

Ohio F2S Quarterly Meeting Notes

June 4, 2020

Ohio and NFSN Updates:

NFSN

- [COVID 19 weekly newsletter](#)- includes info about funding opportunities, webinars, news, letters to sign onto etc.

Ohio

- Working on a project called “Growing Teachers Throughout the Seasons” to provide school garden support to teachers growing food in school during the school year.
- Just submitted add on proposal with GTS for “Garden Nutrition Throughout the Seasons” (GNS) to NIFA to support a school grown harvest of the month with an emphasis on food safety from planting to harvesting.
- Please send any F2S initiatives/projects to plahuta.12@osu.edu to be posted on OH F2S Facebook and Website
- Please use the hashtag: #OHFarmToSchool on related posts! The Apple Crunch hashtag will be #OHAppleCrunch

Jenna Segal, Regional F2S contact at USDA:

- First and foremost, USDA is making sure people get fed. USDA is also listening to hear what needs are to ensure equitable access to food and focusing on big picture work, new challenges for F2S and F2S is likely becoming more important than ever.
- If you submitted a USDA F2S grant in December, you should hear back around mid-end of June. F2S grants will still come out in October and be due in December.
 - Allowing current grantees an additional year to complete grant project.
- Analyzing census and will have info on website in about 6 months.
- [Ohio COVID 19 waivers from USDA](#)- continually being updated.

Stacey Bettis, Food Service Director, Minerva Schools:

- Trying to continue F2S efforts- usually do taste test every month but wasn't able to do pea tasting in May due to weather.
- Had a donation of seed packets and families got to start planting gardens.
- May 11-15 Stark county did [virtual tour of farms across Ohio](#).
- Challenges:
 - Staying connected with teachers and families but missing student feedback on taste testing.
 - Mass production, sometimes on busses is a big challenge.
- Will be serving meals throughout summer. Monday was first day and were down about 50 packages of 5 breakfasts and 5 lunches- hoping it was just due to holiday weekend.

Barbara Burns, Child Nutrition Director, Carrollton Schools:

- Mass production is totally different set up- also loading meals onto busses.
- My concerns for the fall is participation numbers. The uncertainty of how to serve meals. If there is a split schedule how will the students be fed on the days they are not there? Do we or can we send home meals like a packed lunch for the following day. Even HOW do we send it home safely will there be waivers?

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- Meeting the guidelines with available food items with shortages from suppliers.
- Shelf stable entrees are the hardest to get: even canned soup is in short supply.
- We do a 1xweek pickup of a 7 day food supply.
- Keeping staff and volunteer momentum to keep project going.
- Our raised bed garden project is again sidelined due to uncertainty of COVID.

Chris Weatherholtz, K-12 F2S Coordinator, Columbus City Schools:

- Just delivered 750 garden starter kits to families as a partnership between CCS, OSU Extension Farm to School and Green Columbus.
 - 1 K-2 set and one 3-5 set. Families were so excited and passed out all 750.

Michaela Oldfield, Green Umbrella:

- Applied for extension on F2S planning grant and moving along with it.
- Planned an educator summit for June with educators across region on ways to do F2S in classroom, cafeteria and community. Now planning for in person event Sept 13 and will be virtual if needed. Focusing on how F2S is getting into classrooms and having breakout sessions. Will have a panel that looks at engaging community into F2S. Having champion share strategies and communication strategies- lots of great F2S work happening in the region but ppl are often siloed in their department/school.
- Signed agreement with Cuyahoga Board of Health to pilot replicate Feed our Future! Applied for specialty Crop Block Grant and it went to USDA.
- Applied to USDAs regional food system partnership program → want to advocate for spending flexibility for schools, targeting institutions who have expressed interest in health but haven't been active local food purchasers. If they adopt formal purchasing policies, they can be leveraged to help school districts leverage build out their supply chain. Distributors won't carry a product for one school district but will if a lot of districts are using it.

