

# BC School Fruit and Vegetable Nutritional Program

**A Collaborative Program of**  
ActNow BC

**With Funding From**  
BC Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport  
BC Ministry of Education  
BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands

**Administered by**  
BC Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation

**Sourcing and Distribution of BC Fruits and Vegetables**  
Save-On-Foods/PriceSmart Foods/Overwaitea Foods/ Cooper's Foods  
Bulkley Valley Wholesale

**Please Contact:**  
**BC Agriculture in the Classroom Program Office**  
Toll Free 1-866-517-6225 phone    Abbotsford Local Phone Number 604 854-6064  
Fax 1-604-854-6068  
[www.aitc.ca/bc](http://www.aitc.ca/bc)

## Acknowledgements

Thank you to the Advisory Committee for their contributions.

### **Program Implementation Advisory Committee:**

LISA FORSTER-COULL – Provincial Nutritionist, Population Health and Wellness, BC Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport, Victoria BC  
BRENT WARNER – Industry Specialist, AgriTourism / Direct Farm Marketing, BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, Victoria BC  
KEN CORRAINI – Senior Manager, Food Industry Unit, Industry Competitive Branch, BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, Victoria, BC  
HELEN MYERS – Manager, Diversity, Equity and School Health Unit, BC Ministry of Education, Victoria BC  
DWAYNE McCOWAN – Healthy Schools Coordinator, Initiatives Department, BC Ministry of Education, Victoria BC  
LARRY COPELAND – Director, Food Protection Services, Center for Disease Control, Vancouver, BC  
LYNN WILCOTT – Food Safety Specialist, BC Center for Disease Control, Vancouver, BC  
ANTHEA KENNELLY – Community Nutritionist, Community Nutritionists of BC, Courtenay, BC  
GERRY KASTEN – President, BC Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation, Abbotsford, BC  
LINDSAY BABINEAU – Executive Director, BC Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation, Abbotsford, BC  
JULIE DICKSON – Director, Public Relations and Communications, Overwaitea Food Group, Langley, BC  
MARLENE DERGOSOFF – Assistant Superintendent, Saanich School District, Saanich, BC  
BRYNA KOPELOW – Executive Director, Action Schools! BC, Vancouver, BC

### **Program Administrator:**

LINDSAY BABINEAU – Executive Director, BC Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation, Abbotsford, BC

### **Evaluation Consultant:**

PATTI JEAN NAYLOR, PHD – Assistant Professor, School of Physical Education, University of Victoria, BC

### **Informational Materials Writing Committee:**

#### **Lead Writer:**

MARY GALE SMITH, PHD – University of British Columbia/Surrey School District, Vancouver, BC

### **Advisory Committee:**

SHERYL GIUDICI – Community Nutritionist, Interior Health Authority, Kamloops, BC  
GERRY KASTEN – Public Health Community Nutritionist, Fraser Health Authority, Port Moody, BC  
SHANNON HANSFORD – Community Nutritionist, Interior Health Authority, Kamloops, BC  
ARELI HERMANSON – Community Nutritionist, Vancouver Island Health Authority, Victoria, BC  
VICKY PAWLOWSKI – Corporate Dietitian, Capers Community Markets, Vancouver, BC  
SYDNEY MASSEY – Director of Nutrition Education, BC Dairy Foundation, Burnaby, BC  
CAROL ANNE CAULFIELD – Consulting Dietitian, Coquitlam, BC  
HEATHER MCCOLL – Corporate Dietitian, Overwaitea Food Group, Langley, BC  
WENDY MA – Vice-Principal and Grade 2 Teacher, Brentwood Elementary, Saanich, BC  
BRENDA NOWAK – Intermediate Teacher, Dunach Elementary, Abbotsford, BC  
BRENT WARNER – Industry Specialist, AgriTourism / Direct Farm Marketing, BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, Victoria BC  
LINDSAY BABINEAU – Executive Director, BC Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation, Abbotsford, BC

## Table of Contents

<b>Welcome to the BC School Fruit and Vegetable Nutritional Program</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Objectives of the BC School Fruit and Vegetable Nutritional Program</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The Key Messages</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Background</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Role of the In-School Coordinator</b>	<b>3</b>
Duties	3
<b>Keeping Fruits and Vegetables Safe</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Food Allergies in the Nutritional Program</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Product Supply and Distribution</b>	<b>5</b>
Storage and Refrigeration Requirements	6
<b>What To Do With Extra or Returned Fruits and Vegetables?</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Evaluation</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Program Products</b>	<b>8</b>
Plums	8
Pears	8
Cucumbers	8
Apples	8
Tomatoes	9
Carrots	9
Oranges	9
<b>The In-School Coordinator Logs</b>	<b>11</b>
In-School Coordinator Log - Example	12
In-School Coordinator Log	13
<b>Top Ten Questions and Answers</b>	<b>17</b>



## Welcome to the BC School Fruit and Vegetable Nutritional Program

Your school is part of this innovative Program that provides fresh fruit and vegetable snacks to your school.

