

Campaign for Food Literacy

Virtual Launch Event
Feb 6, 2023

An Act to Promote Food Literacy

Senator Lewis & Rep. Vargas have filed
An Act to promote food literacy
([SD.1348](#) / [HD.2580](#))

The bill would:

- Add food literacy to the list of topics that students should learn about in school
- Ask DESE to identify appropriate materials & provide professional development
- Establish a Food Literacy Trust Fund that could be used by schools
- Enable DESE to convene a working group of educators and others with expertise in the food system



**Senator Lewis
Fifth Middlesex
District of
Massachusetts**

MA Food System Collaborative

The Collaborative is a **statewide nonprofit** focusing on food policy issues through research, network building, and advocacy.

We move forward the recommendations in the **MA Local Food Action Plan**, including one to bring back food system education to schools.



Our Process

Conducted interviews with teachers,
nonprofit educators & state agencies

Published the report on food system
education in MA

Identified a Steering Committee to guide
this Campaign



What We Learned

It is critical that students learn about

- nutrition
- agriculture
- food justice
- culinary skills

in science, social studies, wellness, and math classes, and in the cafeteria, school garden, and community.



Challenges Remain

- Food literacy is not included in most state frameworks or tested on the MCAS.
- Teachers struggle to find high-quality, culturally appropriate, curriculum-aligned lessons.
- Many teachers feel unprepared to teach about the food system.
- Many schools don't have funds for materials for food literacy lessons.



Campaign Goal

Every K - 12 student to have access to education about the food system in school so they can make informed decisions that will positively impact the health of:

- Themselves
- Their communities
- The environment



Organizations that Support Food Literacy

American Federation of Teachers Massachusetts
Backyard Growers
Berkshire Grown, Inc.
Chicopee FRESH
ChopChop Family
CISA (Community involved in Sustaining Agriculture)
CommonWealth Kitchen
Everett Community Growers
Farm Direct Coop
FoodCorps
Gardening The Community
Greenfield Housing Authority
Groundwork Somerville
Grow Food Northampton
Growing Places
Health Equity Partnership of North Central Mass Inc (CHNA9)
Healthy Chelsea
Hilltown Community Development Corporation
Island Grown Initiative
Just Roots
Lowell Public Schools Food and Nutrition Services
Massachusetts Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (MAND)
Massachusetts Association for Health, Physical Education Recreation
and Dance
Massachusetts Environmental Education Society
Massachusetts Envirothon
Massachusetts Farm to School
Massachusetts Healthy School Lunch Coalition

Massachusetts Law Reform Institute
Massachusetts PTA
Massachusetts Seafood Collaborative
Massachusetts State Grange
Mill City Grows
New Entry Sustainable Farming Project
Northeast Organic Farming Association/Mass Chapter
Northern Berkshire Community Coalition
Project Bread
Regional Environmental Council
Salem Food for All
Seeds of Solidarity
South Shore Permaculture
Southeastern Massachusetts Agricultural Partnership (SEMAP)
STEAMandarin
Sustainable CAPE
Sustainable Nantucket
Terra Cura, Inc.
The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts
The Food Project
The Food Voice
The Greater Boston Food Bank
The Marion Institute
The Trustees of Reservations
Worcester County Food Bank
World Farmers
Youth School of Liberation

An Act to Promote Food Literacy

The food literacy bill would eliminate many of the barriers to providing food literacy. It would:

- Enable teachers to justify including food literacy lessons
- Make high quality lessons easy to access
- Provide professional development
- Provide funding for schools



The Impact of Food Literacy

Rebecca Cline, Parent Champion, Curley K-8 School, Jamaica Plain

Karen Murphy, Science and Special Education Teacher, Summit Academy, part of Amherst-Pelham Regional High School, Amherst

