



Celebrate Farm to School Month
in partnership with your local FFA Chapter
(formerly Future Farmers of America)

FFA works across the state of Minnesota to help educate and engage young people in agriculture. Agriculture teachers working in roughly 200 high schools around the state are affiliated with FFA. FFA teachers and their students can be a great partner for your Farm to School (F2S) Program and Farm to School Month Celebrations, particularly by helping to plan and implement farm-related activities, promotions, educational activities and community engagement strategies that your staff may not be able to organize on their own.

To find an FFA leader in your school district or nearby, check out FFA's directory at <http://www.mnffa.org/ContactUs/ChapterDirectory/tabid/4128/Default.aspx>. Or contact Natasha Mortenson, Morris Area High School Agriculture Teacher, for assistance at nmortens@morris.k12.mn.us

FARM TO SCHOOL ACTIVITIES TO EXPLORE WITH FFA:

- Ask the Agriculture/FFA leader in your school to develop learning opportunities in the cafeteria and classroom for the Farm to School foods you will feature during Farm to School Month (September 2011).
- Ask FFA students to help demo your Farm to School foods in the cafeteria and encourage other students to try foods that might be new to them.
- Work with FFA to invite your farmers or other community members to lunch during F2S Month. Have an FFA student at each table to start the dialogue.
- Have FFA/Ag students grow herbs in pots on cafeteria or classroom window ledges. FFA students may also be able to develop and maintain display information on how to use herbs for cooking. See if FFA could organize an herb "scavenger hunt" for students and award F2S-related prizes.

- Ask Ag/FFA Students to make a daily “radio” announcement about what Farm to School food is being served and where it came from. Students could also identify appropriate Farm to School videos to show on classroom “smart boards”.
- Have FFA bring a dairy cow, beef animal, hog, sheep, goats, chickens and rabbits or other farm animals to an appropriate outdoor location and teach your students how the animal is cared for on the farm. (If you’re feeling doubtful, check out this video of the MN Dept of Agriculture, Morris Ag teacher Natasha Mortenson and a Minneapolis school conducting just such an event!
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lyM_Dn5X6yA)
- Have Ag Students design bulletin boards about your farmers and the foods you are featuring. This could include showing the “itinerary” and time-in-transit for local and non-local foods. Kids will be amazed to know more about where their food is coming from!
- Have an FFA/Ag Student help elementary students plant a tomato seed in a cup with soil on a day when you are serving local tomatoes. The kids can put them in Ziploc bags to take home.
- Have the FFA/Ag Students put together Game Boards for elementary students to find information about the fruits and veggies they are eating. These boards could be placed where students wait in line for lunch or by the tray return.

These are just a few ideas to consider. Get connected with your local FFA/Agriculture Department and work together to educate your students during September’s Farm to School Month!

*This document was prepared by Natasha Mortenson
and the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy*



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