

Ohio Farm to School Newsletter

September 2018

Ohio Food Policy Summit

You are invited to join us for the eighth annual Ohio Food Policy Summit, on Monday, September 24, at the Nationwide & Ohio Farm Bureau 4-H Center, hosted by the Ohio Food Policy Network and the John Glenn College of Public Affairs.

This year's summit will focus on the financing, investment, and economic development potential of local food systems, with discussions centering around a recent report released by the Federal Reserve entitled "Harvesting Opportunity: The Power of the Regional Food System Investments to Transform Communities."

This national framework will be applied to discussions on resources available for local and statewide efforts, exploring how it can be harnessed to build food systems and how to leverage the economic development potential of local food in Ohio.

This event is dedicated to connecting food council members, policy-makers, finance and economic development specialists and all other stakeholders who want to see a strong regional food system in Ohio.

Conference Highlights:

National perspectives on local regional food system economic development by Andrew Dumont (Federal Reserve Bank) and Debbie Tropp (USDA AMS)

Ideas for building Ohio's Food System Financing Agenda by Toby Rittner (Council of Development Finance Agencies)

Several breakout sessions from which to choose, including food system financing 101, opportunities to hear about funded projects, discussion of equal access to financing in practice, and advocacy agenda building.

Carol Smathers, Ohio Farm to School Director will be a panelist for an afternoon session titled, *Do you Want to Join a Statewide Food Policy Council Advocacy Campaign? At 5 p.m. farm to school enthusiasts will have an informal meeting to discuss our latest efforts and network. To register go to:*
<http://ohiofpn.org/events/food-policy-summit/>



Ohio Valley Food Hub Project Delivers to Cincinnati area Schools



Ohio Valley Food Hub (OVFH) Project is providing Farm to School procurement solutions in Greater Cincinnati and Kentucky; their mission is to increase the sales of local food in the area by creating opportunities for community collaboration and by providing a convenient and efficient local food distribution solution for both farmers and institutions.

For those that attended the National Farm to Cafeteria Conference and Ohio's pre-conference in Cincinnati much of the fantastic food was sourced through the Local Food Connection hub a partner organization. Their more than 70 partner farms offer locally grown, fresh and organic vegetables and fruit, pastured meat and dairy, plus local artisanal products.

The OVFH Project was awarded a three-year, USDA Local Food Promotion Program Implementation grant in 2017. This funding has brought together two food hubs in the region to increase producer sales, increase the number of Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) certified farms and food hubs, and increase the consumption and access.

To fulfill these initiatives the project members are developing new market opportunities by developing relationships with clients, creating a customized crop plan for each institutional client, managing ongoing ordering and distribution for buyers, and measuring the scale and impact of sales. Their business is growing and they are hiring additional staff to keep up with the demand.

The project intends to increase farm sales that market through local food hubs to \$1.1 million; to provide farm safety planning to over 30 producers and 2 food hubs; and to increase consumption of local agricultural products to at least 230 wholesale

clients by the end of the project.

The first Ohio school to buy their products was Seven Hills, a private school in Cincinnati. They have purchased fresh fruit and some locally processed foods.

Little Miami schools started buying produce last spring and has really ramped up their purchases this school year. They kicked off the school year by having local watermelon and corn on the cob at their picnic day. For October, Little Miami has ordered the following products: apples, cucumbers, red onion, tomatoes, melons, and winter squash, explained Anne Schneider, local food consultant, of the Ohio Valley Food Hub Project.

They are currently reaching out to the local schools and offering a Farm to School month and Apple Crunch promotion. Their next step will be to offer the Ohio Days: My Plate, My State promotion a harvest of the month program to the schools in the area. They also plan to apply for a USDA Farm to School grant.

Schneider is most proud of their work of getting the local foods to the kids and helping the local farmers. "The community that is here and the people collaborating are a great network of people wanting to do good things," she added.

