

Local Foods, Lucas County: Farm to School Toolkit

Masters Project

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**Abstract**

Farm to School is a nationwide movement to connect students with fresh, healthy food through local food procurement and educational activities. Ohio State University Extension is the state partner in the United States Department of Agriculture's efforts to promote and support Farm to School activities in Ohio. This program plan serves as a strategic plan for implementation of the Local Foods, Lucas County: Farm to School Toolkit. The toolkit was developed to help Extension professionals meet the needs of potential Farm to School stakeholders in Lucas County, Ohio by addressing issues of public health, education, and community engagement. The Farm to School Toolkit provides county-specific resources for those stakeholders, intended to inform and motivate them towards action.

**Local Foods, Lucas County: Farm to School Toolkit  
Program Plan**

Congress passed the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act (HHFKA) in 2010, with the intent of improving nutrition for youth across the country. The Act provides policy-making and funding for USDA's varied child nutrition programs. HHFKA also set aside funding for the planning, implementation, and sustainability of Farm to School programs, which many advocates believe can make a significant impact on the health and well-being of America's children. The Local Foods, Lucas County: Farm to School toolkit was developed to promote and educate stakeholders in Lucas County, Ohio about Farm to School.

**Program Vision and Theory**

Farm to School is a nationwide movement to connect students with fresh, healthy food through local food procurement and educational activities in individual schools and districts. The purchase and serving of locally grown or produced food products in schools not only enriches community connections, it strengthens the local economy. Educational activities like nutrition lessons, school gardens, and agriculture-related science projects help students make informed food choices and help meet federal and state educational standards.

This program plan serves as a strategic plan for implementation of the Local Foods, Lucas County: Farm to School Toolkit. The toolkit was developed to help Extension professionals address the local needs of potential Farm to School stakeholders in a systematic way, by addressing issues of public health, education, and community engagement. The development of the Local Foods, Lucas County program was a collaborative effort of Lucas

## LOCAL FOODS, LUCAS COUNTY: FARM TO SCHOOL TOOLKIT

County Extension staff, and graduate student, Suzanne Saggese, developed the Farm to School toolkit.

The goal of this program was to create county-specific communication deliverables for schools, farmer and producers, and other community members interested in Farm to School activities. Its mission is to improve student health through increased access to healthy food choices and agriculture-related educational programs. The toolkit is intended to provide organized, relevant, and timely information regarding Farm to School (F2S) programs, activities, and funding. The program can also help strengthen the relationship between OSU Extension and the local community, by engaging the needs of Lucas County.

Farm to School activities align with Ohio State University's *Health and Wellness* Discovery theme, as well as the College of Food, Agriculture, and Environmental Sciences (CFAES) Signature Area of *Food Security, Production and Human Health*. Distribution and use of this Farm to School toolkit will align with a number of Ohio State University Extension Impact Areas:

- *Thriving Across the Life Span*- influencing the eating habits of children and families
- *Health and Wellness*- creating healthy lifestyles through good nutrition and experiential opportunities such as gardening
- *Engaged Ohioans, Vibrant Communities*- improving healthy food access within the community, supporting local agricultural economies
- *Sustainable Food Systems*- influencing policies to address the childhood obesity epidemic through a local food lens, connecting good agricultural practices with science education, helping students understand their role in the food system

## LOCAL FOODS, LUCAS COUNTY: FARM TO SCHOOL TOOLKIT

Extension professionals from all program areas can engage in Farm to School activities, providing valuable resources to the local community. Family and Consumer Sciences educators offer nutrition and/or garden-based curricula, parent workshops, or aid in implementation of school wellness policies. 4-H Youth Development educators connect teens with service project opportunities at school gardens and summer camps, or deliver STEM programming in schools, summer camps, and afterschool care sites. Agriculture and Natural Resources educators provide technical support at school gardens and connect Master Gardener Volunteers with school programs. They also promote field trips to farms, farmers' markets, and community gardens. Community Development educators connect local food sources to school sites, influence policies at the local, state, or national level, and collaborate on USDA grant opportunities. Community Nutrition programs like SNAP-Ed and Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) provide nutrition education programming which aligns with Farm to School principles.

### **Literature Review**

Since Farm to School's fledgling days in the late 1990's, researchers have studied how serving local foods in the cafeteria, and delivering nutrition and agriculture education lessons in the classroom have influenced public health, education, and the community-at-large. In many cases, they have found positive impacts in all three arenas.

### **Public Health**

The percentage of children with obesity in the United States has more than tripled in the last thirty years (Fryar, Carroll, & Ogden, 2014). Today, about one in five school-aged children is obese, meaning their Body Mass Index (BMI) is in the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile or higher for their age

and height (Ogden, et al., 2016). These rising obesity rates among U.S. youth have solicited calls for stronger connections and access to healthy foods, especially in schools.

Several studies have found that an inclusive school-based approach is effective at preventing obesity (Wang, et al., 2015). Farm to School programs are an example of the kind of comprehensive approach that supports school nutrition and makes connections beyond the school day by involving families and other community members. Researchers have found schools participating in Farm to School have an increase in fruit and vegetable consumption among students with the lowest previous intake (Bontrager-Yoder AB, et al., 2014).

Joshi, Azuma, & Feenstra (2006) reviewed fifteen different Farm to School studies for impacts and found students generally preferred farm-to-school meals and were consuming school lunches more frequently after a Farm to School program was initiated.

These improvements in student nutrition habits expand to the whole family, where positive changes in food shopping (Phillips, Romero, Smith, & Reddy, 2011), meal planning (Boxmeyer, 2014), and food security (Upstream Public Health, 2011) occurred. The Food Trust (2007) also reported that 97% of parents whose children participated in a Farm to School program self-reported via a survey that they believe buying locally grown foods was “important” or “somewhat important.”

## **Curriculum**

The decline of agricultural education in American schools has distanced students from relating to and understanding the local food system. The National Research Council (1988) report, *Understanding Agriculture: New Directions for Education* presented findings and advice

on the future of agricultural education. Recommendations suggested that agricultural literacy should begin in kindergarten and continue throughout a student's school career. The report also found that urban minority students had the least access to agricultural education.

Exposure to agricultural topics through experiential learning, including Farm to School activities, has had positive impacts on student knowledge and interest in agriculture (Wein, 2016). Ray, Fisher, & Fisher-Maltese (2016) suggest that school gardens in urban schools can have a positive impact on reading, math, and science scores, as well as stimulate interest in environmental stewardship and community engagement within minority populations.

### **Local Economy**

Diverting school food dollars to the local economy is positive for community as a whole, and keeps small farmers operating. According to the United States Department of Agriculture Farm to School Census (USDA, 2015), \$790 million was spent on local foods by our nation's schools in the 2013-14 school year. This represents a 105% increase from reported spending in the 2011-12 school year (USDA, 2015). Studies estimate that school purchases of locally grown and processed foods have a 1.4-2.6 multiplier, potentially making a significant impact on the local economy (USDA, 2015). In a 2012 report from Ecotrust, "The Impact of Seven Cents", researchers found that "for each job created from a local food purchase, a total of 2.61 jobs are created statewide in Oregon" (Kane, Kruse, Ratcliffe, Sobel & Tessman, 2012). Should these statistics hold true for other states, there are significant opportunities for growth within Ohio.

According to the 2015 Farm to School Census, 190 Ohio districts with 800 schools reported spending food dollars on local foods, resulting in \$16,476,600 invested in locally grown and processed foods (USDA, 2015). The average district spent 17% of their budget on local



products, and 44% stated they planned to increase their purchases in future school years (USDA, 2015).

### Needs Assessment

A needs assessment was conducted to determine the opportunities for Farm to School program impacts within Lucas County. By understanding the context of Lucas County youth and the capacities for programming in the area, Extension professionals can use this toolkit most effectively. Local health, education, and existing Farm to School (F2S) programs were assessed for relevant data. Census of Agriculture reports were reviewed to determine capacity for local foods production in the area.

Community Commons combines various data sources to create a Community Health Needs Assessment, which provides demographic and socio-economic data for youth in Lucas County (Table 1). Poverty is calculated as living in households with income at or below 100% of the Federal Poverty Level. Total number of youth under eighteen in Lucas County is 99,818 (Community Commons, 2015). The demographic data in Table 1 indicates a diverse youth population in Lucas County.

Table 1

#### *Demographic and Socio-economic data for Lucas County, Ohio Youth*

Lucas County Youth under 18	White	Black or African American	Native American	Asian	Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	Some Other Race	Multiple Race
Youth by Race	20.20%	27.90%	20.20%	21.53%	31.91%	26.51%	57.13%
Youth in Poverty	17.59%	53.81%	41.63%	26.86%	100%	38.48%	48.98%

The 2014 Lucas County Community Health Assessment provides information on the status of obesity (Table 2), and fruit and vegetable consumption (Table 3) among youth, two issues potentially impacted by Farm to School programs.

