

# THE FEEDING THE SPIRIT COOKBOOK

A Resource and Discussion Guide  
on Museums, Food and Community



**Center for the Future of Museums**  
an initiative of the American Association of Museums

*This publication incorporates content presented at the Feeding the Spirit symposium hosted at the Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens in Pittsburgh on Oct. 13, 2011.*

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*The webcast is sponsored and hosted by Learning Times <http://www.learningtimes.net>.*



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## Introduction to Feeding the Spirit: An Exploration of Museums, Food and Community

Why is the American Association of Museums leading an exploratory expedition into the world of food? AAM's Center for the Future of Museums was founded to help museums track and respond to the trends that will shape their communities in coming decades. And food, in so many ways, is embedded in the changes and challenges that face society.

America is immersed in a reexamination of its relationship to food. The collective issues of sustainability—human and environmental health, food equity and social cohesion—pose some of the greatest challenges facing the U.S. in coming decades. There is a growing sentiment that our current systems for growing, distributing and eating food are unsustainable, inflicting damage on our health and our environment.

As communities increasingly self-sort by politics, race, culture and income, food is one of the deeply human ways we come together and explore commonalities. The experience of growing food reconnects us to nature and fosters thoughtful awareness about what we eat. Preparing food helps us to share traditions and culture. And museums are embracing the fact that food strongly influences where and how we spend our time. Research on participation in the arts shows that while people are becoming less likely to partake of “high culture” (museums, classical music concerts, theater, dance), they increasingly attend multi-faceted cultural events that include food in the mix. Young people say an important aspect of a welcoming public environment is the ability to eat and drink with friends.

AAM's Feeding the Spirit encourages museums to respond to these challenges—internal and external—by helping their communities explore our collective values about food, our bodies, our environment and society. It is a way to unify the field around key messages about food critical to transforming the health of the country, and challenge museums to integrate these messages into their exhibits, programs and operations. It leads the field to examine the food choices we provide in our facilities and how these choices align with health and nutrition.

The Feeding the Spirit Cookbook documents and shares some of the many ways museums can serve as catalysts for community action on food and nutrition—e.g., starting community gardens, exploring the history of our attitudes towards weight, hosting community meals as venues for discussion, and helping children explore growing and eating healthy food. And the Feeding the Spirit webcast will help museums prepare for the future as they reexamine their own attitudes and relationships towards food and explore how food can play a key role in fostering relationships and building new audiences.



Elizabeth Merritt  
Founding Director, Center for the Future of Museums

## **A Note on Audiences**

The primary audience for this webinar is people who work in, and with, museums across America and around the world. This discussion guide is written in a corresponding voice (“your museum, your staff”). That said, there are many other people who we hope will join in this conversation: those who work with food, love food, labor to promote community health, fight childhood obesity or reform our agricultural systems. I extend my warmest welcome to anyone from the many disciplines outside the museum field who joins us for this exploration of food issues. I encourage you to contact a museum in your community and suggest they organize a group to participate in the webcast! You can help museum staff explore how you all can work together to promote health, healthy eating and healthy food systems.

## Preparing for the Feeding the Spirit Webinar

Use the webinar as a starting point for an exploration of:

1. how your museum can promote food literacy in your community
2. what values your museum wants to bring to bear on your food service operation
3. how your museum can use food as a way to strengthen its ties to its community and reach out to new audiences

We encourage your museum to assemble a diverse group of people to participate in the webcast together. Consider inviting staff (paid and volunteer), members of the museum's governing authority, advisory groups and representatives of community organizations. By bringing these stakeholders together, you will jumpstart your organization's discussions on how to engage with food and food issues.

## How to Get the Most Out of the Webinar

- Schedule a space where a group can view and discuss the webcast—e.g. an auditorium, lunchroom or classroom.
- We encourage you to host a potluck to accompany the webcast, so pick a space where food is allowed!
- Send out invitations: This is an opportunity to connect with local food advocates, food producers and distributors, your food service provider, community activists, community representatives and people working to improve childhood health and nutrition.
- Read the themes, menu and bios of speakers presented in this discussion guide and decide which parts of the webcast to participate in—the whole menu (appetizer to happy hour) or just selected courses.
- Read the points for discussions (page 12), and choose which ones you want to use before, during or after the webcast to shape your museum's exploration of how it will engage with food.
- Share the Recipes for Success with staff, members of your governing authority, community partners and other stakeholders to fuel your thinking.
- Plan the menu for your potluck party to accompany the webcast. Use CFM Lecturer Jessica Harris's recipes as inspiration, or establish a food theme related to your museum's mission. And let us know what theme you have chosen! (I hope a natural history museum chooses an insect theme, featuring fried crickets and chocolate-covered ants.)

## Mechanics of the Webcast

The webcast will start at 1:45 p.m. EST on Friday, Feb. 17, 2012. You can register through the CFM website [www.futureofmuseums.org](http://www.futureofmuseums.org) <<http://www.futureofmuseums.org>>.

After the webcast, videos of the thought leaders and the CFM lecture will be posted to the CFM YouTube channel <http://www.youtube.com/futureofmuseums>.

This webcast is sponsored and hosted by LearningTimes <http://www.learningtimes.com>.

### The technical requirements to participate are: **Internet Connection Speed**

- Adobe Flash Player 10.0.32 or above
- Internet Explorer 8.0 or above, Firefox 2.0 or above, or Safari 3.0, or Chrome 4.0 or above
- Microsoft Windows XP SP2, Microsoft Windows Vista, Macintosh OS X v10.4 or above, or Linux
- 256 megabytes (MB) of RAM - 512 MB recommended
- JavaScript and Cookies must also be enabled.
- Super VGA (800 x 600) or higher resolution
- 16-bit sound card
- Speakers/headphones

For a reliable viewing experience at medium quality, we recommend a downstream connection speed of at least 700Kbps.

Viewers can select a higher (up to 2Mbps for HD) or lower (198Kbps for low) video quality on the player, depending on the connection speed.

You can test your connection speed here: <http://www.speedtest.net/>.

We recommend testing several times as bandwidth can fluctuate.

Login to the webcast through the site <http://www.learningtimesevents.org/cfm/login>.

If you have any technical questions about the AAM webinars or require any assistance at all, please contact LearningTimes at [aam@learningtimes.com](mailto:aam@learningtimes.com).

## Feeding the Spirit: Core Themes

### Promoting Food Literacy

Many communities in America lack access to fresh, healthy food; school lunch programs struggle with barriers that make it difficult to promote healthy eating; attitudes towards food choices are changing incrementally while behavior lags behind; the obesity epidemic may be slowing, but its health effects will be felt for decades through increased rates of heart disease, diabetes and other weight-related ailments. There is a growing sentiment that our current systems for growing, distributing and eating food are unsustainable, inflicting damage on our health and our environment. How can museums help their communities tackle these issues by promoting food literacy? What are the most effective ways to explore individual and community values about food, our bodies, our environment and society?

### Feeding the Visitor

Museums committed to promoting health, nutrition and sustainability can also embed these values in the operations of their restaurants, cafeterias and catering. This theme explores how museums can incorporate interpretation and messaging about nutrition and health into food services, and assesses the economic implications of values-based food systems. What are the costs of running a food service in alignment with green/organic/locally based principles, and what is the return on investment? What guidelines, partnerships and support systems exist to help museums reshape their food services?

### Food as Connector

Food can play a key role in fostering relationships, building new audiences and creating financial sustainability for museums. As communities increasingly self-sort by politics, race, culture and income, food is one of the deeply human ways we come together and explore commonalities. The experience of growing food reconnects us to nature and fosters thoughtful awareness about what we eat. Preparing food helps us to share traditions and culture. And museums are heeding the fact that food strongly influences where and how we spend our time. What opportunities and challenges do museums face in using food as a medium to connect to new audiences? How can a museum assess what kinds of food-related engagement are suited to their mission and circumstances?

## Webcast Menu

Friday, Feb. 17, 2012

Participants are encouraged to host a potluck in your department or museum, and come together over food to participate in the webcast.

