

Local Farms, Healthy Kids: Farm to School Grants



School meals provide consistent, nutritionally balanced meals for low-income kids. When kids have the fuel they need to focus on learning, they have improved test scores, improved physical health, and declines in disciplinary issues. Consistent participation in school meals — especially school breakfast — builds a foundation for a healthier, brighter future.

Yet Washington still ranks in the bottom 5 states for participation in school breakfast by low income students.

This fall, school meals were reaching only 30% of kids who typically eat meals at school, and school nutrition budgets are hurting because lower participation yields lower federal reimbursements. At the same time, Washington farmers have suffered from supply chain disruptions and lost customers. We can jumpstart schools with local food, providing nutrition programs the funds needed to source nutritious ingredients and incentivizing common sense policy that increases access and participation in school breakfast for the kids that need it most.

Washington Farms Feed Washington Kids

Our schools represent an enormous potential market for Washington's farmers, making school meals the best vehicle for improving kids' access to healthy food. Grants for Farm to School programming builds on earlier legislation in 2008 (*Local Farms, Healthy Kids and Communities Act*) and reiterated in 2017 (*Washington Kids Ready to Learn Act*) that aimed to support local farmers and rural economies while improving child nutrition in schools.

- Farm to school grants will be a joint partnership between WSDA and OSPI, providing much needed grants to schools to buy fresh ingredients from local growers to make tastier, more nutritious meals.
- Grants will be available to schools that expand breakfast after the bell – a strategy proven to increase breakfast participation. Farm to School grants will incentivize new schools to make breakfast a part of the school day.
- Connecting farms with schools bridges urban and rural Washington, helping to educate kids about nutrition and how our food is grown.

**Support \$5 million for WSDA's
*Local Farms, Healthy Kids Farm to School Grants***

For more information, contact:

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