The BC School Fruit and Vegetable Nutritional Program is part of ActNowBC<sup>1</sup>, an initiative to improve the health of BC children and families. The Program is a first in British Columbia. Similar programs in the UK and US<sup>2</sup> have been very successful and positively received by children, parents and teachers.

The BC School Fruit and Vegetable Nutritional Program is a unique collaboration between ActNow BC and funded through the BC Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport, BC Ministry of Education, and the BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands and is administered by the BC Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation.

## Objectives of the BC School Fruit and Vegetable Nutritional Program

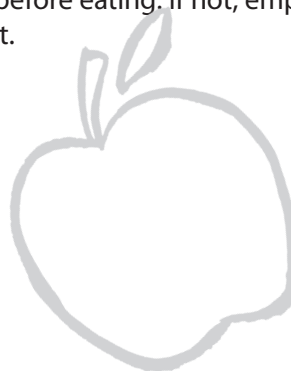
Participants in this Program will gain knowledge of

- the health benefits of local fruits and vegetables
- fruits and vegetables grown in BC
- safe hand-washing practices

## The Key Messages of the Program are

- Pick local fruits and vegetables
- Pick a variety of colourful fruits and vegetables
- Wash hands before eating
- Wash fruits and vegetables before eating
- Enjoy the taste of local fruits and vegetables
- Enjoy eating 5 to 10 servings of fruits and vegetables every day

The fruits and vegetables provided in the Program are washed and ready to eat. No preparation is required. If it is possible, have students wash their hands before eating. If not, emphasize the importance of hand washing especially after using the toilet.




---

1 ActNowBC: <http://www.actnowbc.ca>

2 For US information: <http://www.ers.usda.gov/AmberWaves/November03/findings/freefruitandveggies.htm>  
 For UK information: <http://www.foodinschools.org/>, <http://www.dh.gov.uk/PolicyAndGuidance/HealthAndSocialCareTopics/FiveADay>

## Background

Most British Columbians are not consuming even the minimum recommended daily amount of fruits and vegetables. For example

- The *Adolescent Health Survey II* conducted by The McCreary Centre Society in 1999 reported that only a quarter of BC youths ate the recommended number of servings of fruits and vegetables <sup>3</sup>.
- *The Heart and Stroke Report Card on the Health of Canada's Kids, (1999)* reported that only one out of five Canadian children (20%) aged 6 to 12 ate the recommended daily minimum of five servings of fruits and vegetables <sup>4</sup>.
- The *BC Nutrition Survey* of adults (1999) recommended that people increase their intake of fruits and vegetables <sup>5</sup>.

Consumption of fruits and vegetables is essential for good health. Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating recommends 5 to 10 servings of fruits and vegetables each day.

Recognizing that eating habits established in childhood are important for long-term health, the three ministries—the Ministries of Healthy Living and Sport, Education and Agriculture and Lands—collaborated to create the BC School Fruit and Vegetable Nutritional Program.

Children who eat more fruits and vegetables

- eat less high calorie, high fat foods<sup>6</sup>
- have better attention spans and have fewer discipline problems at school <sup>7</sup>
- decrease their risk of cancer and other chronic diseases such as heart disease and diabetes <sup>8</sup>

For optimal health, children need to eat a minimum of 5 servings of fruits and vegetables each day.

A serving is

- A medium-sized piece of fresh fruit
- ½ cup (125 mL) raw, cooked, frozen or canned fruits or vegetables
- 1 cup (250 mL) raw leafy vegetables
- ¼ cup (50 mL) dried fruit
- ½ cup (125 mL) fruit or vegetable juice

---

3 [http://www.mcs.bc.ca/rs\\_ahs\\_2004\\_regional.htm](http://www.mcs.bc.ca/rs_ahs_2004_regional.htm)

4 <http://www.heartandstroke.ca>

5 <http://www.healthservices.gov.bc.ca/prevent/nutrition>

6 <http://www.5aday.com/pdfs/research/78-0503hires.pdf>

7 <http://www.5aday.com/pdfs/research/78-0503hires.pdf>

8 <http://www.5to10aday.com>

## Role of the In-School Coordinator

As the In-School Coordinator for this Program you will be responsible for distributing and delivering fruits and vegetables to classrooms in your school, as well as working with the BC Agriculture in the Classroom School Fruit and Vegetable Nutritional Program Team, to monitor and record successes and challenges.

