Apple Crunch Day is October 24th!

With the leaves turning colors, the fall harvest underway, and kids happily settled into the school year, October is the perfect month to celebrate Farm to School! See page 7 to register for the Great Lakes Apple Crunch Day, and more ways to share your enthusiasm for Farm to School this month.
Welcome Laura Kington!
First, I am pleased to share with you that Laura Kington has joined the Ohio Farm to School Program. Laura has a degree from OSU in Environment and Natural Resources. In addition to hands-on experience working on a farm this summer, she has lots of experience with local foods issues and has been involved with Local Matters, Fresh Foods Here, and the Real Food Challenge. She will be coordinating Farm to School events and activities, sending out monthly newsletters and other communications, and responding to requests for information. Please join me in welcoming Laura!

Farm to School Policy
Farm to School initiatives recognize the importance of providing food and eating environments that support good nutrition. It is not enough to provide individuals with knowledge and skills; we must make the healthy choice the easy choice, especially in schools. Environment change and policy interventions are viewed to be the most effective strategies for creating improvements nutritious eating on a large scale. Federal, state and local policies affect a community’s ability to implement farm to school practices. In addition to food and agriculture policies, other types of policies such as those affecting program funding and defining school wellness practices that impact the farm to school community.

Federal Level Farm to School Policies
About every five years, the United States congress renews two massive pieces of legislation related to Farm to School: the Farm Bill and the Child Nutrition Act. The 2010 Child Nutrition Reauthorization, also known as the “Healthy Hunger-Free Act”, authorized the USDA to set new standards for food sold in school meals and any food sold during the regular school day, including vending and fundraisers. It provided resources for serving fresh produce from local farm and school gardens. It also mandated $5 million annually for Farm to School program grants. In 2011, the Food Safety Modernization Act was passed. This was the first major overhaul of our nation’s food safety practices since 1938.

State Level Farm to School Policies
State-level policies fall into three main categories: funding for purchases of local foods, funding for Farm to School programs and staff, and regulations that enable or ease restrictions on selling or purchasing local foods for producers and schools. According to a 2015 a report from the National Farm to School Network, 46 states have proposed farm to school legislation and 40 states have enacted it. At this time, Ohio lags behind other states that have varied state-level policies in place to support farm to school practices.

Local Level Farm to School Policies
Local farm to school policies include countywide food action plans, school wellness policies, school district procurement policies, and school district fundraising policies.

October 8 Farm to School Policy Forum
I welcome everyone to participate in the Farm to School Advisory and policy forum on the afternoon of October 8 at the Ohio 4-H Center on the OSU campus (see agenda on page 3). This meeting will focus on policies that support or hinder Farm to School efforts. This will be helpful information for professionals who want to incorporate policy, systems, and environment (PSE) change initiatives in their work.

We will discuss which types of policies are most needed in Ohio and learn how we can all help support the adoption of policies that will enable more students, farmers, and communities to benefit from their preschools, k-12 schools and universities procuring fresh, local foods.

Our featured speaker will be Natalie Talis, Policy Associate with the National Farm to School Network. The National Farm to School Network is the voice for the farm to school movement (including Farm to Preschool and Farm to University) and the leading resource for information about national, state, and local policies that impact farm to school. Natalie will explain farm to school policy trends, provide updates on pending legislation, and help us explore potential policy initiatives in Ohio.

Other contributors to the policy discussion will include Cheryl Graffagnino, City of Columbus Healthy Food Access Program Manager and Bryn Bird of Bird Havens’ Farms.

If you can join us, please RSVP to Laura Kington at kington.10@osu.edu.

Enjoy Farm to School Month!
Carol Smathers
Ohio Farm to School Advisory Board Meeting & Policy Forum: October 8th, 2015

Our Fall advisory board meeting is just around the corner! Next Thursday, we will enjoy a lunch and advisory board meeting, followed by a special policy forum. We would like to invite you to attend either or both components of this afternoon!

