

A Farm to School Primer

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Overview

- Farm to School Primer
 - Who we are
 - How to start
- Key Programs
 - Illinois Harvest of the Month
 - The Great Apple Crunch
 - Gardens
- Local Procurement
- How to Find Local

Illinois Farm to School Network



IL Partner, National Farm to School Network

- Information, advocacy and networking hub for communities working to bring local food sourcing, school gardens and food and agriculture education into schools and early care and education settings across the country.



Farm to School's Core Components

- Strengthening the connections that communities have with fresh, healthy food and local producers
- Procurement
 - Local food in taste tests, snacks, and school meals
- Education
 - Learning about agriculture, food, health, & nutrition
- School Gardens
 - Hands-on engagement

Network Support & Resources

- illinoisfarmtoschool.org/
- harvestillinois.org
- Monthly newsletter
- In-person trainings
- One-on-one consulting

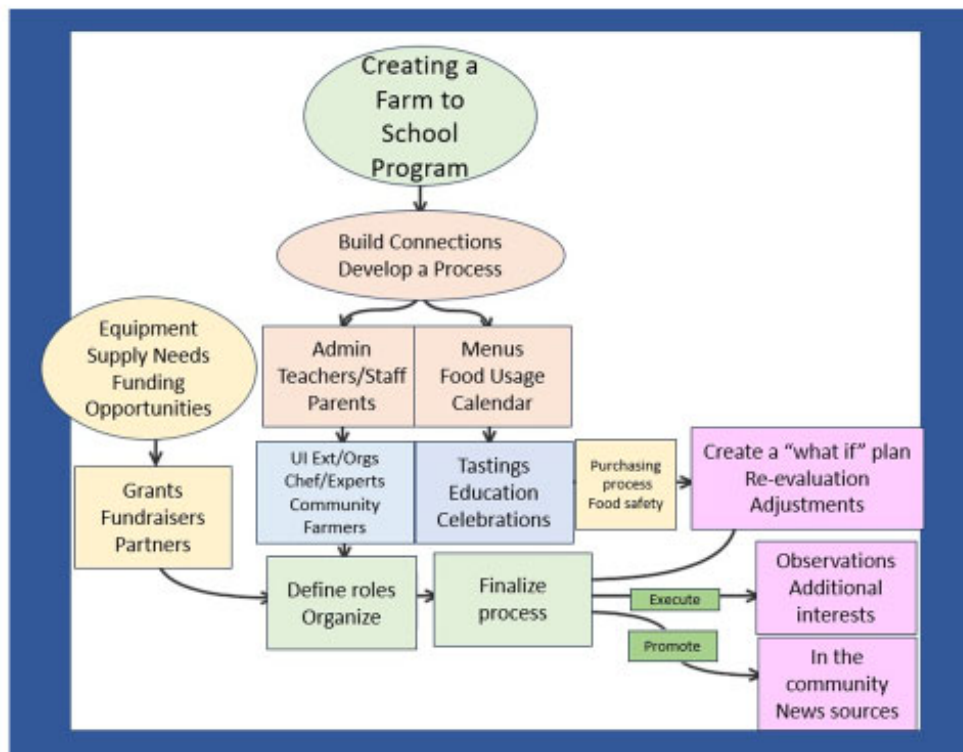
The Illinois Farm to School Toolkit

Looking for support to advance your farm to school activities? You've come to the right place! Access our comprehensive portal of farm to school resources below.

TOOLKIT TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 🍷 Getting Started
- 🍷 Sourcing Local Food
- 🍷 Gardening On-Site
- 🍷 Farm to Summer
- 🍷 New! At Home and In Community Toolkit
- 🍷 Food & Agriculture Education
- 🍷 Early Care Providers
- 🍷 Farmers & Producers
- 🍷 Distributors
- 🍷 Funding
- 🍷 Advocate for F2S
- 🍷 Outreach Toolkit
- 🍷 Boot Camp Education
- 🍷 Illinois Stories- Listen to our podcast series!

