



North Country School:

The Edible Schoolyard & Teaching Learning Kitchen



Involving children in growing and harvesting food is an important part of what we do and have been doing since 1938. Students learn how to plant, harvest, cook and compost on five acres of gardens. In the fall and spring, instructors work with children in 4,000 square feet of greenhouses to produce vegetables, herbs and flowers.

“Partnering with the true pioneer in edible education has been incredibly valuable for the Edible Schoolyard Project. North Country School and Camp Treetops have been giving children the experience of being a part of nature and the food system for 90 years, and their experience is invaluable as is their approach to working in a cold climate.”

—Alice Waters, ESY Founder

We practice “edible education” and are pleased to join forces with The Edible Schoolyard Project, a renowned program out of Berkley, CA whose mission is to provide interactive experiences in the classroom, kitchen, garden and lunchroom. Founded by chef, activist and author Alice Waters, Edible Schoolyard seeks to transform the health and values of children by making edible education part of the core curriculum of every school in the nation. At North Country School, our Edible Schoolyard classes meet for an hour and a half each week.

The Teaching and Learning Kitchen (TLK) is an innovative, experiential learning space that complements the hands-on activities

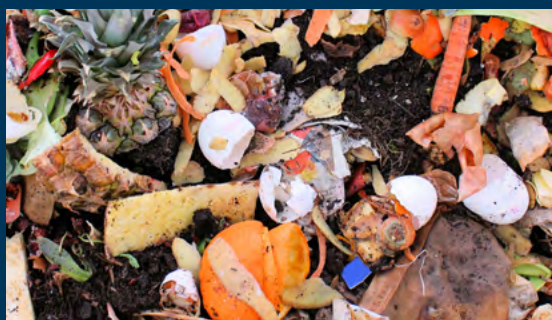


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of our signature farm and garden program. Located at the heart of our campus next to the Children's Garden and across from Glass House, the TLK is one of a handful of instructional facilities of its kind in the country.

The Teaching and Learning Kitchen is the perfect classroom for Edible Schoolyard teaching, which reinforces the work that campers and students do in our extensive gardens and greenhouses. Fresh produce gathered outside is brought to the space for lessons about sustainability, earth science, botany, world history, the planet's food stream—and so much more.

The 1,300-square-foot facility provides a seminar space and three kitchen work stations with ovens, two-burner cooktops, prep counters, storage, and lesson tables. As they prepare food, children and campus visitors can engage with issues that surround sustainably growing and harvesting food for the next century. The building is also an ideal discussion and presentation space for locavore gatherings or farm-to-fork workshops that feature chefs or farmers from the area.



At North Country School, the concept of treating waste as a resource is woven into the fabric of everyday life on campus. Since we opened our doors more than 80 years ago, our community has been doing its part to ensure leftover organic matter does not join the tons of garbage headed to landfills each year.

With support from a NYSERDA grant, North Country School has designed and constructed

a game changing compost system, turning what was once considered a greenhouse-gas causing waste product into a valuable soil amendment. The compact, 20-foot, continuous-flow drum composter turns all sources of food scraps (yes, even milk, meat, and a stray T-shirt or shoe) to nutrient-rich material in 28 days. The automated system mechanically turns the drum one to three times a day, tumbling the food scraps as nearly

completed material falls out of the open end – just like a giant stomach. All organic material is mixed with a carbon source for bulking. Zillions of bacteria do all of the hard work; it is our job to provide the right conditions. The nearly processed material undergoes secondary decomposition in a pile, and the completed product is deposited on campus garden beds, starting the food cycle anew.



RECIPE FROM THE
CHILDREN'S GARDEN

Crabapple and Maple Spice Cake with Lemon Glaze

BECCA MILLER

Winter on our mountain campus brings with it freshly fallen snow, days out on the ski hill and hockey pond, and warm meals with friends in the dining room. Though the gardens have been put to bed for the season, our students are still busy over in the Teaching and Learning Kitchen cooking up creative recipes using autumn's stored bounty of fruits and vegetables.

This dessert bread recipe, brought to us by our 8th- and 9th-grade Edible Schoolyard class, uses crabapples picked and frozen in the fall, along with maple syrup collected and boiled by the school community during the spring sugaring season.