Table 2

*Youth Weight Status in Lucas County, Ohio*

Age	Obese	Overweight
Ages 0-11	24%	13%
Ages 12-18	13%	15%

Table 3

*Fruit and Vegetable Consumption among Youth in Lucas County, Ohio*

Age	Eating recommended 5 or more servings
Ages 0-11	10%
Ages 12-18	23%

Obesity rates, particularly among age 0-11 youth, suggest that Farm to School programs may be a good fit for preschool and lower elementary classrooms. Fruit and Vegetable consumption is low among Lucas County youth, providing opportunity for F2S programs to improve consumption rates.

Data collection to understand youth education in Lucas County included review of federal census data, Ohio Department of Education records, and data from the 2015 USDA Farm

to School Census. Table 4 shows the current number of schools in Lucas County, and estimated total youth population attending grades kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

Table 4

*Census of schools in Lucas County, Ohio*

Lucas County, Ohio Schools	Count
Number of Public School Districts	8
Number of Public elementary, middle, and high schools	100
Number of Community elementary, middle, and high schools	40
Number of Private and Parochial elementary, middle, and high schools	40
Estimated total number of youth enrolled in schools in Lucas County	77,000

As Lucas County is predominantly urban, there is a higher population of youth and a higher number of schools that could potentially implement Farm to School programming. The large number of community, private, and parochial schools may have more opportunity to implement F2S programs, as they do not have to work with the policies and regulations of the larger school districts.

During May 2016, OSU Extension Lucas County conducted a survey of potential and current Farm to School stakeholders in Northwest Ohio to determine interest in programming and professional development. Results highlights are in Table 5. While the many of the respondents were not from Lucas County, the survey showed a high level of interest in Farm to School in the region.

Table 5

*Northwest Ohio Farm to School Workshop survey results*

Survey Questions	Answers	% of total N=69
What is your role in F2S?	School administration, teachers	22%
	School Food Service	19%
	Health Advocate	13%
	Producer, Farmer	13%
	Parent, PTO member	3%
	Other community member	30%
Are you currently participating in F2S activities?	Yes	37%
	No, but plan to in the future	51%
	No, no plans in the future	12%
What F2S activities are you interested in learning about? (choose 1 or more)	Procurement and serving local foods in the cafeteria	50%
	School gardens	73%
	Classroom activities	50%
	Field Trips, Community engagement	54%

Table 6 provides data from the USDA 2015 Farm to School Census. The census website database includes a search function, utilized to sort and filter only school districts, private, parochial, and community schools in Lucas County. A number of school districts did not submit answers for the survey. The answers provided were from district/school Food Service Directors, who may or may not have knowledge of F2S activities at the individual school/classroom level.

Table 6

*2015 USDA Farm to School Census Results for Lucas County, Ohio*

Farm to School Participation Status	Count
Districts reporting <b>current participation</b> in Farm to School activities	1
Districts reporting <b>no plans</b> to participate in Farm to School in the future	3
Community Schools reporting <b>current participation</b> in Farm to School activities	2
Community Schools reporting <b>plans</b> to participate in Farm to School in the Future	7
Community Schools reporting <b>no plans</b> to participate in Farm to School in the Future	5
Private/Parochial Schools reporting <b>no plans</b> to participate in Farm to School in the Future	2

Comparing data from Table 4, Lucas County Schools, and Table 6, USDA Farm to School Census results, provides a clear picture of the relatively few F2S programs in operation. Of those census respondents, three districts and seven schools have decided not to engage in Farm to School programming. That potentially leaves four districts and seventy-two community, private, and parochial schools open for Farm to School.

USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service provides county data via its Census of Agriculture, which is listed in Table 7. As Lucas County is predominantly urban and suburban, the number of choices for procurement of local foods may not be as high as rural counties. However, neighboring counties would have a large number of resources to choose from and still fit into a widely held definition of "local" for Lucas County schools.

Table 7

*2012 USDA Census of Agriculture County Level Data*

Food Product	Farms in Lucas County harvesting product
Apples	6
Beef	17
Cabbage	8
Cantaloupe	9
Honey	10
Peppers	16
Pork	12
Potatoes	14
Poultry	33
Pumpkins	18
Snap Beans	19
Squash	11
Sweet corn	17
Tomatoes	25
Watermelons	9

OSU Extension has the opportunity to be a main source of Farm to School information, as it appears that relatively few Lucas County districts and schools are currently involved. To encourage local schools and districts to participate in Farm to School activities in some manner, county specific resources are needed. These resources may provide incentive to participate if the process is deemed “easy” and “doable”. The Local Foods, Lucas County: Farm to School Toolkit was created to take on those informational responsibilities.

### **Program Goals**

The Local Foods, Lucas County campaign originated in 2016 with the goal of informing Lucas County community members about local foods. Lucas County Extension saw gaps in the promotion of federal programs like SNAP Gardens, Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program, and Farm to School. Extension staff collaborated to develop materials that were simple to understand and contained information on local community resources including OSU Extension, the library system, local farmers, and retailers.

Specifically, the Local Foods, Lucas County: Farm to School toolkit intends to meet the informational needs of potential Farm to School stakeholders in Lucas County. While there is a myriad of information about Farm to School available, none existed with resources specific to Lucas County. The information in the toolkit needed to make potential F2S stakeholders feel confident they could engage in Farm to School activities, whether big or small.

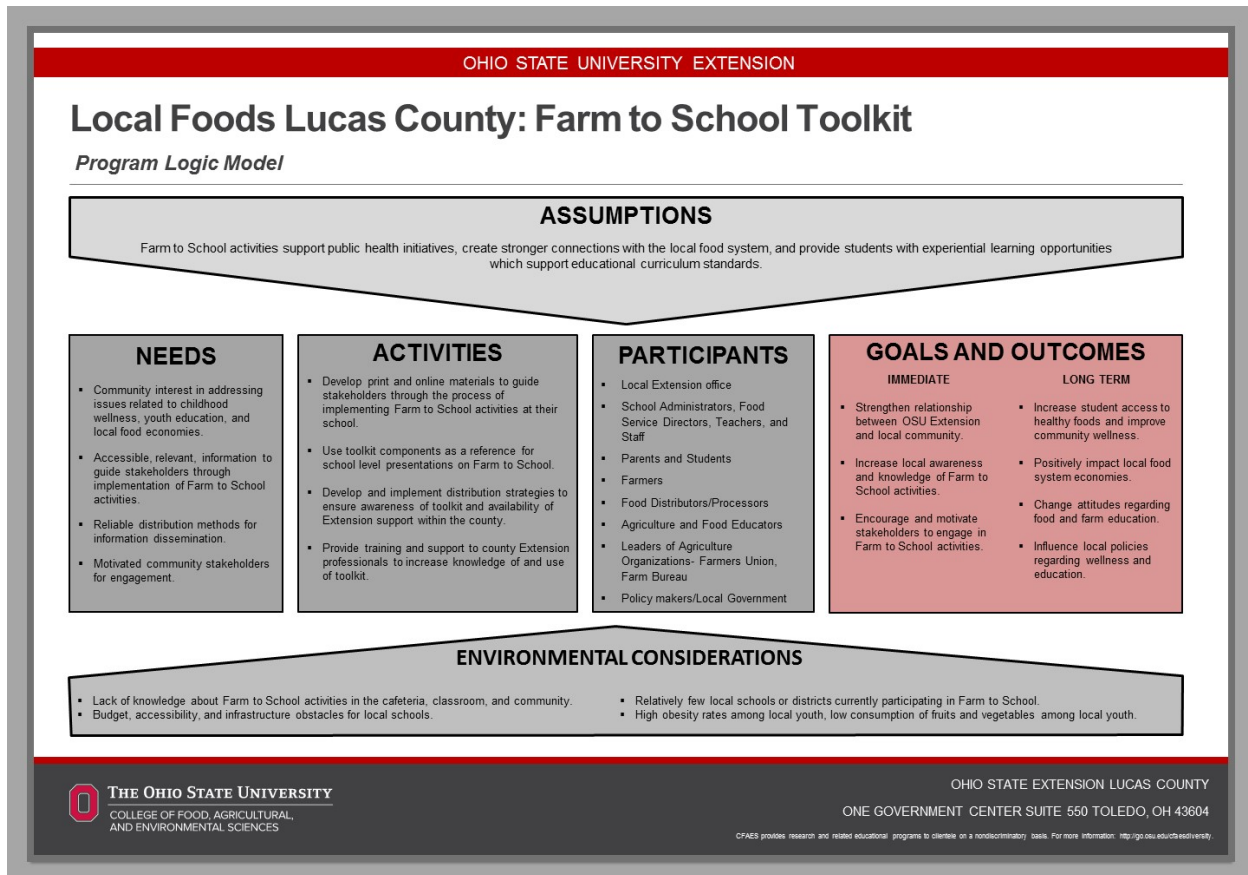
### **Logic Model**

Figure 1 provides a graphic representation of the intended goals and outcomes of the Local Foods, Lucas County: Farm to School Toolkit. The overarching assumption for the program is Farm to School activities support public health initiatives, create stronger connections with the local food system, and provide students with experiential learning opportunities, which support educational curriculum standards. The needs assessment indicated community interest in addressing issues related to childhood wellness, youth education, and local food economies. Long-term outcomes include increasing student access to healthy foods and improving

community wellness, positively influencing local food system economies, and changing attitudes regarding food and farm education.