The In-School Coordinator is vital to the success of the Nutritional Program in the school. As the In-School Coordinator you will:

- plan how to operate the Program in your school together with the BC Agriculture in the Classroom and the Key School Contact
- oversee implementation coordination and operation of the Program in your school
- involve staff and students in a whole-school approach; share with them tasks of preparing and distributing fruits and vegetables when possible
- assist in communication with the Key School Contact and others
- work with your Key School Contact to communicate information between your school and the BCAITC Team

## Duties

- confirm the delivery of fruit and vegetables
- store and prepare fruits and vegetables according to FOODSAFE storage specifications
- report any problems or concerns with the fruits and vegetables to your Key School Contact
- provide in-school distribution of fruits and vegetables to classrooms
- record information in the *BC School Fruit and Vegetable Nutritional Program In-School Coordinator Log* and submit the log on a monthly basis.  
Forms should be faxed to:

BCAITC Office  
1-604-854-6068

More details about these duties are discussed further in this guide.



### Keeping Fruits and Vegetables Safe

- coordinator must have a FOODSAFE certificate (copy must be sent to our office at BCSFVNP fax number 1-604-854-6068.) Schools will NOT receive produce until the certificate is received
- coordinator must have clean clothes and their hair controlled
- coordinator must wash serving containers according to FOODSAFE standards
- coordinators or volunteers with infected cuts, or suffering from diarrhea or vomiting must be excluded from food contact activities
- Anyone handling the Program fruits and vegetables must first wash their hands for at least 20 seconds in warm soapy water. Hand washing is also especially important
  - prior to preparing or handling food
  - after going to the washroom
  - after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing
  - after touching your mouth, face or hair
  - after smoking
  - after eating
  - after handling raw meat, poultry, fish, eggs or unwashed vegetables
  - after handling dirty dishes
  - after touching boxes or garbage
  - after handling animals, birds, fish or reptiles
- Anyone handling the Program fruits and vegetables must dry hands thoroughly using clean paper towels or other single use device as wet hands can spread bacteria.

### Food allergies and the Nutritional Program

Allergic reactions to fruits and vegetables are common. About 5% of population have allergies to fruits and vegetables. Food allergies to fruits and vegetable are usually not severe.

The specific food allergies of many children in BC schools are known. To help promote safety, there are specific plans in place to help prevent these children from being accidentally exposed to the food/s to which they are allergic. Not all severe allergic reactions can be predicted or avoided. Some children will have their first severe allergic reaction in the school setting.

To protect children with severe allergies, the BC Ministry of Education has put into action, the British Columbia Anaphylactic and Child Safety Framework, and the Anaphylaxis Protection Order (HYPERLINK <http://aaia.ca/en/activity-BCAnaphylacticStudentProtectionAct.htm> <http://aaia.ca/en/activity-BCAnaphylacticStudentProtectionAct.htm>). This means school administrators, teachers and parents can work to create a safe environment for allergic children and have access to resources to assist them.

The BC School Fruit and Vegetable Nutritional Program parent coordinators should be aware of any school procedures to promote a safe environment of children with severe allergies. The school procedures may affect how the Nutritional Program is offered in the school. It is recommended that parent coordinators receive training in the following areas:

1. Learn how to help prevent food allergens from getting into the produce
2. Learn how to clearly label produce that is brought into schools.

**Below is some important information about how to help prevent allergens from getting into foods: (From [HYPERLINK www.allergysafecommunities.ca](http://www.allergysafecommunities.ca) [www.allergysafecommunities.ca](http://www.allergysafecommunities.ca))**

If peanut butter or another allergen has been brought into the school, it is important that no traces of the food be found on anybody's hands or other surfaces.

Wash your hands and mouth after eating and thoroughly clean all equipment, utensils and surfaces that you use to handle and prepare the fruits and vegetables.

#### Cleaning Hands

Use liquid detergent, bar soap or antibacterial wipes for helping to get rid of all traces of peanut butter from your hands.

