



# Getting Started: A Guide to Sourcing B.C. Food in Kindergarten to Grade 12 School Food Programs



# Acknowledgements

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- Ministry of Agriculture and Food

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# Introduction

## About this Guide

The Ministry of Agriculture and Food is working with the Ministry of Education and Child Care and partners to incorporate Feed BC into new and expanded Kindergarten to Grade 12 (K-12) school food programs as part of the province's [Feeding Futures Program](#).

This Feed BC guide is designed to provide school districts, schools, and food program delivery partners across British Columbia (B.C.) with information and resources to support the use of B.C. food in school food programs, with a focus on sourcing B.C. foods. Specifically, this guide:

- Introduces the Feed BC program including a recommended definition of B.C. food and targets;
- Offers tips for sourcing B.C. foods and increasing their use over time;
- Highlights commonly available, everyday B.C. foods that can be incorporated into programs and menus; and,
- Showcases local food successes and inspirations from school food programs across B.C.

This guide is for adults involved in developing, coordinating and/or delivering school food programs across B.C. with the responsibility for food sourcing or purchasing decisions or oversight. It is intended to support districts at different stages of school food program development and delivery to increase use of B.C. food incrementally as school food programs grow in capacity.

## About Feed BC

Feed BC is a provincial government initiative, led by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food, to encourage, inspire and support a shift to more B.C. food in public institutions. Feed BC already works with 20 post-secondary institutions, six health authorities, and correctional facilities to incorporate B.C. foods.



Photo credit:  
Flourish! School Food Society

Feed BC partners with public institutions to work towards spending 30% of their total food expenditures on B.C. food over time and build local food initiatives and partnerships based on interests.

More B.C. food in school food programs:

- ✿ Grows communities and the provincial food system,
- ✿ Grows a stable school food market for farmers and food processors and,
- ✿ Increases student access to, and knowledge of, local food and food systems.

## Incorporating B.C. food into school food programs

There are many ways in which B.C. food can be incorporated into school programs. Below are some examples of how some schools across B.C. are bringing B.C. food into their food programs:



### Grab n' Go

In-season apples, pears, snap peas, cherry tomatoes, as well as individual dairy products or juice; other grab n' go options may include locally prepared items such as sandwiches, yogurt parfait, and granola bars.



### Assemble-and-serve

Salad bar programs (e.g., [Huband Park Elementary salad bar program](#)) or cold sandwich programs – in-season B.C. salad greens, carrots, onions, dressings, hummus, eggs, cheese, and bread.



### Cooked-from-Scratch

Soup programs (e.g., [Healthy Student Meal Program](#)) or Culinary Arts and Foods programs (e.g., [Ravenous café at Royal Bay Secondary School](#)) – wide range of B.C. ingredients such as produce, dairy, eggs and meats.



### External Food Providers

Food prepared by a third-party business and delivered to schools. (e.g., [Flourish!](#)) – wide range of B.C. ingredients such as local produce, B.C. dairy, eggs, meats, prepared soups, pasta, and baked goods.

## What is B.C. Food?

Various definitions of “local food” exist. “Local” can refer to a distance radius from where food is grown, a food shed, a regional district, or other geographical indicators. The terms “B.C. food” and “local food” are synonymous and can be used interchangeably within the context of this guide.

Feed BC has worked with public sector institutions to develop a recommended definition for a B.C. food for public institutions in B.C. to support the alignment of common local food goals and to enable consistent across different types of public institutions.

### **Feed BC defines a B.C. food as a final product that is produced and/or processed within British Columbia.**

A B.C. produced food refers to raw food product that is grown, caught, harvested or raised in the province. A B.C. food that is processed refers to a product that has undergone activity such as physical alternations (e.g., cutting, shredding), extending the shelf life (e.g., freezing, drying), or combining ingredients (e.g., mixing, baking) to make a new product for the purposes of sales and distribution. For more specifics on these activities see [Appendix A](#).