Figure 1

## *Farm to School Toolkit Program Logic Model*



## Program Structure

The targeted audience for the toolkit includes school administrators, teachers and staff, food service directors and staff, farmers and food producers, community health advocates, other educators, parents and school parent organizations, and any other community members interested in Farm to School.



## LOCAL FOODS, LUCAS COUNTY: FARM TO SCHOOL TOOLKIT

The toolkit is divided into eight separate handouts, which provide a simple explanation of a particular aspect of Farm to School, and each handout has local resources, which the informant can utilize for guidance and programming. The topics include Getting Started with Farm to School, Classroom Activities, Guidance for Farmers and Producers, Procurement of Local Foods, Serving Local Foods, School Gardens, Grants and Funding, and Celebrating Farm to School Month. See Appendices A-H for handouts. The following questions were developed as objectives for each of the handouts:

- *Getting Started:* How do we define local? What should be considered when establishing goals? Who should be involved in planning and implementation? Who can we contact locally, state level and nationally with questions?
- *Classroom:* What F2S activities can be used to meet curriculum standards? How do school wellness policies affect classroom curriculum? What field trip and educational resources are available locally?
- *Farmers and Producers:* How do we sell our products to schools? What regulations and requirements are in place? How do I determine capacity? What food safety resources are available?
- *Procurement:* What regulations and standards apply to local food purchases? How do USDA Foods and DoD Fresh support local foods purchases? What products are local?
- *Serving Local Foods:* How do we use taste tests to support Farm to School? What menu planning resources are available? What activities help encourage consumption of fruits and vegetables?

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- *School Gardens*: What should be considered when planning a school garden? How can a garden connect with curriculum? What financial supports are available? What local support is available?
- *Grants and Funding*: What USDA grants are available and how do we apply? Where can schools find other funding?
- *Farm to School Month*: What is it and how can we participate?

Suzanne Saggese, OSU graduate student, conducted background research for the Farm to School toolkit. USDA Food and Nutrition Service was a main source of information, as it contains the Office of Community Food Systems (OCFS), which helps schools incorporate local foods in the National School Lunch Program and its associated programs. OCFS also oversees training and technical assistance as well as grant making for Farm to School.

Procurement resources included USDA and Ohio Department of Education, which helped to understand how and from whom schools purchase their food. Local farmers and producers were also contacted to determine capacity for local foods procurement. Educational resources included review of successful programs in other states and cities, which may have similar demographics and resources as Lucas County.

### **Distribution**

Prior to public distribution of the Farm to School toolkit, copies of the handouts will be provided to two Ohio State University teams for review. These include OSU's Farm to School Program Director, Carol Smathers, and OSU Extension's Local Foods Signature Program leaders, Heather Neikirk and Patrice Powers-Barker.

## LOCAL FOODS, LUCAS COUNTY: FARM TO SCHOOL TOOLKIT

Initial public distribution of this toolkit will be via print packets to select Lucas County school principals and community members who have expressed interest in Farm to School. All handouts will also be available on the OSU Extension Lucas County website, [lucas.osu.edu](http://lucas.osu.edu).

Future plans for the toolkit include use for Farm to School presentations at workshops and other events in Lucas County. Other potential future uses may include peer review for statewide use as template for Farm to School information distribution.

### **Evaluation**

An evaluation plan will be developed to determine effectiveness of the Local Foods, Lucas County: Farm to School Toolkit. It is imperative this toolkit provide relevant and timely information to potential Farm to School stakeholders, and that the information received inspires positive action among those stakeholders.

Determining transfer of learning among toolkit recipients may prove difficult. Evaluation tools will need to explicitly define the program content and intended outcomes to determine public use and effectiveness. Change is a complex process for organizations, and several combining factors can support or hinder the transfer of learning. Evaluation tools may include online surveys and personal interviews with school food service directors, teachers, farmers, and other stakeholders.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

There are a number of positive outcomes with Farm to School. Numerous research studies have documented the benefits of Farm to School programming on the health and well-being of our nation's youth. Farm to School can also expand knowledge of our food system

through experiential lessons in the classroom and garden, as well as contribute to a thriving local foods economy.

The needs assessment shows that in Lucas County, there are a number of opportunities to address childhood health through Farm to School. There is an issue with obesity and fruit and vegetable consumption among youth, and a large number of schools in which to begin programming. Local stakeholders have indicated interest in local foods procurement and school gardens.

In locations similar to Lucas County, Farm to School programs have thrived. Buffalo, New York Public Schools is a success story in a similar situation. Buffalo has a diverse population racially and economically. Their Farm to School program included farm field trips, a Harvest of the Month program highlighting locally sourced vegetables, and creation of twenty school gardens that produced more than 6,000 pounds of produce (Buffalo Public School District, 2015). Buffalo Public Schools collaborated with Cornell University Extension-Erie County to develop a 4-H youth afterschool leadership group, involved in advocating for Farm to School activities, including establishment of salad bars in all high schools (Buffalo Public School District, 2015). This example of Extension collaboration with local schools is recommended for Lucas County and all of Ohio.

USDA and Ohio State University Extension support of Farm to School programming in Ohio should positively expand interest in implementation of Farm to School in Lucas County. When stakeholders feel they are well informed, they are more likely to move forward with programming. It is the intention that this Local Foods, Lucas County: Farm to School Toolkit will inform and motivate local stakeholders. OSU Extension Lucas County should utilize this

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toolkit to influence schools and other community participants to engage in Farm to School activities. It should also become a baseline standard for other county Extension offices wishing to inform their communities about Farm to School.

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**Appendices**

- A. Getting Started with Farm to School
- B. Farm to School: Grants and Funding
- C. Farm to School in the Classroom
- D. School Gardens
- E. Farm to School: Procuring Local Foods
- F. Farm to School: Serving Local Foods
- G. Farm to School: Farmers and Producers
- H. Farm to School Month
- I. Handout References

# Local Foods, Lucas County

## Connecting Farms, Health, and Community

## Getting Started with Farm to School

Farm to school initiatives help strengthen the connection communities have with the local food system. Farm to school empowers children and their families to make informed food choices while supporting the local economy and contributing to vibrant communities. Implementation differs by location but generally includes one or more activities in the following areas:

- **Cafeteria:** Local foods are purchased, promoted and served in the cafeteria, as a snack, or as classroom taste-test.
- **Classroom:** Students participate in standards-based education activities related to agriculture, science, health or nutrition.
- **Community:** Schools are purchasing from local growers, developing school gardens, engaging in community events, and educating staff, students, and parents on the benefits of local food support.

### Build Your Team

Farm to School programs have the potential to effect both small and large changes in the community. To create a sustainable project, participation from a diverse group of school and community members is needed. Some schools have formed School Nutrition Action Councils (SNACs) as one way to bring stakeholders together. SNACs have taken on projects ranging from serving healthy meals at school to coordinating garden projects and farm field trips.

*Key Stakeholders and Supporters include:*

- School Administrators, Teachers, and Staff
- School Food Service Directors
- Farmers, Distributors/Processors
- School Wellness Committee Members
- Parents and Students
- Policy makers/Local Government
- Local Extension and Master Gardener Volunteers
- Local media

### Establish Goals

- ❑ **Consider the Big Picture-** What do you want to accomplish in the long or short term? Are you trying to incorporate local foods into the cafeteria? Establish a school garden? Integrate food and agriculture into classroom curriculum? Address school or district wellness policies?
- ❑ **Determine Your Capacity-** What infrastructure is in place to handle changes to the menu or curriculum? Who has been trained in appropriate food safety and handling procedures? Is there space, time and funding to establish Farm to School Activities?
- ❑ **Start Small-** Begin with one or two small goals that can be accomplished with current funding and equipment. Consider purchasing a local food for a special event (apples for a fall classroom party), or using potted vegetable plants indoors for science, math, or literacy activities.

### Connect and Learn

Talk with other schools and districts with established Farm to School programs. They may be able to provide advice on the challenges they faced when starting their program. Visit your local farmers market to meet with farmers and producers. Connect with the Ohio Department of Education to learn more about state and federal policies for local food procurement. USDA has many resources available on their website. The National Farm to Schools Network provides advice, research, and resources from across the country. Don't forget, your local OSU Extension office is a valuable resource for additional Farm to School information. Visit [lucas.osu.edu](http://lucas.osu.edu).



**NATIONAL  
FARM to SCHOOL  
NETWORK**

## Defining Local

Serving local foods through school meal programs is often a central component of farm to school initiatives. Before purchasing local foods, schools and districts must determine what foods are grown, raised, caught, and processed in the area and when those foods are available.

Your school food service department will likely make the decision on what “local” means for your school or district. Definitions may be based on needs, availability, or purchase size.

Potential “Local” definitions:

- Within a radius (50 miles, 100 miles)
- Within a county (Lucas county)
- Within a state (Ohio)
- Within a region (Ohio, Michigan, Indiana)

A district’s definition of local may change depending on the:

- Season
- Product
- Special events

Remember we can incorporate local foods throughout the meal tray. Local can be expanded to include the nearest bakery for school breakfast. It can include prepared protein foods like stewed chicken or ground beef patties. Dairy foods are generally considered local, as they are generally costly to transport.

