



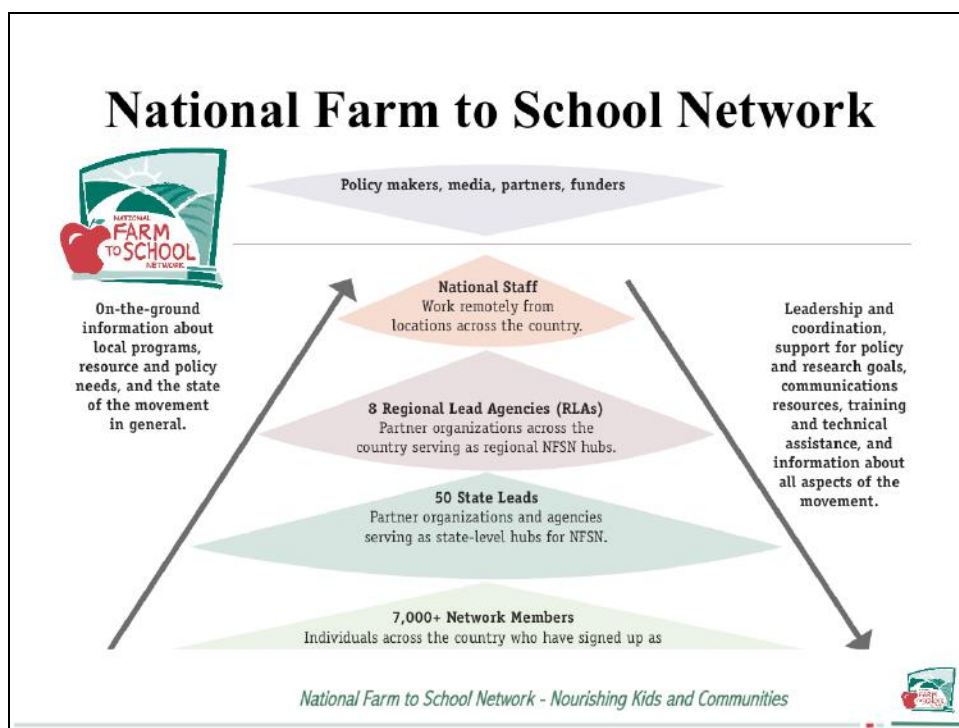
Farm to Preschool: Experiential Education

**{Insert Name of Presenters}
Peer Leadership Network**



National Farm to School Network - Nourishing Kids and Communities





Note to Presenter: Please read the full description below while on this slide:

- This training is brought to you with support from the National Farm to School Network.
- Established in 2007, National Farm to School Network seeks to create strong and just local food systems that ensure the health of children, farms, the environment, the economy and communities. NFSN provides vision, leadership and support to connect and strengthen the Farm to School movement, which now includes more than 12,500 schools spanning all 50 states.
- National Farm to School Network (NFSN) provides vision, leadership and support to connect and strengthen the Farm to School movement across the country. NFSN sets national priorities and policy goals, generates a research agenda, creates and aggregates resources, provides technical assistance, convenes gatherings and promotes the movement. NFSN includes national staff, eight Regional Lead Agencies, 50 State Leads, a 16-member Advisory Board and thousands of on the ground Farm to School supporters.

Farm to School Peer Leadership Network

Goal: Strengthen farm to school training and technical assistance for stakeholders through peer learning.

- 20 Peer Leaders selected in 4 stakeholder groups:
 - Farmers
 - Child Nutrition Directors
 - Educators / Teachers
 - Early Child Education Providers
- 12 peer trainings developed and shared nationally
- Peer leaders available to provide one-on-one assistance
- The Peer Leadership Network is a project of the National Farm to School Network
- The project is supported by Newman's Own Foundation

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Note to Presenter: Please read the full description below while on this slide:

- This training is part of the Peer Leadership Network supported by the National Farm to School Network

