Preparing Salads

Culinary Techniques for Healthy School Meals
The National Food Service Management Institute was authorized by Congress in 1989 and established in 1990 at The University of Mississippi in Oxford. The Institute operates under a grant agreement with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service.

PURPOSE
The purpose of the National Food Service Management Institute is to improve the operation of child nutrition programs through research, education and training, and information dissemination. The Administrative Offices and Divisions of Information Services and Education and Training are located in Oxford. The Division of Applied Research is located at The University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg.

MISSION
The mission of the National Food Service Management Institute is to provide information and services that promote the continuous improvement of child nutrition programs.

VISION
The vision of the National Food Service Management Institute is to be the leader in providing education, research, and resources to promote excellence in child nutrition programs.

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Preparing Salads

Objectives
Improve the quality of salads served to students.
Improve the variety of salads and salad greens served to students.
Improve the appeal of salads served to students.

Main Ideas in This Lesson
• Nutrients in the fresh ingredients in a salad must be maintained during preparation.
• Good quality salads can be prepared by following basic food preparation principles.
• Schools serve three basic types of salads: tossed green salad, mixed salad, and main course salads. Each one has a separate culinary technique that describes basic preparation steps.
• Blanching can be used to maintain color of fresh vegetables.
• The French knife can be used to prepare small amounts of fresh produce.

Preparation for Learning
Review the list of recipes with each Culinary Technique. The recipes are available at:

Available online at http://www.nfsmi.org

Available online at http://www.nfsmi.org

Practice or Application
Prepare one or more of the recipes listed with one of the Culinary Techniques.

Additional Suggestions
• Taste test a selection of new salad greens from the list of salad greens in the lesson. Consider which greens would appeal to students and could be added to your salads.
Important Terms

Salad Greens
- **Arugula** – medium green leaves; pungent flavor
- **Endive, Belgian** – tight, elongated head; slightly bitter flavor
- **Endive, Curly** – thick, narrow leaves with curly edges; bitter flavor
- **Escarole** – flat, curly-edged leaves is a loose head; bitter flavor
- **Lettuce, Butterhead** – tender, loose, round head of leaves; mild flavor
- **Lettuce, Iceberg** – crisp, pale-green leaves, compact head; very mild flavor
- **Lettuce, Leaf** – crisp-tender, curly leaves, loose cluster; red or green; mild flavor
- **Lettuce, Romaine** – elongated head, crisp leaves; fairly mild flavor
- **Radicchio** – fairly tender, red-purple leaves, cabbage-like head; slightly bitter flavor
- **Spinach** – tender, deep green leaves; rigid stems should be removed before serving; fairly mild flavor
- **Watercress** – small, round leaves on slender stalks; delicate texture; peppery, pungent flavor

Other Salad Ingredients:
- **Asparagus**
- **Avocados**
- **Broccoli**
- **Cabbage** – green and red
- **Carrots**
- **Cauliflower**
- **Celery**
- **Cucumbers**
- **Jicama**
- **Mushrooms**
- **Onions** – white, red, or spring
- **Peppers** – green, orange, red, and yellow
- **Radishes**
- **Summer squash** – yellow crookneck and zucchini
- **Tomatoes**

**Culinary**
Relating to the kitchen or cooking. An example of use is to describe food preparation skills as culinary skills.

**Culinary Technique**
A step-by-step food preparation method. The culinary techniques described in this lesson include preparing fresh fruits and baking fruits.

**Danger Zone**
According to the *FDA Food Code*, the temperatures between 41 °F and 135 °F that are ideal for bacteria to grow. All potentially hazardous foods should be kept below 41 °F or above 135 °F.

**Ethylene Gas**
A naturally occurring gas produced when some fruits and vegetables begin to ripen.

**Julienne**
Cutting vegetables or other food products into matchstick shapes.

**Just-In-Time Preparation**
This term is used throughout the lessons to mean preparing a menu item in small enough amounts that it will be at its peak of quality when placed on the serving line. This preparation schedule avoids holding any food for a long time. Other terms that mean the same thing are *batch cooking* and *cooking to the line*.