## Resources for Lucas County

*National Farm to School Network-* [www.farmtoschool.org](http://www.farmtoschool.org)

*OSU Extension Farm to School-* [farmtoschool.osu.edu](http://farmtoschool.osu.edu)

*OSU Extension, Lucas County Local Foods program-* [lucas.osu.edu/program-areas/local-foods](http://lucas.osu.edu/program-areas/local-foods)

*Ohio Department of Education Office for Child Nutrition-* [education.ohio.gov/Topics/Other-Resources/Food-and-Nutrition/Office-of-Food-and-Nutrition-Overview](http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Other-Resources/Food-and-Nutrition/Office-of-Food-and-Nutrition-Overview)

*Ohio Fruit and Vegetable Seasonality chart-* [ofbf.org/whats-in-season](http://ofbf.org/whats-in-season)

*Ohio MarketMaker, producer availability database-* [oh.foodmarketmaker.com](http://oh.foodmarketmaker.com)

*Edible Schoolyard, curriculum resources-* [edibleschoolyard.org/resources-tools](http://edibleschoolyard.org/resources-tools)

*Toledo-Lucas County library system-* [www.toledolibrary.org](http://www.toledolibrary.org)

*Northwest Ohio Food Council-* [www.northwestohiofoodcouncil.com](http://www.northwestohiofoodcouncil.com)

*Creating Healthy Communities, Lucas County Health Department-* [www.lucascountyhealth.com/community-outreach/creating-healthy-communities](http://www.lucascountyhealth.com/community-outreach/creating-healthy-communities)

*Toledo GROWS, gardening support and education-* [www.toledogarden.org](http://www.toledogarden.org)

## USDA Resources

USDA’s Farm to School Program was formally established with the passage of the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010. The Program is housed in the Food and Nutrition Service’s Office of Community Food Systems (OCFS). [www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool/farm-school](http://www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool/farm-school)

Midwest Region USDA Office  
77 W. Jackson Blvd., Suite 2000  
Chicago, IL 60604

Jenna Segal, Farm to School Regional Lead  
[Jenna.Segal@fns.usda.gov](mailto:Jenna.Segal@fns.usda.gov)  
312-886-4613

Jenie Farinas, Farm to Summer and Child Care Contact  
[jenie.farinas@fns.usda.gov](mailto:jenie.farinas@fns.usda.gov)  
312-582-7811



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Getting Started with Farm to School

Contact your local OSU Extension office for more information.

OSU Extension Lucas County  
One Government Center Suite 550  
Toledo, OH 43604  
Phone: 419-213-4254  
[lucas.osu.edu](http://lucas.osu.edu)  
[extension.osu.edu](http://extension.osu.edu)

# Local Foods, Lucas County

## Connecting Farms, Health, and Community

## Farm to School: Grants and Funding

### USDA Grants

The purpose of the USDA Farm to School Grant Program is to assist eligible entities in implementing farm to school programs that improve access to local foods in eligible schools. On an annual basis, USDA awards up to \$5 million in competitive grants.

#### Key Dates:

- *September/October 2017:* Farm to School Grant Program FY 2018 RFA released.
- *December 2017:* FY 2018 Farm to School Grant Program applications are due in [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) (specific date and time not yet announced)
- *May 2018:* Announce awards

### Grant Types:

#### Planning Grant

*What:* organize efforts of schools just starting Farm to School, creation of Farm to School Action Plan

*Who:* PreK-12 School Food Authorities, non-profit private schools, charter schools, Indian tribal schools, others who participate in NSLP/BP, CACFP, SFSP

*How Much:* \$20-45k (25% matching funds required- cash or in kind)

*Time period:* activities must be completed within 18 months

#### Training Grant

*What:* support trainings to strengthen supply chains, provide technical assistance for procurement, food safety, culinary education, integration of agriculture based curriculum

*Who:* state and local agencies, tribal organizations, agriculture producers (or groups), non-profit entities



*How much:* \$15-50k (25% matching funds required- cash or in kind)

*How many are available:* 1 national training grant, 7 regional or state training grants

#### Implementation Grant

*What:* help scale up or further develop existing Farm to School activities

*Who:* PreK-12 School Food Authorities, non-profit private schools, charter schools, Indian tribal schools, others who participate in NSLP/BP, CACFP, SFSP

*How much:* \$65-100k (25% matching funds required- cash or in kind)

*Time period:* 1-2 years (includes stand up activities, execution, close out activities)

Previous Planning grantees may apply, may be combined with Support Service application from partnering agency

#### Support Service Grant

*What:* further development of existing Farm to School initiatives, broad reaching support services including support for procurement of local foods for school lunch/breakfast.

*Who:* state and local agencies, tribal organizations, agriculture producers (or groups), non-profit entities working with schools including AmeriCorps, City Year

*Partnering Schools:* K-12 public, charter or private, but must participate in NSLP/BP, CACFP, SFSP

*How much:* \$65-100k (25% matching funds required- cash or in kind)

*Time period:* 1-2 years

## How can USDA grant money be used?

*Suggested activities:* action plan development, evaluation, menu audits, curriculum, professional development, improving infrastructure, promotional efforts

*Allowable grant expenses:* personnel, contractors, equipment\* (including coolers, freezers, ovens, salad bars) and supplies (including kitchen tools, seeds, livestock), meeting expenses, travel and trainings, temporary structures like moveable greenhouses

\*Equipment is not an allowable expense for Planning and Training Grants

*Non-allowable grant expenses:* land, buildings, construction of permanent structures, delivery costs

\*No more than 10% of grant funds may be used for food. Acceptable food purchases include taste tests or promotional use.

## How do we apply?

Grant applications must be submitted online via [grants.gov](http://grants.gov). Mailed applications will not be accepted. Applications are reviewed on a national level in order to ensure geographical diversity and equitable treatment of urban, rural and tribal communities.

View last year's application for more details: [www.fns.usda.gov/fy17-farm-school-grant](http://www.fns.usda.gov/fy17-farm-school-grant)

Technical Support for [grants.gov](http://grants.gov): 800-518-4726 email: [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov)

## USDA Support

*National School Lunch Program (NSLP) Equipment Grant-* Distributed by Ohio Department of Education to schools, for new purchases of food serving equipment.

[www.education.ohio.gov/Topics/Other-Resources/Food-and-Nutrition/Resources-and-Tools-for-Food-and-Nutrition](http://www.education.ohio.gov/Topics/Other-Resources/Food-and-Nutrition/Resources-and-Tools-for-Food-and-Nutrition)

*Agricultural Marketing Service Local Food Promotion Program (LFPP)-* grant funds with a 25% match to support local food businesses.

[www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/lfp](http://www.ams.usda.gov/services/grants/lfp)

*National Institute of Food and Agriculture Community Food Projects (CFP) Competitive Grants Program-* grant funds with 100% match for Public food program service providers, tribal organizations, or private nonprofit entities

[www.nifa.usda.gov/funding-opportunity/community-food-projects-cfp-competitive-grants-program](http://www.nifa.usda.gov/funding-opportunity/community-food-projects-cfp-competitive-grants-program)

## Additional Grant and Funding Resources

Voices for Healthy Kids: [www.voicesforhealthykids.org/grant-opportunities/](http://www.voicesforhealthykids.org/grant-opportunities/)

Awesome Foundation: Food Chapter [www.awesomefood.net/](http://www.awesomefood.net/)

Simply Organic 1% Fund: [www.simplyorganic.com/community/about/giving-back/grant-application](http://www.simplyorganic.com/community/about/giving-back/grant-application)

Chef Ann Foundation: Salad Bars to Schools [www.saladbars2schools.org/](http://www.saladbars2schools.org/)

Skoop & Chef Ann Foundation: Project Produce [www.chefannfoundation.org/programs-and-grants/project-produce/](http://www.chefannfoundation.org/programs-and-grants/project-produce/)

Fruit Tree Planting Foundation: [www.ftpf.org/fruittree101.htm](http://www.ftpf.org/fruittree101.htm)

Fiskars Project Orange Thumb: [www2.fiskars.com/Community/Project-Orange-Thumb](http://www2.fiskars.com/Community/Project-Orange-Thumb)

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation: Raising Places :Building Child Centered Communities [www.rwjf.org/en/library/funding-opportunities/2017/raising-places-building-child-centered-communities.html](http://www.rwjf.org/en/library/funding-opportunities/2017/raising-places-building-child-centered-communities.html)



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Farm to School: Grants and Funding

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One Government Center Suite 550  
Toledo, OH 43604  
Phone: 419-213-4254  
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# Local Foods, Lucas County

## Connecting Farms, Health, and Community

## Farm to School in the Classroom

Farm to school creates connections between agriculture and local foods to concepts in science, social studies, math, language arts, and health. Educators can use Farm to School to offer students engaging lessons that support healthy bodies and healthy minds, as well as encourage active participation in the local food system. Activities could be as simple as reading a farm storybook to developing a inquiry-based project related to real-world experiences. Even if your school isn't engaged in procuring local foods for the cafeteria, there are many ways to integrate Farm to School in your classroom.

### Connections to Ohio's Learning Standards

Many topics related to food, gardening, farming, and agriculture can be tied to Ohio's Learning Standards. Consider these Farm to School Activities when planning standards-based lessons.

