



## Illinois Farm to School Network News

### **IFSN News: "Planning for Farm to School Success" Webinar coming in March!**

Join our webinar on March 27 at 2 pm to learn how to develop support and build success through planning for your farm to school endeavors. Learn how to increase participation outcomes by planning before you start!



In this webinar, USDA Midwest Farm to School Regional Lead, Jenna

Segal will provide information on developing a plan for farm to school in your district. Jenna will share how Harvest of the Month programs are a great way to support and grow your farm to school program, and she will provide tips on how to plan your programs for future success.

**Who should join us?** Schools involved in, or considering Farm to School, Harvest of the Month or Apple Crunch participation, anyone who works with school gardens, is on a wellness team or works within a school nutrition program.

#### **Mark your calendar!**

IFSN March Webinar: Planning for Farm to School Success!

**Tue, Mar 27, 2018 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM CDT**

[Add to My Google Calendar](#)

[Join the webinar from your computer](#)

Call in: (312) 757-3121

Access Code: 917-275-013

### **IFSN News: Help us to welcome our new program associates!**

Last month, Illinois Farm to School Network welcomed our

new Network Coordinator, Marlie Wilson. Now, we are adding to our team yet again!

Seven Generations Ahead is pleased to welcome two new program associates, Alli Preble and Abbey Prendiville, to its staff.

We are so excited to be working with these talented and innovative associates. Though our office furniture is now in demand, we couldn't be happier that the Seven Generations Ahead family is growing by leaps and bounds!

Read about our new staff [here](#).



## Farm to School News in Illinois

### News: More to defining 'local' than miles

When institutions choose to procure locally the first order of business is to define what local means in your district.

With more and more energy growing around local food, the question naturally pops up about what is the definition of local?

This question was asked at the Illinois Specialty Crops, Agritourism and Organic Conference in Springfield. The answer depends on who is answering.

[Read more here](#)



### News: CU Schools Foundation Fowler Farm project wins Golden Beet Award

[The Fowler Farm Project](#), a collaboration between Julie Anders, Edison Middle School, and Urbana High School, has just won a 2018 [Golden Beet Award](#) from the Illinois Stewardship Alliance. The Golden

Beet Award is given to people whose efforts aim to bring local food to their communities.

The Fowler Farm Project was started in 2014 by Edison Middle School students, as a place where "they [could] experiment with sustainable gardening, plant apples trees and work alongside local gardening experts." Additional information about the project is available on its website.



[Read more here](#)

## News: Illinois Officials Seek More Sites to Host Youth Food Program

State officials are seeking more sites to sponsor a summer food program for children.

The Illinois State Board of Education runs a federally-funded food service program for those 18 and younger when school isn't in session. However, 28 counties in Illinois don't have any sites.



Tim Boyle, Getty Images

Sponsors run their own sites and get a reimbursement of federal money through the Board of Education for administrative and operating costs. Potential hosts could be school districts, local governments and nonprofit groups with sites at parks, libraries and other community locations.

State Superintendent of Education Tony Smith says hunger doesn't take a summer break and young people statewide need reliable sources of healthy meals.

[Read more here](#)

## Information for Schools and Early Childcare

### Resource: Are you ready? It's time to celebrate National CACFP Week!

CACFP Week is a national education and information campaign sponsored annually



the **third week of March** by the National CACFP Sponsors Association. The campaign is designed to raise awareness of how the USDA's Child and Adult Care Food Program works to combat hunger.



The CACFP brings healthy foods to tables for across the country for children in child care centers, homes, and after-school programs as well as adults in day care.

[Find tools and info 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.

**March 20**, Tuesday, 1:00 pm -

[Tribal and Rural Summer Meals](#)

**April 17**, Tuesday, 1:00 pm -

[What Cities Can Teach Us About Summer Meals](#)

**May 15**, Tuesday, 1:00 pm -

[Boosting Your Budget - Summer Meals Financial Planning](#)

**June 14**, Thursday, 1:00 pm -

[Middle of Summer Strategies](#)

## Resource: What's Cooking? USDA Mixing Bowl's 2017 best nine recipes named!

As 2017 has come to a close, the What's Cooking team at USDA's Food and Nutrition Service is joining the #2017BestNine fun - a social media trend where users share their favorite or most popular moments of the year - by taking a look back at our

top-viewed recipes. From quinoa to quesadillas, we are proud to share our users' favorite recipes.

Be sure to check out What's Cooking at [WhatsCooking?](#) for recipe ideas in 2018.

[Explore the best of 2017 here!](#)



## Resource: Every Kid Healthy Week is coming to a lunchroom near you!

Every Kid Healthy™ Week is an annual observance created to celebrate school health and wellness achievements and recognized on the calendar of National Health Observances.

