



A Guide to Using *The Creative Curriculum*® for Preschool to Support Farm-to-ECE Models

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Introduction

When teachers integrate farm-to-early care and education (ECE) learning experiences into their classrooms, they are providing children with important opportunities to explore healthy eating, growing and preparing food, and farming. However, the value of a farm-to-ECE approach extends far beyond the content knowledge children gain from these experiences. Farm-to-ECE learning opportunities embody many principles of effective teaching such as drawing on children’s interests, integrating learning across domains (e.g., social-emotional and cognitive learning), and promoting hands-on exploration and discovery.

Although capitalizing on the enormous potential for farm-to-ECE learning may feel daunting, introducing these experiences into the classroom should not be an additional burden for teachers. Rather than serving as an “add-on,” layered on top of a classroom’s existing curriculum, farm-to-ECE learning experiences can be seamlessly woven into current daily routines, learning environments, assessment practices, and family partnerships.

One of the most widely used curricula is *The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool*. This comprehensive, research-based curriculum is designed to help teachers plan experiences that promote learning through play, exploration, and discovery—a natural fit for farm-to-ECE learning. Teachers can use *The Creative Curriculum®* strategies and activities to provide meaningful learning opportunities that build on children’s innate interest in and curiosity about food and its connections to their lives and the world around them. This guide explores how teachers can use *The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool* and associated resources as a foundation to embed farm-to-ECE learning opportunities into their existing practices. The Guide is organized into four sections:

- Incorporating Farm-to-ECE into Classroom Interest Areas
- Planning Activities that Support Farm-to-ECE Learning
- Using Farm-to-ECE Learning to Support Child Assessment
- Supporting Family Engagement through Farm-to-ECE Learning

By bringing farm-to-ECE learning opportunities into *The Creative Curriculum®* classroom, children become creative, confident thinkers and develop a foundation for lifelong healthy food choices. The following pages provide simple, concrete guidance to enhance existing teaching practices that support the health and wellness of our youngest generation and their families.



Incorporating Farm-to-ECE into Classroom Interest Areas^{1, 2}

Designing an effective learning environment is foundational to helping children explore, discover, and learn. *The Creative Curriculum*[®] classroom is organized into 10 interest areas (Blocks, Dramatic Play, Toys and Games, Art, Library, Discovery, Sand and Water, Music and Movement, Cooking, and Technology), as well as an intentionally arranged Outdoors area.³ Within each of these

areas, teachers can offer specific materials and activities that support farm-to-ECE learning opportunities. Table 1 describes ways in which each of the interest areas can be enhanced to promote learning about local food, nutrition, and agriculture. Information is also provided about specific activities in each interest area that relate to farm-to-ECE learning (see description of *Intentional Teaching Cards*[™] in the next section).





Blocks. The Block area provides children with opportunities to construct, create, and represent their experiences related to farming and gardening.



Farm-to-ECE Adaptations

- Add props to the Block area that represent things you would see on a farm or in a garden (e.g., toy animals, food, tractors, seed markers, plastic trowels, watering cans) for children to incorporate into their block play.
- Invite children to explore farm-to-ECE concepts in their block play. For example, children might build enclosures for farm animals or “plant” rows of blocks and build them into towers to represent plant growth.
- Include paper and markers either in the Block area or nearby, so children can make signs or drawings of what they build (e.g., drawing and/or writing labels for each row of “plants”).





Dramatic Play. Dramatic play is an important way for children to learn about the world around them and deepen their understanding of how people live. This includes exploring the places and people that are a part of our local food system.



Farm-to-ECE Adaptations

- Provide clothing, props, and puppets that allow children to transform themselves into roles such as farmers, gardeners, chefs, cheese makers, spinners, scientists, bakers, butchers, grocers, and even different farm animals.
- Create prop boxes that help children explore settings such as farms, restaurants, and grocery stores. For example, a “life on a farm” prop box or center (located indoors or outdoors) could contain overalls, sun hats, gloves, plastic hoes and shovels, baskets, buckets, a wheelbarrow, hay, cornstalks, and produce items such as pumpkins or other gourds.
- Within a Dramatic Play area set up as a kitchen, grocery store, farm stand, or farmers’ market, try to include food (i.e., produce, plastic or wooden food replicas, recycled packaging from real food items) that is grown locally or in the garden, is seasonal, and that reflects what children eat at home.

Relevant *Intentional Teaching Cards*[™]

LL23, “Playing with Environmental Print”
MO1, “Dinnertime”

**Intentional Teaching Cards[™] are described in detail in the Planning Activities that Support Farm-to-ECE section*





Toys and Games. Manipulatives, puzzles, collectibles, and games related to the concepts of farming, food, gardening, and cooking can offer important opportunities for children to make connections to these areas.

Farm-to-ECE Adaptations

- Add puzzles, beading items, and sewing cards that reflect examples of animals found on a farm, food grown on a farm or farm buildings.
- Create a variety of matching, sorting, counting, and memory games with objects or pictures that relate to these items as well. For example, you could create a seed bingo game where various seeds (e.g., beans, pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds) are picked from a jar and children must mark the picture of the corresponding plant on their bingo board.
- It is important to make connections from the materials in the Toys and Games area to other farm-to-ECE learning opportunities (e.g., “You’re sewing around an ear of corn. Does that remind you of any books we’ve read lately?” or “I notice you’re matching pictures of different types of tractors. What did you notice about the tractors we saw on our field trip?”).

Relevant *Intentional Teaching Cards*™

LL08, “Memory Games”
LL12, “Same Sound Sort”
LL18, “What’s Missing”
LL44, “Rhyming Tubs”
M02, “Counting and Comparing”
M03, “Seek & Find”
M05, “Sorting & Classifying”

M11, “Graphing”
M16, “Show Me Five”
M22, “Story Problems”
M31, “Lining It Up”
M35, “Action Patterns”
M47, “My Shadow and I”
M50, “The Farmer Builds a Fence”
M62, “How Big Around?”





Art. Within the Art area, children can create and represent their ideas and experiences related to local food, farms, and gardening in a visual form.

Farm-to-ECE Adaptations

- Children might draw pictures about their time in the garden or a farm field trip and create class books about their experiences.
- Offer a variety of materials related to food and fibers in the Art area that children can incorporate into their artwork and enjoy and explore on a sensory level. For instance, you might include a variety of seeds (e.g., bean, sunflower, carrot, tomato, pea) that children could use for a seed mosaic.
- Seed catalogues, empty seed packets, and food packaging can be available for collages.
- You can introduce children to weaving using a simple loom and offer both manufactured yarns as well as natural fibers (e.g., grasses, vines) for weaving.

Relevant *Intentional Teaching Cards*[™]

LL40, “What Was for Breakfast?”

SE26, “Making a Mural”





Library. Through books and stories, children can travel beyond the classroom walls to explore and experience gardens, farms, kitchens, and other related topics.

Farm-to-ECE Adaptations

- You can include books that reflect current seasonal changes in weather that highlight information and stories related to:
 - > gardening (e.g., seeds, soil, insects, garden produce)
 - > cooking (e.g., fruits and vegetables, restaurants, food around the world, recipe books with pictures)
 - > farming (e.g., farm animals, barns, planting and harvesting)
- Select a variety of books that include stories and non-fiction books that children can explore independently, discuss as part of a read aloud, or listen to as an audiobook.
- Include books that have foods and recipes from around the world and include images of non-traditional farmers, cooks, and other roles (e.g., images of women and people of color).
- Offer materials for children to make their own books about gardening, cooking, farm visits, etc. through drawing, dictation, and emergent writing (e.g., scribbling).
- Encourage children to retell familiar stories by providing relevant props or puppets (e.g., puppets of animals in *The Little Red Hen*).
- See Table 7 for specific titles in the *Teaching Strategies® Book Collection* that are related to farm-to-ECE content.

Relevant *Intentional Teaching Cards™*

LL01, “Shared Writing”
 LL04, “Bookmaking”
 LL06, “Dramatic Story Retelling”
 LL10, “Rhyming Chart”
 LL11, “Rhyming Riddles”
 LL16, “Tongue Twisters”
 LL20, “Baggie Books”

LL27, “Writing Poems”
 LL33, “Clothesline Storytelling”
 LL43, “Introducing New Vocabulary”
 LL46, “Storyboard”
 LL54, “Asking Questions”
 LL57, “Photo Writing”
 M06, “Tallying”





Discovery. The Discovery area offers children a chance to use all their senses to explore interesting materials related to local food, farms, gardening, and cooking.