#### **B.C. food:**

- ✓ Tofu processed and packaged in B.C.
- ✓ Fruit from California that is washed, sliced, and packaged in B.C.
- ✓ Bread, muffins or cookies mixed and baked in a B.C. bakery, grocery store or other commercial facility, even if made with ingredients from outside of B.C.
- ✓ Grab n’ go sandwiches made in a commercial facility in B.C.

#### **Not a B.C. food:**

- ✗ Beef that is raised, processed and frozen in Alberta, and packaged into smaller boxes in B.C.
- ✗ Apples from Washington that are not sliced, prepackaged, or processed in any other way in B.C.
- ✗ All foods prepared and provided by a local catering service are not considered B.C. foods by default\*.

**\*Note:** If schools or districts use a caterer or other external food provider for school food services that purchase food products on behalf of the school, the definition for B.C. food applies to all foods purchased by that service provider.



# Why B.C. Food?

B.C. food in K-12 school programs has many benefits for students, schools, and communities.



## Strengthening the local food system

Sourcing from B.C. food producers and processors can create local business growth opportunities and jobs. Working with local food businesses may provide opportunities to adapt or customize food items for school food programs. By growing community networks, schools may improve resilience in the case that global supply chains are disrupted.



## Building the local economy

Every dollar spent on B.C. food in schools and other public institutions brings a **two-fold value** to B.C.'s economy. By cultivating community partnerships and connections with local food suppliers, school food programs build a foundation for growing local communities and economies.



## Increasing students' food systems knowledge and connections

Purchasing from local business can foster relationships between schools and farmers, processors, fishers/ranchers, traditional gatherers, and Knowledge Holders who in turn can offer valuable educational opportunities for students about food skills, food systems, climate and culture.

### Did you know?

**1 in every 40** British Columbians are employed by the province's food and agriculture sector.

Programs such as **Farm to School (F2S)** and **BC Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation** that bring local food education into schools can provide hands-on learning experiences that foster food literacy.

More B.C. food in schools brings benefits to **1579** schools and **over 600,000** students.

For every \$1 million a school spends on B.C. food, there are **13** new food and food systems jobs, **\$598K** in new annual wages, and **\$858K** in new provincial GDP contributed to the local economy.

There are over **3,000** food and beverage manufacturing establishments in B.C.

Food and beverage manufacturing is the **second-largest** processing sector in the province in the terms of sales.

# Tips for Sourcing B.C. Food for School Food Programs

The following tips are intended to help school food programs get started on sourcing B.C. food and may be applied across a range of program delivery partners, food offerings and suppliers across the province.

School districts and schools are encouraged to begin by working with existing school food partners to identify and purchase B.C. foods, and then to learn and develop strategies to continue to incorporate more B.C. food over time.

## 1. Ask your existing food suppliers for B.C. food

Food suppliers such as a food service distributor and grocery stores often carry a range of B.C. food products, but it is not always visible to the buyer or flagged in ordering systems. These businesses are often responsive to buyers' requests for local products and are often willing to help find new products if they know there is demand.

Ask your food suppliers about what B.C. food options they have available and check back often as their inventory of B.C. foods may change over time, seasonally or with new product offerings. If you work with an external food provider or community partner, ask them what they are using that meets the definition of a B.C. food, and what other foods they may be able to bring in from B.C., specific to your local region or in response to a cultural or dietary preference in your school food programs.



