

# No Time to Train

## Short Lessons for School Nutrition Assistants

### Vegetable Preparation

#### LESSON OVERVIEW

**Lesson Participants:** School Nutrition assistants/technicians/food preparation staff

**Type of Lesson:** Face-to-face, hands-on session in the kitchen's fruit and vegetable production area and use of steamer. Consider space availability when scheduling training; it is recommended to assign no more than 8 participants per session.

**Time Needed to Conduct Lesson:** 15 minutes

**Lesson Description:** In this lesson, participants will learn

- Techniques for safe preparation of three vegetables common for school meals - frozen broccoli florets, fresh red peppers and baby carrots with hummus dip.
- The use of tools and techniques to ensure service of quality vegetables using batch cooking.

**Lesson Objectives:**

At the end of this lesson, participants will be able to:

1. Prepare and merchandise commonly served vegetables safely and efficiently.
2. Incorporate batch cooking methods into production schedules to improve quality of cooked vegetables.

#### GET READY TO TEACH

Read the Instructor Script and Preparation Checklist. In advance, purchase the vegetables required for this lesson. Instructor may review the online video clips from NC K-12 Culinary Institute: *Batch Cooking* and Produce Lab videos from the Institute of Child Nutrition, available at: <http://www.doe.in.gov/nutrition/indiana-no-time-train-lesson-plans>.

Print off the recipe for Red Peppers and Carrots with Hummus Dip, available here: <http://www.doe.in.gov/nutrition/indiana-no-time-train-lesson-plans>.

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### PREPARATION/PLANNING CHECKLIST

Use this Preparation/Planning Checklist to prepare for the training session. Track your progress by checking off tasks as they are completed.

Done <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tasks
	<b>Before the Training</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Review the video clip <i>Batch Cooking</i> from NC and <i>Vegetable Preparation</i> from ICN.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Review recipe for Vegetables & Hummus Cup.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Prepare Certificates of Completion, if desired.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Create a sign-in sheet to record attendance at the in-service.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Copy Evaluation Form for completion by each participant and gather pencils.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Thaw 2 lbs. of broccoli florets in 2-inch perforated pan over solid steamtable pan in refrigerator overnight.
	<b>On Training Day</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Set up work stations in kitchen (one per participant) with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• copies of Vegetables &amp; Hummus Cup recipe</li> <li>• anchored cutting boards (damp cloth underneath if not anchored by rubber edges)</li> <li>• chef knife</li> <li>• waste tray for drop delivery</li> <li>• pan for portioned product</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Place 1 red pepper, ¼ cup baby carrot, #30 scoop, and 4 oz. tall clear portion cup on each work station.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Allow participants to share a container of prepared hummus.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Steam 3 lbs. of thawed broccoli florets, cover and hold hot for one hour prior to training.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Steam 1 lb. of thawed broccoli florets just prior to training session.
	<b>On the Instructor's Table (by Production Sink or Steamer)</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Place perforated pan or colander by production sink for washing of vegetables.

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<input type="checkbox"/>	Review Instructor Script.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Assemble these teaching props: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Copy of Hummus Cup recipe</li><li>• One red pepper</li><li>• Thawed broccoli florets in 2-inch perforated pan, just steamed (1 lb)</li><li>• Previously steamed broccoli hot held for one hour (1 lb)</li></ul>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Copy of week's menu
<input type="checkbox"/>	Copy of Evaluation Form

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### LESSON AT A GLANCE

(15 minutes)

Time	Topic	Task	Materials
1 minute	Introduction and Overview	Instructor explains importance of vegetable consumption (especially dark green and orange varieties) and why it is important to offer products that are safe to eat, fresh and good for you, and well-merchandised for eye appeal.  Instructor tells that today's lesson will demonstrate washing techniques and provide practice preparing three popular vegetables.	Instructor's Script
2 minutes	Demonstration of vegetable washing	Wash hands first. Wash fresh, red peppers under running water and drain in colander.	
4 minutes	Demonstration of preparation techniques with knife, use of drop delivery for waste and finished product discussing importance of proper set up	Show grip on knife. Demonstrate how to cut peppers into strips.	Pepper Chef Knife Cutting Board Waste tray
5 minutes	Practice	Each participant will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cut pepper into strips</li><li>• Prepare a red pepper and baby carrot hummus cup</li><li>• Receive feedback and technical assistance from instructor</li></ul>	
2 minutes	Demonstration of merchandising techniques	Discuss how to steam frozen broccoli florets. Discuss batch cooking of broccoli versus cooking in advance and held.	
1 minute	Wrap Up	Recap key points. Participants will complete evaluation.	