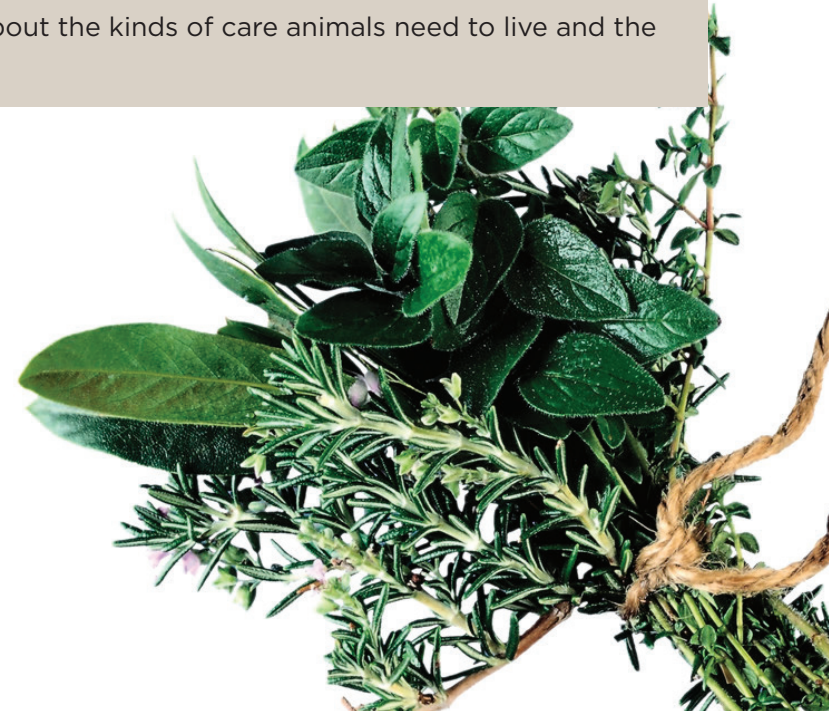
Farm-to-ECE Adaptations

- Add materials like seeds, plants and plant parts (e.g., roots, stems, leaves), soil, wheat stalks, and scraps of wool or fabric for children to explore.
- Use a sensory table or sensory tubs to offer materials such as soil, dried ears of corn, fresh or dried herbs, gourds (rind, pulp, and seeds).
- Provide discovery tools such as magnifying glasses, balance scales, sifters and colanders, and containers for sorting and classifying objects (e.g., recycled egg cartons).
- Offer containers of ingredients such as baking soda, flour, salt, vinegar, oil, and empty containers for mixing.
- Add photo books created from farm field trips, cooking projects, and experiences in the garden.
- Offer ways for children to engage all their senses. Have a taste of unusual vegetables. Have containers with small holes poked in them that contain different herbs and spices and encourage children to smell them and guess what they might be.
- Build a worm bin for your classroom (<http://compost.css.cornell.edu/worms/steps.html>)⁴, and help children care for the worms and add the resulting compost to your garden.
- Invite families to bring materials from their home gardens or yards for the Discovery Area.
- Add tools for children to explore how food is processed in different ways. For example, offering a flour mill in which children can process grain into flour or a mortar and pestle that children can use to grind kernels of corn.
- Include class pets in this area, such as a rabbit. Engage children in conversations about the kinds of care animals need to live and the work that farmers do to help their animals thrive

Relevant *Intentional Teaching Cards*[™]

LL45, “Observational Drawing”

LL63, “Investigating and Recording”





Sand and Water. Sand and water play allows children to explore two key elements needed for plant growth—earth and water. These substances can also be a backdrop for dramatic play, science experiments, and development of skills like measurement and fine-motor control that are related to farm-to-ECE learning.

Farm-to-ECE Adaptations

- Offer a bucket of warm, soapy water for children to wash raw wool, fleece, or other textile materials.
- Provide cooking tools such as measuring cups, whisks, sieves, ladles, and muffin tins for children to use in the sand or water.
- Add props related to farms (e.g., toy animals, tractors) that children can use to create scenes or bury and dig up.
- Provide tubs of water for children to wash vegetables from the garden.
- Select gardening items such as small trowels, rakes, and watering cans that children can use to explore concepts such as irrigation.
- Offer different kinds of sand and soil for children to explore with magnifying glasses. Talk about the different properties of each such as grain size, what each is made of (e.g., particles of rocks, twigs), and what happens when water is added. Invite children to discuss how these features might make it easier or harder for plants to grow in each substance.





Music and Movement. Music and movement activities provide children with a unique modality to explore farm-to-ECE concepts with different senses.

Farm-to-ECE Adaptations

- Encourage children to explore different movements by pretending to be farm animals (e.g., waddle like a duck, gallop like a horse).
- Use plastic Easter eggs to make seed maracas with different types of seeds (e.g., bean, sunflower, carrot, tomato, pea) and invite children to explore the different sounds made by each type of seed.
- Sing familiar songs related to farms, gardens, and food (e.g., “Old MacDonald”, “Apples and Bananas”) that reflect children’s current interest/investigations into farming (e.g., “I’m a Little Watering Can” [instead of tea pot], “This is the Way We... [plant the seeds; milk the cows])”
- Introduce instruments made from natural materials such as gourd drums or seed rattles.
- Invite children to make a dance that incorporates movements such as reaching one hand up to pick an apple, shoveling hay from side-to-side, or pushing both hands away to knead bread.
- Encourage children to engage in “seed yoga.” Invite children to curl into a ball to pretend to be a seed, then guide them through movements of unfurling and stretching as they “grow roots,” “send out leaves,” and “grow flowers and fruit”.

Relevant *Intentional Teaching Cards*™

LL14, “Did You Ever See...?”

LL31, “I Went Shopping





Cooking. In the Cooking area, children can experience how food is prepared and learn about how it contributes to their health and well-being.

Farm-to-ECE Adaptations

- Whenever possible, highlight food grown locally or in your garden.
- Set up taste tests of local ingredients and food from the garden.
- Encourage children to talk about where different foods come from, how they are grown, and how the food you are preparing might be different than what you might buy from a store.
- For thorough guidance on the Cooking area, all of which is applicable to a farm-to-ECE approach, see *The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool Volume 2: Interest Areas*, pages 206–230.

Relevant *Intentional Teaching Cards*™*

LL24, “Lemonade”
LL25, “What’s for Snack?”
LL35, “Fruit Salad”
LL36, “Salsa”
LL37, “Roll-Ups”
LL38, “Hummus”
LL49, “Vegetable Soup”
LL51, “Pizza”
M08, “Baggie Ice Cream”
M10, “Biscuits”
M24, “Matzo Balls”

M27, “Peach Cobbler”
M28, “Applesauce”
M29, “Apple Bread”
M33, “Apple Oat Muffins”
M43, “Pancakes”
M53, “Black Bean Corn Salad”
M54, “Gingerbread Cookies”
M57, “Yogurt Fruit Dip”
M64, “Five-Layer Dip”
M65, “Cornbread”
M67, “Fruit Smoothies”



*The activities listed here are not listed in Table 1 because they would need minimal adaptations to be relevant to farm-to-ECE. When doing cooking projects, use local ingredients whenever possible and engage children in discussions about healthy foods and those that are enjoyed for special occasions such as cookies and cake.





Technology. The thoughtful use of technology in the classroom can support children’s learning of farm-to-ECE content by providing different ways for them to investigate questions, create written and visual works, and learn new information.



Farm-to-ECE Adaptations

- Encourage children to try out tools such as digital cameras to document stages of plant growth, areas of the garden during different seasons, or steps in a cooking project.
- Help children use the Internet to research specific questions about food, nutrition, farming, and gardening (e.g., “How do you make cheese?” “What do worms eat?”)
- Invite children to write their own stories or observations about farming, gardening, or cooking by dictating their ideas as you type in a word processing program. Print the finished product and encourage them to make a book with illustrations.
- Offer electronic books related to farm-to-ECE content such as *Rice is Nice* and *The Little Red Hen* (both titles in the *Teaching Strategies® Children’s Book Collection*, see Table 7).

Relevant *Intentional Teaching Cards*™*

LL02, “Desktop Publishing”
LL26, “Searching the Web”





Outdoors. The outdoors is a laboratory for children's first-hand exploration of how things grow.



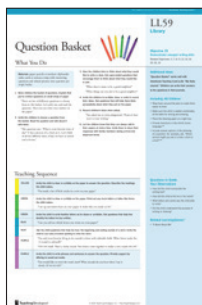
Farm-to-ECE Adaptations

- Offer gross motor equipment such as wheelbarrows, shovels, hoes, hobby horses, and buckets. Encourage children to use gross motor skills in the garden such as weeding and digging, or using a wheelbarrow on a variety of surfaces (e.g., dirt, mulch, grass, concrete).
- Select different materials to add to the garden periodically such as a magnifying glass, scarecrows, a trellis or other structure, insect and weed identification cards, signs in the snow, and a variety of different plants.
- Allow children to have time in the garden for exploration and free play as well as more structured experiences such as a bug or plant part scavenger hunt.
- Create a "play garden" where children can plant objects such as pinecones, rocks, sticks, and other treasures.
- Ensure that modifications are made in the garden that facilitate the participation of children with disabilities (e.g., garden beds raised to the level of a wheelchair, garden paths smooth for walker access).



Planning Activities to Support Farm-to-ECE Learning

The Creative Curriculum[®] for Preschool includes a set of *Daily Resources*, which provide the content and tools for teachers to fill every day with meaningful activities that support the learning needs of all children. These curriculum resources are described in the tables below along with farm-to-ECE adaptations.



Intentional Teaching Cards[™]. *Intentional Teaching Cards*[™] describe playful, engaging activities that teachers can use throughout the day. Each activity includes step-by-step instructions and guidance on how to adapt activities to meet the needs of every learner.⁵ Many of the *Intentional Teaching Cards*[™] can be easily adapted to include a focus on farm-to-ECE content to support learning and development in areas such as language, literacy, math, science, social studies, and physical skills. For example, you could use an assortment of toy farm animals or different types of locally grown food for a math activity that focuses on sorting and classifying objects. A list of selected *Intentional Teaching Cards*[™] activities are presented in Table 1 as well as suggestions about how to adapt them to highlight farm-to-ECE learning opportunities.



