

Ohio F2S Meeting Notes

December 9, 2021

In attendance:

Carol Smathers, Ohio F2S State Lead, Smathers.14@osu.edu and [Haley Scott](#), Ohio F2S Program Assistant

- [Tom Redfern](#), Director of Sustainable Agriculture with Rural Action, just outside of Athens
- [Stacey Bettis](#), Food Service Director in Stark County
- [Maureen Pisanick](#), [Pisanick Partners LLC](#)
- [Kristina Windland](#), Farm to School Stark County
- [Heather Neikirk](#): Ag and Natural Resource Extension Educator, Stark County
- [Christine Weatherholtz](#), Columbus City Schools Farm to School Coordinator
- [Denise Natoli Brooks](#): Southeast Ohio Regional Educator for Central State University Extension (CSUE)
- [Cynthia Walters](#): Green Umbrella in Cincinnati, Ohio.
- [Cheryl Graffagnino](#): Program officer with the at Osteopathic Heritage Foundations
- [Ellie Falk](#): Youth Education Coordinator at Civic Garden Center of Greater Cincinnati
- [Molly Gassaway](#): Community Food Initiatives Director of Garden Programs
- [Brian Williams](#): Local Food and Ag consultant working with Fairfield County
- [Jordan Knisley](#): Food Access Coordinator, Rural Action
- [Stephanie Uhde](#) : 6th grade teacher, Mansfield
- [Lauren Preston](#): Farm to School Intern
- [Megan Lang](#): Wellness coordinator in Washington county
- [Dara Barclay](#): CFAES OSU Knowledge Exchange
- [Lori Lowman](#), SNAP Ed Program Assistant in Ashland
- [Sherry Ellem](#): Washington County Health Department
- [Karen Bakies](#), RD with American Dairy Association Mideast
- [Elizabeth Douglass](#), Program Specialist in Farm to School at ODE
- [Brian Davis](#), Assistant Director for National School Breakfast and Lunch, ODE
- [Anne Schneider](#), Farm to School Coordinator with Greater Cincinnati Regional Food Policy Council
- [Megan Lang](#), Wellness Coordinator at Fort Frye Local Schools
- [Alison Patrick](#), Feed our Future Program Manager at Cuyahoga County Board of Health
- [Maribeth Saleem Tanner](#): Executive Director of Community Food initiatives in Athens
- [Joe Brown](#): Director of Food service for Columbus City Schools
- [Rachel B](#): Appalachian Center for Economic Networks
- [Jalessa Caples](#): Healthy Food Access Coordinator, Franklin County Public Health
- [Tamisha Matus](#): Creating Healthy Communities Union County
- [Maddie Chera](#): Food Systems Analyst for the Greater Cincinnati Regional Food Policy Council
- [Lisa](#): Intern at Union County Health Department
- [Jacob Cason](#): Food Science Coordinator of Cincinnati Museum Center
- [Tracy Enslen](#): American Dairy Association
- [Emily Gladish](#): Parma City Schools Farm to School Coordinator
- [Kelly Corfman](#): Program consultant with creating healthy communities program at Ohio Department of Health
- [Haley Carretta](#), Food Systems Project Manager for Dayton Public Health, West-Central Lead for F2S
- [Julie Wayman](#), Local Foods Coordinator in Ashtabula
- [Dara Barclay](#), Knowledge Exchange OSU <https://kx.osu.edu/>
- [Karima Samadi](#), Knowledge Exchange OSU and Franklin County Local Food Council
- [Maria Cohen](#), Impact Officer at PAST Foundation, based in Columbus and Project in Zanesville
- [June Wedd](#), ADA Mideast in Columbus, leading School team
- [Tony Staubach](#): Hamilton County

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Ohio and National Updates

- **National Farm to School Network** [new partnership structure](#)

NFSN is eliminating the cap on the number of partners. All organizations that pledge to equity commitments are welcome. All partner organizations in each place will be given equal recognition by NFSN for their roles in the NFSN network

NEW Farm to School Newsletter

- **Watch for an email from the Ohio Department of Agriculture the first week of the month**
- Contact [Haley Scott](#) and [Lauren Preston](#) to join the email list and share newsletter topics

Farm to School Spending Flexibility and Policy Paper

Farm to Early Care and Education Coalition

- The coalition is looking for early care sites to pilot local food purchasing. The coalition is working on Local food procurement pilots at early care sites, local food handling guides, and continuing to develop farm to early care and education coalition development.