Please RSVP to Laura Kington, at Kington.10@osu.edu, to let us know your plans:
- I will attend the lunch, advisory meeting, and policy forum on the 8th (RSVP by October 4 for lunch)
- I will attend the policy forum only (2:30-4:30)
- I would like to call in for the advisory group meeting and/or the policy forum

Farm to School Advisory and Policy Forum
Ohio 4-H Center, 2201 Fred Taylor Dr, Columbus, OH 43210
October 8, 2015
Agenda

Noon  Lunch (meet and greet)
12:30  General updates and announcements
1pm   Farm to School Month and Ohio Apple Crunch!
      2015 National Farm to School Census update
1:30 pm Future of Ohio Farm to School
2:15 Break
2:30 pm Farm to School Policy Forum
4:30pm Adjourn

Farm to School Policy Forum
Featured Speaker: Natalie Talis, Policy Associate with the National Farm to School Network

Discuss which types of policies are most needed in Ohio and learn how we can all help support the adoption of policies that will enable more students, farmers, and communities to benefit from their schools and universities procuring fresh, local foods.

Discussion leaders will be: Ohio Farm to School State Lead, Carol Smathers, and Natalie Talis, Policy Associate with the National Farm to School Network. The National Farm to School Network is the voice for the farm to school movement (including Farm to Preschool and Farm to University) and the leading resource for information about national, state, and local policies that impact farm to school.

Contributors will also include:
Natalie Talis, Policy Associate with the National Farm to School Network
Carol Smathers, Ohio Farm to School State Lead
Cheryl Graffagnino, City of Columbus Healthy Food Access Program Manager
Bryn Bird, Bird’s Haven Farms
Get Ready Now!
Prepare to Apply for the National Farm to School Grant

Exciting news: the USDA is expecting to triple the funding available for its 2017 round of national farm to school grants. The Request for Applications (RFA) will be released in October, and summer is the perfect time to prepare to apply. You can help to ensure your project earns a share of the available funds by doing the following now:

1. Gather your team!
   - Recruit a dedicated, diverse team of teachers, administrators, school food professionals, and parents from your school to develop a plan of action. If your school has a School Wellness Team, that’s a great place to start.

2. Find a grant writer
   - An experienced grant writer can save you time and help to ensure that your application communicates your vision clearly while meeting the application requirements.

3. Connect with supporting organizations
   - Taking time to develop relationships with local organizations can be key to a successful long-term farm to school project. Find professional partners in your community who share in your vision.

The purpose of the USDA Farm to School Grant Program is to assist eligible entities in implementing farm to school programs that improve access to local foods in eligible schools. Each year the USDA awards up to $5 million in competitive grants for training, supporting operations, planning, purchasing equipment, developing school gardens, developing partnerships, and implementing farm to school programs.

The USDA shares grant program information through their Farm to School E-letter. Sign up here to stay up-to-date on the FY2017 RFA and National Farm to School Program.

Check out the archived FY2016 RFA and find more guidance here:
http://www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool/farm-school-grant-program
**Garden Ecology Resource Guide**  
Megan Krintz, an MS candidate in Environmental Education at UW-SP, produced a resource pamphlet for how educators are using the garden setting as a way to teach ecological concepts. These concepts, as well as garden activities which teach them, are explained in the 16-page guide:  
http://issuu.com/gardenecologysourceguide/docs/garden_ecology_resource_guide

**Healthy Schools: The Role of Parents in Promoting Healthy School Environments**  
Successful parent engagement programs establish effective relationships between school personnel and parents that reinforce children’s health and learning and cut across multiple settings—at home, in school, and in the community. Watch this informative discussion, hosted by Healthy Schools Campaign, about parent engagement around school health:  
www.healthyschoolscampaign.org/events/healthy-schools-the-role-of-parents-in-promoting-healthy-school-environment

**New Report Highlights Success of USDA Farm to School Grant Program**  
In September, Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced a new report that provides an in-depth look at the first three years of the USDA’s Farm to School Grant Program. The report shows the program has helped 12,300 schools improve healthful meal options with local ingredients. Read more report highlights here:  

**School Garden Food Safety Training**  
The University of AZ Cooperative Extension has created online training videos on school garden food safety. These trainings were designed specifically for Arizona schools to implement the practices in their Food Safety Plan so the garden could be certified by the AZ Department of Health Services so the produce could be used in the school cafeteria. But any garden manager may want to view the videos to make sure they are implementing safe practices in their school garden to minimize microbial food safety hazards:  
http://cals.arizona.edu/agliteracy/school-garden-food-safety-training