#### Life Science

- worm farm/composting bin (Behavior, Growth & Change)
- Observations on how food and water choices affect behavior and growth of plants (Interconnection with Ecosystems)

#### Earth and Space Science

- Soil erosion and nutrient management on farms (Earth's Resources)
- soil components (Rocks, Minerals & Soil)

#### Physical Science

- Building and growing a terrarium (Matter & Forms of Energy)

#### Social Studies

- Role of food in various cultures, Food Systems, buying local vs. global, farming innovations, Ohio history

#### Mathematics

- Plant measurement, collecting pollinator data, recipe measurement, garden design

### Literacy Connections

There are a wealth of books and texts which relate to Farm to School for use in English Language Arts lessons from kindergarten to high school. Contact your local library or OSU Extension office for suggested books.

**Vocabulary Acquisition:** sorting foods into categories (MyPlate), describing foods

**Reading:** use texts about food and agriculture for comprehension, compare and contrast, sequencing

**Writing:** Exploration of careers in agriculture

**Speaking and Listening:** Articulating benefits of specific foods for positive health outcomes

### Health and Wellness

There are no health education curriculum standards in Ohio, however, Ohio law does require schools and districts to include health education throughout its K-12 curriculum. Farm to School activities can be implemented to meet some of the legislated requirements, including: "The nutritive value of foods, including natural and organically produced foods, the relation of nutrition to health, and the use and effects of food additives" (Ohio Revised Code, Section 3313.60 Prescribed Curriculum).

### School Wellness Policy

All schools participating in the National School Lunch Program are required by the Healthy, Hunger- Free Kids Act of 2010 (HHFKA) to establish school wellness policies. Farm to School can positively impact student wellness by providing nutritious, locally grown food as part of the school food program and promoting healthier lifelong eating patterns. Resources for integrating Farm to School in school wellness policies can be found at the National Farm to School Network website: [www.farmtoschool.org](http://www.farmtoschool.org)

## Field Trips

Visiting a farm is a great way to connect students with agriculture and the local food system. Visiting a farm can inspire young people to make healthier food choices or develop an interest in careers in agriculture. Farmers also benefit by developing stronger connections with the local community, and potentially increasing farm revenue.

Lucas County Farms which offer on-site programming:

- *MacQueen Orchard*  
7605 Garden Rd, Holland,  
OH 43528 (419) 865-2916
- *Johnston Fruit Farms*  
2790 US-20 ALT, Swanton,  
OH 43558 (419) 826-1453
- *Hoen's Garden Center*  
1710 Perrysburg Holland  
Rd, Holland, OH 43528  
(419) 865-6566
- *Stevens Gardens*  
550 Weckerly Rd, Monclova,  
OH 43542 (419) 392-2065
- *Friendship Farms*  
9960 Berkey Southern Rd.  
Waterville, OH 43566  
419-832-0239

Other Area Farms:

*Gust Brothers Farm*  
[www.gustbrothers.com](http://www.gustbrothers.com)

*Erie Orchard & Cider Mill*  
[www.erieorchards.com](http://www.erieorchards.com)

*Country Lane Tree Farm*  
[www.countrylanetreefarm.com](http://www.countrylanetreefarm.com)

## Resources for Lucas County

*Ohio State University Extension: Lucas County*- Educators provide classroom lessons on local foods, nutrition, soil, pollinators, gardening and more. 419-213-4254 [lucas.osu.edu](http://lucas.osu.edu)

*Toledo Botanical Garden*- Offering programs at their two campuses or in the classroom, including Plants and Animals, Protecting Water and Soil, and Environmental Stewardship. 419-536-5589 [www.toledogarden.org](http://www.toledogarden.org)

*Lucas County Soil and Water Conservation District*- Educational programs teach the value of natural resources through classroom presentations or field trips. 419-893-1966 [www.co.lucas.oh.us/510/Educational-Programs](http://www.co.lucas.oh.us/510/Educational-Programs)

*Metroparks Toledo*- Programs in the classroom or in the parks provide opportunities in environmental and natural resource education. 419-407-9700 [metroparkstoledo.com/discover/learning-and-education/](http://metroparkstoledo.com/discover/learning-and-education/)

*Imagination Station*- Visit the facility to learn at GrowU or educators visit classrooms with demonstrations on a variety of science topics. 419-244-2674 [www.imaginationstationtoledo.org](http://www.imaginationstationtoledo.org)

*Veggie U*- National organization supplies indoor classroom gardens and a standards based, five-week science program. 440-774-8344 [www.veggieu.org](http://www.veggieu.org)

*Ohio Farm Bureau*- Online resource for lessons and activities [ofbf.org/tag/our-ohio-teachers-lounge](http://ofbf.org/tag/our-ohio-teachers-lounge)

*National Ag in The Classroom Curriculum Matrix*- Online resource for agriculture lessons and activities [www.agclassroom.org/index.cfm](http://www.agclassroom.org/index.cfm)

*USDA's Team Nutrition Farm to School Curriculum*- Lessons and materials for preschool through grade 6. [www.fns.usda.gov/tn/team-nutrition-garden-resources](http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/team-nutrition-garden-resources)

## Ohio Agricultural Organizations- Educational Resources

American Dairy Association Mideast	<a href="http://www.drink-milk.com">www.drink-milk.com</a>
Ohio Apple Marketing Program	<a href="http://www.ohioapples.com">www.ohioapples.com</a>
Ohio Livestock Coalition	<a href="http://www.foryourinformation.com">www.foryourinformation.com</a>
Ohio Soybean Council	<a href="http://www.soyohio.org/council">www.soyohio.org/council</a>
Ohio Corn & Wheat Growers Association	<a href="http://www.ohiocorneducation.org">www.ohiocorneducation.org</a>
Ohio Pork Council	<a href="http://www.ohiopork.org">www.ohiopork.org</a>
Ohio Poultry Council	<a href="http://www.ohiopoultry.org">www.ohiopoultry.org</a>
Ohio Beef Council	<a href="http://www.ohiobeef.org/education/teaching-resources">www.ohiobeef.org/education/teaching-resources</a>



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Farm to School in the Classroom

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One Government Center Suite 550  
Toledo, OH 43604  
Phone: 419-213-4254  
[lucas.osu.edu](http://lucas.osu.edu)  
[extension.osu.edu](http://extension.osu.edu)



# Local Foods, Lucas County

## Connecting Farms, Health, and Community

### School Gardens

School gardens come in all shapes and sizes. They can be as simple as a few containers on an indoor windowsill or cover several outdoor acres. Gardens not only provide an opportunity to encourage physical movement and a more active role in the food chain, but research also supports their use as a tool for developing social and emotional health. School gardens are living laboratories that create teaching opportunities ripe for nutrition and agriculture education and experiential education across all disciplines.

#### Planning Your Garden

The 2012 USDA Plant Hardiness Zone Map is the standard by which gardeners can determine which plants are most likely to thrive at a location. The map is based on the average annual minimum winter temperature. Lucas County is in USDA Plant Hardiness Zone 6a and 6b. We have a medium length growing season, with an average last frost date of May 15th and an average first frost date of October 15th. These dates may vary a week or two, so it's important to watch the weather before planting.

#### Questions to Consider

- ☐ Do you plan to incorporate greenhouses or any other structures into your school gardens? What other considerations are important in the design of your garden?
  - ☐ What supplies will you need for seeding, planting, weeding, harvesting, and teaching in the gardens? Where will you store these items once you've obtained them?
  - ☐ What sort of ongoing maintenance (such as weeding, watering, fertilizing, etc.) will the garden require, both during the school year and the summer? Who will be responsible for these duties?
  - ☐ What do you intend to do with the harvest? Will you serve some of the garden produce in the school cafeteria or offer foods for students to sample in the classroom? Will excess produce be donated to a local food bank, food pantry or soup kitchen? What food safety training is planned for handling fresh produce?
- ☐ Are administrators, parents, food service and maintenance staff, teachers, and students invested in the idea of a school gardening program? If not, how will you get their buy-in and the practical and ongoing support you need from them?
  - ☐ What are your goals for your school gardening program? What topics do you want to teach in the garden, and what experiences do you want students to have?
  - ☐ What will your gardens look like? Will you use existing soil or bring soil in from elsewhere? Will you be doing a soil test? Do you plan to use compost, plant cover crops, add fertilizers?

### Curriculum Connections

The school garden can be integrated into a variety of subject areas. Students can practice math skills by calculating garden bed areas, volume of soil or days to harvest. Science is a natural curriculum partner, where students can investigate plant growth, soil and insects. Literacy, art and physical education can all be paired with garden activities.