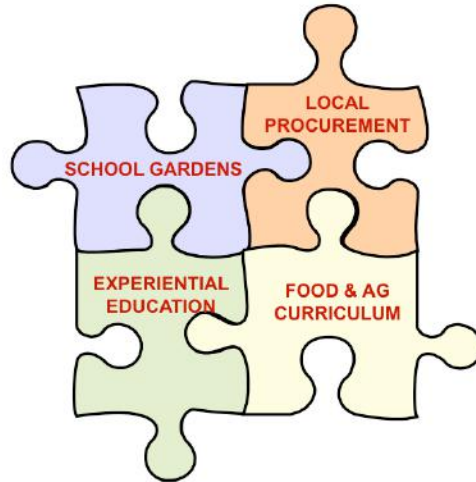
Presentation Overview

- Introduction to Farm to Preschool
- Benefits of Farm to Preschool
- Importance of Engaging Families
- Activities that Involve Families
- How to Get Started
- Resources
- National Farm to School Network and Farm to Preschool Subcommittee

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Farm to Preschool: A Holistic Approach



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Note to Presenter: Please read the full description below while on this slide:

Farm to Preschool is about connecting young children with local foods. It includes any type of childcare setting serving children ages 0-6 and connecting them with local foods through: meals and snacks, taste tests, lessons, farmer visits, cooking, field trips, growing food, or community and parent engagement.

Broadly, Farm to School initiatives connect schools, local farms, and communities as part of the movement to strengthen local food systems and reinvigorate local economies. A subset of initiatives called “farm to preschool” conduct similar activities in preschools, early care centers, head start programs.

F2S has 4 distinct components – Local or regional procurement (also known as the purchase of local foods), School gardens, food and ag curriculum, and experiential education such as farm tours, cooking demonstrations, taste tests.

The Farm to School approach – when taken in its entirety is the **HOLISTIC APPROACH WE NEEDED TO PROMOTE**. Not just one of these **STRATEGIES**, BUT **ALL OF THEM TOGETHER** to enable lasting change.

Defining Farm to Preschool



- Farm to Preschool programs connect young children (0-6) with local foods through
 - Local procurement
 - Nutrition / garden based education
 - School gardening
 - Student engagement activities such as field trips to farms, and taste-testing

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Farm to Preschool Education

- Teaches young children:
 - where their food comes from
 - how to make healthy food choices
 - how to grow fruits and vegetables
- Can be implemented in various ways
- Is easily incorporated into existing activities
- Provides endless opportunities to integrate into curriculum



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Why Farm to Preschool?

- Address dramatic increase in obesity among preschool-age children
- Children consume the majority of their daily nutrients in childcare
- Early patterns are a determinant of later eating habits
- Children can be agents of change for family behavior



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Benefits of Farm to Preschool Education



- Preschool children are active learners
- Lifelong healthy habits and taste preferences developed
- Children are more likely to try and accept new food when they:
 - learn where the food comes from
 - have hands-on experiences using senses

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Message to training participants:

Preschool children are active learners who experience the world through their senses.

Research shows that the preschool years are the time when many lifelong habits and taste preferences develop.

Nutrition education at the preschool level can prove instrumental in influencing the development of healthy eating habits.

Research indicates that when children learn where food comes from, how it is grown, have hands-on experiences and use their senses to understand, they are more likely to taste new food items and accept them as part of their diet, building a foundation of lifelong healthy choices.

Farm to Preschool Education

Do you...

- Feed children healthy meals with locally grown fruits, vegetables, grains or proteins?
- Conduct hands-on educational experiences involving plants, seeds, food, gardening or cooking?
- Talk with children about where their food comes from and how it grows?
- Engage children in meal preparation or meal time activities?
- Grow a garden with children?

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Farm to preschool educational activities come in many, many shapes and sizes. Do you participate in any of the following activities?

Farm to Preschool Education

If you answered “**YES**” to any of these...

...then you do farm to preschool!



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Notes to training presenter:

Use this time to open the floor up for conversation and sharing of ideas between training participants.

Ask the audience if there are any other ways people might already be incorporating farm to preschool in their current work? What are they doing? How it is working?