How to Start



Key Programs

- Illinois Harvest of the Month
- The Great Apple Crunch





**Illinois
Harvest of
the
Month!**

Harvestillinois.org

IL Harvest of the Month:



PARTICIPANTS
FEATURE LOCAL OR
GARDEN FOODS ON
THEIR OWN
SCHEDULE



TEACHES KIDS ABOUT
SEASONAL EATING
AND DEVELOPS
STUDENT
ACCEPTANCE OF
FRESH, HEALTHY
FOODS



MAKES IT EASY FOR
SITES TO BRING FOOD
EDUCATION INTO THE
MEAL PROGRAM, THE
GARDEN AND THE
CLASSROOM



PROVIDES WAYS TO
INCORPORATE
WELLNESS WORK
INTO FEEDING
PROGRAMS



TEACHES PROGRAM
STAFF HOW TO BUY
AND CELEBRATE
LOCAL FOOD

HOME REGISTERED SITES PARTNERS DISTRIBUTORS RESOURCES LOCAL PARTNERS UPDATES US CONTACT



SCHOOLS

Information for individual school sites and master school districts that are participating in Illinois Harvest of the Month through their meal program.



GARDEN BASED PROGRAMS

Information for any type of program that is utilizing Illinois Harvest of the Month with a garden program.



EARLY CHILDCARE (ECE)

Information for early childcare sites. These are sites that provide care and meals for children under 3 years old (0-3).



RESIDENTIAL PROGRAMS

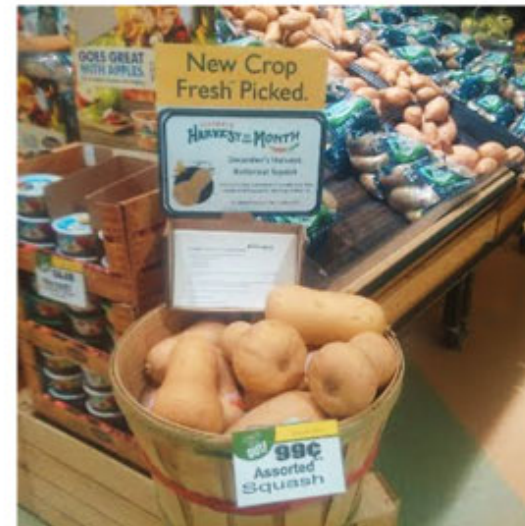
Information for residential program sites. These are sites where children reside on-site part or full time.



Share it in your community...



- Connect local food to your community with home recipes, nutrition facts, fun facts, and more
- Share your Harvest of the Month program with local grocery and producer retailers in your area
- Connect your program to city, county or regional health initiatives and promote your farm to school and local foods programming
- Make connections in your district! FFA, gardens, culinary arts, backpack programs and food pantries, art classes and any program that fits
- Add your farm to school efforts to Wellness Policy work





A great first-step to celebrate local food!

- One-day fun event on the second Thursday in October
- Participants Crunch into local apples!
- Website: illinoisfarmtoschool.org/great-apple-crunch/
- Local orchard locator, toolbox and the Crunch Guide
- Register online in August 2023
- Share your pictures, activities and the fun on social media and on our website!



Illinois Great Apple Crunch



Apple Crunch Day

Register

How to Participate

Sending Apples

Classroom Materials: Classroom

Classroom Materials: Afternoon

Send Us Photos

Reports

What is the Illinois Great Apple Crunch?

The Illinois Great Apple Crunch is a day-long celebration of fresh, local apples. The Illinois Crunch is a part of the Great Lakes Great Apple Crunch celebrated across the Midwest! Schools, early child care facilities, and child education programs across the state of Illinois can participate by serving local apples on the lunch tray, or in the classroom, and 'crunch-ing' into them together at noon. Illinois Farm to School Network provides educational supplements for use in the cafeteria and the classroom that will teach your students all about Illinois apples.



Illinois Crunch participants join children and adults from across the Great Lakes region in Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin in celebrating **National Farm to School Month** by crunching into locally and regionally grown apples at noon, second Thursday of October. Registered participants are encouraged to participate in the Crunch day, but can celebrate on any day or time in October that is convenient. Everyone is invited to Crunch, including schools, early care and education, after-school and residential programs.

