Cultivating Cooks is a classroom based gardening and cooking program that connects students with local chefs, community gardeners and other local food producers. The overall goal is to get kids enthusiastic about “all things green”- understanding how they too can become “green garden stewards” both at school and at home. Teachers are actively involved in the process and have an opportunity to partake alongside the students; learning about healthy food systems and sustainable food practices by engaging in hands-on activities.

The Cultivating Cooks program will allow students to understand more about where our food comes from, identify a wide variety of produce through taste testing and cooking, learn why local food is important, and how to make healthy food choices. Students have an opportunity to tend to the school garden, help grow plants and crops and then cook with the foods they harvest. Farmers and Chefs have an opportunity to engage with the community in which they live and further support and encourage good food sustainability through these vital connections with schools, students and their families. Children learn and are inspired to grow their own food in their “urban center” and also create important connections with community leaders - all the while having fun!
**How does it work?**

Workshops can be booked individually or as a series to allow the students to get a greater understanding of the whole food system and get significant hands on cooking and gardening experience.

Our workshops run from 60-90 minutes depending on time available and the type of workshop being run.

Each workshop can accommodate up to 25 students and can be tailored to meet the needs of all students from kindergarten all the way to high school and beyond! Each workshop features different subjects surrounding healthy food systems. Teachers and parent volunteers participate with their students in discussion, hands on activities and classroom extensions to help keep engagement strong between workshops and at home.

Our workshops are fully catered to your setting and include the necessary equipment, recipes, ingredients and of course trained professional chefs, gardeners, nutritionists and beekeepers ready to share their knowledge and experience.

A quick questionnaire will help us put together a unique set of workshops that are tailored to your classrooms specific financial and educational goals.
Compost and Waste

Students will learn about the importance and benefits of a sustainable and environmentally friendly food system. Students will be relating their gardening, cooking and food choices in their lives to the future of food and how they can incorporate the full food cycle into gardening, cooking and healthy eating every day. Students will learn about how and why to reduce waste and how we can utilize waste through composting.

Seeds and planting

Students will learn how to start a home garden and the process of growing food in an urban setting from seed to fruit or vegetable. Students will get hands on experience learning how to effectively plant seeds for indoor gardening throughout the year. Students will learn guidelines to care and nurture their indoor gardens to yield full grown plants and lettuces. Students will learn the connections between urban agriculture and the beneficial outcomes of growing food in an urban setting.

Roots and Shoots

Students get a good understanding of how a seed grows into a plant. Students will learn the different parts of a plant and the role they play to the plant. Through hands on activities the students will learn to identify the different parts of the plant that can be consumed and cooked. Students will learn some basic food safety and food preparation techniques while preparing a simple salad as a group.

Sharing food knowledge: How to “pass it on”

Pass it on is about friends teaching friends how to cook good food from scratch. Food and cooking knowledge is best taught through hands on learning-person to person. Sharing a recipe or cooking skill is a valuable lesson in leadership, community and teamwork. Sharing, or “passing on” our skills and knowledge for others to use is a fun and important way to keep healthy cooking skills alive and thriving. Students will work in teams with a team leader to create a recipe together. Chefs will lead team leaders through a recipe and then the team leaders will be asked to “pass it on” to their own teams.
Bees, Pollinators and Honey

Students will gain a better understanding of the role of pollinators and their importance to the future of food production. Students will learn about colony collapse disorder and some of the possible causes as well as what we can do to support pollinators. Students will engage in a hands-on honey taste testing as well as pollinator flower seed planting activity and a pollination plant parts group activity.

Chef Recipes

Students will learn how to follow a recipe successfully as well as use their creativity to create unique personalized recipes. Students will be learning the craft of what makes a great dish featuring local and seasonal ingredients and researching new ways to create delicious and healthy meals from scratch. Students will learn the basics of food safety as well as safe and effective equipment handling. Students will gain a good understanding of what role chefs play in our food systems and how they can utilize “chef” skills at home to make healthy and delicious food choices.
**Harvest**

Students will learn about what a fall harvest time can provide for our tables and why this is a time of the year to celebrate Ontario and the amazing products we can grow here. Students will learn about the abundant variety of foods that are available at this time of year and what we can do to make these ingredients last us well into the winter months. Students will learn the value of processing the vegetables they grow in their gardens by preparing a delicious and simple salsa recipe as a team and enjoying it together as a group. Students will also get an introduction to seed saving and a better understanding of why this is important to preserve our heritage plant species. Students will gain hands on experience in seed saving from their gardens.

