



# October is National Farm to School Month

Celebrate the connections being made between local food and schools!

**SMALL FINGERS PLANTING TURNIP SEEDS** during science class. Locally grown greens, tomatoes and snap peas on the cafeteria salad bar. A classroom visit from everyone's favorite strawberry farmer to celebrate the spring harvest and sample sweet, red fruit. October is National Farm to School Month, a time to celebrate the connections that are happening all over the country between schools and local food.

Farm to School is broadly defined as any program that connects schools (K-12) and local farms with the objectives of serving healthy meals in school cafeterias, improving student nutrition, providing agriculture, health and nutrition education opportunities, and supporting local and regional farmers. Farm to School programs exist in all 50 states, but since Farm to School is a grassroots movement, programs are as diverse as the communities that build them.

In November 2010, Congress approved a resolution introduced by Representative Rush Holt (NJ) to officially designate October as National Farm to School Month.

The passage of House Resolution 1655 demonstrates the growing importance and role of Farm to School programs as a means to improve child nutrition, support local economies and educate children about the origins of food.

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Farmers and chefs will be visiting schools across the country to celebrate the first National Farm to School Month. But whether you are a food service professional, a farmer, a teacher or a food-loving family, there are plenty of ways to celebrate and get involved, even if your school doesn't currently have a Farm to School program. Visit [farmtoschoolmonth.org](http://farmtoschoolmonth.org) for additional resources.

## Celebrate

Many Farm to School programs start with a small activity that generates interest and engages the whole community. We hope you can use these ideas for celebrating Farm to School Month as a starting point for establishing a new Farm to School program or strengthening an existing program.:

### Teachers

- Invite a local farmer, chef or the food service staff into your classroom to present an activity or talk to students.
- Plan nutrition education activities, such as Harvest of the Month, featuring a local food product that is in season.
- Create an outdoor garden plot or a container garden for your class.
- Connect instructional school gardens and garden-based learning activities to the curriculum.
- Use local foods as a healthy school fundraiser or a feature at a special event.
- Organize farm tours or trips to the local farmers' market.
- Send information about Farm to School Month to parents.
- Encourage your class to participate in the National Farm to School Month poster contest. Details are available on [farmtoschoolmonth.org](http://farmtoschoolmonth.org).

### School food service professionals

- Invite a local farmer or chef into the cafeteria.
- Promote Farm to School Month on the school menu. Find logos and sample language at [farmtoschoolmonth.org](http://farmtoschoolmonth.org)
- Promote Farm to School Month in the cafeteria through posters and other materials, which can be downloaded or ordered from [farmtoschoolmonth.org](http://farmtoschoolmonth.org).
- Do a taste test of local products, or feature one item for lunch, breakfast or snacks.
- Create a Farm to School salad bar using local products.

### Farmers

- Connect with your local school and offer to conduct a classroom session during October; or offer to host a visit to your farm.
- Become a classroom pen pal. Many schools don't have the money for farm field trips, but stories and photos from the farm are the next best thing.
- Promote Farm to School Month on your farm or at your farmers' market booth with posters and other materials, which can be downloaded or ordered from [farmtoschoolmonth.org](http://farmtoschoolmonth.org).

### Families

- Visit your local farmers' market. Buy something you've never tried before, cook it and share with your family and friends.



- Ask elders in the family for their favorite recipes featuring seasonal products grown in your region.
- Cook with seasonal products as much as possible. Find out what products are grown in your region and when. Most State Departments of Agriculture or Buy Fresh Buy Local chapters can provide you with a regional crop calendar.
- Volunteer at your local school to support a school garden or classroom educational activity.