

Ohio Farm to Early Care and Education (ECE) Coalition Guiding Document

Purpose and Scope:

This document will be created as to guide the Farm to ECE Statewide Coalition as the coalition grows.

Farm to early care and education (ECE) is a group of activities and strategies that include the use of local foods in meals and snacks, gardening opportunities, and food, agriculture, and nutrition-oriented learning activities, implemented with the goals of promoting health and wellness and enhancing the quality of the educational experience. The Ohio Farm to ECE Coalition is established with the aim of expanding farm to ECE opportunities to a greater number of Ohio children, families, and communities and institutionalizing and embedding farm to ECE into state and local ECE programs and systems. We particularly want to increase access and opportunities for groups that have been underserved in this area.

Ohio Farm to ECE Coalition Objectives:

Build and continually strengthen the network of leaders and key stakeholders working together to increase awareness of access to, and participation in farm to ECE initiatives across the state.

Identify and explore opportunities to institutionalize farm to ECE, including but not limited to:

- Expansion of this network to include individuals from diverse, cross-sector groups to offer perspectives, resources, and skills that will help achieve our vision.
- Implement inclusive, co-designed governance to carry out coalition objectives.
- Obtain and use meaningful data to inform policy recommendations and food procurement innovations that expand farm to early care and education opportunities.
- Development and dissemination of farm to ECE resources and support for implementation

Vision Statement: Equity will be achieved when all children 0-5 have access to healthy and nutritious food in their childcare settings and at home and this is not disproportionately determined by race, income level, education level and knowledge about nutritious food and how to prepare food, childcare type, or home address in the state of Ohio.

Coalition Structure:

Responsibilities and leadership will be shared among Coalition members as outlined in this Guiding Document. The primary Coalition contact will support coordination and logistical functions of the group. Coalition co-leads, representing various organizations, will provide leadership to the Coalition and act as “steering committee” to help guide Coalition activities and decision making. All Coalition members are encouraged to

actively engage in leadership opportunities and provide input and opinions on Coalition activities and decision making.

Participant Expectations:

Participation in the Ohio Farm to ECE Coalition is open to stakeholders with vested interest in expanding farm to ECE access and opportunities across the state. The coalition is committed to bringing together participants from diverse sectors to strengthen and deepen our reach and influence. To become a member, complete the Farm to ECE Interest Form. The coalition will review the Interest Form and invite stakeholders to participate if they are deemed a good fit.

Meeting Schedule and Format

- Ohio Farm to ECE Coalition will hold monthly meetings via zoom on the 3rd Tuesday of the month from 1-2:30pm.
 - Sub-group meeting times may be added with dates to be determined.
- Optional Ohio Farm to School Network quarterly meetings the 2nd Thursday in March, June, September, and December.
- Additional meeting times may be added to accommodate coalition member's schedules.

Guiding Document Review and Revisions:

The Ohio Farm to Early Care and Education Coalition will be reviewed, at minimum, on an annual basis and updated to reflect the changing goals, objectives, and structure of the Coalition. The Guiding Document will be reviewed and agreed upon by a consensus of Coalition members.