There is no “one size fits all” Farm-to-Food Bank initiative, but instead a multitude of options that you can tailor to suit your program. Though you may not have a F2FB program at your food bank (yet!), you are an expert on your community, your food bank, and on what hunger looks like in your region. This knowledge is essential to starting a successful F2FB initiative.

**Step 1: Research**  
**Timeframe:** Ideally between October and February

The first step in implementing a F2FB program is researching possible strategies and determining what might work best at your food bank. Additionally, it is vital to learn about the local agricultural system of your region - including growers, crops, markets, and distribution - so that you can form working relationships with growers.

- **Learn about different Farm-to-Food Bank programs:**  
  - Research types of F2FB programs.
  - Check out *Notes from the Field* on NorthwestHarvest.org, a series of articles and videos spotlighting innovative F2FB programs around Washington, for ideas on how other food banks are making F2FB work
  - See ‘Quick Tips’ and ‘Resource Guides’ on NorthwestHarvest.org

- **Contact local food banks with F2FB programs.**  
  - What has worked for them that might also work for your food bank?
  - What resources and organizational infrastructure do the food banks with F2FB programs have that have contributed to their programs’ success?

- **Learn about agriculture in your region:**  
  - What are farmers in your area growing?
  - Where do they market their produce? (CSAs, farmer’s markets, grower’s associations, etc.)
  - Are there grower groups in your area?
  
  **Note:** Grower’s associations, Master Gardeners, and WSU extension agents can be excellent resources, as building healthier communities is often written into their job descriptions or their organization’s mission statements.

For more information about starting or developing your farm-to-food bank initiative, please email growingconnections@northwestharvest.org, or contact Laura Titzer at 206.923.7423