Anne Schneider, Green Umbrella (procurement updates):

- Through F2S planning process, worked with FSD and buying co-ops in the region, United Purchasing Council of Ohio River Valley to include F2S purchasing in upcoming bid for school year. Creation Gardens/What Chefs Want, supplier for Cinci Public Schools won the bid, which will help growers. Feed Our Future program materials will be driven by items included in CPS and UPC bid.
- CPS is committed to supporting local growers and plan to spend more than they did last year on local purchasing. Because of 2 year bid with Creation Gardens, they can be creative to shift to more prepackaged items, using Creation Gardens processing facility downtown. Shows what a formal commitment can do for local growers.
 - Creation Gardens also incorporating as much local into Fresh Fruit and Vegetable program and including prepackaged taste tests.
- Sounding like School lunch will be completely different and may be in the classroom.
- Creation Gardens is on EPC bid for Miami Valley region and submitted proposal for HPS bids. Hopefully will make it easier to purchase local throughout Miami Valley.

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New team member from Creation Gardens, Joy Kostansek has been hired to service Columbus market.

Joy Kostansek, jkostansek@whatchefswant.com, 440-829-1279

Graduated from OU with masters and worked on local food purchasing project there. Hired by Local Food Connection and Creation Gardens through an OSU INFact grant. Intention of grant is to help establish local food hub in Columbus area. Local Food Connection is a food hub based in Cincinnati and serves Ohio Valley region. Through merging with Creation Gardens, they now have access to a wider service area including Louisville, Indianapolis, Columbus, Nashville- Joy is working on Columbus market.

Working with producers and restaurants and bulk of work is focused on institutions, including OSU local purchasing. For Columbus K12, Joy can help with crop planning, onboarding, menu planning, and anything else LFC can do in Cincinnati area.

June Wedd via chat box:

Hello - Stacey, Barb and school food - is there a F2S resources you need for summer meals? Are recipes, food safety or nutrition topics a hot topic for your summer families? and lastly, means of communicating with your families.....would ready to post social media posts be helpful on hot topics?

Stacey: yes, any info to connect to families is helpful. Usually do flyers, calls, anything to share on Facebook is helpful.

Barbara: I would be very interested in recipes cards, food safety and nutrition handouts to include in our meal packages. Would love to have Social media posts can be added to our school facebook page.

Noreen Warnock, Local Matters:

- Local Matters worked on encouraging Pandemic EBT funds for students to have extra lunch funds if eligible for free and reduced-price lunches. Produce Perks Midwest will also match any fresh produce purchasing through June. Find more info [here](#) and [here](#). View webinar on the program [here](#).
- Currently one time \$300 payment.

Carol Smathers: SNAP Ed participants can order food online from Amazon and Walmart now.

Tiffany Torres, Market Link:

- Moved to Ohio from Florida last year and has worked on SNAP in Florida and with NFSN. Currently working for Market Link, USDA Grant Program for free EBT equipment for farmers and farmers markets. Wireless free card reader and 1 year app subscription, which accepts WIC and Senior Bucks.
- Market Link just submitted a proposal and a budget for nationwide online SNAP sales for farmers markets working with Market Link program. This would be the only other program in addition to the Walmart and Amazon sales. If approved, it could be launched by September.
- Regularly connects with a network of farmers, if you are looking to get in touch with a farmer, reach out to Tiffany at tiffany.torres@marketlink.org.