### 1:45 p.m. ET Appetizer

Introduction, Elizabeth Merritt, founding director, AAM's Center for the Future of Museums

#### Thought Leaders:

**Jeannette Ickovics**, Yale School of Public Health, New Haven, Conn., on how museums can promote food literacy and improve community health

**Elizabeth Meltz**, director of food safety and sustainability, Batali/Bastianich Hospitality Group, New York, on bringing food services into alignment with values of sustainability and green operations

**Erika Allen**, Chicago and National Outreach Coordinator, Growing Power, on museums, food and social justice

### 3:00 pm ET Main Course

#### Moderated discussion and Q&A

**Elizabeth Merritt**, AAM, moderator

**Ismael Calderon**, director of science, Newark Museum, N.J.

2012 CFM Lecturer **Jessica Harris**, culinary historian, Queens College, CUNY

**Jane Pickering**, associate director, Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History, New Haven, Conn.

**Elizabeth Meltz**, director of food safety and sustainability, Batali/Bastianich Hospitality Group, New York

### 3:45 p.m. ET Dessert

2012 CFM Lecture by **Jessica Harris**, culinary historian, Queens College, CUNY

“Serve It Up Proudly! Some Food for Thought on the Intersections of Food Studies and Museums”

### 4:30 p.m. ET Virtual Happy Hour!

Discussion and activities at viewing sites, on-line chat and sharing information

## Biographies of Presenters

### Thought Leaders

**Jeannette R. Ickovics** of the Yale School of Public Health conducts research at the intersection between public health and psychology, investigating the interplay of the complex psychological, medical and social factors that influence the health of the person and of the community. She uses this lens to examine the challenges faced by those who have often been marginalized by the health care system and by society.

**Elizabeth Meltz** is the force behind two distinct and crucial programs at the Batali & Bastianich Hospitality Group: Food Safety and Sustainability. Meltz not only oversees the food safety program for restaurants in New York, Las Vegas and Los Angeles, but has also put the B&B Hospitality Group on the map as the leader in the green restaurant world. Meltz worked with each restaurant in achieving a place in the Green Restaurant Association's elite group of restaurants. Her effort to "green" the restaurants has led, among many other things, to a corporate no-bottled-water policy at the restaurants as well as full-scale recycling and composting programs, participation in Meatless Mondays and a burgeoning sustainable seafood purchasing program.

**Erika Allen** is Chicago projects manager for Growing Power, a nationally acclaimed nonprofit organization and land trust providing equal access to healthy, high-quality, safe and affordable food, especially in disadvantaged communities. Allen is co-chair of the Chicago Food Policy Advisory Council, and was appointed by Gov. Pat Quinn in 2008 to the Illinois Local and Organic Food and Farm Task Force. In 2007 she was honored by Family Focus for her work in community food systems, and in 2006 she received the Good Eating Award from the Chicago Tribune. Allen has a B.F.A from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and an M.A. in art therapy from the University of Illinois at Chicago.

### Panelists for Moderated Discussion

**Ismael Calderon**, director of science for the Newark Museum since 1997, is an accomplished museum educator and administrator with more than 30 years of experience in the field. At the Newark Museum, Calderon is responsible for directing all science initiatives. In 2002

he completed the interactive exhibition "Dynamic Earth: Revealing Nature's Secrets," a semi-permanent exhibition utilizing the museum's 70,000-specimen natural science collections. Since arriving in Newark, Calderon has been collaborating with Rutgers University, the New Jersey Institute of Technology, the Public Health Research Institute and other institutions to develop constructivist, inquiry-based science learning opportunities for students, families and teachers.

**Elizabeth Merritt** (moderator) is founding director, AAM's Center for the Future of Museums. Before CFM, she led the Excellence programs at AAM, including Accreditation, the Museum Assessment Program, peer review and the Information Center. Her areas of expertise include museum standards and best practices, ethics, collections management and planning, and assessment of nonprofit performance. Her books include National Standards and Best Practices for U.S. Museums and the AAM Guide to Collections Planning.

**Jane Pickering** joined the Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History, where she supervises all aspects of public programs, in 2002. She began her career 20 years ago at the Oxford University Museum of Natural History, where she was assistant curator for zoology. After a year as senior curator at the Royal College of Surgeons in London, she moved to the U.S. in 1998 to be director of the MIT Museum. She is currently working with Jeannette Ickovics on the exhibition "Big Food: Health, Culture and the Evolution of Eating" (<http://peabody.yale.edu/exhibits/big-food-health-culture-and-evolution-eating>).

### 2012 CFM Lecturer

**Jessica B. Harris**, culinary historian, Queens College, CUNY

Our keynote lecturer is a prolific author and the world's leading expert on the foodways of the African diaspora. Harris has shared her scholarship with audiences around the world, in print and live, including at such major museums as the American Museum of Natural History in New York, the California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco and the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. You can read a full biography of Harris at her website, AfriCooks.com (<http://africooks.com>)

## Discussion Topics

These are suggested topics to guide your thinking or group discussions before, during or after the webinar. You may wish to choose one section to focus on, or one idea from each section, to tailor this list to your available time. Feel free to write your own questions (and share them during the webinar)!

### Increasing Food Literacy

Discuss the food-related challenges facing the community(ies) your museum serves. These could range from high rates of obesity and related medical problems to the presence of “food deserts” (areas in which there are few sources of fresh produce) to unmet needs for locally grown organic produce. Are there ways the museum can help its community tackle these challenges?

Brainstorm 12 things your museum could do to promote food literacy in your community. (See page 13 for suggestions contributed by participants in the Feeding the Spirit symposium.) Pick at least one idea to develop more fully, with action steps, budget and timeline.

### Feeding the Visitor

Draft a values statement for your food service. What principles do you want to guide your choices about what to serve and how to serve it?

How well does your current food service adhere to your values regarding health and sustainability? Create a report card you can use to score the museum on your menu, operations, recycling and interpretive elements.

Discuss how your food service can advance the museum’s mission and incorporate interpretive messages.

### Food as Connector

What challenges does your museum face in integrating food events into the museum? For example, these might be related to policy, finances, logistics, space or expertise. Pick one challenge and discuss what you might do to overcome that barrier. (See page 15 for examples of challenges and solutions contributed by participants in the Feeding the Spirit symposium.)

What distinct cultural communities live in the area served by your museum? Are any of these communities under-represented among your visitors? Brainstorm a food-related event, exhibit or program drawing in that community’s food traditions, which might forge new connections.

What unique food resources—farmer’s markets, local farmers, food coops, cooking schools, etc.—exist in your community? Discuss how any of these might be useful partners in helping the museum reach out to new audiences via food.

## Things Museums Can Do to Promote Food Literacy

Suggestions from Participants in the Feeding the Spirit Symposium

- Create cooking demonstrations and workshops. (At historic houses or history museums these might be period-appropriate.)
- Create a “plant-to-table display” with a chart and map of how food travels to grocery.
- Create an exhibit related to food/health/nutrition, tied to your museum’s subject expertise and collections.
- Create walking/hiking trails on museum grounds with measured distances/pedometers.
- Create “eating a rainbow” signage or activity (e.g., matching vegetable or fruit to colors).
- Encourage use of local farmer’s markets by listing them on the museum newsletter or website; host a farmer’s market on your property.
- Encourage visitors to use stairs instead of elevators or escalators. Add interpretive elements that make taking the stairs a game. Provide ways for visitors to measure their heart rate.
- Examine existing exhibits to see where information about food and nutrition can be added.
- Hold a celebration of home cooking contest (a “cook-off” of family recipes).
- Host a “healthy community” potluck where people bring healthy foods and their recipes for the museum to compile and share.
- Host a community garden on your museum’s grounds.
- Host film screenings and discussion/lecture groups about food issues.
- Invite visitors to make a commitment to do something (e.g., try an activity, find a certain food at store or market, choose a whole grain over white) and provide a way for them to share their commitment to others (on a bulletin board, in an exhibit display element, on the museum’s website).
- Make intergenerational connections with people in your community who have first-hand knowledge of local ethnic/cultural food traditions.
- Offer health and nutrition programs for the museum’s own staff.
- Partner with local Future Farmers of America (FFA) middle school/high school clubs on activities and exhibits.
- Partner with preservation groups to promote landscape preservation, urban green space and community gardens.
- Schedule special program days or a month centered on foods to celebrate food traditions and seasonal food.
- Target children with hands-on classes, cooking, tasting, taste-tests, introduction to vegetables in a fun and tasty way.
- Use landscaped areas to grow food as exhibit/project-based learning.
- Use your food service to showcase healthy foods and include useful information; host visiting chefs giving cooking demonstrations featuring different cultures or cooking for healthy eating.