Farm to Preschool Curriculum

- 1) Farm to preschool curricula
- 2) How to tailor a curriculum or idea to meet your needs
- 3) Examples of easy to integrate activities



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Message to training participants:

Are you interested in incorporating some, or more, farm to preschool activities to your day? Here are some easy to access curriculum guides and activities that will get you started on your path to farm to preschool.

In this next section, we are going to discuss what to look for in a curriculum, how to take an out-of-the-box curriculum program and personalize it for your center and provide a few recommendations.

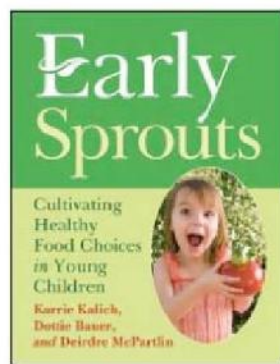
1. Existing curriculum and how to adapt them to your needs
2. How to take simple farm to PK ideas and tailor them to your needs
3. Activity examples

Curriculum Options

Many ready-to-use curricula, including tools and instructions are available online at www.FarmtoPreschool.org

Some Examples of Existing Curriculum Include:

- Color Me Healthy
- Harvest of the Month
- Early Sprouts
- Root for Food
(available at the end of 2013)



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Message to training participants:

Many excellent farm to preschool curriculum already exist, and can be used for free. Many examples are listed at the National Farm to Preschool website: www.farmtopreschool.org. There are many benefits to using a pre-existing curriculum. The materials have been tested and are already packaged for you. This is a great place to start if you would like to easily incorporate some farm to school activities or lessons into your classroom.

How to Adapt Curriculum

Adjust existing curriculum to fit your setting:

Examples:

- Work within the space, resources and environment you have
- Talk to children about relevant family cultural traditions
- Draw on your community's specific resources



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Note to participants: Although many 'out of the box' curriculums are fantastic, there may be easy ways to tailor them to fit your specific program even better. Be creative and think outside the box when it comes to adapting existing curriculum to your own environment.

Other Educational Opportunities

- Incorporate farm to preschool into everyday activities
- Lessons can be incorporated into any subject



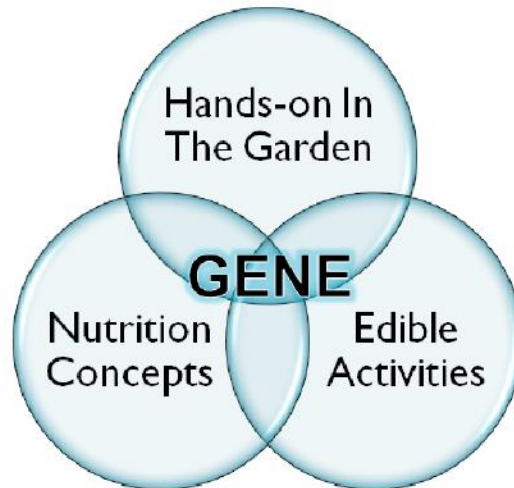
Examples:

- Math: count tomatoes at harvest
- Science: discuss the purpose of each part of a plant
- Literacy: read a book and prepare the food featured in the story
- Art: color or draw in the garden

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Garden Enhanced Nutrition Education



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Message to training participants:

One key component to Farm to Preschool education is learning in the garden. Students who plant and harvest their own fruits and veggies are more likely to eat them. Young children learn better in out-of-classroom settings that involve hands-on activities using all of the senses. The garden is a perfect place for learning.

Garden Activity Example

Garden Row Markers

- Draw or color pictures of the vegetables planted in garden
- Glue the pictures to a popsicle stick
- Place markers at the end of each row
- Help organize your garden and help children understand the seeds-to-plant connection.



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Message to training participants:

Row markers are a great learning activity that allows children to artistically represent garden plants. Children may either draw or color a picture of the fruits and vegetables planted in the garden. Teachers then affix the students' artwork to popsicle sticks. Students then place the row markers in the garden. This activity helps organize your garden while helping children understand what the seeds will grow into.

