



AmeriCorps Wisconsin
FARM TO SCHOOL
PROGRAM

How can the AmeriCorps Farm to School Program help you serve more local foods?

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**AC F2S Program Director/
Nutrition Education Consultant**



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
Tony Evers, PhD, State Superintendent

Introduction

Kara Ignasiak, MS, RDN, CD

- Work for the Dept. of Public Instruction on the School Nutrition Team as the AmeriCorps Farm to School Program Director (6 years)
- Previously served 2 years as a member of this program (I LOVE this program a lot!)



Wisconsin Local Foods Database

- [Wisconsin Local Foods Database website](#)
- Free website created by the AmeriCorps F2S team
- Connects schools to local producers and local producers to schools
- Two different databases:
 - 1) Local Foods Database
 - 2) School Nutrition Director Database
- Check out our [How To video](#) to learn how to use it!



AmeriCorps Wisconsin
LOCAL FOODS
D A T A B A S E



MAIN PROGRAM COMPONENTS

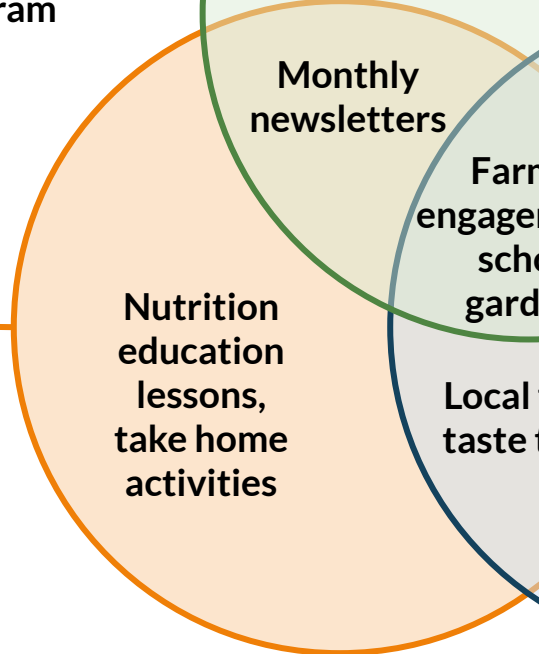
Increasing Community Capacity to Support F2S

Build community capacity and infrastructure to support a F2S program thereby creating a sustainable F2S program without AC members



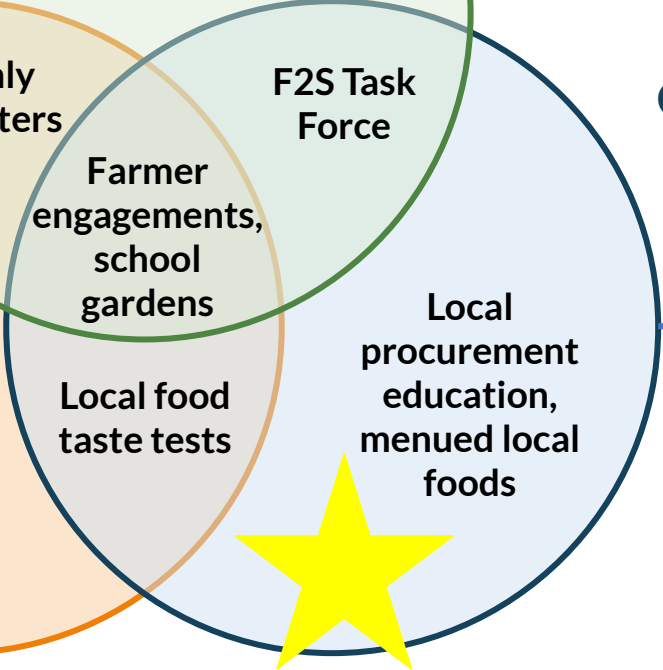
Nutrition Education

Increase fruit and vegetable consumption by children and youth thereby leading to increased positive health indicators



Changing the School Food Environment

Increase food service director's confidence and willingness to purchase local foods thereby resulting in increased student access to fresh, local fruits and vegetables in schools



Monthly newsletters

F2S Task Force

Farmer engagements, school gardens

Local food taste tests



Local Food Taste Tests



- **Members can help conduct local food taste tests with students**
 - Can help students be more receptive to trying new foods before they see in the lunch line
 - The more exposure the better!



Local Procurement Education



BEST PRACTICES HANDLING FRESH PRODUCE IN SCHOOLS

Fruits and vegetables are an important part of a healthy diet. Introducing children to them in schools will improve their present and future health. Fresh produce must be handled safely to reduce the risks of foodborne illness. There are a number of steps that foodservice employees can take to minimize the chances for fruits and vegetables they handle to become contaminated. Best practices for handling all types of produce are described in this fact sheet, along with practices specific to leafy greens, tomatoes, melons, and sprouts.

Contamination of produce with harmful microorganisms can occur at all stages of production, processing, transportation, storage, preparation, and service. To prevent foodborne illness, fresh produce needs to be handled with care at each step from farm to table.

- Members can help school nutrition professionals source and use local foods in their school meal programs
- They can help by...
 - Building farmer relationships
 - Researching local products available
 - Help with recipe development
 - Train other staff on how to use local produce
 - Help develop local food safety plans



Local Procurement Education



Local Procurement Education



Local Procurement Education



School Gardens



- **Members can help schools...**
 - Build or maintain school gardens
 - Assist with harvesting produce to be used in school meal programs
 - Build excitement with students to eat the produce they grow in the lunchroom



School Gardens



School Gardens



Host Site Testimonial

“...our members have been instrumental in giving us the time and resources we needed to make our dreams happen. For example, this summer we are implementing a 2-acre school garden (which will produce hyper-local and nutritious produce for our cafeteria!) and offering a summer school course for 6th and 7th graders in the district. Our members have been working hard to collaborate with multiple departments in the district as well as community partners and volunteers to get the project up and running!...” - Laura Rowell

Howard Suamico School District



Ready to Get Involved?

- Host sites for 2023-2024 have just been selected
- The next round of applications will open Feb/March 2024
- To learn more about our program you can visit our website: <https://dpi.wi.gov/school-nutrition/farm-to-school/americorps>
- I am happy to chat on the phone with anyone who wants to talk through how our program could benefit your school. Send me an email (kara.ignasiak@dpi.wi.gov) to set up a phone conversation.

