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of America

# Gustine Culinary Training Day 2

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# Program Overview

<b>Day 1</b>	<b>Day 2</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	Batch Cooking Basics: Vegetables & Intro to Proteins
<b>Mise en Place</b>	Production Review
<b>Knife Skills</b>	What Next?
<b>Recipe Literacy</b>	
<b>Production Review</b>	



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# Batch Cooking Basics



# Learning Objectives

- **Define** volume production and batch cooking and understand their differences.
- **Identify** when to use volume production versus batch cooking based on food type and service needs.
- **Utilize** common school kitchen equipment (tilt skillets, convection ovens, steam kettles) effectively for large-scale cooking.
- **Apply** best practices for maintaining food quality in large batch cooking by adjusting timing, temperature, and holding methods.
- **Prevent** common cooking issues such as overcooked proteins, mushy vegetables, or unevenly cooked food in a school foodservice setting.

# Batch Cooking & Volume Production

## **Volume Production**

Large quantities ahead of time and either: held at safe temperatures until service or cooled for reheating later on.

Example: cooking a full batch of rice or taco filling and placing in the warmer at 10:45 AM for 12:30 PM Lunch Service.

Central Kitchen cooks large batch of taco soup, cools it, packaged it for distribution to schools later on.

## **Batch Cooking in school food service**

Cooking or reheating smaller portions more frequently throughout service to maintain freshness and quality

Example: stir-frying vegetables in smaller batches throughout lunch instead of cooking everything at once

Traying up broccoli on sheet trays to roast 2 trays at a time during service



# Batch Cooking

## Benefits

- Food Quality
- Flavor
- Texture
- Appearance
- Nutritional Value
- Waste reduction

## Challenges

- More staff attention throughout service
- Precise timing
- Difficult to manage when serving large meal counts
- What have you experienced?

# When deciding to Batch Cook, Ask Yourself:



Would **holding** the food item at a high temperature:

Change the **flavor**?

Change the **texture**?

Change the **appearance**?

Destroy **nutritional value**?

✓ If **YES**, consider using a batch cooking method and then mise en place!

Food Item	Batch cook	Reasoning & Recommendations
Spaghetti Sauce	No	Holds well without quality loss. Keep at >135F in steam table.
Cheese Sauce	Maybe	Prevents sauce from breaking or becoming thick/gluey. Stir regularly. Pre-set a batch to heat during service.
Taco Filling	No	Holds well in warmers at >135F without quality loss.
Chicken Nuggets	Yes	Prevents nugget from becoming dry/hard Cook in small batches every 30-45 minutes. Pre-Set on sheet trays or have hot sheet trays ready to go.
Frozen Vegetables	Yes	Maintains color, texture, and nutrients. Steam fresh every 30-45 minutes instead of holding before service. Pre-set equipment.
Pizza	Yes	Prevents drying out or appearing burnt Rotate fresh batches every 20 - 30 minutes

# Batch Cook: Yes or No? and why?

Fish Sticks

Stir-Fry

Chili (Meat  
or Veggie)

Pulled Pork

Lasagna

Rice

Caesar Salad

# Large Equipment



# Small Equipment



# Setting yourself up for batch cooking success

**1**

Gathering - Measure, slice, dice, and pre-cooking steps

**2**

Prepping - Item cooked or set up to cook/reheat during service

**3**

Service - "firing" batch items as needed

# COMMUNICATE!

# Roasted Vegetable Medley

## 1

- Wash and cut carrot, Zucchini, broccoli
- measure spice
- preheat oven
- Gather equipment

## 2

- Toss vegetables with oil and seasoning
- spread onto sheet trays lined with parchment
- Hold until service

OR

- Blanch vegetables and cool then tray

OR

- Roast and chill if prepping ahead; hold if close to service

## 3

- Reheat/fire trays in batches as needed. (i.e. start with 2-3 trays cooked and ready to go for service, 15 min in time 2 more trays when getting low)
- Serve hot from hotel pans
- Garnish with herbs if desired

# Baked Pasta Casserole

**1**

- Measure dry pasta, cheese,veggies marinara sauce
- Shred cheese, label pans

**2**

- Boil pasta and shock
- Make pasta sauce and cool
- Pre-cook vegetables if needed and cool
- Build pasta casserole cold into dishes top with cheese and cover with foil.

**3**

- Bake 1-2 trays just before service and the stagger as needed in batches
- Cut and portion
- Hold hot and rotate to keep fresh

# Chicken Tenders (frozen or raw pre-breaded)

**1**

- Pull tenders from freezer to fridge the day before
- Preheat oven or combi
- Gather trays, parchment, portioning tools
- Identify holding equipment
- Mise recipe for breading raw tenders if using

**2**

Frozen

- Lay tenders on sheet pans in a single layer, don't over crowd
- Prep dipping sauces or sides in ramekins

Raw

- Pre-bread all chicken and lay out on trays

**3**

Start with 3 trays baked and hot held, fire trays in waves to keep them crisp and fresh

OR bake all items just before service, and re-fire in small waves



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# Vegetable Cookery Basics



# Vegetable Purchasing Forms

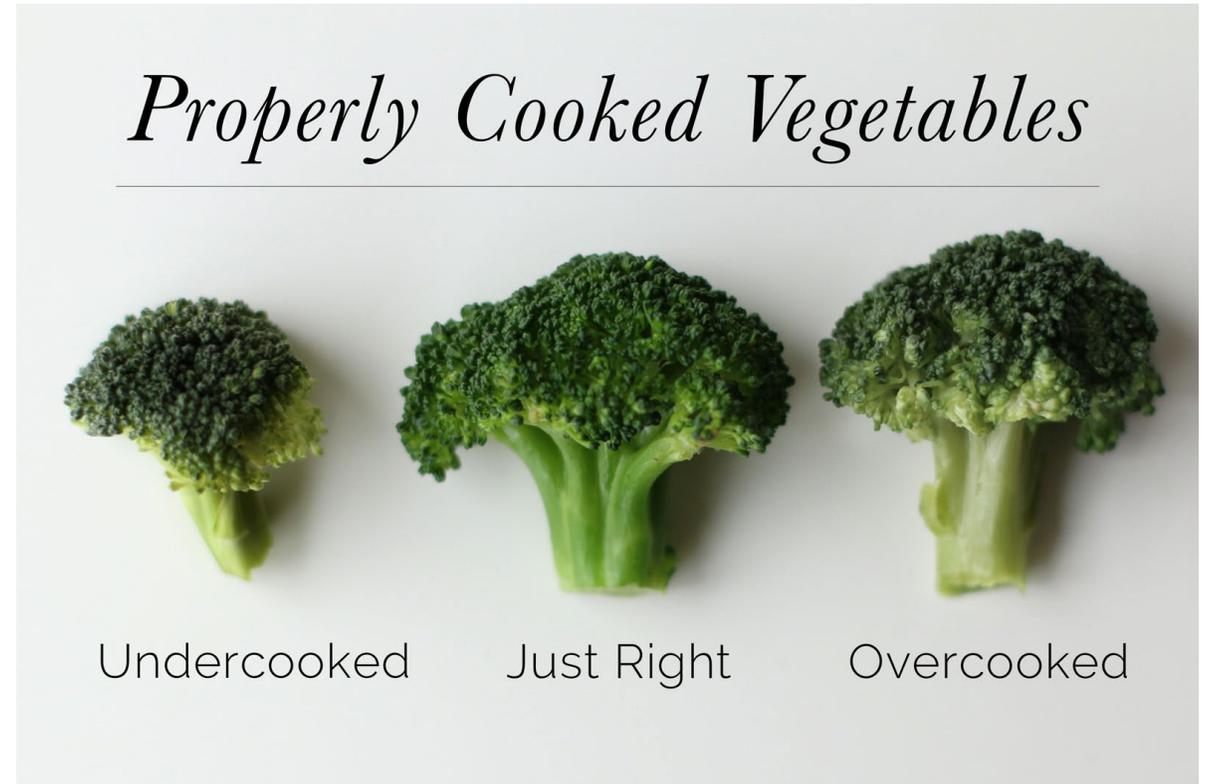


Form	Pros	Cons	Example
Fresh	Best taste and texture	Short shelf life, prep needed	Broccoli, carrots
Frozen	Year-round, less labor, less waste	Texture and flavor varies	Corn, peas, lima beans
Canned	Long shelf life, easy prep	Poor color, texture, flavor loss, nutritional considerations	Beets, beans, oranges, pineapple
Dried	Shelf-stable, convenient for bulk	Needs soaking, cooking	Dry beans, grains, lentils