Garden Activity Example

Create a themed garden

Let children decide what kind of garden to plant. Garden theme examples include:

- Pizza garden
- Salsa garden
- Herb garden
- Giving garden
- Cultural garden



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Message to training participants:

Another example of an easy garden-based learning activity is creating a theme garden. This is a great way to engage children and let them decide what type of garden the class grows.

Theme examples include:

- Pizza garden: grow everything needed for a pizza and then create a class pizza to celebrate harvest
- Salsa garden: grow everything needed for salsa
- Herb garden: grow a variety of herbs to show children the variety of smells and tastes
- Giving garden: donate everything you grow to local food pantry
- Cultural garden: include foods from each child's culture

Does anyone currently have a theme garden?

Can anyone think of other theme ideas?

Food Activity Ideas



- Designate a “color of the day” and explore foods of that color
- Practice using your food senses
- Build a healthy plate
- Make butter
- Vote on favorite foods
- Eat different plant parts

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Field Trips to Farms

Benefits of farm field trips:

- Children build connections to a farm
- Classroom lessons come to life
- Children are introduced to where their food is grown and the farmer who grows it
- Hands-on experience in a different environment
- A great way to involve families!



Growing Minds has an excellent resource called *The Hayride: A resource for Educational Farm Field Trips* that is a great resource

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Message to training participants:

Field trips to local farms offer a great way to take children on a learning adventure.

Sometimes farm field trips can be challenging to plan. If a field trip is not an option, invite a farmer to the classroom to visit with students.

Benefits of farm field trips include:

- Children come away from farm field trips forever connected to local food and farms.
- On the farm, classroom lessons about soil, life cycles, community, and storytelling come to life.
- Children are introduced to the place where their food is grown and the farmer who grows it.
- Children will gain experience with a different environment and way of life that revolves around nature and healthy food.

Additionally, Field trips are also a great way to involve families.

Farm Field Trip Activities



- Harvest vegetables
- Scavenger hunt
- Farm-themed craft table
- Interact with animals
- Grind wheat or corn
- Make a snack
- Take home a pumpkin

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Message to training participants:

Field trips to farms don't have to involve simply walking around. There are many activities that can be incorporated into a field trip.

A few examples include:

- Vegetable harvesting
- Scavenger hunt
- Farm-themed crafts table: decorate a gourd, plant a seed and decorate the pot
- Interact with animals: collect eggs, milk a goat, pet the sheep
- Grind wheat or corn
- Help make a pizza or salad from farm food
- Take home a pumpkin or other farm fruit or vegetable

Has anyone taken their class on a field trip to a farm?

Can anyone think of any other on-the-farm activities?

Other Field Trip Ideas

- Farmers' Markets
- Bakeries or restaurants
- School and community gardens
- Garden nurseries
- Orchards



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Message to training participants:

There are many other places to go on a field trip with preschoolers that will add to their hands-on food education. Examples include:

- Farmers' Markets
- Bakeries or restaurants that give tours
- School and community gardens
- Garden nurseries
- Orchards

Has anyone taken their class on a field trip and would like to share?
Can anyone think of any other field trip ideas?

Farmer Visits

- Children interact with a food-related guest speaker
- Fewer logistical challenges than visiting a farm

Activity examples

- Taste tests
- Farmer story time
- Show and tell
- Animal visits



Photo Credit: Sustainable Food Center

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Message to training participants:

A field trip to a local farm may not be the best fit for your child care center. You may choose to invite a local farmer to visit your center one day. This offers children a great opportunity to interact with a producer, without involving the logistics necessary for organizing a class trip.

While the farmer is visiting your center, there are a few simple activities you can plan that will help your children interact with the farmer.

Examples include:

- taste tests: items can include fresh fruits and vegetables or herbs
- farmer story: farmer can talk about time at the farm or read a story book about farming

In this photo: Sustainable Food Center worked with teams of parents at partner schools to arrange for Meet the Farmer visits to the cafeteria during lunchtime, such as this one featuring Erin Flynn with Green Gate Farm in Austin.

Has anyone invited a local farmer to their child care center?

