

Équiterre



REGROUPEMENT DES  
CUISINES COLLECTIVES  
DU QUÉBEC

(Québec Collective Kitchens Association)



# Fresh from the Farm

## Cooking According to Season

A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR COLLECTIVE KITCHENS



The production of this guide was made possible thanks to funding from the **Population Health Fund**.

The opinions expressed in this guide do not necessarily represent the official position of the Public Health Agency of Canada.

The reproduction of excerpts from this guide is encouraged on the condition that permission is obtained from Équiterre and the Québec Collective Kitchens Association and that the source is mentioned.

## Credits

**Writing:** Nadine Bachand

**Revision :** Germaine Chevrier, Nancy Pole and Guyane Marcoux, Québec Collective Kitchens Association; Isabelle Joncas, Ann Lévesque, Frédéric Paré and Theresia Breu, Équiterre; and Yves Fillion, Project Evaluator, “Citoyennes et citoyens... À votre santé!”

**Translation:** Steve Timmins

**Graphic Design:** Bleuision

**Proofreading:** François Roberge

**Cover Photo Credits:** Ferme Le Vallon des sources, Québec Collective Kitchens Association.

### Équiterre, 2007

2177 Masson St., Suite 206  
Montreal, Quebec, H2H 1B1

Telephone: (514) 522-2000

Fax: (514) 522-1227

[www.equiterre.org](http://www.equiterre.org)

[info@equiterre.qc.ca](mailto:info@equiterre.qc.ca)

### Québec Collective Kitchens Association, 2007

1605 Champlain St.  
Montreal, Quebec, H2L 2S5

Telephone: (514) 529-3448

Fax: (514) 529-1359

[www.rccq.org](http://www.rccq.org)

[info@rccq.org](mailto:info@rccq.org)

Legal Deposit: 2007

Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec

National Library of Canada

ISBN-978-2-980-2084-2-3

# Acknowledgements

The Regroupement des cuisines collectives du Québec (RCCQ) (Québec Collective Kitchens Association) and Équiterre wish to thank all the organizations, collective kitchen groups and farms that took part in this pilot project:

## Collective Kitchen Groups

Signée-Femmes, Centre de femmes  
(Rivière-Rouge, Laurentians)

Aum bio, Regroupement des cuisines  
collectives du Grand Plateau (Montreal)

Educational kitchens, Centre de ressources  
familiales du Haut-Saint-Laurent (Huntingdon, Montérégie)

La Fricassée (Valcourt, Eastern Townships)

Les IRISistibles (Val-Bélair, Quebec City)

Les Pros de la popotte, Centre d'entraide  
Racine-Lavoie (Saint-Eustache, Laurentians)

Cuisines collectives des Bois-Francis  
(Victoriaville, Centre-du-Québec)

## Farms

Les Tourterelles, Runaway Creek, La Ferme Bessette, Serre  
Suzanne Piché, Serre Blanchette, Ferme Le petit cueilleur

Jardins du petit Tremble\*

Jardins Bioterre, La Terre bleue

Ferme de La Berceuse\*

Les productions maraîchères Clément Roy\*

Ferme Semis-Sédenterre\*

Les Jardins de Pierrot

\*Member farms of Équiterre's Community Supported Agriculture Network (CSA)

We would like to thank the following volunteers who participated in the “Community Supported Agriculture and Collective Kitchens” pilot project, for their invaluable support, enthusiasm and time: Édith Blouin, Samantha Chareille, Marc Langlois and Nicolas Soumis. A special thanks goes out to the Ferme du Fort Senneville for the warm welcome it extended to visiting collective kitchen groups.

We would also like to thank all discussion group participants for helping making this guide a practical and easy-to-use tool: Solange Miljours, Louise Bellefeuille and Diane Taillon (Signée-Femmes, Centre de femmes); Xavier Lluís and Marius Arseneault (Bouffe-Action de Rosemont); Rolland Gladu, Alain Carmel and Carole Therrien (Maison de Quartier-Villeray); Sophie Marcotte (Chaudronnée des cuisines collectives).

## Participant Testimonial



### “Cooking with farm fresh vegetables - an easy way to keep it simple!”

“Ecological choices often demand a lot of time and energy. It’s unfortunate, but that’s the reality when the system we live in encourages us to do as little as we can for ourselves to keep us consuming more and more. With our farm, it’s the exact opposite. We choose recipes with seasonal vegetables, we order what we need from a list provided by François, our farmer, and he delivers it all right to us! No more need to drag cart-fulls of carrots through slushy winter snow. Cooking healthy and ethically is now a breeze!”

“A thousand thanks to everyone involved in the project, and especially, to our farmer! Thank you!”

Ms. George Salamandre,  
Aum bio collective kitchen, Regroupement des cuisines collectives du Grand Plateau, Montreal,  
associated with the Les Jardins du petit Tremble ecological farm in Saint-Antoine-sur-Richelieu.

# Table of Contents

## Introduction

<b>Why Use this Guide? How to Use this Guide?</b> .....	5
<b>Checklist - Summary of Steps to Follow</b> .....	6
<b>About The Organizations</b> .....	8
Regroupement des cuisines collectives du Québec (Québec Collective Kitchens Association)	
Équiterre	
<b>About the “Citoyennes et citoyens... À votre santé!” Project</b> .....	9
<b>About the “Community Supported Agriculture and Collective Kitchens” Pilot Project</b> .....	9
<b>Why eat locally grown, ecological produce?</b> .....	10

## How to Become Associated with an Ecological Farm

### Winter: A Time for Preparations!

<b>Step 1:</b> Discuss becoming associated with a local ecological farm in your collective kitchen group .....	12
<b>Step 2:</b> Choose your supply method .....	13
<b>Step 3:</b> Contact a local ecological farm .....	16
<b>Step 4:</b> Plan the costs .....	17
<b>Step 5:</b> Discuss how you would like to function with your farmer including: .....	19
a) Supply frequency	
b) Delivery location	
c) A payment method suitable to both your group and your farmer	

### Spring: Establish a written agreement with your farm and plan some educational activities!

<b>Step 6:</b> Establish a written agreement with your farm .....	22
<b>Step 7:</b> Plan some educational activities .....	25

### Summer: The farm is in full operation and your vegetables are growing strong!

### Fall: Begin receiving produce from the farm and start cooking!

<b>Step 8:</b> Contact the farm again and begin receiving your supply of produce .....	30
<b>Step 9:</b> Cook to your heart’s content and savour the results! .....	32
<b>Step 10:</b> Evaluate your project .....	34
<b>Step 11:</b> Do you want to continue? .....	34

