THECUTTINGBOARD ACADEMY

The Monthly Dose



Tiffani's Food For Thought

September 2026



Ahhh September- here already huh? Thats right Food Nerds, the fall season is upon us and this month alone brings about so many changes. As the school comes back in session and calendars fill up with all of the 'to-do's', dinner can easily turn into a high-stress scramble.

At **The Cutting Board Academy**, we like to flip the script. Meal Prep shouldn't be an anxiety-filled practice- it's **Food Science + STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics).** We believe meal prep isn't just a chore, we think of it as everyday kitchen magic powered by evidence-based nutrition, mixed with a little bit of engineering, and a sprinkle

of creativity. When we prep with intention, the outcomes are nourished and growing brains, stabilized blood sugar all while bringing families and communities together.

Consider this issue of the Monthly Dose your science-backed guide to building an stress-free, evidence-based family meal routine this school year and beyond.

~ Chef Tiffani

The Bioenergetics of School-Night Meals

Growing kids and active adults need sustained energy, not quick spikes and sudden crashes. When creating or *engineering* weeknight dinners, consider focusing on **Glycemic Load (GL) balance aka *Steady Energy*:**

- **Complex Carbohydrates (The Slow Engine):** Swap refined grains for high-fiber alternatives like quinoa, brown rice, or whole-grain pasta. Fiber slows down gastric emptying, keeping kids full through evening study sessions. (Try it out with month's recipe below!)
- **Lean Bioavailable Proteins (The Brain Builders):** Protein supplies amino acids—which can be critical in supporting focus and emotional regulation.
- **Healthy Lipids (The Long Fuel):** Omega-3 fatty acids (found in salmon, walnuts, and flaxseeds) support cognitive function and cell membrane health.

Food Nerd Pro-Tip: Follow the 2:1:1 Plate Formula: Fill 2 parts of the plate with colorful veggies (antioxidants and micronutrients), 1 part with lean protein, and 1 part with complex carbohydrates.

Kitchen Engineering: Batching & Pre-Prepping

Applying basic food processing concepts at home saves hours during the workweek:

1. **Enzyme Inactivation via Blanching:** Flash-boil veggies like broccoli or green beans for 1-2 minutes, then plunge them into ice water. This inactivates the enzymes that cause degradation, locking in vibrant color, crisp texture, and heat-sensitive nutrients for up to 5 days in the fridge.
2. **Structural Protein Prepping:** Marinate proteins over the weekend using mild acids (lemon, yogurt, or vinegar) to break down tough muscle fibers for faster, tender weeknight cooking.
3. **Mise en Place (The Arts & Logistics):** Chop aromatics (onions, garlic, peppers) and store them in airtight glass containers. Having your raw materials prepped cuts cooking time by 50%.

Empower Your Young "Food Nerds"

Involving kids in meal planning increases **food literacy** and reduces picky eating through sensory exposure:

- **Visual & Tactile Engagement:** Let younger kids wash, sort, or tear leafy greens to build comfort with new textures.
- **Flavor Chemistry for Teens:** Teach older kids the basics of balancing taste profiles, combining acid (citrus/vinegar) to balance fat, or a pinch of salt to suppress bitterness in dark leafy greens

Show off your passion for food science! Grab your official **Food Nerd Tote, Mug, or Crewneck Tee** before the new season of workshops kicks off.

Ask a Food Nerd

Upcoming Events

- September 21, 2026 at 1130 am- Food Coaching Session with Silver Connections, LLC
- October 17, 2026 at 5 pm- The Health Dinner Series CLE

- October 28, 2026 at 5:30 pm - The Culinary Wellness Experience with PNC Fairfax Connections
- December 7, 2026 at 6:00 pm - Eating Smart: A Food + Health Workshop w/ Cuyahoga County Libraries
- December 9, 2026 at 5:30 pm - The Culinary Wellness Experience with PNC Fairfax Connections

