

Connecting Kids, Farmers, & Foodies: Local Foods Kids Cooking Camp

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INTRODUCTION

The Local Foods Kids Cooking Camp has taught 85 children over the past 5 years to cook simple recipes using locally raised and processed ingredients. This is a collaborative effort between OSU Extension Coshocton County and Local Bounty Coshocton, LLC, a year-round farmers market. The program began in 2013 with a grant from the Columbus Foundation. There have been 16 different instructors over the years for the Cooking Camp including Local Bounty vendors (farmers, bakers, beekeepers, cheesemakers), Local Bounty supporters (local foodies), and OSU Extension staff.

This Cooking Camp has taught children basic cooking skills, food safety, nutrition and above everything else allowed them to try new foods in a safe and fun environment. Evaluation feedback from parents and caregivers indicates that the Kids Cooking Camp was a valuable experience for their children. This is a fun program that engages multiple audiences with the goal of promoting healthy and fresh local foods.



Participants in the 2013 and 2014 Kids Cooking Camps. The boys were making Cucumber Cups with Yogurt and Granola and these sisters are enjoying Grilled Veggie Pizza.

THE EVOLUTION OF A PROGRAM

This engaging program has seen many different formats ranging from 6 one-hour long camp sessions spread over a 12-week period to one all day camp. Most years the Kids Cooking Camp was held at Local Bounty, either in the store during closed hours of operation or under canopies in the backyard. The recipes over the years have covered a wide range of foods with the goal to feature in season produce as well as many of the other foods available from vendors at Local Bounty.

Over five years there was plenty of time for feedback and adjustments and improvements to the format and the teaching. By the fourth season it was time to change things up a bit. "Cooking Around the Clock" was the first theme, starting with breakfast on Monday all the way to dessert on Friday. The fifth season was "Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food" and featured several local farmers who are vendors at Local Bounty.

EMBRACING THE PARTNERSHIP

The key to the success and longevity of Kids Cooking Camp has been the amazing dedication of many willing teachers. All instructors of classes from 2013-2016 were paid for their time and effort in planning and teaching the lesson for which they had responsibility. The 2017 day camp was made up of volunteers and more of the planning and preparation was handled by OSU Extension.

There have been a total of 16 teachers over the five years. Three of these were OSU Extension staff from Coshocton County and four were local foodies and supporters of Local Bounty. The other nine teachers were all vendors at Local Bounty. These instructors have a passion for helping kids learn about their food and teaching them to cook.

There was also a goal throughout the years not only to teach about basic cooking skills – measuring, mixing, cutting, etc. – but also to teach basic food safety and nutrition. During 2013 and 2014 children used Glo Germ lotion and a black light to learn about the importance of washing their hands. At the 2017 camp the children participated in a "My Plate Relay Race" where team members carried a plate back and forth with the goal of creating a balanced meal with replica food items.



A vendor of Local Bounty Coshocton, LLC helps children from the 2013 Kids Cooking Camp select herbs and vegetables they planted in their "Kitchen Garden".



This pair of instructors, shown here at 2016 Kids Cooking Camp, taught for three of the five years, introducing the kids to fun smoothies, juices and even spinach popsicles.

RECIPES AND OTHER COOL STUFF



- TomatoPeachSalsa
- EggasticEggSalad
- FruitSmoothies
- ZucchiniPancakes
- RainbowFreshFruitKabobs
- RainbowGrilledVeggieKabobs
- OvernightOats
- ZuchinniSliderswithcheesebacontomato
- MiniFruitPizzas
- GrilledVeggiePackets
- SpinachBlueberrySmoothiePopsicles
- GrilledVeggiePizzas
- ChickenwithPeachesPeppers
- GranolaHoneyPops
- CarrotFruitjuice
- Hummus
- CrunchyYummySalads
- FreshBasilPestoPanini
- CucumberCupwithYogurtandGranola

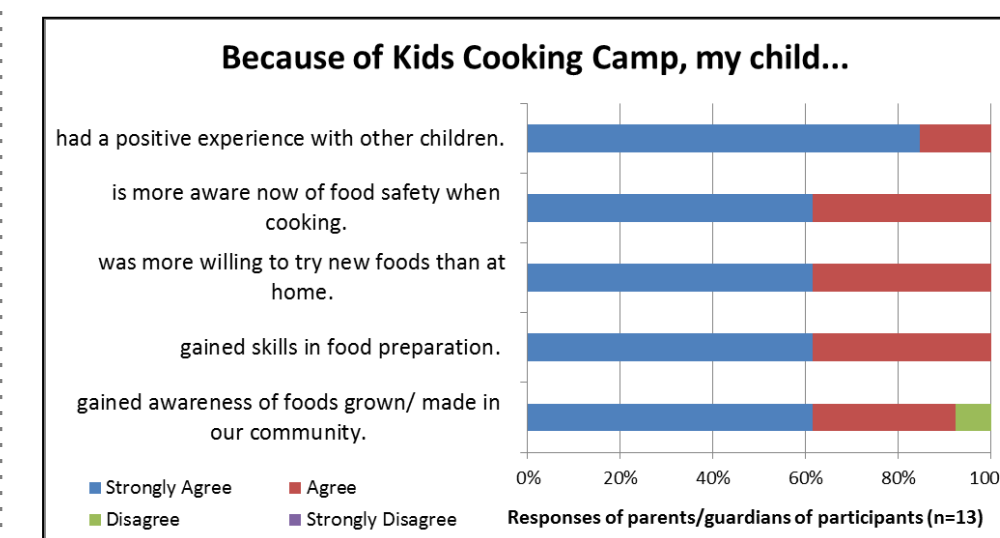


It was very important that Kids Cooking Camp be a fun experience for the children. The first four years every child received an apron. Each year they received items that assisted with the recipes they made. There were jars and straws for smoothies, reusable zipper sandwich bags for snacks, vegetable cutters to make fun shapes with fresh fruits and vegetables, and much more. For the 2017 day camp all children received a drawstring bag, insulated lunch bag with frozen gel pack, and water bottle with fruit infuser insert.

The recipes were shared in a variety of ways from 3-ring binders, to pocket folders, to laminated large cards on a ring. Another fun thing that was used all five years were "I Tried It!" stickers. Each year parents and caregivers were so thankful that their children were trying new foods that they would not normally try at home.

EVALUATION RESULTS

The most extensive and valuable evaluation was conducted in 2016. That year there were 20 participants from 13 different families. All 13 parents/ caregivers completed evaluations following the last of the five classes about the impact of Kids Cooking Camp on their children.



Over the five years a total of 85 children participated in Kids Cooking Camp. Sixteen of those children attended multiple years with one child attending all five years.



Local beef farmer and Local Bounty Coshocton, LLC vendor talks with 2017 Kids Cooking Campers about caring for his animals.



Emily Buxton Adams, OSU Extension educator, teaching kids to cook locally raised chicken with fresh local peaches and peppers.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to the Columbus Foundation for the initial grant to start the project in 2013 and to Local Bounty Coshocton, LLC for their 5 year partnership.

THE COLUMBUS FOUNDATION

