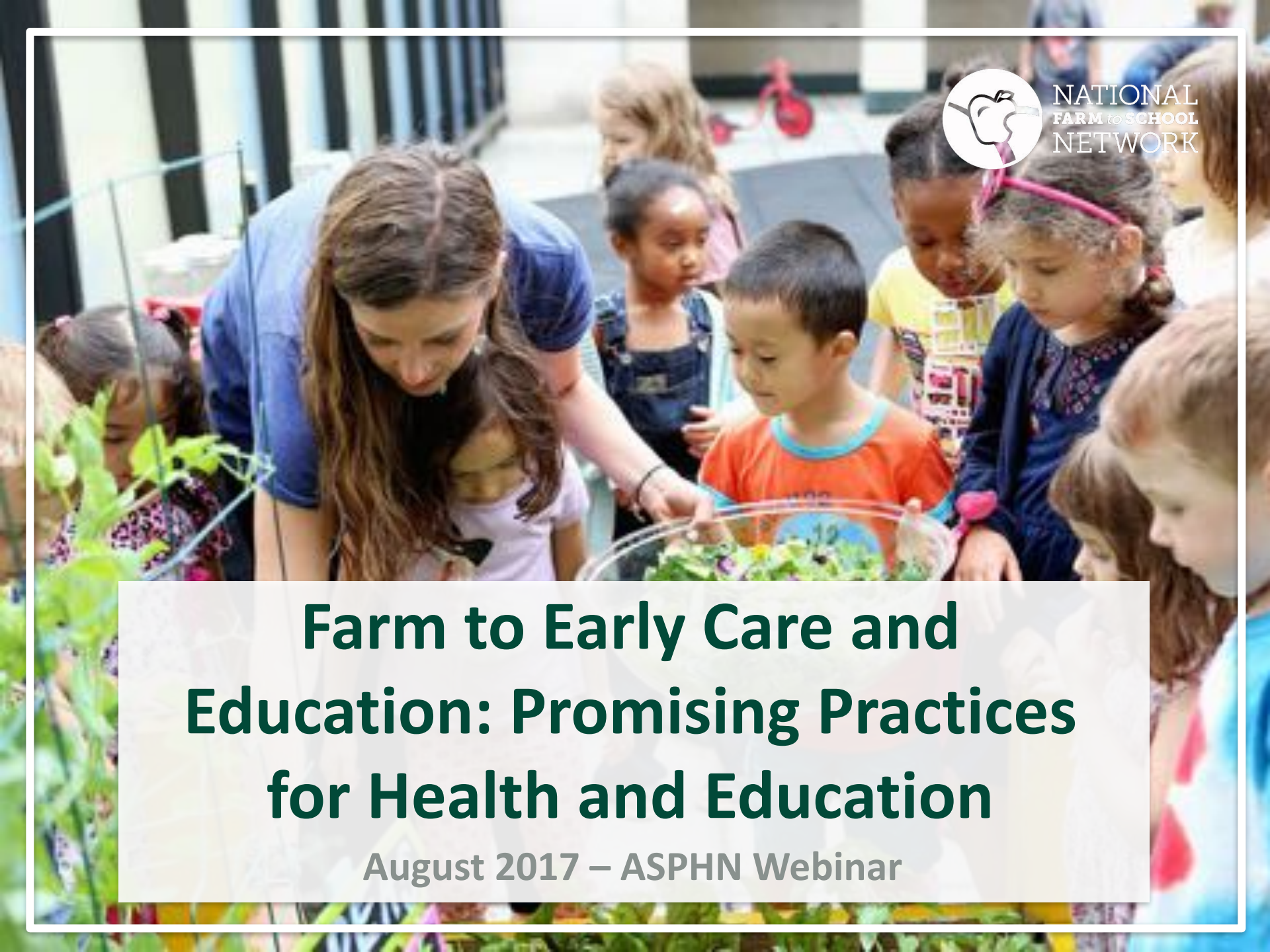

NATIONAL FARM to SCHOOL NETWORK

Farm to Early Care and Education: Promising Practices for Health and Education

August 2017 – ASPHN Webinar

Lacy Stephens, MS, RDN
Farm to Early Care and Education Associate
lacy@farmtoschool.org

NATIONAL FARM to SCHOOL NETWORK

Webinar Agenda

- Introduction to the National Farm to School Network
- What is Farm to Early Care and Education
- Why Farm to Early Care and Education
- Digging into the Core Elements
- Meeting Standards and Increasing Quality with Farm to ECE
- State Agencies and Farm to ECE
- Resource Roundup
- Q & A

