

FARM *to* SCHOOL

FIELD GUIDE

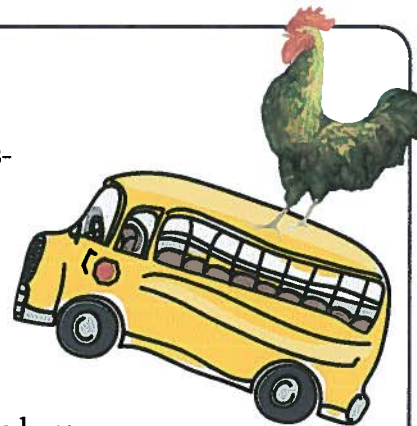
FOR PARENTS & COMMUNITY MEMBERS



A publication of the Community Alliance with Family Farmers' Farm to School Initiative
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WHAT IS FARM *to* SCHOOL?

Farm to School Programs connect farms with school cafeterias and classrooms. These programs can include everything from farm field trips to nutrition education in the school garden to farm-fresh salad bars. The programs come in all shapes and sizes, but they fall into two main categories: **Farm to School Education programs** and **Farm to School Produce Distribution programs**.



A comprehensive Farm to School program puts both elements together: Fresh, locally-grown produce appears on the school menu, while students learn about local agriculture. Farm to School programs are sprouting up across the country!

HOW CAN PARENTS PARTICIPATE IN THE FARM *to* SCHOOL MOVEMENT?

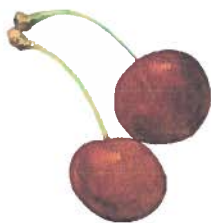
Parents have two roles to play in making farm to school happen:

1) Support and encourage food and farming instruction.

Whether they are in the classroom, school garden or out at a local farm, Farm to School lessons can teach to state standards while engaging students with agriculture and fresh foods. As a parent, you can encourage teachers and administrators to identify these opportunities, or take an active role in identifying and volunteering to help to implement them.

2) Advocate for fresh foods in the cafeteria and at school.

You can get involved in making changes in your school district's lunch program. Across the country, districts are connecting with local farms to serve fresh produce. District-level Wellness Committees provide an opportunity for parents to participate in discussions about school food.



Check out these websites for more information about Farm to School:

Community Alliance with Family Farmers—www.caff.org

National Farm to School—www.farmentoschool.org

California Farm to School—www.cafarmentoschool.org

Since 2001, CAFF's Farm to School Initiative has developed and coordinated on-the-ground programs connecting schools and school children to their local farming communities, while also creating resources, workshops and materials that help further the Farm to School movement in California. CAFF runs Farm to School programs in Monterey, Humboldt, Santa Cruz and Santa Clara counties, and connects local farmers to school cafeterias in the Sacramento Valley, Ventura and Bay areas.

For more information, please contact:

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COMMUNITY ALLIANCE
WITH FAMILY FARMERS

STEP ONE: PLANTING THE PROGRAM

Figuring out what you need to get started

The single biggest piece of advice we can give you is to build a Farm to School team. Farm to School programs have the potential to grow and effect changes that involve a lot of people, from students to teachers to custodians to parents. To create a sustainable project, you'll need to invite participation (and help!) from a diverse group of school staff and community members.

Some schools have formed School Nutrition Action Councils (SNACs) as one way to bring teachers, parents and staff together to talk about Farm to School at their site. SNACs have taken on projects ranging from serving healthy meals at school events, to planning farm-focused school assemblies, to coordinating parent garden workdays. And, SNAC efforts can help implement the federally mandated School Wellness Policy (every district has one!).

While you may not be able to recruit all of these team members right off the bat, an ideal Farm to School Team includes: parents, community members, school food service staff, teachers, school board members and administrators, and students. You'll also want to pull in farmers as well as community organizations and agencies, when their advice and help is needed.