Colette Piotrowski, Junior, Northampton High School

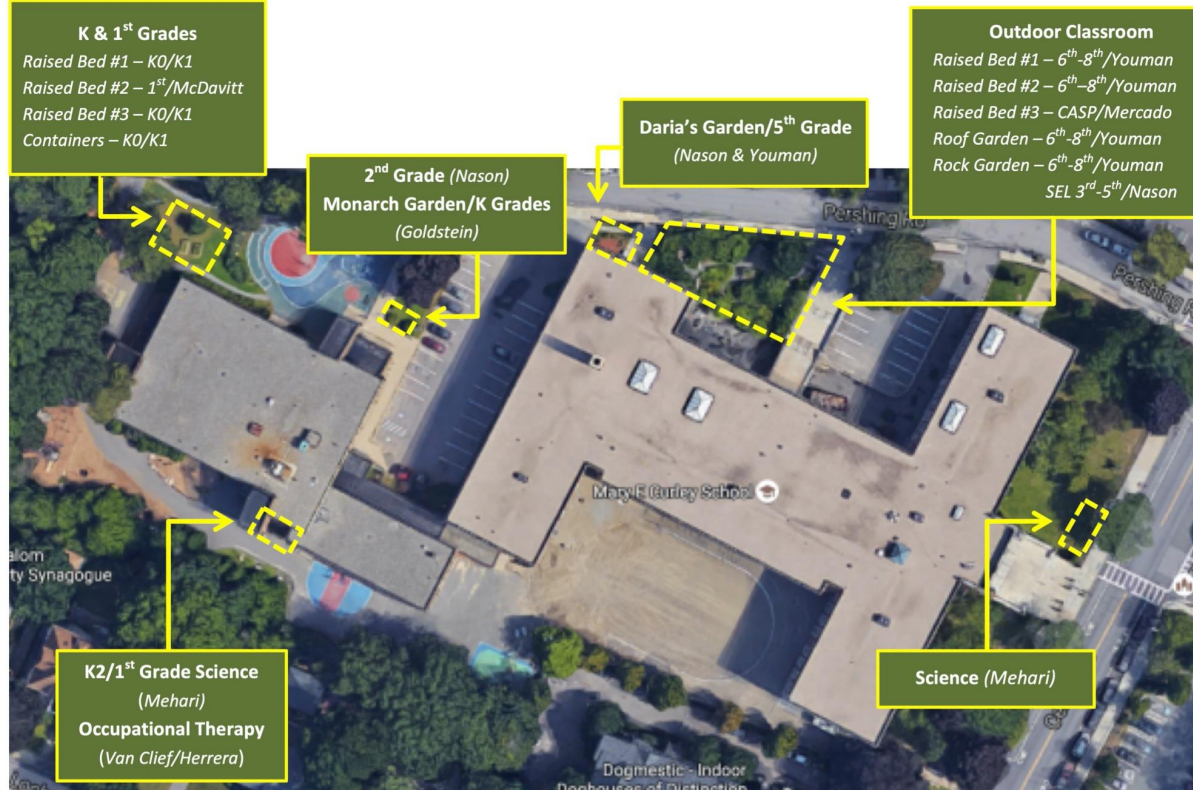
Emily Armstrong, Education Director, Island Grown Initiative, Martha's Vineyard

Sally Sampson, Founder, Chop Chop Family



**Rebecca Cline
Parent Champion
Curley K-8 School
Jamaica Plain**

Curley Gardens – Classroom Projects





Kindergarteners plant herbs, then touch, smell, and taste plants that season food



6th-8th grade
Gardening and Art
elective

Building low boxes
for easy access



Karen Murphy
High School Science
Teacher
Summit Academy,
Amherst-Pelham
Regional Schools
Amherst

Food Science at Summit Academy

- Curriculum developed by Stone Barns Center for Food and Agriculture, with the goal of “transforming the way America eats and farms by creating a healthy, sustainable food system.”
- We study the food system from seed to table
 - botanical and historical origin of our foods
 - how food reflects identity
 - the science of flavor and food engineering
 - resilient agriculture
 - raised and sold microgreens to school food service for school lunches



What We Eat

In small groups, students:

- Dissect food plants and classify the parts we eat (fruit, roots, flower, leaf, stem)
- Use plant parts and provided ingredients to create a salad and dressing
- Use qualitative, rather than judgemental taste and texture descriptions
- Practice knife skills
- Read, analyze, and then write food reviews
- Grow and compare fresh vs. dried herbs
- Make observations about what people eat around the world



Seed-to-Table Project

- Choose a food plant to grow and nurture
- Research the origin and history of this plant
- Harvest the food and make a meal to share
- Document and reflect on the experience - stages, rewards, challenges



Our school greenhouse



Indoor classroom grow rack

Student Projects



Stir fry and salsa with students' jalapenos



Student Seed-to-Table Projects



Mint chocolate chip ice-cream



Charcuterie board with student's basil cream cheese



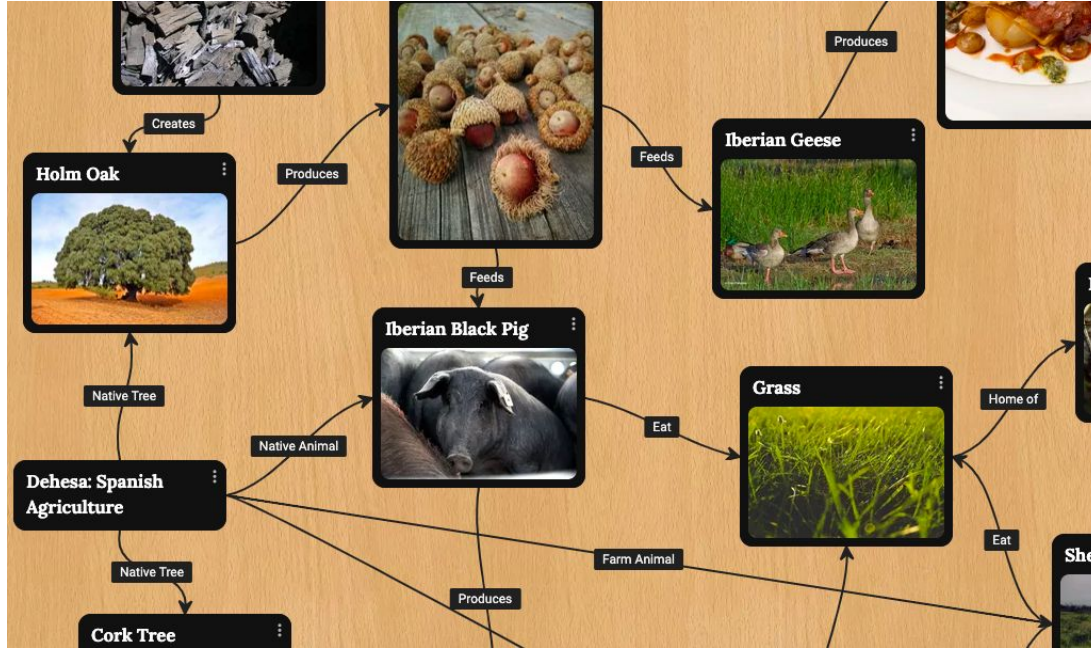
How Cultures Choose Food

- Food as medicine
- Food to celebrate and remember history
- Food to build community
- Edibility and Taboos
 - What is considered taboo in one culture is valid in another (approaching unfamiliar foods in a non-judgemental way)



Food-grade crickets served creatively by a student

Sustainable Agricultural Practices



Concept map of a farm ecosystem

Students build a compost bin for our food waste

Colette Piotrowski

Junior

**Northampton High
School**

NEF Grant Work - Northampton High School

- Northampton Education Fund (NEF) funded the development and implementation of **Plant Science and Food Justice** course at the High School for spring 2023.
- Enrolled students learn about their place in global and local food systems and the impacts these systems have on people, the environment, and society.
- Enrolled students apply scientific knowledge and indigenous teachings to plant and grow vegetables, herbs, annuals, and perennials in school greenhouse space.