**Mise en Place (meez-un-plahss)**
A French term used by chefs and other food professionals to describe all the different things that have to be done to get ready up to the point of cooking. Translated, it means *put in place*. It includes all the *get ready steps* in food preparation such as using the recipe to assemble the equipment needed and getting ingredients ready to combine.

**Nutrients**
The chemical substances found in food that nourish the body. There are six classes of nutrients: proteins, carbohydrates, fats, water, minerals, and vitamins.

**Seasonal Produce**
Fruits and vegetables that are at their peak of production at a particular time of the year. Typically this produce is more flavorful and less expensive. Seasonality of produce will depend on region.
Getting Ready
Wash, rinse, sanitize, and air-dry all food-contact surfaces, equipment, and utensils that will be in contact with produce, such as cutting boards, knives, and sinks.

Equipment Needed
• Preparation sink – A separate two-compartment sink is recommended to clean and prepare fresh produce
• Food waste disposer or garbage can
• Reach-in refrigerator or walk-in cooler
• Worktables, preferably stainless steel
• Chopper and cutter
• Knives
• Peeler, electric or hand
• Cutting boards, color-coded for specific use
• Thermometers
• Disposable plastic gloves
Menu-Planning Practices for Healthy School Meals

- Increase the amounts and variety of fresh vegetables offered because vegetables differ in nutrient content.
- Offer a dark green or deep orange vegetable three to four times a week.
- Plan a vitamin C-rich vegetable or fruit daily.
- Use a variety of salad greens in your salads for variety in taste and nutrition.

Purchasing Practices for Healthy School Meals

Look to local farmers as an alternative to purchasing fresh produce. Check out www.farmtoschool.org.

Children should eat 1 to 3 cups of vegetables each day

Salads are more popular today than ever before because students, like adults, are conscious about what they eat. Salads represent healthy choices. Salads can be low in calories and high in important nutrients, particularly vitamins and minerals from fresh fruits and vegetables. Most importantly, salads are a taste treat.

To please school nutrition customers, salads must have eye appeal, pleasing flavor, and be nutritious. Fresh fruits and vegetables are especially important in a healthy diet. Salads are the perfect way to offer fresh fruits and vegetables to students and to introduce them to new foods. According to the 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, children should eat 1–3 cups of vegetables each day and 1–2 cups of fruits each day. To get that much in a day, students need to choose two or more servings of fruits and vegetables for lunch.

The challenge for the school nutrition program is to offer tempting salads that sell themselves and provide important nutritional benefits to students.

Fresh produce provides important vitamins and minerals. The two vitamins most often associated with fresh fruits and vegetables are vitamin A and vitamin C.

These two vitamins help protect the body from a variety of diseases. The body can make vitamin A from beta-carotene found in carrots, peaches, apricots, spinach, squash, broccoli, sweet potatoes, and kale.

Vitamin C is the leading vitamin in citrus fruits, melons, strawberries, green peppers, tomatoes, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, and other fruits and vegetables. It is easily destroyed during food production since damage occurs from both heat and light.

This lesson describes how to prepare salads so the fresh ingredients maintain their nutrients and their quality.
Foodservice experts have developed culinary techniques or step-by-step procedures that result in quality products. These culinary techniques have been developed so salads will:

1. **Provide a nutritious menu choice,** and
2. **Meet the quality standards for the type of salad.**

To understand why each step of a culinary technique is important, it is useful to know some basic principles or rules of salad preparation. These principles can be organized by those that help protect the nutrients in salad ingredients and those that promote quality. Many of the principles do both things. Appealing, healthful salads result when the basic principles of salad preparation are followed.

