From Scratch Success

Expanding Scratch-Made Menu Items in Space-Constrained School Kitchens

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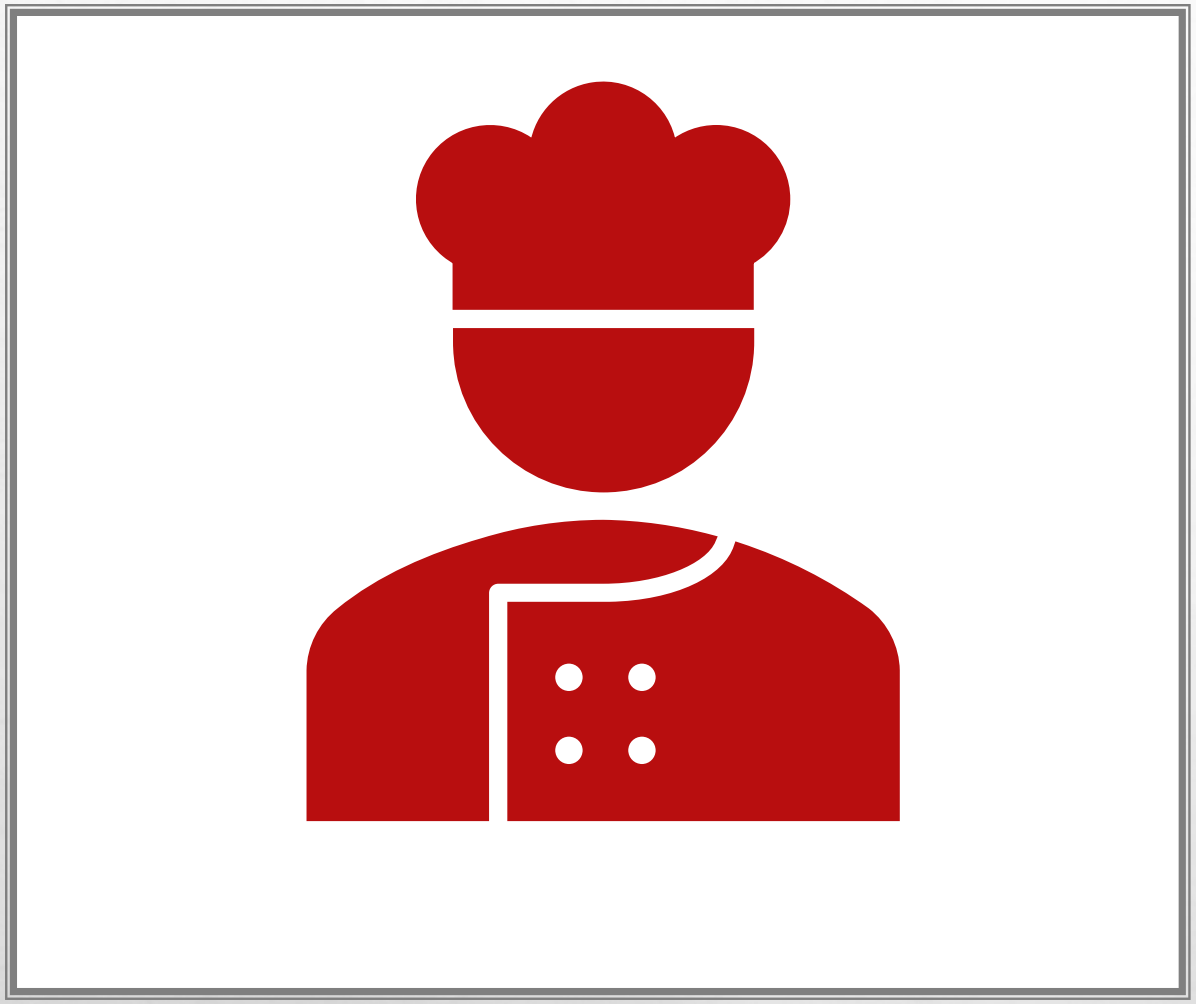
LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Increase scratch-made meals
- Optimize limited kitchen space
- Evaluate hood and ventless options
- Improve labor and workflow

WHY SCRATCH COOKING?

