



## Illinois Farm to School Network News

### IFSN News: Don't miss out! Registration for 2018/19 Farm to School Programming is now open.

The Illinois Farm to School Network is opening program registration for 2018/19. K-12 schools, early childcare, summer feeding sites, and partner organizations can register for programming beginning June 1!

#### [Illinois Harvest of the Month](#)

registration is now open! There are individual registration forms for returning participants, new participants, and supporting organizations located on the front page of the website. You can access registration in the above link.

On June 1st, the Harvest of the Month website will begin conversion to the upcoming 2018/19 school year complete with a new seasonal calendar! We've changed the layout of the HOTM calendar. Instead of a 12-month grid with one highlighted local fruit or vegetable item in each, Harvest of the Month has gone seasonal! Participating schools, early childcare, and feeding sites can now choose to feature any local food item on the seasonal list for our region each month. And, we've added dairy and grains to improve the number of choices during our cold, midwest winter!

New recipes for K-12 schools, CAFCP, and home recipes for families, new tools for education and program promotion along with new featured foods will all be available to registered participants on June 1st.

All 2017/18 passwords to the website will expire at **8:00 am on June 1st**. Don't get locked out this great program. Register now!

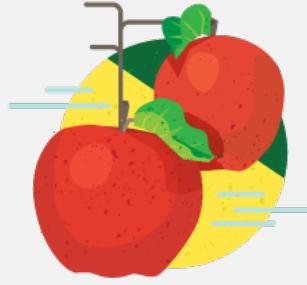
#### [IL Great Apple Crunch](#) registration is now live!

Schools, early childcare, feeding sites, organizations, and businesses wishing to be part of this year's **Great Lakes Great Apple Crunch** can



access registration in the above link.

**NEW for 2018!** The Great Lakes Great Apple Crunch Guide is chock-full of tools, procurement assistance, recipes, and helpful tips and is provided by the Great Lakes Apple Crunch folks at the Center for Integrated Agricultural Systems, WI. You can find the Crunch Guide on our website at [ILGreatAppleCrunch.com](http://ILGreatAppleCrunch.com)



Don't Delay! Join the *crunchin* fun and register your site soon!

## IFSN News: Will you be attending the Illinois School Nutrition Association Conference in June?



The Illinois School Nutrition Association is holding their [annual summer conference](#) on June 26th and 27th at the President Abraham Lincoln Hotel in Springfield. The Illinois Farm to School Network will once again host a table in Affiliate Row on June 26th.

We will have registration capability at the IFSN table for Harvest of the Month and Apple Crunch. And, the newly designed Apple Crunch and Harvest of the Month posters will make their debut!

We will also share information about our exciting, new collaboration to improve Harvest of the Month procurement! So, stop by and check in with us on the 26th. We cannot wait to share these fantastic tools!

See you in Springfield!

## IFSN Resource: Try Local Foods for Summer Feeding; It's easy to add local in the height of the season!

Are you a summer feeding site in Illinois? Then, you are feeding kids in the height of the local produce season.

### When is local produce a sweet deal?

We all know the difference between a home-grown tomato and a store-bought tomato. The taste difference during the height of the season can be eye-opening for young eaters. It's a flavor and sensation overload! If you have an opportunity to purchase locally during the summer your customers will taste



local produce when it is best. What better way to introduce your students to interesting and new fresh fruits and veggies?

**Got school gardens?** School garden programs that run through summer school and beyond have an opportunity to tie what they're producing to Harvest of the Month and utilize lessons and activities. Continuing with Harvest of the Month programming through the summer months can add more activities and education to garden work. Creating a summer garden maintenance schedule with added learning activities as extra credit for fall classes can be the motivator that keeps kids, and parents, engaged all summer long!

**Not a school garden site?** Can you connect your feeding program to a park district or community garden near by? Adding farm to school programming linked to a garden space in your neighborhood is a great way to introduce summer meal eaters to fresh, local veggies and allow them to experience growing food in a garden setting.

**No gardens nearby?** Try connecting to a local farmers market or an area grower, or urban farm. Strike up a partnership to educate your kids and share how food is grown. Then, add local ingredients to the menu! Don't know where those growers are located? You can search for growers at Local Harvest by zip code [here](#). You can search for local farmers markets at the IL Farmers Market Association, and download their new phone ap *What's In Season?* to help you find local veggies and fruits at the market [here](#).

### **Are you summer feeding at school?**

Summer feeding at school is the perfect time to try out Farm to School programming! Utilizing recipes and creating local/regional menus with a smaller group of kids during summer feeding is a great way to try your hand at programming. Experiment with local veggies, dairy, grains, and fruits to gauge your customer's interest and find their favorites.

