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Agenda

- What is Farm to Preschool?
  - Goals of the movement
- Steps to Getting Started
- Resources to Support the Effort
- Next Steps
What is Farm to Preschool?
Farm to Preschool

- **Expansion of the farm to school model**
  - Not always directly linked to the Farm to School Network

- **Targets Head Start, center-based, school-based, and family child care programs**

- **Goals:**
  - To connect early care and education (ECE) settings to locally-grown produce
  - To enhance nutrition education in the classroom
  - To provide additional educational opportunities
Farm to Preschool

- **Elements of the model include:**
  - Procurement
    - Local foods are purchased and served for meals, snacks, and/or as a taste test
  - Education
    - Opportunities are provided to teach children about agriculture and nutrition within the classroom
  - School gardens
    - Children learn through on-site gardening
State Example

- New York State Department of Health
  - Funded through SNAP-Ed
  - Offered mini grants to 11 ECE programs
  - Provide food demonstrations
  - Teachers use the “Grow It, Try It, Like It” curriculum
  - Programs participate in Community Supported Agriculture
    - Boxes of produce are delivered to a program
    - Parents can purchase produce using their EBT cards
  - Trips to the local farmers’ market are organized
  - Child size gardening tools are provided
Steps to Getting Started
Getting Started at the Local and State Level

1. Convene stakeholders
2. Establish goals
3. Make connections
4. Seek and use funding
5. Learn from others
1. Convene Stakeholders

**ECE Programs**
- Food service personnel
- Administrators
- Teachers
- Parents
- Local farmers
- Local colleges & universities
- Community organizations

**Community/State**
- Farm to School Network State Lead
- Colleges & universities
  - Cooperative Extension Service
- State agencies
  - Department of Health
  - Department of Education
  - Department of Agriculture
- Child Care Resource & Referral agencies
- Head Start and other ECE programs
2. Establish Goals

**ECE Programs**
- Form a planning team
- Identify snacks or components of a meal to serve local foods
- Make connections and discuss how to partner
- Plan a local foods event
- Search for local donations or grant opportunities

**Community/State**
- Identify ECE programs to target
- Develop resources
- Disseminate resources
  - Handouts/fliers
  - On-site technical assistance
  - Statewide conference
  - Community meeting
- Create a space to link ECE programs to farmers
3. Make Connections

- To purchase local food, contact a:
  - Food distributor or food service company
  - [www.localharvest.org](http://www.localharvest.org)
  - Local farmer
  - Local farmers’ market
  - Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)

- To build a garden, contact:
  - Cooperative Extension Service
  - Local farmer
  - Local Boy/Girl Scouts

Stay Informed
Join our networks:
- [www.fazintoschool.org](http://www.fazintoschool.org)
- Twitter @FazintoSchool
- Facebook https://en.fbe.me/a7pf2e

LOCAL PROCUREMENT FOR CHILD CARE CENTERS

Options for purchasing local food

There are many different ways to purchase local food. One way is to purchase food from local farmers' markets, co-ops, or community-supported agriculture (CSA) programs. These organizations offer fresh, local produce, meats, and sometimes dairy, which can be purchased on a weekly or monthly basis. Additionally, some local restaurants also offer locally-sourced food on their menus.

1. Through your local food distributor or food service management company
   - Many large food service companies purchase local food from small farmers in the area. Contact your food service provider to see if they offer local food options.

2. Directly from a local farmer
   - Contact local farmers to purchase fresh produce. Many local farmers have Facebook pages or websites where they sell their produce. Check out the local farmer’s market in your area for fresh, locally-grown produce.

3. Visit your local farm store
   - Many local farms have farm stores where they sell their produce and other products. These stores often offer a wide variety of fresh, locally-sourced food.

4. A Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program
   - A CSA program is a way to purchase local food in advance. You buy a share of a farmer's crop and receive weekly or bi-weekly boxes of fresh, locally-grown produce. Contact your local farm stores or community centers to see if they offer CSA programs.

