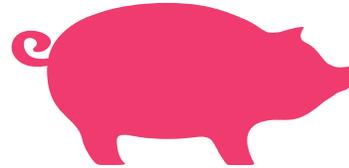




FARM TO SCHOOL

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THE TERM “FARM TO SCHOOL” encompasses efforts that bring local or regionally produced foods into school cafeterias; hands-on learning activities such as school gardening, farm visits, and culinary classes; and the integration of food-related education into the regular, standards-based classroom curriculum. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) supports such efforts through its Farm to School Program, which includes research, training, technical assistance, and grants.

Local what?

Regional offerings (and therefore economic opportunities for local food producers) can span the school meal tray and include everything from fresh fruit and vegetable servings to the wheat in the pizza crust, beans in the chili, rice in the stir fry, turkey in the sandwiches, and cheese in the quesadillas. Thus, farm to school includes all types of producers and food businesses including farmers, ranchers, and fishermen, as well as food processors, manufacturers, and distributors. Schools can define “local” however they choose. Definitions vary widely depending on the unique geography and climate where the school is located, and on the abundance of local food producers.

Grants

Every year, USDA awards up to \$5 million in grants to help schools connect with local producers and teach kids where their food comes from. These funds support activities

ranging from training, planning, and developing partnerships, to purchasing equipment, planting school gardens, and organizing field trips. Grantees include schools and districts (large and small, rural and urban), Indian tribal organizations, producers and producer groups, non-profit entities, and state and local agencies.

We’re here to help!

The USDA Farm to School Program is operated by the Department’s Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), which has seven regional offices around the country; in each is a Farm to School Regional Lead who is available to provide farm to school related support to state agencies and other entities in their region. A list of regions, along with the names and contact information for regional and national USDA Farm to School Program staff, can be found on our website.

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For more information, and to sign up to receive USDA’s bi-weekly Farm to School E-letter, please visit www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool. Questions? Email us at farmtoschool@fns.usda.gov.