<b>Closing Words</b> .....	36
----------------------------	----

# Introduction

## Why Use This Guide?

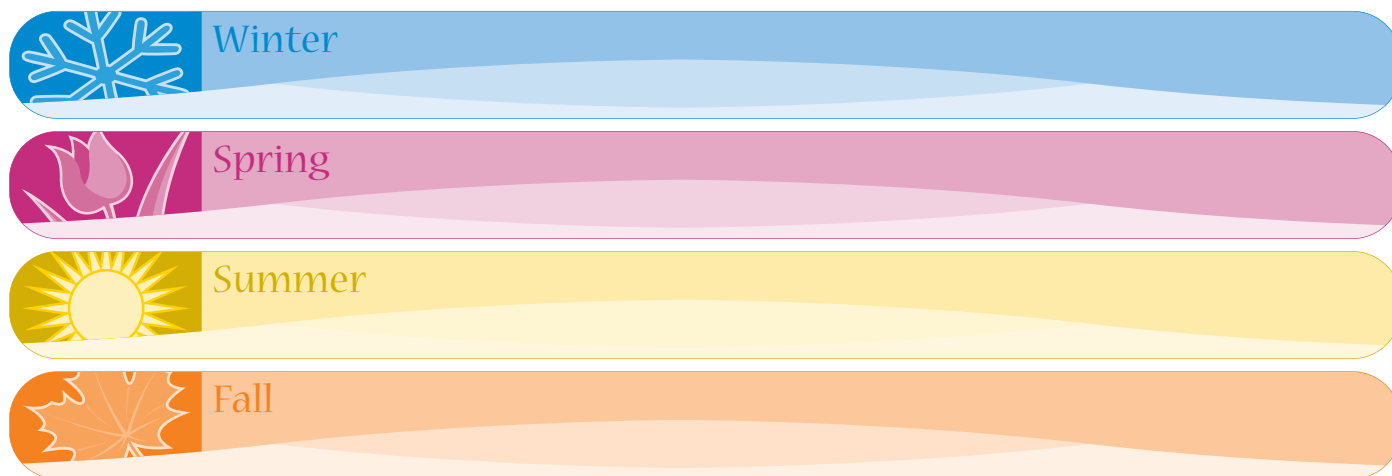
Whether you're a member of a collective kitchen or a group leader, coordinator or member of a board of directors, this guide is intended to help you build direct ties with a local ecological farm.

After consulting the guide, you will know the steps to follow, one easy step at a time, to make it possible for your collective kitchen to cook meals with food purchased straight from a local ecological farm. But like any good recipe, you can adapt your approach to your own taste and needs!

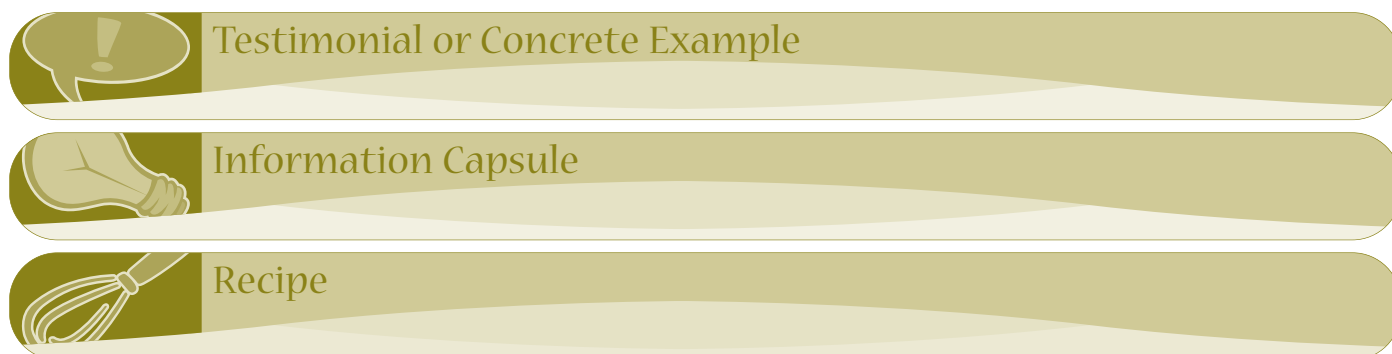
## How to Use This Guide?

This guide is a year-long calendar that walks you through the steps to take in each season. It also shows you testimonials, concrete examples, photos, information capsules and even recipes!

Identify each season by its colour and icon:



Identify the different types of capsules by the following icons:



 **To Do!** : This icon designates a project tool to be photocopied and completed.

## Checklist - Summary of Steps to Follow

 **To Do!** Photocopy and post this checklist. Fill it in as you go.

The following checklist summarizes the main steps to follow for creating direct ties between your collective kitchen and one or several local ecological farms. By following these steps you can:

- Support the farms in your area and know the person who grows your vegetables.
- Cook food that is grown in harmony with the environment and that's good for your health.
- Savour delicious, farm fresh vegetables cooked according to season.
- Learn more about the vegetables you eat and discover some less-known varieties.
- Enjoy produce at affordable prices!

What a great way to build food autonomy!

Steps in Each Season	Details	Page	Done
<b>Winter: A Time for Preparations!</b>			
<b>Step 1:</b> Discuss becoming associated with a local ecological farm with your collective kitchen group	Make a group decision	12	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Become informed through the RCCQ's healthy meals awareness kit and training, or by visiting <a href="http://www.equiterre.org/agriculture/informer.php">www.equiterre.org/agriculture/informer.php</a>	12	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Make a list of all your questions	12	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Appoint people to be in charge of project	12	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Step 2:</b> Choose your supply method	CSA supply method (if able to pay in advance)	13	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Order-based supply method	14	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Step 3:</b> Contact a local ecological farm	Find one or several farms. Directories: <a href="http://www.equiterre.org">www.equiterre.org</a> or <a href="http://sipab.caaq.org/interroGrandPublicFr.do">sipab.caaq.org/interroGrandPublicFr.do</a>	16	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Meet with the farmer(s) and discuss the possibility of entering into a partnership with the farm(s) in question	16	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Step 4:</b> Plan the costs	Assess your current vegetable purchase budget	17	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Assess what portion of it will be replaced by vegetables from the farm	17	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Ask the farm(s) for an approximate list of prices and varieties	17	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Compare prices	17	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Are you willing to pay the prices asked?	17	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	Have you reached the minimum order size?	17	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	Are any other groups interested?	17	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Steps in Each Season	Details	Page	Done
<b>Step 5:</b> Discuss how you would like to function with your farmer including:	Supply frequency	19	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Delivery location	19	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Payment method	20	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Spring: Establish a written agreement with your farm and plan some educational activities!</b>			
<b>Step 6:</b> Establish a written agreement with your farm	An agreement in writing	22	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Step 7:</b> Plan some educational activities	Decide as a group what educational activity(ies) you're interested in	25	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Contact the farm for a visit	25	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Summer: The farm is in full operation and your vegetables are growing strong!</b>			
<b>Fall: Begin receiving produce from the farm and start cooking!</b>			
<b>Step 8:</b> Contact the farm again and begin receiving your supply of produce	Confirm the supply method with the farmer	30	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Get updates from your farm, e.g., do they have any surpluses?	30	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	Order your vegetables	30	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Contact the farm to clarify any questions	30	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Step 9:</b> Cook to your heart's content and savour the results!	Try some new recipes with seasonable vegetables	32	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Step 10:</b> Evaluate your project	Discuss as a group what worked and what could be improved	34	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Discuss how the project benefited the group and the participants	34	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Would you like to use more vegetables from the farm?	34	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Step 11:</b> Do you want to continue?	Do you want to continue this winter?	34	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	Do you want to continue next year?	34	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
	Talk about it with your farmer!	34	<input type="checkbox"/>

## About The Organizations


The **Québec Collective Kitchens Association (RCCQ)** and **Équiterre** teamed up to produce this guide following a joint initiative, the “Community Supported Agriculture and Collective Kitchens” pilot project, which the two organizations carried out together as part of the “Citoyennes et citoyens... À votre santé!” project initiated by the RCCQ.

