

# Why Farm to School?

Farm to School enables every child to have access to nutritious food while simultaneously benefiting communities and local farmers. In addition to supplying nourishing, locally grown and produced food in schools, the Farm to School program encourages and supports nutrition and agriculture education through taste tests, school gardens, composting programs, and farm tours. Such experiences help children understand where their food comes from and how their food choices affect their bodies, environment, and community.



## Bring Everyone to the Table

The success of your farm to school program is based on people getting involved. Bringing everyone to the table creates a strong community of support and allows each party to contribute to the betterment of the whole. Everyone has a role.

Parents Producers Principals  
Nurses Food Service Students  
Teachers

“There is a growing interest statewide in locally grown and produced food. The Iowa Farm to School program provides farmers and schools with a chance to connect and share resources. This is a tremendous opportunity to tell the story of agriculture and the important role it plays in Iowa’s economy.”

*Bill Northey, Secretary of Agriculture  
Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship*

## Newsletter

We want to stay in touch with you and others who are interested in establishing this vital link between Iowa schools and Iowa farms. We need to hear from you and we want to spread the word about your needs, good ideas and good work happening in your area. To that end we publish a bi-annual Iowa Farm to School newsletter. This newsletter highlights pivotal policies, news, publications, and events in the growing movement to bring local fresh ingredients to schools in Iowa.

## Farm to School Council

Christine Pardee, Rich Pirog, Julia Thorius, Debra Stephenson, Denise O’Brien, Earl Hafner, and Laurie Crane



For more information contact us at 515-281-7657 or visit us on the web at <http://www.iowaagriculture.gov/AgDiversification/farmToSchoolProgram.asp>

For more information about Farm to School programs nationally, please visit: [www.farmtoschool.org](http://www.farmtoschool.org).



# Iowa Farm to School Program



Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship

# Farm to School Beginning

Iowa Lawmakers passed Farm to School legislation in 2007 to establish a program that would:

- Link elementary, secondary, public and non-public schools with Iowa farmers;
- Provide schools with fresh and minimally processed Iowa-grown food for inclusion in school meals and snacks; and
- Encourage children to develop healthy eating habits and provide them with hands-on learning activities.



The Farm to School Program is coordinated by the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS) in partnership with the Iowa Department of Education and a seven-member Farm to School Council. We believe the success of this program depends on strong local networks of individuals and organizations familiar with their community's resources and needs.

## Iowa Farm to School Mission Statement:

Iowa's Farm to School mission is to encourage and promote the purchase of locally produced food in our schools, strengthen the farm economy and offer educational opportunities to improve child nutrition and health.



# Farm to School Initiatives

## CHAPTERS:

The Iowa Farm to School Chapter Initiative is unique to Iowa. The Chapter Initiative is being implemented to allow communities and individual school districts the opportunity to procure food from local sources. Community involvement is key to the success of the Iowa Farm to School Program. The Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, Iowa Department of Education and the Iowa Farm to School Advisory Council will reach out to communities to establish strong partnerships.

Check out some of the chapter activities:

- School Gardens
- Food Fair
- Farm/Orchard Visits
- Fresh fruits and vegetables being served



If you are interested in starting a chapter in your community, please contact us or go online for a chapter packet at

<http://www.iowaagriculture.gov/AgDiversification/farmToSchoolProgram.asp>

A chapter can encompass an entire school district or simply be built around one school and one single project.



## A is for Apple Initiative:

This Initiative was launched in the fall of 2008, in order to encourage the purchase of locally grown Iowa apples. Orchards and schools worked together with the Department of Agriculture to provide apples to school children. Over 20 schools applied and 10 schools in 5 counties were selected. Educational materials, classroom presentations and promotional items were provided to the selected schools, along with funds to assist in the purchase of apples. Over 1,789 students were served apples on at least one occasion as a snack



or as part of a meal during this Initiative. This Initiative was a great success and there was positive feedback and future interest by all participants.

## Supporting Local Farm to School Efforts with:

- **Educational Materials** - classroom ideas, apple orchard presentation, worksheets, Fresh Facts (Fruit/Vegetable Brochures)
- **Promotional Materials** - pencils, harvest calendar magnets, erasers, stickers, brochures
- **Co-Sponsorship** - display, monetary funds, education and promotional materials

If you are planning a local Farm to School activity, please contact us to find out how we can help.