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Illinois Farm to School Network News

Food for Thought

A Note From Diane Chapeta, Illinois Farm to School's Program Manager

Recently, here at Seven Generations Ahead, we have begun to explore how to make racial equity a more intentional part of our work, and what that looks like in our programs. That being said, I have begun to review the 200+ recipes in our [Harvest of the Month](#) program with a refined culturally appropriate lens.

When we think of food, recipes, and healthy eating, it is critical to consider all aspects of what is culturally appropriate for the many diverse groups of children we serve in our schools. During my quest for knowledge on this subject, my attention was drawn to an article written in *Self Magazine* by Tamara Melton, R.D.N. Melton is a nutrition counselor, registered dietitian, and founder of Diversify Dietetics, a non-profit organization dedicated to increasing racial and ethnic diversity in the nutrition and dietetics profession. In her article, Melton argues that excluding other cultures when we talk about healthy eating perpetuates a counterproductive binary of “good” and “bad” foods. She said it best: “I’ve heard many American patients say they eat Mexican food when they are being “bad.” But what they really mean is that when they eat the Americanized version of Mexican food.”

Unfortunately, schools and child feeding sites often seek to include culturally appropriate menu items by featuring processed, fast-food Americanized

representations of cultural foods. These items, while well intended and readily obtainable, fail to check the box for a truly culturally relevant and healthy menu.

I hope newsletter readers find Melton's article helpful and inspiring as you plan menus and build recipes for all of your diverse eaters.



Our Idea of Healthy Eating Excludes Other Cultures

There's more than one (Eurocentric) way to eat a healthy diet.

[Read more](#)

www-self-com.cdn.ampproject...

Newsworthy in Illinois

Start planning for National Farm to School Month!

October is National Farm to School Month! Join us and thousands of schools, early care and education sites, farms, communities and organizations across the country as we celebrate food education, school gardens and lunch tray's filled with

October is ...

National Farm to School Network

healthy, local ingredients. Everyone can celebrate! This October, we hope you will take time to get informed, get involved and take action to support farm to school in your community and across the nation.

Check out easy planning steps to get started [here](#).

Resources for Schools & Feeding Sites

How to Start a Sharing Table

September 18th @ 1:00 pm – 2:30 pm
CST

Join SCARCE September 18 to learn how you can feed kids and reduce waste in your school – without a budget – during this program. Learn the what, why, and how of starting a sharing table in your cafeteria in this informative program with real-world examples drawn from SCARCE's experience working with schools. Register [here](#).

Want to learn more about reducing food and cafeteria waste? Check out the Seven Generations Ahead Zero Waste Newsletter [here](#).

Sign up for the newsletter [here](#).



Early Childhood Food Education: The importance of teaching kids where food comes from.

A by-product of less and less time outdoors and a trend for many U.S. families is that fewer children get first-hand experience with food sources. In days past, more of us had backyard gardens or



visited a farm of family members or friends. We may have gotten to pick apples from the tree or ground, collect eggs from the hen house, or harvest beans off the plants. Today, many children only experience food coming from a grocery store.

Reconnecting our children to food's origins can build their conceptual understanding of food sources, while also providing an opportunity to form healthy eating habits and learn about the environmental implications of growing organically or transporting food long distances.

Read about ways to reconnect young children to food [here](#).

Target Field Trip Grants

Grant Timeline: Deadline to apply is Oct. 1.

Who should apply? Target stores award field trip grants to K–12 schools nationwide. Each grant is valued at \$700.

It's become increasingly difficult for schools to fund learning opportunities outside the classroom. To help them out, we launched Target field trip grants in 2007. Since then, we've made it possible for millions of students to go on a field trip.

Some of the best learning opportunities happen outside the classroom. That's why Target is helping give students a once-in-a-lifetime learning experience through field trips (like visits to a local farms!). As part of the program, Target stores award Target Field Trip™ grants to K–12 schools nationwide. Each grant is valued up to \$700.

[Learn more here](#).

News Across the Nation

New Study: Learning what students actually eat in the cafeteria may be easier than we once thought

A new study in the Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics by Program in Nutrition Alum Dr. Matthew Graziose et al., suggests that a quick

News & Trends K–12 Schools: SNA survey shows increases in taste tests, prelunch recess

Responses from 1,550 districts nationwide indicate widespread embrace of tactics to increase participation in school meal programs. The nation's school nutrition

and simple questionnaire may substitute for more involved methods of evaluating fruits and vegetables students take and eat at school lunch. When we know more about the types of fruits and vegetables students are eating in school meals, or whether they are eating them at all, we can accurately test programs and shift messages to ensure students are getting the maximum benefit.