*Gardens provide students with physical activity and learning experiences.*

# Online and Print Resources

## ❑ Planning and Designing a Garden

*Northwest Ohio Community Garden Guide*  
[lucas.osu.edu/program-areas/local-foods/vegetable-gardening](http://lucas.osu.edu/program-areas/local-foods/vegetable-gardening)

*USDA Farm to School Resources - School Gardens*  
[www.fns.usda.gov/farmentoschool/farm-school-resources](http://www.fns.usda.gov/farmentoschool/farm-school-resources)

*Kids Gardening - Gardening Toolbox*  
[www.kidsgardening.org/gardening-toolbox/](http://www.kidsgardening.org/gardening-toolbox/)

## ❑ Curriculum

*National Ag in the Classroom Curriculum Matrix*  
[www.agclassroom.org/teacher/matrix/](http://www.agclassroom.org/teacher/matrix/)

*University of Minnesota Extension Farm to School Curriculum Links*  
[www.extension.umn.edu/food/farm-to-school/school-gardens/curriculum/](http://www.extension.umn.edu/food/farm-to-school/school-gardens/curriculum/)

## ❑ Print Books available at Toledo- Lucas County Public Libraries:

*All New Square Foot Gardening* by Mel Bartholomew  
*Beginner's Illustrated Guide to Gardening* by Katie Elzer-Peters  
*Small Plot, High Yield Gardening* by Sal Gilbertie & Larry Sheehan  
*The Kitchen Garden Cookbook* by Caroline Bretherton

## Resources for Lucas County

*OSU Master Gardeners Volunteers* - Extension-trained experts to answer your gardening questions online, in person or on the phone. Horticulture Hotline 419-578-6783 Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 10 am - 1 pm.  
[mastergardener.osu.edu](http://mastergardener.osu.edu) email: [lucascountymastergardener@gmail.com](mailto:lucascountymastergardener@gmail.com)

*Toledo GROWS* - Outreach program of Toledo Botanical Garden, offers resources and technical assistance to support sustainable garden projects  
Office: 900 Oneida Street, Toledo Phone: 419.720.8714  
[www.toledogarden.org/toledogrows](http://www.toledogarden.org/toledogrows) email: [education@toledogarden.org](mailto:education@toledogarden.org)

*Lucas County Soil and Water District* – Free educational programs on water quality, soils, natural resource conservation, more. Office: 130-A W. Dudley, Maumee Phone: 419.893.1966  
[www.co.lucas.oh.us/lswcd](http://www.co.lucas.oh.us/lswcd)  
email: [jkochensparger@co.lucas.oh.us](mailto:jkochensparger@co.lucas.oh.us)

*Rain Garden Initiative* – Assistance in rain garden construction, financial support and education  
[www.raingardeninitiative.org](http://www.raingardeninitiative.org)  
email: [information@raingardeninitiative.org](mailto:information@raingardeninitiative.org)

*Metroparks Toledo* – Environmental education programs, field trips  
Phone: 419.407.9700  
[www.metroparkstoledo.com](http://www.metroparkstoledo.com)

*Veggie U* – Indoor garden kits, standards-based curriculum  
[www.veggieu.org](http://www.veggieu.org)

## Funding Support

How much will it cost to maintain your school garden throughout the year?

Consider asking for donations of seeds, tools, and other supplies from local nurseries and home improvement stores. Send wish lists home to parents asking for donations of used tools, seeds, or even financial support.

### Potential Funding Sources

- [Annie's Homegrown](#)  
[www.annies.com/doingmore/grants-for-gardens](http://www.annies.com/doingmore/grants-for-gardens)
- [Captain Planet Foundation](#)  
[captainplanetfoundation.org/apply-for-grants/](http://captainplanetfoundation.org/apply-for-grants/)
- [The Fruit Tree Planting Foundation](#)  
[captainplanetfoundation.org/apply-for-grants/](http://captainplanetfoundation.org/apply-for-grants/)
- [Scott's Miracle Grow](#)  
[scottsmiraclegro.com/responsibility/gro1000/](http://scottsmiraclegro.com/responsibility/gro1000/)
- [Seed Money](#)  
[www.seedmoney.org/](http://www.seedmoney.org/)
- [Whole Kids Foundation](#)  
[www.wholekidsfoundation.org/health-kids-innovation](http://www.wholekidsfoundation.org/health-kids-innovation)
- [Wild Ones](#)  
[wildones.org/seedmony](http://wildones.org/seedmony)

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Contact your local OSU Extension office for gardening information or to schedule classroom programs.

OSU Extension Lucas County  
One Government Center Suite 550  
Toledo, OH 43604  
Phone: 419-213-4254  
[lucas.osu.edu](http://lucas.osu.edu)  
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# Local Foods, Lucas County

## Connecting Farms, Health, and Community

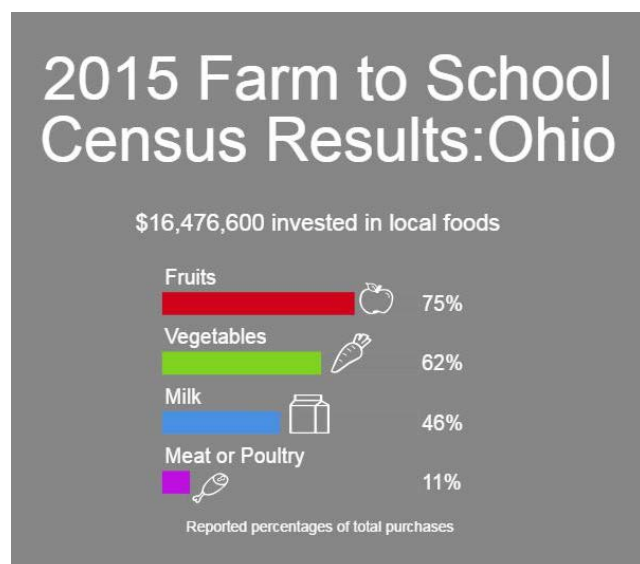
# Farm to School: Procuring Local Foods

Across the country, an increasing number of school food authorities (SFA) are purchasing local foods for breakfast, lunch, and snacks. While enthusiasm for buying local foods has grown, many people are still uncertain about the rules and standards regarding local foods procurement.

Local procurement options may differ depending on your district and school size. There are many ways to buy local. When making procurement decisions, remember these four requirements:

1. Adhere to the Buy American provision (schools must purchase domestically grown and processed foods).
2. Follow state and local regulations for procurement.
3. Ensure full and open competition among potential suppliers, including reasonable terms and conditions for purchase.
4. Vendors must be *responsive* (conform to all terms and conditions of the bid request) and *responsible* (capable of performing successfully under the terms and conditions of the contract) in order to be awarded a contract.

### What local foods did Ohio Schools purchase?



## Procurement Regulations

USDA and the Ohio Department of Education each have specifications for purchase of food for schools.

### Ohio Procurement Regulations- Informal Purchases

- Micro-purchases- No bids are required for purchases costing less than \$3,000
- Small Purchases- Minimum 3 bids for purchases under \$150,000

### Ohio Procurement Regulations- Formal Purchases

- Purchases over \$150,000
- Public notification of Invitation to Bid and Competitive Sealed Bid process
- School can award points to bids meeting Geographical Preference

For details, visit Ohio Department of Education National School Lunch Program Policies: [education.ohio.gov](http://education.ohio.gov)

## Creating Specifications

When considering purchase of local foods, it's best to "do your homework" before contacting suppliers. Think about what your goals are for introducing local foods into the cafeteria. A list of specifications will help farmers and producers provide the best comparative quotes.

Questions to Consider:

- What are your priorities? Do you have concerns about sustainability, distance, or growing procedures?
- How often do you want the product? Farmers and producers can often plan to increase production if they know a school will make frequent purchases.
- Do you have any size and appearance specifications? For instance, all apples should have similar color and be sized to a number per case.
- Does the supplier meet the food safety standards in your Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) Plan?

## USDA Foods

You might be serving Ohio food products in your cafeteria already! Are you are receiving commodity foods from the USDA Foods Program? Many USDA Foods are grown or raised here in Ohio. Based on 2011-2016 Agricultural Marketing Services (AMS) reports, the following items may have originated in Ohio:

- Beef products (ground meat patties or crumbles)
- Mozzarella cheese products (shredded, string cheese)
- Fortified cereals (oat circles, crisp rice, corn flakes)
- Poultry products (chicken drumsticks, turkey taco filling)
- Pork products (sausage patties)
- Peanut products (roasted nuts)
- Canned vegetables (tomato soup, sauce, diced tomatoes)

To learn more about USDA Foods, visit USDA Food And Nutrition Service: [www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/food-purchase-resources](http://www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/food-purchase-resources)

## DoD Fresh

You can also use USDA Foods entitlement dollars to purchase fresh produce from the Department of Defense Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program. The ordering system, FFAVORS, will mark whether an item is "local" to your location. The catalog is updated weekly, and offerings include as many as 50 types of produce in various forms (whole, pre-cut).

