



FARM^{to} SCHOOL

THE PICK OF THE CROP FROM IDAHO



**OUR SCHOOL
IS A FARM
TO SCHOOL
PILOT SCHOOL**

**SERVING THE PICK OF THE
CROP FROM IDAHO**

What is Farm to School?

Farm to School is a broad term that is used to describe efforts to connect healthy local food and agriculture with schools and students.

The goal of the Idaho Farm to School Program is to support healthy children, healthy schools, healthy farms, and healthy communities.

Farm to school programs are based on the premise that students will choose healthier foods, including more fruits and vegetables, if products are fresh, locally grown, and picked at the peak of their flavor and if those choices are reinforced with educational activities.



What to Expect from a Farm to School Pilot School

Five school districts in Idaho were chosen to pilot the Farm to School Program. Through this pilot program schools will receive help in implementing multiple aspects of the farm to school program including nutrition and agriculture education, farmer/producer partnerships, incorporating local foods in school meals and snacks, and marketing the use of local foods.

Farm to school pilot schools will serve at least two local foods a week during September and at least one local food a month during the rest of the school year. The schools will also implement educational and marketing campaigns to support the local food efforts and to educate students, staff, and parents.

Why is Farm to School an Important Program?

The Farm to School Program benefits both students and the local economy. Farm to school enhances students' educational experience and cultivates long-term healthy eating habits.

Existing research shows that Farm to School Programs influence students on many levels; increasing their knowledge and awareness about

food sources, nutrition, and eating behaviors and lifestyles. Farm to School Program studies have shown the following benefits:

Meal Participation Increases

- A 3%-16% increase in school meal participation has been seen in schools implementing the program^{1, 2}.
- Teacher and administration participation in school meals also usually increase¹.

Encourages Healthy Choices

- Farm to School Programs have shown a 25%-84% increase in student fruit and vegetable consumption¹.
- Farm to School may lead to positive family food choices, including purchasing fresh, healthy, local foods².
- Demonstrated willingness to try out new foods and healthier options. In one school in Ventura, CA, on days in which there was a choice between a farmers' market salad bar and a hot lunch, students and adults chose the salad bar by a 14 to 1 ratio².

Provides Educational Opportunities

- Increased knowledge of nutrition, healthy eating, local foods, agriculture, and the environment².

Supports the Local Community

- Creates new markets for local farmers¹.

Did You Know?

- Agriculture is Idaho's number one natural resource based industry
- Idaho farmers raise over 180 different food and agriculture crops.
- Idaho ranks first in the nation in potato and trout production and third in milk and cheese production.
- Idaho produces sweet tree-ripened peaches, plums, pears, nectarines and apples – all available to schools in September – which has been designated Idaho Preferred Month!
- If Idahoans had to consume all products produced in the state every man, woman and child would have to eat or drink **every day**:
 - 220 slices of bread
 - 41 potatoes
 - 41 glasses of milk or 2 pounds of cheese
 - 1 8-ounce steak
 - 2 onions
 - 2 cups of beans



RESOURCES:

1. The Farm to School Network, Western Region Meeting, Center for Food and Justice, 2007
2. "Bearing Fruit: Farm to School Program Evaluation Resources and Recommendations" by Joshi A and Azuma A M, National Farm to School Network, Center for Food & Justice, Occidental College, 2008.