Mighty Minutes[®]. *Mighty Minutes*[®] are short, but meaningful activities that teachers can use during “in-between” times such as transitions between activities during the daily routine. Like the *Intentional Teaching Cards*[™], these songs, chants, rhymes, games, and short activities are designed to support development and learning across all domains⁶, but with a few simple modifications can be tailored to focus on farm-to-ECE concepts. For example, a song or chant could be adapted to include pairs of rhyming words related to farm-to-ECE (e.g., *fruit/root, hen/pen*). A list of selected *Mighty Minutes*[®] activities are presented in Table 2 as well as suggestions about how to adapt them to highlight farm-to-ECE learning opportunities.

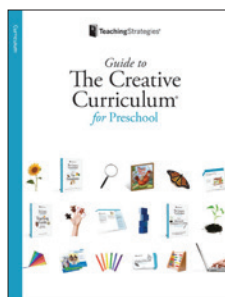
Many of the *Intentional Teaching Cards*[™] and *Mighty Minutes*[®] can be adapted to address farm-to-ECE content by using specific prompts, props, poems or rhymes, or vocabulary. The following tables are provided as a starting point of inspiration for you to incorporate farm-to-ECE into your daily activities:

- Questions and prompts to invite engaged thinking about farm-to-ECE topics (Table 3)
- Props and pictures to use in farm-to-ECE activities (Table 4)
- Poems and rhymes with farm-to-ECE content (Table 5)
- Farm-to-ECE vocabulary words (Table 6)





Teaching Strategies® Children’s Book Collection and Book Discussion Cards™. The Children’s Book Collection contains many books that touch on subjects of food, farming, gardening, and cooking. These books provide an excellent springboard for meaningful conversations and learning opportunities. See Table 7 for a list of relevant books in the Collection and prompts or activities to use before or after reading. Book Discussion Cards™ have been created for some of these titles (books that relate to farm-to-ECE interests and that have associated *Book Discussion Cards™* are highlighted in Table 7). The *Book Discussion Cards™* offer suggestions for supporting rich, analytical book discussions that encourage the types of critical-thinking skills that are foundational to later literacy and language development⁷. The strategies provided in the *Book Discussion Cards™* can also be applied to other books to support vocabulary learning and engaging conversations related to farm-to-ECE topics.



Teaching Guides. *The Teaching Guides in The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool* are plans that offer detailed guidance for daily experiences and span several weeks over the course of investigating topics of interest with children through *studies*.⁸ *The Bread Study* encourages children to explore a familiar, interesting, and universal topic while building skills and knowledge in the areas of literacy, language, mathematics, the arts, technology, physical development, science, and social studies. This study offers children opportunities to learn how bread is made, the kinds of bread we eat, who works with bread, and how and when we eat bread⁹. Most learning opportunities in *The Bread Study* are relevant to farm-to-ECE, particularly when teachers use this study to highlight connections to children’s local food system. There are also farm-to-ECE learning opportunities in the other *Teaching Guides* including *Beginning the Year*; *The Balls Study*; *The Buildings Study*; *The Exercise Study*; *The Reduce, Reuse, Recycle Study*; and *The Trees Study*. Connections to farm-to-ECE topics for these studies are highlighted in Table 8.



Table 1. Adapting *Intentional Teaching Cards™* to Support Farm-to-ECE Learning

<i>Intentional Teaching Card™</i> Activities¹⁰	Farm-to-ECE Adaptations
LL01, “Shared Writing” <i>Class discussion using open-ended prompts about a topic of interest</i>	Help children generate questions and answers about farm-to-ECE topics using prompts like those listed in Table 1.
LL02, “Desktop Publishing” <i>Creation of a book using digital tools (e.g., computer, digital camera)</i>	Invite children to create a book about food, farming, gardening, or cooking using digital tools.
LL04, “Bookmaking” <i>Creation of a book using pencils, crayons, markers, etc.</i>	Invite children to create books about food, farming, gardening, or cooking.
LL06, “Dramatic Story Retelling” <i>Retelling of a familiar story using props</i>	Select a familiar story related to farm-to-ECE concepts (see Table 7 for story ideas). Use toy props, pictures, costumes, and/or puppets.
LL08, “Memory Games” <i>Memory game inviting children to find matching pictures</i>	Use laminated pictures of items like those listed in Table 2 for the memory game.
LL10, “Rhyming Chart” <i>Presenting a short rhyme or poem about a topic of interest</i>	Use a rhyme or poem related to farm-to-ECE concepts. See Table 3 for examples.
LL11, “Rhyming Riddles” <i>Guessing game with clues and rhymes</i>	Invite children to guess words related to food, farming, gardening, and cooking (see Table 4 for examples) by giving clues and rhyming words. Note that the rhyming words in the clues do not necessarily have to pertain to farm-to-ECE concepts.
LL12, “Same Sound Sort” <i>Sorting objects according to beginning sounds</i>	Use objects or pictures such as those listed in Table 2 or 4. Select some items that start with the same sound. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>kale, corn, carrot;</i>• <i>hay, hen, hoe;</i>• <i>tractor, trowel, trough.</i>



LL16, “Tongue Twisters” <i>Phrases with similar sounding words</i>	Come up with phrases related to farm-to-ECE concepts. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fran feeds foals through the fence at the farm.• Did Doug dig Dick’s garden or did Dick dig Doug’s garden?• How many cookies could a good cook cook if a good cook could cook cookies?
LL18, “What’s Missing?” <i>Memory game asking which objects are missing from a set</i>	Gather a variety of objects or pictures of items like those listed in Table 2 to use for the memory game.
LL20, “Baggie Books” <i>Creation of books using environmental print from household items</i>	Use labels and logos from locally grown food and products (e.g., items purchased at a farmer’s market). Talk about GO, SLOW, and WHOA foods*
LL23, “Playing with Environmental Print” <i>Exploration of environmental print on labels and signs</i>	Use labels and logos from locally grown food and products (e.g., items purchased at a farmer’s market). Talk about GO, SLOW, and WHOA foods*
LL25, “What’s for Snack?” <i>Creation of snack menu using food product labels and food preparation pictures</i>	Highlight locally grown food, drawing pictures and using labels when available. Talk about GO, SLOW, and WHOA foods*
LL26, “Searching the Web” <i>Using the Internet as a resource to explore a topic of interest</i>	Help children generate questions and engage in searches about farm-to- ECE topics using prompts like some of those listed in Table 1.
LL27, “Writing Poems” <i>Discussion of and creation of poems</i>	Read poems about farm-to-ECE topics (see Table 3 for some examples of poems) and invite children to create their own poems.
LL31, “I Went Shopping” <i>Exploration of environmental print on food labels and containers</i>	Use labels and logos from locally grown food and products (e.g., items purchased at a farmer’s market). Talk about GO, SLOW, and WHOA foods
LL33, “Clothesline Storytelling” <i>Sequencing pictures of major events in a simple story</i>	As children draw, ask them questions about their food such as some of those listed in the “Food,” “Nutrition,” and “Fruits and Vegetables” sections in Table 1.

* GO foods are highest in nutrients and lowest in fat, added sugar, and calories; can be eaten anytime (e.g., milk and milk products, fresh and frozen fruits, vegetables, and whole grains). SLOW foods are higher in fat, added sugar, and/or calories; are “sometimes” foods (e.g., 100% juice, pancakes, baked chips). WHOA foods are highest in fat/sugar/calories and lowest in nutrients; are “celebration” foods to eat only once in a while (e.g., French fries, doughnuts, fried chicken, candy).¹¹



LL40, “What Was for Breakfast” <i>Drawing and/or writing what children ate for breakfast</i>	As children draw, ask them questions about their food such as some of those listed in the “Food,” “Nutrition,” and “Fruits and Vegetables” sections in Table 1.
LL43, “Introducing New Vocabulary” <i>Incorporating new words throughout the day</i>	Introduce vocabulary related to farm-to-ECE concepts. See Table 4 for example vocabulary words.
LL44, “Rhyming Tubs” <i>Game matching objects that have rhyming names</i>	Use pictures related to farm-to-ECE concepts. Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• tomato/potato• seed/weed• fruit/root• bee/tree• oats/goats• beans/greens• artichoke/egg yolk• bowl/roll
LL45, “Observational Drawing” <i>Close examination and drawing of objects or events of interest</i>	Invite children to observe and draw plants or other items in the garden, cooking utensils, produce or other locally grown foods, or objects that might be found on a farm.
LL46, “Storyboard” <i>Use of a collection of photos, drawings, or pictures to tell a story</i>	Use pictures related to food, farming, gardening, or cooking as inspiration for children to develop a story.
LL54, “Asking Questions” <i>Class discussion encouraging children to think of questions related to a topic of interest.</i>	Invite children to think of questions about food, farming, gardening, and cooking. Model your own curiosity by asking example questions such as those listed in Table 1.
LL57, “Photo Writing” <i>Use of photos or pictures to inspire children’s drawing or writing</i>	Use pictures or photos related to food, farming, gardening, or cooking as inspiration for children’s drawing or writing.
LL63, “Investigating and Recording” <i>Investigations about a topic of interest</i>	Help children generate questions and engage in research about farm-to-ECE topics using prompts like those listed in Table 1.
M01, “Dinnertime” <i>Setting the table and talking about healthy food choices</i>	Engage children in discussions around food and nutrition, using prompts such as those in Table 1. Talk about GO, SLOW, WHOA foods*

* GO foods are highest in nutrients and lowest in fat, added sugar, and calories; can be eaten anytime (e.g., milk and milk products, fresh and frozen fruits, vegetables, and whole grains). SLOW foods are higher in fat, added sugar, and/or calories; are “sometimes” foods (e.g., 100% juice, pancakes, baked chips). WHOA foods are highest in fat/sugar/calories and lowest in nutrients; are “celebration” foods to eat only once in a while (e.g., French fries, doughnuts, fried chicken, candy).¹¹