### Québec Collective Kitchens Association (RCCQ)

Founded in 1990, the RCCQ is a non-profit organization whose mission is to promote the creation and consolidation of collective kitchens in Quebec.

A collective kitchen is a small group of people who pool their time, money and skills together to undertake, in four stages (planning, buying, cooking and evaluation), the preparation of economical, healthy and delicious meals, which they then take home to eat. Collective kitchens are for anyone interested in healthier dietary habits, in a better quality of life for themselves and their families and in getting involved individually or collectively in their communities. A collective kitchen incorporates basic values such as the joy of cooking together, public education, solidarity, democracy, equality, social justice, autonomy, respect and dignity.

The RCCQ promotes a vision of food autonomy, and collective kitchens are an important part of this process.



#### Food Autonomy...

- Means access at all times and in the long term to a sufficient daily quantity of reasonably priced food.
- Means the power to choose - with dignity, and with access to clear, reliable information - food that is healthy, wholesome, safe and varied.
- Is acquired through collective and solidarity-based action whereby individuals and groups become self-reliant for the betterment of the community and with a sustainable development perspective.
- Promotes environmental stewardship, fair trade and responsible consumption and aims at a sustainable balance between meeting the needs of present and future generations.

### Équiterre

Équiterre is a non-profit organization whose mission is to contribute to building a citizens movement and promoting ecological and socially just individual and collective choices.

Équiterre pursues this mission through its four program areas: Ecological Agriculture, Fair Trade, Energy Efficiency and Green Transportation, and its two campaigns: Climate Change, and Changing the World One Step at a Time.

In the area of ecological agriculture, Équiterre develops projects aimed at reintroducing greater ecology and solidarity into the food systems that connect us to the earth and to those who cultivate it. Équiterre implements a range of projects including the Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) project, an agricultural model in which citizens become directly associated with a local ecological farm in a spirit of solidarity, and the Garderie Bio project, an initiative matching daycares with local ecological farms.

Food is an essential human need. To be able to eat tomorrow, the way we feed ourselves today must not compromise our ability to meet our future needs: our methods must be respectful of the environment, human health, the people who work the land, and those who consume the food.

## About the “Citoyennes et citoyens... À votre santé!” Project

From 2005 to 2007, the RCCQ operated a project called “Citoyennes et citoyens... À votre santé!”. The project’s purpose was to promote healthy eating habits among the general Quebec public, and more specifically, among Quebec collective kitchens.

The project was three-part:

- Healthy meals awareness and training
- Political mobilization
- **Community Supported Agriculture and Collective Kitchens**

The third component took the form of a pilot project and was carried out in close collaboration with Équiterre. This guide is the fruit of that collaboration.

## About the “Community Supported Agriculture and Collective Kitchens” Pilot Project

The purpose of the pilot project was to experiment with direct supply partnerships between collective kitchens and ecological farms from the Community Supported Agriculture Network (CSA), a network coordinated by Équiterre.

Over the years, RCCQ’s members had been asking for food that is grown in an environmentally-friendly and health conscious way to be more available to members of collective kitchens and their families. The pilot project was established in response to this demand.

The approach recommended in this guide can be used to complement other food supply methods.

It should be noted that all the participating collective kitchen groups, except for two educational kitchens, operated on a per-order basis and not according to the CSA model involving the advance payment, “surprise basket” supply method. The CSA concept remains, however, the fundamental principle behind the project, and collective kitchens are encouraged to adopt this approach because it provides the greatest solidarity and support for farmers.

### What is Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)?



- Also known as “organic baskets”, the principle is quite simple: citizens provide direct support to an ecological farm by purchasing a share of its harvest before the start of the season (from March to June), and in so doing, they become partners with the farm in a spirit of solidarity.
- Support at the start of the season is very important as it enables the farms to invest in their harvest (purchase of seeds, compost and equipment, etc.).
- In return for your commitment, the farmer commits to producing and delivering “surprise vegetable baskets” every week for an average of 15 to 20 weeks (July through October). The contents of the baskets will evolve as the farming season advances. The baskets are brought to delivery points in the neighbourhoods where their partners live.
- The total price of a harvest share, for an entire season of some 20 weeks in length, ranges from \$200 for small baskets to \$650 for large baskets, which breaks down to \$14.50 to \$32.50 a week.
- Some farms also offer ecological meat produce, and vegetable preserves from November through March.
- In Quebec, in 2007, more than 99 small-scale farms with a diversity of produce were members of the Équiterre coordinated CSA network and provided food for some 8,700 families.



# Why Eat Locally Grown Ecological Food?

For the Sheer Pleasure of it and for the Benefit of Your Health!

## Purchasing produce from an ecological farm means:

- Eating vegetables of superior flavour and freshness. Your recipes will be even more delicious!
- Eating food not grown with pesticides and other chemicals that can be harmful to your health.
- Benefiting from food that is often more nutritious: studies show that some organic food contains more nutrition than conventional food.
- Discovering varieties that you weren't previously familiar with: kale, Swiss chard, celery root and sunchoke, etc.
- Learning more about the benefits of local agriculture.
- Ensuring your food provisions without having to run from one special to the next.



## Vegetables Full of Good Things

Studies show that some organically grown food contains more nutritional elements than those found in conventional foods: more vitamin C, iron, magnesium, phosphorus, and minerals, and fewer traces of heavy metals. Organically grown spinach, for example, contains 52% more vitamin C than conventional spinach<sup>1</sup>.

Organic fruit and vegetables also contain more natural antioxidants (like vitamin A, C and E) than conventionally grown ones. Antioxidants possess numerous medicinal properties, including protection against some forms of cancer<sup>2</sup>.



## For the Betterment of the Local Economy!

### Did you know that two farms disappear every day in Quebec?

At this rate, what will become of our agricultural system, our local economies, our food choices, and the quality of our food when it has to travel more and more kilometres to get to us?

### By becoming associated with a local ecological farm, you will be:

- Supporting small farms in Quebec and farming practices that are beneficial to human health and the health of the environment.
- Supporting agriculture that helps conserve a diversity of living organisms (biodiversity) and maintain balanced ecosystems.
- Seeing 100% of your money go directly to the farmers.
- Contributing to the betterment of your community and to job creation.