### Basic Principles of Preparation for Nutritious Salads

**For fruits or vegetables that have a skin, scrub well and use with the peeling left on whenever possible. If the fruit or vegetable must be peeled, peel as thinly as possible.**

Peeling some vegetables can remove many nutrients that are right under the skin. The skin on fruits gives added color and texture to salads. All fruits and vegetables should be washed well before using. This removes dirt, pesticides, and microorganisms. Failing to wash fresh produce can lead to foodborne illness in the cafeteria.

**When fruits and vegetables are cut, use a sharp blade and cut in the largest pieces that are desirable for the salad.**

A sharp blade in a piece of equipment or a knife will make a clean cut instead of bruising the fruit or vegetable. Bruising causes a rapid loss of vitamin C in some green leafy vegetables such as cabbage and other greens, as well as from fruits. Some fruits turn dark when they are exposed to air. Larger pieces expose less total surface area to air than many smaller pieces. Only cut the amount of the food that will be used for service that day. Prepare fresh salads as close to serving time as possible.

### Culinary Principles

Delicate salad greens, such as Butterhead lettuce, should be torn rather than cut when practical. However, when a knife is used, the blade should be sharp. Salad greens should be no larger than a quarter of a slice of bread.

**Prepare salads for just-in-time service on the line.**

Fresh fruits and vegetables can lose some vitamins and minerals as well as quality when they are held a long time and exposed to air and light. Moisture loss will lead to limp salad.

**Keep salads a nutritious menu choice by using lowfat or fat-free salad dressings.**

Salads are light menu choices since fruits and vegetables are naturally low in calories and high in nutrients. Salad dressings should be fat-free or lowfat to help make school menus consistent with the recommendations of the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*. Salad dressings for tossed green salads should be added by the student to maintain quality and freshness.

What are some popular fat-free salad dressings offered on your menus?

Not only is it important to prepare salads to maintain the nutrients in the fruits and vegetables, but it is also important to offer salads that meet the quality standards described on the Quality Score Card. Different kinds of salads have different quality standards. Salads should also be prepared to meet student likes.
Culinary Principles, continued

Basic Principles of Salad Preparation to Meet Quality Standards

There are many different kinds of salads; this lesson looks at the following:

• Green Salads
• Mixed Salads
  º Fruit Salads
  º Vegetable Salads
  º Potato Salads
  º Pasta and Grain Salads
  º Legume Salads
  º Protein Salads
• Composed (Arranged) Salads

All salads should be prepared using a recipe.*

The manager uses a recipe to determine what ingredients will be included in a salad and then gives that information to the assistant. Salads should be planned to contrast color, flavor, texture, and shape.

Salads are more appealing and nutritious when there is a variety of ingredients.

Color
Include ingredients of different colors for eye appeal, different nutrients, and other healthful components. For example, in a tossed green salad, shredded carrot, and red cabbage can be added to leaf lettuce. Create colorful tossed green salads by mixing ingredients.

Flavor
Balance strong and mild flavors. For example, a pre-plated salad could present mild Butterhead lettuce with grapefruit sections and red onion rings.

Texture
Balance soft with crisp ingredients, juicy with crunchy, fibrous with smooth. For example, a tossed green salad could include Romaine lettuce, sunflower seeds, raisins, and orange sections.

Shape
Cut ingredients in different shapes, such as cubes, julienne (matchstick shape), slices, shredded bits, and wedges.

Use the correct way to clean and wash all fresh ingredients carefully to remove sand, grit, insects, pesticides, and microorganisms. Remember to drain washed ingredients carefully and thoroughly.

Fresh ingredients in salads lose their appeal if they taste gritty. They can cause foodborne illness if they are not cleaned thoroughly. All fresh salad ingredients should be used promptly after cleaning and washing to assure quality.