[Read more here.](#)

professionals are taking the job of growing the appeal and acceptance of healthy school meals very seriously and are willing to embrace a wide range of sometimes out-of-the-box tactics to do so. That's what the most recent School Nutrition Association (SNA) national survey of its membership shows.

[Read more here.](#)

St. Paul School District connects the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program to farm to school

Excerpt from: USDA, FNS "The Dirt"

Despite harsh Minnesota winters, the Saint Paul Public Schools (SPPS) Nutrition Services' team works throughout the year to provide fresh fruits and vegetables for their FFVP. To keep the kids interested and the program fun, monthly themes are developed, such as "Apple Fest" and "Berry Berry Good".

During National Farm to School month, SPPS takes advantage of fall harvests by featuring Minnesota-grown products every week. Last October, SPPS FFVP scholars had the opportunity to devour local green beans, apple slices, butternut squash cubes, and zucchini coins. The District uses monthly newsletters to introduce the theme, promote the menu, relay fun facts, and supply teachers with short classroom activities.

The newsletters identify local items and farms while offering tidbits of agriculture education. For example, did you know that the Honeycrisp Apple is Minnesota's official state fruit? Saint Paul's FFVP students did!

View St Paul Public Schools FFVP page [here.](#)

Check out their Farm to School Month FFVP promotion [here.](#)

Resources for School Gardens



Annie's Garden Grant Cycle is open!

Application Timeline: The application period for 2018 will open on 8/1/2018 and will close on 11/1/2018.

Who should apply? The school garden must be an edible school garden (growing fruits, vegetables, herbs, grains, etc) and be located in the USA. The following types of organizations are eligible to apply: Public schools, Public charter schools, Private schools with 501c3 non-profit status, Private charter schools 501c3 non-profit status (US), 501c3 or charity non-profit organizations supporting a garden at a public or a non-profit private school School districts supporting a garden at a public or a non-profit private school
*Unfortunately, preschools and homeschools are ineligible for this grant.

Want to garden? Great, because we want everybunny to have one too! Our 2018 Grants application period is officially open. Read about the grant program [here](#). You can also download the beginner's guide to creating a school garden [here](#).

Wild One's Laurie Otto Seeds for Education Grant Program

Application Timeline: Applications are due October 15th.

Teachers and students across the US are expanding learning opportunities by enhancing their schoolyards with butterfly gardens, nature trails, prairies, woodland wildflower preserves, and similar projects. These projects enrich the learning environment and provide aesthetic and environmental benefits.

Wild Ones offers assistance for all aspects of such projects. Cash grants under \$500 are available for plants and seeds, and in-kind donations from Nursery Partners can help stretch these dollars. Read more and apply [here](#).

Whole Kids Foundation – US Gardens Grant Program

Application Timeline: Applications close on Oct. 15th.

Who should apply? a new or existing edible garden at either a: K-12 school, 501(c)(3) Non-profit working in partnership with a K-12 school, or 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

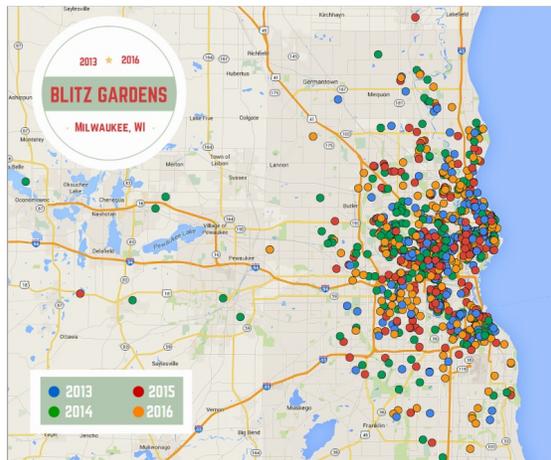
Created in partnership with FoodCorps, the Garden Grant program provides a \$2,000 monetary grant to support to the above projects. Get started on the application with a copy of the eligibility and application questions. Please note that the application must be submitted online during the above application window.

Apply [here](#).

Garden News Across the Nation

10 Stories of Transition in the US:

Transition Milwaukee and the Victory Garden Initiative



During the first two world wars, governments in the US, Europe, and Australia promoted the development of “victory gardens” to increase food productivity and free up resources to support their respective war efforts. It is estimated that these victory gardens, planted and cultivated in the yards of ordinary citizens, yielded an amount of fruits and vegetables equal to contemporary commercial farms.

Gardeners were also encouraged to keep backyard chickens for eggs and soil fertilization. To return this sense of empowerment, food sovereignty, and resilience to the people, [Transition Milwaukee](#) helped to launch and incubate the [Victory Garden Initiative](#), which recently celebrated installing its 4,000th garden.

Read more [here](#).

Lincoln County Health receives grants to create hydroponic gardens at schools

TOMAHAWK WI

The Lincoln County Health Department was on the receiving end of several grants that will be aimed at providing local schools with campus-grown produce, and the education that goes with it.