<p>M02, “Counting and Comparing” <i>Sorting and comparing a collection of objects</i></p>	<p>Offer collections of objects or pictures related to food, farming, gardening, or cooking that can be sorted and compared. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• toy farm animals (species, size, baby/adult animals)• fruit (color, shape, peel/no peel, like/don’t like yet)• cooking tools (mix/spread/mash, size of measuring cups)• food (food groups; color; locally grown/grown somewhere else; GO, SLOW, WHOA foods*)
<p>M03, “Seek & Find” <i>Categorizing a collection of objects or pictures</i></p>	<p>Offer collections of objects or pictures related to food, farming, gardening, or cooking that can be sorted and compared. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• toy farm animals (species, size, baby/adult animals)• fruit (color, shape, peel/no peel, like/dislike)• cooking tools (mix/spread/mash, size of measuring cups)• food (food groups, color, grown in garden/bought at store; GO, SLOW, WHOA foods*)
<p>M05, “Sorting & Classifying” <i>Sorting and classifying a collection of objects or pictures into hoops or bins</i></p>	<p>Offer collections of objects or pictures related to food, farming, gardening, or cooking that can be sorted and compared. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• toy farm animals (species, size, baby/adult animals)• fruit (color, shape, peel/no peel, like/dislike)• cooking tools (mix/spread/mash, size of measuring cups)• food (food groups; color; grown in garden/bought at store; GO, SLOW, WHOA foods*)
<p>M06, “Tallying” <i>Counting and keeping track of totals for different categories</i></p>	<p>Tally categories related to farm-to-ECE such as number of children who like certain foods, number of certain types of animals seen at a farm, types of plants in the garden</p>
<p>M11, “Graphing” <i>Visually represent totals for different categories</i></p>	<p>Graph categories related to farm-to-ECE such as number of children who like certain foods, number of certain types of animals seen at a farm, types of plants in the garden</p>

* GO foods are highest in nutrients and lowest in fat, added sugar, and calories; can be eaten anytime (e.g., milk and milk products, fresh and frozen fruits, vegetables, and whole grains). SLOW foods are higher in fat, added sugar, and/or calories; are “sometimes” foods (e.g., 100% juice, pancakes, baked chips). WHOA foods are highest in fat/sugar/calories and lowest in nutrients; are “celebration” foods to eat only once in a while (e.g., French fries, doughnuts, fried chicken, candy).¹¹



M16, “Show Me Five” <i>Making different arrangements of a collection of objects</i>	Use a collection of objects related to farm-to-ECE (e.g., seeds, fruit or vegetables)
M22, “Story Problems” <i>Using manipulatives to help solve simple addition/subtraction problems</i>	Make up simple addition/subtraction story problems around farm-to-ECE concepts (e.g., “A farmer had six sheep and then two lambs were born. Now how many sheep does she have?” “We grew seven squash in our garden, but the deer ate three. How many are left?”)
M31, “Lining It Up” <i>Arranging a collection of objects by size</i>	Use objects related to farm-to-ECE concepts such as measuring cups or spoons or tomatoes of different sizes from the garden
M47, “My Shadow and I” <i>Use of cut-out shapes to project shadows</i>	Cut out shapes or use objects related to farm-to-ECE concepts (e.g., shapes of easily recognizable fruits or vegetables, garden tools, cooking tools) to make shadows on the wall, have children guess
M50, “The Farmer Builds a Fence” <i>Building fences out of rope in different shapes for toy farm animals</i>	Talk about different animals that might need fences and discuss why fences might be important on a farm.
M62, “How Big Around?” <i>Measuring spherical objects with yarn</i>	Use various pieces of spherical produce grown in your community (e.g., oranges, grapefruit, pumpkins, tomatoes)
SE01, “Site Visits” <i>Discussion before, during, and after field trips</i>	Use site visits to locations such as farms, bakeries, grocery stores, etc. to help children build knowledge about their local food system.
SE12, “Classroom Jobs” <i>Introducing different jobs children can engage in to take care of the classroom</i>	Include jobs that relate to farm-to-ECE topics, such as watering seedlings in the classroom, weeding in the garden, and helping prepare snack. Engage children in discussion about how these jobs might be similar or different to jobs in the community such as farmer and chef.
SE26, “Making a Mural” <i>Creation of a mural about a topic of interest</i>	Create a mural incorporating farm-to-ECE concepts such as scenes on a farm or favorite foods.

Table 2. Adapting *Mighty Minutes*® to Support Farm-to-ECE Learning

<i>Mighty Minutes</i>® Activities¹²	Farm-to-ECE Adaptations
MM01, “The People in Your Neighborhood” <i>Song about roles in the community</i>	Create new verses with jobs related to local food systems (e.g., farmer, dairy worker, chef etc.)
MM04, “Riddle Dee Dee” <i>Chant inviting children to produce rhyming words</i>	Use words related to food, farming, gardening, and cooking as the basis for rhyming words. See Table 4 for examples of words. Note that the rhyming words children come up with do not necessarily have to pertain to farm-to-ECE concepts.
MM06, “This Is the Way” <i>Music and movement activity</i>	Add verses related to farm-to-ECE concepts. For example, “This is the way we...” <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ...sow our seeds.• ...mix our dough.• ...harvest our hay.• ...crunch our carrots.
MM10, “Words in Motion” <i>Movement activity pairing words with actions</i>	Create movements for action words related to food, gardening, farming, and cooking (e.g., stir, harvest, dig, knead, pollinate, milk)
MM11, “What is My Job?” <i>Guessing game based on props associated with various jobs</i>	Gather props that are associated with farm-to-ECE-related jobs (e.g., a frying pan for a chef, some cheesecloth for a cheesemaker, a hat with mesh netting for a beekeeper).
MM12, “Ticky Ricky” <i>Rhyming game based on items in a basket</i>	Collect a basket of items related to food, farming, gardening, or cooking. See Table 2 for examples of objects. Note that the rhyming words children come up with do not necessarily have to pertain to farm-to-ECE concepts.
MM18, “I’m Thinking Of...” <i>Guessing game with clues about familiar objects</i>	Describe familiar objects related to farm-to-ECE concepts. See Tables 2 and 4 for examples.
MM23, “Hi-Ho the Derry-O” <i>Song about predictions of what will be seen on a field trip</i>	Invite children to predict what they’ll see on field trip to a farm-to-ECE-related location (e.g., farm, grocery store, bakery, dairy, etc.)



MM29, “Baa, Baa, Black Sheep” <i>Familiar children’s song</i>	Use the song as an opportunity to engage in a discussion about wool (e.g., where it comes from, what it is used for, the process by which wool is turned into yarn and fabric).
MM33, “Thumbs Up” <i>Game inviting children to identify whether two pairs of words rhyme.</i>	Use word pairs that use vocabulary related to food, cooking, gardens, and farms. Examples of rhyming pairs include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• grow/hoe• dill/till• beet/meat• sheep/peep• cherry/dairy• root/shoot• grate/plate
MM34, “The Wave” <i>Using creative movements and sounds to go on a pretend adventure</i>	Use movements and sounds to guide children on a pretend adventure related to farm-to-ECE (e.g., a day on the farm, the journey of a seed, experiencing a garden with all the senses)
MM35, “My Name, Too!” <i>Matching the beginning sounds of words to children’s names</i>	Use farm-to-ECE words that begin with the same sounds as children’s names. See Table 4 for examples of words.
MM45, “I’m a Sturdy Oak Tree” <i>Music and movement activity in which children pretend to be a tree</i>	Substitute different kinds of locally grown or native fruit- or nut-bearing trees for oak tree (e.g., apple, orange, coconut, pecan)
MM48, “Feely Box” <i>Guessing game based on feeling various objects in a box or bag</i>	Put items related to farm-to-ECE in the feely box/bag (e.g., cooking utensils, different types of fruit or play food). See Table 2 for ideas for farm to ECE objects.
MM50, “1, 2, 3, What Do I See?” <i>Guessing game where an object is slowly revealed from under a scarf</i>	Use items related to food, cooking, farming, or gardening. See Table 2 for ideas for farm-to-ECE objects
MM51, “High in the Tree” <i>Fingerplay about fruit on a tree</i>	Adapt rhyme about peach tree to include other locally grown or native familiar fruits or nuts and add different adjectives.



MM55, “Mr. Forgetful” <i>Phonological awareness game deleting parts of compound words</i>	Use compound words related to farm-to-ECE concepts. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• watermelon• scarecrow• snapdragon• strawberry• sunflower• blueberry• rosemary
MM56, “I Had a Little Nut Tree” <i>Poem about a nut tree</i>	Adapt the poem to include fruit or nuts that grow in your community
MM59, “Clap the Beat” <i>Clapping syllables in words to create a rhythmic pattern</i>	Clap syllables of farm-to-ECE words. See Table 4 for examples of words.
MM61, “Riddle, Riddle, What Is That?” <i>Guessing game about items related to a concept</i>	Create riddles to describe farm-to-ECE items. See Tables 2 and 4 for examples of farm-to-ECE items.
MM63, “Going on a Journey” <i>Pantomiming a pretend adventure</i>	Create a story and associated actions to guide children on a pretend adventure related to farm-to-ECE (e.g., a day on the farm, the journey of a seed, experiencing a garden with all the senses)
MM68, “I Have a Secret” <i>Sorting game where children try to guess the secret sorting rule</i>	Use objects or pictures related to food, farming, gardening, or cooking that can be sorted into two groups. For example: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• toy farm animals (baby/adult animals)• fruit or vegetables (tops/bottoms, peel/no peel)• cooking tools (cooking vessels/stirring implements)• food (grown in garden/bought at store)
MM75, “Busy Bees” <i>Children pretend they are bees and practice following directions</i>	Use this opportunity to engage in a discussion about bees (e.g., why are bees important for our food system? how are bees like people? how is a beehive like a community?)
MM76, “Describing Things” <i>Guessing game describing items hidden in a bag</i>	Put items related to farm-to-ECE in the bag (e.g., cooking utensils, different types of fruit or play food). See Table 2 for ideas for farm to ECE objects.



