

# FSNE Farm to School

## Making Connections From the Farm to School

“Farm to School” describes efforts to create connections between students and their families, the food they eat, and the farmers that grow it. When children experience where food comes from, they develop positive relationships with fresh healthy foods. Engaging parents and caregivers in farm to school activities better equips them to look for affordable local food options in their community.

### A successful Farm to School program includes three elements:

**Cafeteria:** Across Maryland and the country, school districts are working to purchase produce and other foods from farms within the state or region. Serving local fruits and vegetables in the school cafeteria supports local farmers and ensures students have the opportunity to taste produce when it’s at its freshest and most flavorful.

**Classroom:** Eating local food is a delicious experience, but it becomes more meaningful when students engage in experiential learning about farming, gardening, and the food system. Nutrition education, school gardens, and sampling foods and recipes featuring local ingredients encourage students to incorporate a variety of fruits and vegetables into meals and snacks.

**Community:** There are many benefits to eating locally grown foods, including increasing access to tasty and affordable healthy foods for families. Farmer visits to the classroom, field trips to farmers’ markets, and partnering with local farms to create healthy fundraisers build connections between schools, farmers, and the community. These activity can help students and their families develop skills and knowledge to eat a variety of healthy foods, including fruits and vegetables, on a limited budget.

FSNE provides nutrition education complementing farm to school, helps create school gardens and growing spaces, promotes local foods on the cafeteria line, and supports activities that connect families to local food resources in the community. Visit the [FSNE Farm to School Toolkit](#) for tips on planning lessons, parent engagement and more!

