



## Upper Valley Farm to School Network Community Curriculum Pilot Project

March 2012 – Eating Locally in March

### **Overview:**

In this lesson, students will make and sample bean dip and carrot sticks made from locally grown beans, garlic and root vegetables. They will learn about the storage methods (drying and cold storage/root cellars) that allow beans and root vegetables to be available from local sources even though they are not harvested in March. They will also play a relay game to learn about other foods that are available from local sources in March. Throughout all these activities, students will connect the past with the present, comparing food preparation and storage now with food preparation and storage 200 years ago, and describing and analyzing similarities and differences.

### **Focusing Question:**

What local foods can we eat in March?

### **Standards Addressed:**

VT Standard 3.9: Making Decisions: Sustainability: Students make decisions that demonstrate understanding of natural and human communities, the ecological, economic, political or social systems within them, and awareness of how their personal and collective actions affect the sustainability of these interrelated systems. This is evident when students:

- a. Identify items that they consume on a daily basis and analyze the resources used in producing, transporting, using and disposing of these items, including the origins of the resources.

VT Standard 6.4: History: Historical Connections: Students identify major historical eras and analyze periods of transition in various times in their local community, in Vermont, in the United States, and in various locations worldwide to understand the past, the present, and the relationship between the two. This is evident when students:

- a. Demonstrate concepts of past, present and future (e.g., create time lines, create chronologies based on narratives, compare and contrast family life, or school, and community life in different periods.

### **Materials/Preparation:**

For the cooking project:

- 1 beet, grated
- 2 cups cooked pink or white beans
- 1-2 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1-2 T olive oil
- 2 T lemon juice
- Salt to taste
- 5-6 carrots, peeled and cut into sticks

- Food processor
- Spatula
- Bowl for serving
- Measuring cups and spoons

Examples of each ingredient

- 1 beet
- 1 carrot
- 1 lemon
- 1 clove or head of garlic, preferably unpeeled
- Bottle of olive oil
- Jar of dried beans
- Jar of salt

Blanket

4 containers (cardboard box, bucket, basket), one labeled as “Cold Storage,” one as “Dry Storage,” one as “Other Storage.”

Flashcards or items for memory game and to sort into the boxes

- Dry storage ideas: different types of dry beans, different types of dry grains, apples, cranberries, mushrooms
- Cold storage ideas: beets, carrots, parsnips, daikon, onion, garlic,
- Other storage ideas: greens, tomatoes, green beans, milk, squash

### **Procedure:**

Introduction (5 min): Introduce yourself. Ask, “Who’s heard of local food? What does local mean when it comes to food?” Define local food with kids. “Local food is food that was grown nearby. Local food doesn’t travel far between where it is grown and where it is eaten. For this lesson, we’re going to think about local food as food that was grown in Vermont.” Discuss how 200 years ago, most food was local. Now, 3% of what Vermonters eat comes from Vermont. 200 years ago, 90% of food Vermonters ate was from Vermont and probably was from their own farm.

Make bean dip (15 min): “Now we’re going to make bean dip that has a lot of local food in it.” Divide class into 4 groups. Set one group up with a food processor and give each other group a bowl and a fork. Distribute ingredients evenly among the 4 groups. Walk everyone through making the bean dip.

Taste test and discuss bean dip (10 min): Let students sample bean dip made with the food processor and bean dip made with a bowl and fork. Discuss: How was the bean dip made with the food processor different than the bean dip made with a bowl and fork? What ingredients in the dip are local? Could we have made this bean dip 200 years ago? Did people make bean dip 200 years ago?

Explain dry storage and root storage (10 min): See attached background information for content to share. If possible, bring props or photographs to show students how the process works and what people use now and did use.

Blanket memory game (10 min): What did you see that could be stored in a root cellar? What did you see that could be dried to store it? After you’ve gone around the circle once and given every student a chance to remember an item/flash card for each question, lift up the blanket and have every student take an item and sort it into the correct box.

**Extension Ideas:**

- Writing about the differences and similarities between the past and the present, or making a chart, individually or as a class.
- Discussing why it's important to buy local food today

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The background information on local versus industrial food is from the Center for Ecoliteracy's Nourish: Food + Community: A Middle School Curriculum Guide published by WorldLink in 2010.

**Appendices:**

- Magic Pink Bean Dip recipe for students to take home (full page or half page)
- Eating locally coloring sheet for students to take home
- Background information on local v. industrial food