

# Think Like an Agricultural & Culinary Entrepreneur

## Lesson Plan: Level 2 & 3 Culinary Lesson

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### **Purpose:**

Students will explore the connections between agriculture, culinary arts, and entrepreneurship by designing a **sustainable, locally sourced restaurant concept and menu**. They will apply business thinking, agricultural literacy, and culinary creativity to develop a product that could thrive in today's food service industry.



### **Background / Agricultural Connections:**

Agriculture is the foundation of the culinary industry—every ingredient originates from a farm, ranch, or fishery. Understanding this connection helps culinary students appreciate supply chains, seasonal sourcing, sustainability, and cost management. Students will learn how **farm-to-table practices, seasonal menu planning, and local sourcing** not only improve food quality but also strengthen local economies and reduce environmental impacts. Entrepreneurial thinking encourages them to innovate—creating menus and business models that support both profitability and sustainability.



**Grade Levels:** 11-12 (ProStart, Culinary Arts Level 2/3, Agricultural Science, or Entrepreneurship students)



**Lesson Length:** 5–7 class periods (45–60 minutes each)

- Day 1–2: Introduction to agricultural entrepreneurship and concept planning
- Day 3–4: Menu development and recipe costing
- Day 5–6: Business pitch and presentation prep
- Day 7: Student presentations and reflection



**Learning Objectives:** Students will be able to:

1. Define **agricultural entrepreneurship** and explain its importance in the culinary industry.
2. Identify and evaluate **locally sourced ingredients** available in their region.
3. Design a **sustainable restaurant concept and menu** that reflects agricultural and culinary connections.
4. Develop **menu pricing and cost analysis** using local ingredient data.
5. Present a **business pitch** that includes menu items, target market, sourcing plan, and sustainability goals.



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## Materials and Equipment Needed:

- Computers or tablets with internet access
- Poster board or digital presentation tools (Google Slides, Canva, etc.)
- Ingredient sourcing lists from local farms or distributors (Bear Butte Gardens, etc)
- Menu templates or graphic organizers
- Costing worksheets
- Sample menus for inspiration
- Calculators or spreadsheet software



## Teacher Preparation:

- Gather examples of local farms, ranches, greenhouses, and food producers.
- Prepare a brief presentation on **agricultural entrepreneurship** (e.g., farmers who started value-added businesses, chef-farm collaborations, farm-to-table restaurants).
- Print or share digital copies of **menu planning and costing templates**.
- Optional: Invite a local farmer or chef to speak about sourcing and entrepreneurship.



## Activities and Procedures

### Day 1: Introduction

- Hook: Discuss where ingredients come from—trace one menu item “from farm to fork.”
- Mini lesson: What is an **agricultural entrepreneur**?
  - Examples: Farm-branded foods, small-batch producers, chef-owned farm restaurants.
- Brainstorm: “What kind of restaurant could connect local farms to the community?”

### Day 2: Concept Development

- Students form teams (2–4 students).
- Each team chooses a **restaurant concept** (e.g., local grill, farm café, sustainable bakery).
- Research **local agricultural products** (seasonal produce, meats, dairy, grains).
- Complete a “Local Sourcing Map” of nearby farms or suppliers.

### Day 3–4: Menu Creation and Costing

- Students create a **3–5 item menu** using at least 50% locally sourced ingredients.
- Each item should include:
  - Dish name and description
  - Ingredient list with sourcing notes
  - Cost per serving and price
- Teach menu pricing (food cost %, profit margins).
- Emphasize sustainability, seasonality, and food waste reduction.

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## Day 5–6: Business Pitch Development

- Students create a **business proposal presentation** including:
  - Restaurant concept and mission
  - Menu design
  - Local sourcing and sustainability plan
  - Target market and marketing idea
  - Visuals (logo, menu mock-up, farm map)
- Rehearse short oral pitches (3–5 minutes).

## Day 7: Presentations and Reflection

- Each group presents their entrepreneurial concept and menu.
- Peer and teacher feedback using a rubric (creativity, feasibility, agricultural connection, presentation).
- Reflection discussion: “How do agriculture and entrepreneurship drive innovation in the food industry?”



## Assessment

- **Menu Project Rubric (100 points total)**
  - Concept originality & sustainability: 20 pts
  - Local sourcing & agricultural connection: 20 pts
  - Menu design & creativity: 20 pts
  - Costing accuracy & pricing: 20 pts
  - Presentation & professionalism: 20 pts



## References / Resources

- National Restaurant Association: *ProStart Foundations of Restaurant Management & Culinary Arts Level 2*
- USDA Farm to School Program: [The Patrick Leahy Farm to School Program | Food and Nutrition Service](#)
- Local Extension Office / State Department of Agriculture websites
- Menu Pricing Worksheets (ProStart Level 2, Chapter on Costing)
- “On Baking” and “Culinary Essentials” textbooks for menu item inspiration
- Farm-to-Table Movement Articles and Local Food Directories