Scratch cooking isn't about having a million-dollar kitchen. It's about maximizing the kitchen you already have through smarter design, better workflows, versatile equipment, and strategic planning.

Today we'll explore practical solutions that any school district can implement regardless of kitchen size."



COMMON CHALLENGES

- • SMALL KITCHENS
- • AGING EQUIPMENT
- • LIMITED LABOR
- • VENTILATION CONSTRAINTS
- • BUDGET LIMITATIONS

WHY SCRATCH COOKING MATTERS

- TODAY'S STUDENTS EXPECT BETTER

- ✓ FRESH INGREDIENTS
- ✓ BETTER FLAVOR
- ✓ LESS PROCESSED FOOD
- ✓ HEALTHIER OPTIONS
- ✓ MORE CUSTOMIZATION

PRODUCTION WORKFLOW

- STUDENT EXPECTATIONS
- FRESH FOOD
- HIGHER PARTICIPATION
- MORE REVENUE

Traditional	Scratch Made
Heat & Serve	Cook & Create
High Packaging Waste	Reduced Packaging
Limited Menu Variety	Flexible Recipes
Vendor Dependent	Greater Control
Fixed Portions	Customizable Recipes

WHY DISTRICTS ARE MOVING TOWARD SCRATCH COOKING

FOR DISCUSSION

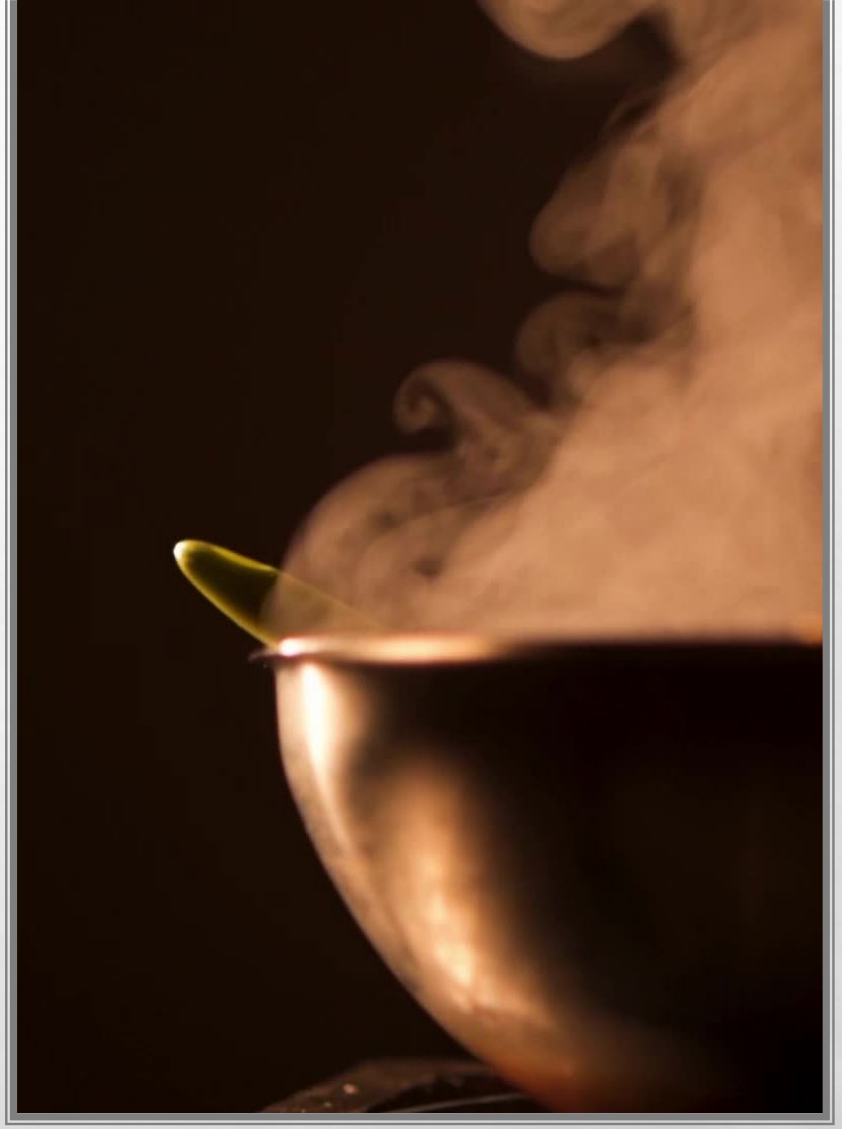
- SCRATCH COOKING PROVIDES OPPORTUNITIES TO:
- • REDUCE SODIUM
- • INCREASE VEGETABLES
- • CONTROL INGREDIENTS
- • IMPROVE FLAVOR
- • SUPPORT LOCAL PURCHASING WHEN FEASIBLE