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Webinar Objectives

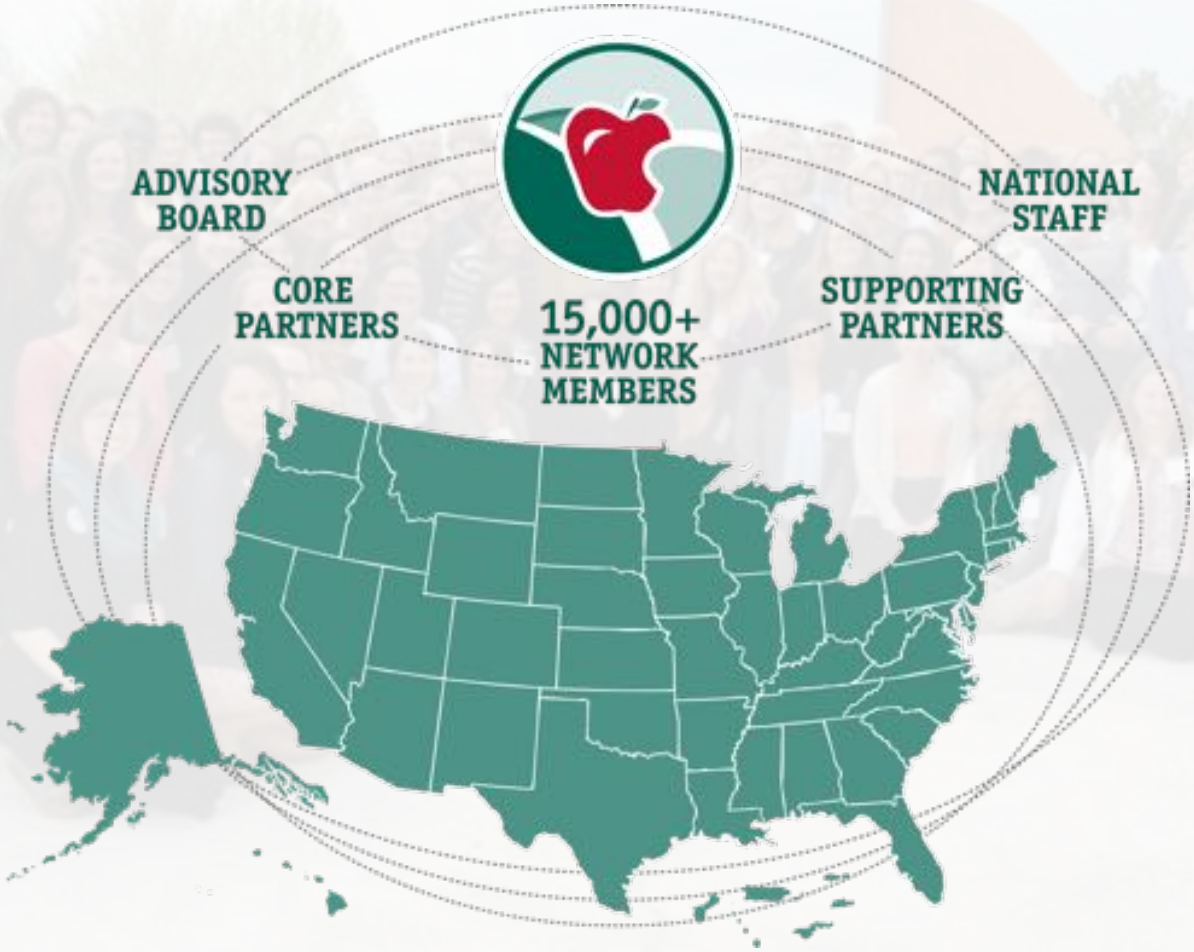
Following the webinar, participants will be able to:

- Identify the core elements of farm to early care and education (ECE) - including education, gardening, and local procurement - and provide examples of each.
- Explain the benefits of farm to ECE and how farm to ECE initiatives can increase the quality of ECE settings by promoting health and high quality education.
- Utilize resources from the National Farm to School Network and other national and state partners to support farm to ECE implementation.

INTRODUCTION TO THE NATIONAL FARM TO SCHOOL NETWORK

NATIONAL FARM to SCHOOL NETWORK

OUR NETWORK



NATIONAL FARM to SCHOOL NETWORK

OUR CORE FUNCTIONS

A hub for:

Information | **Networking** | **Advocacy**

Connecting people to:

Resources | **People** | **Policy**

OCTOBER

is

NATIONAL FARM to SCHOOL MONTH

NATIONAL FARM to SCHOOL MONTH

2017 CELEBRATIONS

A time to take action!

- **Get inspired**: Blogs on farmtoschool.org
- **Get informed**: Webinars & tweet chats
- **Get involved**: “Take Action” Pledge + Sweepstakes

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GET INVOLVED

farmtoschool.org/month

- Download resources
  - Farm to School Month posters
  - Stickers
  - Bookmarks
  - Coloring sheets
- Find activities happening in your state
- Become an Outreach Partner Organization
- Sign up for our newsletter – *more resources coming soon!*

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ECE ACTIVITY IDEAS

- Plan a field trip to a farm, farmers market, fishery or other farm to school site
- Serve a local food item for a snack or during a meal
- Plant seeds or harvest from a garden
- Encourage creativity with coloring pages (download online)
- Display posters and stickers (download online)
- Celebrate what's happening in your community
  - Share local stories far and wide
  - Pitch media, promote on social media, share photos

WHAT IS FARM TO EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION?

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Farm to Early Care and Education

- Group of strategies and activities that offer:
  - increased access to healthy, local foods
  - gardening opportunities and
  - food-based activities
- Targets children ages 0-5
- Adapts to all ECE settings

Photo Credit: Ali Stone for Gardeneers

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WHAT IS FARM TO SCHOOL?

CORE ELEMENTS OF
FARM to SCHOOL

EDUCATION

SCHOOL GARDENS

PROCUREMENT

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WHY FOCUS ON FARM TO EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION?