The Health Department was one of 14 recipients of the Marshfield

Clinic/Security Health Plan ABC's for Healthy Communities grant. Coupled with additional funding from Ascension, the Health Department received \$30,000.

The Lincoln County Health Department says they will work with eight Lincoln County schools to install hydroponic gardening units meant to provide students with education throughout the school year rather than a short-lived summer garden season. Hydroponic gardening is a soil-free option for growing produce.

[Read more here.](#)

Resources for Producers

Central Illinois Farm Beginnings

Central Illinois Farm Beginnings (CIFB) is a training program for those committed to creating a sustainable farm business. The Land Connection hosts Farm Beginnings to provide the best resources, information, tools and mentoring to help you start your own farm business in Illinois or Indiana.



CIFB courses are held on five Saturdays between November and February each year, and students present their farm business plan at the end of the course. After the course is complete, students are paired with mentors to gain the most valuable experience—on-farm learning. The Land Connection's 40+ mentor network spans across the Midwest and includes some of the best and most influential farmers in our region.

Check out the courses and reserve your spot [here.](#)

2018–19 Stateline Farm Beginnings program

[Routes to Farm](#) helps farmers serving the Chicago foodshed find resources to grow their businesses.

Angelic Organics Learning Center (AOLC) is currently accepting applications for Stateline Farm Beginnings® – a yearlong program that has trained over 190 farm families in northern Illinois and southern Wisconsin and since 2005. The course attracts both rural and urban participants, with students hailing from Chicago, Rockford, Milwaukee, Madison, and surrounding rural communities.

Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis for the 2018–19 course

through September 28, 2018.

Stateline Farm Beginnings is part of the Farm Beginnings Collaborative, a national network that trains new farmers using the Farm Beginnings® training model and curriculum. The course is farmer-led, community-based and focused on sustainable agriculture. Unique to Farm Beginnings is the opportunity for students to join a farmer network right away. While taking classes, students form relationships with farmers in the same community where they often launch their farming business.

This yearlong program includes:

- 10 Business Planning Sessions focused on developing a business plan plus much more (October 2018 – March 2019)
- Field Day Workshops covering a variety of topics, hosted at sustainable farms (January – October 2019)
- One-on-One Mentorship in your field of interest (April – October 2019)
- Last Session & Graduation Event to celebrate the completion of the course with a graduation potluck (Late September)

All levels are welcome, whether you're new to farming, transitioning from conventional to organic, or looking to grow your farm business. We encourage military veterans to apply! Scholarships are available.

[Learn more here.](#)

Producer News

I cant be the only one...Can I?!

Jacquelyn Evers, The Land Connection



I have been a resident of Illinois for seventeen years. In that time I have driven from the top of the state to the bottom and everywhere in between.

And in all of those miles, I somehow believed that Illinois was simply known for their soybeans and corn. These are technically the largest crops produced in the state of Illinois, but since starting at The Land Connection a few months ago I have realized that we are doing a lot more than just growing acres upon acres of corn and soybeans.

[Read more here.](#)

What is this veggie– and how do I cook it?

Nat Williams, The Southern Illinoisan

WEST FRANKFORT IL

Noticing more millennials at farmers markets, this Elkville farmer wrote an intro to veggies

Millennials undoubtedly have a different relationship with food than Baby Boomers. Few know that better than vendors selling their meat and produce at farmers markets.



“We don’t have as many older ladies coming who are buying bushels of things to can or freeze. We’re not selling like that,” said Mary Bolen, who oversees the market in Benton. “We’re selling in lower quantities and selling to younger customers. And sometimes they need to know how to use a particular product.”

That means farmers are doing more than merely offering up meat and produce. They are bagging up some advice on what to do with it.

Kendra Humphreys fielded so many questions about how to use her products that she put her knowledge on paper.

[Read more here.](#)

Pitney Meadows Community Farm eyeing future growth

Joseph Phelan, The Troy Record

SARATOGA SPRINGS N.Y

After creating a Community Garden, constructing a high tunnel and hosting a Fire Feast in 2017, Pitney Meadows Community Farm has spent this year building an organizational structure to support future growth.

In April, the not-for-profit hired Ken Kleinpeter and Fran Moore. Kleinpeter joined the team as its Farm Director after previous stops in managing non-profit and for-profit agricultural organizations. Moore, who has lived in Saratoga Springs for the past 10 years, joined the team as Director of Organizational Development. Moore worked for IBM and Verizon as a technology solutions consultant for years.

The duo, along with the Pitney Meadows Community Farm’s board of directors, envisions a mixed vegetable, small grain, livestock operation on the 117-acre field, implementing at least five acres beginning in 2019.

[Read more here.](#)

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