Sign-Up Here

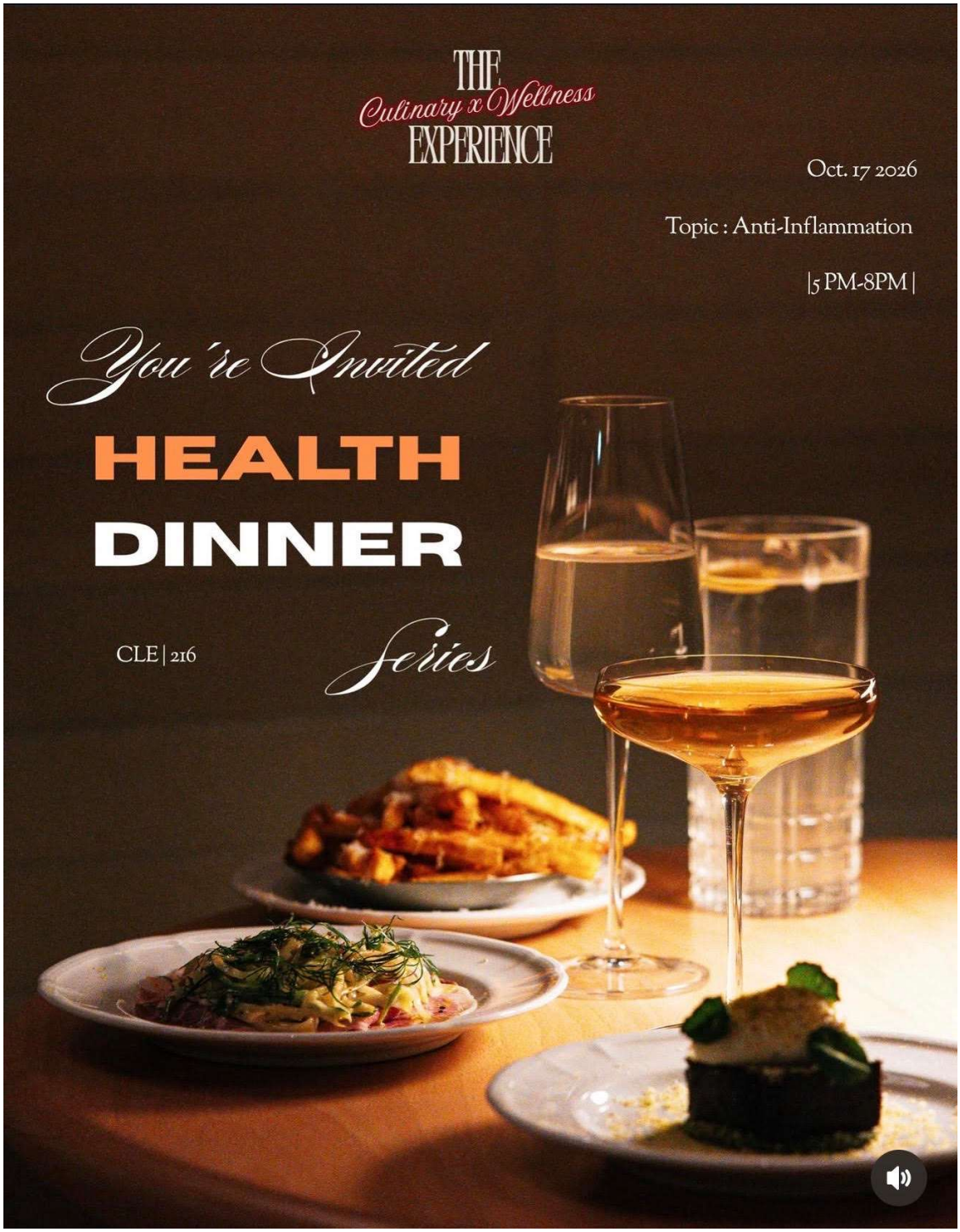
Community Spotlight:

We are thrilled to invite you into a beautifully curated dining experience designed to nourish and pique your curiosity. ***The Health Dinner Series CLE*** blends flavor, education, and connection into one unforgettable gathering — a space where food becomes a catalyst for learning, joy, and community.