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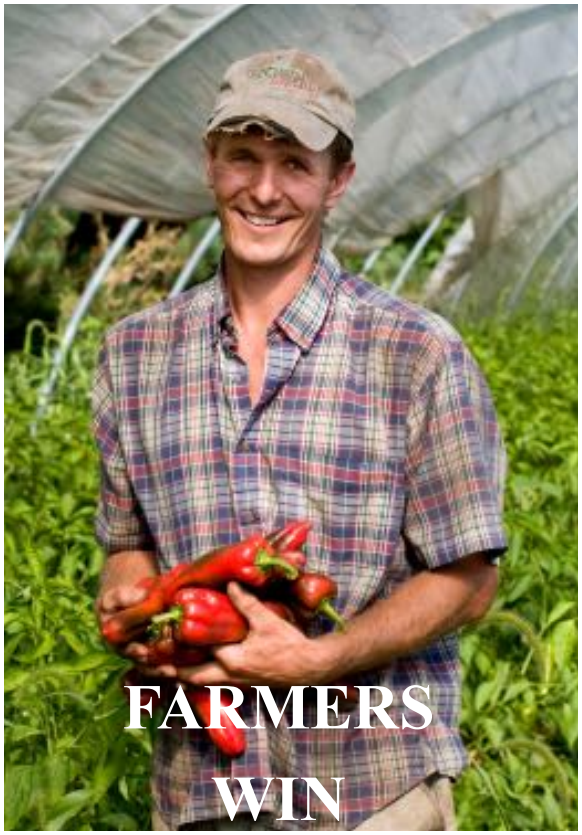
WHY FARM TO SCHOOL?



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…and more

- Family and Community Engagement
- Enhanced Educational Experience
- Health and Wellness

= alignment with early care and education priorities and goals

Family and Community Engagement

- Emphasis on family engagement
  - Most successful parent engagement actively engages with experience and feedback
- Meets needs of children of all ages and abilities
- Children as agents of change
- Impact on caregivers
  - Prioritize healthy eating
  - Expand acceptance of new foods
  - Encourage positive attitudes and modeling
- Connect to community, culture, and heritage

Family Engagement Opportunities

- Family dinners
- Family taste tests
- Cooking classes
- Community supported agriculture
- Story time
- Garden days
- Field trips

Enhanced Educational Experience

- Alignment with ECE standards and systems
  - State Early Learning Standards
  - Head Start Program Performance Standards
- Experiential education is the norm
  - Supports appropriate cognitive, physical, social and emotional development

Health and Wellness

- Early development of eating patterns and preferences
- Rely on parents/caregivers to create food/activity environments
- Increase availability, acceptance, and consumption of healthier foods
- Increase knowledge and improve food choices of parents and caregivers

Photo Credit: Willamette Farm and Food Coalition

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Spectrum of Opportunities for Obesity Prevention in the Early Care and Education Setting

CDC Spectrum of Opportunities for Obesity Prevention in the ECE Setting

- Alignment with Farm to ECE
  - Facility Level Interventions
  - CACFP
  - Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS)
  - Access to Healthy Environments
  - Early Learning Standards
  - Family Engagement

Early Childhood Obesity: Evidence Based Protective Factors

- Introduced to a wide variety of flavors, textures, and foods
- Fruit and vegetable consumption
- Mindful eating is fostered (awareness of hunger and satiety)
- High fiber and nutrient rich diet

Supporting Healthy Habits

- Early childhood is a critical time for development of taste preferences[3]
- Repeated exposure to fruits and vegetables increases preference, a predictor of future consumption[4-8]

Farm to ECE and F&V

- Farm to ECE activities contribute to **increased willingness to try and reported liking** of target fruits and vegetables[9,10]
- Farm to ECE participation contributes to **increased fruit and/or vegetable intake**[11,12,13]

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Farm to School and Student Health[14]

- Farm to school participation contributes to:
  - Choosing healthier options at school meals
  - Consuming more fruits and vegetables at school meals and at home (+0.99 to +1.3 servings/day)
  - Consuming less unhealthy foods and sodas
  - Reducing screen time
  - Increasing physical activity

DIGGING INTO THE CORE ELEMENTS

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Education

- Farm and garden books
- Cooking activities
- Taste tests
- Special visitors - farmers, chefs, etc.
- Sensory exploration

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Photo Credit: Fairyland Family Childcare and YMCA of Madison, WI

Education (cont.)

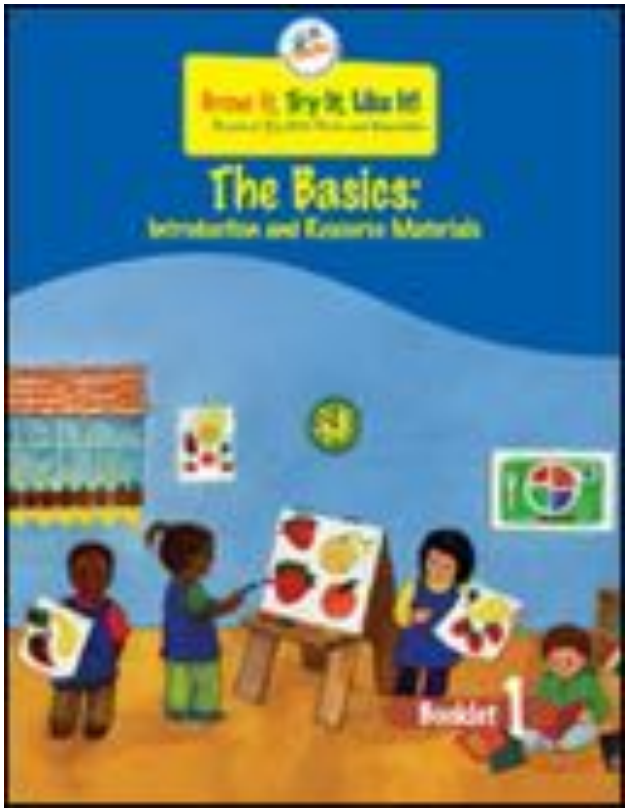
- Food and garden lessons – how food grows and where it comes from
- Field trips – farms, gardens, farmers' markets, etc.
- Math, science, literacy lessons

Curriculum Resources

- USDA Grow It! Try It! Like It!
  - https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/grow-it-try-it-it
- Harvest for Healthy Kids
  - www.harvestforhealthykids.org
- Growing Minds Farm to Preschool Toolkit
  - http://growing-minds.org/farm-preschool-toolkit/

USDA Grow it, Try it, Like it!