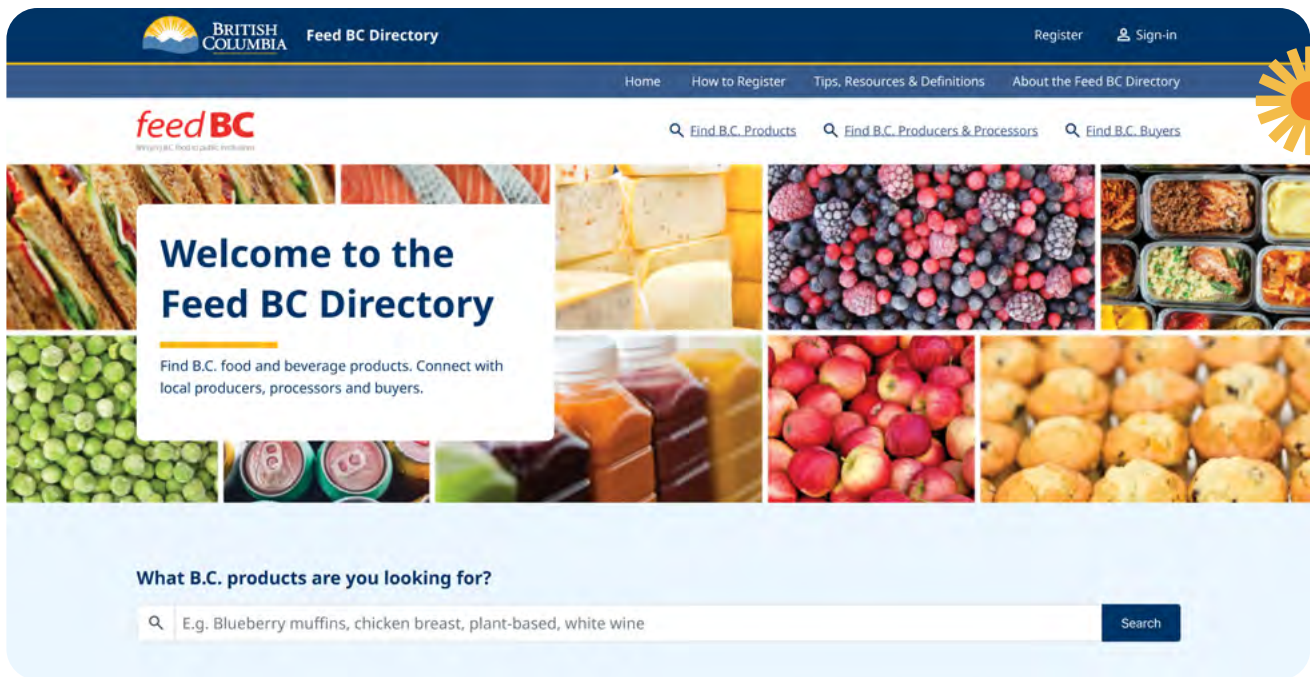
### Do B.C. food costs more?

The cost of B.C. produced and/or processed foods can vary depending on many factors, and it's not always the case that a B.C. product is more expensive. Food prices are often product and region specific and can be influenced by seasonality, scale of production, transportation, global economic conditions, and the cost of living in a region. Typically wholesale, direct, larger volumes purchasing (e.g., bulk or joint purchasing) lowers food prices as compared to purchasing from retail.

B.C. is known for its diverse food and agriculture sector and choosing to buy B.C. food benefits local communities, economies and keeps B.C.'s agri-food industry viable.







2. Check the [Feed BC Directory](#), a searchable B.C. food and beverage product database to connect institutional and commercial buyers with B.C. producers and processors

The Feed BC Directory can help school food buyers source B.C. food by providing information on hundreds of products including specifications, packaging, case sizes, delivery options, food safety and other certifications.

School food programs may wish to connect with B.C. food businesses from the Directory directly, or work with their school food program delivery partners such as food service distributors and external food services providers responsible for food product procurement on new B.C. food opportunities.

3. Engage with your community to explore what is available in your region to help source B.C. food

- Explore if there is a food hub or commissary kitchen in your region that could be used to source, prepare, aggregate, or distribute B.C. food for your school food program. Commercial food hubs offer shared access to food and beverage processing facilities and equipment and may be able to help school food programs to build partnerships and connections that support food needs and local food interests of schools. Find more information on the Ministry of Agriculture and Foods [BC Food Hub Network](#).

