



Fostering garden- and food-based education in the classroom, cafeteria and community

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GARDEN STATE ON YOUR PLATE TASTINGS RETURN TO PRINCETON'S ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

The Princeton School Gardens Cooperative will once again be bringing their Garden State on Your Plate program to Princeton Public Schools' elementary schools during the 2015-2016 school year. Through the generous support of Princeton University, all four elementary schools will be visited by four different pairs of local chefs and farmers -- with each farmer-chef team focusing on a different local, seasonal produce item. Each chef will offer identical tastings of their local farm item at each school. In support of the tastings, children will learn about each produce item through farm videos produced by Your Town Tube, as well as posters, and garden-based lessons.

Garden State on Your Plate focuses on grades K-5, with farmers and chefs pairing up to demonstrate a single ingredient. The emphasis is on the origins of the farm item, the different ways it can be prepared, and how the flavor can be altered -- both by the chef and the students. Children learn about farming and cooking, and are empowered to personalize their item using seasonings such as spices, herbs and condiments. At last year's tastings, students sampled Swiss chard, mushrooms, asparagus, and radishes.



Jess Niederer of Chickadee Creek Farm, harvesting organic broccoli leaves.

This year, the Princeton School Gardens Cooperative will be working closely with Nutri-Serve Food Management to increase the number of times and ways that students will be given an opportunity to taste each featured produce item. By adding Garden State on Your Plate produce items to the cafeteria lunch offerings, Nutri-Serve will give students repeated exposure to each produce item beyond the chef-led tastings.

Princeton School Gardens Cooperative will also be working with Nutri-Serve to bring garden produce into the cafeteria. With the help of the garden educators at each Princeton public elementary school, Nutri-Serve will prepare garden produce to serve at lunch, giving students the opportunity to taste the fruits (and veggies) of their labor -- offering them a better understanding of the effort and seasonality behind growing real food.

The 2015-2016 Garden State on Your Plate tastings will kick off in October with the chefs from Princeton University Campus Dining preparing organic broccoli leaves from Chickadee Creek Farm in Pennington. November's tastings will be led by Chef Joseph Voller of Eno Terra and Chef Terry Strong of Mediterra. They will be serving beets from Canal Farm in Kingston. The Spring 2016 tastings will be led by Chef Crawford Koeniger of Agricola and Chef Chris Graciano of Witherspoon Grill.

PRINCETON SCHOOL GARDENS COOPERATIVE, INC.

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The Princeton School Gardens Cooperative was established in 2006 to foster garden- and food-based education in the classroom, cafeteria and community. Our goal is that every child graduating from Princeton Public Schools will be able to: grow a salad, read a label; set a table and understand the social nature of mealtimes; cook for themselves and nurture their friends and family; understand the social and environmental implications of food choices; find a mentor if they are interested in exploring a career in food, agriculture, hospitality, or the culinary arts. www.PSGCOOP.org