



EAT-IN IDEAS

With your planning group, discuss ideas for the kind of Eat-In you can organize. Spend some time thinking about your city or town, its values and what makes it unique, and then think about the audiences you want to attend (or at least to hear about) your Eat-In: parents, teachers, school board members, clergy, cafeteria workers, politicians, the press, etc. What will make them listen? Why should they come to your Eat-In? What will make your Eat-In accessible, meaningful—even irresistible?

Whether you're aiming for a big or small Eat-In, you might consider adopting some of these ideas:

- **Have your Eat-In on the grounds of a public school.** Get parents and teachers and the school's PTA to help you plan it, and invite the students to cook a meal with their families and come together on Sept. 7 to show what real food can be.
- **Organize several Eat-Ins.** If you're unable to organize a large Eat-In, organize several smaller ones in neighborhoods or at schools throughout your town. Each Eat-In can be simple—like low-key block parties.
- **Choose a creative location.** If you're having trouble finding a location—or securing a permit—for your Eat-In, be creative. Have it on a farm or in a community center, make it a block party or decentralize it and have Eat-Ins on supporters' front lawns or in parking spaces downtown while you feed the meter.
- **Teamwork.** Get people cooking together by dividing them up into teams. You may find that local farms or groceries are happy to donate ingredients. To find them, use the Eat Well Guide, <http://eatwellguide.org>. Organizing cooking teams is a great way to get kids involved, too.
- **Honor Labor Day.** The National Eat-In is taking place on Labor Day because it's a day that's already set aside for sitting down to eat together. Contact teachers' unions and labor councils to find out if there's a way to collaborate, or think up a creative way to honor workers at your Eat-In.
- **Call your legislators.** During the Eat-In, ask everyone to take out his or her cell phone and call the office of your legislators in Congress. Keep calling until everyone who's there—kids, especially—has left a message telling your representative that real food is a priority in your district.



- **Sign the petition and get contact information.** Ask participants to sign the *Time for Lunch* petition, and hand out copies for them to take home and to their workplace. Get the name, email address and phone number of each person attending.
- **Speak to the crowd.** Invite parents, students, farmers, school board members or politicians to speak to the crowd before you start eating. Even better: have them sit down at the table and start conversations about the importance of real food in schools with the people sitting near them. Or: hand out flyers (download them at Sustainable Table's web site, <http://www.sustainabletable.org/spread/handouts>) with information about rBGH, factory farming, food safety and more. Help everyone get educated on the issues.
- **Tell the story.** At your Eat-In, tell the story of how this group of people came together for a meal in support of real food in schools. The media will pick up on it, and it will show people how easy and fun it is to join the food movement.

For more ideas, check out our campaign web site: <http://www.slowfoodusa.org/timeforlunch>. And to see pictures of past Eat-Ins, check out <http://eat-ins.org>.