## Ways to Make the Museum Food Service Healthy and Green

Suggestions from Participants in the Feeding the Spirit Symposium

- Add recycling bins to the food service area.
- Allocate a percentage of your operating budget to going green—for example, replace refrigerators and dishwashers with Energy Star-rated equipment.
- Display the new U.S. Department of Agriculture’s “My Plate” nutritional guidelines in your café and invite visitors to compare their own “plate.”
- Eliminate or reduce less healthy options such as processed foods and fried foods on your menu.
- Eliminate soda and soda vending machines; offer healthy drinks.
- Extend interpretation into the café/restaurant area. Tie the food served to information presented in exhibits elsewhere in the museum.
- Go vegetarian in your food offerings for one day/week (can tie this to the “Meatless Monday” movement).
- Hold a symposium of local/community organizations to promote creative collaboration and networking.
- Hold tasting events to introduce healthy foods (kale chips!) on your menu.
- Host film screenings and discussion/lecture groups about food issues.
- If you buy any of your supplies from local growers, profile them in displays in your food service area.
- If your food service currently uses disposable plates and utensils, price the option of adding a commercial dishwasher for reusable serviceware or of using compostable tableware and collecting it for recycling.
- Implement a policy that for events/catering all vendors and contractors should be local/green/organic.
- Incorporate local, organic and seasonal foods into your food service menu as much as possible.
- Incorporate messaging about food best practices into your advertising and social media to help make your food service part of the draw to the museum.
- Invite visitors to rate the foods they eat in the café; share the ratings with other visitors.
- Make your front-line staff and food service staff part of your decision-making and message delivery. Educate them on the green and nutritional standards guiding your operations; invite their ideas on how to implement changes; make sure front line staff can explain your choices to visitors.
- Minimize packaging; use bulk containers (ketchup, mustard, etc.) instead of mini-packets.
- Offer cooking classes focusing on whole/organic foods.
- Offer smaller portion size offerings; use table tents to promote healthy choices; create special menu items that feature garden products.
- Offer healthier choices in your food service and show nutritional information.
- Display photos of food growing so that children know where food comes from.
- Provide literature with the calorie count of food on your menu and how much exercise it would take to burn off those calories.
- Provide filling stations for reusable water bottles that visitors bring. Sell reusable bottles in the museum store.
- Stop offering bottled water and provide water from clean, easy-to-use water fountains.
- Study the certification standards of the Green Restaurant Association <http://www.dinegreen.com/>. Identify which standards you can integrate into your operations and set a goal of applying for Green Restaurant Certification.
- Use green cleaning products.
- Write a food service mission/intent statement related to the museum’s mission statement. Use it to guide your operational decisions for the food service, including selection of food service companies or vendors, and display it for visitors to see.

## Overcoming Barriers to Integrating Food into the Museum

Observations from Participants in the Feeding the Spirit Symposium

**Challenge:** Altering menus or food operations will require changing an existing relationship/contract with a franchised caterer.

**Solution:** Use nutrition and sourcing of food and sustainability of operations as negotiating factors in reconsidering food contracts.

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**Challenge:** Traditional museum staff often lack technical expertise.

**Solution:** Reach out to members of the community to fill knowledge gaps.

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**Challenge:** Funds are necessary even for start-up programs.

**Solution:** Seek partners, start small and seek in-kind contributions (compost, knowledge/abilities).

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**Challenge:** The museum has no “green space.”

**Solution:** Partner with city parks. Focus on support programming (seed saving, oral histories, physical collections), planter gardens. Develop community presence through outreach or support services.

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**Challenge:** The museum must reach beyond the immediate geographic community to have a broader impact.

**Solution:** Implement targeted marketing; establish a geographically based advisory council; work through affiliates (other museums, organizations with related missions, social service organizations) in the areas you are trying to reach.

**Challenge:** The cost of fresh, organic vegetables and fruit is very high; visitors are price sensitive.

**Solution:** Target the “dirty dozen” (foods that use the highest level of pesticides) to buy organically, and then add others when prices are favorable.

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**Challenge:** Refrigeration is needed to store fresh items, taking up valuable space.

**Solution:** Rethink space planning in the back of house. Can space be reconfigured to solve multiple problems at once, including food storage?

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**Challenge:** Infrastructure and/or staff resources are limited, e.g., no kitchen or cooking facilities; existing staff already have a lot on their plates or are not trained in the proper field.

**Solution:** Work with development staff and trustees to identify funding resources. Identify partnerships in the community to share resources.

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**Challenge:** People don't relate to cultural/ethnic/native foods appropriate to our mission.

**Solution:** Label, brand, market. Tie the food to the stories you tell; integrate it into your messaging. Have the exhibit/interpretive staff work on the presentation of food in the restaurant signage and menus.

## Recipes for Success

These “recipes” were contributed by panelists at the Feeding the Spirit symposium. Use them as a starting point to plan your museum’s menu for contributing to health and sustainability.

## Recipe for Success

### The EatSleepPlay™ Initiative

Chef: Tori Kass, project director, Health Initiative, Children’s Museum of Manhattan (CMOM)

#### Description:

This recipe focuses on serving up the important ingredients for building partnerships to support healthier sustainable communities.

This recipe is based on the EatSleepPlay™: A Children’s Museum of Manhattan Health Initiative, which targets families with very young children in order to prevent the root causes of obesity by providing services to low-income communities using an innovative arts-based approach to deliver the latest medical and scientific information directly to families. With the support of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), CMOM successfully adapted the NIH’s We Can! obesity prevention program into an 11-lesson Early Childhood Obesity Prevention Curriculum using a series of arts- and literacy-based workshops designed to reach children as young as 18 months of age and up to 5 years old with creative programs and consistent messages focused on helping families develop positive behaviors in areas that most affect obesity: nutrition, exercise and sleep. Almost two years since it was initiated, research confirms that Eat Sleep Play™ is already showing signs of impacting childhood obesity prevention at both the local and national levels.

#### Ingredients for Successful Partnerships:

- a mixture of 2 teaspoons of patience and trust
- 2 tablespoons of collaborative effort (shared responsibility offers people the opportunity to stay connected)
- a pinch of accessibility to address the lack of resources that might affect your community
- 1 cup of sustainability for maintaining and building upon successes and preventing deterioration

#### Instructions:

1. **Determine a goal** that supports your organization’s health and wellness vision.
2. **Choose a program** or activity that supports your goal.
3. **Select a target audience.** What specific groups do you want to reach by creating this program or activity? Do you have free access to this population? Are there other organizations that have better access? Example: CMOM partnered with the New York City Housing Authority to gain direct access to underserved, at-risk children living in public housing.
4. **Understand your own resources and expertise.** Make a list of the resources and services that are available in-house. Which ones would be beneficial to the program or activity? Identify your strengths and weaknesses. Do any issues arise that might be resolved by involving other organizations?
5. **Choose a partner.** Research and identify stakeholders. Which ones share your vision in the community? Talk to parents, parent delegates, families and professionals in your community. Conduct Internet research; consult with potential funding sources and key leaders in your community. Determine whether the organization or individual has been involved in other successful partnerships or collaborations. Discuss your potential partner with your staff. Pool your resources. Are there any other organizations (locally or nationally) that are attempting to achieve the same goals as your initiative? Would you benefit from pooling ideas and concepts (and vice versa)? Example: CMOM is working closely with United Way of New York City and Administration of Children Services, as we support their goal of enriching and enhancing Head Start early childhood

programs by implementing educational methods that foster healthier behaviors.

6. **Contact your prospective partner.** Send a letter, e-mail, make a phone call or set up a meeting. Bring marketing or press materials that best demonstrate your idea for the program or activity. You must communicate what makes your vision unique and appealing to potential partners. Represent the benefits of working with your organization on the specific event or activity.
7. **Plan for long-term sustainability and build capacity within your organization.** Create a realistic implementation plan that meets your needs and makes the most out of resources that already exist. Establish a planning committee with staff members. Present the collaboration as a win-win situation for all parties.
8. **Jointly establish your outreach plan.** Agree on goals and objectives. Develop clearly defined roles and responsibilities for staff and partners. Create a written plan that outlines procedures. Sign an agreement letter or contract. Adopt a long-term vision. For example, CMOM has partnered with Hunter College, School of Public Health. This will be beneficial to both organizations because we have similar goals for health advocacy. CMOM has also partnered with CUNY Professional Development Institute and is working closely with childcare providers to train them on incorporating healthier practices that can ultimately influence future generation of children and families.
9. **Evaluate collaboration and partnership.** Track and record your progress and see if you met your goals. Has the program or activity met your expectations?
10. **Share success stories so you can clearly see the value and benefits of joining your particular outreach efforts.** Show appreciation through recognition.

### Notes on Technique:

Recognize the importance of partnerships. Create more opportunities for community efforts.

Capacity building is key to creating lasting partnerships. Prevent duplication of individual efforts that already exist.

Develop a plan to utilize partnerships. Enhance the power of resource development.

Keep your eyes open to all the possibilities. See below for CMOM's diversity of outreach.

### More Information:

For the many different aspects of the **EatSleepPlay™** recipe, visit: <http://www.cmom.org/eatsleepplay>.

## Recipe for Success

### Youth Engagement with a Side of Sustainable Farming

Chef: Eliza Fournier, green youth farm manager, Chicago Botanic Garden

#### Description:

This tasty recipe will yield a holistic youth development program, using sustainable agriculture practices, that includes: cooking, nutrition, leadership development and work-readiness skills mixed in with a little old-fashioned farm work.