For more information, contact DoD Field Rep for Ohio, Brian Kern (740-415-6551) or ODE contact, Susan Patton (614-231-3601)

## Resources for Lucas County

*Ohio Farm Bureau*- produce seasonality chart [www.ofbf.org/whats-in-season](http://www.ofbf.org/whats-in-season)

*Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association*- [www.oeffa.org/search-geg.php](http://www.oeffa.org/search-geg.php)

*Ohio MarketMaker*- [www.oh.foodmarketmaker.com](http://www.oh.foodmarketmaker.com)

*Ohio Proud*- [www.ohioproud.org](http://www.ohioproud.org)

*Maumee Valley Growers Association Food Hub*-  
[www.maumeevalleygrowers.com](http://www.maumeevalleygrowers.com)

*Local Produce Distributors- Ask about locally sourced items.*

- |                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| • Sam Okun Produce Company           | <a href="http://www.samokunproduce.com">www.samokunproduce.com</a>     |
| 33 N Huron St, Toledo, OH 43604      | (419) 241-1101   |
| • Al Peake & Sons                    | <a href="http://www.alpeake.com">www.alpeake.com</a>                   |
| 4949 Stickney Ave, Toledo, OH 43612  | (419) 243-9284   |
| • Tom Strain & Sons and Daughter Too | <a href="http://www.tomstrainandsons.com">www.tomstrainandsons.com</a> |
| 5041 Hill Avenue, Toledo, OH 43615   | (419) 531-8183   |

*Contact your peers in neighboring counties! The following schools have indicated, via the 2015 USDA Farm to School Census, that they are actively purchasing local food products for school meals:*

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| • Benton Carroll Salem School District       | <a href="http://www.bcs.k12.oh.us">www.bcs.k12.oh.us</a>                 |
| 11685 West St. Rt. 163, Oak Harbor, OH 43449 | (419) 898-6210   |
| • Bowling Green City School District         | <a href="http://www.bgcs.k12.oh.us">www.bgcs.k12.oh.us</a>               |
| 137 Clough Street Bowling Green, Ohio 43402  | (419) 352-3576   |
| • Penta Career Center                        | <a href="http://www.pentacareercenter.org">www.pentacareercenter.org</a> |
| 9301 Buck Rd. Perrysburg, Ohio 43551         | (419) 666-1120   |
| • Sandusky City School District              | <a href="http://www.scs-k12.net">www.scs-k12.net</a>                     |
| 407 Decatur Street Sandusky OH 44870         | (419) 626-6940   |

## USDA Resources

*USDA Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs*

Guide to help buy the right amounts and types of food for your program, and determine the specific contribution each food makes toward meal pattern requirements.

[www.fns.usda.gov/tn/food-buying-guide-for-child-nutrition-programs](http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/food-buying-guide-for-child-nutrition-programs)

*USDA Procuring Local Foods for Child Nutrition Programs*

Information and resources for purchase of local foods. Includes menu planning basics, sources of local products, and mechanisms used for procurement.

[www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/f2s/F2S\\_Procuring\\_Local\\_Foods\\_Child\\_Nutrition\\_Prog\\_Guide.pdf](http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/f2s/F2S_Procuring_Local_Foods_Child_Nutrition_Prog_Guide.pdf)



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Farm to School: Procuring Local Foods

Contact your local OSU Extension office for more information.

OSU Extension Lucas County  
One Government Center Suite 550  
Toledo, OH 43604  
Phone: 419-213-4254  
[lucas.osu.edu](http://lucas.osu.edu)  
[extension.osu.edu](http://extension.osu.edu)



# Local Foods, Lucas County

## Connecting Farms, Health, and Community

# Farm to School: Serving Local Foods

School Food Service managers across the country are increasingly adding local foods into their daily offerings. This allows students to become exposed to new and different foods away from home. This exposure can make a positive impact on the overall health of the student, and possibly the whole family. How do you get the students to try these new foods? And continue to purchase these new items? A number of activities can be conducted in the cafeteria to increase participation in your Farm to School program.

## Taste Tests

Taste testing is a great tool for a food service program looking to make healthy changes to its menus at minimum cost. No one wants to see students throw good food away. Taste tests can help ensure the product is salable before making it a permanent part of the school menu. The food sample could be anything from a single slice of fruit or a 2 oz. portion of a prepared entrée.

### Tips for a successful taste test event:

- Determine a goal and outcome for the taste test. What do you want to accomplish?
- Have menu ideas in mind when choosing a food item to test. Try to use something you might serve regularly instead of a one-time unique item.
- Involve as many school staff and parents as possible. Students may be more interested in the product if there are lots of adults supporting the event. Plus, more support makes serving and cleaning up easier!
- Involve students in distribution of tasting surveys and collection of results- give them a reason to be invested in the outcomes.



Source: USDA Blog Photos, flickr

## Menu Planning

Planning menus involves much more than listing which foods you offer each day. Meals must meet USDA's Nutrition Standards in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs, but should also offer a balance of flavors, variety of textures and colors, and be eye-appealing.

Food Service managers may simply look at their existing menus and determine where a local product may be substituted for established purchases. Or, they may consider a new menu item based on the price or availability of local produce or other menu items.

### Menus That Move

Ohio Department of Education (ODE), in collaboration with food service directors across Ohio, and The Ohio State University have developed a set of seasonal cycle menus which utilize local Ohio foods in season. The advisory committee evaluated the menus based on ease of preparation, cost considerations, equipment, and taste acceptance.

- [www.education.ohio.gov/Topics/Other-Resources/Food-and-Nutrition/Resources-and-Tools-for-Food-and-Nutrition/Menus-that-Move](http://www.education.ohio.gov/Topics/Other-Resources/Food-and-Nutrition/Resources-and-Tools-for-Food-and-Nutrition/Menus-that-Move)

USDA's Community Food Systems and Team Nutrition programs also offer a variety of tools from across the country for Menu Planning:

- [www.healthymeals.fns.usda.gov/menu-planning-0](http://www.healthymeals.fns.usda.gov/menu-planning-0)
- [www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool/farm-school-resources#MenuPlanning](http://www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool/farm-school-resources#MenuPlanning)

### Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program

If local foods menu planning doesn't work for you, consider adding local foods to your Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP). It's a great way to expose students to foods they have not tried before!

# Resources for Lucas County

Ohio State University Extension- Ohio Local Foods resources [www.localfoods.osu.edu/resources](http://www.localfoods.osu.edu/resources)  
Online Food Directories for Ohio Consumers- [lucas.osu.edu/node/444](http://lucas.osu.edu/node/444)

Ohio Farm Bureau: Lucas County- grassroots membership organization that works to support our state's food and farm community. 109 Portage St. Woodville, OH 43469 Phone: 419-849-2128  
[www.ofbf.org/counties/lucas/](http://www.ofbf.org/counties/lucas/) Email: [lucas@ofbf.org](mailto:lucas@ofbf.org)

Ohio Department of Agriculture Ohio Proud program- helps consumers find and purchase products grown and made in Ohio. 995 East Main Street Reynoldsburg, Ohio 43068 Phone: 1-800-IMPROUD (1-800-467-7683)  
[www.ohioproud.org/](http://www.ohioproud.org/) Email: [ohioproud@agri.ohio.gov](mailto:ohioproud@agri.ohio.gov)

Ohio Department of Health Seed to Salad Toolkit- assisting schools in implementing and promoting salad bars  
[www.odh.ohio.gov/health/healthylife/healthyeating/salad.aspx](http://www.odh.ohio.gov/health/healthylife/healthyeating/salad.aspx)

Ohio Smarter Lunchrooms- Taste testing resources and materials  
[www.ohiosmarterlunchrooms.com/resources/stickersclings/](http://www.ohiosmarterlunchrooms.com/resources/stickersclings/)

Ohio Action for Healthy Kids- Taste Testing in Schools Resource Guide  
[www.ohioactionforhealthykids.org/resources/nutrition/](http://www.ohioactionforhealthykids.org/resources/nutrition/)

## Promotion and Marketing

What messages are you trying to promote through your Farm to School program? While there may be many reasons for serving local foods, most can agree that increasing consumption of healthy foods is important. Consider your goals when marketing local foods in the cafeteria. There are a number of tools for promoting local foods in your cafeteria. Which will you use?

- ☐ Print materials: table tents, posters, school newsletters, flyers
- ☐ Word of Mouth: morning/afternoon announcements, mentions from cafeteria staff
- ☐ Social media: school websites, Facebook, Twitter

### Harvest of the Month

A number of states have developed promotional programs for specific fruits, vegetables, and other local food items. Consider showcasing one local ingredient every month or each season. Schools may serve the item just once or may prepare the food in several different ways throughout the month to highlight how it can be used.

Connect with your producer or supplier! Develop materials about the people and places who supply your local foods. Invite farmers to your cafeteria during meals, allowing students to ask questions about the food and farm.

### Press Coverage

Invite local news outlets to cover your local foods story. The more positive coverage the program receives, the more likely you are to receive support (monetary or otherwise!) from your community.



Source<sup>1</sup>: [www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/17610759](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/17610759)

### Salad Bars

Salad Bars are a great venue for serving local foods, rotating offerings as seasons change. Researchers in Los Angeles concluded that a salad bar in the cafeteria can significantly increase fruit and vegetable consumption among students.<sup>1</sup>



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# Local Foods, Lucas County

## Connecting Farms, Health, and Community

## Farm to School: For Farmers & Producers

There is increasing interest throughout the country to source locally grown and produced foods for consumption in school cafeterias. If you are a local farmer, baker, food processor or producer, you may find many opportunities to contribute to the health and well-being of children who live in Northwest Ohio through distribution of your products to local schools.