*SD83 (North Okanagan-Shuswap) is working in collaboration with the Zest food hub. Learn more here. [Learn more here.](#)*



- Reach out to local farmers, food processors, farmers markets, and retailers to explore direct or wholesale purchasing opportunities.
- Check out the [Young Agrarian UMap](#) to identify local farms that may be in your area and more detailed farm maps for your region may have been developed by a local food or agriculture organization (e.g., [Powell River Farmers' Agricultural Institute](#)).

*SD48 (Sea to Sky) is purchasing their food from a school farm in addition to local farmers. [Learn more here.](#)*

- Explore if there are other local community food organizations active in your region that could help with local food purchasing and delivery. Try reaching out to a local food policy council or food network, search online for a local maps such as Vancouver Coastal Health's [Food Asset Map](#), or connect with your local public health dietitian.

*SD71 (Comox Valley) works with a community food organization to help with sourcing and delivery of local food. [Learn more here.](#)*

- Keep learning from other schools and districts in your region to share knowledge about school food programs and different ways to connect locally to B.C. producers and processors, community food resources and organizations.

*Organize school field trips by identifying local farms in your region and reaching out to them through [Farm Explorer BC](#).*





## Building relationships with farmers and other local food businesses

- Schedule a visit to sample products and learn about: what they are producing or processing; do they offer bulk or wholesale pricing; when (or if) they offer deliveries and when orders need to be placed; and, to explore opportunities for student field trip.
- Consider ways to support your food program staff and partners to understand the nature of working with local food businesses such as including them in visits, touring or sampling. Incorporating flexibility in menus or recipes can also help limit frustrations when changes or challenges occur in production.
- Understand that when working with local food businesses, in particular small to medium scale, there may be uncontrollable factors that may impact their operations and consistency such as severe weather events or supply chain disruptions. Creating relationships with local food businesses may require pre-planning on your school food needs, especially the volumes and timing during the year. Be as flexible and open as possible and develop contingency plans in case you need to adjust.
- Look at a [seasonal chart](#) to understand what is being produced, when and how seasonal foods could be integrated with your school food menu planning. Reaching out to producers in the dormant season (e.g., winter) is often preferred for farmers so that planning can be done for the following season. When working with small to mid-sized farmers, consider ‘piloting’ a direct purchase relationship to help you iron out any challenges before scaling up.



Photo credit:  
Sprout Kitchen Food Hub

#### 4. Look for the Buy BC Logo



If schools in your district purchases foods from retail stores, look for the Buy BC symbol on products or on in-store signage. The Buy BC program helps B.C. producers and businesses increase the visibility of their local food and beverage products in retail stores. While many B.C. businesses including producers, processors, farmers markets, and retailers are using and promoting Buy BC; it's important to note that not all businesses with B.C. foods will have the logo. To learn more, visit [BuyBC website](#).

B.C. food purchasing may provide opportunity for students to explore the curricular competencies and content of the BC Curriculum while making explicit connection to their core competence ([communication, critical thinking, personal and social](#)).

For example, when bringing local foods into K-12 schools, there may be several [curricular connections](#) in a variety of learning areas that additionally support local food literacy.

*Recognizing that small businesses are vital parts of the local community, the Board of Education of School District No. 46 (Sunshine Coast) will solicit bids from local vendors whenever possible. [See SD46 \(Sunshine Coast\)'s local purchasing policy](#).*

[View this example of the local food integration into the school program at Haida Gwaii.](#)





# Incorporating Everyday B.C. Foods into School Food Programs and Menus

British Columbia has a range of everyday food and beverage products that are widely available, price competitive, and commonly used in food service. Assessing whether your school food program is currently using or could incorporate the following everyday food products may allow you to identify simple ways to increase use of B.C. food in programs and menus.

