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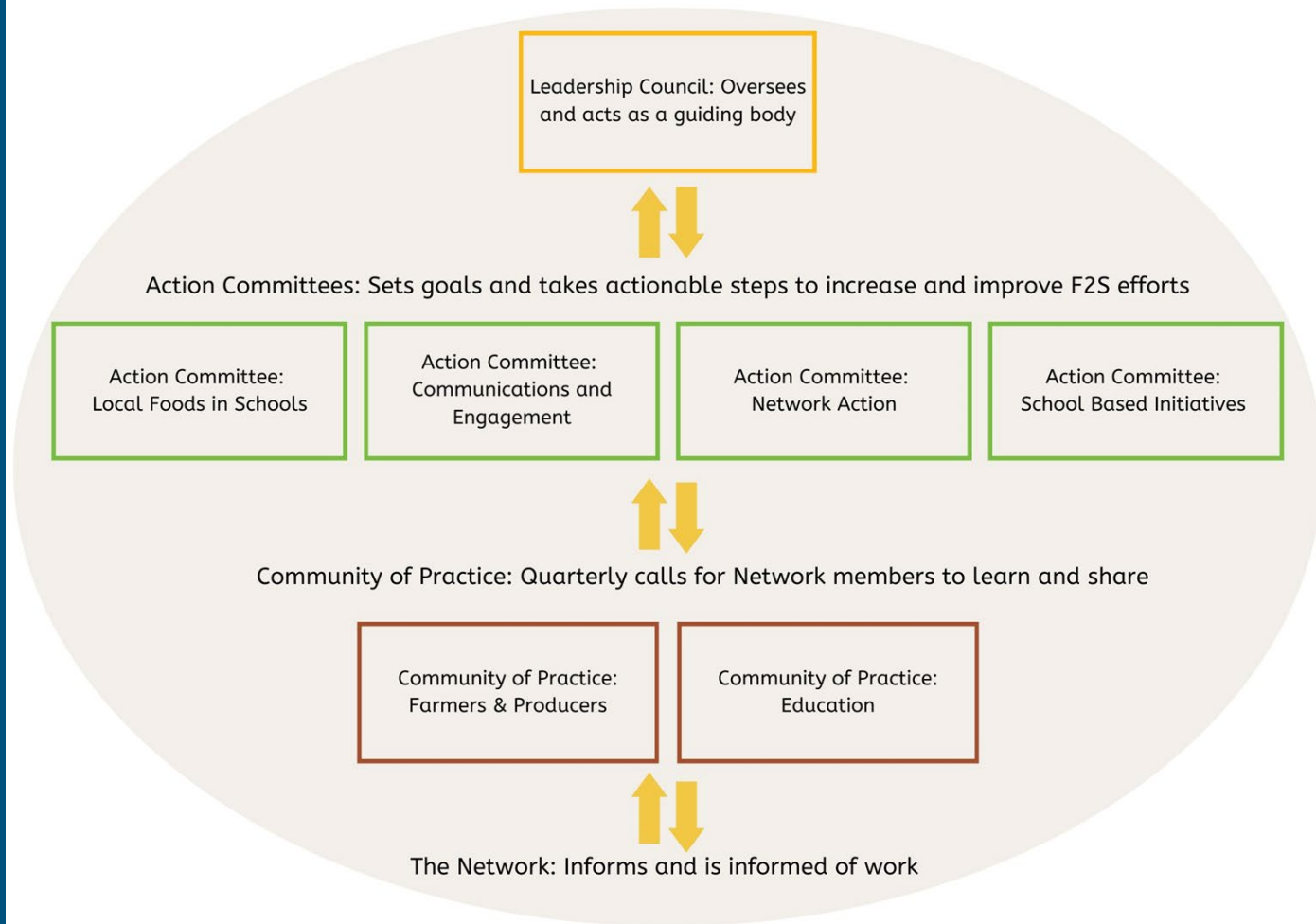
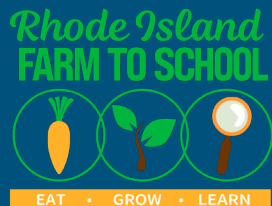