The Chicago Botanic Garden has been involved in community gardening outside the walls of its Glencoe site for its entire history. Since 2003, it has deepened its connection with the community through its Urban Agriculture programs, which include the Green Youth Farm initiative for youth and the Windy City Harvest certificate program for adults. Green Youth Farm consists of four off-site sustainable agriculture (small) farms, each of which employs 20+ high school students mid-May through mid-October. Participants experience life on the farm while gaining an appreciation for how their food is produced, harvested and marketed to patrons of the Chicago Botanic Garden and members of their communities.

#### Ingredients for Success:

- **Leadership:** No substitutions for this ingredient. You must have highly inspired and committed internal leaders to “raise the dough” and provide the institutional support needed to support this effort year after year.
- **Space:** You need fertile soil in which to grow your gardens (and students)! This can be on-site or off-site on park/forest preserve, school or purchased land. Important ingredients include access to water, office space and fencing! If your space is on urban land, make sure to utilize raised beds to avoid growing in contaminated soil, which can spoil the recipe.

- **Staff:** At a minimum, one full-time/year-round staff member to run the program. This is a painstaking and complex recipe that takes committed and skilled staff whom you will want to have around for the long term. The best quality staff people for this recipe will have experience in working with youth, farming and team-building/program delivery. To serve 25–30 students on a ¾- to 1-acre site, we recommend one full-time/year-round coordinator, one full-time seasonal grower (six months) and two full-time seasonal interns (three months).
- **Curriculum/plan:** Fortunately, lots of people have made this recipe before, so there is a wealth of information and training available to people who are attempting this dish for the first time.

#### Instructions:

1. **Raise the dough.** This can be done through the institutional budget or through outside fundraising from corporate sponsors, individual donors, family foundations and/or government grants. A diverse mix of these sources will yield the optimal flavor balance.
2. **Hire the staff.** The pool of candidates with the right mix of personality, experience and education is ever-growing. There are many on-line resources that can help you recruit quality staff for your recipe, including ATTRA (or National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service) and Slow Food USA.
3. **Gather available curriculum/program materials.** Maybe even participate in some training with an experienced “chef” to make sure you understand the steps to this recipe.

4. **Identify the land where you will create this recipe.** Is it on or off-site? Does it have the key qualities listed above? Do you have long-term permission to use the space? (Note: Steps 1–4 can be performed simultaneously or in reverse order. Sometimes it’s best if step 4 happens first to avoid future conflicts.) If the land is off-site, identify community partners who may already be doing similar work and who may be able to help you: a) identify staff and/or students from within the community to participate in the program, b) help provide pieces of the recipe you do not feel so confident about, c) procure or share resources such as gardening materials, advice, etc.
5. **Develop a site plan.** Make sure to include raised beds if you are planting in urban soils.
6. **Recruit students.** Participating in high school career days or just setting up a booth during lunch are great ways to raise interest.
7. **Build your garden.** It is great to include high school students in the initial construction of the garden. (Note: Don’t fret about yields in your first year. The most important produce is your students and the built farm.)
8. **Repeat and add your own special ingredients to make the resulting recipe your own unique blend!**

#### Notes on Technique:

Recipe has the tendency to double, triple and quadruple! Sustainable food systems are a very popular topic right now, and if done right, people experiencing your recipe will undoubtedly want more. Consider how much you are willing to undertake before embarking on the adventure that is this recipe.

The key ingredient in this recipe is staff. The right (and enough) staff with the right skill sets will help you avoid having to redo this recipe over and over.

There are great opportunities for institutional synergies in this recipe. Youth participants can grow food for your museum’s café and support your museum’s gift shop through value-added products (food and other products, e.g., cookbooks, etc.). Today’s youth participants are tomorrow’s museum employees. Field trips for discussion with museum staff about careers help make our museums even more accessible to the communities we serve. Youth are advocates for our museums. They help inspire folks who previously may have never heard of our institutions.

#### More Information:

For the **Chicago Botanic Garden’s** interpretation of this recipe, visit [www.chicagobotanic.org/greenyouthfarm](http://www.chicagobotanic.org/greenyouthfarm).

For the original recipe (including curriculum and manuals) that we adapted for our use, visit [www.thefoodproject.org](http://www.thefoodproject.org).

## Recipe for Success

### Is an Exhibit on Obesity Right for Your Museum?

Chef: Jane Pickering, deputy director, Peabody Museum of Natural History, Yale University, New Haven, Conn.

#### Description:

This recipe will help you decide if an exhibit on obesity is right for your institution given your mission and resources, based on the Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History's experience in creating the exhibit "Big Food: Health, Culture and the Evolution of Eating."

The Peabody Museum was approached by the Yale Medical School to collaboratively produce an exhibit on the global obesity epidemic. We had completed two exhibits on vector-borne disease with our entomology curator, and the school suggested we look at chronic disease. This seemed a logical next step to the school, as we are the family-oriented science museum in the city, but seemed far less obvious to us as we are a fairly traditional, collections-oriented natural history museum. Over a few months we went through a number of thought processes to decide if this was right for us.

#### Ingredients for Success:

- The project needs to be a good "fit" for your organization. There are some wonderful exhibits at children's and science museums on obesity that concentrate on personal behaviors and children's health (the focus of Let's Move!). Our mission as a university museum, and our available resources, argued for a more wide-ranging approach, so we decided to try to produce an exhibit that looked at the complex biological, social, cultural and societal forces behind this epidemic. For an art museum, for example, an exhibit on body image might be an appropriate way to approach this topic.
- Consensus needs to be built from the very beginning. There are difficult times ahead as exhibit content is decided upon and the visitor experience is discussed. How will overweight people feel as they walk around the exhibit? How do you make the exhibit something people will want to see?
- There must be lots of voices at the table. Allocate plenty of time to listen to them. People feel strongly about weight issues and the politics and other forces behind the obesity epidemic. Be prepared for meetings in which people want to share personal stories that can be very helpful in thinking through how visitors will respond to the exhibit. It's also important to have experts who have an in-depth understanding of the issues. For example, we were going to include regular and bariatric wheelchairs (or movie seats) to show changing sizes over time. One of our collaborators pointed out, however, that this display could just as easily engender disgust that patients have gotten bigger (thereby contributing to the weight stigma issues we are trying to address) rather than demonstrating the results of the obesity epidemic.
- Finding financial support for the exhibit proved easier than expected. Obesity is a significant 21st-century issue that is in the news every day. It is a major concern for many businesses and foundations, and we found funders were very interested in supporting this project. It "sold itself." When your idea is fully attuned to community and societal needs, fundraising really is relatively straightforward.

## Instructions:

While the following steps are used by the museum for all exhibit proposals, usually our projects do not require as much time and thought for these phases as they took for “Big Food.”

1. **Evaluate the fit.** We started by asking, “Is this topic right for the Peabody? Does it fit with our mission? Does it serve our audiences?” Asking these questions pushed us to think through different parts of our mission, which includes interpreting Yale research (an important part of the exhibit) but also focuses on our collections (potentially less applicable). This provided a base from which to shape our plans. For example, we decided to work with an anthropologist on human origins as hunter-gatherers, and a section on contemporary foraging populations used objects from our anthropology collections.
2. **Gather input.** The whole staff (not just the Exhibit Committee of 12 staff and faculty curators) was canvassed about the exhibit content, and many offered thoughts and opinions about what the show should cover. We made extra efforts to publicize the project to all our internal and external stakeholders early on. (We are not always good about that.)
3. **Choose an exhibit title.** It quickly became clear that the numerous conversations we needed to have with the staff, university and community required the development of an exhibit title at the beginning. While it is a bit of a chicken and egg situation, without a title it proved difficult to describe the project to both internal and external audiences. We tried to use a “working title” (like “The Rise of Obesity”), but this proved very unhelpful in communicating about the project. So we spent a lot of early planning time on this. It also helped us crystallize our ideas. The result (after more than 100 suggestions) was “Big Food: Health, Culture and the Evolution of Eating,” which we felt indicated the breadth of our exhibit and (hopefully) sounds interesting enough to visit.
4. **Launch planning on content.** We are now in the exhibit development stage, with a team representing the museum (exhibits, education, curatorial) and our two main partners. We are also working on programming events elsewhere in New Haven, e.g., a companion exhibit at the public library.

## Notes on Technique:

You can’t predict people’s reaction to this topic. It is an intensely personal issue. Staff and curators who we feared would think it inappropriate (particularly as the number of museum objects in the show would be relatively small) were actually very supportive. To the contrary, they thought it was an important topic for the community, and therefore for the museum. I was unprepared for the passion this topic brings out, from people’s political views to their own (or a loved one’s) experience with weight issues. This is not a common response when our exhibits are about dinosaurs or Egypt.

