

# Ohio Farm to School Newsletter

National, Regional and State Updates

May 2016



Photos by Amy Fovargue

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## Farm to School is All in Bloom!

May is an intensive month for school gardens, and a great month to start building relationships with local farmers. In this month's newsletter, we have lots of news updates and resources, sneak peaks of our two most recent Farm to School success stories, and pages of upcoming events, webinars, funding opportunities, and resources related to farm to school activities throughout the state. *Don't miss page 8 for an update about 2017 USDA Farm to School grants!*

## **FARM TO CAFETERIA: MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER**

By Carol Smathers  
Ohio Farm to School State Lead

### **Conference Dates: June 2-4, 2016**

Every other year, farm to school supporters gather network and learn about successful ways to bring “the farm” to local schools, preschools, colleges, hospitals, and other institutions. On Thursday, June 2 pre-conference events, including field trips and short courses will be offered. The full conference, hosted by the National Farm to School Network, will begin on Friday, June 3 and run through Saturday, June 4.

### **Focus on Moving Forward Together**

Like “Farm to School”, the term “Farm to Cafeteria” refers to procuring, serving, and teaching about local foods. It encompasses all efforts to bring healthy, locally sourced food along with hands-on learning opportunities about nutrition, gardening, and agriculture to institutional cafeteria settings. With a focus on promoting equity in the food system, this year's conference will offer over 40 workshops in a variety of topics and formats, plenary presentations from nationally-recognized leaders in the farm to cafeteria and local food movements, networking opportunities, “lightning talks,” a poster session, and an evening reception showcasing Madison's vibrant local food culture. Each presentation and event is designed to help participants increase the sourcing of local foods and foster a culture of food and agricultural literacy across America.

### **On the Isthmus - Madison, WI**

The 2014 Farm to Cafeteria Conference was held in Austin, TX. This year the conference will be within a day's drive from Ohio. Madison, Wisconsin. Downtown Madison (including the state capitol building on the “Square”) is located on a strip of land between two large lakes. The conference sessions will be held at Monona Terrace, a 250,000-square foot conference facility on the shore of Lake Monona designed by famed architect Frank Lloyd Wright. There are plenty of beautiful walking paths throughout the area, as well as opportunities to get out on the lakes! And, a busy farmers market is held on the Square each Saturday.

### **Who attends this conference?**

Participants include food service professionals, farmers and food producers, educators, policy makers, students and youth leaders, entrepreneurs, representatives from nonprofits and government agencies, public health professionals, and others engaged in the farm to cafeteria movement. Over 1100 farm to school stakeholders convened in Austin in 2014, and up to 1500 are expected to attend the 2016 conference.

### **Conference Tracks**

- Connecting institutions within farm to cafeteria
- Communities building partnerships
- Local & sustainable procurement
- Farmers, food hubs & supply chains
- School gardens & on-site farms
- Advocating for change
- Moving forward together
- Education, training & professional development
- Measuring & reporting impact
- Farm to preschool/early care and education
- Equity & justice in farm to cafeteria
- Innovating the movement



### **More information**

Register for the conference by May 16<sup>th</sup>. Hotels are available for booking until Monday, May 9, but rooms are available in the University dorms as well (and can be booked later, too!).

For detailed information about the conference program, registration, and activities go to:

<http://farmtocafeteriaconference.org/8/>

**Don't miss the 8<sup>th</sup> National Farm to Cafeteria Conference!**



# OHIO FARM TO SCHOOL CELEBRATES: Toledo's Hawkins Elementary School

Written by Amy Fovargue

## A Teacher's Passion

Judy Hanes, a retired kindergarten teacher in Lucas County, combines her passion for working with children and gardening by leading a year round garden club at Hawkins Elementary School in Toledo, Ohio.

"Currently the club has 12 students that are multi-age, with the majority of the kids from the second grade. We meet during the school year after school once a month in a classroom. I typically arrange to have speakers from OSU Extension or the Toledo Botanical Gardens lead them in activities," Hanes explained.

