

BC School Fruit and Vegetable Nutritional Program



Acknowledgements

Thank you to the Advisory Committee for their contributions in the initial development of this program.

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BC School Fruit and Vegetable Nutritional Program

A Collaborative Program between the

BC Ministry of Health
BC Ministry of Education
BC Ministry of Agriculture

With Funding From

BC Ministry of Health

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

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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 a provincial government initiative to improve the health of BC children and families. The Program is a first in British Columbia. Similar programs in the UK and US¹ have been very successful and positively received by children, parents and teachers.

The BC School Fruit and Vegetable Nutritional Program is the result of a unique collaboration between the BC Ministry of Health, the BC Ministry of Education and the BC Ministry of Agriculture. Funding is provided by the BC Ministry of Health. The Program 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 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 ¹.
- *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 ².
- The *BC Nutrition Survey* of adults (1999) recommended that people increase their intake of fruits and vegetables ³.
- Evaluation Report – Action Schools! Healthy Eating Quick Facts – Actions Schools! BC Pilot www.actionschoolsbc.ca
- McCreary Society 2008 Survey – Nutrition Fact Sheet www.mcs.bc.ca

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 Health, Education and Agriculture—collaborated to create the BC School Fruit and Vegetable Nutritional Program.

Children who eat more fruits and vegetables

- eat less high calorie, high fat foods⁴
- have better attention spans and have fewer discipline problems at school ⁵
- decrease their risk of cancer and other chronic diseases such as heart disease and diabetes ⁶

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

1 http://www.mcs.bc.ca/rs_ahs_2004_regional.htm

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

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

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

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

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

Role of the In-School Coordinator

The BC Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation's website - www.aitc.ca/bc - is a communication tool for all schools on the Program. As the coordinator you will find all of the information you need to successfully run the Program in your school.

Direct communication will come to you and your Primary School Contacts through email from the Foundation or by phone. You can contact the BCAITC Coordinators at 1-866-517-6225 between the hours of 8:00am and 4:30 pm Monday to Friday.

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 (BCAITC) staff and your school's Primary Contact
- Oversee implementation, coordination and operation of the Program in your school
- Involve staff and students in a whole-school approach; share with them the tasks of preparing and distributing fruits and vegetables when possible
- Work with the school's Primary Contact to communicate information between your school and the BCAITC Team
- Submit your school's Annual Program Information Update online to the BCAITC Program Office in June to ensure a smooth transition to the following year. Remember your user name and password so that you can log on to complete the form. Email help@aitc.ca if you do not know your school's user name and password.
- Ensure that the BCAITC Office has a copy of your FOODSAFE Coordinator's Level One FOODSAFE certificate on file
- Be sure that parent permission forms go home every September for every new student on the Program. Your school is responsible for creating and distributing the forms – samples are available on the BCAITC website.
- Handle the delivery of fruits and vegetables. Some products will require immediate refrigeration upon arrival at the school.
- Handle fruits and vegetables according to FOODSAFE specifications
- Report any problems or concerns with the fruits and vegetables to your Primary School Contact or directly to the BCAITC staff. If the product is not suitable for consumption then take a picture of the product, its box, the bar code and the product expiry date. Email your school name, contact information and pictures to the BCAITC office at help@aitc.ca

- Provide in-school distribution of fruits and vegetables to classrooms using the bins provided to you for the program
- Record information in the BC School Fruit and Vegetable Nutritional Program In-School Coordinator Log and submit on a monthly basis.
Forms should be faxed to:
BCAITC Office – 1-604-854-6068

To help you remember essential duties please be sure to display the poster provided – Top 10
- What You Need to Know to Run the Program in Your School

Keeping Fruits and Vegetables Safe

- coordinator must have a FOODSAFE certificate (copy must be sent to our office at BCAITC 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>). 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)

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. Fruits and vegetables will be delivered to your school by Saputo BC or an independent courier or grocer.