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Alison Patrick, Cuyahoga County Board of Health:

- Still seeing schools doing local purchasing.
- Planned to be doing in person culinary trainings so pivoting and doing 3 min type tasty videos. Shooting videos in 2 weeks, should be available on website by fall for free. Excited to have this innovative HOM training available.
- Just wrapped up F2S bid for cooperative purchasing for next year and awarding 4 vendors, more than ever before. Originally intended to pilot local minimally processed food in school districts and instead pivoting and designing all local grab and go concepts. Awarding 5 districts stipends to participate in that pilot. Giving districts cost analysis, nutrition info and applied for COVID funds to design a suite of educational materials so if food is served in classrooms or at home, all local lunch will still be available. More schools applied than are able to serve, varied districts large and small will be participating.
- Considering Facebook live events- Spice Field Kitchen did an asparagus Facebook live and harvested on video and cooking demo and talked through all benefits. Used Harvest of the Month recipes. Conceptualizing what FB live events could look like in the fall.
- Excited to move forward with Green Umbrella and Feed Our Future.

Brian Davis, ODE:

- Reminder that COVID 19 is considered emergency situation under federal procurement regulations, which means for schools using food dollars to make purchases, they have ability to get contracts in place faster with less hurdles. Let ODE program specialist know who they're purchasing from and how long it's going to be.
- Schools facing financial shortfalls due to decline of meals provided and way that meals are provided. Some food service accounts are asked to pay for transportation and unanticipated costs. If you know of situations like this happening, please share with ODE so they can share with regional office who can share with national office and USDA to address supply chain issues and financial shortfalls.

Anne Schneider via chat box: In regards to additional flexibility, it would be good to know if there is a status update on USDA Foods and cash in lieu that could be used for local growers? Thanks!

Jalessa Caples, Healthy Food Access Coordinator, Franklin County Public Health working on F2S:

- Currently putting together 1 page info sheet of responses from teacher focus group in January from school districts in Franklin County. Want to distribute info sheet to partners.
- Working on Ohio Days mini grant process.

Dave Sokoll, Oberlin Food Hub:

- Applied for Ohio school council bid. Been having conversations with farmers about uncertainties, farmers not sure if they are going to be sold out of product or if institutions are going to be shut down and not need product, making it tough for a food hub but keeping connection going.
- Working on access and equity as mission which can be even more difficult as they have moved to supplying retailers.

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- Seeing lettuce and apples go to large districts.
- Doing almost entire local pizza kits, dough, marinara, carrots, shredded cheese and apple. Seeing schools needing more prepackaged foods, working on bringing cost down.
 - Fear and feeling of burnout with school food service, supporting them by providing more prepackaged foods.
- Big takeaway from Good Food network conference- local food systems exist so when we experience some collapse, we can lean into each other and rely on our networks to get good food to people.

Kelly Corfman, Public Health Nutritionist, ODH:

Taking over as the Farm to School contact at ODH for Julia Hansel.

Brian Davis, ODE on summer feeding:

- Emphasizing Dave's point that local supply chains can be so helpful to ensure access to food. There were many supply chain issues and shortages of foods at the beginning. Local food networks really step in during these situations- really helpful for relationships to be formed because products may not be able to come through from a national supplier.
- [Map of approved summer food sites](#). There are also spreadsheets listing sites and contact info for sponsors for summer program, including participating schools. To help, contact local districts and find out what their needs are. Contact anyone at ODE child nutrition to connect with school feeding sites.
- Pandemic EBT: intended to make up for school meals children missed while school was closed. This is a partnership between ODJFS and ODE. There is Q and A on ODJFS page [here](#). ODE provided school data for eligible students.
- [USDA waivers for Ohio](#).
- ODE Remote learning resource guide: <http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Student-Supports/Coronavirus/Ohio%E2%80%99s-Remote-Learning-Resources>
- ODE SFSP map and other important information: <http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Student-Supports/Coronavirus/Supporting-Whole-Child-Nutrition>
- USDA list of waivers that apply right now: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/disaster/pandemic/covid-19>

Jenna Segal via chat box: In addition that, this list describes the AMS farmers to families food box program and which vendors in Ohio received those funds: <https://www.ams.usda.gov/selling-food-to-usda/farmers-to-families-food-box/approved-contractors/mid-west>

Online curriculum:

- [Stark County virtual FREE Farm Tours](#):
Focused day on dairy, protein, grains, fruit/veg, horticulture and specialty ag.
Conversations with a farmer, activities, recipes and related student 4H projects.
- [Ag in the Classroom](#)
- [National Farm to School network curriculum resources](#)

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Apple Crunch 2020:

The Apple Crunch registration is about ready to launch, however between the Great Lakes states, we think it is important to address that Apple Crunch 2020 will look different than it has in the past, with large groups joining in a Crunch together. How can we make apple crunch the most equitable by reaching everyone with fresh, local apples?