<p>MM79, “Here Is the Beehive” <i>Rhyme and movement activity about bees</i></p>	<p>Use this opportunity to engage in a discussion about bees (e.g., Why are bees important for our food system? How are bees like people? How is a beehive like a community?)</p>
<p>MM83, “Let’s Make a Cake” <i>Rhyme about making a cake</i></p>	<p>Instead of a fudge cake, use other kinds of cake or bread (e.g., apple cake, zucchini or pumpkin bread). Talk about the ingredients that might be used and where they come from.</p>
<p>MM94, “Old MacDonald” <i>Familiar children’s song</i></p>	<p>Use different farm animals in the traditional version, or use “...on that farm he grew some _____ (cabbage, apples, pumpkins, etc.)</p>
<p>MM95, “Sorting Syllables” <i>Sorting small objects by the number of syllables in their names</i></p>	<p>Use farm-to-ECE items with one, two, or three syllables. See Table 4 for ideas for farm to ECE objects.</p>

**Table 3. Questions and Prompts to Invite Engaged Thinking¹³****Food**

- Who grew it? How did it get from the field to our plates?
- Where does a certain food come from (e.g., cheese, maple syrup, pickles, pizza)? How do you make it? What is your favorite way to eat it?
- Which foods help our bodies grow strong?
- What foods are ready for harvest in spring? Summer? Fall? Winter?
- What ingredients are in our bread? Where do these ingredients come from? Do these foods come from plants or animals?
- What are some words that describe the different items you tasted? What did you learn about yourself during the taste tests? Can you think of a food that you used to not like but now you do? Can you think of foods that taste better to you when eaten together rather than separately?

Gardens

- What are helping jobs in our garden?
- What are rules in our garden?
- What have we discovered in our garden?
- How much produce have we harvested?
- What questions about gardens do we have for a local farmer or garden center visitor?
- Why are worms helpful in the garden?
- What will happen in the garden in the winter? Spring? Summer? Fall?
- What do we predict will happen (How many squash will grow? How big will a watermelon get?)
- Which bugs live in our garden? Which are helpful to our garden? Which are hurtful?
- How is a garden a community?
- What should we plant in our garden next year?



Seeds and Plants

- What do plants need to grow? How much water/space/sunlight do they need?
- Why do we need to provide water for plants?
- How do seeds grow? What do they grow into?
- How many different plants can you think of?
- Which came first, the plant or the seed?
- Do all seeds look the same? How are they alike? Different?
- How do seeds travel?
- How could the seed germinate without soil? What else did the seed need to germinate? What will happen to the germinated seed next?
- What else can we do with seeds besides germinate them into plants? (eat them, feed them to animals, use them in art projects)

Fruits and Vegetables

- What are our favorite fruits and vegetables?
- Where do different vegetables and fruits grow? (below ground, on bushes, vines, trees, etc.)
- Which fruits/vegetables are a certain color?
- What parts of certain plants can people eat (e.g., pumpkin flesh, seeds, flowers)?
- What part of the plant is your favorite vegetable? Can you think of any other roots/leaves/stems/ seeds/fruits that we eat?

Farms

- What did we learn on our farm field trip/farmer visit?
- What does a typical day on the farm look like?
- Where does food go after they grow it?
- What are farms for?
- What did you see, hear, and smell at the farm? What surprised you about the farm?



Animals

- What do worms look like? What do they eat? How do they get around? What do they like to do?
- How are bees like humans? How are bees a community?
- How are we the same or different from other animals (e.g., sheep, cows, chickens) How are these animals similar or different?
- How do animals depend on humans? How do humans depend on animals?
- What animals live on farms? Why do farmers keep certain animals? How do farmers care for their animals?
- What role do animals play in our community? What products do humans get from farm animals?
- How can a mother farm animal find her baby if all the babies look alike to us? What can baby animals do or not do when they are born? What could you do or not do when you were a baby?
- Where does wool come from? What can you think of that is made of yarn? What are some other products we get from plants or animals that aren't food?

Cooking

- Why do we measure ingredients?
- What happened to the batter or dough when we cooked it? Why?
- What other kinds of tools or objects could we use to roll dough?
- Which part of the recipe did you most like doing?
- What can we do with parts of food we didn't use in the recipe (e.g., fruit peels, carrot tops)?
- What do you think the inside of this fruit/vegetable will look like when we cut it open?
- What foods would we like to try to make?
- Why do foods taste different when we make them ourselves instead of buying them at the store?
- What foods have you and your family made with a recipe? Which foods have you made without using a recipe?

Food, Families, and Culture

- What are some of the favorite foods of people in your family?
- What special foods do you eat at family celebrations like birthday parties or holidays?
- If you are feeling sick, are there special foods or drinks your family gives you to help you feel better?



- Sometimes there are foods that some people do not eat. They might be allergic so it would make them sick, or they might choose not to eat meat from animals, or it might be important to their religion to not eat certain things. Are there any foods that someone you know does not eat?
- What are different tools that people use to help us get food from our plate to our mouth (e.g., spoon, chopsticks, hands)?
- Where does your family get food (e.g., grocery store, garden, restaurant, farmers market)?
- What foods do people in your family make together?

Nutrition

- Why do our bodies need to eat food (e.g., energy in, energy out)?
- What foods help our bodies have the energy to grow, learn, and play (e.g., fruits, vegetables, whole grains, dairy)? Why should we eat these foods (e.g., nutrients, vitamins, and minerals our bodies need; help prevent diseases)?
- Introduce the idea of GO foods (highest in nutrients; lowest in fat, added sugar, and calories; can be eaten anytime); SLOW foods (higher in fat, added sugar, and/or calories; are “sometimes” foods); and WHOA foods (highest in fat/sugar/calories; lowest in nutrients; are “celebration” foods to eat only once in a while).¹² Invite children to think about foods in each category.
- What are things we drink that help our bodies (e.g., water, milk)? How do they help our bodies (e.g., we need water for breathing, digestion, etc.; milk helps build strong bones and teeth)?
- What types of drinks are not helpful for our bodies (e.g., soda, other sugar-sweetened beverages)? Why not (e.g., can damage our teeth, no nutrients for our bodies to use)?
- What else do our bodies need to be healthy (e.g., physical activity, sleep)?



Table 4. Props and Pictures to Use in Activities

Food	Farms
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• fresh produce• wooden or plastic play food• pictures of locally grown foods• empty food containers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• toy tractors and trucks• toy animals or pictures of animals• wool• model barns and silos or pictures of farm buildings• grain• ears of corn or pictures of other crops• overalls
Gardens	Cooking
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• trowels• seed packets• ball of twine• watering cans• plastic bugs• gloves• non-toxic leaves• large seeds (e.g., pumpkin, sunflower, bean, pea, corn)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• funnels• whisks• wooden spoon• juicers• potato mashers• plastic or metal bowls• spatulas• eggbeaters• pot holders• recipe cards• measuring cups• pots and pans



Table 5. Poems and Rhymes About Farm-to-ECE Concepts

<p>Apples Away up high in an apple tree, Two red apples smiled at me. I shook that tree as hard as I could; Down came those apples, And mmmm, they were good! <i>(Traditional)</i></p>	<p>Coolness of the Melons Coolness of the melons flecked with mud in the morning dew. <i>(Matsuo, Basho; translated by Robert Hass)</i></p>
<p>Lavender's Blue Lavender's blue, dilly, dilly (or diddle, diddle) Lavender's green When I am King, dilly, dilly You shall be Queen!</p> <p>Call up your men, dilly, dilly Set them to work Some to the plough, dilly, dilly And some to the pond.</p> <p>Some to make hay, dilly, dilly <i>Some to cut corn</i> <i>While you and I, dilly, dilly</i> <i>Keep ourselves warm.</i> <i>(English nursery rhyme)</i></p>	<p>Blow Wind, Blow Blow wind, blow And go, mill, go That the miller may grind his corn That the baker may take it And into bread make it And bring us a loaf in the morn.</p> <p>Blow wind, blow And go, mill, go That the miller may grind his corn That the baker may take it And into bread make it And bring us a loaf in the morn. <i>(Traditional nursery rhyme)</i></p>
<p>The Farmer Sun is coming up Farmer's out the door, He will go to milk the cows, And start his daily chores. Sun is going down Horse is in the stable, All the fields are planted now, Supper's on the table. <i>(Traditional)</i></p>	<p>If All the World Were Apple Pie If all the world were apple pie And all the sea were ink And all the trees were bread and cheese What would we have to drink? <i>(Traditional nursery rhyme)</i></p>



