



## Food Service Program and School Partner Introduction and Consenting Script

Dear Partner,

This year, the University of California CalFresh Program (UC CalFresh) will work with your school and the Food Service Program. Our goal is to teach children about healthy eating habits to help them stay healthy and perform well in school. We are also encouraging students to eat the healthy food they are being served in the school cafeteria! Our program is funded by USDA and is free to your school.

We will be working in collaboration with the Food Service Program (FSP) to offer students the opportunity to taste test foods. Collecting student feedback can provide useful information to the FSP. When the feedback is collected in a fun and engaging manner such as "voting", the feedback process can even contribute to the enthusiasm about trying a featured food. We plan to ask students how they like the taste test items. Depending on school and FSP interest, we could also ask about student interest to have the tasted food on the school menu, whether they would try the food again and/or changes over the year related to fruits and vegetables and what students know, want to eat or do eat. The feedback questions are very brief and will be completed by UC CalFresh staff when they are conducting the taste tests. However, completing the surveys is completely voluntary and will in no way affect your schools participation in the UC CalFresh program.

If you have any questions about the surveys, just ask us!

Name of your local UC CalFresh educator: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

You may also contact our UC CalFresh State Director:

Kamaljeet Khaira, University of California at Davis, One Shields Ave, Davis CA 95616  
(530) 752-0555

If you have any concerns or complaints about our UC CalFresh Nutrition evaluation, you may also contact the Institutional Review Board, University of California at Davis at (916) 703-9151, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, or by writing to the Institutional Review Board, CTSC Bldg., Suite 1400, Rm. 1429, 2921 Stockton Blvd., Sacramento, California 95817.

---

This material is funded through a joint agreement among the USDA/FNS, CDSS CalFresh Healthy Living Section, UC Davis and the UC Cooperative Extension (UCCE). These institutions are equal opportunity providers and employers. CalFresh Food provides assistance to low-income households and can help buy nutritious foods for better health. For information, call 1-877-847-3663.



## **Large Group or School Wide Taste Testing Process Guide**

This is a guide for conducting taste tests in a large group setting—typically in the cafeteria but also possibly afterschool or on the playground and for collecting student feedback on the taste test experience. We ask that UC Cooperative Extension (UCCE) Community Educators and Food Service Program staff follow the guide and complete the form —depending on the specific questions asked—, so that we can evaluate the effect of food tasting activities on children’s acceptance of healthy foods.

### **Background:**

Children can learn to like healthy foods if they have many opportunities to taste these foods in an environment without pressure. What children like to eat determines what they will eat. Children who are willing to try the food again are more likely to ask for these foods at home.

Staff working with school Food Service Programs (FSP) throughout California are working very hard to procure, prepare and offer students healthy, appealing, and delicious menu options. At many schools, UCCE programs and Community Educators are working in partnership with school and district-level FSP by helping to conduct taste tests of foods — typically fruits or vegetables — offered as part of the regular school meal and/or fruit and vegetable snack program.

Collecting student feedback provides useful information to the FSP. Additionally, when this feedback is collected in a fun and engaging manner such as by “voting” or generating immediate visual results, the data collection process can even contribute to the enthusiasm about trying the featured food(s). Students can also be involved in the planning and implementation of the taste test.

### **Preparation:**

1. In partnership with district or school FSP staff, determine what food to feature for the taste tests by considering existing or potential menu items as well as school procedures for possible student allergies. Also determine how and who will prepare the taste test samples, and the specific questions you plan to ask students.

### **Taste Test Process:**

Taste tests may be conducted in the cafeteria at tables, or in the line or even on the playground. Regardless of the setting, it is essential to do the following:

2. Keep a clean food environment.
  - a. Have students wash their hands or use hand sanitizer; although, remember hand sanitizers do not remove dirt from hands. For taste tests conducted in the cafeteria, classroom teachers are typically already following a procedure for this but this can be confirmed.
  - b. All servers must have washed their hands, use food service gloves and/or serving utensils.
  - c. Keep cold foods refrigerated or in an ice chest until it is time for the food tasting. Do not let perishable foods (like cut produce, protein foods, dairy products, dips, etc.) sit out longer than 2 hours.

