Farm to School at USDA

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Our Authorizing Legislation

• Section 243, HHFKA: “The Secretary shall carry out a program to... improve access to local foods in eligible schools.” Through:
  1. Grants
  2. Technical Assistance
Local Can Span the Meal Tray

- Vegetables
- Meat, Poultry, and Fish
- Beans, Grain, and Flour
- Dairy
- Fruit
- Eggs
FNS’s Role in the School Meal Programs

The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) works with State, territorial, and Indian tribal governments to implement child nutrition programs including:

- The National School Lunch Program
- The School Breakfast Program
- The Summer Food Service Program
- The Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program
- The Afterschool Snack Program
The Farm to School Grant Program
Grant Program Overview

- Award up to $5.0 million annually, for:
  - Training
  - Supporting operations;
  - Planning;
  - Purchasing equipment;
  - Developing school gardens;
  - Developing partnerships; and
  - Implementing farm to school programs.
Grant Program Overview

• 139 awards made to date.
• Eligible entities: Eligible schools and school districts, Indian tribal organizations, nonprofit entities, local and state agencies, agricultural producers and groups of agricultural producers.
• Consideration given to high need; geography; and other departmental priorities.
• Special emphasis on projects that strengthen local supply chains (including product aggregation!)
Types of Awards

» Planning (schools)
  • 1 year, $20K to $45K

» Implementation (schools)
  • 1-2 years, $60K to $100K

» Support service (all others)
  • 1-2 years, $60K to $100K

» *New* Conference planning track
Other Helpful Resources

• At [www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool](http://www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool):
  » Fact Sheets
  » Resources (including our brand new guide to procuring local foods)
  » Webinars (including our “Finding, Buying, and Serving Local Foods” series
  » Grants information
  » Coming soon: a Farm to School Planning Toolkit; additional procurement resources, and more!
USDA Farm to School Program

THE USDA Farm to School Program supports the work of local farm to school programs all over the country by providing free training and technical assistance, information resources, networking, and support for policy, media and marketing activities. Their network includes personnel in all 50 states tasked with helping farm to school programs at all stages of development thrive. For more information visit www.farmschool.org.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. July 2013.
The Farm to School Census

- 13,000 public school districts
- ~20 question survey
- Emphasis on procurement practices
- Two phases of data collection:
  - Initial questionnaire distributed via state agencies in spring 2013 (8,800 Responses, 67% Response rate)
  - Part two via USDA in fall 2013, results available by summer, 2014.
HEALTHY HABITS TAKE ROOT

THE FARM TO SCHOOL CENSUS

USDA estimates that as of the 2012–2013 school year, 3,812 districts operating approximately 38,629 schools with 21,008,254 students in attendance are buying local products and teaching children where their food comes from.

Percent of school districts participating in farm to school activities

- Less than 25%
- 25% - 50%
- 51% - 75%
- More than 75%

HUNGRY FOR MORE?
www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool
Healthy Habits Take Root

Participation in Farm to School Activities

- Yes (43%)
- Future (13%)
- No (38%)
- Don’t know (6%)
Four Ways to Sell to Schools

1) Sell directly to schools
2) Sell to schools through distributors
3) Work with DoD Fresh Program vendors
4) Become a USDA Foods vendor
DoD Fresh and USDA Foods

- The DoD Fresh Programs contracts with 47 vendors across the country to provide fresh food to schools.
- Learn more at http://go.usa.gov/BWNe

- The USDA Food Program works directly with vendors to purchase 15% of the food served through the National School Lunch Program. Products include processed, fresh and frozen Beef, Pork, Chicken/Turkey, Eggs, Fish, Fruits, Vegetables, Nuts and Other Specialty Crops
- 100% Domestically Produced and Processed
- Learn more at http://1.usa.gov/18W3nzH
Thank you.
Questions?

www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool