



*The recipe for*

# local and environmentally responsible food procurement

*in Quebec institutions*



## On the menu

Overview of the sector

Food service management  
in this sector

A Basic Recipe:

- Ingredients
- Instructions

Good to know

Tips and tricks

Inspiring areas -  
A personal recipe

Resources

References

## Guide to icons

 Organizational levers	 Challenges	 Tips and tricks	 Good to know	 Support programs
 Self-operated services	 Contracted services	 Directories	 Tools	 Reference documents

# Preamble



Photo: École Waterloo

This fact sheet is intended as a practical tool to support school administrators (primary and secondary schools, vocational training centres, etc.), staff members, institutional managers and school food service managers in their efforts to transition to a more sustainable food system that prioritizes healthy, local and environmentally responsible food. The step-by-step guide is based on several best practices that have been implemented in primary and secondary schools and school service centres in Quebec. To learn more about the fact sheet project, see the fact sheet [\*The Recipe for Local and Environmentally Responsible Food Procurement In Quebec Institutions.\*](#)

The school environment offers a unique opportunity to teach children about the important benefits of healthy, local and environmentally responsible food. In addition to educating and raising awareness among young people, a strong commitment to this issue within schools also has the potential to inform and educate families as well as the wider community.

## Overview of the sector

There are a total of **3,119 establishments** in the province.<sup>1</sup> Quebec's school sector (general education and vocational training) includes:

- **72** school service centres, serving:
  - 1,768 primary schools;
  - 394 secondary schools;
  - 200 mixed primary and secondary schools;
  - 190 vocational training centres;
  - 184 adult education centres.
- **346** private schools (all levels);
- **37** government schools.

In 2018-2019, over 1,216,791 students attended public school, 129,188 students attended private school, and 1,562 students attended government schools<sup>2</sup>, for a total of<sup>3</sup>



1 347 541 students

## Food service management in this sector

Food service operations in the school sector are complex and highly diverse:

- At the primary level,<sup>4</sup> meals are mainly offered over the lunch period. In schools where the food aid measure is in place, snacks are also provided to students and some schools even offer milk cartons. Schools with a high deprivation index score may also have access to the **Club des petits déjeuners** (breakfast club). In addition, school daycare services may offer snacks after school and on pedagogical days.
- At the secondary level,<sup>5</sup> food service is offered over the lunch period. Some cafeterias provide breakfast and access to snacks throughout the day, and schools covered by the food aid measure have a pre-paid meal card system.

The majority of school food services are operated by contracted food service management providers. According to the most recent data for the education sector as a whole,<sup>6</sup> outsourced food service contracts (contracted management) accounted for 71% of total food sales, while internally managed food services (self-operated management) accounted for 29% of sales.<sup>7</sup>



71% self-operated food services



29% contracted food services

Several types of food services can be found in Quebec's school network:

- Cafeterias operated by the school or by the school service centre (self-operated);
- Cafeterias operated by an external food concession service (contracted management) hired by either the school or the school service centre;
- Outside catering services (approved<sup>8</sup> or otherwise);
- In-house catering services managed by the school service centre;
- Complementary programs: food measures, food aid, Clubs des petits déjeuners, Farm to Cafeteria, Écollation, etc.

The majority of cafeterias are found in secondary schools. Contrarily, primary schools are rarely equipped with an institutional or commercial kitchen, therefore meals and snacks are usually provided through a catering service, whether as part of the food aid measure or offered à la carte for a fixed price.



## The food aid measure within Quebec schools

This program, created in 1992 by the Ministère de l'Éducation du Québec, now the Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur, aims to:

- Nourish vulnerable students by encouraging parents to register their children in the program for a minimal contribution;
- Offer education programs to parents and families in order to provide them with support and tools to help improve their quality of life and overall well-being.

At the primary school level, food service delivery may be handled by the school service centre's self-operated food service, when possible, or by external service providers such as private caterers or community organizations contracted by the school service centre. The school food aid program is designed for primary and secondary school students in disadvantaged areas.

Food aid funding is allocated to schools by the Ministry based on their deprivation index score.<sup>9</sup>

The public education network is subject to the Act Respecting Contracting by Public Bodies (LCOP). **Group purchasing is strongly encouraged in order to take advantage of volume discounts.** Group purchasing makes it possible to centralize food purchases at the school service centre level, which negotiates procurement contracts for the various food services (cafeterias, production kitchens, in-house catering and snack distribution). The application of these principles in the field depends on whether the organizational structure of the food services and procurement management within the school service centre are centralized or decentralized. It should be noted that, since the majority of the services offered are contracted, it is the service providers that are largely responsible for procurement.

External catering services that supply food to schools may also be selected and approved by

the school service centre based on a process of preselection, approval and recommendation to the schools by territory. Each school's governing board (GB)<sup>10</sup> can then choose its food service provider from the bank of approved suppliers. In cases where the food service management is decentralized and there is no pre-selection at the level of the school service centre, the governing board of each school is responsible for selecting the catering service provider for its school in accordance with the guidelines set out in the framework policy Going the Healthy Route at School.



Photo: École Waterloo





# The basic recipe



For local and environmentally responsible food procurement in schools

## Ingredients

### Organizational levers

There are a number of organizational levers within the school sector that can facilitate the transition to local and environmentally responsible food procurement:



- **Mobilization of the different stakeholders:** principals, members of the school team, school daycare service personnel, and the food service provider;
- **Cooperation between the stakeholders;**
- A commitment to **supporting local businesses and social economy enterprises;**
- **The commitment and cooperation of local suppliers** (development of adapted products);
- **Decentralized procurement management** (in several cases);
- **Regular communication with families and the community;**
- **Community support** (volunteering, subsidies, donations).

### Challenges

This sector faces numerous constraints that can potentially impede the transition to local and environmentally responsible procurement:



- Time constraints;
- **Complexity and diversity of the school food system** and management models;
- Difficulty reaching all the different actors or stakeholders;
- A tendering system favouring the lowest bidder;
- Legal constraints (LCOP) prohibiting the prioritization of food origin;
- Limited food budgets;
- **Meal pricing** that respects students' (parents') capacity to pay;
- **Food habits** and resistance from the target groups;
- **Strict hygiene standards** that limit the number of potential suppliers (ex., food allergy issues).

## Instructions

Given the different types of food services offered at schools and the various management models, there is more than one approach that establishments in this sector can follow. This step-by-step guide provides an example of best practices. **Feel free to adapt it to reflect the situation of your establishment.** It is mainly intended for primary and secondary schools that have a contracted food service operated by an external catering service provider.

- For a self-operated cafeteria food service or self-operated catering service, please see the [fact sheet for the healthcare sector](#);
- For a contracted cafeteria food service, please see the [fact sheet for the CEGEP sector](#).



### 1. Create a working committee

In most cases, the selection of a catering food service provider is the responsibility of the governing board, which usually includes representatives of all the services offered at the school. By creating a special committee within the governing board to handle the selection process, the school can better focus its efforts.

- **Bring the different stakeholders involved in the school's food offer together around the table:**
  - Governing board (principal, elected parents, head of the school daycare service, representatives of the school team);
  - Members of the school's "health," "healthy living" or "environment" committees;
  - Nutritionist or other experts, if necessary,



Photo: Sue-Ann Crichlow

- **Determine your approach and define each person's role;**
- **Establish your work method and timeframe.** It's important to allow sufficient time to research, analyze and choose the new supplier while respecting your school's contract with its existing supplier.

## 2. Take advantage of available resources

Sign up for a recognition or assistance program to help organize your initiative and obtain support. Experience shows that these types of programs can lead to a more structured approach while offering significant visibility for your project and raising awareness in the community. In addition to the training and networking opportunities they can offer, they can also help you reflect on and plan each step of your process. Other establishments have already made the leap, so why not take advantage of the lessons they've learned!? Don't hesitate to talk to your peers and learn from their experiences.

Several existing programs are presented in the [Resources](#) section of this fact sheet. Check them out!



- **Farm to School program**
- **Aliments du Québec au menu** (via your food service provider)

Did you know that Aliments du Québec and Équiterre developed a recognition program designed specifically for institutions called *Aliments du Québec au menu*? This program recognizes innovative institutions by highlighting their efforts to incorporate more local food into their procurement processes. Have a look at these videos that present six participating institutions, including schools, [here](#).



## 3. Define needs and priorities

Careful reflection and research are essential in order to clarify your expectations in relation to your current or future food suppliers. By creating a charter of expectations, you can ensure that food suppliers receive clear information and that you select the right supplier for your needs.

- **Use the values of your establishment and its food and sustainable development policies as your basis;**
- **Poll the users (parents and students) of your food services to get a sense of their**



Photo: École Chavigny

interest and priorities and take these into account when vetting contract offers;

- **Compare and draw inspiration from what others are doing:**
  - Network and share your experience with other institutions to get inspired;
  - Contact Aliments du Québec au menu and ask to be put in touch with institutions that have gone through the same process or request information on recognized food service providers.
- **Analyze your existing food service contract**
  - Is it consistent with your school's food policy or values?
  - Does it allow for the inclusion and promotion of local and environmentally responsible food on your school's menu? Can you submit requests or recommendations in this regard?
  - Is it provided by a small regional supplier or even a business in your neighbourhood?
  - Is it operated under a social economy enterprise, which has a social mission in mind?
- **Define your most important criteria:**

#### **Types of businesses**

- Local businesses
- Social economy enterprises
- Businesses recognized by Aliments du Québec au menu

#### **Type of menus**

- Seasonal
- Availability of a vegetarian menu

#### **Type of procurement**

- Favouring local and environmentally responsible food
- Favouring local businesses
- Favouring short food supply chains and local purchasing

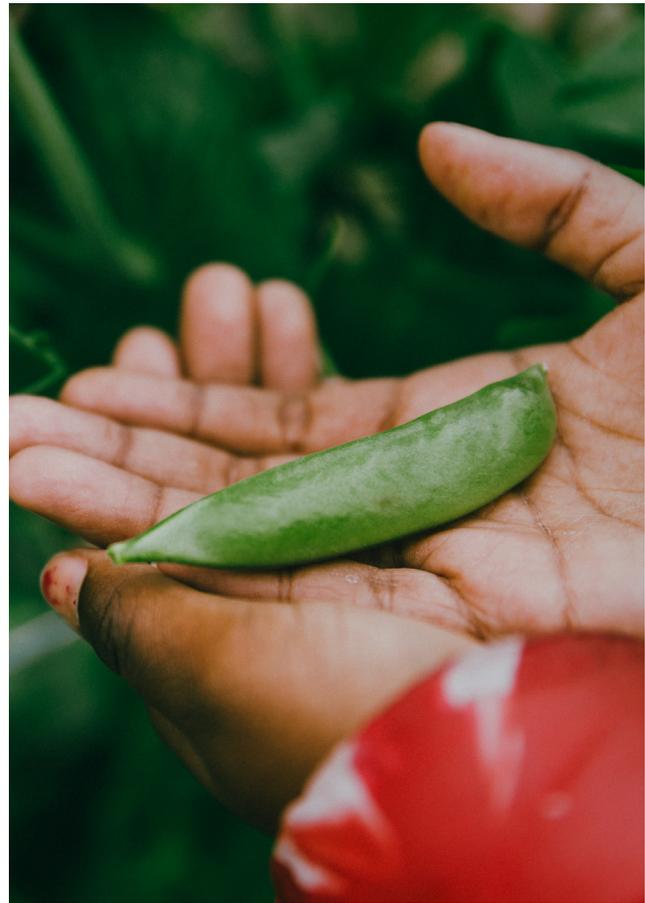


Photo: Myriam Baril-Tessier

#### **Type of service**

- Individually wrapped portions (recyclable or compostable containers)
- On-site service (compostable or reusable dishes)

**“A social economy enterprise carries out economic activities with a social purpose consisting, in particular, in the sale or exchange of goods or services, not for profit, but for the purpose of meeting the needs of its members or the community.”<sup>11</sup>**

#### ***4. Find and select your food service provider***

Before awarding your next food service contract, get a head start in order to identify the best available offer to meet your needs.

- **Draw up a list of companies offering this type of service that stand out in the market, based on the criteria you have defined;**
- **Evaluate the different service offers based on your charter of expectations;**
- **Meet with the service providers to discuss your expectations and what they would be able to implement.**

In the event that the catering services must be approved by your school service centre:

- **Submit your comments and recommendations to the division in charge of selecting food service providers;**
- **Encourage the catering services you are interested in to submit their service offer to the school service centre directly.**

#### ***5. Work with the service provider and implement communication and follow-up mechanisms***

- **Develop a close relationship with your food service provider:**
  - Put in place the necessary communication and follow-up mechanisms to ensure effective collaboration;
- **Encourage your current or future food service provider to register for a structuring program such as Aliments du Québec au menu;**
- **Offer assistance and resources to your service provider to help them understand and achieve the objectives of local and environmentally responsible**

**procurement.** Share the Guide for Food Service Management Companies with the service provider;

- Offer awareness-raising and training activities for food service managers and staff;
- Organize awareness-raising and promotional activities for users that highlight your food service providers' commitments to local and environmentally responsible food procurement.

#### ***6. Integrate this approach in the school's education project***

To take advantage of the cross-curricular educational potential of the food theme, several schools choose to make it an integral part of their education project. Beyond the food service offer itself, they integrate food education activities in the curriculum, as well as hands-on learning activities such as the **growing of fruits and vegetables at school or culinary activities linked to the teaching program**. School daycare services can also play a valuable role in the implementation of these types of activities and many such initiatives have emerged in recent years.





# ***Good to know***



## ***An investment that pays off!***

It's important to keep in mind that these steps will require a number of changes to your teams' routine in the short and medium term.