Want in? Join the Community to learn how to reserve your spot for upcoming dinners and stay connected to future Culinary×Wellness events.

The Culinary x Wellness Experience is hosting a quarterly Multi-Course Health Dinner Series kicking off on October 17, 2026- focusing on whole-food meals that can help to reduce chronic inflammation. Seats are limited

Join The CxW Community!



Recipe of The Month

Red Beans and Rice

Recipe makes 4-6 servings

Ingredients	Amounts
Vegetable Oil	2 Tbsp
Andouille Sausage Links (optional)	8 oz
Yellow Onion, finely diced	1 c
Small red and/or green bell pepper, cored, seeded, diced	1 ea
Garlic clove, minced	4 ea
Bay Leaves	2 ea
Tomato Paste	2 Tbsp
Dried Thyme	1 Tsp
Hot Paprika	1 Tbsp
Low-sodium chicken broth	1 c
Kosher Salt & fresh ground pepper	
Red Kidney Beans, canned, drained and rinsed (can also cook from dry)	2 can (15oz can)
Fresh parsley, chopped	2 Tbsp
Long-grain white rice, cooked	2 c

Instructions

1. **Place a medium stockpot or Dutch oven on the stove over medium-high heat and oil. When the oil is shimmering, add the sausage links and cook until golden brown on all sides, about 5 minutes.**
2. **Using tongs, transfer the sausage to a cutting board and allow them to cool. Cut in half, length-wise and then crosswise into ¼ inch slices.**

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3. **In the same pan you cooked the sausage and without draining the fat, add the onion and red pepper and saute until tender, 6-8 minutes.**
4. **Add the garlic and cook until fragrant, about 1 minute. Stir in bay leaves, tomato paste, thyme, paprika, chicken broth and a pinch of kosher salt.**
5. **Add beans and sausage and increase the heat to bring the mixture to a simmer. Cover and cook for five minutes.**
6. **Remove bay leaves and taste and adjust seasoning with salt and pepper.**

To serve: Serve immediately, over cooked long-grain rice and top with parsley.

Recipe variation: Andouille sausage is traditional, but any smoked sausage can be substituted for this recipe.

Celebrating 15 Years!

Since 2011, The Cutting Board Academy has been turning kitchens into classrooms and everyday meals into moments of discovery. What began as a simple idea to help people understand their food has grown into fifteen years of food literacy, flavor science, and community connection.

We have taught thousands of learners how to read their ingredients, trust their senses, and understand the why behind what happens on the cutting board. From family cooking nights to nutrition coaching to hands on workshops, our mission has always been to make food literacy accessible, practical, and empowering.

Fifteen years later, we are still growing. We are expanding our programs, deepening our partnerships, and continuing to bring food education to families, schools, and organizations across the region.

If your school, organization, or community group would like to host a TCBA workshop, visit **cuttingboardacademy.org** or email **info@cuttingboardacademy.org**.

Donate And Support Food Education



We are on a mission to make an even greater community impact in 2026. All year, we have been working to bring food and nutrition education to classrooms, community groups, and grassroots organizations that want to learn more about the foods we eat

and how they shape our health. This work is growing, and we are committed to reaching even more learners as the year continues.

Your support helps us make that possible. Every contribution provides real supplies for partners who need them and helps us deliver hands on food literacy programming where it makes the biggest difference. Every dollar counts. If you are able, please donate today and help us continue this important work.

Donate Today

Meet Tiffani



Tiffani Sutton is the Founder and Executive Director of The Cutting Board Academy, an organization that focuses on educating children, families, and communities on the importance of understanding Food and Nutrition. As an accomplished food scientist, engineer, and chef, it is her desire to share her wealth of knowledge.

For more information on The Cutting Board Academy and how we can be of service to your organization, please contact Tiffani at **Tiffani@cuttingboardacademy.org** or call **216.282.5422**.

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