

Sprouting Success: Operations, Culinary Skills & Farm-to-School Training

Information Sheet

The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) has funding available for school food authorities (SFAs) to participate in *Sprouting Success: Operations, Culinary Skills & Farm-to-School Training* to improve efficiency, maximize budgets, increase scratch cooking, and streamline local food procurement.

This program includes live, virtual and on-demand training courses for all levels of school nutrition staff. Participants will have unlimited access to [SproutCNP](#), a researched-based training and leadership platform for school nutrition professionals. Training topics support the skills needed for building a food service system rooted in consistency and efficiency for financial solvency.

Participating SFAs will learn skills that:

- ✓ Improve meal quality with scratch cooking.
- ✓ Increase farm to school activities and/or local food purchases.
- ✓ Strengthen operational management with improved forecasting, greater productivity, lessen waste, stronger production planning, and inventory control.
- ✓ Enhance staff skills to support efficient, high-quality meal service.
- ✓ Reduce food waste through better forecasting, menu planning, and production practices.
- ✓ Build capacity to successfully incorporate local foods into regular meal operations.

More than 28 professional standards credit hours are currently available within the platform with more planned during the project period. Training courses include:

For Kitchen Staff

1. Slice and Dice: Knife Skills and Knife Maintenance
2. Process, Cook, and Serve: The skill of As Purchase and Edible Portion
3. School Kitchen Cooking Fundamentals
4. Culinary Math: Weights and Volume Measures
5. School Nutrition is Rooted in Nutrition Science

For Kitchen Managers/Team Leads (Should also take courses one to five)



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6. Kitchen Management Operations: How They Impact Cafeteria Finances
7. Smart Produce Processing: Choosing the Right Tools for the Task
8. Time Standards and Work Schedules
9. Measuring Productivity: Meals per Labor Hour
10. Site Level Forecasting and Ordering

For Directors and Support Leadership (Should also take courses one to ten)

11. Director Bootcamp
12. Procurement Masterclass
13. Optional Bonus: What I Wish I Knew for the Administrative Review

OSPI will also offer four live trainings that will leverage the [SproutCNP](#) course learning to enhance food service workforce skills and support the successful incorporation of local foods into school meal programs.

Registered dietitians and dietetic technicians who complete the on-demand courses offered through [SproutCNP](#) will have access to Continuing Professional Education Units (CPEUs) through the Commission on Dietetic Registration. Both the live and on-demand courses credit towards United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) annual professional standards requirements for food service staff.

Who can apply?

- ✓ SFAs that operate the National School Lunch Program (NSLP).
- ✓ Self-operated SFAs that do not contract with a Food Service Management Company (FSMC).
- ✓ SFAs with administrative support to apply for this opportunity.

OSPI will prioritize applications that:

- ✓ Demonstrate readiness and capacity to meet training requirements.
- ✓ Plan to have all or most food service staff participate in the training.
- ✓ Provide a balance of statewide representation from urban and rural areas.

To apply, applicants must agree to:

- ✓ Consult with relevant stakeholders about labor or other costs associated with participation.
- ✓ Attend four live, virtual farm-to-school trainings in the 2027 calendar year. (Date and time to be determined.)

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- ✓ Identify staff who will participate and complete the on-demand SproutCNP training courses during the pilot period (November 2026–December 2027).
- ✓ Engage in evaluation activities that may include:
 - Pre and post surveys.
 - Collecting and reporting financial and program data, including but not limited to, local food purchases, farm to school activities, and financial metrics.
 - Providing feedback on experience and impacts.

Application Evaluation:

Applications will be evaluated for readiness, capacity, and geographic distribution and LEA size according to the scoring matrix.

Pilot Timeline & Details

- ✓ Application opens: September 21, 2026
- ✓ Application closes: October 23, 2026
- ✓ Training cohort selected and announced: November 2026
- ✓ SproutCNP onboarding: November 2026
- ✓ Sprouting Success trainings available to selected cohort: November 2026–January 2028

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