- Investment of **time** (analysis, research, recipe and menu development, establishment of new partnerships, etc.);
- Increase in the **number of suppliers**;
- Increase in the **number of purchase orders, deliveries and invoices**;
- Heavier **workload** (ex., new preparation routine and tasks related to food preservation and optimization, surplus management, etc.).

In return, these steps are a great opportunity to offer the very best to your community!

Not to mention the positive impact on your food service!

- They send a **positive perception** of your food services to your clients, the school community and the wider community;
- They offer you an opportunity to **stand out and boost your visibility**;
- They raise awareness about the close links between **food and the health of individuals, communities and the planet**.



Photo: Écol'Action



# *Tips and tricks*



## *Change your practices and generate long-term savings!*

In addition to their positive environmental impact, each of the following actions allows you to save money in the long run that can be reinvested in the purchase of local and environmentally responsible food.

- **Offer more vegetarian meals** to increase your purchasing power, reduce your environmental footprint and add more diversity to your menu:
  - Increase the number of meatless meals served each week;
- **Reduce purchases of processed and highly-processed food** to lower costs and improve the quality of the ingredients in your dishes;
- **Vary procurement sources** by supporting local food systems (short supply chain), such as farm-direct procurement, farmers' markets, public markets, organic baskets, purchasing groups, etc.;
- **Reduce food waste** by storing food in optimal conditions, planning portions and needs and making better use of leftovers;
- **Eliminate disposable containers** to reduce purchase costs and environmental impacts.



## *Opt for seasonal menus!*

To facilitate the use of seasonal local food and take advantage of volume discounts, the following practices should be considered:

- **Increase the amount of cold room space** for storage of fruits and vegetables such as apples, squash, onions, potatoes, root vegetables, etc.;
- **Increase freezer space** for the storage of seasonal local products (ex., fruits, vegetables, fish, etc.);
- **Do your own processing and/or freezing** of seasonal products while they are available in abundance (ex., berries, herbs, tomatoes, bell peppers, zucchini, leafy greens, etc.).

By adopting these practices, you can order larger quantities and reduce the number of deliveries.



Photo: Écol'Action





# Inspiring Institution



A recipe personalized by  
École secondaire L'Escale



Photo: École Chavigny

## Asbestos

Dissatisfied with the food served by the contracted food service provider that had been in place for some time, the school principal came up with the idea of **founding a food cooperative** whose mission would be: “To offer quality meals that meet the needs of the school’s students and staff. Healthy eating and sustainable development are core elements of the project, as is a commitment to buying local by **giving preference to producers in the Des Sources RCM.**” In addition to its main objective, the cooperative introduces students to the cooperative model.

The cooperative’s procurement model is based on local resources. In addition, all of the team’s practices are consistent with the mission of this social economy enterprise. Foremost, all parts of the food are utilized, resulting in very little food waste. In addition, everything is “homemade” and recipes are selected based on food availability. A flexible, seasonally based menu allows for changes to be made according to the origin of the food. One day’s cafeteria menu becomes the next day’s catered meal, thus limiting waste. To cater to the tastes of teens, the cooperative tries to be innovative by developing interesting snacks such as smoothies in order to rival the drinks offered at the convenience store... and it works!

The transition from the former catering service and the new cooperative required several changes. For instance, it was necessary to increase the payroll and staff, which went from two to five employees. The cooperative turned to employability programs for its new hires, giving it an opportunity to play a role in training the next generation. Prices also had to be increased; for example, the cost of the main meal rose from \$5.50 to \$6.50 in the first year and then to \$7.00 in the second year. However, with **the improvement in the quality of the food offered**, these price differences were accepted by users.



Photo: Myriam Baril-Tessier

The cooperative is part of the school and integrated in its education project. It participates in the various special activities or theme weeks organized by the school by adjusting its menus and contributing to food literacy.

In 2018, L'Escale was able to enhance the cooperative's salad bar initiative thanks to a grant from Farm to Cafeteria, an organization whose activities are deployed and supported in Quebec by Équiterre. On average, **87% of the food served in the salad bar is local**. This salad bar initiative earned the school recognition from *Aliments du Québec au menu*.

The success of L'Escale's experience has had a ripple effect in the region, with numerous schools in neighbouring RCMs now also looking to integrate the cooperative's catering service!

## Ingredients for success

- ✓ A project built entirely on the principles of local, regional and short supply chain procurement;
- ✓ The teamwork between the principal and the RCM's project lead in order to bring together the necessary conditions to get the cooperative up and running;
- ✓ The decision to establish a democratic social economy enterprise committed to serving its members.