Common Everyday Foods Available from B.C.	
 <p><b>Protein</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chicken, turkey, eggs, fish</li> <li>• Tofu, tempeh, plant-based patties</li> <li>• Fresh or frozen soup</li> <li>• Prepared sandwiches</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Entrees containing commercially battered and/or breaded products (e.g., chicken nuggets, chicken strips) and/or processed meats (e.g., deli meats and hot dogs)</i></li> </ul>
 <p><b>Baked Goods</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bread, tortillas, naan</li> <li>• <i>Cookies, muffins</i></li> </ul>
 <p><b>Dairy and Alternatives</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Milk, yogurt, cheese</li> <li>• Non-dairy/plant-based yogurt and cheese, fortified plant-based beverages</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Yogurt drinks</i></li> </ul>
 <p><b>Fruit and Vegetables</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fresh and frozen berries and fruit (apples, peaches, blueberries)</li> <li>• Greenhouse and field vegetables (tomatoes, peppers, cucumber, lettuce, squash)</li> <li>• Root crops (carrots, beets, potatoes, onions)</li> </ul>
 <p><b>Grocery</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dry goods including flour, oats, sugar</li> <li>• Snacks such as granola bars, dried fruit and nut mixes</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Honey, jam, sauces</i></li> </ul>
 <p><b>Beverages</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sparkling water, bottled water</li> <li>• <i>Fruit juice</i></li> </ul>

Items to “serve infrequently or in smaller serving sized,” are italicised to align with provincial resources for creating healthy food environments.

## Review school food program menus regularly to explore opportunities to feature, trial or incorporate more everyday B.C. foods.

### For example:

- Incorporate common B.C. everyday foods such as chicken or tofu in a stir fry, or sandwiches.
- Use prepared products such as soups, samosas, or veggie-based burgers to decrease in-house labour costs.
- Look for opportunities to use more readily available lower grade B.C. products (e.g., Grade B frozen berries) in muffins or smoothies to reduce food costs.
- Create menu items that showcase local ingredients (e.g., squash soup, or salmon pilaf). Check out [these recipes](#) from BC Agriculture in the Classroom for inspiration.
- Incorporate dishes that allow you to take advantage of [seasonal products](#) when they are lower in cost (e.g., seasonal vegetables as a side dish, a daily soup using local ingredients).
- New B.C. food companies and innovative food products are coming on the market all the time and may be suitable for your school food program. Ask food suppliers regularly for B.C. food products, or for lists such as new items, seasonal options, and fresh sheets.

Meat, dairy, and baked goods are often used in large volumes in school food programs and have many B.C. food product options to select from.

Explore ways to incorporate Indigenous foods. Together with Indigenous chefs, Indigenous foods educators, and government partners, Feed BC is working to support public institutions to incorporate Indigenous foods.



Feed BC resources are intended to grow understanding and respect for Indigenous foods, cultures, histories, and how colonization has affected Indigenous food ways. They provide guidance and support to public institutions including schools on creating food-related facilities, programs, and services that are more inclusive and respectful of distinct Indigenous foods and food cultures across British Columbia. See Feed BC resource [Cooking in Two Worlds](#) for more information.



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School District No. 39 (Vancouver) states that the district's vision for feeding students at school is for “breakfast, snack, lunch and after school food programs [to] include as much local food as possible, including food grown in school food growing spaces, connect to local food businesses, harvesters, and processors, as well as use recipes that represent the cultural communities of Vancouver.”

# Examples of School Food Programs Incorporating B.C. Foods

Below are inspiring stories from school food programs across B.C. that are working hard to source more B.C. food, each narrating their experiences in their own words. These programs:

- Leverage existing partners and resources in their communities to source and/or deliver B.C. food;
- Source widely available, everyday B.C. foods like produce, meat, dairy, and/or eggs;
- Streamline purchasing from local producers and processors for multiple schools or the whole district to coordinate sourcing B.C. food;
- Have established policies or visioning documents that communicate their objectives regarding local food values and goals, community engagement, culture, food literacy and sustainability; and,
- Aspire to continue growing their school food program to include more B.C. food.