THE REALITY OF SCHOOL KITCHENS

- APPROXIMATELY 70% OF DISTRICTS REPORT ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING:
- 🏫 SMALL KITCHENS
- 👩‍🍳 STAFFING SHORTAGES
- ⚡ LIMITED ELECTRICAL CAPACITY
- 💨 VENTILATION LIMITATIONS
- 💲 BUDGET CONSTRAINTS
- 📦 STORAGE SHORTAGE

AUDIENCE ACTIVITY

- WHAT IS YOUR BIGGEST OBSTACLE TO INCREASING SCRATCH COOKING?"



THINK AND WALK LIKE A PRODUCTION KITCHEN

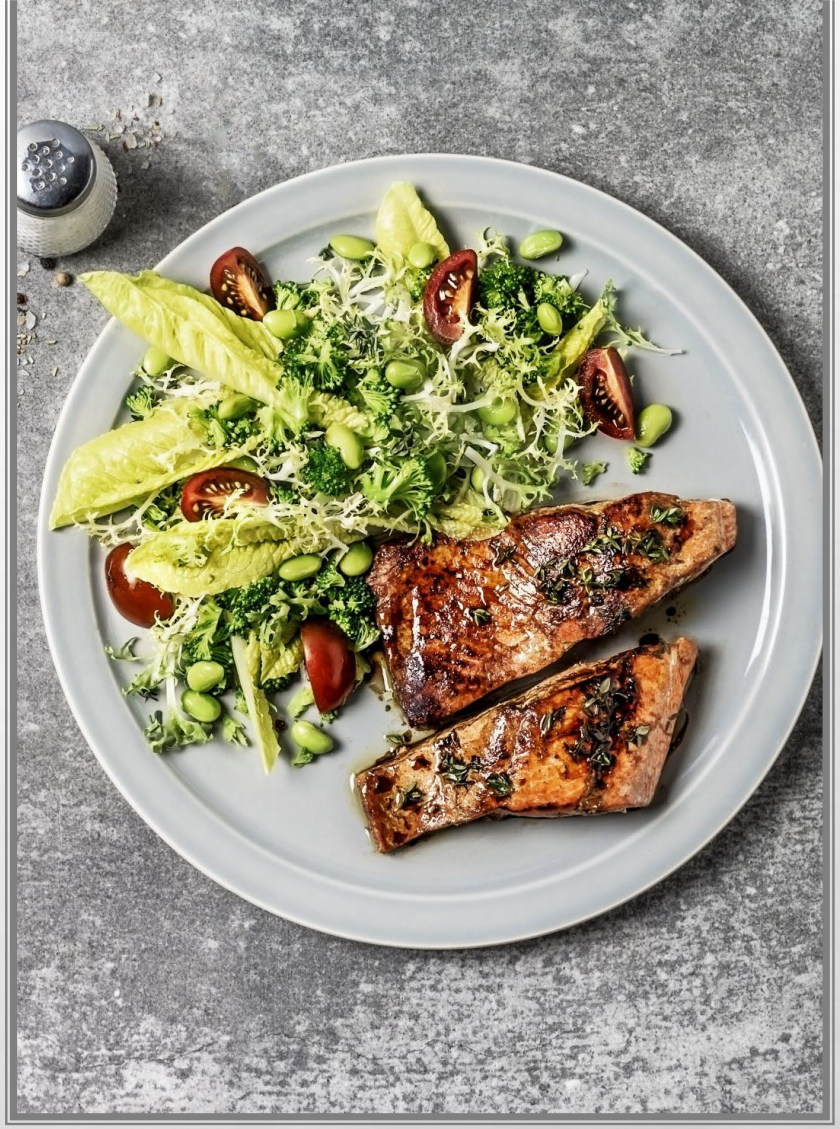
- RECEIVING
- DRY STORAGE
- COLD STORAGE
- PREPARATION
- COOKING
- HOLDING
- SERVING
- WAREWASHING

