

# MEDIA KIT



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## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Chef Ann Foundation Launches School Food Institute to Scale up Scratch Cooking**

*New online institute provides a fresh approach to education through operational how-to and support for foodservice professionals to create healthier school menus across the U.S.*

**BOULDER, CO – Sept. 6, 2017 – [Chef Ann Foundation](#)** (CAF) announces today the launch of its [School Food Institute](#) (SFI), an online video course educational series that teaches school foodservice professionals and childhood nutrition advocates across the U.S how to transition to a scratch-cooking program. The program was created to increase accessibility to healthier school food by providing the in-depth training, operational skills and strategic vision necessary to make sustainable improvements in school food programs.

School Food Institute is leveraging technology and video to swiftly scale up a return to scratch cooking. While there are other online courses for school nutrition professionals, none solely focus on the importance of fresh ingredients and real cooking, or offer “Office Hours” with Chef Ann Cooper, founder of Chef Ann Foundation and national school food activist.

“We had to do this,” said Mara Fleishman, chief executive officer for Chef Ann Foundation. “Since we haven’t figured out how to clone Chef Ann Cooper, we chose a functional and interactive way to still reach all districts with a blueprint for positive change and access to Ann for support.”

School Food Institute’s coursework kicks off on Monday, Oct. 16 with eight professional development courses focused on key areas of school food operations, such as procurement, marketing and lunchroom education, human resources, finance, and recipe and menu development. Participants may choose to enroll in the entire series or individual courses best suited for their needs. All courses are in alignment with USDA Professional Standards’ learning

objectives allowing course completion to satisfy annual training requirements for foodservice professionals.

SFI's online video courses are taught by [Chef Ann Cooper](#), a leader in the field of school food reform and founder of CAF. Chef Ann has served for the past nine years as the Director of Food Services for Boulder Valley School District, overseeing all meals for 50+ public schools, and is the author of *Bitter Harvest* and *Lunch Lessons: Changing The Way We Feed Our Children*.

Registered participants in the SFI courses can directly engage with Chef Ann and her teaching assistant through SFI virtual office hours. This forum provides an interactive platform for enrollees to ask questions on the coursework and receive ongoing support to encourage positive food change within schools.

SFI participating students may choose to become SFI Certified. Certification is available at three levels: Gold, completion of all eight courses; Silver, completion of the School Food 101 and four additional courses of choice; and Bronze, completion of School Food 101 and two additional courses of choice. This is the first national certificate on school food improvement through scratch-cook operations.

“We decided to meet school nutrition officials and school food activists where they work and live through the power of video and online education,” said Cooper. “I try to offer support to any school food service operator that reaches out to me but it’s hard to keep up, and I needed a more efficient process. I want to see this positive change happen in every school in America in my lifetime.”

The School Food Institute was made possible, in part, by a grant from the Colorado Health Foundation. This generous support will allow all Colorado school foodservice professionals to enroll in SFI coursework at no cost.

For more detailed information about the program and coursework visit [schoolfoodinstitute.org](http://schoolfoodinstitute.org).

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## About The Chef Ann Foundation

[The Chef Ann Foundation](#) was founded in 2009 by [Ann Cooper](#), an internationally recognized author, chef, educator, public speaker, and advocate of healthy food for all children. To-date the Foundation has reached over 2.8 million children across the country and seeks to provide tools that help schools serve children healthy and delicious scratch-cooked meals made with fresh, whole food. As a 501(c) 3 nonprofit organization, the Chef Ann Foundation is grateful to their generous [supporters](#) and friends who help them carry out this mission.



## About The Colorado Health Foundation

The Colorado Health Foundation is bringing health in reach for all Coloradans by engaging closely with communities across the state through investing, policy and advocacy, learning and capacity building. For more information, please visit [www.coloradohealth.org](http://www.coloradohealth.org).

# BACKGROUND

## Chef Ann Foundation's School Food Institute

How to swiftly scale up positive change and more nutritious food for all school districts in the U.S.? This was the question the [Chef Ann Foundation](#) asked in its effort to make healthier school food more accessible to all students. The answer is the new [School Food Institute](#) (SFI), made possible, in part, by a major grant from the nonprofit Colorado Health Foundation.