To fund the project initially, retired Hawkins school teachers collected donations from community members. They have received materials from a nearby Lowe's, and the school is buying its compost this spring. A neighborhood greenhouse has been a very generous donor, as well as The Toledo Grows program of the Toledo Botanical Gardens whom have provided most of their seeds and vegetable plants.

## Garden Time

During the month of May, the club meets three times to get all of the planting done. In April they cleaned out the garden and pulled the weeds to prepare for planting. They have 12 four foot by eight foot raised beds for vegetables, plus a pollinator garden.

The students have provided food, water, cover and a place for wildlife to raise their young. "The students have really enjoyed studying the insects that the garden has attracted," said Hanes.

"We meet in the summer once a week to pull weeds, water, and harvest along with some educational programming from OSU's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP Ed) to teach the kids about healthy snacks and USDA My Plate Activities," she explained.

## Continued Engagement & Success

Hanes provides the kids with tote bags that the students can haul their harvest home to enjoy with their families. "Parents and grandparents really want these kids to know where their food comes from," Hanes noted, "and some families may have gardens at home as well".

"Toledo Public Schools, like many large, urban school districts, does not necessarily source local foods for the cafeteria. So, that part of Farm to School is not well represented here, but we do see many schools doing the important garden education piece of Farm to School, like Hawkins Elementary School," said Patrice Powers-Barker an OSU extension educator.

In past years, they had an herb garden that grew thyme, basil and oregano. The herbs were available for the teachers to take home. "During our first year, we also planted gourds and dried them. We then made bird feeders and sold them at a parent teacher conference night. During the winter we feed the birds from sunflowers we grew," she said. "One year we were having trouble with our pumpkin plants and our Extension educator Patrice used a knife to slit open the stem to discover borers.

The kids were very interested in seeing those. They were amazed at what was inside. They also liked to see the swallow tail caterpillar," Hanes said.

"The kids coming now are really interested and diligent in wanting to learn. It is good for them to see the whole process. It's a life skill to take care of the plants and grow their own food!" Hanes concluded.



**[Click here to read the full story!](#)**

# OHIO FARM TO SCHOOL CELEBRATES: Federal Hocking Schools

Written by Amy Fovargue

Federal Hocking School District in Athens County is a top school district in the state for having the highest percent of their food budget spent on local food, according to the recently released USDA Farm to School Census.

"We need to brag about what we are doing! We keep striving forward to make sure our kids get the best food possible. They (students) are our customers and we want to make them happy!" said Mike Kubisek of COMCorps/AmeriCorps.

Mike and his cohorts teach healthy living classes, lead a cooking club, and provide healthy snacks at schools, among other activities. Federal Hocking provides fruit for free throughout the school day, and goes through five cases of fresh fruit a week. Anytime of the day that the students want fruit, it is available. The athletes can save a piece in their lockers for their practice or games later in the day.

Pam Crabtree, the food service director and head cook at Federal Hocking, feeds about 400 students and staff a day, she feels that the greatest success they have achieved with their Farm to School effort is providing increased access to a variety of foods. "These students have a lot of healthy choices. Our salad bar has mixed greens and more than 15 items every day. The most popular item is pickled beets!" she said.



Mike Kubisek and Pam Crabtree pose in the lunchline

"We are working every day to improve the offerings. We plan to install white boards in the cafeteria with the daily nutrition info of our options so they can make wiser choices," she explained.

The school has one of the highest numbers of students eating school breakfast which is 83%. "We serve homemade biscuits and gravy every Friday morning. It's very popular with the kids," Crabtree said. "It's great to see their smiles and to keep them happy and healthy," she continued. "The students love the local foods. We keep pushing for more and more. They like to hear that the food is from their neighbors. We are currently searching for some local honey so we could make our own granola bars," Pam said.

Nothing goes to waste from the cafeteria as all of the food waste is then composted and used in the school garden led by Keith Macartney, an 8<sup>th</sup> grade science teacher. This school garden is the largest in the county. He has been teaching at Federal Hocking Middle school for the past 12 years. Macartney is a strong proponent of local food. He developed a school garden program that is tied to the math and science curriculum as a way to teach using hands-on lessons. Over the last four years the garden project has been taught to hundreds of students and has provided food to local food pantries and the school cafeteria. Recent additions to the garden include raspberry canes and an orchard.