## For the Health of the Planet!

### Are you concerned about extreme weather conditions, deforestation and climate change?

- Did you know that every year in Canada up to 16,000 people die prematurely due to air pollution<sup>3</sup>?
- Did you know that food bought in supermarkets travels on average 2,400 to 4,000 kilometres before arriving on your table<sup>4</sup>?

### By becoming associated with a local ecological farm, you will help reduce:

- Air pollution.
- Green house gas emissions.
- Climate change.

### Buying Organic Food Straight from the Farm... What a Great Way to Help Reduce Pollution!

## The Power is in Your Plate!

### The Veggies May Look Different



The vegetables you buy directly from the farm may sometimes look a little different from the ones you buy in a conventional supermarket. The potatoes may look a little unwashed, the carrots a little crooked, and the peppers a little smaller. But, not to worry! Just give them a good wash and they'll be completely free of the occasional insect that may have tagged along. Imagine, a veggie that's attractive to insects - the living proof that your vegetables have been grown without the use of chemical pesticides!



# How to Become Associated with a Local Ecological Farm

The following are the steps to take in each season starting with the winter!

## Winter: A Time for Preparations!

December, January, February and March

### Step 1: Discuss becoming associated with a local ecological farm in your collective kitchen group

Are you interested in incorporating the values of healthy meals and food autonomy into the way you operate? Would you like to contribute to the vitality of your regional economy and to protecting the environment?

Would you like to obtain your produce directly from a local ecological farm? For your project to be successful, any decision on this course of action should be made by your group in a democratic manner.



In our collective kitchen, we make decisions together about the food we cook and how we buy our food supplies.

For the project to be a collective one, the group may need more information to have a better understanding of the advantages of eating local ecological produce. You can:

- Order the healthy meals awareness kit or register for the healthy meals awareness training sessions offered by the Québec Collective Kitchens Association (RCCQ).
- Visit [www.equiterre.org/agriculture/informer.php](http://www.equiterre.org/agriculture/informer.php).
- Organize discussions on healthy food, pesticides, food additives, GMOs, and germination, etc.
- Visit an ecological farm.
- Etc.

Before contacting a farm (Step 3), do the following in your group:

- Make a list of group members' questions such as: What vegetables will be available and at what time? What will be available when we are planning our recipes? Etc.
- Discuss the supply method (Step 2).
- Appoint one or two people to contact one or several ecological farms, report on the farm(s) to the group and lead the discussions that follow, etc.





## Collective Kitchen Values in Action



Becoming associated with a local ecological farm is a great way to express your collective kitchen values.

The participants in this project appreciated and enjoyed:

- Creating solidarity with and supporting the farms in their area.
- Having direct contact with the people growing their vegetables.
- Knowing the work that was involved before the vegetables arrived on their tables.
- The flavour, freshness and exceptional quality of local, ecologically grown vegetables.
- Paying affordable prices.
- Discovering new varieties of vegetables.

The participants felt like they were contributing to improving their own health, the health of the environment and that of their community. What a great way to work toward food autonomy!

## Step 2: Choose Your Supply Method

There are two different supply methods available:

### CSA Supply Method (Community Supported Agriculture)

As part of the pilot project, some groups opted for the CSA approach whereby they purchased a share of the farm's harvest in advance and cooked with the farm fresh produce contained in their "surprise baskets". This was the case, for example, for the Centre de ressources familiales du Haut-Saint-Laurent (See below).

### A Concrete Example



The Centre de ressources familiales du Haut-Saint-Laurent in Huntingdon, Montérégie Region, oversees educational kitchen groups and collective kitchen groups in its area.

Two educational kitchen groups connected to the Centre buy their produce in the fall using the CSA "surprise basket" supply method, as follows:

- The Centre makes an advance purchase (in the spring) of two harvest shares from two ecological farms in its area. The Centre then incorporates these harvest shares into its kitchen stock.
- One person is responsible for picking up the produce every week at the delivery point near the Centre and planning recipes based on basket content.
- All participants make a small weekly payment throughout the year.





## Order-Based Supply Method

Since payment in advance is often difficult for groups to assume, most of the collective kitchens in the pilot project purchased food from their farms on a per order basis. This is, therefore, the method we explain throughout the rest of the guide. But we encourage groups to get fully involved in the CSA advanced payment/“surprise basket” method, because the CSA approach ensures greater solidarity and support for farmers and saves you the trouble of having to place orders.

Under the order-based method, the kitchens order supplies from a list of available produce sent by the farm. Because CSA farms give priority to their start-of-season partners who purchase their harvest share in advance, they may have less produce to offer you on a per order basis, depending on harvest surpluses. This is why it’s always better to register as a start-of-season partner (CSA advance payment approach) whenever financially possible.



### A Concrete Example

The Aum bio collective kitchen from the Regroupement des cuisines collectives du Grand Plateau (RCCGP) (Montreal) bought its provisions by placing orders monthly with the Les Jardins du petit Tremble ecological farm in Saint-Antoine-sur-Richelieu.

- Starting in September, the farm would send RCCGP a list of its available produce on the Thursday prior to delivery.
- Every time they placed an order, 10 to 15 varieties of vegetables were available.
- The person responsible ordered vegetables for the group based on both the recipes planned by Aum bio and the vegetables available from the farm.
- She returned the order form to the farm by Friday.
- Vegetables were delivered on the following Tuesday to the collective kitchen premises.



The Aum bio collective kitchen cooking with vegetables from their farmer.



### No Chemical Pesticides

In organic agriculture, chemical pesticides are not allowed, as they are in fact poisons. Herbicides kill plants considered “weeds”, fungicides kill fungi and insecticides kill insects, etc. Chemical pesticides also affect other living organisms including humans.

Studies have shown links between pesticides and health problems such as cancer, lowered fertility, weaker immune systems, developmental defects and behavioural problems<sup>5</sup>.

Women diagnosed with breast cancer show levels of pesticides in their tissue of 50% to 60% higher than in healthy women<sup>6</sup>.

Children are the most vulnerable because they are growing and developing, and in proportion to their weight, they eat, drink and breathe more than adults.





## The Advantages of Each Supply Methods

Advantages of CSA Supply Method	Advantages of Order-Based Supply Method
Your harvest share is guaranteed	You can choose from the farm's surplus harvest vegetables allowing more flexibility in planning your recipes
You ensure direct support and enhanced solidarity for your farm	You pay upon receipt of your order
You avoid having to place orders	







## About Organic Certification



### How can we be sure that the food we purchase has been grown ecologically?

When a product is labelled “organic” or “ecological” or “biodynamic”, this is the guarantee that it has been produced ecologically, i.e., without using chemicals, genetically modified organisms (GMOs), or antibiotics and growth hormones (in the case of livestock). Such products must carry the name of a certification body recognized by the Conseil des appellations agroalimentaires du Québec.

### The recognized certification bodies for food produced in Quebec are:

GARANTIE BIO-ÉCOCERT	 
QUÉBEC VRAI	 
OCIA	
FARM VERIFIED ORGANIC	
QUALITY ASSURANCE INTERNATIONAL	
OCP / PRO-CERT CANADA	

For more information on organic certification, see [www.caaq.org](http://www.caaq.org)





## Step 3: Contact a Local Ecological Farm

During the winter, farmers plan their next harvest. They chose the types and quantities of vegetables they will plant in the spring and they plan their delivery route.