TIPS FOR BRINGING FARM TO SCHOOL EDUCATION INTO THE CLASSROOM:

- 1) Understand the pressures that schools and teachers face.** With the testing and performance standards enforced by the No Child Left Behind Act, class time is often highly regulated. As a parent it is important to recognize that teachers and administrators working under this system have to follow very strict guidelines, regulating lesson time down to the minute. To successfully incorporate food education into the school day, build an alliance with school faculty and staff and find out the best place and time to conduct these lessons. Oftentimes, lunchtime or afterschool are ideal, since there are fewer pressures on those slots of time.
- 2) Weave Farm to School into existing lessons.** Tie food and farming topics to curriculum standards: cooking lessons make great math lessons, gardens are great places to learn new vocabulary, and nutrition lessons are key to teaching the new California state health standards.
- 3) Bring a local farmer into the classroom for a visit.** Farmer visits connect kids with the people who grow their food, and give them a personal connection with local agriculture. Search for a local farmer near you at www.buylocalca.org or at www.localharvest.org.
- 4) Don't reinvent the wheel!** There are many fun, engaging, standards-based agricultural education resources. We have listed a few good websites here that are good places to start your search for lessons and resources:

California School Garden Network—www.csgn.org (Check out their “curriculum” page!)

National Farm to School Network—www.farmentoschool.org

California Farm to School Program—www.cafarmentoschool.org

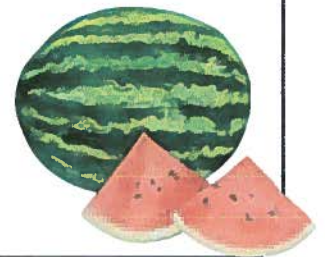
Harvest of the Month—www.harvestofthemonth.com

California Foundation for Ag in the Classroom—www.cfaitc.org


UC Cooperative Extension—cemonterey.ucdavis.edu

Life Lab Science Program—www.lifelab.org

The Food Project—www.thefoodproject.org



WHAT'S IN SEASON IN CALIFORNIA?

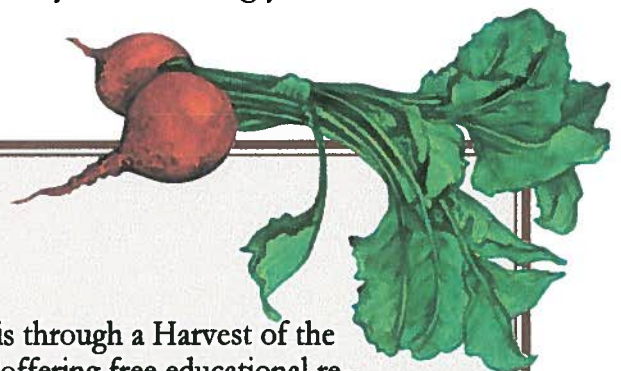


	WINTER	SPRING	SUMMER	FALL
Apples				
Asparagus				
Avocados				
Broccoli				
Cabbages				
Carrots				
Dried Fruit				
Green Beans				
Kiwifruit				
Mandarins				
Melon				
Oranges				
Peaches				
Pears				
Peas				
Peppers				
Persimmons				
Potatoes				
Salad Greens				
Spinach				
Strawberries				
Sweet Potatoes				
Tomatoes				
Winter Squash				
Zucchini				

These fruits and vegetables correspond to the California Harvest of the Month Program. More regional specific seasonality information can be found by downloading your Local Food Guide at www.buylocalca.org.

SPOTLIGHT ON HARVEST OF THE MONTH:

One simple way to introduce food and farming lessons to kids is through a Harvest of the Month program. Harvest of the Month is a statewide program offering free educational resources to teachers, parents and food service staff that highlights California fruits and vegetables. Visit www.harvestofthemonth.com for more information. CAFF offers its own Harvest of the Month Tasting Kits that feature a fresh, locally grown fruit or vegetable each month—and includes more suggestions for easy classroom activities, recipes, and farm profiles. Contact harvestofthemonth@caff.org for more information.



FARM *to* SCHOOL CONTACTS:

Who you need to get on your team
and how to contact them.....



District Food Service Director

Name: _____ Contact: _____

District Wellness Policy Coordinator

Name: _____ Contact: _____

School Garden Coordinators

Names: _____ Contact: _____

Champion Teachers

Names/Grades: _____ Contact: _____

PTA/PTO Allies

Name: _____ Contact: _____

Other Fired Up Parents and Community Members

Name: _____ Contact: _____

Community Alliance with Family Farmers advocates for California family farmers and sustainable agriculture. CAFF's **Farm to School Initiative** and the **Buy Fresh Buy Local Campaign** connect communities with local food and farming. CAFF is located across California, with offices in Berkeley, Davis, Watsonville, Ventura, Humboldt and Sunnyvale. For more information about CAFF's programs, please visit www.caff.org.

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