Enjoy this spice cake beside a fireplace after a busy day of wintertime activity, or pack some along as a warming snack while out skiing, hiking, or ice-climbing in the backcountry.

Crabapple and Maple Spice Cake Recipe

1 ½–2 cups crabapples (defrosted if frozen)

3 eggs

⅓ cup maple syrup

⅓ cup white sugar

½ cup vegetable oil

1 tsp vanilla extract

1 ¼ cups white flour

⅔ tsp baking powder

½ tsp ground cinnamon

Less than ¼ tsp ground cardamom or nutmeg

½ tsp salt



Preheat oven to 350° Fahrenheit. Grease a 9" x 9" baking pan.

Chop crabapples into small pieces, cutting around and discarding the stems and seeds. Once prepared, you should have approximately 1 cup of chopped crabapple pieces.

In a large bowl, mix together the chopped crabapples, eggs, vanilla, sugar, oil, and maple syrup until combined.

In another bowl, mix together the flour, baking powder, cinnamon, cardamom or nutmeg, and salt. Add the dry mixture into the wet mixture in three batches, stirring until all of the dry ingredients have been incorporated and no clumps remain. Take care to not overstir the batter.

Pour the batter into the greased baking dish and bake for 35–45 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean. Let cake cool completely.

Lemon Glaze Recipe (optional)

1 ¼ cup confectioners' sugar

½ tsp finely grated lemon zest

2 ½ tbsp fresh lemon juice

1 tsp unsalted butter, melted

Once the spice cake has cooled completely, whisk the glaze ingredients together in a bowl. Drizzle finished glaze over the cake immediately. Allow glaze to set before serving.



RECIPE FROM THE CHILDREN'S GARDEN



Honey and Blossom Cookies

BECCA MILLER

FLOWERS ARE BLOOMING and the honey bees are buzzing in the Children's Garden. As the fields and gardens flourish, our creative students and campers head to the Teaching and Learning Kitchen to whip up seasonal dishes featuring just-picked ingredients.

This sweet cookie recipe, brought to us by our 4th- and 5th-grade Edible Schoolyard class, takes advantage of the rainbow of edible flowers available in our gardens during the spring and summer. Bee balm, echinacea, Johnny Jump-Ups (or tricolor violets), and wild dandelion flowers accompany the local honey that brings a sweet surprise to this simple treat.

Enjoy these cookies at a summertime picnic alongside a glass of iced dandelion-flower and mint tea, or recreate this recipe during the winter months by swapping in dried flowers, bringing a burst of warmth and color to chilly, snow-filled days.



Honey and Blossom Sugar Cookies Recipe

- ¼ cup dandelion petals
- ⅛ cup mixed bee balm and echinacea petals
- ⅓ cup violet flowers (either wild or cultivated Johnny Jump-Ups)
- ⅓ cup honey
- ½ cup softened butter
- ¼ cup granulated white sugar + an additional ¼ cup
- 1 egg
- ¼ tsp vanilla
- 1 cup white flour
- Pinch of salt

Note: Gently wash all flowers and allow to dry flat on a towel before use.

Instructions

Preheat oven to 350° Fahrenheit.

Grease a cookie sheet with butter. In a bowl, cream together the butter and sugar until smooth. Add in the egg, vanilla, and salt and mix completely. Add the honey and continue to mix until you achieve a smooth, batter-like consistency.

In a separate bowl combine the flour, dandelion petals, bee balm petals, and echinacea petals. Add the dry ingredients to the wet ingredients and mix until just combined. Dough should be sticky. Cover dough and refrigerate for 15–20 minutes.

Place ¼ cup granulated white sugar in one bowl and the violet flowers in another. Using your hands, roll balls of dough (approximately a teaspoon's worth), first pressing one side into the violets until a few stick, then pressing that same side in the sugar. Place on greased cookie sheet (sugar side up) and flatten slightly. If dough becomes too sticky to work with, refrigerate 10 more minutes before continuing to shape dough balls.

Bake 10–15 minutes until edges are set and light golden-brown. Once cooled, cookie edges should be crispy and centers should be slightly chewy.

Makes approximately 20 cookies.