School Gardens of Ohio meets the second Wednesday of the month at 4:30pm

Knowledge Exchange Food Systems Map

- KX is including Farm to School in an upcoming food system map
- Think this [Maryland Food System Map](#)
- Please fill out the [OH partnership form](#) to be listed as a partner

Growing Teachers Throughout the Seasons update

- Working on 4 year project to flip school year gardening calendar
- Continuing to work on modules over the next two years

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Emergency Procurement: Local Foods

- Supply chain challenges affecting everyone
- Flexibilities: [Emergency Procurement and other strategies](#)
- In-Depth USDA Webinar (recording): [2022 School Year Procurement](#)

Emergency Procurement Links:

- [Emergency Procurement and Other Strategies](#)
- [2022 School Year Procurement](#)
- Contact [Brian Davis](#) and [Elizabeth Douglass](#) with questions

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Supply Chain Challenges Discussion

Maureen Pisanick, [Pisanick Partners LLC](#)

Stacey Bettis, Food Service Director, Stark County

What are specific challenges with purchasing school foods and particularly local foods?

- Started at about 20% of product shortage, Stacey is tracking each school so the board and superintendent are updated. These issues are impacting about 30% of items on the menu.
- Supply chain has worsened this year, even with hybrid model last year. Cycle menus have been planned this year. Schools that have never done school breakfast program are now for the first time. Ordering is only filling 60% of need. Needing about 8 administrative hours. Trying to balance commodity purchasing, often in food service, plans throughout the alphabet are taken...
 - Bread specifically has been an issue- may order whole wheat and receive white bread due to supply and demand.
- Joe Brown, Columbus City Schools- Seeing 20-30% outages everyday. Procurement challenges extend past food to forks, napkins and other disposables.

Advice for Food Service Directors

- Always being flexible and transparent with kids
- Pisanick Partners advises quality over quantity and work smarter not harder. Think about not putting off scratch cooking if no frozen pizzas are in stock. Pisanick partners can train staff. Pizza as a great example to support local flour, tomato producers, dairy, etc.
- Forecasting for the year has been helpful for Stacey's schools. Letting distributors know what you plan to purchase when.
- Wellness committees are a great way to encourage/increase farm to school. Great way to engage with parents, teachers, school garden projects, any other farm to school activities.

How have your districts and schools you work with had the most success purchasing local?

- Stacey's districts able to perform farm stands. Using hydroponic lettuce. Local dough go company, pizza dough, etc. to bring local back into districts.
- Leverage food hubs and local producers in the area. Breakfast companies having a tough time meeting demand which is creating significant bottleneck in supply. The baker who makes pizza dough was able to make cinnamon breakfast products.
- Traverse city example- incentivizing schools with 10 cents a meal with an accurate way to forecast is a perfect recipe for success for increasing money spent locally in the state.
 - Smaller local businesses like Comida Vida in Cleveland- could you look at bistro box options for schools? Freezer, thawed, serve.
 - Supply boxes especially come in handy when entire kitchens are out
- Give food service directors an email or call to reach out

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Local Food Purchasing Model in Cincinnati, Anne Schneider

[Creation Gardens seasonal information](#)

- Creation gardens is the division of what chefs want that serves K-12 schools
- Creation gardens has had a ton of success through the fresh fruit and vegetable program instead of national school lunch program. Found that farms had excess product and creation gardens, as preferred distributor was able to match where extra product was with closed restaurants or facilities.
- Cincinnati public schools had already signed on to good food purchasing


Cincinnati Public Schools Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Program

- [GFPP](#) & [USDA FFVP Waivers](#)
- Local Food Purchasing SY 2020 – 21
 - FFVP - \$220,000 (Majority spent in Q4 2020 and Q1 2021)
 - NSLP - \$95,000
- FFVP Local Food Purchasing SY 2021-22 (Nov 16 - Dec 8th 2021)
 - \$91,000+ spent so far in local purchasing
 - From 5 different local farms in Ohio and Indiana
- Menu & Product Types
 - Both whole items (ex. apples) + cut items (ex. carrot coins)
 - 3 different items a week served for the entire school year
 - Typically, 1 whole fruit, 1 cut fruit and 1 cut vegetable
- For More Information:
 - Contact Megan Debanto at mdebanto@whatchefswant.com

Greater Cincinnati Regional
Food Policy Council

Berea Kids Eat (BKE) Take Home Meal Kit Program

- [Grow Appalachia](#) & [USDA SFSP Waivers](#)
- Grow Appalachia and Berea College partnered with the USDA and the Kentucky Department of Education to form the Berea Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). Launched in 2016, Berea SFSP works with Berea College Sodexo Dining Services to prepare breakfast and lunch to youth (ages 18 and under) during the summer months. Since summer 2018, BKE has partnered with a local food bank to meet weekend summer meal gaps by delivering Weekend Backpack meals kits to neighborhood meal sites each Friday.
- Local Food Purchasing Oct 2020 to Sept 2021:
 - Approx. \$250,000
 - Includes 18+ local farms participated from Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana
 - Each weekly meal kit generally included milk, eggs, produce, grains, and other proteins
- The success of this program has allowed Berea Kids Eat to continue doing meal kits throughout the current school year including:
 - Holiday Meal Kits (Thanksgiving & Winter Break)
 - Spring Meal Kits
 - Approx. \$7,000 local sales from 7 different local farms