## Word of advice from the food service manager

*“Set your sights high and trust your community. Sooner or later it will see itself in the project.”*

Véronic Poisson, General Manager,  
Coopérative des Sources

## Recap



- 598 students
- 82 employees

### Food service analyzed

- 1 school cafeteria operated by the Coopérative des Sources, a project launched by the school which includes a salad bar initiative
- 1 kitchen
- 5 employees on site
- 5 contract employees who provide service in the schools served by the catering division
- 60 hot meals served on site each day
- 500 meals produced each week (including the catering service at a neighbouring school)

### Main suppliers

- Broadline distributors (Alimentation du lac, Farinex)
- Regional producers (Ferme Bioprovidence, Les Petites pousses vert tendre and La Clé des champs)
- Local suppliers: La Jambonnière (pork), Le Coureur des bois (maple syrup), Fromagerie L'oiseau bleu, Boulangerie Pain de Warwick, Vergers des horizons (apples), Le Pré gourmand (strawberries), Ferme Au pied de loup (vegetables and honey), La maison grise (goat cheese), Moulin Lapierre (flour), le Paradis du bleuet
- Vegetable distributors: Victoriaville (alternative)

### Certifications and recognition

- Farm to School
- Aliments du Québec au menu for the salad bar (87% local)
- Ose entreprendre
- Coup de cœur régional
- Agenda 21





# Inspiring Institution



A recipe personalized by  
Centre de services scolaire de Montréal



Photo: Aliments du Québec au menu

## Montreal

The Centre de services scolaire de Montréal (CSSDM), **the largest school service centre in Quebec**, has always given preference to local businesses whenever possible. As a public institution, it is required to use the public call for tender process for the majority of its purchases. Despite the “lowest bidder” criterion, it nonetheless manages to grant a large portion of its procurement to Quebec companies through its distributors. The Centre de services scolaire de Montréal has embodied these values for more than 20 years. The last audit of its procurement, in 2017-2018, revealed that over 70% of its purchasing volume came from Quebec companies. It is common practice for the CSSDM to ask its distributors for Quebec products and to question them about the origin of their food. Leveraging its influence and its large procurement volumes, the institution works with industry **to develop local products that meet its specific needs**. For example, when the CSSDM wanted to put chicken fingers made with healthier breadcrumbs on its menus to meet the criteria of its food policy, it worked with Olymel to develop this new, healthier alternative. Initially created to meet the specific needs of the CSSDM, these chicken fingers are now also available on the retail market.

With its large network of establishments spread across the Island of Montreal, the CSSDM has to minimize the number of its distributors in order to optimize the delivery process, which is made more complicated in Montreal by urban traffic, a lack of loading docks and difficulty accessing schools. This reality, combined with the unique needs of the institutions, limits the number of competitors in certain respects. For instance, as part of the CSSDM’s snack program, under which 22,000 fresh fruits are distributed once a week, and in order to increase the variety of fresh fruit offered, its food service division conducted several pilot projects with different suppliers in order to offer fresh fruit cut into single servings. Offering a product that is packaged and delivered to every primary school within a very short time period and within the allocated budget is a major challenge. Additional constraints related to strict hygiene standards and allergens in the school environment also limit snack possibilities.

In addition, over the years, the duties in some cafeterias have changed as the number of meals



Photo: Collège Trinité

produced and served has increased considerably, while the space available has often remained the same. As a result, the vast majority of cafeterias are not equipped to store or process large quantities of fresh food due to **limited refrigeration and freezing capabilities**. This has an impact on the choice of food, the quantities ordered and the frequency of deliveries. For example, in order to provide a wide variety of vegetables throughout the school year, storage constraints, among others, mean that preference has to be given to fresh, peeled, pre-cut and pre-washed vegetables as well as frozen vegetables.

Despite this set of unique needs and constraints, the CSSDM stands out for its commitment to sourcing the majority of its procurement from Quebec companies, despite a public tendering process that favours the lowest bidder!

## Ingredients for success

- ✓ A strong determination to support local businesses and the embodiment of this value for over 20 years;
- ✓ High purchasing volumes that can be leveraged to influence the development of a product offering that meets the required criteria and sought-after values.

## Word of advice from the Superintendent of Food Services

“By focusing on the quality of our relationships with local distributors and suppliers, which often fosters communication on a more human scale, we can increase the potential to develop a market that meets our needs.”

