

Cambo First School



Using produce from a school garden in school meals

At Cambo First School we believe that there are many health and educational benefits to growing your own food for school meals and snacks in our school garden. It is fresh, delicious, local, and our children are more likely to taste new/different things if they have grown it themselves.



This may be a new area for some schools and school caterers but the main thing we feel people have to consider is: how to avoid cross contamination with other food products during storage and preparation. Once in receipt of the school's garden produce we ensure that our food safety policy is followed and a due diligence trail (HACCP) recorded including 'goods received' and 'used'.

Key precautions to avoid contamination are:

- Food should be stored in a manner to eliminate the risk of cross contamination.
- Ensure the produce is washed thoroughly in a designated sink
- Ideally, food should not be washed in sinks used for general equipment washing but in a separate sink for food washing. Where this is not possible, food should not be washed at the same time as non-food and items and the sink must be washed and sanitised before food washing begins.
- The raw and cooked food preparation area must be separate and designated on the HACCP plan. Where this is not possible, due to lack of space, use different work surfaces. Separate ends of the single work surface should be used for raw and cooked food.
- Separate colour coded boards and knives should be used for food preparation
- Use separate containers for carrying and storing produce
- Keep raw produce separate from cooked food materials
- Ensure good hand washing routines
- Clean and sanitise work areas and equipment between tasks



In some instances questions may arise regarding the conditions that the crops have been grown in, i.e. soil components and the potential contaminants therein.

Cambo First School manage their growing areas organically so no harmful solutions or additives have been used. [A conversation with the garden group lead i.e. SNAG group, should be enough to establish this.]

Some people may be concerned about 'wildlife' such as slugs, aphids, and fungal diseases. We believe It is important to educate staff, parents, children and the community about these and provide information on the food safety management procedures that are in place to avoid these contaminating foods.



As for more specific land contamination issues it is fairly safe to say that Cambo First School has not, and no school should have been, built on land that has any evidence or record of land contamination.

N.B.

Should an environmental health officer (EHO) or management require soil samples this can be carried out at a cost to the school. In these instances we would strongly advise growing in containers and raised beds thus ensuring that provenance of soil/growing matter is known.

Useful information

Food Standards Agency

General advice can be found at www.food.gov.uk or www.eatwell.gov.uk

An FSA Guidance booklet called A Caterers Guide to food hygiene can be ordered from 08456060667 or foodstandards@ecgroups.co.uk



LACORS

General advice 02076653888 or info@lacors.gov.uk

Garden Organic

General gardening advice and advice on growing in containers can be obtained from Garden Organic for Schools www.gardenorganic.org.uk 02476308238

