

# Why Farm to School?

## Added Farm Income Potential

- While the health of our nation's youth is declining, family farming is facing the greatest decline of all occupations in the US.
- Many farmers with small- to mid-sized operations are seeking diverse and creative ways to support the family farm. Some raise specialty crops including organic crops to meet niche markets. Others grow and sell fresh fruits and vegetables at local farmers markets. Farm to School Programs provide yet another opportunity for these farmers to grow and sell fresh products in the schools within their own community.

## Positive Outcome for Children

- Raising children's awareness and consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables
- Encouraging children to develop healthy eating habits
- Educating children about where food comes from and where it is grown



**“There is a growing interest statewide in locally grown and produced food. The Iowa Farm to School program provides farmers and schools with a chance to connect and share resources. This is a tremendous opportunity to tell the story of agriculture and the important role it plays in Iowa's economy.”**

*Bill Northey, Secretary of Agriculture  
Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship*

## Farm to School Council

Christine Pardee– appointed by Secretary of Agriculture

Rich Pirog– Leopold Center

Julia Thorius– Iowa Department of Education

Debra Stephenson– Iowa Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance  
with expertise in health

Denise O'Brien– Iowa Fruit and Vegetable Producer

Earl Hafner– Iowa Organic Meat Producer

Laurie Crane– Iowa School Nutrition Association



**For more information contact us at 515-281-7657 or visit us on the web at <http://www.agriculture.state.ia.us/AgDiversification/farmToSchoolProgram.asp>**

For more information about Farm to School programs nationally, please visit:

[www.farmentoschool.org](http://www.farmentoschool.org).



# Iowa Farm to School Program



**Iowa Department of Agriculture  
and Land Stewardship**

# Farm to School Beginning

Iowa Lawmakers passed Farm to School legislation in 2007 to establish a program that would:

- Link elementary, secondary, public and non-public schools with Iowa farmers;
- Provide schools with fresh and minimally processed Iowa-grown food for inclusion in school meals and snacks; and
- Encourage children to develop healthy eating habits and provide them with hands-on learning activities.



The Farm to School Program is coordinated by the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS)

in partnership with the Iowa Department of Education and a seven-member Farm to School Council. We believe the success of this program depends on strong local networks of individuals and organizations familiar with their community's resources and needs.

*“Not only do fresh local products help improve diet and health, they also provide schools with a connection to their communities through their local farmers. It's a win-win situation!”*

Karey Claghorn, Deputy Secretary of Agriculture

Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship



# Farm to School Initiatives

## CHAPTERS:

The Iowa Farm to School Chapter Initiative is unique to Iowa. The Chapter Initiative is being implemented to allow communities and individual school districts the opportunity to procure food from local sources. Community involvement is key to the success of the Iowa Farm to School Program. The Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, Iowa Department of Education and the Iowa Farm to School Advisory Council will reach out to communities to establish strong partnerships.

If you are interested in starting a chapter in your community, please contact us or go online for a chapter packet at <http://www.agriculture.state.ia.us/AgDiversification/farmToSchoolProgram.asp>. A chapter can encompass an entire school district or simply be built around one school and one single project.

## A is for Apple Initiative:

This Initiative was started in the Fall of 2008, in order to encourage the purchase of locally grown Iowa apples. Orchards and schools work together to provide apples to the school children. Educational materials, classroom presentations and promotional items were provided to selected schools, along with funds to assist in the purchase of Iowa-grown apples.



## Supporting Local Farm to School Efforts with:

- Educational Materials - classroom ideas, apple orchard presentation, worksheets, Fresh Facts (Fruit/Vegetable Brochures)
- Promotional Materials - pencils, harvest calendar magnets, erasers, stickers, brochures
- Co-Sponsorship - display, monetary funds, education and promotional materials

If you are planning a local Farm to School activity, please contact us to find out how we can help.



## Newsletter

- We want to stay in touch with you and others who are interested in establishing this vital link between Iowa schools and Iowa farms. We need to hear from you and we want to spread the word about your needs, good ideas and good work happening in your area. To that end we publish a bi-annual Iowa Farm to School newsletter. This newsletter highlights pivotal policies, news, publications, and events in the growing movement to bring local fresh ingredients to schools in Iowa.