Using only Anti-bacterial hand sanitizers and water does not work as well. Using just dish soap alone does not removed all traces of peanut butter either.

#### Cleaning surfaces

Use common household cleaning products like Formula 409 (Clorox), Lysol sanitizing wipes, and similar cleaners with bleach to help get rid of traces of peanut allergen from surfaces.

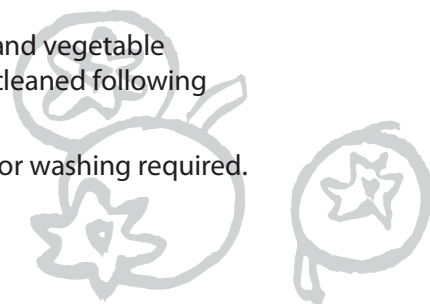
#### Product Supply and Distribution

The BC Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation is working with Save-On-Foods, PriceSmart Foods, Overwaitea Foods and Cooper's Foods and Bulkley Valley Wholesale to deliver fruits and vegetables to school communities. Fruits and vegetables will be delivered to your school. All fruits and vegetables will be BC grown where possible.

Please check the BC Agriculture in the Classroom website...[www.aitc.ca/bc](http://www.aitc.ca/bc) regularly for product information and scheduling.

Each school will be provided with classroom distribution bins to assist with fruit and vegetable delivery. The bins are equipped for easy stacking and storage. The bins must be cleaned following FOODSAFE standards before each use.

All fruits and vegetables will arrive at the school ready to eat. There is no cutting or washing required.



We will be working hard to ensure optimal freshness of the fruits and vegetables served, but it is essential that you check all produce before it is delivered to classrooms. Please record and report any issues that arise on the *BC School Fruit and Vegetable Nutritional Program In-School Coordinator Log* form provided.

School personnel will provide you with a list of classrooms and the number of servings each class requires. Place the appropriate amount of fruits or vegetables for the classroom in each bin (for product-serving sizes please refer to the Product Rotation List). Once the fruits or vegetables have been allocated into the classroom bins, the bins can be delivered to classrooms. Delivery times will vary from school to school, so please check with school personnel to determine a delivery schedule. When snack time is over you will need to collect the classroom bins and wash them following FOODSAFE standards.

### Storage and Refrigeration Specifications

The only fruit and vegetable snacks you will be receiving for this program that REQUIRE refrigeration are the packaged sliced apples and mini cucumbers. Both of these products must be refrigerated immediately upon receipt at your school and kept refrigerated until as close to delivery as possible to insure maximum quality.

They may not remain unrefrigerated for more than 3 hours.

All other products MAY be refrigerated if your school has the existing capacity.

If you are not refrigerating produce please store it in a cool room, out of direct sunlight.

Product	Requires Refrigeration	May Be Refrigerated
Plums		✓
Whole carrots	✓	
Apples		✓
Pears		✓
Mandarin oranges		✓
Sliced packaged apples	✓	
Baby Carrots	✓	
Mini cucumbers	✓	
All tomatoes		✓

## What To Do With Extra or Returned Fruits and Vegetables?

Due to shipping/handling restrictions, you may find that you have extra fruits and vegetables. There may also be fruits or vegetables returned in the classroom bins. Each school has been given the flexibility to handle extra fruits and vegetables in the manner they see fit. Please check with your school administrator for instructions on what to do with extra product.

Please record any fruits or vegetables returned from classrooms on the *BC School Fruit and Vegetable Nutritional Program In-School Coordinator Log* form provided. It is important to track classroom returns so that we can assess fruit and vegetable consumption and preferences. We encourage you to provide as much detail as possible on the *Log*. The more information we receive the greater the likelihood of the success of the Program. You will find examples of *Log* entries further in this guide.

## Evaluation

As the In-School Coordinator you may be asked to participate in the evaluation of the Program.

Dr. PJ Naylor from the University of Victoria may be requesting interviews with Program participants to discuss what went well, and what needs improvement. We request that you take part in this process and provide your valuable feedback. Dr. Naylor will also be interviewing administrators, custodians, teachers and children over the course of the Program.

Feedback from the Program participants and stakeholders is key to assessing how we may improve upon the Program. It will provide the blueprint for fruit and vegetable selection, delivery methods, in-school best practices, budget and future expansion.



## Program Products

The following fruits and vegetables may be served on a rotational/seasonal basis. Please note that due to weather changes during the growing season fruits and vegetables may vary.

