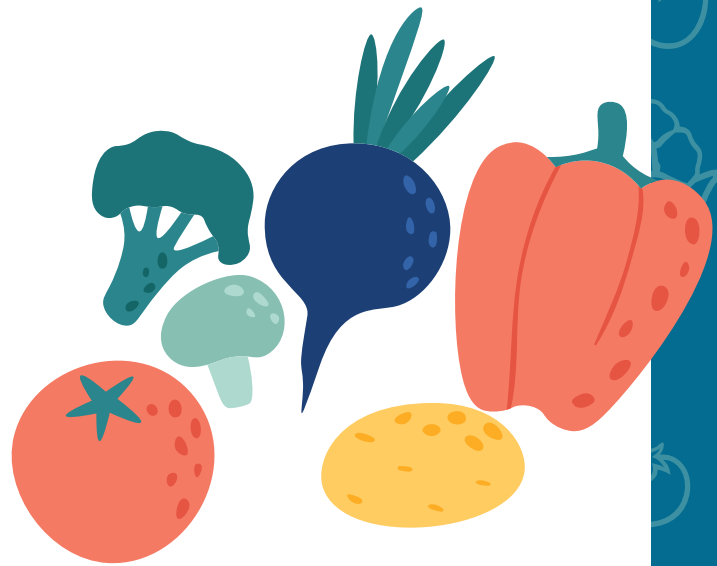




COMMUNITY HEALTH
IMPROVEMENT PARTNERS
making a difference together



IDENTIFYING A BRAND



INTRODUCTION TO BRANDING:

A brand is not the product itself, but rather how people feel about that product, service, or organization. Brands can be thought of as the look given to products or services and can take on an identity of their own (e.g., Nike, Apple, Coca Cola, etc.). A brand identity is made up of: 1) what your values are, 2) how you communicate your product/service, and 3) what you want people to feel when they interact with your product/service.¹ You can think of your branding as the personality of your services or the emotion your services elicit.

BRANDING CHECKLIST:

- **Keep it simple:** When designing your materials, focus on keeping the message simple. It is important to think through what you want to communicate beforehand and how you can best simplify your message. Effective messaging should be clear and concise without too much information.
- **Be consistent:** Your materials should use a similar font, color, and style to create a consistent theme and to avoid confusion. Branding consistency helps your audience easily recognize what you are promoting. Branding will often take the form of a recognizable symbol which your audience can easily identify (e.g., the Nike “swoosh” or the apple used by Apple computers).
- **Repeat your message:** Reiterate the information you want shared. Often, audiences will need to hear the same message a few times before comprehending the information you share. For example, if your department, program, or district has a tagline, be sure to include it on your presentations, flyers, and materials.
- **Focus on your audience:** Continue to keep your audience in mind when new promotional materials are created. Consider the audience’s culture, language, and preferences in designing your materials. If your school meal and Farm to School programs are serving a diverse audience, you will want to think about how to make your materials easily comprehensible.
- **Have fun:** Your promotional materials should be exciting and engaging for your audience. Consider including fun materials for your audience to interact with and stay engaged (e.g., competitions, taste tests, activities, etc.).

¹ Source: Wheeler, K. (2020, September 2). How to Develop a Unique (& Memorable) Brand Identity in 2020. Retrieved from <https://blog.hubspot.com/agency/develop-brand-identity>

ACTIVITY**BRANDING IN ACTION: DEVELOPING A BRAND ACTIVITY**

1. Explain to your staff that your brand is much more than a picture or logo, it is fulfilling a promise to your customers/ community. As a team, discuss the following questions:
 - what are you committed to?
 - in what ways are you transforming other peoples' lives?
 - what emotions do you want people to feel when thinking about your program?
2. Your brand is your ability to fulfill a promise to your ideal customers/communities. Keeping responses to the above questions in mind, what photos could you choose to represent your brand quality? Are there color tones that suit your overall image? Is there a motto or mission statement you would like to emphasize?
3. Develop several options and try your brand out! Approach a few different people who are in your target audience (i.e., students, families, and staff members) with examples of your flyers, posters, and images to see what they think. What type of reaction did you get? Pay attention to the body language and any signs of confusion. What questions are your target audience asking? Make note if something needs further clarification.
4. When creating graphics or looking for pictures for content, try using online platforms and computer programs to find the best picture for your post. We recommend checking out: [Canva](#), [Piktochart](#), and [Microsoft Publisher](#). Be careful to avoid images with restricted use due to copyrights and look for options under public domain, meaning they are free to use without restrictions. You can also pay for stock images or create your own.
5. Roll out your brand! Be sure to keep your "look" and materials consistent. Remember, branding is an ongoing activity. You can always brainstorm or adjust if needed.²



² **Source:** Taylor, I. (2015, May 25). Top 10 Branding Exercises to Attract Customers. Retrieved from <https://diymarketers.com/branding-exercises-to-attract-customer/>



TIPS TO GET YOU STARTED

After coming up with your branding, you will want to think about how to best showcase your school meal and Farm to School programs. To get you started, we have listed a few different content ideas for your promotion/branding strategy.



Photo ideas:

- Students smiling and holding a fruit or vegetable
- A school meal tray highlighting a healthy meal option served in the school meal program
- Students choosing from a selection of meal items (e.g., salad bars, etc.)
- Students in a school garden harvesting produce or planting seedlings



TIP: For photographs, keep in mind the subjects you are using. Check your district policies to determine permissions or any waivers needed for photographing students and families. For images of food, make sure the food looks fresh and colorful and that everyone is using proper food safety practices.³



Video ideas:

- Students explaining why they enjoy school meals
- Parents advocating for school meal programs and the benefits of school meals
- Students in a garden program planting or harvesting fruits and vegetables
- School nutrition service staff explaining why they enjoy their jobs



Virtual or distance learning ideas:

- Zoom event displaying Harvest of the Month fruit or vegetable⁴
- Showcase school nutrition service staff - highlight messages to students during remote learning
- Images or videos of school meal drive-through pick-up
- Videos or recordings highlighting “school food heroes” (e.g., staff and school nutrition service workers)
- Take-home flyers, business cards, and notes included in meal distribution bags/boxes
- Take-home seed packets or small garden kits for students to plant at home

Farm to School Collective: Example Resources

- Social Media Instagram Template Design 1: [Farm to School at Home](#)
- Social Media Instagram Template Design 2: [Farm to School Champions](#)
- [Farm 2 School Collective Promotional Video](#)

Additional Resources:

- [Photographing School Food - Center for Ecoliteracy](#): Guidebook for making California school meals look great, including tips on lighting, composition, and choosing a background.
- [Define Your Brand Message - DIY Marketers](#): A great list of activities you can do with your team to help define your brand.

³ For additional tips and resources on photographing school food, visit Center for Ecoliteracy's [Photographing School Food Guide](#)

⁴ For an interactive calendar on the San Diego Harvest of the Month seasonal produce, visit [UCSD Center for Community Health's Harvest of the Month Calendar](#)

