



# NH Farm to School Month

## October

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# Sample Press Release Template

Adapt this brief template for your own use, and send it to colleagues, friends, and parents.

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For Immediate Release—

[Date]

Contact:

[Your Information Here]

This October, join [Your School/Organization] to celebrate National Farm to School Month! Celebrated annually since 2010, Farm to School Month recognizes the important role farm to school plays in promoting well-being among children and strong local economies. NH Farm to School will be hosting the month in New Hampshire, and we are excited to be a partner for October.

To celebrate, each week in October will feature a theme around different key components of farm to school. We will be participating throughout the month using different topics like school gardens, agricultural and food curriculum, school lunches, cultural diversity in food, and pre-school education. We invite you to become more involved during the month by visiting the NH Farm to School website. You can find out more about the unique ways we're celebrating by following us on social media or joining our newsletter!

Farm to School within New Hampshire continues to grow. The most recent data shows that over 75% of NH schools surveyed participate in Farm to School activities, and 70% of schools surveyed have a school garden. All that adds up to more than \$840,000 spent on the purchase of local foods in NH schools! From school gardens and farm field trips to local food on cafeteria trays, farm to school practices help children learn about where food comes from and to make healthier choices while also creating new markets for local and regional farmers.

# # #

[Information about your organization/business, if applicable]

# Garden Harvest Week

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## Curriculum and Resources

- [Banking on Seeds](#) (Project Food, Land, & People): The critical role that seeds play in the world is explored through creating a seed bank and comparing historical and current uses of seed.
- [Plant Part Scavenger Hunt & Journaling](#) (Cornucopia Project): Students will explore the garden to find and identify the six edible plant parts before choosing one specific plant part to draw in detail for a nature journaling activity.
- [Plant Nutrients & Soil Samples](#) (UGA Extension): Students will learn about plant primary, secondary, and micronutrients by playing a matching game. This game will also reinforce skills for using the periodic table of elements. Afterwards, students will collect a soil sample from the school garden.
- [NH Harvest of the Month](#) (NH Farm to School): The Harvest of the Month program highlights a different food item every month to promote seasonal eating, encourage healthy diets, and support the local economy.

## NH School & Youth Garden Network

The network's mission is to support NH educators and mentors to initiate and sustain educational garden programs for youth. We work to strengthen efforts to advance community health and wellness, environmental literacy, public education, and the evolution of sustainable, resilient, local food systems through youth gardening programs. Visit their website for curriculum, funding resources, gardening tips, and to connect with other school garden educators!



Photo by the NH School & Youth Garden Network

## Activities and Celebration Ideas

- Plan a special Harvest Dinner with your students for the fall with the bounty from your school garden - invite parents to join in too!
- If you have pumpkins in your garden, pick them for carving (or painting, if they're small!) just in time for a local Halloween treat.
- Engage your students in planning for next year's school garden - what would they like to grow? This is also a good chance to teach your students about what crops work well in the NH climate, and about the seasons.
- Invite colleagues, students, and parents to participate in a school or community garden clean-up day.

# Classroom Connections Week

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## Curriculum and Resources

- [Discovering Our Food System](#) (Cornell University): An exploration of the people and processes that shape our food system. It will help students better understand what the food system means to them, how it affects their community and their health, and ways in which they can influence the food system.
- [Understanding Food & Climate Change: An Interactive Guide](#) (Center for Ecoliteracy): This free guide uses interactive multi-media to help students learn how food and climate systems interact and how personal choices can make a difference.
- [Farm Based Education Network](#): The Network support the work of farm-based educators and community members with lesson plans, activity guides, professional development, and more.
- [Future Farmers of American Educator Resources](#): FFA's website offers hundreds of free resources for educators about agricultural literacy, careers, and technology.
- [NH Agriculture in the Classroom Curriculum Matrix](#): The matrix is an online, searchable, and standards-based curriculum map for K-12 teachers based around agricultural education.

## NH Agriculture in the Classroom

NHAITC has been dedicated to increasing the agricultural literacy of New Hampshire's youth since 1991, and reaches 15,000 students each year. They provide education materials and resources for K-12 classrooms. Students learn about current and historical agricultural practices, sustainability, and gain a connection to our food system. These programs help cultivate an understanding and appreciation of New Hampshire's agricultural and food systems.



Photo by NH Agriculture in the Classroom

## Activities and Celebration Ideas

- Coordinate with a nearby farm to plan a field trip so that students can better understand how food is grown and sold.
- Tackle the issue of food waste in schools with your students to come up with creative ideas for reducing waste, composting, and food donation.
- Create a school cookbook with contributions from students and their families featuring healthy ingredients grown in New Hampshire.

