

National ECELC Newsletter

The National ECELC

Welcome to the National Early Care and Education Collaboratives Project (ECELC) Newsletter! We hope this newsletter is helpful as we offer supplemental information to help you prepare for the Learning Sessions and provide technical assistance to early care and education (ECE) providers. Topics within each newsletter will emphasize areas outlined in the *Lets Move!* Child Care goals including healthy eating, physical activity, screen time, and breastfeeding support. We hope you enjoy it!

-The National ECELC Team

Volume 3 Issue 9

October 2016

This October, take



**one
small
step**



for farm to school!

One Small Step:

October is Farm to Preschool Month!

Written by: Alex Hyman, MPH

Reviewed by: Kevin Cataldo, MS

In 2010, Congress designated October as Farm to School/Preschool Month to demonstrate the increasing importance these programs play in improving child nutrition, supporting local economies, and educating children about where they get their food. In 2015, through Farm to School/Preschool month, outreach efforts were able to reach more than 2.7 million people.

The theme of Farm to School/Preschool month 2016 is One Small Step. This theme was selected to highlight the small steps that anyone – providers, students, farmers, nutrition professionals- can take to get informed, involved, and take action in advancing farm to school in their community. You can encourage providers to take the One Small Step Pledge during the month of October 2016. All who sign the pledge will be entered to win support for farm to school activities at the school of your choice!

Providers can use Farm to Preschool month as a small step towards establishing a new farm to preschool project or to strengthen an already existing program. There are many ways to celebrate Farm to Preschool Month including:

- Taste tests
- Nutrition lessons in the classroom
- Visiting a local farm
- Starting a garden at your program/family child care home
- Hosting a school garden harvest party
- Cooking activities with kids

Resources for Providers

Farm to Preschool Survey

In 2015, the National Farm to School Network surveyed early care and education providers across the country. Nearly 1,500 providers serving 183,369 young children in 49 states and Washington, D.C., responded and shared a look into the work that they are doing to connect young children to healthy, local foods and food related educational opportunities. The results show that farm to school in early care and education is on the rise across the country: 54% of respondents are already doing farm to school activities and another 28% plan to start in the near future.

WEBINAR ARCHIVE: NFSN Farm to Early Care and Education Group Webinar - July 2016

The webinar focused on celebrating and connecting with diverse cultures and communities through farm to early care and education initiatives. Practitioners from across the country share their approach to incorporating culturally relevant curriculum, resources and programming into their farm to early care and education work and increasing opportunities for meaningful engagement with children, families and communities. <http://www.farmtoschool.org/resources-main/webinar-archive-nfsn-farm-to-early-care-and-education-group-webinar-july-2016>

Questions?

Please contact your State/Local Project Coordinator or ECELC at Nemours ecelc@nemours.org

Farm to school is on the rise in early care and education



Local Procurement

Farm to Preschool helps build strong connections between communities and healthy foods by enhancing food purchasing options for early care and education programs and educational activities that expose children in care to healthy, local foods. There are multiple sources of local food and a variety of farm to preschool activities for programs. These include purchasing through food distributors, directly from local farmers, from local grocery stores, local farmers' markets, edible gardens, and more.

Farm to Preschool has produced fact sheets offering advice about procurement for both [Child Care Centers](#) and [Family Child Care Providers](#) looking to participate in farm to early care and education. They discuss options for purchasing healthy foods and offer tips for how to get started with farm to preschool for both child care centers and family child care providers.

Programs participating in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) can use funds to purchase foods from farmers' markets and plant edible gardens. You can find more information on [local procurement foods for CACFP](#)

Farm to Preschool Toolkit

The Farm to Preschool Toolkit comes from Growing Minds, a program of Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project. Growing Minds Farm to School program has been supporting and providing resources to schools and preschools throughout Western North Carolina, the Southern Appalachians, and as Southeast Regional Lead for National Farm to School Network, throughout the southeast since 2002. Their farm to preschool toolkit is a compilation of all of their farm to preschool resources and includes information about getting started with farm to preschool, rules and regulations, recommendations for local procurement, and monthly resources (sample recipe card and sticker, *This Week in the Garden and Farm to School Goes Home* resources, as well as food and farm based lesson plans). The toolkit is available online in two sections, and can be viewed here:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B1N5xP5zvzwzhTXNwZUY1VWMxbFk/view>

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B1N5xP5zvzwzhd2pWLXI0eTJWcms/view>

Resources

[Farm to Preschool](#)

[Farm to School Resource Database](#)



Nemours is currently funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) under a five-year Cooperative Agreement (1U58DP004102-01) to support states/localities in launching early care and education learning collaboratives focused on childhood obesity prevention. The views expressed in written materials or publications, or by speakers and moderators do not necessarily reflect the official policies of the Department of Health and Human Services, nor does the mention of trade names, commercial practices, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.