Don’t trivialize the issues surrounding obesity. There are many complex forces at play, and weight stigma is a serious problem. It’s not just about everyone needing to exercise more and eat vegetables.

Communication about the exhibit topic is challenging. Staff needed to learn to be comfortable talking about the topic with overweight people (sometimes close colleagues) in the room.

## More Information:

Some blog posts about our project:

<http://futureofmuseums.blogspot.com/2011/08/big-food-health-culture-and-evolution.html>

<http://paleocoll.blogspot.com/2011/09/weighty-matters.html>

One of our partners, the **Yale Rudd Center on Food Policy and Obesity**, is one of the nation’s leading research organizations on obesity. Their website has lots of relevant resources, including a food timeline; copyright-free, high-resolution pictures for your exhibit; and up-to-the-minute media and political information.

<http://www.yaleruddcenter.org/>.

Not everyone thinks it presents a good idea, but this short post includes lots of interesting comments:

<http://www.artsjournal.com/realcleararts/2011/06/art-and-health.html>.

## Recipe for Success

### “Generation Fit: Steps to a Healthier Lifestyle”: An Exhibit and Educational Plan Addressing the Childhood Obesity Epidemic in the United States

Chef: Ismael Calderon, director of science, Newark Museum, N.J.

#### Description:

This recipe describes an appetizing and delectable full-course meal consisting of a main entrée interactive exhibit—“Generation Fit”—and appetizing à la carte educational programs provided by strategic partners. “Generation Fit” is a 2,500-square-foot interactive exhibit that allows families to explore issues of nutrition and exercise, and provides an interactive “tool kit”—ingredients for disease prevention and life-long healthy behavior.

Research indicates that there is a direct correlation between the high incidence of obesity and low socio-economic and educational status. New Jersey is ranked as the second wealthiest state in the nation and consequently 43rd out of 50 states in the obesity scale. However, it has several socially, economically and educationally challenged communities—Newark, Camden, New Brunswick, Vineland, Trenton—where the obesity trend, especially among youth ages 6–18 years old, is higher than the national average. The Newark Museum, an institution that since its inception has addressed the needs of its community, developed “Generation Fit” to improve literacy about nutrition and exercise within at-risk communities and society overall. Tackling and achieving longitudinal behavioral change among these communities required a partnership with institutions and organizations concerned about and committed to remediating the obesity epidemic.

Newark Mayor Cory Booker was appointed co-chair of First Lady Michelle Obama’s Let’s Move national initiative to raise a healthier generation of kids. The museum saw this as an opportunity to address the obesity epidemic and play a major role in its remediation. It joined its project with the city’s, the national Let’s Move initiative and other local community-based efforts.

Museums are places where audiences come to have a mindful, delicious and enjoyable experience. “Generation Fit” accomplishes this through a series of entertaining interactive components developed to engage families as they explore and discover the causes for obesity. They also acquire a “tool kit” of strategies for weight control, physical fitness and lifestyle change. Interactive components were developed through a year-long process of research and brainstorming, allowing visitors to actively participate in their learning:

1. **Calorie Crank** allows visitors see how much energy is required to burn calories consumed.
2. **Appetite Circuit Animation** illustrates how the appetite circuit works, how we are wired to eat and why we easily gain weight.
3. **Food Engineering** reveals how flavor chemists engineer smells and tastes to make us eat more “junk” foods.
4. **Body Scan** correlates the relationship between healthy/unhealthy individuals based on their nutrition and exercise.
5. **Healthy Meal** allows visitors to construct a delicious, nutritious meal.
6. **Sugar Detective** provides participants with tools to avoid sugars in foods.
7. **Label Decoder** teaches visitors how to read food labels.
8. **Portion Size** provides strategies for selecting the right portion and not overeating.
9. **“Exertainment” Center** combines video games with exercise challenges.
10. **Fit Center** provides simple exercise equipment geared at promoting the essentials of good exercise.
11. **Social Network** permits visitors to stay connected with the exhibit message and receive healthy recommendations and strategies, and invitations to upcoming health-related events.

#### Ingredients for Success:

- **Tie to mission.** In keeping with its tradition of service to the community established by founder John Cotton Dana, the Newark Museum recognized an opportunity to provide much-needed resources to families affected by obesity. While developing an exhibit that could provide these resources, the exhibit team was cognizant of the importance and difficulty of developing an exhibit on obesity that would draw in the public. The exhibit’s theme had to meet the dual goals of the museum’s mission—a museum of service, and a leader in connecting objects and ideas to the needs and wishes of its constituencies—as well as drawing audiences to the institution.

- **Make it compelling.** In an exhibit addressing the theme of obesity, the central question that emerged was “How do you get the overweight and obese, as well as their families, to attend an exhibit on obesity?” The team’s solution was to develop an exhibit storyline and marketing plan that communicated an interactive, fun and positive family experience in a non-threatening and non-judgmental environment. The title does not contain the word obesity because that would communicate a negative message that would not draw visitors in. The title “Generation Fit: Steps to a Healthier Lifestyle,” together with the exhibit logo, were developed and vetted to communicate an active and engaging visitor experience. The exhibit theme was clearly a good match for the museum, and the exhibit title prompted a great deal of interest and provided a gateway for coalescing the various initiatives focusing on the issue.
- **Think big.** For a project such as “Generation Fit” to be completely successful, it must address the obesity issue from many perspectives. First, partners must form a consortium to extend the visitor experience and make resources available for addressing and remediating the issue after visiting the exhibit. Second, an institution must be able to transform its culture to coincide with the message that it will deliver. There must be broad institutional buy-in on the concept and philosophy of the exhibit from all museum departments—exhibits, development, marketing, food services and others. We needed to “walk the talk” institutionally by communicating a clear message to the public about the exhibit’s goals and objectives, carry them out in the exhibit and educational programs, and encourage the staff to practice the exhibit’s philosophy by staying active and eating healthy. Any vending machines should offer nutritional snacks. Caterers should connect the menu to the exhibit’s theme by providing healthy, nutritious meals throughout institutional functions.

### Instructions:

1. **Create a logic model.** This model visualizes the scope of goals and objectives, resources required for the project, synergies and relationships among partners, related educational programs, and metrics—front-end, formative (prototyping) and summative/remedial evaluation—to determine success. The logic model guides conversations among partners, funders, the museum team and the public.
2. **Communicate.** The logic model serves as a communication instrument that allows the exhibit team to communicate how the goals and objectives of the exhibit will be accomplished and what resources will be needed. Egos must be left out of the development process. Think about the experience you want to provide your audience. Allow all team members to have a voice in the team process, but ultimately there has to be a decision-maker: the project director.
3. **Follow best practices and standards for exhibit/project development.** These include:
  - Internet search for prior exhibits on the topic
  - research on the central concepts connected to the theme—the issues
  - project timeline for successful fundraising, concept and exhibit development, fabrication and development of supporting education initiatives
  - prototyping period to ensure the exhibit components work
  - evaluation framework that communicates (especially to funders) the exhibit’s success
  - networking, communicating and participating in partner events
  - involvement in the exhibit development, design and fabrication process
  - building audiences (marketing) prior to opening
  - dissemination of the project to the field
4. **Include homegrown organic ingredients gathered from the community.** Of prime importance in launching the exhibit development is front-end evaluation. In

order to gauge how potential audiences perceive and understand the issue of obesity—and whether or not they will attend an exhibit on it—develop a questionnaire asking focus questions. Use the information gleaned from the front-end research to craft exhibit messaging and interactive components that address misinformation, misconceptions and lack of knowledge. We distributed questionnaires at community festivals and museum family programs where “Generation Fit” coaches—a cadre of trained high school students—provided demonstrations and presentations on nutrition and exercise. Once audiences engaged in fun activities, they also participated in open-ended conversations about the issues of obesity, nutrition and exercise. These conversations were significant in developing the exhibit’s design and visitor experience.

5. **Create an advisory committee.** Ours consisted of project partners and helped guide the exhibit development process, support educational programs and navigate through the issues. The advisory committee can help shape the exhibit’s storyline based on their knowledge and vet exhibit content to ensure thematic focus and accuracy. Ours also helped develop and contribute educational resources, such as electronic field trips and weight challenge competitions. They helped in marketing to the targeted communities and identified sources of funding that supported the museum’s initiative without interfering with messaging.
6. **Sit down at the table together.** Because the issue of obesity is complex and sometimes difficult to address within the affected communities, it is essential to provide a potpourri of educational strategies via

a cadre of partners. While our exhibit was being conceptualized, other initiatives were being developed by other organizations addressing the obesity issue. It was essential to identify those initiatives and ensure that committed and dedicated partners—museums, libraries, health organizations, environmental organizations, community-based organizations, print and electronic media, etc.— would bring assets to the table. Assets included educational programs such as electronic field trips, fitness classes/curriculum, community gardening workshops, nutrition/cooking curriculum and outdoor activities, as well as potential delivery of audiences. The exhibit served as the central hub supported by educational initiatives conducted by partners. These educational activities allowed us to engage a wide audience.