Please check the BC Agriculture in the Classroom website... 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. As the in-school coordinator it is your responsibility to ensure that these bins are kept from year to year to run the program. Do not allow others to use the bins on non-delivery weeks.

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 on the website aitc.ca/bc). 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

Please see table on page 7.

FRUIT & VEGETABLE STORAGE GUIDE



- * READ ALL STORAGE & HANDLING INFORMATION LOCATED ON PRODUCT CASE
- * KEEP SCHOOL REFRIGERATOR AT 4° C
- * FOR PRODUCTS THAT MAY REQUIRE RIPENING (I.E.) PEARS , ENSURE CASE & PLASTIC LINER ARE OPENED TO ALLOW PRODUCT TO BREATHE

FRUIT / VEGETABLE	ROOM TEMPERATURE STORAGE 20° to 22° C	REFRIGERATOR STORAGE 4° C / 40° F	SPECIAL TIPS
SLICED APPLES	Do not store at room temperature	2 weeks from date packed (check package expiry date)	* Apples will absorb odours from potatoes, onions and other fragrant produce. They tend to soften 10 times faster at room temperature.
WHOLE APPLES	Store loosely, product will soften faster than in refrigeration	2 to 3 weeks in perforated plastic bag in crisper	
BLUEBERRIES	Do not store at room temperature	10 days, loosely covered	* Store in shallow container.
BABY PEELED CARROTS	Do not store at room temperature	2 weeks from date packed (check package expiry date)	* Carrots absorb odours from apples and pears.
MINI CUCUMBERS	Do not store at room temperature	1 week	
MANDARIN ORANGES	1 week; store loosely in open or perforated plastic bag	1 month; store loosely in open or perforated plastic bag	* Oranges produce odours that are absorbed by meat, eggs and dairy products.
PEARS	Store loosely until ripe (Note: Ensure case and plastic liner are opened to allow pears to breathe!)	2 to 3 days; store uncovered in a single layer	* Pears are ripe when flesh around stem gives to gentle pressure.
PLUMS	Store loosely until ripe (Note: Ensure case and plastic liner are opened to allow plums to breathe!)	3 to 5 days (ripe)	* Grey bloom on plums is natural and indicates freshness. This does not have to be washed off.
GREENHOUSE TOMATOES	3 to 4 days, uncovered, out of direct sunlight, until ripe; when ripe use in 1 to 2 days	No. Stops ripening and affects flavour.	* Refrigerate only when well ripened, but will affect flavour.

Source: Canadian Produce Marketing Association (CPMA), BCSFVNP Suppliers
 Information about storing fruits and vegetables can be found on the CPMA website at the following link:
http://www.cpma.ca/en_hear_storage.asp

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.

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 as well as on-line through the BCAITC website.

Evaluation

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

Feedback from the Program participants and stakeholders is key to assessing how we may improve 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.



TOP 10 WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW TO RUN THE PROGRAM IN YOUR SCHOOL

