

Climate Resilient Lunch Scheme Honoring Local Foods that Grow in Bio-Region

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By Krishna Mckenzie



An Authentic Example (Solitude Farm Cafe)

Solitude Farm Cafe Auroville, offers daily thalis, based entirely on local foods, primarily grown at the farm.

A huge variety of spinaches, green papaya, plantain, banana stem, banana flower, yams, sweet potatoes, tapioca, gourds, pumpkins, a wide diversity of beans, ladies finger, radish, local herbs like thoothuvalai and mudakathan (balloon vine) etc. There are over 20 variety of fruit trees, flowers, roots, grains, oil seeds, leaves - so far we have counted over 200 plants we regularly eat throughout the year. These foods are the colours of a cultural nutritional heritage and simply by eating them they represent the reclamation of wellbeing on all levels of our society.

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In India people are still familiar with local foods because the knowledge of how to use them has been passed down from generation to generation.

If we can do this, you can too!



Why Local food is the solution

What foods are we feeding our children?

Children are growing up disconnected from where the food they eat comes from. This is reflected on every level of our lives; ecological, climatic, nutritional, medicinal, social, economic and cultural.

The industrialisation of agriculture is responsible for the erosion of well being and the ecological crisis we face in the world today.

We no longer know where the food we eat is grown, who grows it, if chemicals are used to grow it, how it is processed, stored, packed, transported etc. We are disconnected from this most essential aspect of our existence, and the foods we eat reflect this loss of relationship with Mother Nature.

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The Characteristics of Local Food

- Abundance
- No Ecological Cost // Climate resilience
- High Medicinal and Nutritional Values
- Diversity



Stakeholders | Ecological & Community Impact

Small land holding farms/farmers & Women/cooks

Technological solutions to nutrition leads us away from traditional knowledge. The custodians of our cultural heritage are the small land holders, often women who know the value of traditional spinaches and forgotten foods. By valuing local foods we value this intergenerational knowledge allowing local farmers and women workers to reclaim a livelihood that emerges from their culture.















Abundance!
Morning Harvest at
Solitude Farm.

Current mid-day meal scheme and proposed solution

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The current Mid-Day meal revolves around food with extensive use of Palmolein oil, which is the leading cause of global deforestation and potatoes which also don't grow here. There is very little spinach which are rich in nutrition and are found extensively in this culture and there is rice for every meal which again sustains an industrialised agriculture heavily dependant on chemicals and extensive irrigation. So we see this exploration of local food is not only about nutrition and the well being of the children's physical health but also about their ecological future well being.

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The Menu we propose is not much different from the food we are already serving at Solitude cafe. It is largely based on millets and we have already been offering this food to schools in Auroville.

Here is a two week menu example.

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Menu week 1

Monday:

Varagu Millet, Drumstick Spinach curry, boiled Tapioca, Mango pickle

Tuesday:

Red Rice, Sundakkai sambar, Green Papaya poriyal, Mango pickle

Wednesday:

Ragi & Mongina Spinach Adai, Green chutney made with Rosella and Mudakathan, Tattaipayaru (cow pea) sundal, Plantain poriyal

Thursday:

Tennai Millet, Kara kuzhambu (with Sundakkai, Green Papaya, Tapioca), Cluster Beans with Coconut

Friday:

Spinach Samai Millet sadham, Pumpkin Peanut poriyal, Tapioca chips



Menu Week 2

Monday:

Mudakathan Millet dosa, sambar with seasonal vegetables, Bottle Gourd poriyal, Green Chutney (with Rosella and Mudakathan)

Tuesday:

Varagu, Thoothuvalai rasam, Sundakkai poriyal

Wednesday:

Tamarind Tennai Millet, Tapioca with Kori Keerai

Thursday:

Ragi Kalli with Peanut Chutney, Ladies Finger poriyal

Friday:

Banana Stem kuthu with Varagu Millet, Local Spinach poriyal

All the meals should come with **seasonal fruits** - Papaya, Banana, Custard Apple, Ramphal, Jackfruit, Sapota, Guava, Amla etc



An Investment Into Our Nutritional Heritage & Our Future

- Diversity of ingredients
- Cooks per children ratio
- Training/education for cooks
- Equipped kitchen space
- Farm to Kitchen to School logistics
- Outreach to schools
- Documentation | children health, emotional & social wellbeing, academic progress within the school



Get in touch with us to make the change!

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Get inspired at solitude.farm

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