



NATIONAL PICKLE DAY

NOVEMBER 14, 2025

NATIONAL PICKLE DAY, November 14, 2025, is being celebrated by Healthy Kids Collaborative members highlighting how house-made pickles can creatively be served in kid-friendly recipes in schools. Recipes are fun, flavorful, fermented, and fit in a variety of student-driven meals-such as a Banh Mi or Cuban Sandwich Roasted Cauliflower Pickle Pizza and prominently displayed on salad bars. House-made pickles are a vehicle for classroom extension lessons, in math, science, and social studies, and connect the classroom with the cafeteria and school gardens. See HKC members serving up pickles and sharing their tested and tasted recipes.

HEALTHY
KIDS
COLLABORATIVE

MCDS PICKLES

(BULK RECIPE)

Recipe by Marin Country Day School

The Culinary Farm Program at Marin Country Day School, a private kindergarten through 8th-grade school in Northern California, nurtures students through a child-centered, hands-on edible education. Using our gardens, greenhouse, chicken coop, and outdoor oven as living classrooms, students explore and learn about growing, cooking, and enjoying healthy, sustainable food while gaining the knowledge and skills to care for themselves, their community, and the planet.

Yield: Approximately **20–22 gallons** of finished pickles

Ingredients

- **80 lbs** pickling cucumbers, thinly sliced
- **40 red onions**, halved and sliced
- **60 garlic cloves**, halved
- **1.5 gallons** of water
- **3.125 gallons** rice wine vinegar (≈12.5 quarts / 50 cups)
- **12.5 cups** granulated sugar
- **2 cups** whole black peppercorns
- **25 bunches** fresh dill, chopped
- **15 bunches** fresh thyme, leaves stripped

Preparation

1. In a large food-safe container (such as a Cambro with lid), combine the rice wine vinegar, water, sugar, dill, and thyme.
2. Stir until the sugar is fully dissolved.
3. Add the cucumbers, garlic, onions, and peppercorns. Stir gently to distribute evenly.
4. Ensure all ingredients are fully submerged in the pickling mixture.
5. If needed, use a clean plate or weight to keep vegetables below the brine surface.
6. Cover tightly and refrigerate for 48 hours to allow flavors to develop.
7. Store covered in the refrigerator for up to 7 days for the best quality and crunch.

Notes

These are **refrigerator pickles** — they must remain refrigerated at or below **40°F (4°C)**. For a stronger flavor, allow up to **72 hours** of marinating before service. Serve chilled as a side, sandwich topping, or garnish.



PICKLE PIZZA WITH GARLIC DILL CREAM SAUCE

Garlic Pickle Cream Sauce - Recipe by Garland ISD

Yield: 80 servings of 1 Tbsp

Ingredients

- **1 1/2 gallon** drained pickles, dill chips
- **2 cups** mayonnaise, light
- **2 cups** sour cream
- **2 tbsp** garlic, granulated
- **1** lemon

Preparation

1. Drain juice from dill pickle chips and reserve 2 cups of juice for later use.
2. Measure out 2 cups of mayonnaise in a large mixing bowl.
3. Measure out 2 cups of sour cream and add it to mayonnaise.
4. Using reserved pickle juice, add 3/4 cup of pickle juice to mayonnaise and sour cream mixture. Mix until thoroughly incorporated.
5. Add 2 tbsp of granulated garlic to mayonnaise mixture.
6. Squeeze 1/8 cup of lemon juice into mayonnaise mixture.
7. Place garlic dill pickle cream sauce in a squeeze bottle.
8. Drizzle cream sauce over individual slices of pickle pizza.

Serving

Serve with **Pickle Pizza**, recipe on next page



PICKLE PIZZA WITH GARLIC DILL CREAM SAUCE

Pickle Pizza - Recipe by Garland ISD

Yield: 2 lb, 13.51 oz (8 slices)

Ingredients

- **1** pizza, whole
- **1 cup** drained pickles, dill chips
- **1 tbsp** garlic pickle cream sauce per slice

Pre-Prep

1. Day before service, place parchment paper on sheet pan and place frozen pizza on sheet pan. Allow to thaw overnight in the cooler.
2. Pizzas may be thawed the same day for about 2 hours.
3. Pizza crust must be completely thawed before cooking.

