

Serving Foods Grown in School Gardens

Produce grown in school gardens approved by PPS Facilities and Asset Management Department (PPS FAM) may be served to students using the following safe food handling procedures to reduce the risk of harmful bacteria:

- All persons harvesting produce will use proper hand washing techniques before and after handling fresh produce.
- Excess dirt and leaves will be removed from produce in the garden area before using the school cafeteria food preparation sinks.
- Harvested produce will be promptly refrigerated or kept on ice in a cooler for safe transport after picking.
- All food-contact surfaces, equipment and utensils such as cutting boards, knives and sinks that are used in the preparation of harvested produce will be washed, rinsed, sanitized and air-dried in the school cafeteria kitchen under the guidance of a certified food handler.
- Wash hands and surfaces often before and during food preparation. Do not cross contaminate clean surfaces with unwashed produce.
- Fresh produce will be washed vigorously under cold running water in a sink that has been cleaned and sanitized. Do not use detergent or soap to wash vegetables or fruit.
- Firm vegetables or fruits with a hard surface should be scrubbed. Softer vegetables and fruits should be gently rubbed and turned while holding under running water.
- Wash all whole fruits and vegetables even if the skin or rind will not be eaten to prevent pathogens from being transferred to the edible part when it is cut.
- Remove the outer leaves of lettuce and cabbage before washing.
- Remove damaged or bruised areas of the vegetables and fruits and discard.
- Label, date and refrigerate any cut fruits and vegetables within two hours of peeling or cutting.
- Discard any cut fresh produce that has been left at room temperature for more than two hours.

PPS Nutrition Services should be contacted at least one week in advance to arrange for use of kitchen to prepare produce as described above.