The correct way to clean fresh fruits and vegetables:

• For Iceberg lettuce, remove the core before it is cleaned. To remove the core, firmly strike the core of the head of lettuce on a hard surface, then remove the core whole.
• Wash head lettuce by running water in the core that has been loosened. Do not soak heads of lettuce since the leaves absorb water. Place in a colander to drain with the core end down. Remove the leaves and stack six to seven leaves to a pile.
• For salad greens with loose leaves, such as spinach, Romaine lettuce, Boston lettuce, or leaf lettuce, separate the leaves; wash in cool water. Do not soak.
• Drain all salad ingredients thoroughly so no water collects in the bottom of the serving container. Use a commercial salad spinner to thoroughly dry salad greens.
• All washed salad greens should be placed in plastic bags or plastic containers with a fitted cover.
• Some fruits turn brown when the cut surface is exposed to air. These fruits include apples, avocados, bananas, pears, and peaches. They should be cut with a sharp, stainless steel knife and then tossed in pineapple, orange, or diluted lemon juice. A commercial product can be used to prevent browning.
• Some fresh vegetables such as carrots, jicama, potatoes, and turnips need to be washed thoroughly, and then peeled. Do not soak because important nutrients can be lost in the soaking water.

*Refer to USDA Recipes for Schools for suggestions. Use the USDA Food Buying Guide when determining the amounts needed for new recipes developed at the school site.
**Culinary Principles, continued**

**Value-Added Produce**

Cleaned and cored lettuce or pre-cut produce may be another option for preparing fresh salad ingredients. Cleaned and cored iceberg lettuce is ready to rinse and drain. Then proceed to the next step in salad preparation.

Pre-cut salad greens and other pre-cut fresh produce items are ready to use when they are received. The labor and packaging necessary to prepare fresh cut produce adds to its value and cost.

Pre-cut produce should be purchased in quantities that can be used within five school days in order to remain at its peak of quality. Because the produce is ready for use, the temperature of the packages is critical to quality. Take the temperature inside the produce bags when they are received. Be sure the temperature is about 40 °F. If the temperature of the product is too low or too high, follow the school district procedure.

On receipt of pre-cut produce, immediately store the bags in the refrigerator in the coldest part. Do not remove the bags from the refrigerator until it is time to prepare the salad. Pre-cut produce is packaged in air-controlled bags to assure quality and freshness. Once the seal on the bag has been broken, the products should be used as quickly as possible.

**Chill all salad ingredients in the refrigerator until time for preparation.**

The temperature of ingredients affects appearance, texture, and flavor of the salad. Fresh greens should be refrigerated for several hours to develop crispness.

Most fresh fruits and vegetables maintain their quality best between 34 °F and 40 °F. Fresh-cut produce loses quality even faster than whole produce when it is above 40 °F.

Ingredients like canned tuna, hard cooked eggs, and pasta will provide a more appealing salad when they are chilled. Before leaving each day, check the next day’s menu to make sure all salad ingredients for the next day have been prepared so they can be used chilled on the day of service.

**Cut salad ingredients as described in the recipe. Pieces should be large enough to be identified.**

Many fresh fruits and vegetables provide vitamins that can be destroyed by light or exposure to air. Some oxidize and turn brown and have an unattractive appearance when exposed to air. It is better to have fewer pieces of salad ingredients that are larger than many very small pieces. Most students like to be able to identify the ingredients in their foods.

Many salad ingredients are prepared in large quantities using a vertical cutter mixer (VCM), a food processor, a slicer, or some other similar piece of equipment. However, some ingredients are needed in only small amounts and can be easily cut with a knife. A French knife is the chef’s choice for cutting fresh ingredients.

**A variety of salad dressings should be offered on the side so students can add them after they have selected a salad. If this is not possible, add salad dressing just in time for service.**

Salad dressings add an important taste to salads. However, when a salad dressing is added to mixed greens or other fresh vegetables or fruits too long before serving, the liquid in the dressing makes the fruit or vegetables lose their crispness. The salad will look tired and wilted. Lowfat or fat-free salad dressings should be offered as individual servings on the side, or added at the last minute. Follow the recipe for adding dressings to salads like tuna or pasta.

