



What is Farm to School?

Farm to School encompasses all efforts to connect local agriculture with school cafeterias and classrooms. These efforts include experiential learning activities such as school gardening, farm visits and culinary classes; the integration of food-related education into curriculum; and bringing locally produced foods into school cafeterias.

The goal of the Kansas Department of Agriculture (KDA) Farm to School program is to expand the prevalence of fresh, local foods in school cafeterias and bolster agriculture and nutrition education.

The term 'local' has many different definitions. KDA defines local as within the state of Kansas.

Local foods in schools may be grown on school property, by a farmer within the school district or by a rancher on the other side of the state.

These foods can span the school meal tray and include everything from fresh fruit and vegetable servings to the wheat in pizza crusts, beans in chili, rice in stir fry, meat in sandwiches and cheese in quesadillas.

Farm to School includes all types of producers and agribusinesses, including farmers, ranchers and fishermen, as well as food processors, manufacturers, and distributors. There is a place at the lunch table for every type of agriculture producer.

Cooperation fuels Farm to School efforts in schools, classrooms and extracurricular activities. Those involved with successful Farm to School programs include:

- Food service directors and personnel;
- Farmers and/or food distributors
- Parents, teachers and school leaders;
- Students; and
- Community members and organizations.

The state of Farm to School was examined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) in 2013 via the Farm to School Census.

In Kansas, 35 percent of school districts currently participate in Farm to School activities. These districts represent large and small, rural and urban settings. Kansas schools who purchased local food during the 2011-2012 school year invested more than \$2 million into the local economy.

Farm to School programs are flexible and can be tailored to fit any budget or emphasize any food category. Some programs have local food tastings on special occasions. Others serve local food in the cafeteria on a daily basis. All programs have the opportunity to integrate agriculture and nutrition education to give children the opportunity to learn more about what agriculture looks like and how food really arrives from farms to our homes and schools.

For more information on the USDA Farm to School program, please visit

www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool.

For information on Kansas' program, visit www.agriculture.ks.gov/farmtoschool

Robin Blume

Education & Event Coordinator
Kansas Department of Agriculture
(785) 564-6756



The goal of the KDA Farm to School program is to expand the prevalence of fresh, local foods in school cafeterias and bolster agriculture and nutrition education.

Kansas Department of Agriculture | 1320 Research Park Drive | Manhattan, KS 66602 | (785) 564-6700 | agriculture.ks.gov