School Food Institute is promoting good, old-fashioned scratch-cooking in schools by embracing modern technology and dynamic video production to reach school nutrition officials and advocates across the U.S. SFI's engaging video lecture courses are taught by Chef Ann Cooper to satisfy professional development and continuing education needs of school foodservice operators across the country. These video-based online courses leverage [Chef Ann Cooper's](#) extensive expertise



in leading school food programs through a transition to serving whole, fresh, healthy foods to kids. The coursework is also open to childhood nutrition advocates, parents, administrators, teachers – anyone who wants to be an informed advocate of school food change that ends with fresh, healthy food on lunch trays across the country. [Cooper](#), aka 'The Renegade Lunch Lady,' is a leader in the field of school food reform and founder of the Chef Ann Foundation (CAF). As the Director of Food Services for Boulder Valley School District, overseeing all meals for 50+ public schools – over 13,000 meals a day – for the past eight years, she knows firsthand what it means to transform school food programs. Cooper is also the author of *Bitter Harvest* and *Lunch Lessons: Changing The Way We Feed Our Children*.

SFI's online coursework consists of eight professional development courses focused on key areas of school food operations, such as procurement, marketing and lunchroom education, human resources, finance, and recipe and menu development. Participants can enroll in all eight courses or in individual courses that focus on the areas of school meal operations they are interested in and/or seeking improvement. All coursework will be taught from the lens of scratch-cook operations.

Participants will have the opportunity to earn a certificate, the only national certificate which recognizes the transition to scratch-cook operations, at three different levels:

- Gold – Complete all 8 courses
- Silver – Complete School Food 101 and four additional courses of choice
- Bronze – Complete School Food 101 and two additional courses of choice

## Office Hours with Chef Ann and Other Points of Distinction

- SFI coursework takes on school food reform by approaching school food education through the lens of whole, fresh scratch-cooking, providing continuing education unlike any other existing online learning/continuing education programs for school foodservice professionals.
- Many have asked, how do we accomplish this in every school district without cloning Chef Ann? SFI provides direct access to Chef Ann Cooper through virtual office hours twice per month. This forum allows participants to ask direct questions about the coursework to Chef Ann Cooper and SFI's teaching assistant.
- SFI provides dynamic, engaging content including video lectures, supplemental resources linked to lectures, assignments and activities applicable to real school meal programs, networking among participants and the ability to create custom cohorts for groups who wish to take online training together.

## Mission Statement

The School Food Institute is an educational program developed by the Chef Ann Foundation to give school foodservice professionals and childhood nutrition advocates the in-depth training, operational skills and strategic vision necessary to make school food fresh, healthy and sustainable.

## FAQ

- **When does enrollment begin? When does the first course begin?**
  - Enrollment begins Sept. 6, 2017 and the first course term begins Oct. 15, 2017
- **How are the courses accredited?**
  - All courses will be aligned to USDA Professional Standards learning objectives so that completion of the courses will satisfy annual training requirements for foodservice professionals.
- **What will each course curriculum involve?**
  - A pre-quiz to determine baseline knowledge
  - Video lectures taught by Chef Ann Cooper and guest lecturers
  - 1-2 applied assignments or learning activities with feedback from the instructor
  - 2-3 optional discussion questions to support peer learning
  - Supplemental readings and resources
  - A post-course quiz to determine knowledge gained from the course

## Multimedia Resources:

View the [trailer for the School Food Institute here.](#)

View a sample of the [School Food 101 course here.](#)

View the SFI Mission, Vision and Strategic planning [video here.](#)

View a selection of [scratch cooking photos here.](#)

# CURRICULUM OUTLINE

## **COURSE 1: SCHOOL FOOD 101**

1. Course introduction (2 minutes)
2. The Health of America's Children (17 minutes)
3. History of School Food (16 minutes)
4. Guidelines and Regulations (20 minutes)
5. Mission, Vision, and Wellness Policy (15 minutes)
6. School Lunch Operational Models (15 minutes)
7. School Food Dollars and Cents (15 minutes)
8. Developing a Workforce that can Sustain a Scratch-Cook Model (15 minutes)
9. Recipes and Menu Development (15 minutes)
10. Procurement (15 minutes)
11. Salad Bars in Schools (15 minutes)
12. Marketing and Education of Your Program (15 minutes)
13. School Food and Social Justice (15 minutes)

**Total – 175 minutes**

## **COURSE 2: MISSION, VISION AND STRATEGIC PLANNING**

1. Creating a Vision and Mission
2. BVSD's Story of Developing, Marketing and Implementing the School Wellness Policy
3. Interview with Mara and Leslie
4. Strategic Planning