Preparation

1. Preheat oven to 425°F.
2. Drain juice from dill pickle chips and reserve 2 cups of juice for later use.
3. Utilizing 1 cup of pickle chips, spread evenly over cheese pizza.
4. Bake for 7-10 minutes or until cheese is melted in the center and crust is golden brown.
5. Cut each pizza into 8 slices. Use 8-cut cutting boards.
6. Drizzle over pickle pizza.

Serving

Serve 1 slice of pizza.



PICKLED ONIONS

Recipe by Cincinnati Public Schools

Yield: 2 lb, 12 oz (25 servings of 1 oz)

Ingredients

- **12 ounces** sliced banana peppers, strained
- **2 pounds** red onions, sliced

Preparation

1. When draining banana peppers, save the juice.
2. Peel and thinly slice 2-3 large red onions. Place in a #6 pan and cover with reserved banana pepper juice. Marinate for at least 24 hours. Serve on toppings bar for BBQ sandwiches or any sandwich.

Notes: Cold Hold: 41°F. Discard if >41°F for >4 h

HOW TO PICKLE LESSONS FOR MATH AND SCIENCE



BIG MAC SALAD

Recipe by Cincinnati Public Schools

Locally grown crispy greens topped with ground beef, cheese, pickles and home made special burger sauce dressing!

Yield: 10 lb, 9.28 oz (20 servings of 1 each)

Ingredients

- **2 lb 8 oz** cooked beef crumble
- **1 tbsp** dehydrated onion flakes
- **2 tsp** sea salt
- **1 1/2 tsp** black pepper, ground
- **1 tsp** garlic powder
- **10 cups** shredded lettuce
- **10 cups** salad greens
- **1 lb 4 oz** sliced dill pickles
- **2 cups** grape or cherry tomatoes
- **10 oz** shredded cheddar cheese
- **10 oz** sliced red onion
- **3 cups** light mayonnaise
- **8** ketchup packets
- **1/3 cup** diced yellow onion
- **1/3 cup** sliced dill pickles
- **1 tsp** garlic powder
- **6** mustard packets

Pre-preparation

1. Beef can be prepped the day before.
2. Thaw beef and use scale to weigh out needed amount for recipe.

Preparation

3. Beef can be prepped the day before.
4. Thaw beef and use scale to weigh out needed amount for recipe.
5. Place beef in shallow hotel pan and add dried onion, salt, black pepper, and garlic powder. Place in 350°F oven to cook and flavor the meat. Heat for 15 minutes, until internal temp of 165°F, stir well, then cool.
6. To cool, place cooked beef in shallow pan, not more than 1–2 inches deep of beef, and place uncovered in walk-in. Once cooled below 40°F, combine to one pan and cover in cooler until time to put together salads.
7. Portion 2 ounces by weight (8 oz scoop volume) of preseasoned meat onto center of salad.
8. Mix shredded lettuce with leafy green lettuce. Portion 2 cups of the mix into 20 salad containers.
9. Drain pickles, then dice and portion 1 ounce (7 pickles) on top of lettuce, in one corner of container.
10. Add 3 tomatoes to each salad for color.
11. Portion 1/2 ounce of shredded cheddar cheese per salad (1 soufflé cup full).
12. Place 1 red onion ring on top of each salad for color.
13. Measure all dressing ingredients into a bowl: mayo, ketchup, grated onion, minced pickle, pickle juice, mustard packets, garlic powder. Mix well.
14. Portion 1 soufflé cup of dressing per salad.
15. Grate onion.
16. Mince pickles to very small pieces. Include 2 tablespoons of pickle juice.

To Serve: Offer crackers with salad.

ROASTED CAULIFLOWER PICKLE PIZZA

Recipe by Cincinnati Public Schools

Pickled Cauliflower

Yield: 4 lb, 4.152 oz (8 slices)

Ingredients

- **12 ounces** sliced banana peppers, strained
- **4 cups** fresh cauliflower florets, sliced

Preparation

1. When draining banana peppers, save the juice.
2. Place 4 cups cauliflower in a #6 pan. Cover with banana pepper juice and let marinate for at least 24 hours. Serve on toppings bar with hamburger or BBQ sandwich.