Greater Cincinnati Regional
Food Policy CouncilAN INITIATIVE OF  Green Umbrella

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State Agency Farm to School Grant

- Strengthen the existing Farm to School State Network by increasing participation from all stakeholder groups.
- Statewide Farm to School Marketing Campaign
- Ohio Proud Farm to School Webpage
- Producer Training and Procurement Videos to provide farmers and FSD with information to increase and strengthen buying and selling relationships



Feed Our Future Local Menu Takeover

Original Goal – Pilot minimally processed fresh and frozen vegetables on school menus

COVID Pivot: Pilot all local grab-n-go meal concepts to students across all pandemic feeding models



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Feed Our Future Local Menu Takeover



Feed Our Future Local Menu Takeover

6500 meals served

- 100% of food service directors were very satisfied and will participate in the program again
- The program brought value to the school by helping communicate the value of school meal programs in providing high quality food

80% of parents say they are more likely to allow their child to buy school meals if local Ohio products are on the menu

The Pizza Bagel concept was voted as the favorite concept by students

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Local Menu Takeover (LMT)

- Statewide Marketing Campaign modeled off of Cuyahoga County pilot program.
- This sample graphic will be used for local purchasing initiatives across the state to identify local foods.
- After voting during the meeting, the graphic chosen is below.
- A couple hundred marketing kits will be sent out around the state in March
- Posters, window clings, and magnets are the most popular choices for materials with the graphic



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Regional Farm to School Networks

- **Northeast** – Cuyahoga County Board of Health
- **West Central** – Dayton and Montgomery County Public Health
- **Central** – OSU Extension Farm to School
- **East Central** – OSU Extension Stark Co
- **Southwest** – Green Umbrella
- **Southeast** – Rural Action and CSU Extension
- **Northwest** – ?
- **North Central** – ?



CFAES

Breakout Room Questions

1. Share any F2S updates, challenges, or successes in your region.
2. Local Menu Takeover (LMT)
 - Do you think FSD in your area would use these kits to promote local foods? What are your thoughts on who gets the kits or how to give them out?
3. Local Food Purchasing and Supply Chain Challenges
 - How does local food purchasing tend to work best in your area?
 - How would communication and connection work best between schools buying and producers selling? How can the state agencies facilitate these connections?
4. Producer Training and Food Service Director Training
 - Preferable format for these trainings

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Regional Farm to School Team Notes

East Central:

- Using let us grow towers in Stark County schools
- Some changes in staff and leadership in the area
- Stacey had a great experience with Local Menu Takeover. Even got to share pizza bites with virtual students.
- For LMT, schools love window clings, art, anything that can be displayed on bulletin boards or windows.
- Producers- train the training? Need to connect with OSU Direct Marketing. Nov-Feb better for producers
 - FSD training: Nov, Jan (one conference), Feb and April are fine
 - Hybrid trainings may be best. Regional trainings work well.
- Stacey utilizes harvest of the month calendar from Stark County. Use milk, grains, in addition to fruits and vegetables.

Northeast:

- Opportunities to engage school districts in Ashtabula in farm to school bid. School commitments going out in Jan so thinking about how we can bring districts on
- Local food purchasing challenges- districts doing most local purchasing are the districts doing it the longest. Local food supply may be able to fill a gap- if relationship isn't already there, it's overwhelming to think about opening a new purchasing route.

Central:

- Questions on LMT. A number of HOTM initiatives so how does LMT fit in- see it as umbrella and not competing.
- Could there be certain entry points so districts can opt into Farm to School month but not all 7 months?
- People loved pizza bagel example- which companies may be similar in our region? What is price point?
- OSU Food Industry Center- hoping to help facilitate process

Southwest:

- Excited to have Tony Staubach back- figuring out food waste
- LMT- keep it simple. It's a sticker. Figure out what is local and put a sticker on it
- Try not to create new things for producers or FSD to come to- busiest groups. Try to go into their existing meetings and channels

Southeast:

- Excited to see a lot of partners
- Discussing local food purchasing initiatives including summer food busses, new farmers markets, interested to keep growing
- Selling to wholesale markets training in January. Interested in reaching producers
- Good representation from Washington and Athens
- Float idea of having monthly meeting within region that we could use as a tool to expand connectivity, best practices, reaching out to more counties