

2023  
FOOD LITERACY  
ROUNDTABLE



FINAL REPORT



## EVENT OVERVIEW

Our annual installment of the Good Food Gathering's Food Literacy Roundtable took place at the South Island Farm Hub. This event featured a conversation with Iyé Creative about expanding the ways in which we think about food security when providing food programming. This was followed by a hands-on pasta making workshop and a shared dinner. With participants representing various organizations and initiatives across, and beyond, the Good Food Network, we were able to hear from a number of folks with different perspectives and experiences.



## Discussion with Iyé Creative

Our intent for this gathering was to come up with ways to share strategies to elevate and reinforce food literacy programming currently taking place in our community. The conversation with Iyé Creative emphasized the importance of centring culturally relevant crops in food literacy and accessibility programming. This presentation reminded us that whenever we're talking about food literacy, we need to centre cultural literacy as well. After all, food is often a central element of a person's connection to their culture. In order for this to happen, it is essential that communities have agency over the care of their cultural food systems.

Here in Victoria, there are a number of foods that can be grown in our climate which are of cultural relevance to Asian, African, Middle Eastern, South American, and other diasporic communities. Iyé Creative is in the process of compiling a comprehensive review of the foods that are missing from our local food system that are suitable to be grown here. With this review they will be able to provide food growers with insight into which crops can be produced in our climate, as well as help connect consumers and program coordinators with culturally relevant foods. This will hopefully extend to school food programs to ensure that students, regardless of their background, have access to foods that are locally sourced, healthy, and culturally appropriate.



# THE SECRET SAUCE

A recipe for experiential  
Food Literacy programming

## PREPARATION

Before you lead your food literacy program, there are a couple things you should ask yourself...

**"Who is the program intended for?"**

Is it meant to teach cooking skills to youth or elders? Is it geared towards school groups? Are you seeking to provide access to folks experiencing economic, societal, or cultural barriers? Are there any groups who you feel might be interested in your program that you are not reaching with your current approach?

Do you have a skill set that you are hoping to share with your community? Is your program a part of an organization or initiative that has staff to support and lead these events or do you need to hire other facilitators to lead them? Are there any community food leaders that you could collaborate with to provide this programming?

**"Who is going to lead the program?"**

**"Is your program accessible?"**

What measures are you taking to ensure that your event will be a safe space for all who are in attendance? Are you ensuring that your venue is physically accessible to folks with different needs? Are there hands-on tasks for folks of different ages and abilities to partake in? Are you keeping event costs reasonable for attendees and providing sliding scale pricing or free admission to folks facing greater barriers to participate.

Does your organization have the funds to support this program or will you need to seek funding from sponsors or grants? There are a number of private and public organizations that may be able to help fund your program such as the City of Victoria (My Great Neighbourhood Grant), local business sponsorships, etc.

**"Where is your funding coming from?"**

**"Have you taken safety precautions into account?"**

Whenever food is involved, you need to be sure that the venue you are working with has a certificate from your local health authority and that you are within the occupancy parameters of the space. Additionally, at least one person who is helping lead the session should have their food safe certification. Visit [www.foodsafe.ca](http://www.foodsafe.ca) for more information!

## INGREDIENTS

- A handful of equipment and tools
- A whole bunch of food for the cooking workshop
- Some space to prepare and share food
- A group of people to attend the workshop



# Food

When budget allows, try to support local food producers in our region when sourcing food for cooking workshops and events. This can be done by reaching out directly to food producers and land stewards, or by going through local food suppliers such as the South Island Farm Hub.

We purchased the majority of the food for our workshop from the South Island Farm Hub as they offer produce and products sourced directly from local farmers and businesses all in one place. You can learn more about the South Island Farm Hub at [www.sifarmhub.ca!](http://www.sifarmhub.ca!)

# Space

When trying to carry out cooking workshops and food sharing programs, it's important to consider venues that can support these kinds of events. Perhaps you are already connected to a community kitchen or neighbourhood house that has a kitchen space and gathering space already set up to support such events.

Other organizations such as the Shelbourne Community Kitchen, the Mustard Seed, the Victoria Public Market, and Kitchen Connect are all outfitted with community kitchens that can be rented for leading workshops.

# People

At the end of the day you want to make sure that people are going to show up to your event! Outreach is often the most difficult part of event planning and organizing. Reaching out to folks who took part in your organization's events and programs is often the best way to get people to show up.

Other avenues, such as using social media and email lists, can also be a great way to get the attention of folks who may not be familiar with your organization or program. Just be sure that you are providing detailed and consistent information that highlights the amazing things your program is offering.



# Tools & Equipment

Perhaps the venue you are using already has all the equipment you could possibly need to run your program... but sometimes they won't. Depending on your budget and the needs of your organization it might make sense to invest in some specialty equipment. This might include pasta rollers, food processors, food thermometers, etc.

# METHOD

## 1. Introductions and welcoming

## 2. Document the event

## 3. Combine discussion and activity

## 4. Have a hands on component to the event

## 5. Have concrete takeaways from the session

## 6. Get some feedback

**1** Take some time at the beginning of your event to introduce yourself and your organization, and help everyone in the room a chance to get to know each other. An easy way to do this might be to have a fun check in question that gets people thinking and helps break the ice.

**2** Once you have media release forms from your participants, make sure you're taking lots of photos of the amazing event you've organized! These will always come in handy if you're making posts about your event on social media or updating to your website.

**3** If your event also features a group discussion or learning component, try to integrate a hands on activity to help encourage reflection and have a lasting impact on the participants.

**4** Whether you're doing your food literacy workshop in the field, on a farm, or in the kitchen, make sure to follow up the discussion with an hands on activity where people can network and talk amongst themselves about the discussion you just had, or about the activity you are all working on. As the organizer it can be a huge help to both you and your participants to have the technical instructions for the activity written out to help answer questions.

**5** You might be sending people home with some fresh produce or all coming together to share a meal that you've prepared. Either way, it's nice to be able to leave your participants with something that reminds of them of everything they learned at the session and provides them with a sense of accomplishment.

**6** Getting event feedback is a great way to improve your programming for next time and can really come in handy when putting together future events. Participant testimonials are really valuable additions to grant applications and promotional material.



# FEEDBACK

Much of the feedback that we received from the participants was that they enjoyed the hands-on and collaborative approach of the cooking workshop.

There was a common theme of gratitude for being able to connect and reconnect with folks in our community. Here are some of the highlights that participants mentioned:

- *Pasta rolling and conversation*
- *Sharing a meal while connecting with like-minded people*
- *Networking while doing something hands on and sharing food*
- *Connecting with past friends, contacts, and people also working in the community or in positions that they are interested in pursuing*
- *Cooking together and strengthening relationships*
- *Sharing community stories*





# Thank you to everyone who attended this year's Food Literacy Roundtable!

You can learn more about the Good Food Network's Food Literacy Working Group at [www.crfair.ca/food-literacy](http://www.crfair.ca/food-literacy).

Be sure to also check out Iyé Creative for more resources, workshops, and reports on supporting food sovereignty and a culturally relevant food system at [www.iyeherstories.com](http://www.iyeherstories.com)

Another big thank you to our sponsors and partners!



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