## Large Group Taste Testing Tool (Large TTT)

- A variety of methods can be used to quickly collect feedback from large groups of students in a fun and engaging manner:
  - “Voting” with sample cups, buckets and smiley faces or with an iPad



After tasting the featured item like the radishes in the photo on the left, students can be asked to “vote” by dropping their sample cup in the bucket that best represents what they thought either – Loved it!, Liked it! or Not Today!



A mock “voting booth” or “voting station” can even be set-up. Or, if iPads or tablets are available, students can also quickly “cast” their votes indicating Thumbs Up or Thumbs Down for the tasted item.

- Placing stickie dots or post-it notes on a flip chart paper or pre-prepared poster



A large poster or flip chart paper can also be prepared with the feedback questions and response options. Distribute stickie dots or post-it notes to students and ask them to place it beneath the response that best captures what they think.

- Following the tasting, share the summary results from these simple feedback questions with FSP school and/or district staff. You can do this verbally with onsite staff and via email with the Food Service Director. Ideally, you would also share these results with students and the larger school community through a large visual format such as the poster, dot chart or large bar chart posted in the cafeteria or other areas of the school where students and staff congregate. A summary of taste test results over the school year can also be provided to FSP staff in a table format by featured items to help inform future food purchases and menu items.

# Large Group Taste Testing Tool (Large TTT)

School/Site: \_\_\_\_\_ County: \_\_\_\_\_

Date the taste test was conducted: \_\_/\_\_/\_\_\_\_ (MM/DD/YYYY)

<b>Grade(s) with which the taste test was conducted:</b> <i>(check all that apply)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Kindergarten <input type="checkbox"/> Grades 1-3 <input type="checkbox"/> Grades 4-6 <input type="checkbox"/> Grades 7-8 <input type="checkbox"/> Grades 9-12
<b>Was this taste test conducted as part of a larger effort?</b> <i>(check all that apply)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Smarter Lunchrooms Movement (SLM) <input type="checkbox"/> Farm to School – local procurement <input type="checkbox"/> Farm to School – gardens <input type="checkbox"/> Other – specify: _____
For single, uncooked food item: <b>What was the target food tasted by students?</b> <u>OR</u> - For mixed foods or menu items: <b>What was the target food/recipe item tasted by students?</b>	<hr/> <i>(List one food only – e.g. avocado, almonds, yogurt)</i> <hr/> <i>(e.g. guacamole, trail mix, fruit and yogurt parfait, turkey slider)</i>

After the students have tried the food, ask them to either “vote” or indicate their response with “dots” or another indicator on a large poster or iPad to any of the following questions.

### Preference

1. Tell us what you think about <target food or recipe name>? (using 3 or 2 response options)

<u>Three</u> response options:	# of students	OR	<u>Two</u> response options:	# of students
<i>I loved it! – with large smile face</i>			<i>I liked it! – smile face or thumbs up</i>	
<i>I liked it – with smaller smile face</i>			<i>I don't like it – face no smile or thumbs down</i>	
<i>Not today – face not smiling</i>				

2. Would you like to see <target food or recipe name> on the menu?

\_\_\_\_\_ # of students – Yes or Liked or Thumbs Up or Smiley Face

\_\_\_\_\_ # of students – No or Disliked or Thumbs Down or Face no Smile

### Intention

3. Would you try <target food or recipe name> again?

\_\_\_\_\_ # of students – Yes or Thumbs Up

\_\_\_\_\_ # of students – No or Thumbs Down

**Change Over the Year** – Especially if the taste test is conducted as the last of several tastings or promotional activities over the course of the year, it might be of interest to ask students one or more of the following questions.

4. Since the start of this school year...	<u>No, not at all</u> # of students	<u>A Little</u> # of students	<u>A Lot</u> # of students
<i>a. have you learned about fruits and vegetables</i>			
<i>b. do you want to eat more fruits and vegetables</i>			
<i>c. do you eat more fruits and vegetables at school</i>			