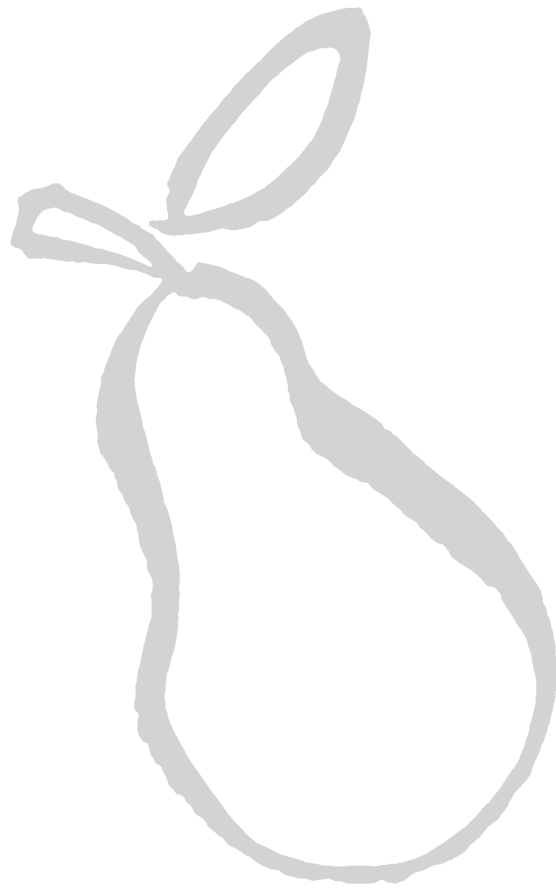
- 1 Ensure the BCAITC Program Office has a copy of your FOODSAFE Coordinator's certificate.
- 2 **Before preparing product for distribution to students:**
 - Ensure a FOODSAFE Certified Coordinator has checked that the product is safe to eat
 - Use only clean distribution bins
 - Wash and dry your hands
- 3 **Parent Permission Forms must go home every September** to every **NEW** student participating in the program. Your school is responsible for creating and distributing the forms.
- 4 **Allergies and their management is the responsibility of the school.** YOU must notify the BCAITC Program Office if you want your school's delivery of a scheduled product to be **CANCELLED** due to an allergy.
- 5 **Refrigerate product upon its arrival at the school. Product must be eaten in the week that it arrives.** When the product arrives, you are responsible for moving it to a FOODSAFE location in the school. Remember, unless it needs to ripen, do not leave product out of the refrigerator.
- 6 **Product information, serving size and nutritional facts are found on the BCAITC website www.aitc.ca/bc**
- 7 **If your order has not arrived by 3:00 pm on your delivery day, notify the BCAITC Program Office at help@aitc.ca or 1-866-517-6225.**
- 8 **Poor Quality Product** - If the product is not suitable for consumption, take a picture of the product, its box, the bar code and the product expiry date. Email your school name, contact info and pictures to the BCAITC Program Office at help@aitc.ca
- 9 **Complete your monthly report and submit it to the BCAITC Program Office.**
- 10 **Submit your school's Annual Program Information Update online** to the BCAITC Program Office in **JUNE** to ensure a smooth transition to the following year. Remember your **user name and password** so that you can log on to complete the form. Email help@aitc.ca if you do not know your school's user name and password.

PROGRAM INFO: website: www.aitc.ca/bc
email: help@aitc.ca
toll free: 1-866-517-6225



Watch for this sticker on all product cases

In-School Coordinator Logs



Additional copies can be downloaded from aitc.ca/bc

An example of a Log is shown below. If you have any questions or require further information on Log entries please contact the BCATTC office.
 If there are any problems with delivery or product please call the office 1-866-517-6225 or fax 1-604-854-6068
 Send reports monthly by fax to 1-604-854-6068 or email to help@aitc.ca

In-School Coordinator Monthly Comments Log

School Name: SD#: Coordinator Name:
 Month:

Date Served	Type of fruit or vegetable	Product received in good order? (Yes/No)	Please Comment
Oct. 01/07	Sunrise Apple	Yes	Delivery of the fruit went smoothly. There were approximately 25 apples not distributed (extra received).

SAMPLE

Instructions: Send your monthly log by fax to 1-604-854-6068 or email to help@aitc.ca
 Note: We allow for approximately 7% spoilage/unexpected damager per shipment (i.e. 1 case apples = 15 bad apples, 1 case cukes = 9 bad)