Agenda

- What is farm to school ?
- Why is it important?
- What does farm to school look like in RI?
- How can farm to school support your goals?
- Farm to School Network Announcements



RI Farm to School Network Structure



RI Farm to School Leadership Council

5 Organizational Seats



Sector Seats (up to 10)

- School based initiatives
- Growers/producers
- Environmental Impact
- Food Access
- School Community
- Education
- Regional/National F2S
- RIHSC
- Distributors/Supply Chain

Stephanie Pike (FFRI)

RI Farm to School Network Chair



1. Make it easier for all types of farmers and food producers (large and small businesses) to sell into the school nutrition programs
 2. Make it easier for schools to purchase locally produced and harvest foods
 3. Develop a RI Farm to School Action Plan for expanding access to local food and agricultural education across all school districts in Rhode Island.
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Caitlin Mandel (RIDE)

RI Farm to School Network Co-Chair



1. Work within RI Department of Education to align Farm to School initiatives with the goals of other departments including the Child Nutrition Program, the School Building Authority, and the Curriculum Team.
 2. Provide outreach and training to Child Nutrition Program stakeholders throughout the state and region
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Let's hear more about you

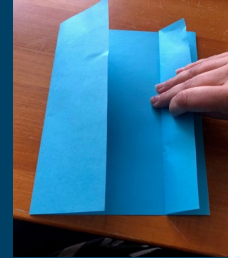


You will need:

- An 8x11"-ish size piece of paper
- A pen, pencil, or marker



Step 1: Holding your paper in landscape orientation, fold each side in so that they meet in the middle.



Step 2: Keep them folded, take the inner edge of each fold, and fold each one back so that it meets the outer edge of the fold.



Step 3: Turn your paper to portrait orientation and draw your face so that it overlaps the folds.

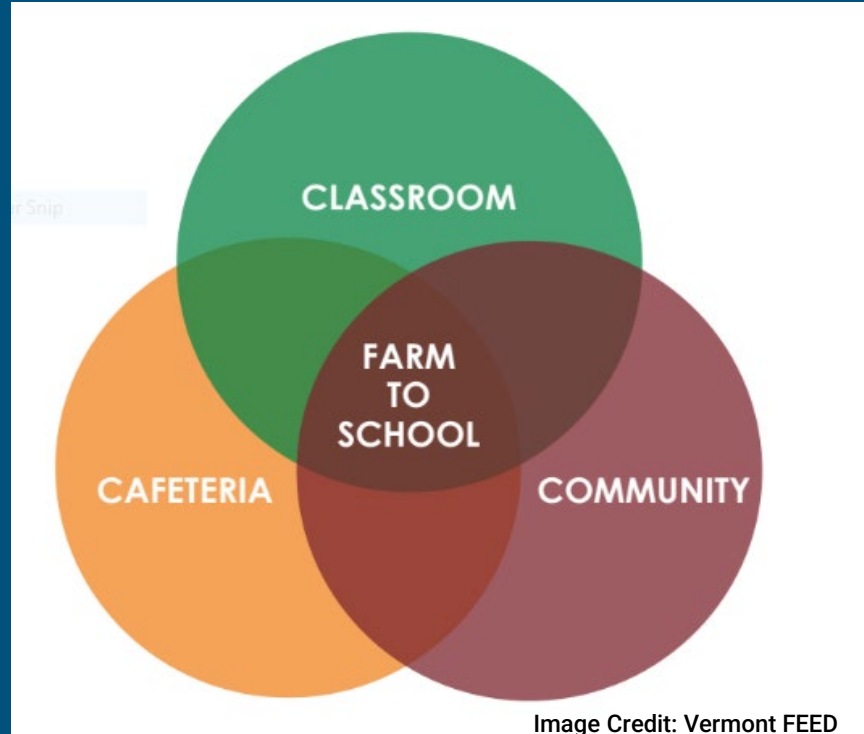
Step 4: Pull open your "mouth" fold & write or draw a food that has a strong memory for you. Pull open your "head" fold & write a word or sentence about that memory.