**On-going resources:**  
- **Finding local farms, buyers, or restaurants that purchase/serve local foods**, visit [Ohio MarketMaker](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.ohiomarketmaker.com)  
  [OEFFA’s searchable on-line directory](http://www.ohiomarketmaker.com)
- **Farm to School Webinars: National Good Food Network Website**:  
  [http://www.ngfn.org/resources/ngfn-cluster-calls/farm-to-school](http://www.ngfn.org/resources/ngfn-cluster-calls/farm-to-school)  
  NGFN offers four recorded webinars on the topic of Farm to School at this time: “Food Hubs and Farm to School”, “Market-Based Models for Increasing Access to Healthy Food: Defining What Works”, “School Food FOCUS”, and “National Farm to School Network”. You can also sign up from their website to receive notice of upcoming webinars.
- **GroundWorks Community** [URL](http://www.edweb.net/schoolgardens)
On-Going Funding Opportunities

**Fruit Tree Planting Foundation - Orchard Donations**
The Fruit Tree Planting Foundation (FTPF) is dedicated to planting fruitful trees and plants to alleviate world hunger, combat global warming, strengthen communities, and improve the surrounding air, soil, and water. FTPF programs donate orchards where the harvest will best serve communities for generations, at places such as community gardens, public schools, city/state parks, low-income neighborhoods, Native American reservations, international hunger relief sites, and animal sanctuaries. Recipients must be nonprofits, public schools, or government entities. In addition, the “Fruit Tree 101” program creates outdoor edible orchard classrooms at public schools of all levels, across the country, to provide generations of students with environmental education opportunities and a source of organic fruit for improved school lunch nutrition. 
**Deadline: Rolling**

**Home Depot’s Retool Your School - Campus Improvement Grant**
Home Depot’s Retool Your School program provides grants through a two-tier structure for campus and facility improvements at historically black colleges and universities. The program awards Tier I and Tier II grants based on a combination of consumer voting and advisory board panel selections. The college with the highest score will receive a $50,000 Tier I grant; thirteen other applicants will receive Tier II grants of $10,000 each. An additional three Campus Pride grants of $25,000 each will be awarded to the schools with the most votes and social media activity, as determined by Home Depot. Grant funds will go toward an improvement project at each school that is likely to have impact on the lives of students, faculty, and alumni for generations to come. **Deadline: Rolling**

**Let’s Move Salad Bars to School Foundation**
believes that salad bars + schools = more fruits and vegetables for children. They could get a free salad bar (or multiples for multiple school sites) into your schools by end of November. A fairly easy application is now open, and must be initiated by the school district nutrition director. For great ideas for other equipment, recipes and procedures with real-world examples go to [http://www.saladbars2schools.org/](http://www.saladbars2schools.org/). **Deadline: Rolling**

**Awesome Food $1000 Project Grants**
Each month, Awesome Food will give one applicant $1,000 to help pull off an awesome idea involving food. The ideas must relate to food in some form, and the definition will be more inclusive than exclusive. Examples could include educating the public about DIY-farming, creating an ad-hoc eatery in a subway car, or recording videos of immigrants’ recipes. Anyone is eligible to apply: for profit, nonprofit, individuals, companies, schools, adults and children. Applications are reviewed as they are received. One grant is awarded each month. **Deadline: Rolling**

**Simply Organic 1%**
The Simply Organic 1% fund supports and promotes the growth of organic and sustainable agriculture, including research, education and efficient/quality improvement projects. **Deadline: Rolling**
On-Going Funding Opportunities

**Scotties Facial Tissues annual Video and Essay Contest: TREES ROCK!**
Did you know that Scotties Facial Tissues (which plant 3 Trees for Every 1 they use) puts on an annual Video and Essay Contest called TREES ROCK!? The contest is for 3rd through 8th graders in the 50 United States and Washington D.C. They are sure you are always looking for ways to engage your kids in the classroom or in a club. TREES ROCK! is an excellent way to get kids to be creative on their own or as a team when learning about trees and the environment.