Can anyone think of any other activities that can pair with a farmer visit?

Activity Demonstration



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Message to training participants:

I'd like to demonstrate a few easy-to-plan activities that can be incorporated into your Farm to Preschool education.

Note to Presenter: Please update the list below with the activities you will detail in the presentation.

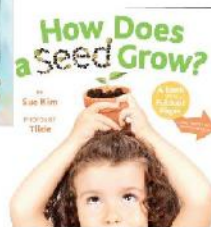
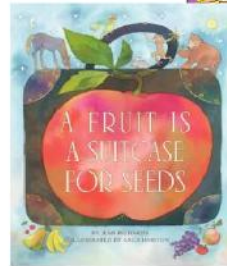
Today's examples are:

- (insert text)
- (insert text)
- (insert text)

Story Time

Read a book about fruits, vegetables or gardening

- *The Two Bite Club*
 - includes optional taste testing activity
- *How Does a Seed Grow?*
- *A Fruit is a Suitcase for Seeds*
- Additional Show and Tell activity
 - Engages parent
 - Conduct activities over more than one day



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Message to training participants:

How many of you incorporate story time into your activities?

Story time offers an excellent way to provide children with education about fruits, vegetables and gardening. Listed here are two book examples, but you can use any of your favorites. Additionally, if you would like to extend the activity over a period of more than one day, you can read a book to the children, send home a note with parents asking them to enjoy a fruit or vegetable with their child at dinner and invite children to bring the fruit or vegetable they ate to show and tell the next day. This activity is an easy way to reinforce the information children gain from hearing the story.

<http://growing-minds.org/childrens-literature/>

Taste Testing

- Choose a simple fruit or vegetable
- Taste test can include:
 - one fruit or vegetable
 - several varieties one fruit or vegetable
 - a simple recipe using in-season produce
- No one has to try, but everyone is encouraged
- Vote after tasting
 - Create a chart
 - "I like it!" and "Not today"



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Message to training participants:

Taste testing is a versatile learning activity that can be executed in almost any learning environment for different aged children and various sizes of classes.

A few points to remember when conducting a taste test:

- choose a simple fruit or vegetable
- taste test can include one fruit or vegetable or several types of a particular fruit or vegetable, for example tasting 3 varieties of apples
- taste tests can be of the raw product or use a simple recipe that features in-season food items
- remember to verbalize to children that no one HAS to try the food item, but everyone is supported and encouraged to participate.

Once everyone has tried a sample, each child can vote if they like or don't like the item, or vote which variety of fruit or vegetable they liked the most.

There are many ways to hold a vote following a taste test, including:

- Create a chart with each fruit or vegetable listed at the top and ask each child to place a sticker or stamp in the column under the sample they liked.
- Label two jars "I liked it!" and "Not today" and let children place a pom pom, marble or other toy in the appropriate jar to cast their vote.
- Both of these voting methods offer an additional math and counting skills practice, in a fun and interactive way.

If you are concerned about the cost of food for taste tests, Growing Minds at the Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project has conducted a break down of taste testing costs.

For a class of 20 students, the total cost for a taste test is:

Cherry tomato tasting/exploration: \$4

Cucumber Exploration: \$3

Cabbage tasting: \$3-4

Sweet potato tasting: \$2

Apple tasting (Two months): \$4-6

Lettuce Tasting: \$3

Strawberry tasting: \$3-4

Total: \$20-25

Farm to Preschool in Hughes Springs, Texas

Education from many directions...

- year-round outdoor garden
- indoor container garden
- educational displays
- agricultural mural
- field trips
- community involvement



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Message to training participants:

Hughes Springs Head Start, located in Hughes Springs, Texas has found that a successful Farm to Preschool program offers education at many touch points. The center has a year-round garden where children can watch plants grow and assist adults as they work in the garden. The children enjoy telling visitors about their gardening activities and what they observe during the different seasons. There are also indoor plantings for additional educational opportunities. Educational displays showcasing fruits and vegetables are spread throughout the center and a mural provides an artistic representation of agriculture and locally sourced nutrition. There are also ongoing science experiments that provide visual demonstrations about nutrition and how plants grow. Trips to local farms and farmers market introduce the children to a variety of local agricultural producers. Community involvement includes education for parents and activities at the Head Start Community Action center.