Notes: Cold Hold: 41°F. Discard if >41°F for >4 h

Roasted Buffalo Cauliflower Pickle Pizza

Yield: 1 lb, 10.109 oz (25 servings of 1 oz)

Ingredients

- **1 pizza**, Big Daddy, 16" Primo Cheese, cooked
- **1 pound** fresh cauliflower florets, sliced
- **1 cup** Franks Original Hot Sauce
- **1/4 cup** sliced dill pickles
- **1 ounce** buttermilk ranch dressing

Preparation

1. Break large pieces of cauliflower into bite-sized pieces before roasting. You can roast all the cauliflower needed for your pizzas at one time.
2. 1 1/4 cups roasted cauliflower needed for each pizza.
3. Place hot sauce in a bowl, then add hot roasted cauliflower and toss to coat.
4. Using a slotted spoon to drain some of the hot sauce, measure out 1 1/4 cup cauliflower per pizza and place on pizza. Pizza can be immediately baked or stored in fridge as prepped for batch cooking.
5. Drain well, then dice pickles and sprinkle on pizza.
6. Place diced pickles on cooked pizza after it comes out of the oven, when ready to serve.
7. Have house-made ranch in a squeeze bottle and drizzle over the top of cooked pizza when serving.

Notes: Hot Hold: 135°F. Discard if <135°F

QUESABIRRIA TACOS & SPANISH RICE, CHUCK ROAST

Recipe by San Luis Coastal USD

Queso Birria tacos: using local beef and house pickle red onions for the garnish. This has been wildly popular with students in our middle and high schools. The tangy taste of the pickled onions pairs nicely with the savory beef and cheesy taco. **Yield:** Approximately **50 servings**

Ingredients (for beef and rice preparation)

- **9 lb** cooked birria, chuck roast
- **50 servings (1/4 cup each)** Spanish rice

Preparation: Day Before

1. Cook birria beef according to recipe.
2. Prepare pickled onion according to recipe.
3. CCP: Cool to 41°F or lower within 4 hours.
4. CCP: Cool to 70°F within 2 hours and from 70°F to 41°F or lower within an additional 4 hours.
5. CCP: Refrigerate until service at 41°F or below.

Service Day: Beef

6. Remove beef from fridge. Remove fat cap from cooking pan. Remove beef from pan and place on a sheet pan. Using gloved hands, lightly shred the beef and remove large pieces of fat. Once beef is slightly shredded, place back into the beef broth in the original pan. Cover with foil and heat to 165°F for at least 15 seconds.
7. CCP: Heat to 165°F or higher for at least 15 seconds.

Service Day: Rice

8. Prepare Spanish rice according to recipe. Heat to 135°F for 15 seconds.
9. Place tortillas in warmer to soften and heat.
10. CCP: Heat to 135°F or higher.

Ingredients (to assemble tacos)

- **6 lb + 12 1/4** tortillas, white whole wheat 6"
- **15/8 lb** cheddar cheese, yellow, reduced fat, shredded
- **1 bunch** cilantro
- **3 cups + 2 (1 tbsp servings)** pickled red onion
- **9 lb** cooked birria, chuck roast
- **50 servings (1/4 cup each)** Spanish rice

Assemble tacos

1. Lay down half of all tortillas.
2. On top of each tortilla, spread 1/2 oz of cheese.
3. Place another tortilla on top of the cheese-covered tortilla.
4. Place 3 oz of warm braised birria beef on top of each stack of tortillas. If beef is wet/juicy, that is okay.
5. Fold the double stack of tortillas in half, forming a double-layered taco. Use warm beef fat and broth to stick the tortilla together.
6. Proceed in the same manner until all tacos are filled and folded.
7. Lay them on a sheet pan slightly shingled.
8. Bake at 400°F until tortillas are browned, cheese is melted, and internal temperature is above 165°F, approximately 12–16 minutes.
9. Use a spatula to tray each taco into a 5 lb tray. Using a #16 disher (1/4 c. scoop), portion 1/4 cup Spanish rice on each tray.
10. Hold hot until service above 135°F.
11. Garnish with 1 tbsp pickled red onion and 1 tbsp minced cilantro.
12. Optional: serve with julienned radish, diced onion, a cup of broth, and/or lime wedge.
13. CCP: Heat tortillas to 155°F for at least 15 seconds.
14. CCP: Heat pickled red onion to 165°F for at least 15 seconds.



BANH MI

Recipe by Chef Ann Foundation Yield: **96 servings** - Serving = 1 Sandwich

Two USDA Child Nutrition-compliant versions of a Cuban sandwich designed for K-12 school lunch programs. Both meet National School Lunch Program (NSLP) meal pattern requirements.