**Note:** These examples do not detail *all* food programs happening within these districts and do not include all school food programs in B.C. working hard on sourcing more B.C. food. Instead, this section highlights a range of programs focused on sourcing B.C. food to help inspire ideas and opportunities for other school food programs to consider.







## Flourish! Hot Lunch Program

**District:** School District No. 62 (Sooke, Vancouver Island)

**Food Supplier:** Flourish! School Food Society (non-profit partner)

**School food offering:** Grab n' Go & Cooked from Scratch

SD62 (Sooke) contracts the Flourish! School Food Society to run a school meal program for grades K-12 across 17 schools. Flourish! prepares 455 from-scratch cooked hot lunches and 100 snacks or breakfasts per day at a food distribution centre. Hot lunches consist of a hot entrée and cold salad. The snacks and breakfasts are simpler grab-and-go items. The food is transported from a warehouse location to participating schools each day, with the entrees delivered hot. Each school has a food coordinator (CUPE staff) who receives 1 hour per day to serve lunch.

**Sourcing B.C. Food:** All meat is sourced from Berryman Brothers, who raise, butcher, process, and package meat in the Victoria region. Vegetables are ordered from the Island Vegetable Cooperative Producers Association and the South Island FarmHub, a local produce aggregation and distribution center. Some additional vegetables and dry goods are ordered through Red Barn Market, a local grocer. Flourish! also utilizes free rescued foods from the Mustard Seed/Food Share Network, which operates in the same facility as Flourish! Having access to rescued food allows for more funds to be spent on local foods.



**Flourish! School Food Society - Mission is to support:** efficient, nourishing school food services; hands-on food literacy programming, and; development of nourishing food environments in schools.

**Flourish provides three key services to schools:**

1. Fun, nourishing meals. Flourish! creates diverse, seasonal and youth friendly menus, and prepares and distributes hundreds of scratch cooked meals and snacks daily to schools across the region.
2. Food aggregation and distribution. Flourish! works collaboratively to support schools in efficiently accessing diverse food streams, with a focus on rescued, farm grown, and locally produced products. They partner with diverse local organizations to help connect school communities with the food resources they need to do more with food in house.
3. Food literacy. Flourish! supports school-based staff in integrating food learning across the curriculum and highlights good practice for school food programming and pedagogy.



## Soupermeals Program

**District:** School District No. 83 (North Okanagan-Shuswap)

**Food Supplier:** Shuswap Food Action Society (non-profit partner)

**School food offering:** Cooked from Scratch

SD83 (North Okanagan-Shuswap) runs a program called 'Soupermeals,' which is offered in 14 schools and universally available in 10 schools. The program feeds 350 students per day. The schools have limited capacity and infrastructure for cooking and transforming raw ingredients into food, so the soup is made by a local community partner, the Shuswap Food Action Society (SFAS), in commercial-scale steam kettles with ingredients sourced from local farmers and producers. The soup is processed by SFAS at a Zest Commercial Food Hub, which is part of the BC Food Hub Network. The soups, along with buns and fruit, are delivered by SFAS volunteers to schools or they are picked up by the Parent Advisory Council (PAC). Soup is served by staff, PAC, or students, depending on the school. The soup thermoses are washed by the school and picked up by SFAS volunteers or staff, who return them to [Zest Commercial Food Hub](#) where they are sanitized and stored.

**Sourcing B.C. Food:** SFAS sources a variety of vegetables, including potatoes, onions, carrots, and others from local farms such as Wildfight Farms, Mara Valley Farms, and Song Hollow Farm. SFAS preserves locally sourced corn and celery by freezing them for future use, given their seasonal availability. They acquire discounted #2 veggies, small apples, and "ugly" vegetables at a discounted price from local farms that retail markets might reject. The bread used in the school meals is baked fresh for every soup day by Inspired Bread.

