

Cafeteria as

# LEARNING LAB

**Aim for consistent messaging between the classroom and the cafeteria. The following are some examples of cafeteria activities that can be complemented by the classroom. See if your School Nutrition Director is interested in one of them!**

## March Through the ABCs

Each day is assigned a different letter. The cafeteria features food(s) that begin with the letter of the day. For example, apples, apricots, asparagus, and arugula are featured on A-day. Bananas, blueberries, and beans are served for B-day. If the cafeteria creates a printed menu for the month indicating the letter for each day, the classroom can use the menu to encourage kids to bring snacks like cantaloupe, cherries, celery, and carrots on C-day! The book “Eating the Alphabet” by Lois Ehlert is a great classroom read.

## Maine Harvest Lunch

The Maine Harvest Lunch is a day in September where schools throughout the state of Maine celebrate the bounty of Maine’s harvest by featuring local foods on the school menu. This is a distinctive opportunity for positive interaction and collaboration with the School Nutrition Program. Pulling off the Maine Harvest Lunch requires commitment and dedication from the entire school. It requires extra effort, money, and enthusiasm from the School Nutrition staff, and support from the rest of the school can go a long way. Check in with your School Nutrition Director to see if your school is participating this year. There is an easy-to-use curriculum designed to tie the Maine Harvest Lunch ideals into the classroom. To find out more about the Maine Harvest Lunch and to order the free curriculum, visit [www.mofga.org](http://www.mofga.org). Look for Maine Harvest Lunch under the resources tab.



## Eat Your Way Through the Rainbow

Explain to kids that they should try to eat the rainbow every day. Eating a variety of colorful foods greatly improves the chances of getting all the nutrients they need for good health. The outside color of a fruit or vegetable can be a clue to the vitamins and minerals found within. This activity runs like the “March through the ABCs” program. The

cafeteria assigns a color to each week in a month and the classroom encourages students to bring in cherries during red week and carrots during orange week. It’s a great way to create unity between cafeteria and classroom.