Farm to Preschool in Lawrence, Kansas

- Cooking is one of our favorite curriculum activities
- Empowering for children to help make a healthy snack or meal
- Cooking with children isn't intimidating
- Everyone enjoys food more knowing it was a team effort!



"The kids and I ate our first home-grown salad today! Everyone was curious and tried each item: lettuce, spinach, radish. Success, yes!"

-Emily Hampton
Douglas County Child Development Association

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Message to training participants:

Cooking is one of our favorite curriculum activities. It is always exciting to witness young children help make a garden pizza or smoothie. It is empowering for children to help in the process of making a healthy snack or meal, especially when they helped grow the fruits and vegetables. Child care providers can be inspired by cooking demonstrations and realize that cooking with young children is not as intimidating as they may have imagined. Everyone enjoys their food more knowing that it was a team effort to create!

The quote featured on the slide is from a child care provider. "The kids and I ate our first home grown salad today. Everyone was curious and tried each item: lettuce, spinach and radish. Success, yes!?"

Farm to Preschool in _____

Use this space to share a farm to preschool example from your experience or your local area.

Insert your local photo here

"Insert your farm to preschool quote here"
-Citation

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Message to training facilitator:

Please use this slide (and add other, if needed) to highlight a local or regional story. Please remember to include relevant examples and images. Please keep text on the slide to a minimum and use this notes section to clearly outline what you want to cover.

Time to get started!

Farm to Preschool can be done in many ways. Just remember to:

- Find what works best for your setting
- Try different activities and only use what is successful
- Engage partners and the wider community
- Try, learn, adapt and try again

And most importantly,

- Be creative and have FUN while teaching children how to grow, eat and love local food!



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Additional Resources

- www.FarmToPreschool.org
 - Resources, curriculum, newsletter and more
- www.FarmToSchool.org
 - Resources, policy information and more
- www.Growing-Minds.org
 - Website for Growing Minds
 - Farm field trip information
 - Farm to preschool literary collection

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Note to Presenter: Please read the full description below while on this slide:

Did you know there is a website dedicated to farm to preschool information? Visit www.farmtopreschool.org for the latest information and resources about farm to preschool. And if you are looking for farm to school resources, don't forget to visit www.farmtoschool.org too.

National Farm to School Network's website is www.farmtoschool.org
 Join the network to receive regular news and updates on farm to school
 Search the website for informational resources, webinars, events, and conferences
 Click on the map and connect with your state leads and regional lead agencies who can assist you.

National Farm to Cafeteria Conference



April 15-18, 2014 in Austin, Texas
www.farmtocafeteriaconference.org

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Note to Presenter: Please read the full description below while on this slide:

Premier conference for all things farm to school/ farm to preschool and beyond. Great opportunity to connect and network with the movers and shakers, and to learn about best practices, tools, and resources.

October is National Farm to School Month

NATIONAL
FARM to
SCHOOL
MONTH



More information at www.farmentoschoolmonth.org

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Note to presenter: National Farm to School month occurs each October. If you are hosting a training in August, September or October (or if Farm to School Month is relevant to your audience) please include this slide. Otherwise, please delete this slide if it is untimely.

Note to Presenter: Please read the full description below while on this slide:

And we are celebrating farm to school month in October. This is a great opportunity to start your farm to school activity or highlight an existing one!

Evaluation and Future Assistance

- Complete the training evaluation form
- Future one-on-one training

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Notes to Presenter: Read below text to audience

“This training is part of the Farm to School Peer Leadership Network”

Please complete this evaluation form so we can improve the quality and effectiveness of these trainings in the future. Also, by completing the evaluation form and including your contact information, future farm to school support may be available to you.

Thank You!



Name
Title
Organization
Phone
E-mail
Website

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Note to Presenter(s):

Please customize this slide with your contact information and the logo of your organization (if applicable)