### Resources and references:

- USDA Best Practices Produce and ICN Produce Safety University materials available at <http://www.nfsmi.org/ResourceOverview.aspx?ID=394>
- Video clips on *Batch Cooking*, North Carolina K-12 Culinary Institute available at <http://childnutrition.ncpublicschools.gov/continuing-education/nc-k-12-culinary-institute>.

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### INSTRUCTOR SCRIPT

**SAY:** I am glad you are here to learn how to safely and effectively prepare vegetables for our students to enjoy. Students are influenced by how the product looks, so today we will learn some ways to prepare and merchandise vegetables. We will find out how simple changes in preparation and presentation techniques will visually enhance appearance and improve the taste. That means more students will select and eat vegetables!

**Note to Instructor:** Gather participants in front of the produce washing sink.

**SAY and DO:** When we wash produce, we want to be sure we are washing with clean hands. So, first we wash our hands. Next, always rinse fresh produce under running water (unless it is labeled as a ready to eat product) before preparation, and allow to drain in a perforated pan or colander. Some root vegetables should be scrubbed with a vegetable brush before preparation. Remember to wear clean gloves to prevent bare hand contact with produce that will receive no further cooking before consumption.

**SAY:** Now, take a look at this workstation. See how this is set up so there is a place for waste, a place to cut, an anchored cutting board so it won't run away while we are working, and a place for the prepared vegetables. Having the *mise en place* makes preparation go much faster!

**SAY and DO:** Remove the top (stem area) of the pepper with a chef's knife and place the cut end (stem side) against your cutting board. Working around the pepper, remove large portions or sides of the pepper, similar to removing the skin of a melon. Finally cut away the remaining small top portion. Now you have large "planks" of pepper to cut into ¼ inch vegetable strips or dices.

**Note to Instructor:** Demonstrate proper holding of a chef knife as in this photo below:



**Activity:** Each participant will cut a fresh red pepper into ¼ inch vegetable strips.

**SAY, DO and ASK:** Next, prepare a red/orange vegetable cup with hummus dip. Use the #30 disher to place hummus in a 4 oz tall portion cup and add ¼ c red pepper strips and ¼ c baby carrots (about 5 of each) in the hummus so that they stand up for added merchandising. Doesn't that improve eye appeal?

**SAY:** Often we cook vegetables received in individual frozen pieces. This type of product is called Individually Quick Frozen or IQF. It is important to thaw IQF vegetables overnight in the

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refrigerator to speed cooking and improve quality. Place approximately 4 to 5 pounds of frozen broccoli florets in a 2 inch perforated pan to thaw. The following day, steam until al dente (time will depend on steamer) and the internal temperature reaches 135°F. We try to stagger cooking times so holding time is reduced because longer holding results in loss of vibrant color. Cover and store in the warmer for only 20 to 25 minutes prior to service.

**SAY:** Look at this pan that was cooked over an hour ago and hot held. Compare to the pan steamed just before this training session.

**ASK:** See the difference?

**ASK:** Do you think we could use batch cooking of vegetables in our kitchen? How might that work? Let's look at the menu. Is there a day our menu will benefit from use of these techniques? Are we willing to try?

**DISCUSS:** Identify the menus to incorporate batch cooking of vegetables.

### Wrap Up – 1 minute

**SAY:** It is time to wrap up our session. Thanks for taking the time to practice. These new techniques should make your work easier and increase the appeal of nutritious vegetables to our students. Today you earned 15 minutes in Food Production (2100) Training. Be sure you are signed in for the session and remember to file your Certificate of Completion with your other training documents.