- Activity Guides for 6 different fruits and vegetables
- Family handouts and resources
- Planning calendar
- CACFP recipes



Harvest for Healthy Kids

- Developed in partnership with Head Start programs
- Evidence based
- Free activity kits
- Picture cards
- “Family Bites”
- Recipes

ASAP Farm to Preschool Toolkit

- This Week in the Garden
- Farm to School Goes Home
- Reach for the Stars – Farm to Preschool Alignment with ECERS-R

Gardening

- Containers
- Raised Beds
- In ground gardens
- Hydroponics
- Vertical gardening

Photo Credit: NFSN

NATIONAL FARM to SCHOOL NETWORK

Photo Credit: Fairyland Family Childcare, YMCA of Madison, WI, Taking Root Tennessee, IATP Farm to Head Start

NATIONAL FARM to SCHOOL NETWORK

Local Foods

- Meals
- Snacks
- Taste Tests

Photo Credit: Fairyland Family Childcare, IATP Farm to Head Start

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Unique Opportunities for Local Food

- Flexibility of purchasing
  - Varying class and program sizes
  - Year round programming
- ECE Priority Areas
  - Experiential learning opportunities
  - Family style meals
- Best Practice in CACFP

CACFP Meal Pattern Final Rule

"Local foods can plan an important role in creating and promoting a healthy environment. A growing body of research demonstrates several positive impacts of serving local foods and providing food education through CNP's including:

- Increased participation and engagement in school meal programs,
- Consumption of healthier options, such as whole foods,
- Support of local economies."

Photo Credit: Healthy Community Food Systems, CO

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Local Foods in the new CACFP Meal Pattern

- Additional **fruit and vegetable variety requirements, increased whole grains and reduced sugar in snacks and beverages,** can all be supported with farm to early care and education activities.
- Using **local foods, gardening experiences, and food and nutrition education**, young children learn to accept and enjoy the variety of healthy foods included in the meal pattern.

NATIONAL FARM to SCHOOL NETWORK

Photo Credit: IATP Farm to Child Care

Best Practices in CACFP

Farm to ECE supports “Best Practices in CACFP”:

- Incorporate seasonal and locally produced foods into meals.
- Make at least one of the two required components of snacks a vegetable or fruit.
- Serve a variety of fruits and choose whole fruit more often than juice.
- Provide at least one serving each of dark green vegetables, red and orange vegetables, beans and peas, starchy vegetables, and other vegetables once per week.

USDA CACFP Guidance

- March 2015 USDA Memo – *Local Foods in the Child and Adult Care Food Program*
  - http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/f2s/CACFP11_2015_Local%20Foods%20in%20CACFP_03%2013%202015.pdf
  - Local purchasing
  - SAE funds
  - Gardens and garden grown produce
  - Food safety
  - Donated foods

Photo Credit: IATP Farm to Child Care

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USDA CACFP Guidance – Buying Local

- Institutions vs. Facilities
  - Procurement regulations
  - Geographic preference
- Documentation
  - Date of purchase, name of vendor/farmer, item cost, amount, total cost
- Purchasing from farmers
  - GAP, liability

USDA CACFP Guidance – Gardens

- Allowable Costs
  - Items for garden (seeds, fertilizer, watering cans, labor, plot rental, etc.) to grow food that will be used in food service
- Documentation
  - Weight and/or volume of produce from garden

Photo Credit: NFSN

MEETING STANDARDS AND INCREASING QUALITY

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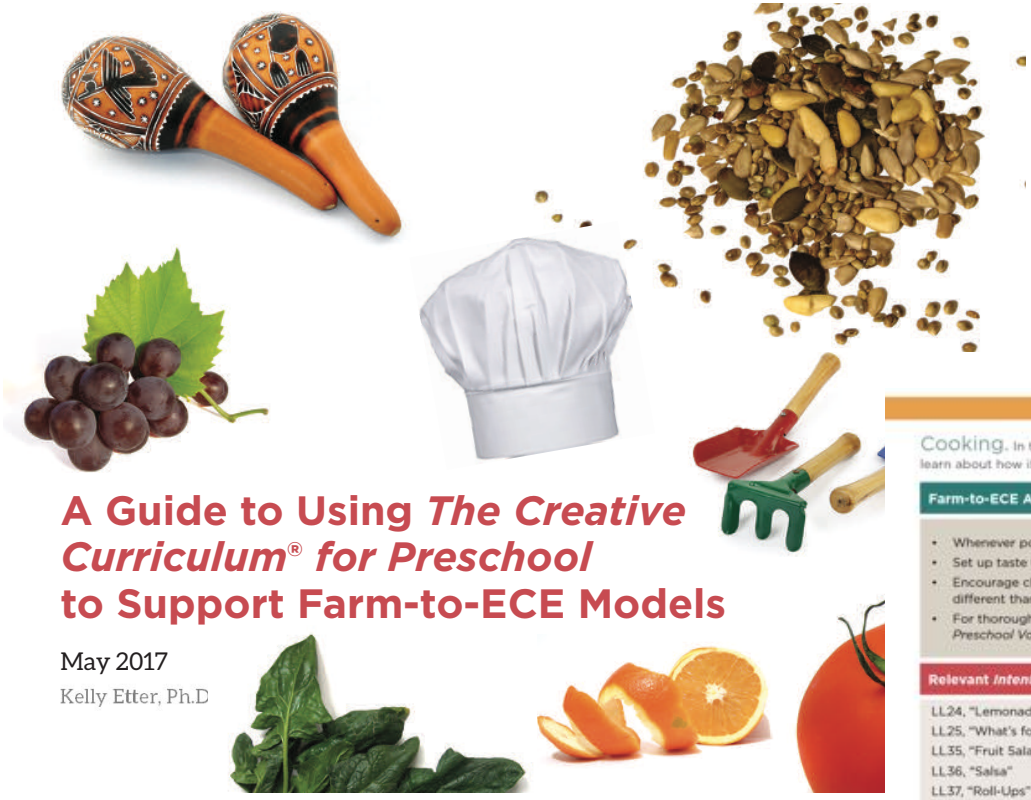
Head Start Program Performance Standards