As a result, the winter is a good time to contact and start building ties with a local ecological farm. Talk to the farmer about your project; see if the order-based supply method is possible. Request an approximate list of the vegetables planned for the next growing season. A farm can even grow some vegetables according to your taste. Wow! Produce made to measure! Go in person to meet with the farmer on her farm - what better way to build a solidarity-based relationship!

Some farms even provide vegetables during the winter months including potatoes, carrots, onions, garlic, squash, leek, sunchoke, celery root and cabbage, etc. So if you're interested, talk to your farmer.



Collective kitchen groups meeting with their farmer on the farm.

### How to Find Your Farm

- a) Consult the list of Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) farms by going to [www.equiterre.org](http://www.equiterre.org) or calling **1-877-ASC-6656**. Find the farm with the delivery point closest to where you live.
- b) If you can't find a delivery point within proximity, find a farm whose delivery route passes near your home. Take for example a group located in Berthierville looking for a farm. There's a good chance that a farm in the Trois-Rivières area that delivers to Montreal passes close to Berthierville on its delivery route.
- c) If you can't find a farm close enough on the Équiterre list, you can consult the directory of the Conseil des appellations agroalimentaires du Québec (CAAQ) at [sipab.caaq.org/interroGrandPublicFr.do](http://sipab.caaq.org/interroGrandPublicFr.do), or contact the following organizations for a list of farms:
  - Fédération d'agriculture biologique du Québec: [www.fabqbio.ca](http://www.fabqbio.ca)
  - Garantie Bio-Ecocert: **(418) 838-6941**
  - Québec Vrai : [www.quebecvrai.org](http://www.quebecvrai.org)
  - OCPP Canada : **1-877-867-4264** (English only)



### Collective Kitchens are for Everyone!

Children, teens, women, men, seniors, and people of all financial means. Collective kitchens are for anyone and everyone wanting to eat healthy food, enjoy better quality of life and get involved individually or collectively in their community.





## Step 4: Plan the Costs

### “How much will it cost?”

The answer to this question depends on several factors such as your choice of produce (fruit, vegetables, meat and other foodstuffs) and the supply method used. Planning the cost of vegetables purchased directly from the farm is different from buying groceries at the supermarket: quantities and varieties of vegetables will change over the course of the season in keeping with the crops that are ready for harvest. From one order to the next, your farmer will give you a list of available vegetables including price per unit or kilo.

Other factors that affect the price:

- If the season has been a poor one, there will be more losses in the fields and costs can go up as a result.
- Every farm has different production costs, and their prices vary accordingly.

It's important to see the purchase of locally grown, organic vegetables as a long-term investment in yours and you children's health, in the survival of farming in Quebec and in promoting a healthy environment.

### To decide whether or not to participate in this kind of project:

- Assess your current vegetable purchase budget.
- Assess approximately the percentage of these purchases that would be replaced by farm vegetables, by asking the farm to provide an approximate list of prices and the vegetables it plans to harvest over the coming season.
- Compare prices.
- Decide together, whether you are willing to assume the cost. Consider not just the cost, but also food quality, the environment, the health benefits and social solidarity.
- Be sure that enough groups will participate to be able to reach the minimum order size asked by the farmer (where applicable).





## A Concrete Example

To give you an idea of the cost, here are some of the dishes cooked by the Aum Bio collective kitchen.

	<b>September</b> (Before Agreement with Farm)	<b>October</b> (With Farm Vegetables)	<b>November</b> (With Farm Vegetables)
<b>Name of Recipe</b>	1. Ratatouille 2. Cream of leek 3. Banana and fig bread 4. Lentil and nut bread	1. Creamy Indian cauliflower soup 2. Apple and cranberry cake 3. Winter vegetable pie 4. Carrot and cashew bread	1. Butternut squash soup 2. Vegetarian meat loaf 3. Fall splendour (pumpkin pie) 4. Chocolate brownies
<b>Number of Portions</b>	120 portions	112 portions	128 portions
<b>Cost Per Portion</b>	\$0.85/portion	\$1.57/portion*	\$0.68/portion
<b>Percentage of Vegetables and Fruit Coming Directly from the Farm</b>	0%	74%	72%

\*The higher cost per portion for October is due to the price of cashews.

## The Fair Price of Organic and Ecologically Grown Food

### Why is organic and ecologically grown food sometimes more expensive than conventional food?

- When herbicides are not used, more time is required to remove weeds around crops, making labour costs higher.
- When chemical pesticides are not used, there is more crop loss in the field.
- In Quebec, ecological vegetable farms are generally smaller than conventional farms. As a result, they cannot benefit from the same economies of scale.
- The environmental costs (e.g., depollution costs) and social costs of conventional crop production are not taken into account in the prices we pay in the supermarket.
- Organic farmers also have to pay for organic certification.
- Ecological farms do not have access to the same grants as conventional farms.

That's all fine and dandy, but a lot of people just can't afford to buy organic and natural food!



Maybe so, but by buying directly from the farm, you pay less for organic and natural food than you would at the supermarket! And 100% of your dollars goes straight to the farmer!





## Step 5: Discuss How You Would Like to Function with Your Farmer

Several things need to be discussed with your farmer to establish the way your supply system is going to work. Where will deliveries be made? How often will the farm deliver? What will be the payment method?

### a) Decide on Supply Frequency

CSA farms usually deliver to their partners once a week, thereby ensuring produce freshness and allowing you to fully benefit from nature's bounty as you go along.

What if your group cooks just once a month? Then place your order monthly or team up with three or four other groups to place orders weekly, on a rotating basis. This option is easier when there are already several groups operating under the same organization.

### What if Your Collective Kitchen Closes for the Summer?

- Cook during the summer with healthy fresh vegetables, then preserve and freeze food for the coming winter months.
- Participants can take vegetables home to cook.

### b) Decide on the Delivery Point

#### Option 1 - Delivery to Your Collective Kitchen Premises

- When the volume of vegetables purchased is large enough and your collective kitchen premises are on a farmer's delivery route, the farmer might deliver straight to your collective kitchen. The farmer may, however, have a required minimum purchase volume for making such an arrangement.
- If the purchase volume is likely to be too low, you can team up with other collective kitchen groups or other organizations in your municipality or neighbourhood (daycares, seniors' homes, etc.).

#### Option 2 - Pick Up Your Vegetables at the Closest Delivery Point

Has the farm already planned a basket delivery point for your municipality or neighbourhood? If so, just pick up your order at the designated location!

#### Option 3 - Become a Delivery Point

Individuals (participants, employees, volunteers and neighbourhood residents, etc.) can become partners with a farm and even become a designated delivery point for organic vegetable baskets! Your collective kitchen can receive its order at the same time.

If you're interested, contact the farm and Équiterre as early as possible. Most delivery points are already decided on in December and January.