Elaine Lévesque, PDt, Superintendent of Food Services, CSSDM

## Recap



- 113,700 students
- 16,350 regular and non-regular employees
- 189 schools

### **Food service analyzed**

Centralized, self-operated food service management

- 39 cafeterias
  - o 24 secondary school cafeterias
  - o 5 primary school cafeterias
  - o 5 production cafeterias serving 44 support services (caterer or school covered by the food aid measure)
  - o 5 vocational training cafeterias
- 10,000 to 12,000 meals per day, the majority of them in secondary school cafeterias, but also in primary schools (excluding external contracted catering services)
- 22,000 snacks per day, distributed in 80 schools

### **Main suppliers**

- Broadline distributor
  - o grocery store (dishes, non-perishables, etc.)
  - o meal, poultry, fish
  - o fruits and vegetables
- Distributor of fresh fruits and vegetables: snack program
- Daily product supplier
- Bread supplier



# Inspiring Institution



A recipe personalized by  
École primaire Louis-de-France



Photo: École Louis-de-France

## Trois-Rivières

At Louis-de-France, agriculture has been integrated in the school since 2016. The issue of local procurement is part of a broader education project called *L'agroalimentaire s'invite à l'école*. The aim of the project is to get students to actively participate in the seed-to-plate experience by making it part of the school's educational program. From the raised garden beds to the teaching kitchen, students are involved at every step with a hands-on experience that allows them to apply what they have learned. Thanks to substantial financial support from the *Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation du Québec (MAPAQ)*, Louis-de-France has developed a model that can be replicated and applied in other schools.

The school's food service is provided by an external catering service. The school has opened a dialogue with this provider to encourage them to increase the amount of local food procurement sources being offered. Since 2019, the school has increasingly focused on establishing a weekly salad bar initiative as part of the Farm to School program. This program is fully self-operated within the school itself, in collaboration with the school daycare service. Thanks to a grant offered by Farm to Cafeteria Canada, whose activities are implemented and supported in Quebec by *Équiterre*, the school invested in the necessary infrastructure to set up a teaching kitchen where the food is prepared by students and then served in the salad bar. These activities are part of the school's educational program and are supported by a specialist who helps develop the menu and prepare the recipes. Service is provided by the students themselves, who are supervised with the cooperation of the daycare service.



Photo: École Louis-de-France

The seasonal menu is composed of food grown by the students in the school's 24 raised garden beds, which are filled with market garden produce from local farms. On average, **87% of the food served in the salad bar is locally sourced**, earning the school the *Aliments du Québec au menu* recognition for its salad bar initiative. In order to minimize the amount of travel for farmers and increase order volume, the construction of a cold room was the ideal solution. When necessary, the school also encourages the neighbourhood supermarket through the purchase of locally sourced food. The project also accepts donations to support its efforts to reduce food waste. All of these aspects require outside funding.

To integrate the project and simplify its management, a non-profit organization called AgrÉcoles was created in 2019. AgrÉcoles' mission is to support schools in their efforts to integrate agri-food in the school environment. The organization continues to support Louis-de-France and to work with the school's teaching staff, educational consultants and specialists (agricultural technician, nutritionist) to develop key tools that can be applied in other schools. It is also working to put in place the necessary conditions to allow schools to run their own independent project.

## Key ingredients for success

- ✓ The enthusiasm and commitment of the principal, teaching staff, parents and community;
- ✓ The invaluable involvement of professional volunteers in various aspects of the project.

## Word of advice from the Director

“Invest the necessary human resources in the development and implementation of your project. A multidisciplinary team is your key to success.”

*“ We want to educate citizens, to let them get their hands dirty and learn differently, and most importantly, we want to help them develop an environmental conscience. For that to happen, we need to get them outside! ”*

Julia Grenier, Director, AgrÉcoles

## Recap



### **Food services**

- 430 students
- 50 employees

### **School food offer**

- External catering service (50 meals per day) and self-operated salad bar once a week

### **School service analyzed**

- Salad bar initiative (approximately 80 to 100 students per week)
- 1 teaching kitchen
- 1 employee of AgrÉcoles, 1 school daycare employee and volunteers

### **Main suppliers**

- Fruits and vegetables grown in the school's raised garden beds
- Organic market garden farms in the region (Les Jardins Bio Campanipol, La Chouette Lapone, Coopérative La Charrette, Verger Barry)
- Local supermarket (Metro, IGA)
- Donation (food waste reduction)

### **Certification and recognition**

- Farm to School
- Aliments du Québec au menu for the salad bar (87% locally sourced)
- Le coq d'or of the UPA
- MIAM (regional recognition)





# Inspiring Institution



Other initiatives in the school sector



Photo: Cantine pour tous

## La Cantine pour tous

La Cantine pour tous is a network bringing together organizations and collective enterprises<sup>12</sup> that share a commitment to facilitating access to healthy, affordable meals for all. It gives these enterprises access to resources and equipment to help increase their impact and meet the needs of the community. It also seeks to develop commercial opportunities for members. The network's members generally offer a diverse range of food services. For example, nearly half of them provide catering services in Quebec schools.