Performance Standard	Farm to ECE Activity
1302.11 Determining community strengths, needs, and resources	Local foods and nutrition education resources can be included in community assessment
1302.31 Teaching and the learning environment	Farm to ECE educational initiatives promote interactive learning opportunities through food, making every meal time a learning time
1302.32 Curricula	Peer reviewed, evidence based farm to ECE curricula is available for implementation
1302.34 Parent and family engagement in education and child development services	Farm to ECE initiatives offer engaging and meaningful opportunities for parent volunteer and engagement in the classroom

Early Learning Outcomes Framework

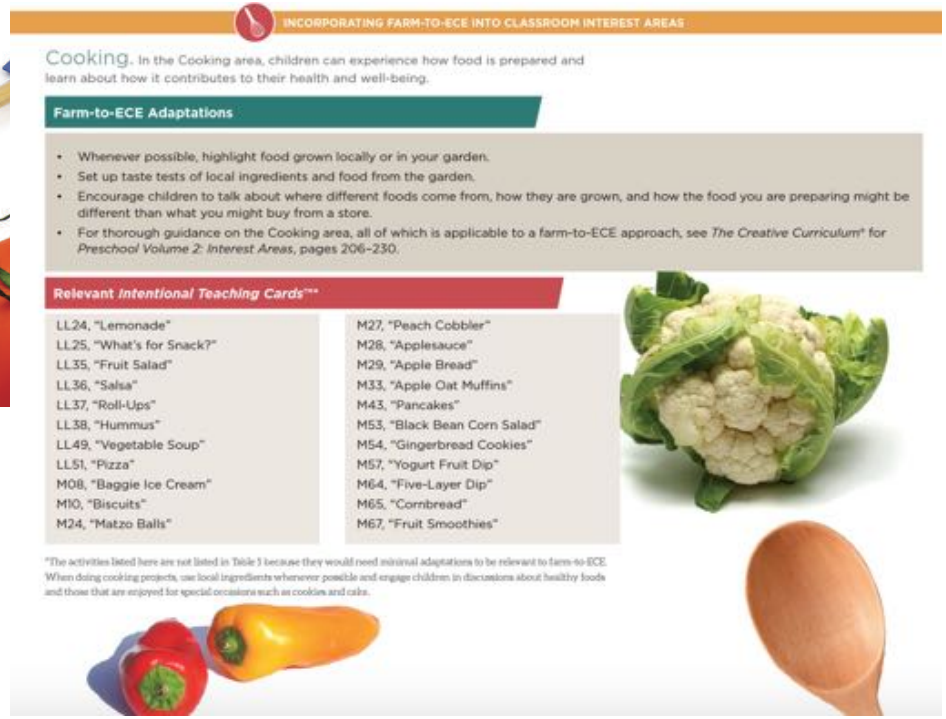
Early Learning Outcome Goal	Farm to ECE Activity
Nutrition: Goal P-PMP 5. Child develops knowledge and skills that help promote nutritious food choices and eating habits	Gardening, taste tests, cooking, sensory exploration offer multiple exposures to healthy, local foods, promoting increased willingness to try and reported liking healthy foods.
Logic and Reasoning Standards: Goal IT-C 1. Child actively explores people and objects to understand self, others, and objects.	Child uses gardening to investigate questions like, “What to plants need to grow?” Child makes predictions and observations like, “I think the plant needs water to grow.”



A Guide to Using *The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool* to Support Farm-to-ECE Models