Ingredients

- **12 oz** lemongrass
- **5 oz** garlic, whole peeled
- **20 oz** red onion (1 lb 4 3/4 oz)
- **1 1/2 cup** oil, olive/canola blend
- **3/4 cup** fish sauce
- **3/4 cup** oyster sauce
- **3/4 cup** hoisin sauce
- **12 tbsp** light brown sugar
- **12 tbsp** lime juice
- **2 tbsp** crushed red pepper
- **432 oz** chicken thigh, fresh (27 lb)
- **127 oz** cucumber (7 lb 15 oz)
- **16 oz** cilantro (1 lb)
- **10 1/2 oz** jalapeno
- **20 oz** granulated cane sugar (1 pint + 4 tbsp)
- **3 cup** rice vinegar
- **8 tbsp** toasted sesame oil
- **130 oz** carrot (8 lb 2 1/3 oz)
- **94 1/3 oz** daikon radish (5 lb 14 1/3 oz)
- **32** whole wheat baguette, 12/16 oz each
- **23 1/4 oz** mayonnaise (1 lb 7 1/4 oz)

Pre-Preparation

1. Prep the chicken:
 - Trim the lemongrass and peel the garlic and red onion.
 - To make the marinade, add olive-canola oil, fish sauce, oyster sauce, hoisin sauce, brown sugar, lime juice, red pepper flakes, lemongrass, garlic, and red onion to a food processor and process until chopped and combined.
 - In a container, mix the marinade and chicken thighs until well combined.
 - Marinate in a sealed container in refrigerator for at least 4 hours or overnight.
2. Cut cucumbers into 1/4" sticks.
3. Chop cilantro.
4. Slice jalapenos into 1/4" slices.
5. Preheat oven to 425 degrees F.



Preparation

1. Cook the chicken:
 - Prepare full size sheet pans with metal rack and spray with pan spray.
 - Arrange chicken pieces onto the rack in a single layer, about 20–24 per pan.
 - Cook chicken at 425°F for 25–30 minutes or until internal temperature reaches 165°F.
 - Once cooked, slice chicken into 1/4 inch strips weighing 3 oz each.
2. Prepare the pickled carrots and daikon:
 - In a bowl, dissolve sugar into rice vinegar and sesame oil.
 - Peel carrots and daikon and cut into 1/4" sticks.
 - Add the carrot and daikon sticks to the vinegar-oil mixture and let pickle for at least 1 hour, stirring occasionally.
3. Assemble sandwiches:
 - Cut baguettes (1 baguette = 9 oz) into thirds to create 3 oz rolls.
 - Spread 1/2 Tbsp of mayonnaise onto inside of baguette rolls.
 - Place pickled veggies inside, then cucumber sticks.
 - Place 3 oz of sliced chicken on top and finish with cilantro and jalapeno slices.

CUBAN SANDWICH

(TRADITIONAL WITH PORK)

Serving Suggestion: serve with baked plantain chips and a fruit cup for a complete meal.
Optional garnish: sliced tomato or lettuce.

Recipe by New York City Public Schools

Yield: 50 servings - Serving = 1 sandwich (approx. 5.5 oz each)

Ingredients

- **5 lb 8 oz** whole-grain hoagie rolls (6-inch, split)
- **5 lb 8 oz** roasted pork loin, sliced thin
- **3 lb 2 oz** deli ham, reduced sodium, lean, 96% fat-free
- **3 lb 2 oz** Swiss cheese, sliced, reduced sodium
- **2 lb** dill pickle slices
- **1 1/2 cups** yellow mustard
- **As needed** pan spray or butter-flavored oil

Preparation

1. Preheat oven or sandwich press to 375°F (convection 350°F).
2. Split rolls horizontally.
3. Assemble sandwiches in this order: mustard, Swiss cheese, roasted pork, ham, pickles, top roll.
4. Press or bake: spray pans, place sandwiches, bake 10–12 minutes until internal temperature reaches $\geq 140^{\circ}\text{F}$ and cheese melts.
5. Serve hot.



CUBAN SANDWICH

(PORK-FREE VERSION)

Recipe by New York City Public Schools

Yield: 50 servings - Serving = 1 sandwich (approx. 5.5 oz each)

Ingredients

- **5 lb 8 oz** whole-grain hoagie rolls (6-inch, split)
- **5 lb 8 oz** low-sodium roasted turkey breast, sliced thin
- **3 lb 2 oz** Swiss cheese, sliced, reduced sodium
- **2 lb** dill pickle slices
- **1 1/2 cups** yellow mustard
- **As needed** pan spray or butter-flavored oil

Preparation

1. Preheat oven or sandwich press to 375°F (convection 350°F).
2. Split rolls horizontally.
3. Assemble sandwiches in this order: mustard, Swiss cheese, turkey, pickles, top roll.
4. Press or bake 10–12 minutes until cheese melts and internal temperature reaches $\geq 140^{\circ}\text{F}$.
5. Serve hot.

