

# Ohio Farm to School Newsletter

National, Regional and State Updates

December 2017



Springfield City Schools offered a cooking class for youth following harvest of cucumbers from their school garden this summer. See more about their Farm to School activities on page 3.



April 25-27, 2018 | Cincinnati, Ohio

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## National Farm to Cafeteria Conference Cincinnati, OH Important Dates:

Scholarship application period:  
December 18, 2017 – Feb. 12, 2018

Early bird registration:  
Jan. 29 - March 9, 2018

Registration closes: April 9, 2018

Conference: April 25-27

## BIG STRIDES WERE MADE IN 2017

By Carol Smathers Ohio Farm to School Director



### Great Lakes Great Apple Crunch

Rallied enthusiasm for local foods in schools by gathering students, friends, and/or colleagues to bite into fresh, Ohio-grown apples.

Highlights:

- Ohio record! 107,286 reached
- Social media exposure
- Donated apples from the Ohio Apple Growers
- Resolutions from local governments
- Special events
  - Ecole Kenwood
  - Columbus Public Health



This year there were a whopping 1.5 MILLION Crunches in the Great Lakes Region! In Ohio 319 *different locations registered*. We more than doubled the number of Crunchers from last year.

### Ohio School Nutrition Association features Farm to School at Fall Focus Regional Workshops

Ohio Farm to School presented information about procuring local foods in the cafeterias at all five of the meeting locations; Springfield, Lima, Mentor, Huron and Mason with more than 500 members attending the meetings collectively. We also promoted the National Conference coming to our state.

### New Success Stories in 2017

- OSU Makes Goal to Serve More Local Foods
- A Cleveland Head Start Enjoys It's Garden
- Civic Garden Center provides lessons
- Bauman Orchards provides 3 million apples to Columbus City Schools
- Check our website for these and more at [farmtoschool@osu.edu](mailto:farmtoschool@osu.edu)

### “Ohio Days” in Central Ohio school districts

Now in their second year of offering locally sourced “Ohio Days” meals each month (and local apples throughout every month), Columbus City Schools is making new connections with more local producers and substantially increasing the portion of their food budget spent on local foods. Franklin County Public Health has rallied several schools in the Columbus area to also serve an Ohio-sourced meal each month. FCPH has developed an extraordinary Food Service Director Toolkit, a local foods directory, and materials to help students become more aware of the local foods in their cafeterias.

### Ohio chosen as site for 2018 Farm to Cafeteria Conference— Plan Now to Attend!

During April 25-27 a Cincinnati event will promote our local food economy and draw attention to our elected officials about the importance of Farm to School. There will be preconference meetings with an Ohio focus for producers and food service directors.

On Thursday, seminars will be offered in several tracks from ECE to Farm to College. The field trips on Friday will provide those attending the highlights of our state and the opportunity to network with those in the F2S field.

# Ohio Success Story

## Springfield City Schools has received two USDA Farm to School Grants fostering garden education and procurement

By Amy Fovargue

During 2015, Springfield City School District Springfield received an USDA Farm to School planning grant for more than \$44,000. Springfield City Schools (SCSD) is an urban district with 8,000 students, the Springfield Grows, Farm to School Initiative contributed to a more economically stable, academically strong, physically healthier, and food secure community. They had two overarching goals; to support the academic, social and career success of youth through project-based learning through agriculture, and to develop an integrated local food system that links local producers with the various SCSD food programs.

The planning grant accelerated the success of the initiative by providing the initial support to retain a part-time project coordinator to ensure the development of a stakeholder team and a strategic plan that ensures an integrated local food system. Sherry Chen was hired as a part-time farm manager to experiment with and evaluate project-based learning opportunities that connect to the Common Core standards in three pilot schools before the project is to be scaled up to the remaining 12 buildings in the district. This year they will add two schools and an early childhood center.

In 2017, they also received the USDA Farm to School implementation grant for more than \$98,000. This project is identifying sources for locally produced food and linking them with the Springfield City School District's distributor as well as supporting direct linkages between the school district and area food producers. It will also pilot an innovative community-based approach to processing bulk items, for school-based snack or after-school programs. They are addressing local lettuce and may add apples.