Table 6. Farm-to-ECE Vocabulary Words

Food		Farms	
apple	melon	agriculture	jack (male donkey)
bean	mushroom	bale (of hay)	jenny (female donkey)
bell pepper	onions	barley	kid (baby goat)
blueberry	parsley	barn	lamb
brussels sprouts	pea	calf	llama
cabbage	peanut	cattle	mare
cantaloupe	potato	chick/chicken	mower
catnip	pumpkin	coop	oats
carrot	radish	corn	orchard
celery	rosemary	cow	pasture
chives	scallion	dairy	pig
cilantro	spinach	egg	piglet
corn	strawberry	ewe	plough
cucumber	Swiss chard	fence	poultry
dill	sunflower	fertilizer	rake
garlic	tomato	foal	rooster
kale	verbena	gander	shears
lettuce	watermelon	goose	sheep
mint		goat	silo
		grain	stable
		harvest	till
		hen	tractor
		herd	trough
		horse	udder
		irrigation	wheat



Gardens		Cooking	
ant	root	bake	oil
bee	scarecrow	batter	peel
bulb	seed	beat	plate
compost	shoot	blender	pour
dig	shovel	boil	pulp
flower	soil	bowl	recipe
grow	sprout	bread	roll
harvest	sun	char	salt
herb	trowel	dice	scramble
hoe	vine	dough	spoon
leaf	water	grater	stove
mulch	weed	grind	toast
pollinator	wheel barrow	juice	whisk
rake	worm	kettle	yeast
		knead	zest
		mash	
		measure	
		melt	



Table 7. Teaching Strategies® Children’s Books Collection and Book Discussion Cards™ to Support Farm-to-ECE Learning

Book Title (English/Spanish) and Author	Farm-to-ECE Extensions*
<i>Come Cook with Me / ¡A cocinar!</i> ¹⁴ Heather Baker, Kai-leé Berke, and Sherrie Rudick	Invite children to examine how recipes are written, decide on which recipe to make, and refer to the recipe as they bake. Encourage children to make their own recipe using the recipes in the book as an inspiration.
<i>Cuckoo / Cucú</i> ¹⁵ Lois Ehlert <i>Book Discussion Card 37</i> ¹⁶	Encourage children to think of other events that might destroy crops. What can farmers do to save their crops?
<i>Doña Flor</i> ¹⁷ Pat Mora <i>Book Discussion Card 35</i> ¹⁸	Invite children to make tortillas and offer a tortilla press or rolling pin for play dough as well.
<i>The Doorbell Rang / Lllaman a la puerta</i> ¹⁹ Pat Hutchins	Offer cookies (plastic or real), or cookie-shaped cutouts for children to use as they act out the story. Record the numerals as children work.
<i>Gathering the Sun: An Alphabet in Spanish and English</i> ²⁰ Alma Flor Ada, English translation by Rosa Zubizarreta	Invite children to think of other words that relate to farms and plants that start with each letter of the alphabet (in English and/or Spanish).
<i>The Gingerbread Man / El hombrecito de jengibre</i> ²¹ Bonnie Dobkin <i>Book Discussion Card 13</i> ²²	Encourage children to note the ingredients and tools the bakers use and to notice the rhyming text in the chants. After reading, invite children to make gingerbread-shaped figures out of play dough to retell the story of this naughty gingerbread man.
<i>Guacamole: A Cooking Poem/Un poema para concinar</i> ²³ Jorge Argueta	After you finish reading the book, ask children who has tried guacamole and how they ate it. Have a guacamole recipe and ingredients available in the Cooking area.

*Adapted from Teaching Strategies, LLC. (2010). *The Creative Curriculum® for preschool Book Discussion Cards™*. Bethesda, MD: Author; Teaching Strategies, LLC. (2014). *The Creative Curriculum® for preschool teaching guide: Exercise study*. Bethesda, MD: Author; and Teaching Strategies, LLC. (2015). *The Creative Curriculum® for preschool teaching guide: Bread study*. Bethesda, MD: Author.

***A Grand Old Tree***²⁴

Mary Newell DePalma

*Book Discussion Card 16*²⁵

Invite children to talk about life cycles in the garden and on farms. What happens to plants in the winter? What happens when plants die? What new beginnings come from these endings?

Jalapeño Bagels / Bagels de jalapeños²⁶

Natasha Wing

As you read, invite children to notice the different ingredients, tools, and shapes of the different kinds of breads made in the family's bakery. After reading, follow the recipes at the end of the book for change bars and jalapeño bagels; document the children's work with photos or videos.

The Little Red Hen / La Gallinita Roja²⁷

Bonnie Dobkin

*Book Discussion Card 05*²⁸

As you read, reinforce vocabulary: wheat, harvest, grind, flour, knead, and yeast. Ask children to share what they notice about the process for making and baking bread. After reading, invite children to retell the story by acting out each character's role.

Mama & Papa Have a Store / Mamá y Papá tienen una tienda²⁹

Amelia Lau Carling

After a visit to a bakery or store that sells bread, introduce this book to discuss the different jobs and materials in stores. Help the children make a chart of all the different jobs they would like to learn how to do.

Peeny Butter Fudge / Dulce de mantequilla de maní³⁰

Toni Morrison

Invite children to notice the rhyming words in the text, and share stories of cooking or baking with their family members. Ask children to review the recipe at the end of the book. Make the recipe for peeny butter fudge and document the children's work with photos or videos.

Radio Man / Don Radio³¹

Arthur Dorros

*Book Discussion Card 11*³²

Invite children to talk about migrant farm workers—why do they move so often? What is it like to move so frequently?

Rah, Rah, Radishes! A Vegetable Chant³³

April Pulley Sayre

After you read the book, make a class list of "Our Favorite Vegetables" and "Vegetables We Would Like to Try." Talk about how eating a variety of vegetables of all different colors helps our bodies get many different nutrients and vitamins we need to be healthy. Invite children to think about ways they could eat more fruits or vegetables.



Rice Is Nice / Arroz para todos³⁴
Nancy Noel Williams

After reading this book, follow the directions in the book for making rice and ask children what types of rice dishes they would like to learn how to make.

Stone Soup³⁵
Marcia Brown
*Book Discussion Card 36*³⁶

Invite children to make a version of stone soup, with each child contributing an ingredient. Engage children in a discussion about how the community came together and made a meal that was better than any of the single ingredients alone.

Too Many Tamales / Qué montón de tamales³⁷
Gary Soto
*Book Discussion Card 21*³⁸

After reading the book, invite children to pretend to make tamales with play dough. Hide small items such as large buttons or wooden rings in the play dough for children to find.

Who Wears What / ¿Quién usa esto?³⁹
Judith Bauer Stamper

Point out the pictures related to the chef. After a visit to a bakery, use this book to discuss the garments the children observed. Ask children to explain how these garments help chefs (and bakers) in their work.



Table 8. Teaching Guide Studies to Support Farm-to-ECE Learning*

BEGINNING THE YEAR ⁴⁰	<i>Teaching Guide Activity</i>	<i>Farm-to-ECE Adaptations</i>
	<p>Focus Question 3 Day 4, Discussion and Shared Writing <i>Large-group prompt to discuss “What can we do with our hands?”</i></p>	<p>If children need prompting to come up with ideas, ask open-ended questions about tasks that we use our hands for in the Cooking area and in the garden.</p>
	<p>Focus Question 3 Day 5, Discussion and Shared Writing <i>Visit from a family member with a special skill involving their hands</i></p>	<p>If a family member shares a special skill that is related to farm-to-ECE, such as preparing tamales or knitting, you might encourage children to think about where the masa flour used in the dough comes from, or the process through which wool was spun into yarn.</p>
	<p>Focus Question 4 Day 3, Discussion and Shared Writing <i>Share photos that families have brought in showing daily events at home</i></p>	<p>Notice if any of the photos involve activities such as families preparing a meal together. Invite children to share what they were making in the picture, where they got the ingredients, and what the food tasted like.</p>
	<p>Focus Question 5 Day 2, Discussion and Shared Writing <i>Visit from a school worker whose job relates to food preparation or delivery</i></p>	<p>Invite children to ask the visitor questions about their job and the food that they eat at school. Children might be curious about where the food comes from, how it is delivered, how it is prepared, what tools are used in the school kitchen, or what is done with leftovers.</p>
	<p>Focus Question 5 Day 2, Discussion and Shared Writing <i>Visit from a family member to cook during choice time</i></p>	<p>Invite the family member to share with children if they ever make similar dishes at home, where they learned to cook, or what their favorite foods or kitchen tools are.</p>

* The Bread Study is not included in these tables because most activities are relevant to farm to ECE themes with little or no adaptation necessary.



	Teaching Guide Activity	Farm-to-ECE Adaptations
BALLS STUDY ⁴¹	Investigation 2 Day 1, On a Roll/Rolling Ramp <i>Children make and test predictions about whether a variety of objects roll</i>	Include food items (pretend food or sturdy produce) and cooking items (e.g., round biscuit cutter, rolling pin) in the collection of objects that children are exploring whether they roll.
	Celebrating Learning Day 2, Discussion and Shared Writing: Sharing Special Foods <i>Plan a meal to celebrate with families featuring foods shaped like balls</i>	Provide and invite families to bring ball-shaped foods, especially those that highlight local food or represent families' traditions (e.g., blueberries, cheese balls, melon balls, tomatoes, matzo balls, kofte).