### Plums

#### Basic Facts:

Plums are fruit with a smooth skin and a stone or pit in the centre. Prune plums have dark blue skins with yellow flesh. Other plums can be red, golden, or black on the outside and red or yellow on the inside. Prune plums will arrive with a natural powder-like haze covering the fruit. This is produced by the fruit for protection, has no flavour, and does not wash off easily. The plums are safe to eat with the bloom and very delicious.

#### Checking for freshness:

**Look for** full coloured smooth fruit. Ripe fruit yields to gentle pressure.

### Pears

#### Basic Facts:

Pears are a tree fruit that can be shaped like an apple or like a teardrop. The outer skin can be light green, yellow, or even reddish or brown. They have a core in the middle like an apple.

#### Checking for freshness:

**Look for** firm, well-shaped fruit. Use fully ripe fruit for immediate use. Minor scars and blemishes do not affect flavour.

### Cucumbers

#### Basic Facts:

The cucumber belongs to the same family as the pumpkin, zucchini, watermelon and other gourds. They grow on vines. The cucumbers we are using have been greenhouse grown. The cucumbers in our Program may be eaten with the skin on.

#### Checking for freshness:

**Look for** firm, well-shaped bright green cucumbers. Avoid soft, over mature or yellowing ones.

### Apples

#### Basic Facts:

An apple is called a pome fruit because it has seeds in the middle protected by a core. There are many different kinds of apples each with a slightly different shape and colour. Some common apples grown in BC are: Red and Golden Delicious, McIntosh, Royal Gala, Fuji, Ambrosia, Jona-Gold, and Spartan. We will be serving both whole apples and sliced apples. The sliced apples are washed and cut and ready to eat in portion sizes. The whole apples are washed and ready to eat.

#### Checking for freshness:

**Look for** well-shaped, smooth skinned fruit that is free of bruises. Brownish freckled areas do not affect flavour.

## Tomatoes

### Basic Facts:

Tomatoes are a roundish fruit of a plant that grows on a vine. It has a skin that protects a juicy flesh with lots of seeds inside. Tomatoes are usually red but some varieties are yellow. They come in many sizes and shapes.

### Checking for freshness:

**Look for** smooth, well-formed, firm tomatoes that are uniform in colour.

## Carrots

### Basic Facts:

Carrots are a root vegetable. They grow down into the soil in various shapes from long and thin to short and fat. The carrots we will be using come from a farm in Surrey. They are picked and washed and packed into boxes. Carrots do not have to be peeled to eat.

### Checking for freshness:

**Look for** firm, clean, bright orange carrots that are well shaped.

## Oranges

### Basic Facts:

Mandarin Oranges are citrus fruits grown on small trees. They have orange skins like other oranges but the skin is loose and easy to peel. Mandarin oranges are not grown in BC but for many years BC residents have looked forward to this special Christmas treat.

### Checking for freshness:

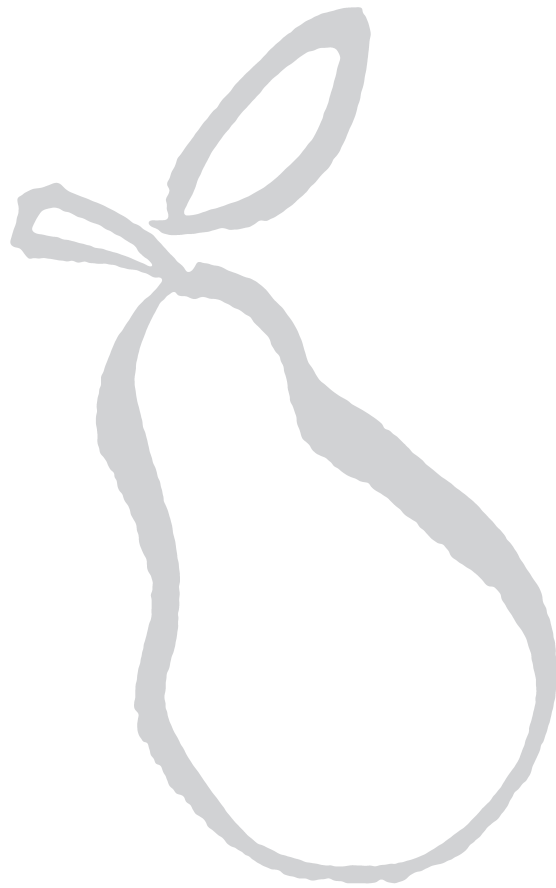
Check over individual oranges for any that are showing signs of mold or soft spots where the skin is looking transparent. Discard all oranges that look this way. Oranges that have a slightly green skin will be just fine for eating.