The local food comes from local farmers (mostly Amish) who consign their produce at an auction in nearby Morgan County. The Chesterhill Produce Auction which has a network of 125 farmers growing produce is operated by Rural Action, a community development organization. An order-buyer employed by Rural Action will purchase food for the local schools; besides Federal Hocking, Alexander Local and Athens City also participate. The order-buyer coordinates delivery to Hocking College culinary department. Depending on the time of year, the fresh product is prepared by culinary students or by volunteers (either COMCorps members or parents) which have been trained in food service. They will process produce such as watermelon, corn and green beans among other produce at the peak of harvest. This locally grown product then goes to schools and is served to the local students.

As you can see, many people are dedicated to locally feeding and educating the school children in Athens County.

**[Click here to read the full story!](#)**

### Ohio Farm to School Update

#### **Join Our June Advisory Meeting Thursday, June 16<sup>th</sup> Columbus Public Health; 240 Parsons, Columbus, OH**

We are seeking new voices to join our advisory meetings this year. Join us to share your experience with farm to school, and help inform Ohio Farm to School's work this year – including the regional workshops! Join us for both sessions if you are able, or just come for the morning or afternoon – RSVP (include dietary restrictions!) to Laura Kington at [Kington.10@osu.edu](mailto:Kington.10@osu.edu).

- **9:00-11:30am Farm to School Advisory Meeting**  
Program Updates, national conference report, regional stakeholder workshops, F2S policy updates, potential guest to present research about school lunches
- **11:30 – noon Break/open networking**
- **Noon – 2pm Consensus Modeling Activity**  
Led by a research team from OSU and Case Western Reserve, and lunch from Angry Baker provided. Consensus modeling involves group discussion with input from all participants with a goal of generating agreement. After reviewing key themes resulting from interviews and focus groups that were conducted last year, you will be asked to complete two small-group activities to generate agreement on key Farm to School project readiness themes. The first activity will involve sorting and rank ordering Farm to School project readiness indicators. Following a discussion, groups will then use tokens to assign weights to each theme to show the importance of each theme for successful implementation of Farm to School projects.

## Save the date for our regional workshops, coming in October!

In farm to school month 2016 (October!), we will convene six regional workshops across Ohio. At each workshop, we will share regional success stories and provide trainings and resources, as well as facilitate relationship-building between parents, producers, food service staff, and other farm to school stakeholders! Stay tuned here:

<https://farmtoschool.osu.edu/events/2016-farm-to-school-regional-workshops/>

- October 4: Central Ohio
- October 11: Southeast Ohio
- October 13: Northeast Ohio
- October 14: Northwest Ohio
- October 20: Western Ohio
- TBD: Southwest Ohio

## We're seeking your input for the content of these workshops!

Take a brief survey to make your opinions heard – <http://go.osu.edu/nwohf2s>

If you are interested in helping to plan your local workshop, contact Laura Kington at [Kington.10@osu.edu](mailto:Kington.10@osu.edu)

## News & Resources

### State, Regional, and National

#### ***USDA: GroupGAP Certification Now Available***

After a successful pilot program, USDA-AMS launched the GroupGAP (Group Good Agricultural Practices) certification program at the beginning of this month. GroupGAP enables farmers to unite under a quality management system for food safety audits, gaining certifications as a group. We believe that this makes third-party food safety certification more accessible to small and mid-sized producers, enabling access to more markets, and widening the opportunity for schools to buy local!