Chicken, pork, and beef are also purchased from local farms and processed at a local meat processing site, Yankee Flat Meats. SFAS purchased one whole cow for the school year, which was butchered and processed into 5 lb packs of ground beef and stored in the deep freezer in the high school. SFAS can source free chicken bones from local pasture-raised chicken farm, which produces a high-quality broth compared to some commercially made broth options.

**Future Aspirations:** SFAS would like to have their own kitchen space one day, so they don't have to transport ingredients and equipment between sites.

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Our goal is to increase demand for local food and familiarize student taste buds with local flavours. We are trying to make soup "cool" and to build student's appreciation of this economical and nutritious B.C. food option.

– **Serena Caner, School Food Coordinator for School No. 83 (North Okanagan-Shuswap)**



## LUSH Healthy Student Meal Program

**District:** School District No. 71 (Comox Valley)

**Food Supplier:** [LUSH Valley Food Action Society](#) (non-profit partner)

**School food offering:** Grab n' Go & Cooked from Scratch



The Healthy Student Meal Program (HSMP) is offered by SD71 (Comox Valley)'s Indigenous Education department, in partnership with LUSH Valley Food Action Society (LUSH). Each week, LUSH volunteers pack large 'meal kits' based on a rotation of 10 meals and snack recipes. The meal kits are then distributed by volunteer drivers to the 20 participating schools across the region. At each school, Indigenous Support Workers and students prepare and serve the meals to students in need. The program served an estimated 24,000 meals to over 2,000 students during the 2022-2023 school year. Through this model of aggregation and distribution of local food, LUSH also supports 4 regional salad bar programs and provides Good Food Boxes (are a bag of locally sourced fresh fruit, vegetables, and eggs) to 300 SD71 (Comox Valley) households once every 4 weeks. You can follow the HSMP program from farm to plate [here](#).

**Sourcing B.C. Food:** [LUSH](#) is a non-profit community food hub working with over 25 Comox Valley regional farms to aggregate local fruit, vegetables, eggs, meat and other ingredients for the weekly meal and snack program. With their walk-in cooler and small warehouse, they store root crops, squash, and fruit well into the school year. They source local greens, sprouts, eggs, and meat year-round as well as some greenhouse crops (e.g., peppers, tomatoes, and cucumbers) through most of the season. When this isn't possible, they source B.C. food through local third-party distributors, Islands West and Red Barn Market.

**Aspirations:** LUSH has built a commercial kitchen at their building and is in the process of upgrading ventilation and processing equipment to increase capacity to provide both lightly processed (chopped veggies and fruits for snacks and meals) as well as fully cooked meals and dehydrated meals in large volumes to schools and other community partners.



**LUSH VALLEY**

## School District 42's School Food Program

**District:** School District No. 42 (Maple Ridge & Pitt Meadows)

**Food Supplier:** Simply Foods (third-Party caterer); Humble Roots (local café); Salvation Army (community non-profit); and CEED Centre Society (community non-profit)

**School food offering:** Cooked from scratch and Grab n' Go

SD42 (Maple Ridge & Pitt Meadows) offers a mix of universal, low-cost, and free meals to students 5 days a week in all elementary schools. Lunches are offered on a rotating basis from: Simply Foods, a third-party catering provider; Humble Roots, a local cafe with strong local food values, who serves 704 lunches a week; and the Salvation Army, a community non-profit. Together with CEED Centre Society, a community non-profit, SD42 (Maple Ridge & Pitt Meadows) also purchases 62 Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) boxes with fresh produce aggregated from local farms to distribute to the schools.

**Sourcing B.C. Food:** SD42 (Maple Ridge & Pitt Meadows) chose Simply Foods to provide their catered meals because they use high quality distributors with excellent traceability, like Saputo and Terra Foods, to source their ingredients. Humble Roots crafts all meals from scratch, including homemade sauces and dressings, featuring local, seasonal produce and ethical protein sources. All local produce grown for the CSA program is 100% B.C. grown.