5. Visit the Local Procurement for Family Child Care handout [here](http://www.carerx.org/procurement)

Find this handout [here](http://www.carerx.org/procurement)
4. Seek & Use Funding

- **Funding sources**
  - Private funding
  - USDA Child Care Wellness grants
  - USDA Team Nutrition grants
  - CACFP allowable food costs
    - Purchase fresh fruits & vegetables from farmers’ markets
    - Plant an edible food garden

- **Use the funding for:**
  - Mini grants for ECE programs
  - Statewide or local conference/meeting
  - Technical assistance to ECE programs
  - Purchasing nutrition curricula for ECE classrooms and provide staff training
5. Learn From Others

- Reach out to local, state, or national contacts to overcome barriers
  - Farm to Preschool website (www.farmtopreschool.org)
    - Program models (http://www.farmtopreschool.org/programmodels.html)
  - Farm to School website (www.farmtoschool.org)
    - Farm to School Network state lead
  - Child Care Resource & Referral agency
  - Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)
  - Other ECE programs participating in the movement
  - Colleges and universities
    - Cooperative Extension Service
Resource for ECE Programs

- Assess where you are
- Form a team
- Establish goals
- Learn from others
- Promote Farm to Preschool in the community

What is Farm to Preschool?
Farm to preschool is a network of educators and community members to connect early-childhood education settings (preschools, Head Start, center-based programs, K-12 schools, horizon, and family childcare programs) to local food producers and consumers. This relationship helps to promote healthy eating habits and to provide children with fresh, healthy food.

Getting Started
Here are some easy steps to starting a Farm to Preschool program in your community:

1. Assess where you are and where you’d like to be.
   - Are your goals centered on:
     - Purchasing local foods to be served in meals or snacks?
     - Establishing a garden?
     - Implementing other ideas to promote healthy eating (field trips to farms or farmers markets, cooking lessons, etc.?)
     - Engaging families in local food access and education?

2. Find a team and collaborators.
   - Farm to preschool programs can involve many collaborators: parents, Child Care Resource and Referral staff, local farmers, community organizations, and even local college/university students. Each collaborator can play an important role in establishing a sustainable farm-to-preschool program.

3. Establish one or two achievable goals to get started.
   - Some ideas include:
     - Creating a planning team that includes potential collaborators such as parents and teachers.
     - Identifying local farms or food companies that would be interested in engaging with local food programs.
     - A local farmers’ market or a community garden.
     - Teachers and students in local schools or community centers.
     - A local college/university student.

Find the handout here
Resources for State

- Convene appropriate stakeholders
- Create and define the role of an advisory group
- Identify priorities and activities
- Choose a form of communication and set regular times to meet
- Seek funding

Find the resource [here](#)
Resources to Support the Effort
Farm to Preschool Toolkits

- Farm to Preschool Initiative Toolkit
  - Food Trust

- Farm to Childcare: Opportunities and Challenges for Connecting Young Children with Local Foods and Farmers
  - Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy

- USDA Interactive Farm to School Network Toolkit
Nutrition Curricula

- Grow It, Try It, Like It!
  - Gardening and nutrition education kit
- Early Sprouts
  - Gardening and nutrition education kit
- Eat Well Play Hard: In a Childcare Setting
  - Nutrition education and physical activity curriculum
- Color Me Healthy
  - Nutrition education and physical activity curriculum
- Harvest for Healthy Kids
  - Nutrition kits with lesson plans and family newsletters
- Farm to Childcare Curriculum Package
  - Nutrition curriculum, sample menus, lesson plans
Improve the Menu

- What’s Cooking? **USDA Mixing Bowl**
  - Sort recipes by:
    - Program
    - Course
    - Food group
    - Nutrient
    - Cooking equipment
    - Cuisine
    - Quantity

- Food Safety from Farm & Garden to Preschool
  - Free **online training** for ECE providers, food service staff, volunteers, and parents
    - Receive certificate of completion
Next Steps
Next Steps

1. Read the following documents:
   - Growing Farm to Preschool in Your State
   - Farm to Preschool Initiative Toolkit
   - Farm to Childcare: Opportunities and Challenges for Connecting Young Children with Local Foods and Farmers
2. Review the Farm to Preschool [website](#)
3. Contact your [Farm to School Network](#) state or regional lead
   - Ask about local and state Farm to Preschool efforts
   - Discuss opportunities for expansion
4. Identify ECE programs who are interested in participating in the Farm to Preschool movement
5. Get started!
Questions?
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