SAUSAGE & CHEESE BENTO

Serving Suggestion: serve with baked plantain chips and a fruit cup for a complete meal.
Optional garnish: sliced tomato or lettuce.

DeSoto County School District

Serving Size = 1 Bento box

Ingredients

- **1 link (2 oz)** sausage link, split
- **4 slices** pickle dill slices
- **1 stick** cheese string cheddar
- **1 packet** BBQ sauce PC
- **1 bag** Cracker Crunch n' Crave
- **¼ cup** raisins or
½ cup whole fruit (not both)
- **Pan spray** (as needed)

Preparation

1. One link (2 oz) of sausage link, split
 - Lay sausages in a single layer on a lined sheet pan.
 - If frozen, slack out the day before and place in cooler to thaw.
 - Spray with pan spray and bake at 350°F for 10–15 minutes or until internal temperature reaches 165°F.
 - Keep in warmer until service.
 - Control measures: hold >135°F; check temperature every 30 min.
2. Four slices of pickle dill slices
One stick of cheese string cheddar
One packet of BBQ sauce PC
One bag of Cracker Crunch n' Crave
 - Place pickle, Crunch & Crave, BBQ PC, and cheese in the 2# boat.
 - Add ¼ cup raisins or ½ cup whole fruit (not both) to make fully reimbursable.
 - Hold in cooler and add sausage (1 whole split link, 2 oz) when on the line.
 - Portion 1 bento box for serving.
 - Control measures: refrigerate at 41°F or lower until service. Quick chill to <70°F within 2 hours. Cover, label, and date leftovers; store at <41°F.

QUICK PICKLED MUSHROOMS

Recipe adapted from Humboldt Unified School District, AZ

This pickled mushroom recipe is packed with flavor, featuring a fragrant mix of garlic, thyme, bay leaves, parsley, and a hint of red pepper in a vinegar marinade. These mushrooms make an excellent side dish or an ingredient for a main dish.

Yield: 2 lb, 12 oz (25 servings of 1 oz)

Ingredients

- **6 oz** white mushrooms
- **4** cloves garlic
- **2** bay leaves
- **3/4 tsp** salt
- **1/2 tsp** cayenne pepper
- **1 cup** water
- **1/2 cup** red wine vinegar
- **3/4 tsp** Italian seasoning
- **1 1/2 tsp** fresh parsley
- **1/4 cup** chopped red onion
- **2 1/3 tbsp** fresh thyme
- **1/2 cup** white wine vinegar
- **1/8 tsp** black pepper
- **2 tbsp** sugar

Preparation

1. Wash mushrooms under cold running water. Quarter mushrooms into bite-sized pieces and set aside.
2. Fill a deep, medium-sized saucepan with 4–5 cups of water. Add 1 clove smashed garlic, 6 tsp freshly chopped thyme sprigs, 1 bay leaf, and 1/4 cup of each vinegar. Bring to a rapid simmer.
3. Add 1/2 tsp salt and mushrooms to the water and return to a gentle simmer. Cover, reducing heat as needed to maintain a gentle simmer until mushrooms are tender, about 3–5 minutes. Remove from heat and drain mushrooms well.
4. While the mushrooms are poaching, prepare the marinade. In a separate pot, add the remaining minced garlic, remaining bay leaf, Italian seasoning, 1/4 tsp salt, black pepper, cayenne pepper, 1 tsp freshly chopped thyme, freshly chopped parsley, sugar, and 1 cup water. Whisk to combine.
5. Bring the marinade to a boil until the salt and sugar dissolve. Once dissolved, add the remaining vinegar, remove from heat, and set aside.
6. While mushrooms are still warm, add them along with the chopped red onion and the marinade to a large non-reactive (non-metal) bowl. Gently stir to coat. Ensure that all mushrooms are covered with the marinade.
7. Taste the marinade and adjust seasoning if desired. Cover tightly with plastic wrap. Refrigerate and allow to marinate for at least 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. For best flavor, marinate at least 8 hours.

Notes: Recommend serving pickled mushrooms within 1 day of cooking.