"Farm to School is a very big passion of mine. I think health education is huge and we are missing out these days. We don't have the tools available to raise the healthiest families," Schneider explained. She and her husband also run a nonprofit to help to provide families with the knowledge to make the best choices to raise healthy children. This work certainly goes hand in hand with her passion for local foods.

**NATIONAL
FARM to
SCHOOL
MONTH**



National Farm to School Month is right around the corner, and now is the time to start planning celebrations for your school and community! Every October, thousands of students, teachers, farmers, food producers, food enthusiasts and families celebrate the connections happening all over the country between children and local food. Join us!

There are several resources to get your planning started:

- Find activity suggestions in the Farm to School Month Fact Sheet
- Download and print posters, stickers, and bookmarks
- Get creative with National Farm to School Month coloring pages
- Host a farm to school site visit for your legislators
- Recognize farm to school champions with an award.
- For these items and more go to : <http://www.farmtoschool.org/our-work/farm-to-school-month>

Using USDA DoD Fresh to Purchase Local Produce



The USDA Department of Defense Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (USDA DoD Fresh) is available to schools in 48 States, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. More than 22,000 schools receive fresh fruits and vegetables from this program. Schools interested in participating in the USDA DoD Fresh program should reach out to the Ohio Department of Education, Office of Child Nutrition.

USING USDA DOD FRESH TO PURCHASE LOCAL PRODUCE

How Does It Work? USDA DoD Fresh is a partnership between USDA and the Department of Defense (DoD) Defense Logistics Agency (DLA). This program leverages DoD's procurement system to provide a variety of nutritious U.S.-grown fresh fruits and vegetables to schools. Schools receive two types of support from the USDA. The majority of the support is provided in the form of cash reimbursement for the meals served, and the second form of support is the ability to order foods that USDA purchases ("USDA Foods") which can make up about 15-20% of the value of the food served in the National School Lunch Program. USDA DoD Fresh is one option that schools can use to spend their entitlement. For more information go to:

<http://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Other-Resources/Food-and-Nutrition/Community-Distribution-Program/Department-of-Defense-Fresh-Fruit-and-Vegetable-Pr/DoD-Fresh-Fact-Sheet.pdf.aspx>

Grants & Funding

NCR-SARE Grant Proposals are now available.

Youth Educator Grant projects provide opportunities for youth in the North Central Region to learn more about sustainable agriculture (farming and ranching that is ecologically sound, profitable, and socially responsible). Educators use the grants to encourage young people and their parents to try sustainable practices and see sustainable agriculture as a viable career option. Projects should help youth discover that sustainable farming and ranching is profitable; good for families, communities, and their quality of life; and good for the environment long term. The maximum amount for grants is \$4,000, and a total of approximately \$40,000 is available for this program.

NCR-SARE will be accepting online submissions for the Youth Educator Grant Program. More information about the online submission system can be found in the call for proposals.

Interested applicants can find the call for proposals online as well as useful information for completing a proposal at online at <http://www.northcentralsare.org/Grants/Our-Grant-Programs/Youth-Educator-Grant-Program>.

You can find more information about sustainability at <http://www.sare.org/> and in the Youth Education Topic Room at: <http://www.sare.org/Learning-Center/Topic-Rooms/Youth-Education>.

Proposals are due by November 15, 2018 at 4pm CST.

Applicants with questions can contact Joan Benjamin, Associate Regional Coordinator and Youth Educator Grant Program Coordinator, at benjaminj@lincolnu.edu or 573-681-5545 or 800-529-1342.

Each state in SARE's North Central Region has one or more State Sustainable Agriculture Coordinators who can provide information and assistance to potential grant applicants. Interested applicants can find their State Sustainable Agriculture Coordinator online at <https://www.northcentralsare.org/Professional-Development/State-Coordinator-Contact-Info>.



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES



NATIONAL
FARM to SCHOOL
NETWORK

OHIO

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