May 2017

Kelly Etter, Ph.D



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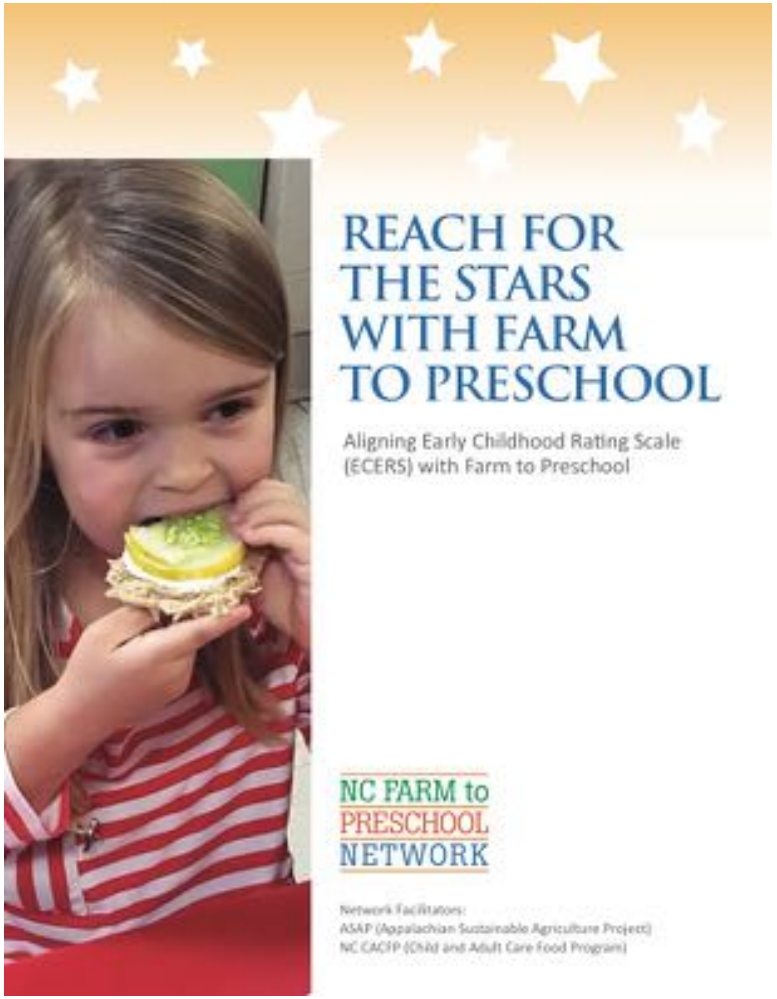
Creative Curriculum Objectives for Development and Learning

Area of development and learning	Farm to ECE Activity
Physical: Demonstrates fine-motor strength and coordination	Children sort seeds and use their fingers to dig and plant in the garden.
Language: Uses appropriate conversational and other communication skills	Children and teachers talk with one another to plan a garden, making decisions together by asking questions and listening to the ideas of others.
Mathematics: Compares and measures.	Children explore different fruits and vegetables by comparing shapes, sizes, and textures.



ACTIVITY:

Edible Gardening with Young Children

SUBSCALE	SPACE AND FURNISHINGS
Item	**Child related display**
Indicators	Indicator 5.1 Children display art that references experiences in the garden and includes pictures of themselves in the garden Indicator 7.1 Creative and Individualized displays depicting the garden are created by 50% of the children
Item	**Space for gross motor play**
Indicators	Indicator 7.1 Children utilize gross motor skills in the garden (weeding, digging, using a wheelbarrow) on a variety of surfaces (soft: dirt, wood chips/mulch, grass; hard: concrete surface)
Item	**Gross motor equipment**
Indicators	Indicator 3.1 Children have access to gross motor equipment (wheelbarrows, shovels, hoes, buckets) in the garden Indicator 5.1 Numerous gross motor equipment (wheelbarrows, shovels, hoes, buckets) are made available to children in the garden