Create mini surveys using your school's phone ap or go "old school" and share printed surveys to get those customer responses to your new menu items. Doing the groundwork before the busy school year begins will give you a time advantage and allow you to plan ahead!

Plus, buying local produce, dairy and grains during the summer provides the perfect opportunity to choose potential school-year suppliers and develop a relationship with new, local vendors. Look for, and talk to producers at your local farmers market to check out offerings and availability through late fall. Ask about a potential farmer visit to your cafeteria during the winter, or a field trip to the farm in the spring or fall. Develop a relationship with a local farm and watch it grow every year!

Want to learn more?

Contact the [programs manager](#) or call 708-628-4501.

Check out our website with links to our programs [here](#).

## News in Illinois

### **News: Chicago is Leading the Way Toward a Good Food Future**

Chicago, IL  
When Leslie Fowler asked

America's largest chicken producers to increase their supply of antibiotic-free poultry, they gave her "the Heisman hand" and turned down the chief nutrition and facilities officer for Chicago Public Schools (CPS).

But Fowler was on a mission to ensure that the nation's third largest school system served better chicken, so she stopped placing orders with them. It took six months, but the chicken producers eventually responded to her call.

That was the fall of 2016. By the start of the 2017 school year, all chicken served in each of Chicago's 646 public schools was antibiotic-free. "**If you don't speak up and tell people what you want, you'll never get it,**" Fowler recently told the audience at the Good Food Expo in Chicago. This victory convinced CPS that signing on to the Good Food Purchasing Program (GFPP) was not only a tenable option, but was also a vital pathway to better food.

[Read more here.](#)



## IFSN Partner News: Bringing Ag to the Chicagoland Area

Lewistown, IL.

According to the Illinois Department of Agriculture, farmland covers 75% of the state. Yet most students don't grow up learning about agriculture in the classroom.



"These children have never seen this," says Carole Scannell, a 4th-grade teacher at St. Germaine School in Oak Lawn.

Although most students in urban, and even suburban areas, don't grow up on a farm, they know how important agriculture is to the community.

"If you didn't have agriculture, then you wouldn't have any of the food," says Noah McNeela, 4th-grader at St. Germaine School.

Agriculture is an essential field that often gets overlooked in the classroom. But under the Illinois Agriculture in the Classroom program, that perception changes.

"This 'Ag in the Classroom' program hooks you up with different people," says Scannell. "So these children understand that it's farm to table; that you don't just go to the grocery store and your food is there, it has to be grown."

[Read more here.](#)

## Resources for Schools and Early Childcare

### Opportunity: Enter in the Real School Food Recipe

## Contest to receive complimentary foodservice staff training!

Hurry! Recipe Submission Due: 11:59pm MT June 30, 2018

Winners Announced: via email by July 20, 2018

With a shared passion for bringing healthier food into schools across the country, Chef Ann Foundation and The Dannon Company, LLC have teamed up to create a recipe contest featuring one key ingredient: yogurt!

Get creative and show us how you make savory dishes featuring yogurt that credits to the meat/meat alternate component of the USDA meal pattern.



The contest will run from May 18, 2018 through June 30, 2018. All entries must be submitted by 11:59pm MT on the final day of the contest. Winners of the recipe contest will be notified via email by July 20, 2018 and announced on the Chef Ann Foundation's social media pages and newsletter.

Chef Ann Foundation and Danone North America will choose 10 winning recipes. **Each winner will receive seven complimentary codes to the School Food Institute's online courses.** As featured in the New York Times, these online courses leverage Chef Ann Cooper's extensive experience in leading school food programs through a transition to serving whole, fresh, healthy food to kids. All courses at the School Food Institute align to the USDA Professional Standards learning objectives and will satisfy training requirements for school food service professionals.

[Read more here.](#)

## Resource: Spice up your lunchroom with a Flavor Station!



Are you looking for ways to add excitement to school meals? A flavor station is a great way to get kids excited about trying new foods and participating in school lunch. The Flavor Station at the 2018 Smarter Lunchrooms Symposium was a big hit, and with these tips and spice suggestions, you can be on your way to developing a zesty addition to your own school's lunchroom!

A flavor station is any area where students can self-select spices and low-sodium sauces to add pizzazz to their raw and cooked veggies, fruits,

salads, and entrees. They love having the ability to customize their meals, and flavor stations provide them with choice and variety without having to change the menu!