**Serve salads at the ideal temperature. Salads should be served at a temperature of 34 °F–38 °F for the best quality.**

Fresh ingredients maintain their appearance and texture better at this temperature.
Preparing Green Salads

1. **Store fresh produce at the right temperature.**
   Refer to the chart *Keep Fresh Produce Flavorful* in the lesson on Preparing Fruits to learn how to store different kinds of fruits and vegetables.

2. **Use a variety of ingredients for contrast in color, flavor, texture, and shape.**
   Begin with a leafy green vegetable and add a variety of ingredients.

3. **Wash the greens thoroughly in plenty of cool water to remove all traces of dirt or sand.**
   Change the water as often as necessary until absolutely no traces of dirt, grit, or sand are visible. Separate the lettuce or other greens into leaves. Trim any coarse ribs or stem ends away.

4. **Dry the greens completely.**
   Salad dressings cling best to well-dried greens. Thoroughly dried greens maintain quality longer. Be sure tossed green salads are drained and dry. Use a salad spinner for best results.

5. **Cut or tear the lettuce into bite-size pieces.**
   A sharp, high-carbon, stainless-steel knife is necessary to prevent discoloration. A sharp knife will ensure that the leaves are sliced rather than crushed and bruised.

6. **Keep greens chilled until ready to serve.**
   Store greens in shallow tubs with a tight cover until service.

7. **Offer a variety of lowfat or fat-free salad dressings for students to add to the salad.**

Try these USDA recipes for reduced-fat salad dressings:

- Clear Dressing . . . . . . .E-18
- Ranch Dressing . . . . . .E-19
- Honey Dressing . . . . . .E-20
1. **Store fresh, frozen, or canned fruits at the right temperature.**

   Refer to the chart *Keep Fresh Produce Flavorful* in the lesson on Preparing Fruits to learn how to store different kinds of fruits and vegetables.

2. **Review the recipe the day before preparation so ingredients can be selected and chilled.**

   Chill canned ingredients overnight.

3. **Follow the recipe for preparation of ingredients that need to be chopped, diced, minced, or sliced.**

   Leave ingredients in large enough pieces to be identified. All ingredients in a salad should be identifiable.

   For fruits that turn brown (apples, pears, and bananas), treat with fruit juice (pineapple, orange, or diluted lemon juice) or a commercial product to prevent browning.

   Fresh herbs such as mint, basil, or lemon thyme can be added for flavor and color.

4. **Gently mix all fruits, herbs, seasonings, and dressing.**

   Fruit salads with highly perishable fruits, such as bananas, can be produced in batches.

5. **Keep fruit salads chilled until service.**
Preparing Mixed Salads - Vegetable Salads

1. **Store fresh produce at the right temperature.**
   Refer to the chart *Keep Fresh Produce Flavorful* in the lesson on Preparing Fruits to learn how to store different kinds of fruits and vegetables.

2. **Review the recipe the day before preparation so ingredients can be selected and chilled.**
   Chill canned ingredients, including salad dressings, overnight.

3. **Follow the recipe for preparation of ingredients that need to be chopped, diced, minced, or sliced.**
   Leave ingredients in large enough pieces to be identified.
   All ingredients in a salad should be identifiable.
   For vegetables that turn brown, such as avocados, treat with fruit juice (pineapple, orange, or diluted lemon juice) or a commercial product to prevent browning.
   Blanch vegetables, if necessary, to set the color or to soften the vegetable.

4. **Gently mix all vegetables, herbs, seasonings, and dressing.**
   Vegetable salads with highly perishable vegetables, such as tomatoes, can be produced in batches.

5. **Keep vegetable salads chilled until service.**

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Try these USDA Recipes that include this Culinary Technique

- Carrot-Raisin Salad . . . .E-04
- Creamy Cole Slaw . . . .E-06
- Broccoli Salad . . . . . .E-17
1. **Store fresh produce at the right temperature.**
   
   Refer to the chart Keep Fresh Produce Flavorful in the lesson on Preparing Fruits to learn how to store different kinds of fruits and vegetables.

2. **Review the recipe the day before preparation so ingredients can be selected and chilled.**
   
   Potatoes must be cooked completely, but not overcooked. Cook and chill potatoes the day before salad preparation.
   
   Chill ingredients, including salad dressings, overnight.

3. **Follow the recipe for preparation of ingredients that need to be chopped, diced, minced, or sliced.**
   
   Leave ingredients in large enough pieces to be identified. All ingredients in a salad should be identifiable.
   
   Blanch vegetables, if necessary, to set the color or to soften the vegetable.

4. **Gently mix potatoes, other vegetables, herbs, seasonings, and dressing.**

5. **Keep potato salads chilled until service.**
Preparing Mixed Salads - Pasta and Grain Salads

1. **Store fresh produce at the right temperature.**
   Refer to the chart *Keep Fresh Produce Flavorful* in the lesson on Preparing Fruits to learn how to store different kinds of fruits and vegetables.

2. **Review the recipe the day before preparation so ingredients can be selected and chilled.**
   Pasta and grains must be cooked completely, but not overcooked. Cook and chill pasta and grains the day before salad preparation.
   Chill ingredients, including salad dressings, overnight.

3. **Follow the recipe for preparation of ingredients that need to be chopped, diced, minced, or sliced.**
   Leave ingredients in large enough pieces to be identified. All ingredients in a salad should be identifiable.
   Blanch vegetables, if necessary, to set the color or to soften the vegetable.

4. **Gently mix pasta or grains, other vegetables, herbs, seasonings, and dressing.**

5. **Keep pasta and grain salads chilled until service.**

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Try these USDA Recipes that include this Culinary Technique

- Macaroni Salad .............. E-07
- Pasta Salad ............... E-08
- Tabbouleh ............... E-23
- Rice Salad (Child Care) ............... E-02
- Pasta-Vegetable Salad (Child Care) ............... E-08
- Macaroni Salad (Child Care) .............. E-10
- Macaroni and Ham Salad (Child Care) .... E-10A
1. **Store fresh produce at the right temperature.**  
   Refer to the chart Keep Fresh Produce Flavorful in the lesson on Preparing Fruits to learn how to store different kinds of fruits and vegetables.

2. **Review the recipe the day before preparation so ingredients can be selected and chilled.**  
   Dried beans should be cooked until they are tender to the bite. The center should be soft and creamy.  
   Chill ingredients, including salad dressings, overnight.

3. **Follow the recipe for preparation of ingredients that need to be chopped, diced, minced, or sliced.**  
   Leave ingredients in large enough pieces to be identified. All ingredients in a salad should be identifiable.  
   Blanch vegetables, if necessary, to set the color or to soften the vegetable.

4. **Gently mix beans, other vegetables, herbs, seasonings, and dressing.**  
   Dress the bean salad within 4 hours of service as beans will become tougher from the acid in the salad dressing.

5. **Keep bean salads chilled until service.**

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**Try these USDA Recipes that include this Culinary Technique**

- Three Bean Salad ..... E-11
- Marinated Black Bean Salad ........ E-21
- Hummus ................... E-24
- Three Bean Salad (Child Care) .......... E-04
1. Store fresh produce at the right temperature.
   Refer to the chart Keep Fresh Produce Flavorful in the lesson on Preparing Fruits to learn how to store different kinds of fruits and vegetables.

2. Review the recipe the day before preparation so ingredients can be selected and chilled.
   Chill ingredients, including salad dressings, overnight.

3. Follow the recipe for preparation of ingredients that need to be chopped, diced, minced, or sliced.
   Leave ingredients in large enough pieces to be identified. All ingredients in a salad should be identifiable.
   Blanch vegetables, if necessary, to set the color or to soften the vegetable.