What is Farm to School?

Farm to School is an initiative that intentionally connects students, school communities, and local food producers, with the goals of improving student nutrition and academic outcomes, strengthening local food systems and communities, and protecting the environment.



The 3 C's of Farm to School



The 3 C's of Farm to School



Cafeteria



Classroom



Community

Benefits of Farm to School Programs



Economic

Each dollar invested in farm to school stimulates an additional **\$0.60-\$2.16** of local economic activity. Farmers see an average 5% increase in income from farm to school sales and establish a long term revenue stream

Education

Overall academic achievement in K-12 is enhanced, including grades and test scores

Public Health

When schools offer school gardens, 44% of students eat more fruits and vegetables; when schools serve local food, 33% of students eat more fruits and vegetables

Parents & Families

Increased food security and positive diet changes; increased student participation in meals at home

How big is Rhode Island's School Food Program?

- **70,553** school lunches & **31,781** school breakfasts served per school day (12.7M lunches & 5.7M breakfasts per school year)
- **135,723** Rhode Island students at **312** schools
- **47.7%** of Rhode Island students qualify for free/reduced meals (RIDE)
- Each year, the state contributes only \$1 Million for school meals to bring in over \$55 Million in Federal funding. Year over year, the Federal invest increases while the state contribution does not.



Sources: RI Dept. of Education LEA Eligibility Report October 2022

What federal programs do schools access to feed students?

- NSLP = The National School Lunch Program
- SBP = School Breakfast Program
- SFSP = The Summer Food Service Program
- CACFP = The Child and Adult Care Food Program (serves childcare program, and includes a separate afterschool meal and supper program).
- FFVP = The Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (healthy snacks and nutrition education)
- CEP/P2 = Universal School Meals (Community Eligibility Provisions and Provision 2) allows students to eat for free. These federal provisions are available to schools with very high free/reduced rates.

The connection between Farm to School and School Meals

If our students are well nourished, their bodies and minds are ready to learn. School nutrition programs are as fundamental to student success as laptops, textbooks, and soccer balls, yet they are often overlooked as an essential part of the education day.

Public schools in Rhode Island serve meals to more than **135,000 students**. That is a tremendous opportunity to nourish kids, improve readiness to learn, develop healthy eating habits, provide new markets to farmers, and strengthen school culture and local communities.

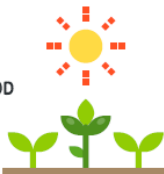


Rhode Island FARM TO SCHOOL



EAT • GROW • LEARN

- **BUILDS** RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN SCHOOLS & LOCAL FARMS
- **SUPPORTS** ACCESS TO LOCAL FOOD
- **CREATES** OPPORTUNITIES FOR EDUCATION & HEALTH PROMOTION
- **BENEFITS** THE LOCAL ECONOMY & ENVIRONMENT



FARMERS WIN

SUPPORT YOUR
COMMUNITY
FARMERS. THEY'RE
YOUR NEIGHBORS!



COMMUNITIES WIN

LOCAL FARMS
PRESERVE
GREEN SPACES
& SUPPORT
BIODIVERSITY.



BUYING LOCAL
INVESTS IN THE
COMMUNITY.

KIDS WIN

LOCAL FOOD IS
NUTRITIOUS, FRESHER
AND TASTES BETTER.