Northampton High School and Community

- Though there is no on-site garden, NHS students will travel to community partner, **Grow Food Northampton**, to plant seedlings in the Community Garden.
 - All produce harvested from the Giving Garden will be donated to local food shelters and food pantries.
- Importance of applying classroom teaching to local communities and the world around us.



Grow Food
NORTHAMPTON 

SUSTAINABLY GROWN
LOCAL FOOD
FOR EVERYONE

Emily Armstrong
Education Director
Island Grown
Initiative
Martha's Vineyard



Every subject can be taught through the lens of food, gardens and farms.

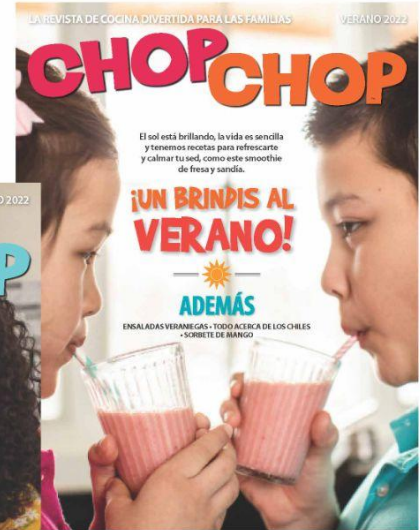
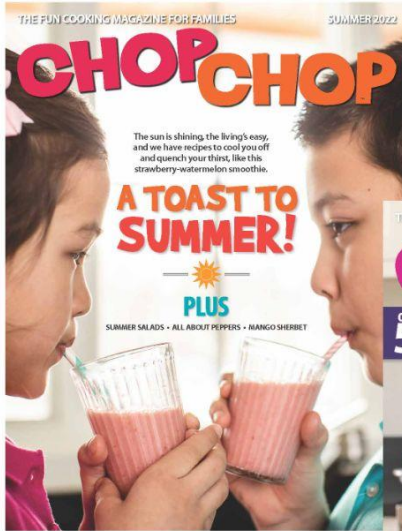


Diverse learners have success with hands-on learning.

Sally Sampson
Founder
Chop Chop Family



Published in
English and Spanish





Make-It-Your-Way Vinaigrette

Make a jar of this bright-tasting dressing—it's also great as a dip for raw vegetables and, of course, to dress a simple green salad.

ADULTS: 15 MIN. OR FINE; 10 MIN. OR FINE; 1 Tbsp. FINE; 1 Tbsp. FINE; 1 Tbsp. FINE; 1 Tbsp. FINE

KITCHEN GEAR

Measuring cup
Measuring spoons
Glass jar or blender or food processor (adult needed)

INGREDIENTS

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup olive oil
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup vinegar (any kind)
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon kosher salt

INSTRUCTIONS

- Put everything in a jar, cover, and shake, shake, shake.
Or: Put everything in a bowl and whisk, whisk, whisk.
Or: Put everything in a blender or food processor and put the top on tightly. Turn the machine on and blend.
- Taste the dressing on a leaf of lettuce. Does it need more oil, more vinegar, or a pinch of salt? If so, add it and taste again.
- Use right away or cover and refrigerate up to 2 weeks.



NOTE:

The dressing will separate over time and will need to be shaken before use to help it emulsify, or become a smooth mixture. Serve as is, or put in one or a combination of these tasty additions:

- 1 teaspoon crumbled dried herbs (like thyme, rosemary, oregano)
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh herbs (like mint, dill, basil, cilantro)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon ground spice (like black pepper, cayenne, cumin)
- 1 teaspoon mustard

LEARN THE LINGO!

Here are some of the cooking terms in this recipe.

- Chopped** means cut up into small pieces
- Mixed** means finely chopped
- Grated** means reduced to small pieces by rubbing

Photo: Shutterstock

www.chopchopfamily.org



Curriculum

ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies, Spanish



Recipe Ratios

Sometimes, you need to adjust the size of a recipe so that it can feed more people or fewer people. Recipes for sauces or dressings like vinaigrettes often use ratios in order to make the recipe easier. The classic vinaigrette ratio is 3:1, but for our Make-It-Your-Way Vinaigrette, we use a ratio of 2:1, which means for every 2 measures of oil, there is 1 measure of vinegar.

Solve these problems using the vinaigrette ratio of 2:1.

2 measures of oil for every 1 measure of vinegar

- Ama and Marcus are making vinaigrettes, and they have 1 cup olive oil. How much vinegar do they need to make the vinaigrette?
- Kate wants to make vinaigrette using apple cider vinegar for her small green salad. She has already measured 1 tablespoon of apple cider vinegar. How much oil does Kate need to add in order to make the vinaigrette?
- Manny is having a big birthday party and wants to serve salad with a vinaigrette to his guests. If he buys two 16-ounce bottles of balsamic vinegar, how many 16-ounce bottles of olive oil does Manny need in order to make the vinaigrette?

Bonus Question:

Jose wants to make vinaigrette. He has all of his ingredients—but he forgot his measuring tools! All he has is a small mug. Can Jose make vinaigrette even though he does not have any measuring tools? If so, how?



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Cooking & Math 12

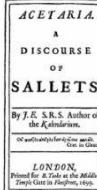


Vinaigrette History and Geography

The use of oil and vinegar to flavor vegetables dates back to ancient Greece and Italy. Greeks claim to have discovered and used the first olive tree for its oil. Vinegar, on the other hand, invented itself—wine, exposed to oxygen, went bad, creating vinegar!

The term "Vinaigrette" goes back to at least 1696 when John Evelyn mentioned "Vinaigrette" in his book on salads called *Acetaria*.

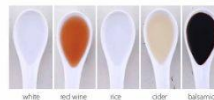
Derived from the French word "vinaigre," meaning vinegar, vinaigrette is typically considered to be a French sauce. Around 1900 in Britain and America, the term "French dressing" became a popular synonym (substitute) for "vinaigrette," though it really is not how the French made their vinaigrette.



Taste Test: Vinegar

Your sense of taste is made possible by your taste receptor cells. Taste receptor cells are bundled into clusters that we call taste buds. Your sense of taste occurs when these taste receptor cells become excited. There are five types of tastes that humans recognize: sweet, salty, sour, bitter, and umami. Umami means "summy" in Japanese and it is the savory and rich taste of amino acids, like meat broth or aged cheese.

Vinegars can fall under multiple taste-type categories. For example, some may taste sour, and others might taste sweet!



Try this taste test experiment:

Sample four different types of vinegar by putting each in a separate bowl and dipping raw vegetables (like carrots) into each one. Label each vinegar sample with a number. Some recommended vinegars are: red wine vinegar, white vinegar, rice vinegar, balsamic vinegar, and apple cider vinegar.

Observations:

Vinegar Sample	Color	Taste Type	Would you use this on your salad?	Guess—What type of vinegar is this sample?
(example)	clear	sour	yes	white vinegar
#1				
#2				
#3				
#4				

Photo: Shutterstock

www.chopchopfamily.org

Kitchen Science 12



For the three European countries mentioned in the vinaigrette History?

Cooking & History/Social Studies 12

Support the Campaign for Food Literacy - Today!

Reach out to your legislator about food literacy and ask them to co-sponsor this bill, An Act to promote food literacy ([SD.1348](#) / [HD.2580](#)).

Sign your organization on to support our campaign at [this link](#).

Reach out if you are a teacher and would like to host a tour of legislators.

Be ready to testify and attend hearings and other events when they are scheduled.



Support the Campaign for Food Literacy - in Spring 2023

FY 2024 Budget Ask

1. Funding for DESE
 - a. Food Literacy Coordinator
 - b. Expand the Massachusetts School Wellness Coaching Program
 - c. Professional development opportunities
 - d. A pilot grant for school districts to hire district-level food literacy coordinators
2. Funding for MDAR
 - a. Agricultural Literacy Coordinator
 - b. Workshops for teachers
 - c. Funds for field trips



Thank you

For more information

Email Brittany Peats at:

brittany@mafoodsystem.org

See more on our website:

mafoodsystem.org