Brooke Gammie, 3rd generation farmer in Erie County at Quarry Hill Orchards: It's exciting to see access and education being brought to agriculture virtually- nothing changes if nothing changes and in a challenging time, there could be an opportunity to reach more kids in a way we wouldn't have thought to do in the past. How can apple crunch be more effective and reach more people?

Dave Sokoll via chat: Can we go viral? Apple Crunch Tik Tok craze

Haley Plahuta: Note- my zoom connection cut out at this point in the meeting so I unfortunately missed a minute or so of the conversation.

Stacey: Like the idea of fitting apple crunch into curriculum and connecting with families.

Jenna Segal: Farm to Summer week happened in the Western region and Cucumber Crunch was formed- some midwestern states are now doing it. Building excitement for apple crunch and featuring cucumbers in Farm to School programming. MN and MI are doing this July 30.

scroll down to option "5" to see the Cucumber Crunch logo from Roseville Area Schools in Minneosta

<https://www.usda.gov/media/blog/2019/10/03/seven-ways-farm-school-can-make-you-cool>

Brooke: My kids' distance learning assignments usually have a video and a google form- could we put a video together and have the form ask "were you able to crunch into an apple today? If so, upload a photo to share" or visit a local farm, paint an apple in your window. How to hit cafeteria (kitchen?), classroom and online community How to leverage HOM and FOF to apple crunch

Dave: Can apple growers marketing/fruit growers marketing association help with lesson/video creation?

Jeff Gibbons, Ohio Fruit Growers Marketing Association: Looking forward to participating and make sure apples for apple crunch and in promotional opportunities.

Carol Smathers: Columbus City Schools, as a result of apple crunch, went from not knowing where apples come from to over 90% of apples coming from Ohio growers.

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Harvest of the Month

What do we envision as a state for Harvest of the Month?

Alison Patrick, CCBH: Feed our Future, Local Foods for Growing Minds is Cuyahoga County's Farm to School effort of which HOM is one component but has reached broader than that. Have invested significantly in what Farm to School looks like- every child regardless of school district has access to healthy and when possible, local food. HOM kits meet districts/communities where they are- different versions in Cuyahoga county, general version for Ohio and non-state specific. Green Umbrella will look a bit different than Cuyahoga as they service multiple states. Not currently at capacity for food being served. Did heavily invest in the brand.

Brooke: Is there a talking point from FOF program materials/HOM program to leverage Apple Crunch? Planning to look into this during OH Apple Crunch meeting.

Also, FOF started small and has shown the program is effective.

Anne, Green Umbrella: Approaching through buying co-op relationship, FSD already have that network, CPS is already involved so it seems like an efficient approach and service a lot of districts that have a common framework in place.

Cathy Corbitt, Ohio Department of Agriculture: Applied for USDA F2S grant and the idea of the grant would be to expand Harvest of the Month programming.

Heather Neikirk via chat box: If we choose a state Harvest of the Month program-can we also include uniform evaluation for the materials...Impacts, etc

Alison: Absolutely Heather. Cleveland/Cincinnati will have common metrics to report out on

Tiffany Torres via chat box: FL has a statewide HOTM program organized by FL Dept of Ag I'd be happy to share more about. I worked closely with their program the last couple of years across multiple growing zones. Lovely to meet everyone. I am located in Cleveland and would love to connect with anyone in the NE region., volunteering, consulting, brainstorming, etc.! tiffany.torres@marketlink.org