STATE AGENCIES AND FARM TO ECE

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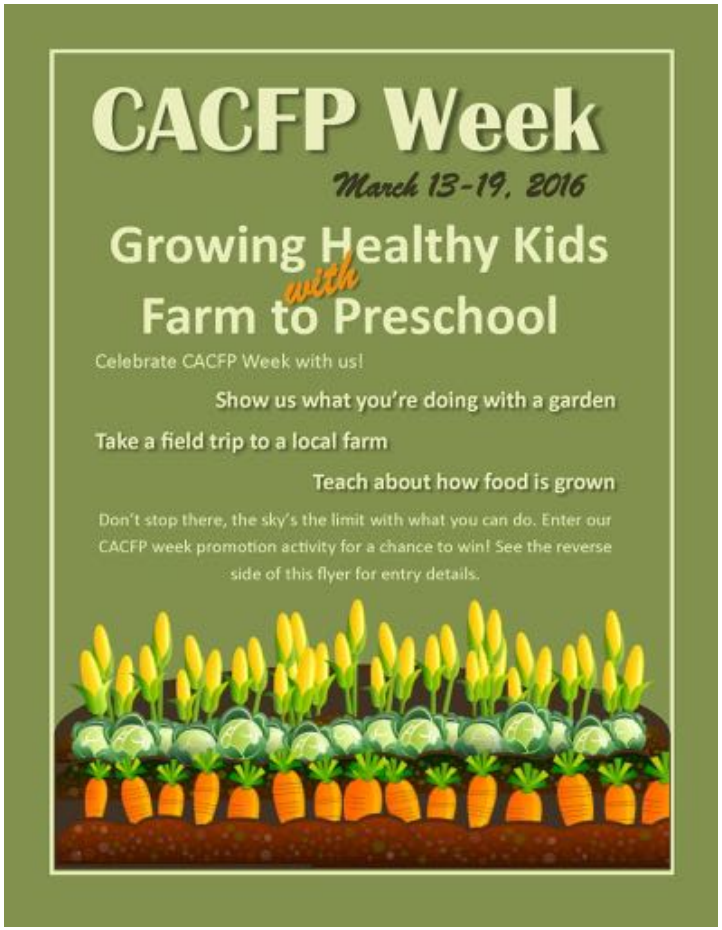
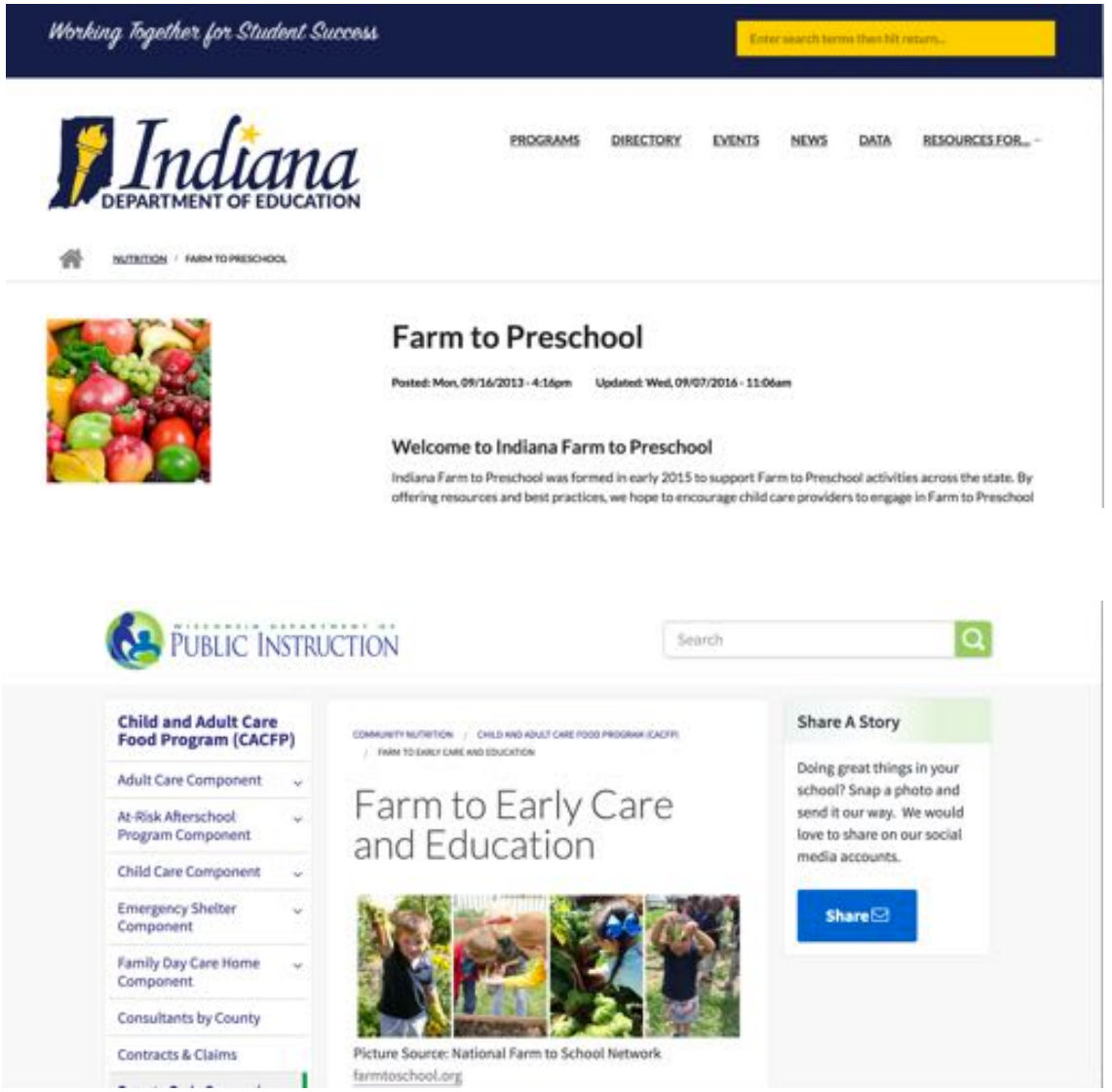
Integrate Farm to ECE into Existing Systems

- Special guests at in-person training
- Topic specific trainings
- Promotional activities
- Farm to ECE websites
- Webinars
- Data collection

Photo Credit: Renewing the Countryside

NATIONAL FARM to SCHOOL NETWORK


CACFP Week
March 13-19, 2016
Growing Healthy Kids with Farm to Preschool
Celebrate CACFP Week with us!
Show us what you're doing with a garden
Take a field trip to a local farm
Teach about how food is grown
Don't stop there, the sky's the limit with what you can do. Enter our CACFP week promotion activity for a chance to win! See the reverse side of this flyer for entry details.


Working Together for Student Success
Indiana Department of Education
PROGRAMS
DIRECTORY
EVENTS
NEWS
DATA
RESOURCES FOR...
NUTRITION / FARM TO PRESCHOOL
Farm to Preschool
Posted: Mon, 09/16/2013 - 4:16pm
Updated: Wed, 09/07/2016 - 11:06am
Welcome to Indiana Farm to Preschool
Indiana Farm to Preschool was formed in early 2015 to support Farm to Preschool activities across the state. By offering resources and best practices, we hope to encourage child care providers to engage in Farm to Preschool
Public Instruction
Search
Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)
Adult Care Component
At-Risk Afterschool Program Component
Child Care Component
Emergency Shelter Component
Family Day Care Home Component
Consultants by County
Contracts & Claims
Farm to Early Care and Education
Share A Story
Doing great things in your school? Snap a photo and send it our way. We would love to share on our social media accounts.
Share
Picture Source: National Farm to School Network
farmtoschool.org