#### Notes on Technique:

Like a complete meal, which is both satisfying and nutritious, an exhibit should feed and nourish positive behavior and culture.

Working with partners is a delicate and complicated undertaking. They must bring resources to the table and not just be in it for the recognition. Yet, it is extremely important to recognize partners in marketing initiatives and promotional materials based on their breadth of contributions and without confusing the messaging. Central to a successful partnership is a well-defined quid-pro-quo documented through a memorandum of understanding.

## Recipe for Success

### Designing a Successful, Values-Based Museum Restaurant

Chef: Chazz Alberti, national director, Culinary Development, Sodexo Leisure Services

#### Description:

This recipe provides a framework for successful collaboration with your dining services provider and ensures that your dining program is consistent with your mission, and is operating in alignment with your values about wellness, sustainability, service and quality, and meets the “triple bottom line” of people, planet and profit. When you take all these factors into account, everybody wins.

#### Ingredients for Success:

- Create a statement of what you want your museum’s food to mean. What values does it embody?
- How will you communicate new values to the visitors if the restaurant is going to change materially through this process?
- Decide what the restaurant going to look like. Will the restaurant and its communications be designed by the museum’s in-house team that designs exhibits and marketing, your dining services provider or a third-party designer?
- Ask yourself, how do we create an experience for the visitor that integrates restaurant and exhibits to further reinforce your institution’s mission?
- Determine what the user wants and needs. Who are your visitors and what do they look for? A parent visiting with toddlers may find a fine-dining experience uncomfortable and uninviting. Do a post introduction assessment to measure actions against impacts. Remember that moving the visitor dining experience closer to your mission is a process and that review is critical to success.

#### Instructions:

1. **Have a preliminary conversation with your food service provider.** Outline your goals and values.
2. **Invite the service representatives to come to the museum and meet with staff from all departments.** Your dining partner should review dining expectations with each department. What is important to the visitor? Staff from guest services, development, finance, exhibits and programming should provide feedback on how the dining program can help them achieve goals for their specific departments and (very importantly) which of these goals takes precedence. Serving organic, locally sourced food may be in alignment with your mission, but will increase the price of your menu items and reduce your financial return. A new dining venue could also increase participation and per caps, so it is critical to measure all factors as you make your choices.
3. **Ask your food service provider to incorporate this input into a plan that addresses all the critical issues and outlines how the restaurant will meet the museum’s goals.** Share the plan with the involved departments, assess how it meets the needs of the museum’s stakeholders and revise as necessary. Integrate the final plan into your food service contract.
4. **Work continuously to integrate your restaurant into your planning and communications.** Museum visits often begin at home. The restaurant link on the landing page of your website can create early interest and steer visitors to your dining service operations. It must be easy to find and accessible, or website visitors will never get to the information. All of the museum’s communications (Web, social media, print) should educate visitors about your dining program and how these choices support your mission and values.

## Notes on Technique

Sodexo has developed exceptional partnerships with successful dining programs because of the joint focus with our clients on communicating to visitors about the dining offerings and the decisions we have made and why. A botanical garden such as Phipps Conservatory might decide that serving local and/or organically raised products, though more expensive, is important to their mission. The client must work with their dining partner to communicate the reasons behind these decisions and how they support their mission. Garden exhibits may articulate that reducing the carbon footprint protects the environment, so the dining program operations are consistent with actions to save the plants and ecosystems visitors just saw.

The National Aquarium in Baltimore has been very thoughtful about integrating the restaurant with the exhibits, and vice versa. When they talk about ocean warming and the resulting “bloom” of jellyfish, they can share how selecting specific items from the menu can help to prevent this negative outcome.

The Indianapolis Museum of Art is another good example. They made a commitment to a dining experience that emphasizes local produce, fresh food and sustainability. The restaurant is a key part of their public image; they include the restaurant in their PR and feature the restaurant prominently on the home page of their website. The information is easy to access and very visible.

The best decisions about your dining program involve visitors and their feedback early in the process. Your website, exit interviews and focus groups are effective methods for gathering insight on actions you are considering. Questions can be posted on your website, such as “Would you pay a higher price for organic chicken?” A mission related program must meet all your goals; service, quality, financial return and alignment.

## More Information:

All of these destinations do a good job of explaining what values underlie the menus of their food services:

### **Indianapolis Museum of Art**

<http://www.imamuseum.org/visit/dining>

### **National Aquarium in Baltimore**

<http://www.aqua.org/dining.html>

### **Phipps Conservatory**

<http://phipps.conservatory.org/visit-hipps/cafe-hipps.aspx>

## Recipe for Success

### Café Practices that are Good for People and the Planet

Chef: Richard Piacentini, Executive Director of Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens in Pittsburgh, Pa.

#### Description:

Some of the best recipes are passed down over generations. But in the case of our recipe for a museum café with whole, healthy foods for children and adults, we nixed the traditional menu—hot dogs, pizza, sweets, and sugary drinks—and decided to start from scratch.

When Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens opened in 1893 as a source of instruction and pleasure, healthy foods weren't part of the equation. Much later in 2005—when we opened the first LEED® Visitor Center in a public garden as part of a three-phase green building expansion project—we started to focus on organic and local foods, eventually even achieving three stars as a Green Restaurant Certified® café, but still served typical fare. As we continued with efforts to be truer to our organizational mission, which compels us to inspire and educate visitors with the beauty and importance of plants and advance sustainability and worldwide biodiversity, we realized that we needed to raise the bar with the foods we were serving, too.

We set a goal to offer meals that are produced and served in a way that is good for people and the planet. And, because thousands of children visit Phipps each year, we decided to completely rework our kid's menu and inspire families to live healthier lifestyles.

We considered the production and sourcing of ingredients and created a menu for adults and kids packed with healthy, whole foods served on reusable plates at an affordable price point. Once we took the leap, we never looked back. After all, what better way to teach people about the connection between people and plants than through food? Here is what you will need to create change at your institutions:

#### Ingredients for Success:

- **Perseverance** (with a dash of practicality): Determine a doable strategy and set an attainable goal; don't try to do it all at once. You will want to have an aggressive plan that allows you to check off milestones over time, while giving yourself, staff and food service provider a chance to get some good experience. Nothing motivates action like success, so start with the low-hanging fruit while continuing to think about where you want to be when you are finished. At Phipps, we decided we wanted our café practices to be consistent with our mission.
- **Fearlessness**: Be fearless; anything is possible. We weren't sure what to expect when we made the bold decision to eliminate soda entirely from our café, but we moved forward anyway and the results were surprising. Sure, there were a few naysayers, but they were few and far between, so our fearlessness paid off.
- **Creativity**: Instead of serving peanut butter and jelly on white bread, why not offer organic peanut butter on a whole wheat wrap with sliced, fresh, organic strawberries? And, instead of traditionally made spaghetti and meatballs, why not try whole wheat penne pasta with turkey meatballs that are simmered in broth rather than fried? At Phipps, kids love these new twists.
- **Communication**: Brainstorm with your staff about ways to communicate the value of what you're accomplishing in your café to the public. At Phipps, as a result of our collaborative meetings, we made some exciting advancements. For example, we displayed photographs of the farms our foods are sourced from to help people make the connection between the garden and the plate. We also planted a vegetable garden on one of our green roofs and serve produce from it in

our café. We joined the Meatless Monday movement, offering additional delicious vegan and vegetarian options on Mondays; became a partner in First Lady Obama's Let's Move! campaign to combat childhood obesity; and completely eliminated soda from our café. We encourage visitors to participate in the change by offering free samples of our new, healthier options.

- **Empowerment:** Think of your entire staff as brand ambassadors. If you effectively communicate to them what changes you are making and why, and give them some talking points for when they interact with customers, they will feel part of the change and will take pride in the solutions.

### Instructions:

Ground rules (required ingredients): Develop a set of metrics to guide staff at all levels, and to make it easy for them to make purchases and develop menu selections. Our café mission statement is the foundation from which we make all menu and sourcing decisions. We focus on local and organic foods, with organic being our preference as long as the food is domestically produced. You may not be able to offer organic versions of everything, but a good place to start is with your children's menu, as kids are more susceptible to pesticides. Another good step is to serve only organic versions of "The Dirty Dozen"—fruits and vegetables that have the highest residual level of pesticides. (Find the list at [www.ewg.org](http://www.ewg.org)). At first, we used a Mediterranean Pyramid to help guide menu offerings in our café. We are now transitioning over to MyPlate (found at [www.myplate.gov](http://www.myplate.gov)), which is much easier to follow than the old USDA Food Pyramid. Our café mission statement also guides us in responsibly sourcing ingredients so that we are steering away from products that come from environmentally destructive CAFOs (concentrated animal feedlot operations). Additionally, we only choose the highest-quality, sustainably-sourced seafood for the same ecologically minded reasons.