Questions and Answers for Schools Currently Participating in the BCSFVNP

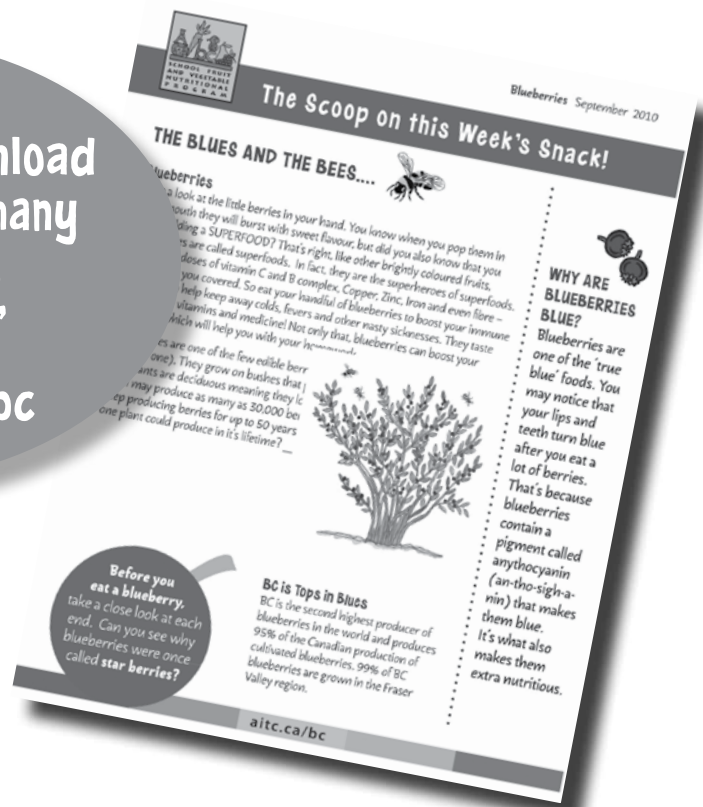
Top Ten Questions Asked:

1. **Q What to do if there is a problem with delivery?**
A Call the BCAITC 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 The sliced apples, mini cucumbers and carrots must be refrigerated. Read the information provided either on the product case or on the Fruit and Vegetable Storage Guide provided in this manual. Watch to be sure that cases are opened and plastic liners cut open to allow products such as pears to breathe while they ripen.
3. **Q Are all the fruits and vegetables provided in the Program grown in British Columbia?**
A Almost all fruits and vegetables in the BCSFVNP are grown in BC – except the Mandarin Oranges provided at Christmas.
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.

Check out and download
 for teachers the many
 "Scoop on this
 Week's Snack!"

at www.aitc.ca/bc



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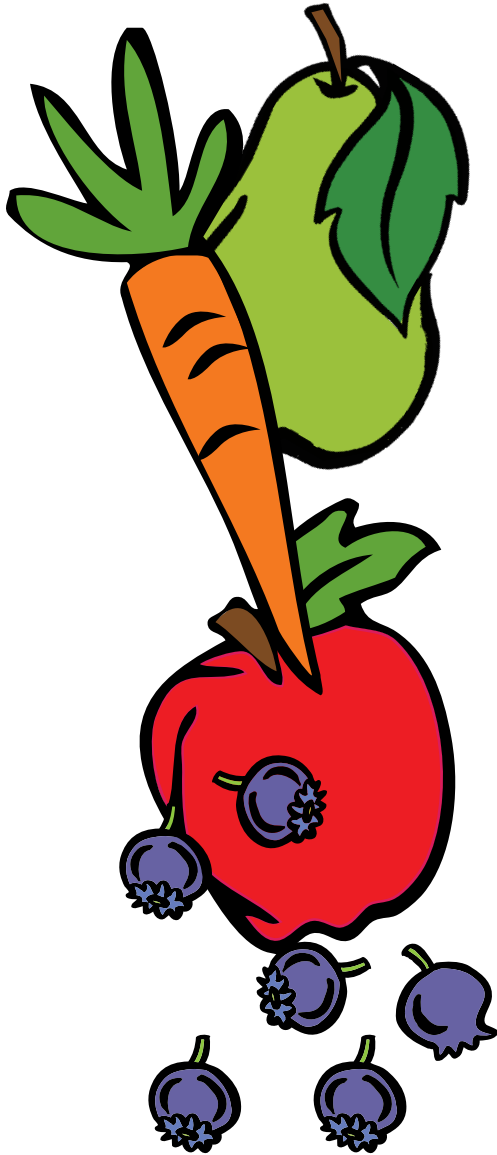
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