Garden-based activities, including Project Based Learning, will continue to develop at schools with existing gardens. The project will also provide support for installing two winter gardens at schools, transforming one school garden into a dual school-community garden, and increase access to locally grown food through Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) programs.

Sherry Chen, the farm manager is working with three



neighborhood women, who serve on an advisory board. They also offered a summer cooking class using produce from the garden and had a farm stand (*pictured above*) at an elementary school.

Chen provides garden science lessons with first graders. "We have a quality vs quantity approach to our education aspect. We have one student returning as a mentor to the year round middle school garden club program. They typically offer a short lesson then go into their project in the garden. The south side schools are struggling academically so the lessons have to be relevant. These grants are a godsend!" she added.

"When I hear that they remember what I taught them, I end up appreciating the little things, because sometimes when working with the younger kids, it feels like I am just herding squirrels," she said.

Carla Patrick a first grade teacher that has had Chen do guest teaching in her classes is thrilled to have the garden programming. "The kids call Sherry the "Plant Lady" and they get excited when she comes for a visit, because her lessons are so engaging. Our kids come from low income homes and this type of experience is not something they have been exposure to," Patrick explained.

To teach a plant's life cycle, Chen teaches the first grader's how to plant seeds in cups, then they get to take them home to continue the learning. In her future work with the schools, Chen plans to do local food capacity building and would like to develop a set of lessons then provide a train the trainer course, which she feels will have more of an impact on the students reached.



## A Roadmap for State Farm to School Policy

### State Farm to School Legislative Survey: 2002-2017

Farm to school policies have been a key strategy for making local food procurement, food education and school gardens a reality for millions of children. To support the continued growth of state policy advocacy, we've updated one of our signature resources that tracks how farm to school supportive-bills strengthening the farm to school movement. The **State Farm to School Legislative Survey: 2002-2017** offers a state-by-state review of every proposed farm to school policy since 2002, analysis of legislative trends, case studies of successful advocacy efforts and other resources for those working to advance farm to school in their communities.

Since 2002, 46 states, including Washington, D.C. and the U.S. Virgin Islands, have proposed 491 bills and resolutions supportive of farm to school activities. Since the last legislative survey published in 2014, Louisiana, Arkansas, Wyoming, Utah and Arizona have enacted their first farm to school legislation, with only a handful of states remaining that have yet to pass farm to school policy.

The State Farm to School Legislative Survey is designed to offer farm to school advocates a roadmap to learn about and compare existing, potentially replicable state farm to school laws, policies and programs in order to advance new legislation in your state. More info <http://www.farmentoschool.org/resources-main/statelegisativesurvey>

### School Garden Updates

We are excited to share the link for our new school/afterschool gardening newsletter, featuring information about our upcoming events including the school garden bus tour, school garden educational series and the school garden conference, all coming up soon. Other information about school gardening including season extension how-to and a link to fall garden lesson plans is included. You may view the newsletter by clicking on the attached link, but in the future the newsletter will only be sent to you if you click on the link provided and select the "Follow Susan Hogan" tab. They will not sell your information as the newsletter is strictly educational in design, and there will be no more than 4-6 newsletters a year. <https://www.smores.com/tha8s>

#### On-going resources:

- Finding local farms, buyers, or restaurants that purchase/ serve local foods, visit **Ohio MarketMaker**: [www.ohiomarketmaker.com](http://www.ohiomarketmaker.com)*
- Finding farms in and around Ohio that sell directly to the public through local farmers' markets, CSA's, and on-farm sales, visit **OEFFA's Good Earth Guide** <http://www.oeffa.org/search-geg.php>*
- GroundWorks Community**  
*URL: [www.edweb.net/schoolgardens](http://www.edweb.net/schoolgardens)*
- Ohio Proud** is a resource for identifying local farms and food producers:  
*<http://www.ohioproud.org/>*
- National Farm to School Network**  
*<http://www.farmentoschool.org/about>*

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