



**USDA Farm to School:  
Opportunities to  
Increase Local Food in  
School Meals**

March 10, 2010




**Today's Agenda**

- Brief History on Farm to School at USDA
- Introduction to Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food & Farm to School Initiatives
- Farm to School Team Site Visits
- Available Resources
- Keeping Connected
- Current Grant Opportunities
- Q&As




**History of Farm to School at USDA**

- 1997: USDA began a comprehensive effort to connect small farms to the school meal programs
- 2000 & 2005: Issued farm to school publications






**History of Farm to School at USDA**

Most Recent History

- 2008: FNS discussion with farm to school stakeholders
- 2008: Farm Bill offers more flexibility




**History of Farm to School at USDA (cont.)**

- Farm to School Activities:
  - Vary significantly among communities
  - Generally defined as efforts to serve regionally and locally produced products in school cafeterias
  - Connecting students to the food they eat through nutrition and agriculture education




**Know Your Farmer,  
Know Your Food (KYF2)**



- Agency-wide effort to create new economic opportunities by connecting consumers with local producers
- Initiative focuses on the importance of understanding where our food comes from and how it gets to our plate

KYF2 website:  
[www.usda.gov/knowyourfarmer](http://www.usda.gov/knowyourfarmer)




## KYF2 Mission



Strengthens the critical connection between farmers and consumers and support local and regional food systems. Through this initiative, USDA integrates and emphasizes programs and policies that:

- **Promote** locally and regionally produced and processed food;
- **Foster** new opportunities for farmers and ranchers;
- **Stimulate** food-and agriculturally-based community economic development;
- **Expand** access to affordable fresh and local food;
- **Cultivate** healthy eating habits and educated, empowered consumers;
- **Demonstrate** the connection between food, agriculture, community and the environment.




## KYF2 Goals



- To improve the management and implementation of USDA programs that strengthen the critical connection between farmers and consumers and support local and regional food systems.
- To break down barriers and supports policies and programs that emphasize local and regional food systems and the critical connection between farmers and consumers.
- To lead a national conversation to increase understanding of how communities rely on food, agriculture, working lands and each other.
- To strengthen the capacity of USDA to carry out this mission.




## Farm to School Team

- Supports local and regional food systems via linkages between schools and local food producers
- Comprised of FNS & AMS employees
- Regional & Other HQ Representation
- Tasked with developing mechanisms to:
  - Assist schools in accessing local markets
  - Enable food producers to effectively service their local schools
  - Facilitate communication between interested stakeholders




## Farm to School Team Goals

- Provide access to resources and information on beginning and maintaining Farm to School activities for schools, farmers and local community members.
- Provide technical assistance to assist schools and farmers in the development, progression, and/or sustainability of Farm to School activities.
- Identify obstacles faced by schools and farmers in implementing and/or sustaining Farm to School activities and provide suggested solutions.




## Farm to School Team Objectives

- Visit 9 areas of varied demographics and farm to school characteristics
- Analyze and assess variables that support or deter farm-to-school activities
- Identify trends and best practices
- Maintain a Farm to School website (<http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/F2S>)
- Engage in webinars with interested parties to allow for information sharing of Farm to School obstacles and successes




## FNS and AMS Roles in Farm to School Team

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>FNS</b></li> <li>▪ Perspective of schools and school administrators</li> <li>▪ General oversight of the Farm to School Team activities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>AMS</b></li> <li>▪ Perspective of famers, growers, and wholesalers</li> </ul>
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### FNS & AMS will represent those perspectives in:

- Information gathering and sharing
- Needs assessment
- Resources (including creating new resources, if needed)
- Technical assistance
- Website content
- Webinars
- Conferences and meetings attendance
- Procurement issues
- Sample product specification for local purchasing



### Farm to School Team's Site Visits

- Visit 9 areas of varied demographics and farm to school characteristics
- Requests due January 31, 2010
- Received 300 requests to be considered
- Currently finalizing the selected site areas
- Work through Region, State, & School Food Service Director



### Variables Considered:

- Regional representation
- Rural, Urban, Suburban, Tribal Schools
- Large and Small School Districts
- Self-op, Vended and Management Company
- Various Distribution Models
- Different Stages of F2S Implementation
- New or Novel Ideas for incorporating F2S activities



### Areas of Interest for Site Visit:

- School's Farm to School Infrastructure
- School Food Service Infrastructure
- Procurement Process
- Non-purchasing Aspect of Farm to School
- Food Safety
- Implementation and Impact
- Policy Support and Recommendations
- Farmers Perspective



### What to Expect?

- Working visit
- Visiting school and farmer
- 2-3 core team members
- Possible Regional and State participation
- Visits conducted in April, May and June
- Best practices, lessons learned and challenges shared with others



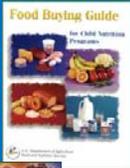
### Available Resources

- Sharing information is crucial in supporting Farm to School programs
- USDA tools and resources available on our F2S website:  
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/F2S/f2sresources.htm>



### Available Resources

- Team Nutrition
  - Fruits and Vegetables Galore
  - Food Buying Guide for Nutrition Programs
- Fresh Fruits and Vegetable Program
- AMS
- National Institute of Food and Agriculture






### Keeping Connected

- USDA's Farm to School Website
  - <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/F2S>
  - <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/F2S/f2stacticalteam.htm>
- E-newsletter
- Webinars
- Contact us: [farmtoschool@fns.usda.gov](mailto:farmtoschool@fns.usda.gov)




### Current Grant Opportunities

- **AMS Specialty Crop Block Grant Program (SCBGP)**
  - Purpose is to solely enhance the competitiveness of specialty crops.
  - Specialty crops are defined as "fruits, vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits, horticulture, and nursery crops (including floriculture)."
  - Numerous farm to school related programs nationwide have received SCBGP funding ([www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/SCBGP](http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/SCBGP))




### Current Grant Opportunities

- **The Farmers Market Promotion Program (FMPP)**
  - Annual competitive grant program
  - Promotes the domestic consumption of agricultural commodities by expanding direct producer-to-consumer marketing opportunities. (<http://www.ams.usda.gov/FMPP>)




### Current Grant Opportunities

- **The Federal-State Marketing Improvement Program (FSMIP)**
  - Competitive matching grant program
  - Open to State government agencies and agricultural experiment stations
  - Supports marketing research and technical assistance projects ([www.ams.usda.gov/FSMIP](http://www.ams.usda.gov/FSMIP))




### Current Grant Opportunities

- **2010 NSLP Equipment Assistance Grants**
  - 2010 – \$25 million (<http://www.fns.usda.gov/cga/PressReleases/2010/0015.htm>)
- Policy Memo SP 19-2010 ([http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/governance/Policy-Memos/2010/SP\\_19-2010\\_os.pdf](http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/governance/Policy-Memos/2010/SP_19-2010_os.pdf))




### Current Grant Opportunities

- 2010 Team Nutrition (TN) Grants
    - 2010 – Up to \$5.5 million
- (<http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/Grants/2010app.html>)



### Open for Question & Answer

- Type your question online into the Q&A tab and click the "Ask" button
- Or
- Press \*1 on your telephone to be entered into the queue



Thank you!

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