KEY POINT

- EVERY EXTRA STEP COSTS:
- • LABOR
- • TIME
- • MONEY

SCRATCH LUNCH

- CHICKEN FAJITAS
- BAKED ZITI
- TERIYAKI CHICKEN
- BBQ PORK
- CHILI



PROTEIN STRATEGY

- COOK ONCE, USE MULTIPLE WAYS:
- CHICKEN → TACOS, PASTA, SALADS, PIZZA.

DESIGNING FOR EFFICIENCY

- SIX PRINCIPLES
- ✓ MINIMIZE WALKING
- ✓ KEEP PREP NEAR REFRIGERATION
- ✓ SEPARATE CLEAN AND DIRTY TRAFFIC
- ✓ STORE FREQUENTLY USED ITEMS NEARBY
- ✓ CHOOSE MULTI-PURPOSE EQUIPMENT
- ✓ DESIGN FOR FUTURE GROWTH

SMALL KITCHEN…BIG RESULTS

- **KITCHEN SIZE**
- 1,800 SQUARE FEET
- SERVES
- 900 STUDENTS
- **EQUIPMENT**
- ONE COMBI OVEN
- ONE TILT SKILLET
- ONE WALK-IN COOLER
- ONE MOBILE PREP TABLE

energy
ENERGY STAR

OUTCOMES

- ↑ SCRATCH COOKING INCREASED
- ↑ STUDENT PARTICIPATION IMPROVED
- ↓ FOOD WASTE REDUCED
- ↓ CONVENIENCE FOODS DECREASED

PRESENTATION AND MARKETING

YOUR SCRATCH COOKING ROADMAP

Evaluate	Evaluate current menu
Identify	Identify one scratch recipe
Train	Train staff
Measure	Measure success
Expand	expand gradually

KEY MESSAGE

- DON'T OVERHAUL YOUR MENU OVERNIGHT. BUILD CONFIDENCE ONE RECIPE AT A TIME
- THE MOST SUCCESSFUL DISTRICTS FOCUS ON CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT. STARTING WITH ONE OR TWO SCRATCH-MADE ITEMS ALLOWS STAFF TO GAIN CONFIDENCE, REFINE PROCESSES, AND DEMONSTRATE SUCCESS BEFORE EXPANDING

BUILDING A SCRATCH KITCHEN WITHOUT BUILDING AN ADDITION

THE EQUIPMENT MINDSET

- DON'T BUY MORE EQUIPMENT...
- BUY EQUIPMENT THAT DOES MORE.
- INSTEAD OF ASKING:
- "WHAT PIECE OF EQUIPMENT DO I NEED?"
- ASK:
- "HOW MANY JOBS CAN THIS EQUIPMENT PERFORM?"

EQUIPMENT MULTIPLIERS

Equipment	Can Replace
Combi Oven	Convection oven, steamer, proofing cabinet, holding cabinet, smoker
Tilt Skillet	Stock pot, range, braising pan, steam kettle (many applications)
Induction	Gas range, hot plate, warming station
Rapid Cook Oven aka fast oven	Convection oven, microwave, toaster
Blast Chiller	Ice bath, extended cooling racks (improves cooling process)

MULTI COOK OVENS

LETS TALK
HOW MANY OF YOUR CURRENT PIECES OF EQUIPMENT PERFORM ONLY ONE TASK?

CHOOSING THE RIGHT COOKING PLATFORM

Equipment	Best Uses	Ideal District
Combi Oven	Roasting, steaming, baking, regeneration	All district sizes
Tilt Skillet	Sauces, taco meat, chili, rice, pasta	Medium to large districts
Braising Pan	Soups, casseroles, proteins	High-volume production
Convection Oven	Baking and roasting	Universal
Induction	Finishing and demonstrations	Satellite kitchens

HOOD SYSTEMS 101

- TYPE I HOOD
- REQUIRED FOR GREASE-PRODUCING EQUIPMENT SUCH AS:
- FRYERS
- GRIDDLES
- CHARBROILERS
- OPEN-FLAME RANGES
- SOME TILT SKILLETS, DEPENDING ON USE AND MANUFACTURER INSTRUCTIONS
- INCLUDES GREASE FILTERS AND A FIRE SUPPRESSION SYSTEM.