Connections and Tools

- Tools to create a fantastic Crunch!
- Connections to Harvest of the Month and gardens!
- Social media and promotions

A young girl with blonde hair is holding two brown eggs over her eyes, making her eyes disappear. She is wearing a yellow sweater and has a pink hair clip in her hair. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

SCHOOL GARDEN
RESOURCES

Garden Toolkit:

<https://illinoisfarmtoool.org/toolkit/school-garden-resources/>

Garden Connections

Connect Harvest of the Month to your school or community garden program

Use garden produce for tastings in the cafeteria

Use garden produce as a part of lessons in the classroom

Connect your school garden to the school lunch menu and promote the veggies your students have grown

Share excess garden produce with a local food pantry

Utilize

Utilize online K-12 curriculum. Check out the toolkit:
<http://illinoisfarmtoschool.org/toolkit/nutrition-education/>

Don't forget

Don't forget early Pre-K! Gardening in early care settings provides hands-on experiential learning for children that help your program meet the Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards.

STEAM

STEAM activities for ECE:
<http://illinoisfarmtoschool.org/toolkit/farm-early-care/>



First Steps for Local Procurement

Create

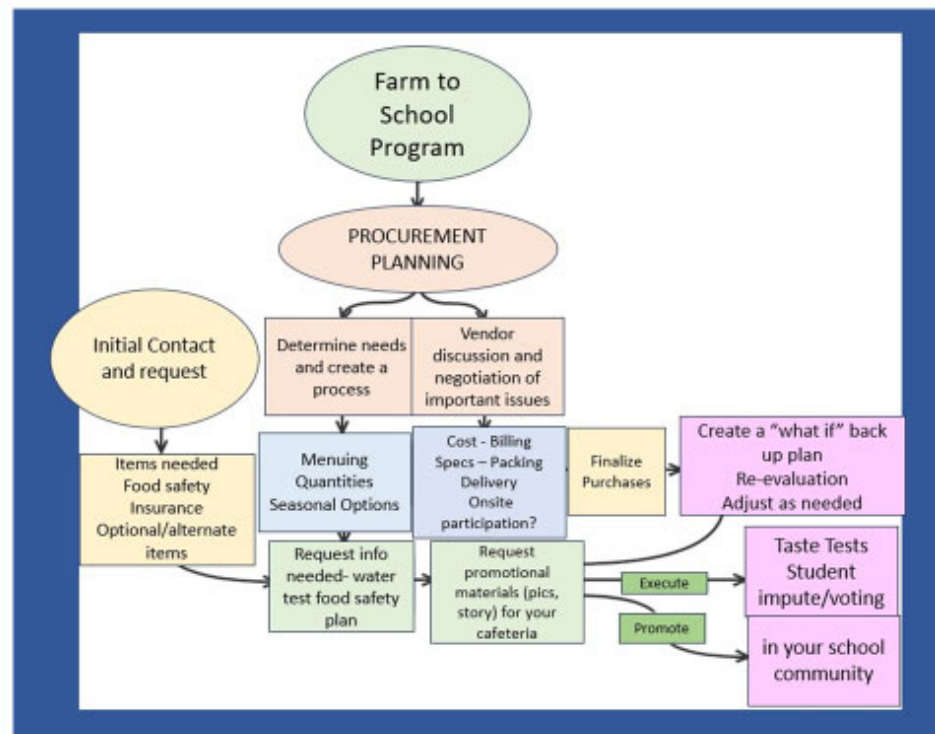
Create a procedure to procure local foods.



Contact

Contact your county sanitarian to discuss your plan for purchasing local foods. Ask for suggestions and any additional requirements for local procurement at the county level.

Planning for Procurement



How to find local

Sourcing Local Food

Overview

Local Food Procurement Resources

Where to Find Food

Menu Planning with Local Foods

Sourcing Locally Grown Food

Local food procurement is different for each school based on the amounts of food needed, the location of the school and the seasonal availability of fresh, local foods. Sourcing locally can involve direct relationships with local farmers and producers, shopping at farmer's markets or produce auctions, drawing from local DOD selections, working with regional produce distributors and aggregators, or working with primary or secondary distributors to locate regional or local items. The Illinois Farm to School Network has created a Mighty Mini training video, Local Sourcing, which provides information and insight for school districts considering, or expanding local or regional