**Fruits and Vegetables**

Students learn about new fruits and vegetables through examination and learn which parts of the plants are delicious to eat. Students will learn the benefits of eating more fruits and vegetables and some fun ways to prepare them.

**Health and Whole Foods**

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**Creating a Waste-less Lunch**

Students will learn the value of working as a team to create a simple and delicious recipe. Students will be guided by chefs through some basic food preparation skills, kitchen safety, and teamwork in the kitchen. Students will be learning the value of sharing the workload as a team to create something nutritious and delicious to eat. Students will be learning practical cooking skills and meal planning that can help reduce waste in their daily lives from our current food systems.
Healthy Lunches Workshops

These presentations are designed to help parents navigate the lunchbox. Focus will be made on healthy eating, time and money saving strategies as well and learning how to get the most from your groceries. Easy recipes and lunch ideas will be shared with help from chefs and nutritionists and plan for lunches that your kids will enjoy without all the hassle.

Where Does Food Come From?

Students will get a better understanding of where their food comes from. What are the different ways that food ends up on our plates? From seed to supper we will examine all the steps our food takes before ending up in our kitchens. Some of the following key questions about where our food comes from will be examined through discussion, and hands on activities: What types of food come from what parts of the world and what can we grow locally? How can we grow locally? What are the environmental impacts of food production? Students will also learn about some sustainable local food choices they can make in relation to the Canadian seasons.

“Pass it on” – For the whole school!

This workshop is a larger scale version of the “pass it on” theme. This workshop is priced differently and can accommodate up to 8 participating classes and runs throughout the school day. This workshop requires additional planning as well as the use of a large common space- usually the gym. This is a great way to get the whole school familiar and engaged in hands on food literacy.

Parent and child cooking classes

These workshops can be tailored from most of our workshop themes and are designed to get parents actively involved- cooking with their kids! Parents and caregivers will be paired up with their children to prepare a healthy recipe as a team! This workshop structure is geared to get kids helping out in the kitchens at home while honing in on some basic cooking skills and spending some quality time learning together.
What Teachers & Students are Saying about Cultivating Cooks:

“The Cultivating Cooks program has all the ingredients to create a successful learning experience for my students - it has the right blend of hands-on, practical activities about growing and nutrition alongside well-researched learning activities designed to help kids become conscious food consumers. The students have learned so much from their interactions with the chefs, the dietician and the master gardener who have shared their expertise. The learning blends curriculum from science and healthy living with critical thinking and creativity to make good food choices.

I have immensely enjoyed this collaboration and would recommend this program to any class. Cultivating Cooks activities have been springboards to many different conversations and connections in many different classes. Most of all, the students look forward to seeing our Cultivating Cooks friends every two weeks.”

- Mr. MacArthur Millen, Grade 5 Teacher

“Many of my students made recipes at home that they couldn’t wait to tell me about - their favourites were: green goddess dip, granola and apple parfait and garden taco salad.”

“Parents expressed their excitement about the program regularly. I had one student who was eager to learn and discuss his new knowledge with his parents. His parents were impressed that he was actually trying new things!”

“I feel lucky to have been able to be apart of this learning journey with my students last year. They always looked forward to the workshops and couldn’t wait to see what they would be doing. The hands-on stations engaged even my most "difficult" students and always allowed all students to get involved. These workshops are so versatile as they allow cross-curricular connections from language, science, math etc. and promote group work to achieve a common goal. It was a wonderful learning experience for all!”

- Mrs. Lesley Jhan, Grade 2/3 Teacher

What Students are Saying about Cultivating Cooks:

“This year’s Cultivating Cooks has been amazing. I’ve learned how to cook and crop things properly and also have tried so many local foods I didn’t know existed. Cultivating Cooks is helping me eat healthier foods.”

“In the Cultivating Cooks program we learned many ways to perfect our gardens. We constructed new beds for the school garden, a new compost system and learned how to properly compost. We learned how to make a healthy salad and eat whole foods”

“The Cultivating Cooks Program – I could go on forever about how fun it is. The first thing we did was plant a ton of plants, and it was awesome. I loved it and I got to water them every day. We got to redo our garden and now we are learning how to properly compost. This was my favourite year because of Cultivating Cooks. They helped us understand the eco-system better.”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Workshop Description</th>
<th>Price</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1x 90 minute workshop “A la Carte”</td>
<td>$350</td>
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<tr>
<td>3x 90 minute workshops for one classroom</td>
<td>$750</td>
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<td>3x 90 minute workshops for two classrooms consecutively</td>
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<td>10x 90 minute workshops for one classroom (By-weekly)</td>
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<tr>
<td>10x 90 minute workshops for two classrooms consecutively (By-weekly)</td>
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<td>“Pass it on” - A whole school, full day event!</td>
<td>$1200</td>
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<tr>
<td>1x 90 minute parent and child cooking workshops</td>
<td>$350</td>
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<tr>
<td>Better school lunches workshops for parents and caregivers (2 hrs)</td>
<td>$400</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indoor lamp and growing system installation (1 unit)</td>
<td>$75</td>
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<tr>
<td>Installation of an outdoor composting system including a building workshop</td>
<td>$650</td>
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<tr>
<td>Installation of new outdoor raised garden beds (x 6) including soil, seeds, starts, building materials, compost and mulch</td>
<td>$1375</td>
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<tr>
<td>Upgrade and maintenance of existing garden beds (up to 6)</td>
<td>$600</td>
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Indoor Growing Systems and School Garden Connections

The cultivating cooks classroom program is ideal for pairing with Ottawa’s innovative indoor growing systems and growing towers initiatives. Hydroponic growing towers are a great way to showcase the future of sustainable food systems and get students engaged and excited about growing and preparing healthy food. Our classroom cooking and gardening program is designed to pair spaces, outfitted with growing towers, windowsill gardens and outdoor school gardens by utilizing vegetables and presenting a variety of ways for schools and students to utilize these vegetables through cooking workshops.
About the Founders

Anna March is thrilled to be a founding partner of Cultivating Cooks! Anna has been a chef by trade for over 10 years. Since completing the culinary program at Algonquin College, she has been honing her skills developing her craft as a chef all across Canada. She has worked in celebrated restaurants in Ottawa, Montreal, and Vancouver and has returned home to the capital most recently as executive chef at Mariposa Farms as well as executive chef at The Urban Element. Drawing from her experiences working with local farmers, chefs and teaching the public hands on cooking classes, she is developing programming to promote food literacy anywhere she can. With young children of her own she is sure that the need for good food education is greater than ever. She is eager to make positive change in the way kids eat and with the support of her colleagues, partners, community and family, you can expect to see her sharing her passion for real food across as many dinner tables in Ottawa as she can.

Living passionately with the attitude of ‘all things food’, Carley Schelck had always been inspired by the creativity and challenges the hospitality and food industry presents. Carley is the owner and operator of the urban element – a dynamic culinary studio in Ottawa that fosters a passionate team of food professionals who deliver exceptional, unique and one-of-a-kind culinary experiences in an inspiring environment. Upon becoming a mother herself, Carley recognized the need for more good food access in school settings. Carley operates and manages a “garden to cafeteria“ program at Saint Paul University which helps bring from scratch seasonal products into a campus setting. Dedicated to the notion of lifelong learning, education has always remained at the forefront of Carley’s professional and personal path. Carley teaches in the Business Management and Entrepreneurship Program at Algonquin College and mentors graduates transitioning into the business world. Carley is a founding member of The Ottawa School Food Network, a coalition of like-minded individuals motivating change and create impact on various school food initiatives within the Nation’s Capital. Carley’s passion for food and education is realized fully now with the inception of Cultivating Cooks.