There are lots of prizes to be won and 2 schools will receive $10,000. To learn more, check out their videos on the Growing School Gardens Home Page. To download all of the important documents to get started, go to www.scottiestreesrock.com

**Deadline: Rolling**

**Healthy Playground Makeover Sweepstakes**
Anyone can now enter on behalf of a Pre-K or elementary school to win our annual Healthy Playground Makeover Sweepstakes. Entering once a day, everyday increases the chance to make a big difference at a local school. Enter today! Little kids have a chance to make big changes too! Pre-K Schools and Head Start programs are eligible to enter to win a Smart from the Start Award. Ten schools will be awarded a $2,500 grant and one grand prize winning school will receive a $20,000 grant. The grants go toward making healthy improvements at the school, and incorporating energy balance concepts into classrooms.

Learn more at http://www.togethercounts.com/at-school/win-for-your-school/sweepstakes
**Deadline: Rolling**

**USDA Requests Applications for Rural Child Poverty Nutrition Center**
This grant will support strategies to reduce child food insecurity in rural communities.
**Deadline: Rolling**

**The Pollination Project** is a nonprofit organization that provides $1,000 seed grants to individual change makers. The Project has granted numerous awards to various small agriculture related operations who want to bring change into a community. The Project has received repeated media reports on how the organization is impacting small agricultural practices. New grants are awarded daily and there is no deadline for when to apply. We hope to have someone from the Project speak at a future meeting.
**Deadline: Rolling**

**Micro-Grants/ Karma for Cara Foundation**
These grants are awarded to children 18 and under to fund service projects in their communities, with ideas including rebuilding a playground or turning a vacant lot into a community garden.
Go to http://www.ysa.org/karma_for_cara_foundation
**Deadline: Rolling**
Events & Webinars

Farm to School Month!

From the National Farm to School Network...

Join us as we celebrate the connections happening all over the country between children and local food. From taste tests in the cafeteria and nutrition education activities in the classroom, to farm visits and school garden harvest parties, schools, preschools, communities and organizations in all 50 states and D.C. will be celebrating this October.

More info at www.farmtoschool.org/our-work/farm-to-school-month

Find Ohio Apples!

Our Ohio asked Facebook followers for their help in spreading the word about all the wonderful apple orchards in our state.

They shared their favorites with us, and here is the list. The most nominated orchard is Hillcrest Orchard of Walnut Creek, in Tuscarawas County. Congratulations!

More info on Ohio orchards at http://ourohio.org/community/food-and-farm-profiles/1238/a-is-for-apple

Great Lakes Great Apple Crunch

Thurs, Oct 22 | 12 pm

Join the Great Lakes region in the annual Great Apple Crunch! Students, teachers, chefs, and food service directors will all take a collective CRUNCH on a locally sourced apple to commemorate Farm to School month and celebrate local orchardists. Register online to receive an official crunch guide and logo for promotion at your school, then share your photos on Facebook and Twitter using the #GreatAppleCrunch or #F2Smonth hashtags!

Please register at bit.ly/GreatLakesGreatAppleCrunch
More info at www.facebook.com/GreatLakesGreatAppleCrunch

Farm to School Big Day of Action

Tell Congress to strengthen Farm to School on October 22
Thurs, Oct 22

The Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010 expires on Sept. 30, and Congress has yet to pass a new version of this bill (also known as the Child Nutrition Act Reauthorization, or CNR).

Make your voice heard: Join us in calling on Congress to pass a strong CNR that supports farm to school across the country! Make sure your legislators know that farm to school is a common sense approach to child nutrition that empowers kids and their families to make informed food choices while strengthening the local economy and contributing to vibrant communities.

Pledge to join our Big Day of Farm to School Action on Oct. 22, 2015, and let the world know that farm to school is a win for kids, farmers and communities!

Sign-on your support for the Farm to School Act. This bill must be included in CNR to ensure that the USDA Farm to School Grant Program can meet the needs of farmers and schools nationwide. (If you represent an organization like a school, business or nonprofit, you can also sign on behalf of your organization here.)

More info at www.farmtoschool.org/dayofaction
To find more festivals near you, visit http://ohiofestivals.net

9th Annual Stinner Summit
October 16 | Malabar Farm

The Summit, held at a different location each year, is a highly engaging and participatory event that draws stakeholders from around Ohio (and sometimes beyond!). Attendees with diverse interests and expertise work together to develop projects that address healthy agroecosystems and sustainable communities. At the end of the day, the Ben Stinner Endowment pledges $15,000 in support of one or more projects. Breakfast and lunch are provided for attendees, and always showcase local food and local producers. The event is free of charge and open to any who are interested, though space is limited.