**Learn more:**

[http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentid=2016/04/0085.xml&navid=NEWS\\_RELEASE&navtype=RT&parentnav=LATEST\\_RELEASES&edeployment\\_action=retrievecontent](http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentid=2016/04/0085.xml&navid=NEWS_RELEASE&navtype=RT&parentnav=LATEST_RELEASES&edeployment_action=retrievecontent)

#### ***Survey Results: Farm to School in Early Care and Education Builds Healthy Kids with Bright Futures***

In 2015, the National Farm to School Network surveyed early care and education providers across the country. Nearly 1,500 providers serving 183,369 young children in 49 states and Washington, D.C., responded and shared fascinating insight into the important work that they are doing to connect young children to healthy, local foods and food related educational opportunities. The results show that farm to school in early care and education is on the rise across the country. 54% of respondents are already doing farm to school activities and another 28% plan to start in the near future. A new infographic and factsheet are available with more survey results.

**Learn more:** [farmtoschool.org/earlychildhood](http://farmtoschool.org/earlychildhood)

#### ***USDA Grants for Food Safety Training, Outreach and Technical Assistance***

The USDA has announced the availability of \$4.7 million in grants for food safety education, training, and technical assistance projects that address the needs of owners and operators of small to mid-sized farms, beginning farmers, socially-disadvantaged farmers, small processors, small fresh fruit and vegetable merchant wholesalers, food hubs, farmers' markets, and others. The grants, offered through the Food Safety Outreach Program and administered by USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), are designed to help these stakeholders comply with new food safety guidelines established by the Food and Drug Administration under the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA).

**Learn more:**

[http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentid=2016/04/0091.xml&navid=NEWS\\_RELEASE&navtype=RT&parentnav=LATEST\\_RELEASES&edeployment\\_action=retrievecontent](http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/usdahome?contentid=2016/04/0091.xml&navid=NEWS_RELEASE&navtype=RT&parentnav=LATEST_RELEASES&edeployment_action=retrievecontent)

#### ***Living Schoolyard Activity Guides***

May is Living Schoolyard Month! Green Schoolyards America has released a 2016 Activities Guide to celebrate. The guides collect 147 hands-on activities, contributed by 123 programs around the world, for students from PreK through 12th grade, emphasizing outdoor play, managed risk-taking, ecological understanding, and appreciation for the unique communities where students live.

**Access this and other free guides:** <http://www.greenschoolyards.org/2015-living-schoolyard-month-activity-guide.html>



## News & Resources

### State, Regional, and National

#### **USDA: New Toolkit for Urban Agriculture**

Urban agriculture is growing in the farm to school movement! This new toolkit from the USDA is an electronic document that helps urban and small farms navigate more than 70 helpful resources, including technical assistance and financing opportunities. It focuses on some of the most pressing challenges confronting urban producers such as land access, soil quality, water resources, capital and financing, infrastructure, market development, production strategies, and applying for federal, state or private foundation grants.

**Learn more:** <http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usda/knownyourfarmer?navid=kyf-urban-agric>

#### **Ag is Cool! Contest for Ohio Schools**

The Ohio Department of Agriculture is accepting entries for the 2016 "Agriculture is Cool!" Creative Expressions contest. Children enrolled in school or home schooled in Ohio during the 2015-2016 academic year have until June 6, 2016 to capture their personal interpretation of why Ohio agriculture is cool for their chance to win prizes, including tickets to the Ohio State Fair. "Ag is Cool!" entries can include an original video, photograph, drawing or painting. Winners of the art contest will be recognized by the governor's office and other state officials at the Ohio State Fair July 27.

**To learn more and apply:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0B8uXmMBgj4&feature=youtu.be>

#### **School Garden Photo Contest**

Schools and other K-12 programs can grow cold, hard cash for their school gardens in 2016. The United Nations declared 2016 as the International Year of Pulses. As part of the celebration, the Crop Science Society of America (CSSA) is sponsoring an IYP School Garden Photo Contest for educators. Prizes are \$300 first place, \$150 second place, \$100 third place. Three honorable mentions will receive \$50 each.