La Cantine pour tous is dedicated to promoting and demonstrating a school food program that is accessible to all students across the province. In Quebec, most subsidized programs target low-income families, and private catering services are available only to the most

affluent parents. La Cantine pour tous has implemented a pilot program in two Montreal schools that allows all students to receive a healthy, affordable meal prepared by a community caterer through a voluntary contribution system that allows parents to pay according to their means.<sup>13</sup>

The network's position on local procurement is favourable, which, in such a system, has a significant impact on the local economy.

Another pilot project aimed at increasing local procurement will soon be launched in collaboration with two of the network's members. As part of this project, the impacts of the changes implemented will be tracked in order to share the results with all members.



Photo: Cantine pour tous

## *Écollation*

“Écollation is a pilot project involving the distribution of fruit and vegetable snacks to children attending primary and secondary schools in disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

Écollation aims to reduce social health inequalities through the promotion of healthy eating and sustainable development. The project is piloted by the L'Association québécoise de la garde scolaire, in collaboration with the members of the Table québécoise sur la saine alimentation.

Since its inception in 2017, the project has been tested in schools in disadvantaged areas in four different regions: Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean, Outaouais, Gaspésie-Îles-de-la-Madeleine and Montérégie. Thanks to an extension of the project for a fourth year, two new regions will be added: Lanaudière and the Capitale-Nationale region.”<sup>14</sup>

## **Farm to School initiatives in Quebec, Canada and the United States**

Did you know that Équiterre has been an active partner of the Canadian organization Farm to Cafeteria since 2011, and that it is responsible for coordinating the implementation of several salad bar initiatives in Quebec?

The Farm to School: Canada Digs In! program was officially launched for the first time in Quebec in 2018, with nine schools being selected to receive a grant of \$10,000 each. Thanks to these grants, five elementary schools and four secondary schools in four administrative regions of Quebec were able to introduce healthy, local and environmentally responsible food in their schools. Each participant initiated a long-term, extensive food procurement process and the schools were able to count on the sustained support of Équiterre and the involvement of Farm to Cafeteria Canada and the *Aliments du Québec au menu* recognition program. In addition, numerous local and regional collaborations and partnerships are at the heart of the project! Find out more about this program [here!](#)



Photo: École Waterloo



# Resources



## Support, recognition, certification and accreditation programs

- [Équiterre](#) is an environmental organization that offers concrete solutions in order to foster ecological choices that are both healthy and equitable. In the area of food procurement, Équiterre is committed to facilitating the implementation of a sustainable food system by developing joint projects with partners and offering consulting services.
- [Aliments du Québec au menu](#) is a recognition program created by Aliments du Québec and Équiterre to promote the use of Quebec products in institutional menus.
- [Farm to Cafeteria Canada](#) is a Leader in the Farm to School Approach, which aims at getting more healthy, local and environmentally responsible food on the minds and plates of children and youth across Canada.
- The [Tables de concertation bioalimentaire du Québec](#) co-facilitate, mobilize and coordinate the efforts of various actors in the regional biofood sector (ex., producers, processors, restaurant owners, retailers, development organizations, regional county municipalities [MRC], etc.). [in French]
- [La Cantine pour tous](#) is a non-profit organization that promotes universal food security and brings together organizations and collective enterprises committed to developing their food services in order to better meet the needs of their clients. [in French]
- [Écollation](#) is a three-year (2017-2020) pilot project based on the distribution of fruits and vegetables to children in primary and secondary schools in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. [in French]



## Directories, lists and networks for finding local foods

- [Directory of local and organic food providers \(Équiterre\)](#)
- [List of livestock and crop producers in Quebec \(MAPAQ\)](#) [in French]
- [Aliments du Québec directory](#)
- [Quebec Seasonal Produce Calendar](#)
- [Manufacturers, Wholesalers, Industrial-Related Service Companies search engine \(ICRIQ\)](#)
- [Pêchés ici, mangés ici: Directory of Quebec fish and seafood \(MAPAQ\)](#) [in French]
- [Fraîcheur Québec](#) [in French]
- [Family Farmers Network](#)
- [Arrivage: Sustainable, local and direct procurement for professionals](#) [in French]



## Useful tools

- [Aliments du Québec au menu quantification table](#) [in French]
- [Guide to Sustainable Menus](#)
- Standardized local recipes developed by the ITHQ (look for online recipes on the [Aliments du Québec au menu](#) website)
- [CAPÉ technical guide](#): For information on the effective storage and conservation of local and organic products, contact: [info@capecoop.org](mailto:info@capecoop.org)



## Reference documents

- [Cadre de référence pour l'achat d'aliments dans le marché institutionnel : règles applicables et modalités de prise en compte du développement durable et de l'environnement](#) (MAPAQ) [in French]
- [Policy Framework: Going the Healthy Route at School](#) (MEES)

## References

Baril, Gérald Ph. D., Les politiques alimentaires en milieu scolaire, une synthèse de connaissance sur le processus d'implantation. Institut national de santé publique du Québec, 2008.

