



## Illinois Farm to School Network News

### IFSN News: Don't Miss These Upcoming Training Opportunities!

Are you a school foodservice manager, early childcare or feeding site operator in Kane, DuPage, DeKalb, or N.W. Cook Co?

Join us on **May 15th from 12:30-4:00** for an exciting afternoon of training and networking around using locally grown foods in meal programs! This event will feature a delicious locally-sourced lunch, a live recipe demonstration, and a meet-and-greet with the operators of Kane County's brand new food hub. Attendees will leave feeling inspired with new tools to talk to farmers and integrate local food into their menus.

Area school food service directors and staff, early care providers, and other institutional food service managers are welcome. Continuing education units will be available for school food service professionals attending this training.

Event Host: Growing for Kane Local Food Partners  
This is a free event!

**Reserve your seat by TOMORROW May 11th!**

[Reserve Your Seat Here!](#)



### IFSN Webinar: Illinois Harvest of the Month in Action: Stories from School Districts

Join our webinar on **May 16th at 3:30 pm** for an in-depth look at school districts who participated in Harvest of the Month during the 2017/18 school year.

School garden programs along with school foodservice programs, both contracted and self op, procured or produced vegetables for Harvest of the Month throughout the year. Learn how these school districts applied Harvest of the Month programming in different ways, and how they served local foods on the menu and in taste tests.

Don't miss the opportunity to use this program in your Wellness Policy work! Learn how these schools integrated their local veggies into learning opportunities, and how they shared recipes and food education with their communities and school families!

You do not need to register for this webinar. Just add the Google link to your calendar as a reminder, or save the information to another calendar.

**Mark your calendar! No need to register!**

### **Illinois Harvest of the Month in Action: Stories from School Districts**

Wed, May 16, 2018 3:30 PM - 4:30 PM CDT

On May 16th, from your computer, tablet or smartphone: [Join Here.](#)

Using your phone: (872) 240-3212

Access Code: 453-127-381

[Add to My Google Calendar](#)

## Farm to School News in Illinois and Beyond

### **News: Locally sourced food truck makes way to Madison, WI schools**

Madison high schoolers can look forward to a unique grab-and-go lunch option starting this week. REAP Food Group is partnering with Madison Metropolitan School District to bring a food truck donated by Roth Cheese last spring to Madison's four public high schools.



Food from the Uproot truck counts as a reimbursable school lunch, which REAP's executive director, Helen Sarakinos, said is important, because half of MMSD's student body qualifies for free or reduced lunch.

"I think it's great to reframe that school food can be delicious and fun. And we tend to forget that sometimes," she said. "We get caught up in it being healthy and nutritious and it's got to follow all these things, but it can be delicious and fun too, and it'll be exciting to see that."

[Read more here.](#)

### **News: State-wide Farm to School Cook-offs begin in Maine**

Education and edibles shared a plate as a statewide cooking competition kicked off last week. Two-person teams from Falmouth, Yarmouth and Lewiston - each composed of an adult and youth - squared off in the kitchen at the Bath Regional Career and Technical Center April 5 for the first of two regional "Farm to School Cook-Off" competitions.



The Maine Department of Education held the second regional event at Hampden Academy Monday, with the winners to face each other at the final statewide competition at a time and place to be determined.

The IncrEdibles from the Yarmouth school system, which won last year's final competition, scored top marks at the April 5 regional event. Nikki Pilavakis-Davoren, a member of the 2017 team and a nutrition worker, was joined this year by Isaac Pendleton, a seventh-grader at Harrison Middle School.

[Read more here.](#)

## Information for Schools and Early Childcare

### News: USDA Turnip the Beet! High Quality Summer Meals Award Program

The Turnip the Beet Award recognizes outstanding Summer Meal Program sponsors across the nation who work hard to offer high quality meals to children that are appetizing, appealing, and nutritious during the summer months.



Summer meals are critical in the lives of millions of our nation's youth, whose risk for food insecurity increases during the summer months when they no longer have access to the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. Summer meal programs, including the SFSP and the Seamless Summer Option within the NSLP, present the opportunity to help alleviate summertime food insecurity and positively impact children's growth and development by offering nutritious meals and encouraging children to develop healthy habits at a young age. High quality summer meals provide daily

energy, and help make sure children are healthy and ready to learn when they return to school in the fall. The Turnip the Beet Award program was created to showcase sponsors who are going above and beyond to ensure that children in their care are receiving high-quality meals that are both nutritious and appetizing.