### Two Concrete Examples



François Tanguay from Les Jardins du petit Tremble ecological farm delivers his fresh vegetables directly to the premises of the Regroupement des cuisines collectives du Grand Plateau. Minimum purchase size is \$60.



Farmer Robin Fortin from La Berceuse farm at his delivery point.





## Option 4 - Pick Up Your Vegetables Right on the Farm

Some farms are a delivery or pick-up point themselves, often on specific days of the week and at specific times of day. Discuss it with your farmer.



### c) Establish a Payment Method Suitable to Your Group and the Farm

Payment at time of delivery? On presentation of a weekly or monthly bill? In advance? When an order is placed?

 **To Do!** See on the following page a list of points to discuss with your farm. In the right column, write down the agreements reached with the farm (e.g., communication by email).

*Photocopy the list, and after completing it, give a copy to the farmer and keep a copy for yourself as a memory aid. Even though you've completed the list, feel entirely free to call your farmer whenever there's some thing you're not sure about.*



### Learn to Plan Your Recipes with Seasonal Vegetables

The vegetables available from your farm will vary from one delivery to the next as crops grow and are ready for harvest. With the farm's planned crop calendar in hand, hold a think tank with your group to discuss how it can adapt your recipes giving priority to fresh in-season vegetables. You may decide to replace some of the usual vegetables with different ones available from the farm.

Take the spinach in your lasagne, for example. In September, this can be replaced by kale or Swiss chard, and the mushrooms in your soup by carrots.

Be open to new ideas and discover some delicious new recipes!





## List of Points to Discuss

### Points a Collective Kitchen should Discuss with One or Several Local Ecological Farms

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Group: \_\_\_\_\_ Name of Farm: \_\_\_\_\_

Resource Person: \_\_\_\_\_ Resource Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Information: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact Information: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Points to Discuss

#### Agreement

Planned Dates for Start and End  
of Supply Period

Supply Method  
("surprise basket" or Order-Based Method)

Method of Communication for Placing Orders  
(telephone, email or fax)

Order Frequency

Day of Week when Farm Provides List  
of its Available Fruit and Vegetables

Day of the Week when the Group  
Places its Order with the Farm

Day and Time of Delivery

Location where Farm is Required to Deliver Order  
and Name of Person Who will Receive Delivery

Minimum Order Amount  
(If Any)

Payment Method

Terms and Conditions for Ending Agreement





## Spring: Establish a written agreement with your farm and plan some educational activities!

April, May and June

### Step 6: Establish a Written Agreement with Your Farm

A written agreement enables:

- Both parties to know exactly what the other's expectations are.
- To clarify things in case of any disagreement or misunderstanding.
- To clearly state the commitment of the kitchens toward the farm and vice versa.

Such an agreement can include and describe the items mentioned in the list of points to discuss on the preceding page.

 **To Do!:** You can photocopy the two following pages, complete them, make a photocopy, give a copy to the farm, and save a copy for yourself.



#### No Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO)

GMOs are forbidden in ecological agriculture. A GMO is any plant or animal whose genetic code has been modified by introducing genes from another species. Genes from bacteria, for example, are inserted into some corn seed to create corn that secretes its own insecticide. Such a gene transfer could never occur in nature. Moreover, nothing is known about the long-term affects of GMOs on human health and the environment.





# Partnership Agreement

## Whereas:

- Ecological agriculture allows us to live in harmony with nature, promotes human health, maintains soil and water balance and ensures the welfare of animals;
- Local agriculture allows the building of bonds and creation of solidarity between urban and rural communities, limits the transportation of food, reinforces regional economies, and promotes the development of a sustainable food system model;
- The Québec Collective Kitchens Association and Équiterre have put in place the “Community Supported Agriculture and Collective Kitchens” project aimed at facilitating the creation of partnerships between collective kitchens and local ecological farms;

\_\_\_\_\_ (Name of Group) and  
 \_\_\_\_\_ (Name of Farm) do hereby agree as follows:

## 1. Agreement of the Farm

\_\_\_\_\_ (Name of Farm) agrees to sell and deliver, upon receiving an order for a minimum purchase of \$ \_\_\_\_\_, during the period from (date) \_\_\_\_\_ to (date) \_\_\_\_\_, organic vegetables produced only by the farm to \_\_\_\_\_ (Name of Group) located at \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ (Name of Farm) agrees to do everything necessary to ensure the production, sale and delivery of said produce as specified in this agreement with \_\_\_\_\_ (Name of Group), in accordance with organic farming standards, and to hold valid organic certification at all times.

\_\_\_\_\_ (Name of Farm) agrees to provide a list of its produce available each week and to collaborate in the preparation and conducting of activities involving farm work performed on said farm by the participants of \_\_\_\_\_ (Name of Group).

## 2. Agreement of Group

\_\_\_\_\_ (Name of Group) agrees to purchase and receive vegetables from \_\_\_\_\_ (Name of Farm) and understands that the varieties of the said vegetables change from week to week in keeping with the harvests. \_\_\_\_\_ (Name of Group) agrees to buy and receive vegetables from the farm for a minimum purchase of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ per order.





### 3. Renewal of Agreement

When \_\_\_\_\_ (Name of Group) wishes to remain a partner of \_\_\_\_\_ (Name of Farm) after \_\_\_\_\_ (date), a new agreement shall be drawn up, completed and signed by both parties.

### 4. Supply and Payment Method (Check Off Appropriate Square)

**CSA Supply Method (Community Supported Agriculture)**

Advance payment for the purchase of a harvest share, or harvest shares, shall be made by cheque prior to the start of delivery, in accordance with the agreement reached with the farm.

**Order-Based Supply Method**

Payment for the first order shall be made by cheque at the time of the first delivery. Subsequent billings by the farm shall be done on a monthly basis, and shall show the quantities of the vegetables purchased and price per article or per weight. Subsequent payments shall be made monthly.

### 5. Termination of Agreement

Either party may end this agreement. It shall give notice to this effect to the other party at least 10 days prior to an order date and shall clearly state in the notice the reason(s) for such termination.

We agree to all the above terms and conditions,

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Given and Family Name, Title)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of Group)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Address)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Given and Family Name, Title)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of Farm)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Address)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date





## Step 7: Plan Some Educational Activities

Organize some educational activities to help you learn more about the food you eat and the impact it has on your health and the environment.

Some ideas for activities:

- Trips to the farm (details below).
- Tastings of seasonal vegetables or less-known varieties (sunchoke, kale, etc.).
- Activities involving germinations and tastings (alfalfa, radish, sunflower, etc.).
- Visits to a garden, a community garden, a nature park, etc.
- Growing plants and mini gardens in containers or on a nearby plot (flowers, vegetables, fine herbs, etc.).
- Setting up and maintaining a composter.

### Trip to the Farm

It's the perfect way to see how your vegetables are grown and harvested and to learn more about the life of a farmer. And why not give your farmer a hand! It would be very much appreciated since there are always a million things to do on a farm and farmers work very long hours. To visit your farm, talk to your farmer about it as soon as possible so you can set a date.