More info and register at http://amp.osu.edu/index.php/save-the-date-for-the-9th-annual-stinner-summit/

Norton Cider Festival
October 2 - 4 | Norton
More info at http://www.norton ciderfestival.com/

Sauerkraut Festival
October 10 - 11 | Waynesville
More info at http://www.sauerkrautfestival.com/

School Wellness Team Training
November 6 | Columbus
Action for Healthy Kids’ school health team training teaches school community members how to work collaboratively to improve school policy and practices related to students eating better and moving more. Walk through the free Game On Program to begin assessing your school environment, creating an action plan and implementing activities. Make student wellness a priority in your school!

More info at www.actionforhealthykids.org/events/event/363

Smoked Meat & BBQ Festival
October 16 - 17 | Nelsonville
More info at ohiobbq.org

Ohio Farm Bureau Fall Farm Tours
Oct. 3 Knox County,
Oct. 4 Stark County,
Oct. 10 Lucas County,
Oct. 11 Trumbull County,
Oct. 11 Columbiana County,
Oct. 17 and 18 Coshocton County.

Contact these county Farm Bureau offices for tour information.
Dig in to USDA Team Nutrition resources!
Team Nutrition offers a variety of materials that can enhance your farm to school program, including curriculum, event ideas, posters, and stickers. All Team Nutrition materials are available for download on the website and print copies can be provided for free to any school operating the National School Lunch Program. Go to http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/team-nutrition

Here are a few of our favorites:

- **Dig In! Standards-Based Nutrition Education from the Ground Up**: Explore a word of possibilities in the garden and on your plate using ten inquiry-based lessons to engage 5th and 6th graders in growing, harvesting, tasting, and learning about fruits and vegetables.

- **The Great Garden Detective Adventure**: Discover what fruits and vegetables are sweetest, crunchiest, and juiciest through a series of investigations and fun experiences connecting the school garden to the classroom, cafeteria, and home with this eleven-lesson curriculum for 3rd and 4th graders.

- **Popular Events Idea Booklet**: Discover fun ways to promote nutrition and physical activity at your elementary or middle school with ideas for 20 themed events, from scavenger hunts to try-day Fridays!

- **Make Today a Try-Day! Stickers**: Use these fun stickers as part of your taste-testing event and order posters to match!

**Tools for Schools** is an online toolkit where you can find all of USDA's best resources on school meal topics (e.g., fruits and vegetables, whole grain-rich foods, and reducing sodium) and implementing Smart Snacks. In the toolkit, you will find policy documents, nutrition education materials, Smarter Lunchroom strategies, kid-friendly recipes, and success stories from other schools. Visit http://www.fns.usda.gov/healthierschoolday/tools-schools

**USDA Local Food Directories**
Local and regional food systems, including farmers markets, are one of USDA's four key pillars to revitalize rural economies and improve access to fresh, healthy food for millions of Americans. Four USDA Local Food Directories are now available online to give potential customers, business partners and community planners easy, one-stop access to the most current information about sources of local foods. The four directories are: National Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA) Enterprise Directory, National Food Hub Directory, National On-Farm Market Directory, and National Farmers Market Directory. For more information on the launch: http://blogs.usda.gov/2014/09/30/the-easy-way-to-find-local-food-usda-launches-new-local-food-directories/

**Farm to School Grant Program is closed for 2016**
The request for application (RFA) for FY2016 funding is now closed. The purpose of the USDA Farm to School Grant Program is to assist eligible entities in implementing farm to school programs that improve access to local foods in eligible schools. On an annual basis, USDA awards up to $5 million in competitive grants for training, supporting operations, planning, purchasing equipment, developing school gardens, developing partnerships, and implementing farm to school programs. Get the link for RFA and guidance here: http://www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool/farm-school-grant-program
Thank you to all of our partners and supporters!

Ohio Farm to School Newsletter
Put together by:
Carol Smathers, Ohio Farm to School State Lead
Stacy Haught, Ohio Farm to School Coordinator

For Ohio Farm to School inquiries or to submit information, e-mail farm2school@osu.edu

Follow Ohio Farm to School on Facebook and Twitter!

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