INSPQ, Portrait de l'environnement alimentaire dans les écoles primaires du Québec, Directions du développement des individus et des communautés, Québec, April 2012.

INSPQ, Portrait de l'environnement alimentaire dans les écoles secondaires du Québec, Direction du développement des individus et des communautés, Québec, November 2012.

Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation, Le Bottin / Édition 2017: consommation et distribution alimentaires en chiffres, 2017.

Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation, Cadre de référence pour l'achat d'aliments dans le marché institutionnel: règles applicables et modalités de prise en compte du développement durable et de l'environnement, March 2018.

Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation, Guide d'accès au marché institutionnel, 2014.

Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation Politique bioalimentaire 2018-2025 : Alimenter notre monde, 2018.

Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation, Stratégie de positionnement des aliments du Québec sur le marché institutionnel, 2013.

Ministère de l'Éducation, du loisir et du sport, Pour un virage santé à l'école, politique-cadre pour une alimentation saine et un mode de vie actif, 2007.

Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement Supérieur, Rapport annuel du ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur 2018-2019, Gouvernement du Québec, 2019

Food Secure Canada (FSC), "Purchasing Power: 10 Lessons on Getting More Local, Sustainable, and Delicious Food in Schools, Hospitals and Campuses", March 2017.

### Websites

Banque de données des statistiques officielles sur le Québec, Effectif scolaire de la formation générale des jeunes, selon diverses variables, années scolaires 2005-2006 à 2018-2019, Québec, accessed May 2020

Banque de données des statistiques officielles sur le Québec, Nombre d'écoles, selon l'ordre d'enseignement et le réseau d'enseignement, Québec, années scolaires 2012-2013 à 2017-2018, accessed March 2020

Centre de services scolaires Marguerite-Bourgeoys, accessed March 2020

Communiqués de presse: L'aide alimentaire garantie pour tous les élèves vulnérables , accessed March 2020

La Cantine pour tous website, accessed March 2020 [in French]

Centre de services scolaire de Montréal website, accessed November 2019 [in French]

Écollation website, accessed March 2020

Farm to Cafeteria Canada website, accessed March 2020 [in French]

Tables de concertation bioalimentaire du Québec website, accessed March 2020 [in French]

# Credits

Icons: © The Noun Project, Inc

## Notes

- 1 [Database of official statistics for Quebec, Nombre d'écoles, selon l'ordre d'enseignement et le réseau d'enseignement, Québec, années scolaires 2012-2013 à 2017-2018.](#)
- 2 [Database of official statistics for Quebec, Effectif scolaire de la formation générale des jeunes, selon diverses variables, années scolaires 2005-2006 à 2018-2019, Québec.](#)
- 3 [Rapport annuel du ministère de l'éducation et de l'enseignement supérieur 2018-2019](#), Government of Quebec, 2019.
- 4 [Portrait de l'environnement alimentaire dans les écoles primaires du Québec](#), INSPQ, Quebec, 2012, p. V.
- 5 [Portrait de l'environnement alimentaire dans les écoles secondaire du Québec](#), INSPQ, Quebec, 2012, p. V.
- 6 Including primary, secondary and post-secondary (college and university) education.
- 7 [Le Bottin / Édition 2017: consommation et distribution alimentaires en chiffres](#), MAPAQ, 2017, p. 53
- 8 Selected by either the school service centre or the school.
- 9 Centre de services scolaires Marguerite-Bourgeoys and [Communiqués de presse: L'aide alimentaire garantie pour tous les élèves vulnérables](#)
- 10 The governing board is composed of the principal, members of the school team, a school daycare service representative and elected parents.
- 11 [Économie et Innovation Québec](#), March 2020 [translation].
- 12 "Collective enterprises take the form of cooperatives, mutual associations and non-profit organizations that engage in commercial activities." [Chantier de l'économie sociale](#), accessed May 2020 [translation].
- 13 La [Cantine pour tous](#), accessed March 2020
- 14 [Écollation](#) website, accessed March 2020

*If you use the print version of this fact sheet, all of the websites identified can be accessed by clicking on the link provided in the fact sheet.*



# équiterre

This project was made possible with the collaboration of