[Check out the resource here.](#)

## Resource: NFSN Webinar Deep Dive into Fundraising for Farm to School

**When:** Tuesday, **June 19th** 2:00-3:00 pm CDT

**Who Should Attend?** K-12 foodservice staff, ECE and feeding site managers, school administrators, Wellness Policy team members, farm to school and garden managers

Fundraising for farm to school can be challenging. Join the National Farm to School Network to learn about different opportunities and avenues to fundraise for farm to school activities. This webinar will be led by Lea Madry, National Farm to School Network Development Director, and is open to the public.



[Register here.](#)

## Resource: Complete Salad Bar Tool Kit available and it's free!

### Why Salad Bars?

Research shows that incorporating salad bars into school lunches increases children's consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables. Salad bars profoundly shift the typical school lunch by offering students not only variety but also choice.

- Assessment and Planning
- Training
- Operations
- Salad Bar Procurement
- Marketing Your Salad Bar
- Salad Bar Tools & Resources



[Check out the resources here.](#)

## Resource: CACFP Thirty on Thursdays Webinars

Join Team Nutrition for monthly training webinars on hot topics related to the CACFP Meal Pattern requirements.

Webinars will be held on the third Thursday of every month, in English from 2 to 2:30 PM ET and in Spanish from 3 to 3:30 PM ET.

- June 21, 2018: Adding Whole Grains to Your Menu
- July 19, 2018: Feeding Infants: 0-5 months
- August 16, 2018: How to Support Breastfeeding in the CACFP
- September 20, 2018: Feeding Infants: Starting with Solids

[Read more here.](#)



## News Across the Nation...

### News: Local students learn about strawberry growing.

Watsonville, CA

MacQuiddy Elementary students were given a special treat Friday when local farmer Javier Zamora visited during lunch break to teach them about strawberries.

Zamora, who runs JSM Organics out of Aromas, set up a table at the side of the school's cafeteria and covered it with cases of different strawberry varieties. It didn't take long for the children to notice.



Becca McKnight, from Pajaro Valley Unified School District's Food & Nutrition Services stood guard in front of the strawberries, promising the eager students that no one would leave empty handed—they just had to wait their turn.

"It's great, seeing them so excited for fresh fruits and veggies," McKnight smiled. "And they really are at the prime age to get interested in where it all comes from."

The event, dubbed a "Know Your Farmer Taste Test", is part of PVUSD's Harvest of the Month Program. Every month, a locally-grown fruit or vegetable is featured in every student's school lunch.

[Read more here.](#)

## News: Bringing Kale to the Kiddos

Corvallis Environmental Center, OR

Farm to School programs exist at national, state, and local levels in order to increase access to local food and nutrition education for primary school students. The Corvallis Environmental Center has established a program distinctive in the way it has grown deep roots within our community.

"It's based in partnership. It's a community effort and that's why it has been successful for a decade now," says Cassidy Radloff, Program Manager of CEC's Edible Corvallis Initiative, the umbrella under which Farm to School operates.



[Read more here.](#)

## News: Winters Farm to School Receives Educational Excellence Award

Winters, CA

Principal Moffitt added "We are so fortunate to have Cathy Olsen as our Food Services Director."



Winters Farm to School received a Partners in Educational Excellence Award presented by the Association of California School Administrators Region 3 at their Annual Awards Banquet held on May 14, 2018 in Sacramento. Cathy Olsen and Patty Rominger, founding members of Winters Farm to School accepted the award on behalf of Winters Farm to School. Winters Joint Unified School District Superintendent, Todd Cutler, Principal Greg Moffitt and Micah Studer, Manager of Information Technology with the school district also attended the awards ceremony representing both Yolo County and the Winters Joint Unified School District.

"Winters Farm to School was recognized for the outstanding work they do to boost the health and well-being of students in our school district," said Cutler.

"Other school districts look to Winters Farm to School as their model for how to implement a sustainable farm to school program. It amazes me that a handful of community volunteers started Winters Farm to School eight years ago and it has grown into a non-profit that donates over \$60,000 per year to our schools here in Winters."

[Read more here.](#)

## News: Tahoe Food Hub teaches North Lake Tahoe students about sourcing, selling sustainable produce

Lake Tahoe, NV

Step aside, brownie bake sales; Tahoe Food Hub is upping the ante for children's health, education and providing real-world knowledge through the Farm Cart in the Classroom program.

"Instead of a bake sale, students can host a veggie sale," explained Susie Sutphin, Tahoe Food Hub director.

"We believe if kids know the story of their food, they will be that much more interested to think about where their food comes from and select healthy choices," she added.

Teachers can host Farm Cart days in their classrooms, teaching students about selecting seasonal produce to sell, determining a reasonable price for each item, raising awareness of their veggie sale, marketing their goods to students and parents, and managing the money earned.