There are several pathways to explore when considering selling your local products to schools:

- **Direct Marketing-** Schools buy directly from you, allowing for a more personal relationship to address specific requests. Be aware, federal guidelines require schools to solicit multiple price quotes when purchasing directly from a vendor.
- **Wholesale Distributors-** Schools may have a distributor they currently work with who may be willing to purchase from you. You can find companies who buy from Ohio farmers and producers on Ohio MarketMaker.
- **Farmer Cooperative-** Cooperatives appeal to institutional buyers because they have more variety and more consistent supply than a single farmer can offer. To learn more about joining or starting a cooperative, contact the Ohio Cooperative Development Center.
- **Department of Defense (DoD Fresh)-** DoD operates as a broker, taking orders from school districts and purchasing fruits and vegetables from produce houses. DNO, Inc. in Columbus is a DoD Fresh contractor.
- **USDA Foods-** USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) and Farm Service Agency (FSA) purchase via a competitive bidding process. Farmers, growers and processors must become an approved vendor to submit bids.



### Are You Ready?

Schools need consistent quantity, quality, price, and delivery from producers. They also need to plan their menus well in advance. Here are some situations to consider:

- ☐ What items do you produce in abundance during the school year? Provide potential buyers with a seasonality chart to help them plan purchases.
- ☐ Some schools don't have the capacity to process fresh produce. Do you have the labor and equipment to clean and cut up fruits and vegetables before delivery?
- ☐ What kind of backup plan will you and the school have if your harvest doesn't meet the contract specifications?
- ☐ Schools often order in terms of number of meals, but farmers tend to sell by weight. University of Florida has developed a Servings Calculator allows you to calculate the number of pounds required for a number of specified servings. ([edis.ifas.ufl.edu/hs1250](http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/hs1250))
- ☐ School food service managers must work within a tight budget. They might not be the highest profit market, but can be reliable, large volume buyers. Product pricing for school customers should be in the range between wholesale prices and farmer's market prices.

### Connecting with Schools

Be sure to have websites and social media accounts so potential buyers can get to know you. Create profiles in Ohio agriculture and local food databases to amplify your market presence. Check out these sites:

- Ohio Market Maker ([www.oh.foodmarketmaker.com](http://www.oh.foodmarketmaker.com))
- Ohio Proud ([www.ohioproud.com](http://www.ohioproud.com))
- Local Harvest ([www.localharvest.org](http://www.localharvest.org))
- Our Ohio Buying Local Directory ([ourohio.org](http://ourohio.org))
- Good Earth Guide ([www.oeffa.org/search-geg.php](http://www.oeffa.org/search-geg.php))



# Resources for Lucas County

*Ohio State University Extension: Local Foods Program-* [localfoods.osu.edu](http://localfoods.osu.edu)

*Ohio Cooperative Development Center-* [southcenters.osu.edu/cooperatives](http://southcenters.osu.edu/cooperatives)

*Northwest Ohio Food Council-* [www.northwestohiofoodcouncil.com](http://www.northwestohiofoodcouncil.com)

*Maumee Valley Growers Association Food Hub-*  
[www.maumeevalleygrowers.com](http://www.maumeevalleygrowers.com)

*Toledo GROWS-* [www.toledogarden.org/toledogrows](http://www.toledogarden.org/toledogrows)  
900 Oneida Street, Toledo 419-720-8714  
email: [yvonne.dubielak@toledogarden.org](mailto:yvonne.dubielak@toledogarden.org)

*Center for Innovative Food Technology-* [www.ciftinnovation.org](http://www.ciftinnovation.org)  
5555 Airport Highway, Suite 100 Toledo, Ohio 43615 419-535-6000

*Ohio Produce Growers and Marketers Association-* [www.opgma.org](http://www.opgma.org)

*Food Hub: Knowledge Base for Selling to Schools and Institutions-*  
[www.food-hub.org/knowledgebase/browse/15](http://www.food-hub.org/knowledgebase/browse/15)

*Public School Review-* listing of public school contacts in Lucas County  
[www.publicschoolreview.com/ohio/lucas-county](http://www.publicschoolreview.com/ohio/lucas-county)

*Private School Review-* listing of private school contacts in Lucas County  
[www.privateschoolreview.com/ohio/lucas-county](http://www.privateschoolreview.com/ohio/lucas-county)

## USDA Resources

*Selling Local Food to Schools: A Resource for Producers-*  
[www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/f2s/FactSheet\\_Selling\\_Local.pdf](http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/f2s/FactSheet_Selling_Local.pdf)

*USDA Agricultural Marketing Service: Selling Food to USDA-*  
[www.ams.usda.gov/selling-food](http://www.ams.usda.gov/selling-food)

*DoD Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program-*  
[www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/F2S\\_using\\_dod.pdf](http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/F2S_using_dod.pdf)  
DoD Field Representative for Ohio, Brian Kern (740-415-6551)  
Ohio Department of Education contact, Susan Patton (614-231-3601)

*USDA Foods Toolkit for Child Nutrition Programs-*  
[www.fns.usda.gov/usda-foods/usda-foods-toolkit-child-nutrition-programs](http://www.fns.usda.gov/usda-foods/usda-foods-toolkit-child-nutrition-programs)

## Food Safety

Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) training programs provide growers with the knowledge and tools needed to implement on-farm best management practices to reduce fresh produce safety hazards and ensure that their product is safe.

GAP certifications are only required when selling fresh fruits and vegetable directly to the USDA. However, local distributors, retailers, or schools may have individual GAPs related policies.

The OSU Fruit and Vegetable Safety Team educates growers of fresh produce about Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) and Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA)-Fresh Produce Safety Rules.

Basic GAPs trainings are 3 hours and participants receive a certificate of completion at the end of the training. Each participant also receives recordkeeping materials and factsheets. Each training costs \$20, which helps to cover the cost of training materials. To learn more and find training dates near you, visit: [www.producesafety.osu.edu](http://www.producesafety.osu.edu)

### Liability Insurance Coverage

There is no specific amount of liability coverage required of farmers by USDA to sell to schools. However, school districts, states, distributors, retailers and food service management companies may all have different liability coverage requirements. Check with potential buyers to determine their individual requirements.

*Lucas County Department of Health Food Safety Program-*  
[lucascountyhealth.com/environmental-health/food-safety](http://lucascountyhealth.com/environmental-health/food-safety) 419-213-4100



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Farm to School: For Farmers and Producers

Contact your local OSU Extension office for more information.

OSU Extension Lucas County  
One Government Center Suite 550  
Toledo, OH 43604  
Phone: 419-213-4254  
[lucas.osu.edu](http://lucas.osu.edu) [extension.osu.edu](http://extension.osu.edu)



# Local Foods, Lucas County

## Connecting Farms, Health, and Community

## Farm to School Month

October is National Farm to School Month, a time to celebrate connections between schools and local food!

Farm to School provides students with access to healthy, local foods as well as education opportunities such as school gardens, cooking lessons and farm field trips. When schools buy local, they create new markets for local and regional farmers and contribute to vibrant communities, a win-win scenario!

The 2016 National Farm to School Month theme, **One Small Step**, will highlight the simple ways anyone can get informed, get involved, and take action to advance Farm to School in their communities. Join the celebrations by signing the One Small Step pledge and take one small step to support healthy kids, thriving farmers and vibrant communities this October. Sign the pledge by visiting [farmtoschool.org](http://farmtoschool.org).

### Great Lakes Apple Crunch

Grab an Ohio-grown apple and join participants across the Midwest on Thursday, October 12, 2017, for the fourth annual Great Lakes Great Apple Crunch!

Participants of all ages are invited to help reach the goal of one million apple “crunches”. This event encourages healthy eating and supports Farm to School and other local food purchasing initiatives throughout the region. It’s also a fun way to connect food and nutrition to all kinds of classroom curricula – from science to art!

The Great Lakes Great Apple Crunch provides your school or group with resources to host a successful local food event this October. Register your group at [www.cias.wisc.edu/applecrunch](http://www.cias.wisc.edu/applecrunch)

Visit [www.ohioapples.com](http://www.ohioapples.com) to find an orchard near you, teacher resources, and more!



### What can we do in Lucas County?

Whether you are a food service professional, a farmer, a teacher or a food-loving family, there are plenty of ways to celebrate and get involved in National Farm to School Month!

- Hold a recipe contest for students and families. Ask them to submit a recipe using their favorite Ohio grown seasonal fruits and vegetables- think apples, pumpkins, or squash!
- Take a virtual field trip to an Ohio Farm! Learn about pigs, dairy cows and more.  
Ohio Pork Council [www.ohiopork.org/fieldtrip](http://www.ohiopork.org/fieldtrip)  
Ohio Dairy Farmers [www.drink-milk.com/farms](http://www.drink-milk.com/farms)
- Read a farm or food story in the classroom. Here are some of our favorites:

*Rah, Rah Radishes* by April Pulley Sayre  
*Tops & Bottoms* by Janet Stevens  
*In the Garden with Dr. Carver* by Susan Grigsby  
*It's Our Garden: From Seeds to Harvest in a School Garden* by George Ancona  
*Johnny Appleseed* by Steven Kellogg

- Contact OSU Extension-Lucas County to schedule classroom programs on gardens, local foods or nutrition.

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# LOCAL FOODS, LUCAS COUNTY: FARM TO SCHOOL TOOLKIT

## Appendix I

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