www.rifarmtoschool.org

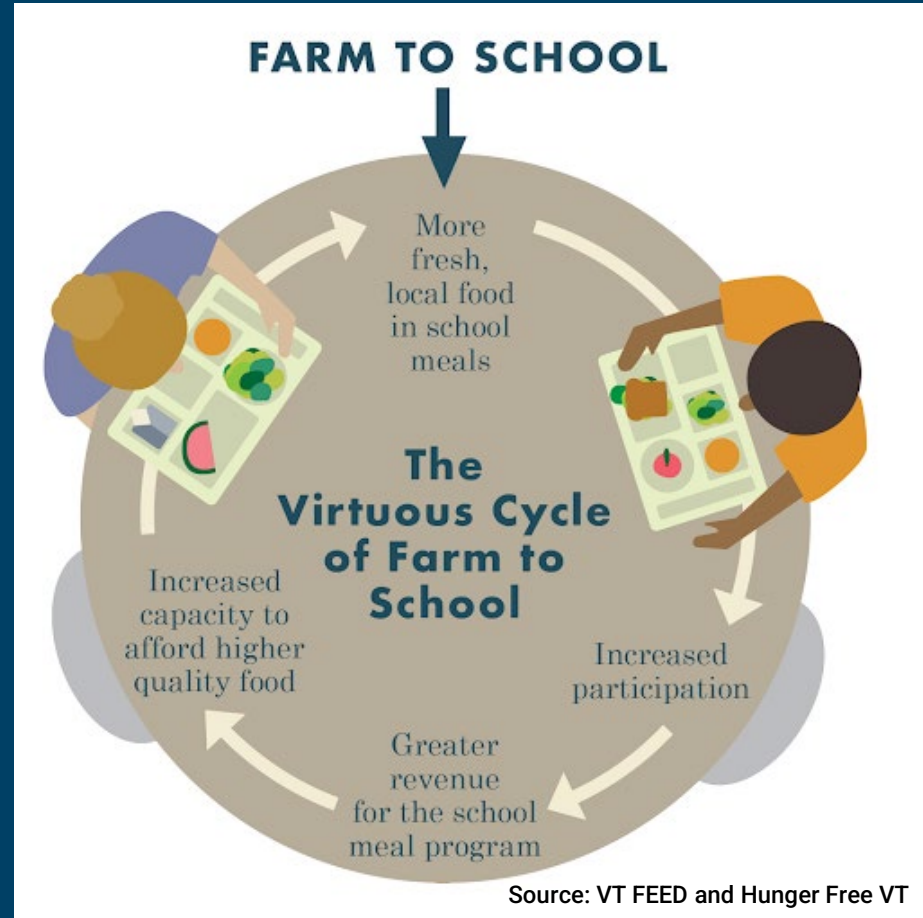
"Encouraging kids to eat healthier while supporting local farmers is a win-win."

-Governor Dan McKee, 2022

"The pandemic reinforced the notion that school food matters. Well-nourished kids are better eaters, better learners and better food citizens"

-Julianne Stelmaszyk, Director of Food Strategy, RI Commerce

Farm to School and universal school meal programs both increase participation in school meals, which improves revenues in the program which allows more local purchasing, leading to more participation.



Farm to School in Rhode Island

79% of SFAs
Participate in at least
one farm to school
activity

89% of SFAs serve
local food

29% of SFAs have an
edible garden

Most popular farm to school activities to offer

60% taste tests and cooking demos

37.8% host student field trips to farm

33.3% have an edible educational school garden



What does Farm to School look like in Rhode Island?



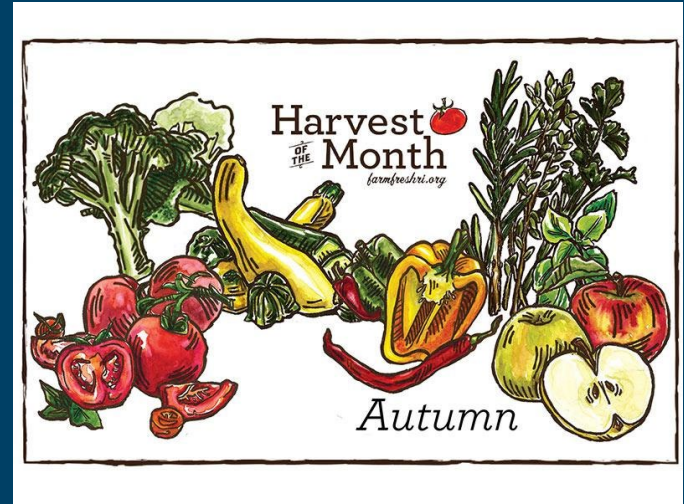
Farm to School in the Cafeteria:

Freight Farms (Cumberland)



Farm to School in the Cafeteria:

Harvest of the Month (South Kingstown)




Farm to School in the Community & Classroom:

Aquidneck Community Table (Newport)



Farm to School in the Classroom:


Sampling Microgreens in Pawtucket with the Local Food Ambassador Program



LOCAL FOOD AMBASSADOR

Microgreens


Microgreens are baby plants. Some of our favorites like carrots, broccoli, peas and lettuce all start out as little sprouts that turn into microgreens before growing into mature plants. Microgreens are harvested when they are about 1.5-2 inches tall, and their nutrient content is highest, making them a healthy snack. Today in class, students planted their own microgreens and tried out some samples with their Aramark school lunch!



Caring for and Harvesting your Microgreens

Keep the soil moist, like a wrung out sponge, but not soaking wet, like mud. Dump out any water that is still in the drip tray within an hour of watering.

Snip them with scissors at the soil line when they are about 1.5-2 inches tall, about 10-12 days. Rinse with cold water, and toss them with some salad dressing, add to a sandwich, into salads, or just eat raw!



Then....do it again!




Pull out the remaining roots and stems, toss them in the compost bin, and mix the soil with a fork. Sprinkle on a fresh layer of seeds, top it with a thin layer of soil, and give it water and sunlight for another harvest!

Today's Taste Test

Today we tried microgreens with our lunch! Did you like the microgreens that you tried? (circle one face)

😊 😐 😞

What did the microgreens taste like to you?
What was your favorite part about planting them?





Farm to School in the
Classroom:

Portsmouth Ag
Innovation Farm



A Fully-Integrated Farm to School Program (cafeteria + classroom + community)

Smithfield Public Schools

Our leaves are the experiential learning

Leaves give the plant a pathway to energy through photosynthesis. These activities are the things that energize us!

Field Trips



Garden Tastings!



School Gardens



How does Farm School Impact our Local Food System?



Supply Chain Assistance (SCA)

Goal: Provided directly to School Food Authorities (SFA) to help them cope with unprecedented challenges in purchasing and receiving food through their normal distribution channels.

Amount awarded: **\$1 Million**

Local Food in Schools (LFS)

Goal: Support economic opportunities and a more resilient local food system by purchasing locally and regionally produced, minimally processed or unprocessed, food, targeting purchases from socially disadvantaged farmers/producers

Amount awarded: **\$560,189.00**

These funds have been
a game changer for
schools AND local food
producers

They help demonstrate
the potential demand
from the school
market channel

Value added products w/ local ingredients

Montana Marinara combines USDA FOODS canned tomatoes with Montana-grown produce! Processed in Ronan, Montana.

MONTANA MARINARA



TOMATO SAUCE



Montana grown

BUTTERNUT SQUASH, CARROTS, ONIONS, AND SAFFLOWER OIL
in a Montana-made Marinara Sauce



Leverage your school food funds for a Made in Montana product. Ordering Montana Marinara is a way to put your USDA allocation to work for local foods. Each pound of Montana Marinara sauce provides roughly \$0.33 to Montana farmers that produce the ingredients.

ORDERING: Montana Marinara will be on the USDA Foods Annual Survey in February 2022. For the 2022-2023 school year, OPI will cover 100% of the production cost with USDA Supply Chain Assistance Funds. Production in future years will be dependent on school district purchases.



Scan or visit:
<https://bit.ly/MTMarinara>

1/2 cup serving of Montana Marinara
equals 1/2 cup serving red/orange
vegetables!

Scan the QR code to watch a video about Montana Marinara and see how the product is made!

How can our Farm to School Network Partners Help You?



How are we working to meet the challenges of more local food in school meals?