- **Start with the basics (and hold the sugar):** All museum cafes can get rid of fried foods, prepackaged and processed snacks, sugary and artificially sweetened drinks masquerading as healthy (i.e., flavored milks,

high-sugar juices and sports drinks). While you are at it, get rid of the artificially sweetened ones, too. To be more environmentally friendly, you can also get rid of plastic disposables and use real serviceware. Plastics made from plants are good (though expensive) options, but only if you have the ability to compost them. Our kitchen was originally designed for throw-away serviceware, and, as a result, there is not much room for a dishwasher or storage. We settled on using real plates and silverware, and paper and compostable plastic for drink cups. And while we do not have room on site for composting, we do contract with a company that picks up and composts all of our pre- and post-consumer café waste. Sometimes, it is also good to have an outside imposed set of criteria to help you focus on what to do. We went for Green Restaurant Certification®, which covers waste streams, cleaners, sourcing, and energy and water use. The plaque and recognition are good, too.

- **Come to terms with choices:** The choices offered on a museum café menu invariably include processed food. What kid, or adult for that matter, can resist food that is processed and engineered to taste good? Every single chemical in the ingredients list—and there are lots of them—was selected to stimulate taste buds or improve mouth feel, also known as texture. These highly processed foods are often hard to pass up, which is why they are so popular. If you include only healthful choices on your menu, you won't be putting your young visitors in a position to have to choose between good and bad. Additionally, parents won't have to say "no" and they will appreciate that. Be creative with what you offer by coming up with new menu items that can stand on their own.
- **Identify what is unique about your museum and find a way to tie it to your café.** Make your café an extension of your exhibits. For our botanical garden, it was easy to make the connection between plant-based foods and our beautiful displays. In February 2012, when we open our Tropical Forest India exhibit, we will offer vegetarian Indian selections in the café. If your museum is on an historic site, look into recipes

that were served there in the past. If you display art from various countries, consider offering healthy cuisine from these locales, too. As long as you are cooking from scratch with your mission statement in mind, you can get creative with menu items.

- **Get a contract with a food service provider that gives you a say when making choices.** This step is absolutely critical. If you sign a contract that shifts responsibility for all café losses onto your food service provider, it is going to be very difficult to convince them to offer potentially costlier healthy choices and/or service options. At Phipps, we have a contract where we absorb all the losses and make all the profit with our café and catering services. We pay the provider a management fee, plus a percentage of the profit if we exceed our goals. You may not be in a position to do this, but, at the very least, you need to structure your contract to allow for some sharing of the risk if you want to offer better choices in your café.
- **Test selections on customers to make sure you are on the right course.** We tested our healthy Splash Bar fruit drinks for several months before we pulled the plug on the soda machine.

### Notes on technique:

Make your new offerings fun and attractive. Our new Splash Bar drinks are a bit theatrical and special because they are made to order. For our orange and grapefruit splashes, we squeeze the fruit right in front of the customer. Ever wonder how Starbucks got so popular? People like watching the barista make their drinks. Tell people why you are doing what you are doing. If you are spending more on providing organic food or other better choices, make sure you communicate to patrons that they are getting added value when they visit your café.

For more information, please visit:

Café Phipps webpage: <http://phipps.conservatory.org/visitphipps/cafe-hipps.aspx>

AAM blog post by Richard Piacentini on eliminating soft drinks: <http://futureofmuseums.blogspot.com/2011/09/dont-just-stir-itshake-it.html>

Positive media response to soda removal: <http://communityvoices.sites.postgazette.com/index.php/news/being-green/30266-hipps-takes-a-stand>

Choose My Plate: <http://www.choosemyplate.gov>

Harvard School of Public Health: How Sweet Is Your Drink? <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/files/how-sweet-is-it-color.pdf>

Harvard School of Public Health: Healthy Drinks: <http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/healthy-drinks>

## How to Host a Potluck

Since the focus of Feeding the Spirit is food and community, it seems only appropriate that it be viewed and discussed with a group convivially gathered over food and drink.

We encourage you to make the webinar a culinary event—whether you view it alone and treat yourself to some good takeout or a carefully assembled home-packed lunch at your desk, or reserve the museum’s lunchroom for an all-staff potluck. As with any good potluck, the more guests you invite, the better the experience!

Think of an appropriate theme to guide your potluck. Jessica Harris’s lecture touches on African food traditions and how they spread to America with the slave trade. She has suggested some recipes (page 28–31) that complement that theme. You might choose a theme appropriate to your museum’s mission or to the culture(s) of the community surrounding you.

Note that the webcast concludes with a virtual happy hour—we recommend that you schedule the physical equivalent at your viewing site. Kicking back over appetizers and a drink (alcoholic or non, whatever is in keeping with your employer’s policies) will stimulate your appetite for discussion and help ensure that the food for thought provided by the webinar translates into action.

## Recipes for Your Potluck

Our 2012 CFM Lecturer, Jessica Harris, is a prolific author in addition to being a scholar and lecturer, having published at least a dozen cookbooks in addition to her other writing. She suggests the following recipes as potential dishes for your webcast potluck. After each recipe, we indicate what cookbook it originally appeared in. Several were also reprinted in her latest book, *High on the Hog: A Culinary Journey from Africa to America*. You can find these books on Amazon if you want to explore similar recipes.

### Yassa au Poulet

Harris notes, “This is the first dish that I tasted on the African continent, and it launched me on my culinary journey of connections.”

1/3 cup freshly squeezed lemon juice  
4 large onions, sliced  
salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste  
5 tablespoons peanut oil  
1 habanero chili, pricked with a fork  
1 2½- to 4-pound frying chicken, cut into serving parts  
½ cup water

The night before, prepare a marinade by mixing the lemon juice, onions, salt and pepper, 4 tablespoons of the peanut oil and the chili in a deep bowl. When the marinade has reached the desired heat, remove the chili. Place the chicken pieces in the marinade, cover the bowl with plastic wrap and refrigerate it overnight.

When ready to cook, preheat the broiler. Remove the chicken pieces from the marinade, reserving the marinade. Place the pieces on the broiler rack and grill them briefly, until they are just lightly browned on both sides. Set them aside. Remove the onions from the marinade with a slotted spoon. Heat the remaining tablespoon of oil in a deep skillet, add the onions, and sauté them over medium heat until they are tender and translucent. Add the remaining marinade to the skillet and cook until the liquid is heated through. Add the chicken pieces and the water and stir to mix well. Lower the heat and simmer, covered, for 30 minutes, or until the chicken pieces are cooked through. Serve hot over white rice.

—*The Africa Cookbook: Tastes of a Continent* by Jessica B. Harris

### Macaroni and Cheese

“This dish is an African American classic. It has deeper roots in the culinary repertoire than is usually assumed and even turns up in other locales in the African diaspora like Barbados, where it is known as macaroni pie.”

Cook macaroni broken up into short lengths in boiling, salted water. Boil uncovered for 20 or 30 minutes, then drain. Fill a buttered pudding dish with alternating layers of macaroni and grated cheese, sprinkling pepper, salt and melted butter over each layer. Have top layer of cheese, moisten with rich milk, bake in moderate oven until a rich brown.

—*Rufus Estes' Good Things to Eat: The First Cookbook by an African-American Chef* by Rufus Estes

## Spicy Fried Chickpeas (Channa)

“This is one of my favorite kinds of recipes—so simple it almost doesn’t merit being called a recipe. It can be prepared using dried chickpeas that have been soaked overnight in water and will have a bit more crunch, but these are just fine by me. They’re sold throughout the English-speaking Caribbean under the name of channa. They originated in Trinidad, where there is a significant Indian population.”

*Serves 4 to 6*

one 1-pound can whole chickpeas (Goya is a good brand)  
salt  
cayenne pepper

Preheat the broiler. Drain the chickpeas and spread them on a cookie sheet with sides. Season them with salt and cayenne. Place them under the broiler, stirring occasionally until they are brown and crunchy, 3 to 5 minutes. Serve warm.

Note: You can vary the flavor of your channa by playing around with ingredients like pimentón (smoked paprika) or other powdered chilies.