Observed the **last week of April** each year, this special week shines a spotlight on the great efforts our school partners are making to improve the health and wellness of their students and the link between nutrition, physical activity, and learning - because healthy kids are better prepared to learn! Anyone can get involved and be a part of the celebration to help support sound nutrition, regular physical activity and health-promoting programs in schools. Schools are invited to host an event during Every Kid Healthy Week or anytime in April. Consider making your field day or other school-wide event health focused. Keep reading to learn how to host an event!



[Explore resources here.](#)

## Information for Producers

### News: Farm Bureau emphasizes importance of local foods.

Illinois Farm Bureau has spiced up its support of local food and specialty growers with its new Live Local program.

And giving this initiative some zesty flair is Local Foods Programs Manager Raghela Scavuzzo, who's been on the job since last spring. She works in Bloomington in the Business and Regulatory Affairs Division under Governmental Affairs and Commodities.

Local food is grown by specialty and other types of growers - Certainly farm bureaus are well known for supporting commodity farmers, but not necessarily for those farmers who grow "farmers market" foods, such as green beans, tomatoes, lettuce, apples, peaches, herbs and watermelons. Scavuzzo seeks to add more types of growers under the farm bureau umbrella.

[Read more here.](#)



## Event: 2018 Good Food Expo at Chicago's UIC Forum

**When:** March 23-24, 2018

**Where:** [UIC Forum](#), Chicago

**Who Should Attend:** anyone involved in the good food movement!

Greet spring and celebrate our region's growing local food community! The 14th Annual Good Food EXPO invites you to two dynamic days that connect all the people active in the Good

Food community - farmers, food producers, investors, trade buyers, policy makers, activists, families and Good Food lovers.

Admission is FREE with online registration (Master Class is \$55 in advance, \$65 at door).

Network, Sell and Connect at Friday's Good Food Trade Show  
FamilyFarmed's Good Food EXPO kicks off on Friday, March 23 with the Good Food Trade Show: Production, Policy & Industry Exchange. Industry stakeholders come together for a day of exhibiting, educational programming and networking opportunities. This 14th annual event is centered on the Good Food Marketplace, where more than 100 farmers and producers engage with buyers, retailers, investors and others interested in the rapidly growing consumer demand for healthy food produced locally using sustainable, humane and fair practices.

New in 2018 is farmer training with Atina Diffley. On-Farm Food Safety & FSMA farmer training will be held on Thursday, March 22 as a Good Food Expo pre-conference event at the UIC Forum in Chicago. And the Wholesale Success workshop happens March 23. Both are free - register here. The first 20 Illinois Specialty Crop farms to register for exhibit space Friday, or both Friday and Saturday receive \$370 discount.

goodfood  
**EXPO**  
powered by familyfarmed

[View conference & register here.](#)

## News: Oswego state rep. explores possibility of year-round farming as part of Aurora area's future.

The need to attract businesses and grow the state's economy was the focus behind a recent field trip for state Rep. Stephanie Kifowit (D-Oswego), who went to Rochelle in Ogle County to learn about making year-round farming more of a reality in the Aurora area.



Photo Credit: Daniel Murphy

On Jan. 29, Kifowit, who was accompanied by members of the Illinois Farm Bureau, toured the MightyVine tomato "growhouse" in Rochelle which uses hydroponic methods to produce fresh vine-ripened tomatoes throughout the year.

[Read more here.](#)

## Information for School Gardens

### 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](#)

### Contest: SPRING 2018 CARTON 2 GARDEN CONTEST





**Who Should Apply:** The Spring 2018 Carton 2 Garden is open to all PreK-12 public and private schools in the United States. Your school does not need a garden to participate.

**Timeline:** Spring 2018 Carton 2 Garden Entry Forms must be submitted by **Monday, April 16, 2018.**

Evergreen Packaging and KidsGardening.org are proud to present our fourth annual national Carton 2 Garden Contest! Open to public and private schools, contest winners will be selected based on their implementation of an innovative garden creation featuring creative and sustainable uses for repurposed milk and juice cartons.

Your school can get started by collecting at least 100 empty cartons from your home, community, or cafeteria. After gathering cartons, it's time to design and construct purposeful garden items and structures using them. Looking for ideas? Check out last year's winners for inspiration and visit us on Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest or tips, activities, and lessons.

All entries must document and share their gardening experience through an online entry form and submission of up to 10 photos. In order to be eligible for the grand prize and specialty prizes, entries must also include a video link that tells the story of the project in its entirety. Please note: that each student that appears in the photos or video must have an accompanying signed official Carton 2 Garden parental release form submitted with your entry.

[Contest Information Here](#)



**STAY CONNECTED AND JOIN THE CONVERSATION:**



## **BECOME A NETWORK MEMBER!**

Join our growing movement. [Click here to take the Farm to School pledge](#), 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.