Challenge	Action
Cafeteria service infrastructure and culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Supporting upgraded kitchen design❑ Upgrading equipment
Cost & availability of local foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ LFS and SCA funds❑ Exploring value added products with expanded seasonality❑ Exploring light processing
Food Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Connecting farmers and nutrition personnel
Distribution and Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Working with Market Mobile
Student and Community Buy In	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❑ Nutrition and Food Literacy Education

RIDE Programs



1. Learning Inside Out Grants
 2. Green Ribbon Schools
 3. School Construction Bonds
 4. MPAs for consulting services for school kitchen design and sourcing kitchen equipment
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FARM FRESH RI

Farm to School

Educational programs in food literacy, cooking and gardening

Market Mobile for purchasing local food for school meals

Recipes scaled for food service

Farmer and product specific promo materials



Greenville,
Rhode Island

Steere Orchard is a 4th generation family orchard founded in 1930. They are the largest orchard in Rhode Island, and also home to some of the oldest RI Greening Apple trees, the Rhode Island state fruit.



Scan this code to learn
more about Steere
Orchard!

**FARM
FRESH RI**
A HUB FOR LOCAL FOOD SINCE 2004

farmfreshri.org

URI Cooperative Extension



URI School Garden Academy

URI School Garden Mentorship
Program (*accepting applications
until October 31st*)

Food Recovery for Rhode Island

<https://web.uri.edu/coopext/programs/>

URI Community Nutrition Education:



THE
UNIVERSITY
OF RHODE ISLAND
COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION



Free USDA-funded hands-on
nutrition education for eligible
schools (at least 50% of students qualify for
free/reduced meals)

Website with healthy, low-cost
recipes, nutrition handouts, and
videos in English and Spanish

<https://web.uri.edu/community-nutrition/>



Local Food Ambassador Program

School Meal Outreach Toolkit

Supports schools & Wellness
Committees with promoting
nutrition and healthy eating

Breakfast for School Wellness
Leaders - October 26, 2023



STRATEGIES TO
IMPROVE OUTREACH & COMMUNICATION,
INCREASE MEAL BENEFIT APPLICATIONS,
AND IMPROVE FOOD ACCESS

2023-2024

rihsc.org

Food Waste Partners



MEANS Database Rescues leftover food and makes it available to nonprofits fighting food security -

<https://meansdatabase.org/>



The RI Schools Recycling Club teaches students how to be stewards of their environment and keep food waste out of the landfill - <https://rirecyclingclub.org/>

Important Farm to School Network Announcements



It's USDA Farm to School Census Time



What?

A national survey that collects detailed information about farm to school activities

Why?

Helps us understand how farm to school supports resilient local food systems and contributes to student experiences at school and helps policymakers secure funding to support farm to school expansion

How?

In October 2023, FNS will send each SFA their own unique link to the Farm to School Census web-based survey and will share a webinar

Questions on the Farm to School Census



- ☐ Estimated amount spent on all food/local food
- ☐ Where schools purchased local items
- ☐ What types of local items are purchased
- ☐ Types of farm to school activities your district is participating in
- ☐ Number of edible school gardens
- ☐ Staff time dedicated to farm to school programs

Promo Kits Available Now



Available Items

Event Poster Board

Retractable Banner

Table Runner

Aprons

Stickers for Kids and/or Food Packaging

Clings

Decals

Logo Stickers

A-Frame Sidewalk Sign

Bookmarks

Fruit/Veggie Costume

Available on the RI Farm to School
Website: <https://rifarmtoschool.org/>

RI Farm to School Institute



A unique year-long professional learning opportunity for selected school teams to build relationships, skills, and a collaborative action plan implementing farm to school in their school.

Coming in 2024 !

Farm to School Stakeholder Gathering: **Save the Date!**

Thursday November 9th 2023
At Farm Fresh RI
3 to 6pm

Come learn about and celebrate farm to
school in Rhode Island and
help shape our 5 year Network Action
Plan



Coming Up

- RI Schools Recycling Club
- Farm Fresh RI & Tour of Market Mobile
- Share your ideas to inform our Farm to School Action Plan



Thank You!



Sign up to receive updates
on all things Farm to
School



<https://rifarmtoschool.org/enews/>