# Retaining Nutrients in Vegetables

- Keep cuts large
- Use minimal water e.g. steaming > boiling
- Serve cooked product in cooking liquid
- Shorter cooking time and batch cooking
- Don't hot hold for long periods





- **Blanching** – sets color, removes bitterness, preps for freezing

- **Steaming** – light, nutrient-retaining method

- **Roasting** – deep flavor, crispy texture

- **Stir-Frying vs Sautéed**

# Blanching Vegetables

- Quick cook + quick chill = color, texture, and nutrients preserved
- Once blanched vegetables can be held cold (41 or below)
- Not just for serving, but key prep step, blanching can be used to:
  - **Pre-cook vegetables** for use in casseroles, soups, or baked dishes later
  - **Extend storage time** while maintaining color, texture, and nutrients
  - **Speed up cook time** during busy service—just reheat or finish as needed
  - **Standardize doneness** across large batches



# Blanching Vegetables

## Equipment

- Large stockpot, steam-jacketed kettle, hotel pan + serrated hotel pan
- Strainer, tongs, or spider
- Ice Bath
- Timer
- Sheet tray for drying after chilling

## Time Guidelines

Vegetables usually blanched for 30 seconds to 2 minutes depending on size and firmness

- Broccoli florets 1-1.5 min.
- Green beans 1.5 – 2 min (snap when bent, still bright)
- Carrots (sliced) 1 – 1.5 min (softens but still hold crunch)
- Kale – 1 min (reduces bitterness)

## Example dishes:

- Broccoli and Cheese Bake
- Stir-Fry (carrots and green beans)
- Veggie Pasta Salad
- Casseroles (kale, spinach)

## Tips for best results:

- **Use plenty of water so boil stay strong**
- **Cook only what fits comfortably in the cooking vessel**
- Chill to **41°F or below** within 4 hours (CCP)
- Use a **bite test**—veg should be tender but still snappy

# Steaming Vegetables

- Vegetables cooked via hot vapor = preserved flavor, texture, color and nutrients
- Great for delicate vegetables prone to breaking in water
- Easy to batch in advance and hold hot for service
- Works well with seasonal and frozen vegetables
- Simple to flavor with herbs, spices, citrus zest, or low-sodium blends.



# Steaming Vegetables

## Equipment

- Convection or compartment steamer
- Steam-jacketed kettle with perforated pan inserts
- Large stockpot with steam insert or hotel pans with foil (oven method)
- Perforated pans
- Solid hotel pans for steam tray setup or draining
- tongs

## Time Guidelines

Vary by vegetable size, cut, and equipment

- Broccoli: 3-5 min, (steam uncovered for best texture)
- Carrots, sliced: 5-7 min. (thinner slices cook faster)
- Green Beans: 3-5 min. (watch for color)
- Cauliflower: 5-6 min. (tender but not soft)

## Quick Steps for Steaming (Convection or Compartment):

1. Place vegetables in **perforated pan** (about 25 ½-cup servings per pan)
2. Steam **uncovered** to prevent sogginess
3. Cook until fork-tender and vibrant in color
4. Remove, **drain briefly** if needed, and season

## Oven Steaming Method (if no steamer):

1. Fill 4" hotel pan with 2 cups water
2. Place **perforated pan of vegetables** inside
3. Tightly **cover both pans with foil**
4. Bake at **350°F for ~20 min** (check doneness)
5. Drain & season—hold hot (135°F+) or serve immediately

# Roasting Vegetables

- Uses dry heat to cook vegetables = enhances natural sugars, produces crispy exterior and tender interior
- Deepens Flavor
- Prep head in batches
- Works well with fresh, frozen, or pre-cut
- Don't over-crowd the pans or the oven



# Roasting Vegetables

## Equipment

- Convection or conventional oven
- Full or half sheet trays
- Parchment
- Mixing bowls or large cambros for seasoning
- Tongs or gloved hands
- Mise en placed vegetables (wash, chop, peel, dry)