	Teaching Guide Activity	Farm-to-ECE Adaptations
BUILDINGS STUDY ⁴²	Exploring the Topic Day 1, Discussion and Shared Writing: Taking a Look at Buildings <i>Present children with a collection of pictures of buildings and invite them to talk about what they notice.</i>	Include pictures of buildings such as siloes, barns, and greenhouses in the collection of photos of buildings.
	Investigation 5 Day 1, Discussion and Shared Writing: What's Going on Inside? <i>Show children several pictures of building exteriors and ask them to predict what goes on inside.</i>	Include pictures of buildings that pertain to the food system including farm buildings, garden centers, markets, etc.
	Investigation 5 Day 4, Discussion and Shared Writing: Building Signs <i>Present children with pictures of building signs with graphics that provide clues as to what happens in the building.</i>	Include pictures of businesses that pertain to the food system such as bakeries, restaurants, dairies, grocery stores, etc.



CLOTHES STUDY ⁴³	Teaching Guide Activity	Farm-to-ECE Adaptations
	<p>Investigation 1 Day 1, Small Group: Play Dough/Biscuits <i>Invite children to make small, medium, and large objects or biscuits.</i></p>	<p>Offer children other local produce to explore the concepts of small, medium, and large. For example, use different sized cookie cutters to cut thin slices of apple or melon or have children sort tomatoes or other produce into groups of small, medium, and large sizes.</p>
	<p>Investigation 4 Day 3, Discussion and Shared Writing: How Cloth is Made <i>Discuss “What comes from sheep?” and how cloth is made.</i></p>	<p>Talk about the process of how wool is shorn from sheep, washed to get rid of the natural oils, combed by progressively smaller brushes (picking and carding) to make it fluffy, dyed, spun into yarn, and woven into fabric.</p>
	<p>Investigation 6 Day 1, Discussion and Shared Writing: Exploring Workers’ Clothes <i>Discuss uniforms that people wear in different jobs.</i></p>	<p>Include professions related to agriculture and food service such as farmers, chefs, bakers, etc</p>



EXERCISE STUDY ⁴⁴	Teaching Guide Activity	Farm-to-ECE Adaptations
	Investigation 3 Day 1, Discussion and Shared Writing: Energy for Exercise <i>Discussion about how people get energy for their bodies</i>	Follow the guidance for asking questions to help children think about how they feel before meals when they are hungry or after eating healthy food or drinking water after exercise.
	Investigation 3 Day 1, Choice Time <i>Exploring pretend healthy foods and food-preparation supplies in the Dramatic Play area</i>	Follow the prompts to support children in thinking about how they might create healthy snacks.
	Investigation 3 Day 3, Discussion and Shared Writing: The Colors We Eat <i>Discussion about nutrition and the importance of eating a variety of fruits and vegetables</i>	Follow the guidance to support learning about nutrition and encouraging children to think of a variety of fruits and vegetables and “The Colors We Eat”.
	Investigation 3 Day 4, Discussion and Shared Writing: Interviewing an Expert <i>Introducing a class visitor such as a dietician, nutritionist, or physician</i>	Encourage children to come up with interview questions that help them better understand nutrition and how different foods affect our bodies.
	Investigation 3 Day 4, Choice Time <i>Using environmental print and food containers to talk about healthiness of different foods</i>	Follow the guidance to help children sort healthy food into a pile and discuss their choices.
	Investigation 3 Day 5, Discussion and Shared Writing: Healthy and Strong <i>Helping children identify their favorite fruit or vegetable</i>	Follow the guidance to help children name, draw, and talk about their fruit or vegetable
	Investigation 3 Day 5, Choice Time <i>Introducing cookbooks into the Dramatic Play area</i>	Follow the guidance to encourage children to explore cookbooks and follow a healthy recipe using props and empty food containers.

**Teaching Guide Activity****Investigation 5**

Day 3, Discussion and Shared Writing: So Much Trash
Discussion about food-related waste and composting

Farm-to-ECE Adaptations

Follow the guidance to engage in a discussion around food garbage and composting. Explain that when food comes from far away (rather than locally), it might need more packaging to keep it fresh, which turns into garbage. Start a classroom compost bin for your garden.



TREES STUDY ⁴⁶	Teaching Guide Activity	Farm-to-ECE Adaptations
	<p>Investigation 3 Day 2, Discussion and Shared Writing: Food Grown on Trees <i>Discussion about food grown on trees</i></p>	<p>Highlight any local fruit- or nut-bearing trees. Invite children to think of examples of things that grow in trees that only animals eat and things that animals and people both might eat. How do we make sure that both animals and people get the food they need from trees?</p>
	<p>Investigation 3 Day 3, Discussion and Shared Writing: Visitor Who Grows Food on Trees <i>Class visitor who grows food on trees or who works with tree-grown food</i></p>	<p>Follow the guidance to invite children to learn more from the visitor about tree-grown food and offer samples of food grown on trees.</p>
	<p>Investigation 3 Day 4, Read-Aloud <i>Reading and creating tree counting books</i></p>	<p>After reading <i>Trees Count</i>, invite children to make their own tree counting books. Offer suggestions of local foods that grow on trees that they might add to their trees.</p>
	<p>Investigation 5 Day 1, Discussion and Shared Writing: We Grow and Trees Grow <i>Exploring the growth of people and trees</i></p>	<p>As you talk about how people start out as babies and grow into adults, talk about how plants in your garden or classroom also started as seeds and seedlings and grow taller and larger. Invite children to think about what plants need to grow and what we need to grow.</p>
	<p>Investigation 5 Day 3, Discussion and Shared Writing: Living and Nonliving Things <i>Exploring the differences between living and nonliving things</i></p>	<p>Follow the guidance to help children explore the characteristics of living and nonliving things. Draw their attention to plants that grow in your garden or in your local community.</p>
	<p>Closing the Study <i>Special celebration to close the study</i></p>	<p>Follow the guidance to set up a snack bar at a celebration with families that includes local food grown on trees (e.g., apples, peaches, dates, pecans; be mindful of allergies).</p>

Using Farm-to-ECE Learning to Support Child Assessment

Learning about local food, nutrition, and agriculture is not only a key part of healthy development and learning, but these learning opportunities also provide an ideal context for teachers to gather information about children's current levels of knowledge and skills to inform future learning opportunities. *The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool, Sixth Edition, Volume 6: Objectives for Development & Learning* cover 10 areas of development and learning. Teachers use these 38 research-based objectives to understand children's growth and development and use formative assessment data to individualize instruction to meet the needs of every learner. *The Objectives for Development and Learning* are at the heart of *GOLD®*, the authentic, ongoing observational system for assessing children from birth through third grade⁴⁷. Table 9 presents examples of how teachers might use farm-to-ECE learning opportunities to support assessment across all 10 areas of development and learning.





Table 9. Using Farm-to-ECE Learning Experiences to Support Assessment Across the *GOLD*® Objectives for Development and Learning

Examples of What a Child Might Do	Examples of Related <i>GOLD</i> ® Objectives for Development and Learning ⁴⁸
<p>Social-Emotional Development</p> <p>Wash hands after working in the garden</p> <p>Say, “Milk helps my bones grow strong.”</p> <p>Ask a group of children in the Cooking area, “What are you making? Can I help?”</p> <p>Give another child a turn with a trowel in the garden, but ask to use it again when the other is done</p> <p>Say, “You be the chef this time, and I’ll be the restaurant customer and then we’ll switch.”</p>	<p>Objective 1. Regulates own emotions and behaviors b. Follows limits and expectations</p> <p>Objective 1. Regulates own emotions and behaviors c. Takes care of own needs appropriately</p> <p>Objective 2. Establishes and sustains positive relationships c. Interacts with peers</p> <p>Objective 3. Participates cooperatively and constructively in group situations a. Balances needs and rights of self and others</p> <p>Objective 3. Participates cooperatively and constructively in group situations b. Solves social problems</p>
<p>Physical Development</p> <p>Pick beans off a vine in the garden</p>	<p>Objective 7. Demonstrates fine-motor strength and coordination a. Uses fingers and hands</p>



Language Development

Select the whisk from a group of cooking tools when the teacher lists it as an item they will need for an upcoming project

Follow the multi-step direction to dig a hole, place one seed in the hole, then cover it with soil

Say, "I'm making an irrigation ditch for my farm," while playing in the Sand and Water area

Talk about a recent visit to the farm with the events in the proper sequence

Objective 8. Listens to and understands increasingly complex language

a. Comprehends language

Objective 8. Listens to and understands increasingly complex language

b. Follows directions

Objective 9. Uses language to express thoughts and needs

a. Uses an expanding expressive vocabulary

Objective 9. Uses language to express thoughts and needs

d. Tells about another time or place



Cognitive Development

Gather pretend food items from the Dramatic Play area and then draws a menu to use while playing restaurant

Continue trying to dig in the garden and attempt using different tools in a spot where the soil is hard

Ask another child to hold the measuring cup while she pours milk

Show interest in learning how the farmer plants the whole field with seeds

Suggest using dried cranberries in a recipe when a peer says they don't care for raisins

Identify four vegetables that were removed while playing "What's Missing?"

After reading *Tops and Bottoms*, suggest planting beet tops to see if they will grow leaves like the carrot tops that were previously planted

Group fruits into those that grow on trees and those that grow on bushes

Pretend to be a seed growing into a plant during a music and movement activity

Pretend to be a farmer and assign roles to peers to act out a farmer's market

Objective 11. Demonstrates positive approaches to learning
a. Attends and engages

Objective 11. Demonstrates positive approaches to learning
b. Persists

Objective 11. Demonstrates positive approaches to learning
c. Solves problems

Objective 11. Demonstrates positive approaches to learning
d. Shows curiosity and motivation

Objective 11. Demonstrates positive approaches to learning
e. Shows flexibility and inventiveness in thinking

Objective 12. Remembers and connects experiences
a. Recognizes and recalls

Objective 12. Remembers and connects experiences
b. Makes connections

Objective 13. Uses classification skills

Objective 14. Uses symbols and images to represent something not present
a. Thinks symbolically

Objective 14. Uses symbols and images to represent something not present
b. Engages in sociodramatic play



Literacy

Select pictures of a tomato and a potato during a rhyming matching game

Pick up a goat puppet when asked, “What begins with the same sound as *goose* and *gate*”?