—*Rum Drinks: 50 Caribbean Cocktails, from Cuba Libre to Rum Daisy* by Jessica B. Harris

## Sugarcane Shrimp

*Makes 12 skewers*

12 large fresh shrimp, peeled and deveined  
1/3 cup freshly squeezed lime juice  
1/3 cup low-sodium soy sauce  
1 tablespoon dark Jamaican-style rum, such as Appleton  
1 tablespoon olive oil  
1 teaspoon Demerara sugar  
¼ teaspoon minced garlic  
salt  
freshly ground black pepper  
minced habanero chile (substitute jalepeño for a milder taste)  
24 two-inch chunks fresh pineapple  
12 eight-inch sugarcane skewers (see note)

Wash the shrimp and place them in a large bowl. Combine the lime juice, soy sauce, rum, oil, sugar and garlic in a second bowl. Season with salt, pepper and the habanero. Pour the liquid over the shrimp. Cover with plastic wrap and allow the shrimp to marinate while preheating the broiler. When ready, thread one pineapple chunk, one shrimp, then a second pineapple chunk on each skewer. Place the skewers on a broiler pan and cook until lightly browned, turning once, 3 to 5 minutes. When done, serve the sugarcane shrimp on their skewers on a platter while hot.

Note: To make sugarcane swizzle sticks and skewers, wash the sugarcane stalk thoroughly. Using a sharp chef’s knife, carefully cut the stalk crosswise, at a joint, into sections the length of the skewer needed. Be careful, as the cane is harder than you think. Split at the center of the core lengthwise into quarters for four skewers. Don’t remove the outer bark; it reinforces the skewer. Sharpen the ends of the skewers into points.

—*Rum Drinks: 50 Caribbean Cocktails, from Cuba Libre to Rum Daisy* by Jessica B. Harris

## Soused Cucumbers

“This salad is like the one that my mother used to make every summer. Just seeing a cucumber and smelling the almost violet perfume of a really fresh one makes me think of this cooling slurry of slippery cuke and onion. Here the Caribbean touch is the heat of the habanero with the cool cucumber.”

3 large cucumbers, peeled and thinly sliced  
2 medium Vidalia onions, thinly sliced  
¼ cup cane vinegar (see note)  
¼ cup freshly squeezed lime juice  
1 tablespoon water  
1 teaspoon brown sugar  
¼ teaspoon minced habanero chile, or to taste  
salt  
freshly ground black pepper

Alternately layer the sliced cucumbers and onions in a medium glass bowl. Whisk together the remaining ingredients in a small bowl. Taste and adjust seasoning with salt and pepper. Pour the mixture over the cucumbers and onions. Cover the bowl with a plate that fits inside it, weight the plate with a 1-pound can and refrigerate for 3 hours. When ready to serve, remove the weight and plate, fluff the cucumbers and onions with a fork, and serve chilled.

Note: Cane vinegar can be ordered from [www.steensyrup.com](http://www.steensyrup.com)

—*Rum Drinks: 50 Caribbean Cocktails, from Cuba Libre to Rum Daisy* by Jessica B. Harris

## Marinated Green Mangos

### (Souskai de Mangues Vert)

*Serves 4 to 6*

“There are more than 60 different varieties of mango in Martinique. In Jamaica, a local saying implies that in mango season cooks can turn over their pots and take a break, because everyone’s eating their fill of the luscious fruit. There are those who do not like the taste of ripe mangoes, though, and I number myself among them. I prefer the tartness of a green mango.”

4 medium green mangos  
2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lime juice  
1 garlic clove, minced  
1/8 teaspoon minced habanero chile, or to taste  
¼ cup peanut oil

Peel the mangos and cut their meat into ½-inch dice. Place them in a nonreactive bowl and mix with the lime juice, garlic and chile. Toss until well mixed. Drizzle in the oil and toss again. Cover with plastic wrap, refrigerate and allow to marinate for 1-2 hours. Serve with toothpicks.

—*Rum Drinks: 50 Caribbean Cocktails, from Cuba Libre to Rum Daisy* by Jessica B. Harris

And in case you are throwing a real happy hour to accompany the Virtual Happy Hour at the end of the webcast, Jessica recommends the following drinks.

### Shandy

“This is a classic colonial cooler that I’ve sampled in former British colonies from Bridgetown to Nairobi to New Delhi. It’s simply a mix of beer (the local brand is best) with fizzy lemonade. Caribbean beer brands like Caribe, Banks and Red Stripe are all fine, but if you can’t find them, a light local beer like a Budweiser or a Coors will do. The fizzy French lemonade that is sold in many supermarkets is fine.”

### Caribbean beer

fizzy French-style lemonade

ice cubes

1 wedge lemon for garnish (optional)

Mix equal parts of beer and fizzy lemonade in a tall glass over ice. Garnish with the lemon wedge, if desired. Serve immediately.

—*Rum Drinks: 50 Caribbean Cocktails, from Cuba Libre to Rum Daisy* by Jessica B. Harris

### Rum Daisy

“Daisies were popular tall drinks in the 1930s. They could be prepared from a range of alcohols. This is a variation on the Santa Cruz Rum Daisy that appears in the Savoy Cocktail Book.”

Makes 1 drink

2 ounces dark Barbadian-style rum, such as Mount Gay

2 teaspoons Simple Syrup (see below)

1 teaspoon maraschino liqueur

1 teaspoon freshly squeezed strained lemon juice

crushed ice

seltzer water

Combine the rum, simple syrup, maraschino liqueur and lemon juice in a cocktail shaker. Add crushed ice and shake vigorously. Strain into a highball glass and top with seltzer. Serve immediately.

### Simple Syrup

Makes about 1 cup

2 cups sugar

1 cup water

Combine the sugar and water in a small saucepan and bring to a simmer over medium heat, stirring occasionally. Continue to simmer and stir until all of the sugar has dissolved, about 3 minutes. Allow the syrup to cool to room temperature, and then pour it into a sterilized decorative bottle that can be fitted with a speed pourer. The syrup will keep in the refrigerator for 1 month.

—*Rum Drinks: 50 Caribbean Cocktails, from Cuba Libre to Rum Daisy* by Jessica B. Harris

## Let's Move! Museums & Gardens

Many of the museums that participated in the Feeding the Spirit symposium on October 13 are part of a national initiative to fight childhood obesity. AAM encourages you to join this campaign as well, demonstrating how museums can help improve national health.

Let's Move! is a comprehensive initiative launched by First Lady Michelle Obama, dedicated to solving the problem of obesity within a generation, so that children born today will grow up healthier and able to pursue their dreams.

Let's Move! is about putting children on the path to a healthy future during their earliest months and years, giving parents helpful information and fostering environments that support healthy choices.

There are an estimated 17,500 museums in the U.S. that collectively host at least 850 million visits each year. Through the Let's Move! Museums & Gardens initiative, museums, zoos, public gardens, historic sites, and science and technology centers can join the call to action in fighting childhood obesity.

To become a Let's Move! museum, organizations commit to actions that support at least one of the first two priorities in the following list. Institutions that serve food should also select at least one of the second two priorities.

Priorities:

- eat-healthy, get-active exhibits
- learning about healthy food choices and physical activity through after-school, summer and other programs
- healthy food service
- learning about healthy food choices and physical activity using food service operations

You can learn more about the campaign and sign up to be a Let's Move! museum at the IMLS website <http://www.imls.gov/about/letsmove.aspx>.

## Next Steps

- Keep the discussion going! This webinar is only the beginning of your exploration of how your museum can connect to your community through food.
- Decide what steps your museum will take to increase food literacy, bring your food service into alignment with your mission and values, and use food to build community.
- Share the discussion guide and the YouTube videos of the speakers with those in your museum who might be interested (educators, exhibit designers, your director).
- Visit the Institute of Museum and Library Services website <http://www.imls.gov/about/letsmove.aspx> to learn about the Let's Move! Museums and Gardens campaign promoting childhood health through exercise and good nutrition, and sign up to be a Let's Move! museum.
- Tell us what you think about the webcast. Send comments to [futureofmuseums@aam-us.org](mailto:futureofmuseums@aam-us.org).
- Record your thoughts about the future of museums and society by participating in CFM's Voices of the Future video project. For more information, email [futureofmuseums@aam-us.org](mailto:futureofmuseums@aam-us.org).

AAM's Center for the Future of Museums (CFM) helps museums explore the cultural, political and economic challenges facing society and devise strategies to shape a better tomorrow. CFM is a think tank and research and design lab for fostering creativity and helping museums transcend traditional boundaries to serve society in new ways. For more information, visit [www.futureof-museums.org](http://www.futureof-museums.org).

The American Association of Museums (AAM) has been bringing museums together since 1906, helping to develop standards and best practices, gathering and sharing knowledge, and providing advocacy on issues of concern to the entire museum community. With more than 17,000 individual, 3,000 institutional and 300 corporate members, AAM is dedicated to ensuring that museums remain a vital part of the American landscape, connecting people with the greatest achievements of the human experience, past, present and future. For more information, visit [www.aam-us.org](http://www.aam-us.org).

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