## **COURSE 3: OPERATIONAL MODELS**

### **Operational Models**

1. Food preparation models
2. Operational models
3. Production models
4. Service models
5. Equipment
6. Interview – Foodservice director on transition to scratch-cooking

### **School Food Labor**

1. Challenges in school food labor
2. Labor in a scratch-cook environment
3. Creating a culture of culinary professionalism
4. Interview – HR person
5. Professional development
6. Organizational Structure

## **COURSE 4: SCHOOL FOOD FINANCE**

1. School Food Expenses
2. School Food Revenues
3. Budget Tracking tools (demos)

4. Writing a Budget
5. Multi-year Profit and Loss

#### **COURSE 5: RECIPES AND MENU DEVELOPMENT**

1. Overview
2. Recipe Development 1
3. Recipe Development 2
4. USDA Recipe Guidelines
5. Cycle Menus
6. Cycle Planning
7. Menu Costs or Pricing
8. Forecasting Volume
9. Menu Cycle Development

#### **COURSE 6: PROCUREMENT**

1. Fresh Food Procurement
2. USDA Foods
3. Vendor Relationships
4. Local and Regional Procurement
5. Procuring Freshly “Prepared” Foods
6. Responsible Production (Meat and Poultry)

#### **COURSE 7: SALAD BARS IN SCHOOLS**

1. Overview
2. Training
3. Salad Bar Procurement
4. Assessment and Planning
5. Operations
6. Marketing and Education

#### **COURSE 8: MARKETING AND EDUCATION**

1. Overview
2. Marketing Your Program
3. Branding Your Program
4. District Communication
5. Social Media Platforms
6. Lunchroom Education 1 (Rainbow Days, Chef Demos, Tastings, Art Contents)
7. Lunchroom Education 2 (Jr. Chef Competitions, Harvest Festivals, etc.)
8. Funding and Partnerships (including Volunteers and Interns)

# SPOKESPERSON BIOS

## **Chef Ann Cooper**

### **President and Founder, Chef Ann Foundation**



Chef Ann Cooper is a celebrated author, chef, educator and enduring advocate for better food for all children. A graduate of the Culinary Institute of America, Ann has been a chef for more than 30 years, over 15 of those in school food programs. She currently serves as the director of nutrition services for the Boulder Valley School District. Known as the Renegade Lunch Lady, Ann has been honored by The National Resources Defense Council, selected as a Kellogg Food and Society Policy Fellow, and awarded an honorary doctorate from SUNY Cobleskill for her work on sustainable agriculture. In 2009, Ann founded the nonprofit [Chef Ann Foundation](#) to focus on solutions to the school food crisis. CAF's pivotal project is [The Lunch Box](#) – a web portal that provides free and accessible tools, recipes and resources to support schools transitioning to scratch-cooked meals made with whole, healthy food.

## **Mara Fleishman**

### **Chief Executive Officer, Chef Ann Foundation**



After becoming involved in school food as a concerned parent, Mara Fleishman served on the CAF board of directors from the very beginning, then transitioned to Executive Director in March of 2013. She is now the Chief Executive Officer of the Foundation. In this role, Mara supervises all CAF staff and is responsible for program development and oversight, national partnerships, strategic planning, and organizational growth. Mara has nearly 20 years of experience working in natural products including 12 years with Whole Foods Market where she served most recently as National Director of Partnerships. She is dedicated to educating people regarding the benefits of healthy food, and has spoken about sustainable business practices on

panels at Yale University and at the University of Colorado's Leeds School of Business where she was a guest lecturer. In addition to CAF, she has held board seats at The Growe Foundation, the Kitchen Community, and Naturally Boulder. Mara's background in marketing and partnerships, combined with her expertise in natural and organic food and her advocacy efforts to improve school food, uniquely position her to lead CAF through its growth and expansion in the coming years.

## PARTNERS + SPONSORS

- Colorado Health Foundation: <http://www.coloradohealth.org/>

## CONTRIBUTING EXPERTS

- **Christina Cobell:** Senior Technical Advisor, USDA Farm to School, USDA Office of Community Food Systems
- **Samantha Cowens-Gasbarro:** Chef and Nutrition Coordinator, Windham Raymond School District
- **Erin Hysom:** Program Analyst, USDA Farm to School, USDA Office of Community Food Systems
- **Andrea Northup:** Farm to School Regional Lead, USDA Office of Community Food Systems
- **Robyn O'Brien:** Food Allergy Expert
- **Jeanne Riley:** School Nutrition Director, Windham Raymond School District and President, Maine School Nutrition Association

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