4. Gently mix protein, vegetables, herbs, seasonings, and dressing.

5. Keep protein salads chilled until service.
Culinary Technique

Preparing Composed (Arranged) Salads

1. **Store fresh produce at the right temperature.**
   Refer to the chart Keep Fresh Produce Flavorful in the lesson on Preparing Fruits to learn how to store different kinds of fruits and vegetables.

2. **Prepare the base or underliner to frame the salad.**
   A salad green is placed on a plate as the underliner for the main ingredient of the salad. Be sure the green is well drained and dry.

3. **Prepare the body or main ingredient of the salad.**
   The main ingredient(s) should be drained and chilled. Follow the recipe for a quality product. When arranging the main ingredient(s) on the underliner, consider the shapes, size, and texture. Vary the shapes and heights of the ingredients for visual appeal.

4. **Prepare the salad dressing.**
   Some recipes include salad dressing. However, if the pre-plated salad can be served with the salad dressing on the side, that is the best way. This keeps the salad fresher and allows the customer to add the amount of dressing desired.

5. **Add the garnish.**
   The garnish is often described as part of the recipe. A garnish should add both visual appeal and taste appeal. All garnishes should be edible.

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Try this USDA Recipe that includes this Culinary Technique

Taco Salad ............ E-10
Blanching means dipping a food into boiling water for a very short time, only a minute or two. This method briefly and partially cooks a food. Blanching is used to

- prepare vegetables for further cooking (for example, broccoli);
- remove strong or bitter flavors (for example, kale);
- soften firm foods (for example, carrots);
- set colors of vegetables (for example, snow peas); and
- loosen skins for peeling (for example, ripe tomatoes).

In schools, the main use for blanching is to set the color of vegetables that will be served cold as part of salads. Some vegetables that can be blanched for use in salads include: broccoli, cauliflower, carrots, and snow peas. Some vegetables need to be blanched before stir-frying. Always follow the recipe.

1. **Prepare the washed, cut vegetable.**

2. **Use a steam kettle, tilting braising pan, or stockpot.** Bring water to a boil. Place the vegetables in the boiling water and cook for 2–3 minutes or just until the color of the vegetables becomes brighter (green vegetables will become a brighter green).

   For small amounts of vegetables to be blanched, the vegetables may be placed in a colander and then the whole colander set in the boiling water.

3. **Immediately drain all hot water.**

4. **Immerse the vegetables into an ice bath (water with ice).** Be sure all the vegetables are submerged in the water. Leave about 1 minute, to stop the cooking process.

5. **Drain the vegetables well and store covered in the refrigerator until time for use.**
Culinary Technique  Using a French Knife

1. Keep your fingers curled back and grip the food being cut.
2. Hold the knife in the other hand.
3. While keeping the knife’s tip on the cutting surface, lift the heel of the knife.
4. Using the second joint of your index finger as a guide, cut a slice using a smooth, even, downward stroke.

Push out slightly as each cut is made. Adjust the position of the guiding finger after each slice to produce slices of equal size. After a few cuts, slide your fingertips and thumb down the length of the item and continue slicing. For this technique, the tip of the knife stays on the surface and the knife moves up and down only at the hand.
Before any food is placed on the serving line, it should be evaluated using the Quality Score Card. Follow the recipe to prepare any salad to meet quality standards. The school nutrition manager and assistant who prepared the food should make the determination whether the food product meets the standards on the Quality Score Card. If the decision is made that the food does not meet the quality standards, do the following things:

1. Substitute another salad on the serving line. Follow the school district procedure for menu substitutions.
2. Use the salad or its ingredients another way, if possible, to avoid wasting the food.
3. Determine what happened during preparation that caused the poor quality and make plans to correct the preparation next time.
Quality Score Card for Salads

Date: __________________ Name of Menu Item: ________________________________

Proudly Prepared by __________________________________________________________

Quality Scored by ____________________________________________________________

Directions: When the food is ready to serve, use this Quality Score Card to evaluate the quality. Mark YES when the food meets the standard and NO when it does not. Mark NA (Not Applicable) when a specific quality standard does not apply to the food being evaluated. Use the COMMENTS section to explain why a food does not meet a standard.