Develop State Specific Resources and Materials

- Training modules
- Seasonality and purchasing guides
- Harvest of the Month programs

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Devote Staff Time and Manpower

- Appoint farm to ECE “specialist”
- House or support farm to ECE coordinator position

Indiana
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Leverage Funding Opportunities

- Team Nutrition
- 1305 CDC (State Health Department)

Lead and Participate in State Wide Network Building

NC FARM to PRESCHOOL NETWORK

GA F2PS
Georgia Farm to PreSchool

FARM TO ECE RESOURCES

NATIONAL FARM to SCHOOL NETWORK

Farm to ECE Landing Page

www.farmtoschool.org/earlychildhood

Fact Sheets

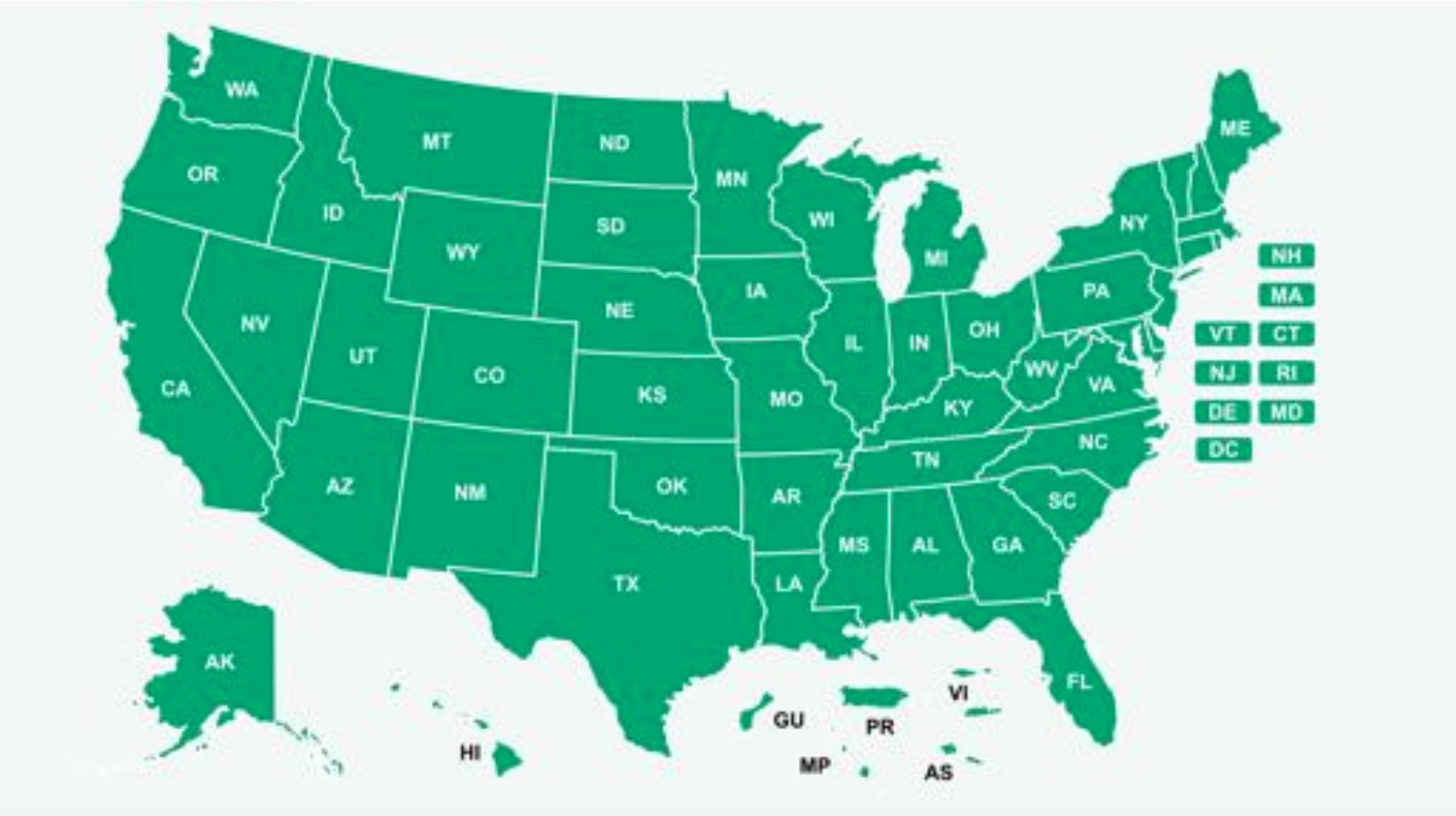
- Getting Started with Farm to Early Care and Education
- Local Purchasing for Family Child Care Homes
- Local Procurement for Child Care Centers

Resource Database

www.farmtoschool.org/resources

NATIONAL FARM to SCHOOL NETWORK

Connecting with NFSN – Our Network



www.farmtoschool.org/our-network

NATIONAL FARM to SCHOOL NETWORK

Connecting with NFSN

- Website: www.farmtoschool.org
  - Our Network:
    - www.farmtoschool.org/our-network
  - Farm to ECE:
    - www.farmtoschool.org/our-work/early-care-and-education
  - Resource Database:
    - www.farmtoschool.org/resources
- Stay connected:
  - eNewsletter: www.farmtoschool.org/join
  - Facebook: National Farm to School Network
  - Twitter: @farmtoschool

Lacy Stephens, MS, RDN
Farm to Early Care and Education Associate
National Farm to School Network
lacy@farmtoschool.org
816-914-0597

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