[Read more here.](#)

## Resource: 2018 Summer Meals Webinars are scheduled!

Wholesome summer meals are critical to the health and well-being of our children. Join us for our 2018 Summer Meals Webinars to learn more about this important USDA program.



Click on each link to register for the specific webinar that interests you.

**May 15**, Tuesday, 1:00 pm -  
[Boosting Your Budget - Summer Meals Financial Planning](#)  
**June 14**, Thursday, 1:00 pm -  
[Middle of Summer Strategies](#)

## Resource: Chef Ann Plant Forward Menu Resource

In the United States, more than 30 million students eat lunch every day. If schools begin to incorporate more plant forward meals into their operations, and students choose to eat those meals, the impact on the environment, student health, and school food finances could be huge. Because schools serve such a large population, serving one vegetarian or plant-based meal once a week or once a month is beneficial.



Plant forward meals focus on fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and reduced meat proteins to introduce students to a healthy diet at a young age. A diet focused on plants is also better for the environment, as most plants take fewer resources to produce than meats.

Chef Ann Foundation programming centers on supporting schools in developing and sustaining school food operations that serve healthy, fresh food made from scratch. More Plants Please! offers recipes,

promotional materials, and resources designed to get more plant-based proteins into schools. Plant-based proteins like beans and tofu credit to the USDA meal pattern and are nutritious and delicious additions to school food menus.

[Read more here.](#)

## Resource: School's Out ..... And We're Already Thinking About Next Year's School Lunch

Spring Tools for Schools and Feeding Sites from the USDA Team Nutrition Newsletter



Get Inspired With These 5 Great Tools for School Nutrition Professionals  
Professional Standards Training Database

Visit the [Professional Standards Training Database](#) to find trainings on a number of school meal topics. Keep better record of the training you've taken using the updated Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool!

Learn more about Child Nutrition (CN) Labeled Products, which include a standardized food crediting statement on their product label. Check out our new [CN Label Manufacturers Report](#) and [CN Label Verification Report](#).

Try fun new [USDA Standardized Recipes](#) such as Sweet and Sassy Chicken, Volcanic Meatloaf, or Arroz con Queso. Yum!

Find USDA-approved software for [nutrient analysis](#) in the school meals programs.

Use the [Food Buying Guide](#) for Child Nutrition Programs to help plan amounts of food needed for school meals. It's now available as a printable document, an app, and an interactive web-based tool.

## Information for School Gardens

### News: Edwardsville, IL Lincoln Middle School starts Farm to School Gardening Club

The Farm to School Gardening Club started their gardens at Lincoln Middle School as they hauled in dirt and planted their seeds Thursday afternoon to learn the process of farming.

Students not only got their hands' dirty planting but got a chance to work with their minds as they become experts of their plants.

[Read More Here.](#)



### News: Columbia, MO Public Schools officials tour Urban Farm, hear update on CUA partnership

Columbia Public Schools administrators and Columbia Board of Education members on Monday received an updated on a CPS partnership with the Columbia Center for Urban Agriculture and a tour of its Urban Farm.

CCUA has received a \$41,784 grant from the Boone County Children's Services Fund. With a match of \$31,700 from CPS, it will fund a Farm-to-School Coordinator who will work with CCUA to develop lesson plans for third- and fifth-graders at Alpha Hart Lewis, Battle, Benton STEM, Blue Ridge, Derby Ridge, New Haven, West Boulevard and Parkade elementary schools. The schools were chosen because of the high number of students receiving free or reduced-price meals at them.

The CPS officials shared the Urban Farm, located at 1209 Smith St., with third-graders from Lee Expressive Arts Elementary school, who were touring the farm and seeing how the crops they had seen first in the fall had changed. They made salads from spinach they had harvested.

[Read more here.](#)

## Resource: National School Garden Network "Garden To Cafeteria Toolkit" Webinar



Are you interested in bringing fresh produce from the school garden into the cafeteria to be used in preparation of healthy school lunches? Join us for a webinar that will introduce the new Garden to Cafeteria Toolkit from Slow Food USA and Whole Kids Foundation and describe the ongoing support for Food Service Departments provided by Slow Food USA. On hand will also be Tegan Bernstein of the USDA, contributor to the toolkit, to answer any questions. Our goal is to build a Garden to Cafeteria community to support numerous districts in creating their own Garden to Cafeteria programs using the toolkit.