Remember, if a food does not meet the quality standards, it should not be placed on the serving line.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Standard</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>NA</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Appearance</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bright color is typical of the fresh greens.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bright color is typical of other fresh</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ingredients (no discoloration).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salad appears moist, not dry or excessively</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wet.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salad ingredients are even pieces.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salad ingredients appear crisp, not limp.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garnish is edible and appropriate for the</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>salad.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Texture or Consistency</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salad ingredients are crisp, not soggy.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meat or pasta/rice salads are tender but</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not mushy.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Flavor and Seasoning</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salad ingredients have a fresh, distinctive</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>flavor.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seasonings enhance the salad but are not</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>too salty or too tart.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A choice of lowfat and/or fat-free salad</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dressings is available.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Service Temperature</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chilled – 34 °F – 38 °F</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Culinary Techniques for Healthy School Meals
Culinary Practice is an activity designed to give foodservice assistants an opportunity to practice preparing salads. Use the Culinary Practice Score Card for the activity.

1. Foodservice assistants may work as partners or individually, depending on the directions from the manager. Ideally, one partner should be someone who cooks and the other, someone who has other responsibilities. Both foodservice assistants should work together to complete the Culinary Practice.

2. The manager and foodservice assistants should discuss the Culinary Practice for Preparing Salads. Make a note of the date the Culinary Practice should be completed and discussed with the manager.

3. The manager will approve the recipe to be used for the practice. The recipe should use one of the culinary techniques described in this lesson. Review the steps of the culinary techniques:

   • Culinary Technique: Preparing Green Salads
   • Culinary Technique: Preparing Mixed Salads - Fruit Salads
   • Culinary Technique: Preparing Mixed Salads - Vegetable Salads
   • Culinary Technique: Preparing Mixed Salads - Potato Salads
   • Culinary Technique: Preparing Mixed Salads - Pasta and Grain Salads
   • Culinary Technique: Preparing Mixed Salads - Legume Salads

4. The manager and foodservice assistants who prepared the product will evaluate the product before it is placed on the serving line. Use the Quality Score Cards to evaluate the products.
Culinary Practice Score Card for Salads

Name(s): ____________________________________________

(This practice activity may be completed individually or with a partner. The manager will make this assignment at the end of the lesson.)

**Purpose:** The purpose of the activity is to practice Preparing Salads.

**Culinary Technique:** (Identify the culinary technique that you will use. Refer to the previous pages for a description of each technique.)

Name of the Recipe: ____________________________________________

Date for Production: ____________________________________________

**Directions:** The manager and foodservice assistant(s) will select a recipe for salad that includes one of the culinary techniques described in this lesson. Check YES or NO when each step is completed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan food production for just-in-time service.</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Did you plan food production for just-in-time service?</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Review the Quality Score Card and the recipe.</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Did you review the recipe so you are familiar with the ingredients, equipment, and directions?</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did you review the Quality Score Card so you will know how the finished product should look and taste?</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organize equipment and ingredients.</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Did you assemble all the equipment needed?</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did you assemble all of the ingredients needed?</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use the right culinary technique.</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Did you use the culinary technique correctly?</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deliver a quality product.</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Did you use the Quality Score Card to evaluate the product?</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did you review the product with the manager?</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discuss the following questions with the manager before serving.</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How can the appearance of the food be improved?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How can the flavor or taste of the food be improved?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How can the texture and tenderness of the food be improved?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How can the service temperature of the food be improved?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The manager’s signature indicates this practice has been completed satisfactorily. The manager should keep this on file or submit it to the central office to document the completion of the lesson.

Name of Manager: ___________________________ Date Signed: __________
References