**To learn more and apply:** <https://www.crops.org/iyp/iyp-grow-your-own/school-garden-contest>

#### **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** [OEFFA's searchable on-line directory](#).*
- ❑ **Farm to School Webinars: National Good Food Network Website:**  
<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: [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/>



### Farm to School – for Summer!

#### **Summer is a great time to experiment with farm to school!**

Summer is a fantastic time of year to add variety to keep meals tasting great. In Ohio, USDA's Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) aligns well with the peak growing season, allowing schools and nonprofit organizations to serve products in their freshest state. There are numerous benefits to "bringing the farm" to summer feeding sites. Sponsors can increase participation by improving the quality of meals and keeping kids engaged through hands-on activities. Schools can develop continuous, year-round farm to school programming, and test out cooking techniques and recipes using local foods. Regional producers benefit from a reliable outlet for their products during the summer months. And kids and teens get fresh, healthy meals and participate in activities at meals sites, staying nourished and engaged while school is out!

#### **USDA Resources**

- [Farm to Summer Fact Sheet](#) - Use this fact sheet for summer meal program tips on incorporating local foods and agriculture-based activities.
- [Local Foods and Related Activities in Summer Meal Programs](#) SP-07-2016, SFSP-07-2016 - This policy memo provides guidance on the incorporation of local foods and nutrition and agriculture-based activities into Summer Meal Programs. Published November 12, 2015.
- [SFSP Toolkit](#) - Find local foods guidance for [state agencies](#), [sponsors](#), and [partner organizations](#), along with tips for starting a summer meals site at [farmers markets](#).
- [SFSP Handbook](#) (pdf) - Sponsors can find guidance on procurement and tips on targeting local foods.
- [SFSP Webinar Series](#) - Listen to presenters discuss incorporating local foods in summer meals, building awareness about summer programs, engaging in partnerships that help boost participation and increase access, and more.

#### **Contact the Ohio Department of Education to get started!**

For more information on how Farmer's Markets can partner with Ohio Summer Food Service Sponsors, please contact: Mary Forster, Education Program Specialist, SFSP at (614) 752-1460 or e-mail: [mary.forster@education.ohio.gov](mailto:mary.forster@education.ohio.gov)

#### Get Ready Now!

#### Prepare to Apply for the National Farm to School Grant

Exciting change is underway with the USDA Farm to School Grant Program! The Child Nutrition Act, the authorizing legislation for the grant program, is currently in the reauthorization process in Congress – the Act is expected to increase the funding available in the grant program!

In anticipation of change, there will be a delay in the release of the FY2017 request for applications from February to September – making now the perfect time to prepare to apply! **Applications will be opened in September, due in November, and awards announced in May, 2017.** 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. In past years, the USDA has awarded 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/farmentoschool/farm-school-grant-program>

# 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**

## **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**

**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/>

**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](http://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](http://www.ysa.org/karma_for_cara_foundation)

**Deadline: Rolling**



## Events & Webinars

### **School Garden Development 101**

June 16 | Cincinnati, Ohio

9 am – 3 pm

This six hour workshop is the first step in partnering with the Civic Garden Center for assistance in establishing a school garden program. This training is for teachers, parents, and community members who wish to start a school or youth garden program. The training is a full day of learning the design process for a socially and ecologically diverse garden. We share ideas and examples from other schools, teach basic gardening and composting skills, and model gardening lessons you can use in the classroom.

After participating in the training you are enrolled in our School Garden Network, giving your program access to free seeds, consultations from our staff, our monthly School Garden Calendar, and notifications of upcoming events in our School Garden Workshop Series. Join 100+ youth gardening programs in Greater Cincinnati by partnering with the Civic Garden Center to help your students grow!

**More info and to register:** Contact Mary Dudley at [youtheducation@civicgardencenter.org](mailto:youtheducation@civicgardencenter.org) or 513.221.0981

### **USDA Webinar Series: Planning for Farm to School Success in 2016**

Preliminary results of the 2015 Farm to School Census tell us that more than 1,700 school districts don't yet have farm to school programs, but are interested in starting one. The USDA is here to help! Through this 11-part series, we'll guide you through the USDA Farm to School Planning Toolkit. Served up in bite-sized 30 minute webinars, we'll offer questions to consider and helpful resources to reference when starting or growing a farm to school program. Guest speakers will join the webinars to share their hands on farm to school experiences.

