



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



TO: Sponsors of the School Child Nutrition Programs

FROM: John Frassinelli, Chief
Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education

DATE: September 23, 2016

SUBJECT: Operational Memorandum No. 16-16
The Use of “Put Local on Your Tray” for Promoting Locally Grown

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) is excited to share information about “Put Local On Your Tray” resources for school cafeterias, which are available in time for [National Farm to School Month](#) in October and Connecticut-Grown for Connecticut Kids Week (October 3-7, 2016). Developed in partnership with UConn Extension, these tools can assist in promoting locally grown products on school menus to help students connect school meals to local farms.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) encourages Farm to School as a way to bring local foods into the cafeteria and support local economies. At the national level, forty-two percent of school districts who responded to the 2015 Farm to School Census are operating Farm to School programs. Schools report that farm to school programs can increase the number of students purchasing school breakfast and lunch, improve consumption of healthier foods at school, and reduce plate waste.

In school year 2014-15, sponsors in Connecticut spent \$7,244,580 on local food, seventy percent of school districts that responded to the 2015 Farm to School Census offer Farm to School programming. This includes 97 districts, 706 schools, and 355,489 students!

Local procurement can be integrated into all Child Nutrition Programs, including the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, Summer Food Service Program, Seamless Summer Option, and At-risk Afterschool Snack and Supper Programs through the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Sponsors are responsible for complying with federal, state, and local procurement regulations. Guidance on procuring local foods can be found on the USDA’s [Community Food Systems](#) Web page.

Sponsors can download and use “Put Local On Your Tray” graphics, stickers, and newsletters from the UConn Extension’s [Put Local On Your Tray](#) Web page. Free posters are also available upon request by contacting Monica Pacheco at monica.pacheco@ct.gov.

The CSDE encourages sponsors to pledge to participate by committing to offer “Local Tray Days” on their menus at least three times a year. “Tray” materials and kid-friendly graphics promote the following seasonally available products: corn, apples, summer squash, butternut squash, kale, greens, green beans, carrots, beets, berries, dairy products, and seeds/seedlings.

For additional resources, see the CSDE's [Farm to School](#) Web page and the Connecticut Department of Agriculture's [Farm to School](#) Web page.

Questions may be directed to Monica Pacheco at monica.pacheco@ct.gov or 860-807-2086.

JF:mpp

Important: This is a numbered Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) operational memorandum that contains important program information. Please read carefully and retain in a binder for future reference. All CSDE operational memoranda are posted on the CSDE's [Operational Memoranda for School Nutrition Programs](#) Web page.