

# Building a Network and Statewide Supports for Farm to Early Care and Education in Washington State

**Core Project Team:** Chris Mornick, MPH, RD, Washington State Department of Health (DOH); Vic Colman and Sophia Reimer, Childhood Obesity Prevention Coalition.

**Statewide Coalition Member Organizations:** Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA), Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), Snohomish Health District, Washington State University Extension – Snohomish County SNAP Ed, Seattle Farm to Table, Catholic Charities Food for All Program, Viva Farms in Skagit County, Skagit/Island Head Start and ECEAP, University of Washington Center for Public Health Nutrition

**Background/Introduction:** In fall 2020, Washington was awarded a 1-year Farm to ECE Implementation Grant (FIG). The FIG builds off existing work of the statewide farm to ECE Community of Practice (farm to ECE CoP) and [website](#). In the grant application, Washington identified 8 strategies to promote statewide systems and resources for farm to ECE, including:

- Integrate farm to ECE into CACFP training and resources
- Support farm to ECE policies and legislation
- Develop free, online training modules for farm to ECE
- Support community assessments and evaluations
- Gather and disseminate success stories from a diverse set of communities
- Conduct racial and social equity and sustainability assessments
- Strengthen farm to ECE in tribal communities



**Berry Pemmican Recipe** Jan. 2021

**INGREDIENTS:**

- 1 cup beef jerky (bayac)
- 1/2 cup of dried berries
- 1/2 cup of seeds or nuts
- 2 tsp. peanut butter
- 1 teaspoon of honey

**DIRECTIONS:**

- 1) Shred or chop jerky into small pieces (optional– use food processor)
- 2) Using a zip lock bag crush seeds and nuts
- 3) Next add dried berries, crushed seeds, peanut butter and honey in a mixing bowl. Once completely mixed add in the jerky
- 4) Now you can press the mixture into bars or roll into balls

To individualize this recipe– Each child has their own bowl, a teacher spoons in the ingredients and child mixes on their own. Portions do not need to be exact.

**meat / bayac**  
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**HISTORY:** Pemmican is a traditional Native American food and is well known for its high concentration of nutrients and long shelf life. It is made from dried meats such as elk, deer, venison or salmon. The meat would be pounded together with fat and dried berries and pressed into cakes or rolled up into a ball. It was a travel food and with its combination of protein, fat and carbohydrate is said to have kept a person going all day.

**Methods:** We have assembled a statewide coalition of 15 members who meet monthly and guide work on the FIG. We also hired a part-time project coordinator (Sophia Reimer) to oversee FIG strategies and support existing staff with nominal FTE (DOH, OSPI and WSDA) to work on farm to ECE.

**Results/Summary/Discussion:** The FIG has given us the opportunity to develop comprehensive, equitable and relevant supports for farm to ECE statewide. By the end of this grant year, we hope to have a strong and active farm to ECE CoP, comprehensive website with pages curated by resource type, one or more free state-accredited online trainings on farm to ECE, stronger relationships with tribal communities and a diverse and equitable statewide coalition. Even though we are less than halfway into the FIG, Chris Mornick was recently awarded the *2021 Outstanding Leadership for the National Fruit and Vegetable Nutrition Council* award by the Association of State and Public Health Nutritionists for our farm to ECE work.