TYPE II HOOD

- DESIGNED FOR HEAT, STEAM, AND MOISTURE ONLY.
- COMMON APPLICATIONS:
- DISH MACHINES
- STEAMERS
- OVENS THAT DO NOT PRODUCE GREASE-LADEN VAPORS (WHERE PERMITTED)
- KETTLES IN SOME INSTALLATIONS

VENTLESS COOKING TECHNOLOGIES

- EXPANDING CAPACITY WITHOUT MAJOR CONSTRUCTION
- MODERN LISTED VENTLESS EQUIPMENT MAY INCLUDE INTEGRATED SYSTEMS FOR:
- GREASE FILTRATION
- SMOKE CONTROL
- CATALYTIC CONVERSION
- AIR FILTRATION
- POTENTIAL BENEFITS INCLUDE:
- ✓ REDUCED RENOVATION SCOPE
- ✓ FLEXIBLE PLACEMENT
- ✓ FASTER INSTALLATION
- ✓ LOWER DISRUPTION TO SCHOOL OPERATIONS

CONSIDERATIONS

VERIFY LOCAL CODE

TRADITIONAL HOOD VS. VENTLESS

Traditional Hood	Ventless Equipment
Higher construction cost	Often lower installation cost
Roof penetrations	Minimal building modifications
Requires makeup air	No dedicated exhaust duct (for listed equipment)
Fixed location	Greater placement flexibility
Longer construction timeline	Often shorter implementation timeline

DESIGNING THE WORKFLOW

Poor Layout	Receiving	Prep	Walk Across Kitchen
Cooking	Walk Back	Serving	Result: Excess movement and lab

IMPROVED LAYOUT

- RECEIVING
- STGORAGE
- PREP
- COOKING
- HOLDING
- SERVUBG
- BETTER FLOW AND IMPROVED EFFICIENCY

BUILDING A FLEXIBLE PRODUCTION LINE

- EXAMPLE EQUIPMENT CONFIGURATION
- WALK-IN COOLER
- MOBILE PREP TABLE
- VEGETABLE PREP SINK
- COMBI OVEN
- TILT SKILLET
- HEATED HOLDING CABINET
- SERVING LINE

PRODUCTION EXAMPLE

- MONDAY – ROASTED CHICKEN
- TUESDAY – CHICKEN ALFREDO
- WEDNESDAY – CHICKEN TACOS
- THURSDAY – CHICKEN SALAD
- FRIDAY – BBQ CHICKEN PIZZA

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EQUIPMENT PLANNING CHECKLIST

Before purchasing equipment, ask:

- Does it support our menu?
- Can staff operate it confidently?
- Does it fit available utilities?
- Does it improve workflow?
- Can it replace multiple pieces of equipment?
- Does it comply with applicable ventilation and code requirements?
- Will it support future menu growth?

KEY TAKEAWAY

- THE BEST EQUIPMENT PURCHASE IS THE ONE THAT ALIGNS WITH YOUR OPERATIONAL GOALS
- NOT SIMPLY THE NEWEST TECHNOLOGY.
  - KNOBS VS DIGITAL DISPLAY!!!

MORE TAKEAWAYS

- NOW THAT WE'VE EXPLORED HOW EQUIPMENT AND KITCHEN DESIGN SUPPORT SCRATCH COOKING, LET'S LOOK AT WHAT REALLY MATTERS
- CREATING DELICIOUS SCRATCH-MADE MENU ITEMS
- MAXIMIZING LABOR EFFICIENCY
- MAINTAINING FOOD SAFETY
- AND DELIVERING MEALS STUDENTS CHOOSE TO EAT

RESOURCES

- USDA TEAM NUTRITION
- INSTITUTE OF CHILD NUTRITION
- SCHOOL NUTRITION ASSOCIATION

QUESTIONS

THANK YOU!