# School Lunch Week

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## Curriculum & Resources

- [Guide for Using Local Foods in Schools](#) (VT FEED): This guide is designed to help schools reconnect with their local food systems through local purchasing for school meals.
- [Sea to School Guide](#) (NH Farm to School): This guide explores why schools might choose to source local seafood and different methods for purchasing and promoting local seafood, and innovative strategies for promoting local seafood to students.
- [Garden to Cafeteria Guide](#) (Michigan Farm to School): This guide is a walkthrough of the necessary considerations, tips and examples for using school garden produce in your school food programs.
- [NH Farm to Institution Toolkit](#) (NH Farm to School): This NH-specific toolkit summarizes various resources to guide institutions and food purchasers with institutional contracting and purchasing choices.

## Farm to School Recipe Sources

- [NH Harvest of the Month Recipes](#)
- [VT Feed New School Cuisine](#)
- [NH Farm to School Teen Cookoff Winning Recipes](#)
- [Massachusetts Farm to School Cookbook](#)
- [NH Dept. of Health & Human Services Fruit & Veggie Quantity Cookbook](#)
- [The Lunch Box School Recipe Database](#)



Photo by the USDA

## Activities and Celebration Ideas

- Make time for your students to cultivate gratitude by writing “Thank You” notes to the school food service team and/or local farmers!
- Plan for themed lunch days in the school cafeteria, which can be a good way to introduce students to new food items. Students can submit ideas for themes, too.
- Create a salad bar using farm-fresh, local produce to encourage students to fill up on fruits and veggies.
- Invite a legislator to your school lunch! The National Farm to School website has a guide on how to do so [here](#), and this can attract attention to your farm to school achievements!

# Celebrating Culture Week

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## Curriculum and Resources

- [Food Traditions Interview](#) (Center for Eco-literacy): Have your students interview an elder or someone from another culture to learn about foods in different times or places, giving students broader insight into their own food choices.
- [Three Sisters Garden](#) (NH Agriculture in the Classroom): Students will investigate the benefits of the “three sisters” crops together, while learning about Native American practices and plant growth.
- [Culture, Food, & Ritual](#) (National Geographic): Students will explain the food rituals of three major world religions, make connections to their own food rituals, and discern similarities and differences between these rituals.
- [American Indian Traditional Foods in USDA School Meals Programs](#) (Wisconsin Dept. of Public Instruction): A guide created to help food service directors incorporate traditional, healthy foods into their school food programs and to educate about American Indian nations and tribal communities.
- [Serving Up Tradition](#) (MA Farm to School & MA FoodCorps): This report is meant to connect school district diversity and efforts to improve school meals by drawing from diverse food traditions that meet federal dietary guidelines.
- [Indigenous NH Collaborative Collective](#): A collaborative, long-term project intending to reframe New Hampshire’s history from an Indigenous perspective.



Photo by Zachary Young



Photo by the Organization for Refugee and Immigrant Success

## Activities and Celebration Ideas

- Invite your students to bring in a culturally connected food from their family to class for a “show and tell” style tasting.
- Plan to celebrate Indigenous People’s Day on October 14th, and explain to students the history of Native Americans and colonization.
- Have students organize a cultural diversity themed food drive where donations of healthful food items that represent various ethnic cultures are collected and donated to a local food bank or pantry.



# Farm to Pre-School Week

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## Curriculum and Resources

- [Playing with Food](#) (Early Sprouts): This resource explains key points about why playing with food can be problematic in an early childhood setting. Teach kids that food is respected as something that nourishes and sustains us.
- [Grow It, Like It, Try It!](#) (USDA): A garden-themed nutrition education kit that introduces children to three fruits (peaches, strawberries, and cantaloupe), and three vegetables (spinach, sweet potatoes, and crookneck squash).
- [Cultivating Joy & Wonder](#) (Shelburne Farms): This guide brings sustainability into your classroom through engaging activities, essays, and resources that encourage children to explore and engage in the world around them.
- [Taste & Tales](#) (Growing Minds): The lesson is designed to promote early childhood literacy, teach children about vegetables and fruits, and encourage parent volunteerism. Teachers and parents partner to read a book and offer a related taste test to children.



Photo by the Early Sprouts Institute

## Early Sprouts

Developed by Keene State College in 2006, Early Sprouts offers award winning programs that help early childhood educators foster enthusiasm for healthy foods and active play in young children. The goal is for young children to develop healthy habits that will last a lifetime! Early Sprouts offers professional development online trainings for educators, as well as curriculum and recipe ideas in their companion book.

## Activities and Celebration Ideas

- Help your students make butter from local cream! Fill small jars about halfway with cream, and have the children shake the jars for about 10 minutes. Make sure to explain how dairy gets to our tables
- Participate in the NH Harvest of the Month [program](#) for pre-schoolers, developed by the NH Dept. of Education! Each month features a different food product.
- Encourage your students to contrast and compare the different foods that they try at school and at home.



Photo by the University of New Hampshire