[Read more here.](#)

## Information for School Gardens

### Resource: School Garden Support Organization Network



The National School Garden Network (NSGN) connects over 900 individuals and organizations working to support school garden programs at a district, regional, statewide, or national level. Members share resources and strategies for supporting multiple schools gardens, with the ultimate goal of aligning efforts across communities.

The School Garden Support Organization Network offers this online forum for individuals and organizations to discover resources, best practices, and much more. Apply to join the group to brouse these discussions.

- Funding and Budgeting
- Research and Assessment
- Training and Staffing Garden Educators
- Garden to Cafeteria
- Policies to Support School Gardens
- Program Management - Running Regional or Statewide Programs
- Creating and Managing Garden Sites
- Curricula and Instructional Resources
- Announcements - Miscellaneous

[Join the chat here](#)

## Grant: Project Learning Tree GreenWorks Grant

**When:** The annual deadline to apply is September 30.

**Who should apply:** To be eligible to apply for a grant, applicants must have attended a PLT workshop, either in-person or online, that provides training, lesson plans, and other resources to help integrate these projects and environmental education into your curriculum or youth programs.

Project Learning Tree offers GreenWorks! grants up to \$1,000 to schools and youth organizations for environmental service-learning projects that link classroom learning to the real world. Students implement an action project they help design to green their school or to improve an aspect of their neighborhood's environment.



The projects provide opportunities for student leadership and partner students with their whole school, local businesses and community organizations, and natural resource professionals. The funds can be used by students to implement recycling programs at their school, conserve water and energy, establish school gardens and outdoor classrooms, improve a forest, restore a natural habitat, and more.

[Read more here.](#)

## Garden News: Jere Whitson students enjoy fruits of their labor

Cookeville, TN  
Jere Whitson Elementary School students were offered something for lunch Friday that had never been available to them before.

As children came through the cafeteria serving line, they were offered an opportunity to try some freshly picked lettuce - lettuce that had been grown in a garden on the school's property.

"We harvested this yesterday," said second grade teacher Beverly Hall. "It was a beautiful day, and we spent about two hours as a team picking the lettuce."

Hall was a driving force in getting the ag lab gardening program going a few years ago with the help of Brenda Hugheatt, extended learning programs supervisor, and others.

"It was a LEAPs (Lottery For Educational Afterschool Programs) endeavor," said Hugheatt. "That's where it originated. I got grants, and she got grants, and we were able to get it funded."

[Read more here](#)



## Information for Producers

### **Resource: Women Who Farm Field Day Series 2018 Showcasing and learning from women farmers of Illinois.**



The Women Who Farm Field Day series is BACK! Join us this summer in touring five women-led farms in central Illinois on Sunday afternoons from June through September. At each event, we will take an extensive tour of a working farm, explore the skill or niche that the host farmer does best, and experience a hands-on activity to learn a new skill.

Delicious, fresh, local refreshments will be provided at each field day to replenish the body, cool the summer heat, and facilitate getting to know each other. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to attend!

Registration costs \$15 and includes a farm tour, refreshments, and a hands-on learning activity.

**FLOWER FARMING:** Violeta Veenstra, Harvest & Blooms

**Sunday, June 24, 2-5pm | Rochester, IL**

**FARMHOUSE BREWERY:** Anna Schweig, Big Thorn Farm

**Sunday, July 22, 2-5pm | Georgetown, IL**

**CULTURAL CROPS:** Janet Zintambila, CHJ Umoja Family Gardens

**Sunday, August 12, 2-5pm | Carlock, IL**

**VINEYARD AND WINERY:** Susan Danenberger, Danenberger Family

**Vineyards Sunday, August 26, 2-5pm | New Berlin, IL**

**PASTURED LIVESTOCK & POULTRY:** Beth Osmund, Cedar Valley

**Sustainable Sunday, September 30, 2-5pm | Ottawa, IL**

[Learn more here.](#)

## IFSN Partner News: Unique partnership breeds new farmer program.

CARBONDALE, IL. - Big ag and small farms found themselves on the same team with the recent "Grow Success as a Direct Market Farmer" program.



The daylong, free opportunity came to producers thanks to a first-time partnership between Illinois Farm Bureau's Live Local and FamilyFarmed, a nonprofit focused on locally and responsibly grown food that's reached 14,500 farmers in the nation. The classes were offered in Carbondale, Champaign and Cambridge in Henry County in early May.

[Read more here.](#)

This newsletter made possible by:



STAY CONNECTED AND JOIN THE CONVERSATION:



## BECOME A NETWORK MEMBER!

Join our growing movement. [Click here to join the network](#), and then spread the word. Receive the monthly IFSN newsletter and stay informed! Forward this email and invite anyone you know who cares about Farm to School to join the conversation.