[Register here.](#)

An archive of this webinar will be shared after May 22nd.

[View previous webinars here.](#)

## Resource: Slow Food USA: Plant a Seed Kit

Slow Food's spring campaign brings together schools, chapters and individuals across the world who are champions of Food for Change.

The Plant a Seed kit contains the Three Sisters - beans, corn and squash - that, when planted together, help one another thrive and survive. These aren't just any seeds. These particular seeds are on the Slow Food Ark of Taste, a living library of delicious and distinctive foods facing extinction: Stowell's Evergreen Sweet Corn, Long Island Cheese Pumpkin, and beautiful Christmas Lima Beans.



Help teach kids about climate change and the wonderful new flavors of biodiversity! For every kit purchased, one kit will be sent to a school garden in need, up to the first 300 schools who apply. Once those run out, or if you have the budget to pay, you can use "plantschoolhalf" code for a 50% discount.

[Read more here](#)

## Information for Producers

## Resource: Upper Midwest Craft Field Days

Assorted dates and Locations.

Check the [schedule](#).

Each year Angelic Organics organizes a variety of field days with topics focusing on the core themes of soils, plants, animals, and people. Field days provide prospective and current farmers exposure to the diversity of farms in the region through a workshop series that balances visits to: 1) larger and smaller farms 2) organic, biodynamic and sustainable farms 3) new and continuing Upper Midwest CRAFT member farms, and 4) other farms throughout our geographic region. Each field day is divided between time on the training topic, the host farm tour, and social time.



[Learn more here.](#)

## Resource: Farm Finances Webinar Series

**What:** Learn the basics of farm finances in this webinar series with an option for individual consultation

**When:**

Part 1: Profit & Loss Statement - already completed- you can view this presentation [here](#).

Part 2: Quickbooks Basics - **May 16, 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM**

**How Much:** Webinars are both free to attend, or for \$25 you can receive a half hour individual consultation



Description:

**Part One: Profit & Loss Statement** \*Completed on 2/21, see link to watch! Is your farm business turning a profit? The profit & loss statement will tell you! In this live webinar, you will learn how to organize your income and expenses into meaningful categories and interpret their impact on your bottom line.

**Part Two: QuickBooks Basics**

Managing financial records and bookkeeping is challenging. Accounting software like QuickBooks can make the process much easier. Learn how to set up and use QuickBooks to streamline bookkeeping for your farm. For \$25 you can attend AND receive a half hour individual consultation.

[Learn more here.](#)

## Resource: Windy City Harvest: Certificate Short Courses in Urban Agriculture

**Saturdays:** 9am-noon or 1-3pm | Chicago

Courses are available on a range of subjects, including Rooftop Farming, Edible Landscaping, Value

Added Food, Season Extension, and Small Business For Food Entrepreneurs and are typically 4-6 weeks and tuition ranges from \$150-600.

**WORKSHOP TIME, LOCATION, AND REGISTRATION INFORMATION**

Workshops are held Saturdays, either at the greenhouse classroom at the Arturo Velasquez Institute, 2800 S. Western Avenue, Chicago, IL. (Please enter the south parking lot at 31st Street) or at the Farm on Ogden at 3555 Ogden Ave, Chicago, IL 60623. Please double check your registration information for the accurate location. Registration for each class ends the Thursday prior to each class. The cost is \$75; no discounts apply.



[Learn more here.](#)

**News: Hydroponic business at Ledgeview Farms continues to grow in Malone, WI**

MALONE - While the rest of northeast Wisconsin has been blanketed with snow for what has seemed like forever this year, Lenny Opsteen and his family have been working inside a little oasis tucked away on a rural road just a mile or two from the shore of Lake Winnebago in northeast Fond du Lac County.

Inside the hydroponic growing operation, towering tomato plants laden with ripening tomatoes and climbing cucumber vines fill the 12,000-square foot greenhouse at Ledgeview Farms.

The successful hydroponic grow operation is in its ninth season and Opsteen says that most of the inventory is spoken for long before the plants begin bearing fruit.

"We hit a couple of bumps at first, thinking we could sell right to a warehouse but our volume wasn't quite big enough," he said. "We put a sign out front and business has taken off like wildfire. There's a real demand and yearning for this 'buy local' product that we're thinking of expanding."

[Read more here.](#)



Photo Credit Colleen Kottke Wisconsin State Farmer

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