### More Product Information: [www.aitc.ca/bc](http://www.aitc.ca/bc)

BC Agriculture in the Classroom Program Staff will also be communicating to you through email and through their website. We encourage you to watch the site for more product information, product rotation and delivery schedules as well as related items such as product serving size, recipes, monthly newsletter articles and comments from other schools who are also on the program.



## **In-School Coordinator Logs**













## Questions and Answers for Schools Currently Participating in the BCSFVNP

### Top Ten Questions Asked:

1. **Q What to do if there is a problem with delivery?**  
**A** Call the SFVNP office toll free as soon as a problem is encountered and steps will be taken immediately to correct the problem. 1-866-517-6225
2. **Q Which products need to be refrigerated?**  
**A** Only the sliced apples and mini cucumbers and baby carrots must be refrigerated. All other produce may be refrigerated if space is permitted. Please store any un-refrigerated produce in a cool room, out of sunlight.
3. **Q Are all the fruits and vegetables provided in the Program grown in British Columbia?**  
**A** All the fruits and vegetables used in the SFVNP are grown in BC. There may be an occasion when a shipment is late and we are required to substitute other produce. Should this happen our mandate is to supply Canadian produce if possible. There may be occasions when growing conditions affect our BC crops and we will need to utilize other sources, but we do our best to ensure top quality BC produce whenever possible.
4. **Q Is the produce used organic?**  
**A** Some of the produce we use in the Program is organically grown. In BC we import over 80% of our organic produce from other countries. Many of the products we use are not “certified” organic, but are grown utilizing organic practices.
5. **Q Is traditionally grown (non-organic) produce safe?**  
**A** Absolutely. BC boasts some of the safest growing practices in the world. The Canadian Food Inspection Agency regularly checks produce for pesticide residues and our produce is considered some of the safest in the world. All of the fruits and vegetables used in the Program are HACCP certified. This means that the growers follow all best practice growing, packing and safety techniques.
6. **Q What do we do with left-over produce?**  
**A** Each school has the ability to utilize leftover produce however they see fit. Many schools place a basket at the office so that children can help themselves. Some schools use leftover produce for sports teams, others package it up and send it home with children they feel are in need. This is a school based decision. The reason you have left-over produce is that we do not break case lots of produce. If you have 90 children in your school, you may receive a case of apples with 125 pieces. We do not break cases for food safety reasons.
7. **Q Do we have to wash the produce before serving it?**  
**A** No, all produce arrives washed and ready to eat. Products such as plums often look as though they have not been washed due to the “bloom”, a natural occurrence in their makeup.

8. **Q What is the best time to serve the produce?**
  - A** Produce such as sliced apples and carrots must not be out of the refrigerator for more than three hours. Other produce can be taken to the classroom in distribution bins and served to the students at the teacher's convenience.
9. **Q What are the safety requirements for storing and handling produce?**
  - A** The safety requirements for receiving, storing and handling the produce are outlined in the In-School Coordinator's guide book. The person who first opens the cases of product and inspects the it before serving any product must be Level One FOODSAFE trained. All hand washing and safety procedures as outlined in the FOODSAFE guide must be followed. As mentioned above, sliced product, should be refrigerated. All produce should be checked for freshness before being delivered to the classroom. Any quality issues should be recorded in the Produce Log and reported to the designated lead in your school and our office.
10. **Q Where can we get more information on the Program and BC agriculture?**
  - A** For more information on the School Fruit and Vegetable Nutritional Program please visit our website at: <http://www.aitc.ca/bc/snacks/> or contact our office at 1-604-866-517-6225.



All rights reserved. No part of this resource covered by the copyrights herein may be reproduced or used in any form or by any means—graphic, electronic, or mechanical—without written permission from the BC Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation. A limited copyright is granted for the teacher who may photocopy the information contained within this resource for his/her own classroom use. These pages may be reproduced for their intended use only.

© First Printed 2005  
Second Printing 2006  
Third Printing 2007  
Fourth Printing 2008

BC Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation  
1767 Angus Campbell Road  
Abbotsford, BC V3G 2M3

Funding and Support Provided by:  
BC Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport  
BC Ministry of Education  
BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands



British Columbia  
Agriculture  
in the Classroom  
Foundation



ActNowBC.ca