Put together *scare* and *crow* to say *scarecrow*

Follow picture recipe cards to make trail mix

When prompted, offer an alternative solution that Maria and her cousins could have cut up the tamales instead of eating them when looking for Maria’s mother’s ring

Retell *The Gingerbread Man* using pictures as prompts

Use letter-like forms and a picture to make a sign to identify which seeds were planted in the garden

Objective 15. Demonstrates phonological awareness
a. Notices and discriminates rhyme

Objective 15. Demonstrates phonological awareness
b. Notices and discriminates alliteration

Objective 15. Demonstrates phonological awareness
c. Notices and discriminates smaller and smaller units of sound

Objective 15. Demonstrates phonological awareness
d. Applies phonics concepts and knowledge of word structure to decode text

Objective 17. Demonstrates knowledge of print and its uses
b. Uses print concepts

Objective 18. Comprehends and responds to books and other texts
a. Interacts during reading experiences, book conversations, and text reflections

Objective 18. Comprehends and responds to books and other texts
c. Retells stories and recounts details from informational texts

Objective 19. Demonstrates emergent writing skills
b. Writes to convey ideas and information

Mathematics

Say, “We found seven worms in the garden” after counting them

Say, “We planted three rosemary plants and five basil plants. We have more basil.”

Fill measuring cup with dry oatmeal for a cooking project

Make a kabob with repeating pattern of strawberry, strawberry, blueberry, strawberry, strawberry, blueberry

Objective 20. Uses number concepts and operations
a. Counts

Objective 20. Uses number concepts and operations
b. Quantifies

Objective 22. Compares and measures
a. Measures objects

Objective 23. Demonstrates knowledge of patterns



Science and Technology

Predict that the seedling placed by the window will grow taller than the seedling on the table by the door

Sort pictures of baby farm animals and adult farm animals

Notice that the bread dough doubled in size after it rested

Collect different types of soil found outside and investigate its properties with a magnifying glass

Use an eggbeater during a cooking project

Objective 24. Uses scientific inquiry skills

Objective 25. Demonstrates knowledge of the characteristics of living things

Objective 26. Demonstrates knowledge of the physical properties of objects and materials

Objective 27. Demonstrates knowledge of Earth's environment

Objective 28. Uses tools and other technology to perform tasks

Social Studies

Share a family recipe for lefse, a potato pancake he helps make at Christmas

Talk about rice dishes from different cultures after reading *Rice Is Nice*

Draw a map of a farm after a field trip

Objective 29. Demonstrates knowledge about self

Objective 30. Shows basic understanding of people and how they live

Objective 32. Demonstrates simple geographic knowledge

The Arts

Make edible art with sliced fruit and vegetables on a tortilla

Use a tambourine made from a gourd

Use movement and dance to represent the growth of a seed

Explore roles on a farm through dramatic play

Objective 33. Explores the visual arts

Objective 34. Explores musical concepts and expression

Objective 35. Explores dance and movement concepts

Objective 36. Explores drama through actions and language

English Language Development

Go to the table when teacher says, "Time for snack" and gestures by bringing her hand to her mouth

Say, "I do a cookie" during a cooking project

Objective 37. Demonstrates progress in listening to and understanding English

Objective 38. Demonstrates progress in speaking English

Supporting Family Engagement through Farm-to-ECE Learning

Within *The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool*, there are many opportunities to include and involve families in children’s farm-to-ECE learning. These opportunities include:

At a Glance Pages

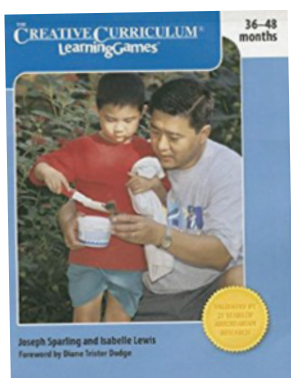
Within the “At a Glance” planning resources located in the *Teaching Guides* are notes about Family Partnerships that offer suggestions for involving families in the program⁴⁹. The Family Partnerships notes in the *Teaching Guides* also present opportunities for family engagement, such as inviting family members with special skills or jobs to speak with the class, including families in special celebrations at the end of a study, or inviting families to share about their own food traditions. For example, during *The Bread Study* you might invite families to share family bread recipes and photos of family gatherings where special breads are eaten.

Letters to Families

Letters to families (available in English and Spanish) introduce curriculum content and provide information about opportunities for family participation and support⁵⁰. These letters are provided to programs in an editable form, making them an ideal tool to highlight farm-to-ECE material in your communications with families. For example, in the letter about Cooking, you might highlight the importance of using locally grown, healthy foods and offer a simple recipe for families to make at home. In the letter about Outdoors, you might talk about your classroom garden and invite parents to volunteer in the garden.

Weekly Plans

Weekly plans are editable resources (available in English and Spanish) that describe the class’ daily activities for families⁵¹. You might use these plans to highlight farm-to-ECE activities by using a special symbol (e.g., an apple) next to relevant activities.



The Creative Curriculum® LearningGames®

The Creative Curriculum® LearningGames® are ready-to-print activities that teachers can send home with families to bridge what is learned at school with what families can do at home⁵². Many of these easy-to-use, engaging activities can support learning about nutrition, gardening, and cooking. Table 11 presents simple suggestions that you can provide to parents to encourage farm-to-ECE learning at home through the *LearningGames®* activities.



The Creative Curriculum® LearningGames®53	Farm-to-ECE Adaptations
LG105, “Match and Name Pictures” <i>Picture matching game</i>	Suggest that families use pictures of fruits, vegetables, other local food, or farm animals.
LG107, “A Book About Me” <i>Collecting personal items for a book about the child</i>	Encourage families to include items or pictures related to their favorite food or a seed packet or pictures of a child’s favorite plant from their garden.
LG108, “Planting Together” <i>Planting a window garden</i>	Invite families to create a window garden with their children.
LG110, “A Shared Family Activity” <i>Making or filling a bird feeder</i>	Encourage families to make (e.g., out of a pinecone) or fill a bird feeder and talk about the different kinds of seeds in the bird feed and different types of birds that visit.
LG116, “What’s It For?” <i>Talking about the functions of objects and sorting objects into categories</i>	Suggest that families use cooking or gardening items.
LG124, “Playing with Many Sizes” <i>Arranging objects by size</i>	Suggest that families use items such as measuring cups, measuring spoons, bowls of various sizes, or food (e.g., tomatoes of different sizes)
LG130, “Matching Among Similar Pictures” <i>Looking for matching pairs among several pictures</i>	Invite families to use pictures of food, farm animals, or gardening items.
LG133, “Packing My Own Picnic” <i>Packing a special picnic together</i>	Encourage families to let their child pack a special picnic, talking about healthy food choices and foods only eaten on special occasions, such as cookies and cake.
LG135, “Plan an Event” <i>Planning a special event</i>	Invite families to plan an event with their child such as fixing a special dish for a loved one. Steps might include finding a recipe, making a shopping list, going to the store, and cooking together.
LG137, “That Doesn’t Belong” <i>Setting the table with some items that do not belong</i>	Encourage families to eat meals together and involve children in activities such as setting the table.



LG140, “Changing Partner Roles” <i>Engaging in an activity that allows a child to move gradually from less to more responsibility.</i>	Suggest that families engage in activities related to eating, cooking, or gardening (e.g., setting the table, watering plants, simple cooking tasks)
LG143, “Remembering Pictures” <i>Picture memory game</i>	Suggest that families use pictures of fruits, vegetables, other local food, or farm animals.
LG147, “Props for Pretending” <i>Collecting supplies in a box that encourage pretend play in different roles</i>	Invite families to make prop boxes related to farm-to-ECE roles such as a chef (e.g., pots, cooking utensils, apron) or a gardener (e.g., gloves, seed packets, plastic shovel, gourds)
LG157, “Fork Food” <i>Game classifying foods based on if they are eaten with a fork, spoon, or fingers</i>	Encourage families to include locally grown foods in their discussions.
LG162, “My Favorite Things” <i>Helping child identify personal preferences</i>	Invite families to discuss their favorite foods and plants.
LG167, “First, Next, Last” <i>Using picture cards to follow a simple recipe</i>	Offer families simple recipe ideas using local ingredients.
LG175, “Little By Little” <i>Asking a child to name a picture as it is slowly uncovered</i>	Encourage families to use books that have pictures of local foods, farm scenes, or gardens.
LG187, “Tell How” <i>Using simple recipe cards for a child to give directions</i>	Offer families simple recipe ideas using local ingredients.
LG193, “Let’s Celebrate” <i>Preparing for a holiday or special event</i>	Invite families to discuss with their child special foods they prepare for holidays and other events.
LG194, “Rhyming” <i>Game identifying the word that does not rhyme with the others</i>	Encourage families to use words that relate to farm-to-ECE. See Table 4 for suggestions.
LG199, “Same Sounds” <i>Game identifying whether words start with the same sound</i>	Encourage families to use words that relate to farm-to-ECE. See Table 4 for suggestions.

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