## Howe Sound Secondary Cafeteria Program

**District:** School District No. 48 (Sea to Sky)

**Food Supplier:** Howe Sound School Farm

**School food offering:** Cooked from Scratch

Howe Sound Secondary School (HSS) offers lunch from their cafeteria four days per week, serving 40-70 meals each day. Meals are prepared by the cafeteria food classes where students set the menus. These meals are increasing the amount of student-grown food HSS is purchasing from their own **school farm**. This school farm was developed in partnership with community non-profits (Squamish Climate Action Network and Farm to School BC) and consists of quarter acre production space to support hands-on learning with students from Howe Sound Secondary as well as a nearby elementary school.

In addition to the cafeteria program, HSS offers subsidized Good Food Boxes made up of produce grown at the school farm to families requesting additional support during the summer months.

**Sourcing B.C. Food:** SD48 (Sea to Sky) has a school meal coordinator position as well as a food committee that helps direct purchasing decisions. A Farm Studies elective class at HSS welcomes about 20 students for 7 hours/week to help with farm activities such as planting, harvesting, washing, and selling produce to the school for the cafeteria program to process into lunches. In addition to the school farm, HSS is purchasing from B.C. farmers, thereby shortening the supply chain, and helping teach students about integrating seasonal foods into meal planning.

**Aspirations:** Squamish CAN is working to support SD48 (Sea to Sky) to integrate food from the school farm into multiple school food programs across the district.

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Choosing B.C. food products is a win-win for both the food providers and growers as well for the students enjoying it. When it comes to feeding B.C. students it makes sense that they can learn about what grows or can be harvested on the lands and the waters season to season. As the B.C. school meal programs get established, integrating B.C. food as a priority through setting up effective systems of sourcing and tracking will have a large impact on all our community members.

- **Krystle tenBrink, Executive Director Squamish CAN (Climate Action Network), partner of School District No. 48 (Sea to Sky)**



**Squamish CAN**

Climate Action Network

# Appendix

## Feed BC Definitions of B.C. Food

Feed BC has worked with B.C. public sector institutions to develop a recommended definition for a B.C. food to support the alignment of common local food goals and enable consistency across different types of public institutions and their supply chain partners.

### Definitions

**B.C. food:** A final product produced and/or processed within British Columbia.

**B.C. produced:** A raw food product that is grown, caught, harvested, or raised in British Columbia.

**B.C. processed:** A final product that has undergone one of the following activities performed in a commercial food and/or beverage manufacturing facility located in B.C., for the purposes of sales and distribution: general physical alterations, extending shelf life, and combining ingredients to make a new product.

1. General physical alterations: grinding beef, milling wheat, crushing tomatoes, shredding cheese, chopping cucumbers, etc. and/or
2. Extending shelf life: freezing, canning, drying, pickling, smoking, fermenting, etc. and/or
3. Combining ingredients to make a new product: baking muffins, making pizza, blending juice, mixing salad greens, etc.

Not considered food processing: cleaning, washing, bagging, packaging and/or wrapping, unless combined with one of the three activities above.

### Other Considerations and Conditions:

- The use of B.C.-produced ingredients in B.C.-processed foods is encouraged wherever possible.
- The definition of B.C. processed food applies to the final stage of processing only, due to operational challenges of tracking the many different steps of the supply chain, particularly for multi-ingredient, processed foods.

**Note:** While all prepackaged foods in Canada are required to be labelled with the name and principal place of business of the company responsible for the product, this location is not necessarily where the product is prepared or processed (and some businesses have multiple locations for processing different product types). Buyers interested in understanding a food product's last point of production or processing in accordance with the Feed BC B.C. food definition, should inquire directly with the business if this is unclear on the label.







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Bringing B.C. food to public institutions

## Getting Started: A Guide to Sourcing B.C. Food in Kindergarten to Grade 12 School Food Programs