## Time & Temp Guidelines:

Vegetable	Temp (°F)	Time Range	Notes
Carrots (sticks)	400–425	20–25 min	Toss halfway through
Sweet potatoes	375–400	25–35 min	Great caramelization
Zucchini/squash	375–400	15–20 min	Don't overcook—retain texture
Cauliflower/broccoli	400–425	20–30 min	Crisp edges = flavor!
Root veggies (beets, parsnips)	375	30–40 min	Roast longer to soften interior

## Tips for Batch Roasting:

- **Max 2.5 lbs** of veg per full sheet pan
- Preheat oven **before loading** trays
- Don't stack pans directly on top of each other—allow airflow
- Label and hold roasted veg hot (135°F+) or cool and reheat

# Stir-Frying and Sauteing Vegetables

Both methods use direct heat and a small amount of fat to cook vegetables quickly

- Sauteing = medium-high heat, small amount of fat, food cooked in single layer, moved to ensure even cooking
- Stir-frying = high heat, fast motion, often in a wok or large skillet, more air-flow
- To stir-fry during service = batch portions and time new batch as needed (blanch ingredients if needed for even faster cooking)

## Sample Dish Ideas:

- Teriyaki stir-fry with broccoli and carrots
- Fajita-style peppers and onions
- Cabbage slaw sautéed with garlic and lime



# Stir-frying and Sauteing Vegetables

## Equipment

- Tilt skillet, wok, braiser, convection oven, or large sauté pan
- Spatulas or high-heat spoons
- Heat-safe oil
- Sheet trays, ladles as needed

## Mise en Place:

- Vegetables should be **uniform in size** (thin slices or julienne work best)
- Ingredients pre-measured and ready to go (stir-frying moves fast)
- Aromatics like garlic, onion, or ginger should be chopped ahead
- Sauce or seasoning should be pre-mixed and added near the end

## Time Guidelines:

Most vegetables cook in **5–7 minutes or less**

- Firmer vegetables (carrots, bell peppers): 5–7 min
- Softer items (zucchini, spinach): 2–4 min
- Add items in stages by cooking time

## Tips for Success:

- Heat the pan **before** adding oil
- Cook in **small batches** to avoid steaming instead of browning
- Stir or toss constantly to avoid burning
- Add aromatics (like garlic or ginger) at the start
- Add sauces and leafy greens **at the end** to preserve texture

# Cooking Proteins



## Types of Protein Used in School Foodservice:

- Ground beef, turkey, or chicken
- Chicken parts (thighs, drums, breasts)
- Pulled or shredded meats (for sandwiches, tacos)
- Plant-based alternatives: lentils, beans, tofu
- Egg-based items: bakes, frittatas
- Fish and seafood (occasionally)

# Batch Cooking Proteins

## Common Equipment for Batch Protein Cooking:

- **Oven** – Roasting chicken, turkey, or meatballs
- **Tilt skillet / Braiser** – Ground meats, taco fillings, stir-fries, stews
- **Steam-jacketed kettle** – Chili, meat sauces, soups
- **Sheet pans & hotel pans** – Baked proteins or layered dishes
- **Thermometer** – To check internal temperatures (essential!)

## Batch Cooking Considerations:

- Choose the **right method** (bake, braise, grill, stew) based on cut and use
- Always **season early and well**—proteins need flavor!
- **Hold hot** at 135°F or above until service
- Avoid overcooking—especially with lean meats like chicken breast
- Use **batch size and pan depth** that allow even cooking (no crowding)

# Protein Cooking Mise en Place

- Clean and portion protein
- Identify cooking method (bake, saute, stir-fry)
- Cut if needed
- Set-up cooking area
- Cook and serve immediately or hot hold or cool for later reheating.

Don't overcrowd

Don't move around often  
(unless stir-frying or sauteing)

Don't temp in the oven

Always have pan for cooked  
protein ready to go

## Key Food Safety Temperatures:

Protein Type	Minimum Internal Temp	Notes
Ground meat (beef, pork, turkey)	160°F	Must be checked with a thermometer
Poultry (whole or ground)	165°F	No pink, juices run clear
Fish	145°F	Opaque and flakes easily
Eggs (for casseroles, quiche)	160°F	No runny centers
Leftovers / Reheated items	165°F	Rapid reheating required



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Any Questions?