

CELEBRATE Farm to School Month

Ideas and resources for celebrating National Farm to School Month

OCTOBER IS NATIONAL FARM TO SCHOOL MONTH

, a time to celebrate the connections that are happening all over the country between schools and local food. In 2010, Congress approved a resolution to officially designate October as National Farm to School Month. The passage of House Resolution 1655 demonstrates the growing importance of farm to school programs as a means to improve child nutrition, support local economies and educate children about the origins of food.

Everyone can celebrate Farm to School Month! The second page of this fact sheet contains ideas for teachers, food service professionals, farmers and families. The National Farm to School Network (NFSN) has also developed resources and activities to promote Farm to School Month in schools, communities and media outlets. All of these tools are available on farmtoschoolmonth.org with detailed explanations, but here is an overview of what's in store for 2013:

Farm to School Counts

Share your Farm to School Month story by filling out our Farm to School Counts survey. Participants will be entered in a prize drawing for a chance to win registration to the National Farm to Cafeteria Conference in April 2014 as well as other prizes. The survey asks basic questions like where your events and activities took place and how many students were involved. Use the survey form to tell us about the highlights of your month and share your photos. The deadline to participate is November 30.

Theme of the Day

Celebrate a new theme each weekday of National Farm to School Month! The Theme of the Day will spotlight an aspect of farm to school and offer activities and resources related to that theme as well as messages to share on social media. Theme of the Day content will be created in collaboration with a variety of other organizations, so the perspectives will be diverse. The National Farm to School Network will promote each theme on Facebook and Twitter (@FarmtoSchool), so be sure to follow us and share your theme-related photos and stories. Both downloadable and interactive theme calendars will be available by September, so check farmtoschoolmonth.org for more information.

Resources and Merchandise

The "Resources" page of farmtoschoolmonth.org features logos, posters, fact sheets and other tools to help you promote Farm to School Month. Also visit the "Shop" page of the website, where you will find a link to merchandise including t-shirts, magnets and stickers that make great gifts and giveaways.



Vist farmtoschoolmonth.org for a complete list of resources and activities.



Celebrate

Many farm to school programs begin with a small activity that generates interest and engages the whole community. We hope you can use these ideas for celebrating Farm to School Month as a starting point for establishing a new farm to school program or strengthening an existing program.

Organizations and businesses

- Become an official Farm to School Month partner! Partners commit to using their communications channels to spread the word about Farm to School Month. Suggested messaging and weekly updates will be provided by NFSN. Contact: info@farmtoschool.org
- Show your support for Farm to School Month by becoming an official sponsor! Contact: info@farmtoschool.org

Teachers

- Plan nutrition education activities, such as Harvest of the Month, featuring a local food product that is in season.
- Connect instructional school gardens and garden-based learning activities to the curriculum.
- Use local foods as a healthy school fundraiser or a feature at a special event.
- Organize farm tours or trips to the local farmers' market.
- Send information about Farm to School Month to parents.

School food service professionals

- Promote Farm to School Month on the school menu and in the cafeteria. Find logos, posters and more at farmtoschoolmonth.org
- Do a taste test of local products or feature one item for lunch, breakfast or snacks.
- Create a farm to school salad bar using local products.

Farmers

- Connect with your local school and offer to conduct a classroom session during October or offer to host a visit to your farm.
- Become a classroom pen pal. Many schools don't have the money for farm field trips, but stories and photos from the farm are the next best thing.
- Promote Farm to School Month on your farm or at your farmers' market booth with posters and other materials, which can be downloaded or ordered from farmtoschoolmonth.org.



Families

- Visit your local farmers' market. Buy something you've never tried before, cook it and share with your family and friends.
- Ask elders in the family for their favorite recipes featuring seasonal products grown in your region.
- Cook with seasonal products as much as possible. Find out what products are grown in your region and when. Most State Departments of Agriculture or Buy Fresh Buy Local chapters can provide you with a regional crop calendar.
- Volunteer at your local school to support a school garden or classroom educational activity.

These materials and those found on farmtoschoolmonth.org were produced by the National Farm to School Network, a project of Tides Center.