#### Participant Testimonial



##### A Picture's Worth a Thousand Words!

Louise Lefebvre, participant in the Centre de ressources familiales du Haut-Saint-Laurent educational kitchens, during a visit with her group to the La Terre bleue farm.

“I liked the shapes and colours of the pumpkins. I learned the names of some vegetables that I wasn't familiar with. I also learned how organic, pesticide-free gardens were made and how they worked. The quality of the vegetables that we took for making soup was more consistent and had a better taste. With a little loving care, you can make such a beautiful organic garden! Thank you.”

Louise Lefebvre



© Centre de ressources familiales du Haut-Saint-Laurent

### Don't Forget when Organizing Your Visit to the Farm...

#### Transportation

Organize car-pooling if some of the members have cars, or have a few people chip in to rent a car together. And if the farm's not too far away, why not ride your bicycles!





## Characteristics of Your Farm

- One of the advantages of your ecological farm is that it doesn't expose people to chemical pesticides, which can be harmful to their health.
- Find out ahead of time about the crops it grows, the animals it raises, its activities and its equipment (making apple juice or butter, milking cows, composting, etc.).
- Not all farms are organized to receive groups. Make sure that you will be able to walk around freely in small groups without risk of stepping on planted crops.

## Time of Year (Weather and Farm Work Calendar)

Based on the yearly cycle, the following are the best times to visit:

- In May and June, farmers work the soil, seeds are sown in greenhouses and seedlings are transplanted to the fields. There are still very few vegetables and fruit to see or pick, except for strawberries, which are ready in June.
- In July and August, the harvests are fully underway.
- In September and October, when it's a good season, the harvests are still going strong (tomatoes, squash, etc.).
- The winter is not usually the best time to visit, but if your farmer has livestock, goats may be birthing.

## Availability of Farmers and Farm Hands

Farmers are usually extremely busy, especially during growing season. Being welcomed by the farmer, however, adds the human touch and makes for a much more rewarding visit. It's important to check in advance to see who will be available at the farm to greet and accompany you when you visit.

## Farm Logistics

Check the following in advance:

- Available parking space on or close to farm (bus, cars, etc.).
- Group meeting point (arrival, departure, etc.).
- Washroom access.
- A place to have lunch and snacks (on the grass, with or without a cover to sit on, tables, shady areas, etc).
- Shelter in case of rain.

## What to Bring

- Citronella insect repellent.
- Hat.
- Sun block.
- Boots.
- Raincoat, if forecast calls for rain.
- First aid kit.
- Bottle of water.
- Cover for sitting on the grass to eat (the choice is yours).
- Picnic or snack, if a half-day visit.





### After Your Farm Visit:

- Send a thank you card to your farmer.
- Discuss what you saw and did on the farm, and what you liked.
- Make a poster with photos of the visit.
- Paste drawings or photos of seedlings, seeds, fruit and vegetables on a calendar (as seen, or to come later).

### A Collective Kitchen is a Great Way to...



- Get out of the house.
- Meet new people and make new friends.
- Build self-confidence.
- Foster initiative.
- Promote autonomy and self-reliance.
- Develop, acquire and share your knowledge.
- Gain experience working on projects as a group.
- Build a network of mutual assistance and for sharing information about food.
- Develop an alternative food supply system and make healthier food choices, etc.





## Summer: The Farm is in Full Operation and Your Vegetables are Growing Strong!

### July and August

During the summer months, most collective kitchens are closed. Just before you close, however, would be the perfect time to wish your farmer a good summer and to set a time for getting back in touch at the end of the summer or start of fall.

Summer is a very hectic season on the farm! Weeds are being removed, fields are being irrigated and natural methods are being used to attempt to control all the other life forms interested in the farm's crops (insects, fungi, etc.).



Carrot harvest on the Cadet-Roussel Farm (Mont-Saint-Grégoire, Montérégie).



### No Chemical Fertilizers!

Runoff from chemical fertilizers used in conventional agriculture can end up in waterways and underground water reserves. In waterways, it causes an overproduction of algae which can suffocate all other aquatic plant and animal species.

In ecological agriculture, the health of the earth is an important factor, because the earth is what nourishes the plants! Farmers are, therefore, careful to enrich the soil using natural methods, e.g., through the addition of compost. Compost is produced when micro-organisms transform organic matter (vegetable scraps, leaves, etc.) into humus.





## Approximate Calendar of Harvests in Quebec

Month	Vegetables and Fruit
June	Swiss chard, spinach, various types of lettuce (mesclun, rocket, etc.), radish, strawberries....
July	Swiss chard, spinach, various types of lettuce, radish, strawberries, broccoli, various varieties of cabbage (green, Savoy, cauliflower, kohlrabi), cucumber, shallots, fennel, herbs, peas, beans, radicchio, summer squash...
August	Swiss chard, broccoli, varieties of cabbage (green, Savoy, cauliflower, kohlrabi), cucumber, shallots, fennel, herbs, peas, beans, radicchio, summer squash, pepper, tomato, garlic, eggplant, beet, carrot, potato, white turnip (rabiola), ground cherry, corn, onion, cantaloup...
September	Swiss chard, garlic, eggplant, beet, carrot, cucumber, ground cherry, varieties of cabbage, broccoli, fennel, onion, potato, rabiola, tomato, herbs, pepper, kale, celery, celery root, red cabbage, fall squash, watermelon, leek...
October	Garlic, beet, carrot, celery root, varieties of cabbage, winter squash, kale, onion, leek, potato, rabiola, turnip, sunchoke and parsnip.



## Fall: Begin Receiving Produce from the Farm and Start Cooking!

September, October and November

### Step 8: Contact the farm again and begin receiving your supply of produce

The key to a successful partnership is good communication between your group and the farm:

- Contact the farm at the end of summer (end of August, beginning of September). Be sure that both you and the farmer have the same understanding of how the supply method is supposed to work (see Page 21 for a list of points to discuss).
- Get an update from the farm: the varieties and quantities of vegetables may have changed, or the farm may even have some unexpected surpluses!
- Place your first order.
- Throughout the supply period, contact your farm whenever you have questions you need clarified.



**To Do!** Use the blank sheet on the following page to assess your vegetable purchases during the supply period with the farm. What vegetables are available from the farm? What vegetables can you replace with the vegetables that are available from the farm? Make photocopies of the sheet and complete it with your group.

### A Diversity of Collective Kitchens

Since they were created, collective kitchens have become diversified. There are now groups that respond to special needs. These include multi-ethnic, vegetarian, baby food, health food and weight loss collective kitchens, and of course, ecological collective kitchens using local, farm fresh produce!





## Step 9: Cook to Your Heart's Content and Savour the Results!

The following are some of the recipes for meals cooked by collective kitchen groups using seasonal vegetables from their ecological farms!

Some groups prepared thematic dishes centred on a seasonal vegetable for the purpose of making preserves during the fall.