Upcoming webinars:

**Evaluating Your Program:** May 12, 2:00 PM

**Partnering for Success in Tribal Communities:** May 20, 3:00 PM

**Tying it All Together and Digging In:** May 26, 2:00 PM

**More info and to register:** <http://www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool/videos-and-webinars>

### **Webinar: School Garden Education for Children Experiencing Behavioral and Mental Health Challenges**

May 17 | 2 PM

School Gardens for students with behavioral and mental health challenges provide interesting opportunities to develop positive and empowering life skills. The Creeks School Garden in Portland Oregon integrates practical education theory and methods into tangible, thoughtful teaching exercises that results in dynamic behavioral changes. The Creeks School Garden team will describe: the learning characteristics of these special children, their school settings, the importance of community partnerships, and specific activities that help these student's gain confidence and develop productive collaborative relationships.

**Join from your computer, tablet or smartphone:** <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/793288293>

## Events & Webinars

### **Register Now! National Farm to Cafeteria Conference June 2016**

Save the date for the 2016 National Farm to Cafeteria Conference, to be held June 2-4, 2016 in Madison, Wisconsin. The National Farm to Cafeteria Conference is a biennial event that convenes a diverse group of stakeholders from across the farm to cafeteria movement who are working to source local food for institutional cafeterias and foster a culture of food and agricultural literacy across America. The conference is hosted by the National Farm to School Network, in partnership with local host organizations.

**For more information or to register:** <http://farmtocafeteriaconference.org/>

### **Save the Date! 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Real Food Real Local Conference**

July 18 - 20 | Athens, Ohio

This event brings together people from across the region, providing an opportunity for people and organizations involved in various aspects of local food systems in their communities to learn, share and network. We are returning to last year's wonderful venue, Eclipse Company Store in The Plains, just a few miles from Athens Ohio.

Whether you are a farmer, processor, involved with farmers or retail markets, a food entrepreneur, advocate or consumer, this event will have something for everyone; fresh ideas, proven approaches, great connections, and plenty of interaction and fun.

**For more information:** <http://realfoodreallocalinstitute.org/5th-annual-real-food-real-local-conference/>

### **Save the Date! Ohio Local Foods Week**

August 7 - 14

The Ohio State University Extension Local Food Signature Program invites you to celebrate Ohio Local Foods Week during August 7-14. August is a great time to celebrate because of the availability of direct-to-consumer marketing of all products including a wide variety of fresh produce. Check with your local Extension office to see how you can participate.

**For resources:** <http://localfoods.osu.edu/ohio-local-foods-week>

### **Save the Date! 2016 School Garden Conference: Getting Back to Our Roots**

October 7 | Columbus, Ohio

The fourth annual school garden conference, "Getting Back to Our Roots" will be hosted by OSU Extension, Franklin County on Friday, October 7th, 2016. The location is the Nationwide and Ohio Farm Bureau 4-H Center at 2201 Fred Taylor Drive, The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH 43210. Educators, after-school personnel and others are invited to attend. Whether you are a new or experienced educational gardener, do not miss the 2016 school garden conference!

Cost: \$55 includes lunch and materials

**For more information:** [franklin.osu.edu](http://franklin.osu.edu) or [Hogan.239@osu.edu](mailto:Hogan.239@osu.edu)

**To register:** <https://www.regonline.com/Register/Checkin.aspx?EventID=1805357>

# USDA Resources

## 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 world 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/>

## The USDA Farm to School Planning Toolkit

Just getting started with farm to school? The USDA has a comprehensive, easy to understand guide for how to begin a farm to school project. The Farm to School Planning Toolkit guides you through questions to consider and helpful resources to reference when starting or growing a farm to school program. It is designed for use by schools, school districts, and community partners. The toolkit is filled with tips and examples, insights from others, and lists of resources for further research. Each school district is unique, so browse the topics to find the resources most relevant to you and your implementation team! Visit [http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/f2s/F2S\\_Planning\\_Kit.pdf](http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/f2s/F2S_Planning_Kit.pdf)

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NATIONAL  
FARM to SCHOOL  
NETWORK

## Ohio Farm to School Newsletter

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