### Quebec Tomato Sauce

Recipe from the Signée-femmes collective kitchen, Centre de femmes, during the period when there was an abundance of tomatoes - Provides 20 portions

- 5 lbs. of tomatoes
- 4 cans (5 oz.) of tomato paste
- 1 sweet green pepper
- 2/3 cup of celery
- 2/3 cup of onions
- 2 bay leaves
- 1/2 tsp. of garlic powder
- 1/4 cup of sugar (or honey)
- 2 tbsp. of coarse salt
- 1/2 tsp. of pepper
- Blanch and peel tomatoes
- Finely chop vegetables
- Simmer 1 hour over low heat



### Ratatouille

Recipe cooked by Aum Bio collective kitchen, Regroupement des cuisines collectives du Grand Plateau, during period when zucchinis were in abundance - Provides 4 portions

- 1 large onion
- 1 sweet green pepper
- 1 clove of garlic
- 2 celery stalks
- 1/2 package of sliced mushrooms
- 1 grated eggplant
- 2 zucchinis cut into small cubes
- 1 large can of tomatoes
- 1 1/2 cups of cooked rice
- 1 cup of mozzarella cheese
- Salt, pepper, thyme and marjoram, to taste
- Brown onion, celery, pepper and mushrooms
- Add eggplant and season
- Add crushed tomatoes
- Simmer 30 minutes and add zucchinis
- Cook another 5 minutes
- Place rice on bottom of oven dish, add mixture and spread cheese on top
- Cook au gratin



## Mother Hubbard Pie



Recipe from the educational kitchens, Centre de ressources familiales du Haut-Saint-Laurent, during autumn season when fall squash was in abundance - Provides 6 portions

- 2 tsps. of vegetable oil
  - 1 chopped onion
  - 2 chopped celery stalks
  - 2 chopped carrots
  - 1 1/2 lbs. of ground beef
  - 1 tbsp. of flour
  - 1 tsp. of chili powder
  - 1 1/2 tsps. of dried thyme
  - 1 1/2 tsps. of salt
  - 1/2 cup of beef bouillon
  - 3 tbsps. of tomato paste
  - 1 tsp. of Worcestershire sauce
  - 1 cup of kernel corn
  - 2 tbsps. of fresh parsley, chopped
  - 5 cups of squash purée (best varieties: hubbard, buttercup, butternut, delicata and acorn)
  - 1 tsp. of pepper
- Heat oil in saucepan. Add onion, celery and carrots, and sauté over medium heat about 8 minutes, until vegetables are tender
  - Add beef, flour, chili powder, thyme and 1 tsp. of salt
  - Cook 5 minutes stirring until pink hue disappears
  - Add beef bouillon, tomato paste and Worcestershire sauce. Bring to boil
  - Reduce heat and simmer 5 minutes until thickens
  - Add corn and parsley
  - Place in mold, 11" x 7"
  - Mix in purée, remaining salt, and pepper. Spread purée over beef mix
  - Cook in oven about 20 minutes at 350° F

### Squash purée:

- 3 lbs. of squash (12 cups) gives 4 cups of purée
- Cut squash in two lengthwise, and place in casserole (cut side up)
- Add 1 inch of water, cook in oven 30 to 60 minutes at 400° F until tender
- Drain and let dry out. Remove cooked shell and make purée



Louise Lefebvre, educational kitchens, Centre de ressources familiales du Haut-Saint-Laurent, spreading squash purée made with produce from their ecological farm onto beef and corn mix of Mother Hubbard pie, a kind of shepherd's pie with squash replacing the potatoes. Tasty!





## No Antibiotics or Growth Hormones in Organic Meat

We consume too many antibiotics through the medications we take and through those put in the food of the animals we eat. Livestock raised ecologically, on the other hand, are fed naturally and given no antibiotics or growth hormones.

## Step 10: Evaluate Your Project

Discuss your project in your group and share your opinions and ideas with your farmer.

 **To Do!** Photocopy and complete the project evaluation sheet on the following page with your group.

## Step 11: Do You Want to Continue?

Some farms offer winter vegetables. If you're interested, talk to your farm about it. If winter supply not possible, tell your farmer that you're interested in resuming the supply agreement next year.



## Participant Testimonial

“I am delighted to be part of a collective kitchen with a commitment to total health as can be seen through its use of organic products purchased from local farmers. I have a high regard for the farmers’ efforts to protect the environment through the farming practices they employ. It’s reassuring to know that there are people like them who take care of us and of our planet. It’s important to encourage them and to follow their example.”

Louise Bellefeuille, participant,  
Signée-Femmes collective kitchen,  
Centre de femmes, Rivière-Rouge, Laurentians.





## Project Evaluation Sheet - Questions to Help You Evaluate Your Partnership with a Local Ecological Farm

Name of Group: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

What aspects of the partnership worked well?	
What did not work as well?	
What improvements could be made to our project?	
How did our group benefit from this project?	
How did our participants benefit from this project?	
Are we willing to continue the project over the winter or next year?	
Do we want to use more vegetables from the farm?	



# Closing Words

Not so long ago, every Quebecer knew a farmer. It might have been our uncle, grandfather or neighbour. But today changes to the agriculture and food systems have distanced us from our food source, from farmers and from farming.

This project, we believe, has empowered the members of the participating collective kitchens to experience a closer, more rewarding relationship with the food they eat, the food supply system and the farmers who grow their food. By strengthening this connection, we are building food autonomy because we are creating a solid foundation on which we can act collectively and take solidarity-based action toward the betterment of our communities and the promotion of sustainable development.

It is for this reason that Québec Collective Kitchens Association and Équiterre decided to encourage and help collective kitchens establish partnerships with local ecological farms. Please feel free to contact us should you have any questions.

**Enjoy your food and your eco-solidarity!**

## References Cited:

- 1 Worthington, V. "Nutritional Quality of Organic Versus Conventional Fruits, Vegetables and Grains". *The Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine*, Vol. 7, No 2, 2001, p. 161-173.
- 2 Asami et al. "Comparison of the Total Phenolic and Ascorbic Acid Content of Freeze-Dried and Air-Dried Marionberry, Strawberry, and Corn Grown Using Conventional, Organic, and Sustainable Agricultural Practices". *Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry*, 51, 2003, p. 1237-1241.
- 3 John Last et Konia Trouton. *Taking Our Breath Away: The Health Effects of Air Pollution and Climate Change*, David Suzuki Foundation, Vancouver. May 1999, p. 55.
- 4 Halweil, B. "Home Grown: The Case For Local Food in A Global Market", *Worldwatch Paper*, USA, No. 163, November 2002. p. 6.
- 5 Standing Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development. *Pesticides: Making the Right Choice for the Protection of Health and the Environment*. House of Commons, Ottawa, Canada, May 2000, p. 57.
- 6 Monica Moore, "Hidden Dimensions of Damage: Pesticides and Health", *Fatal Harvest*, Washington, Covelo and London, Island Press, 2002, p. 256, in Laure Waridel, *L'envers de l'assiette et quelques idées pour la remettre à l'endroit*, Montreal, Éditions Écosociété, 2003, p 173.

