

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE

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Farm to School Challenge

Announcement

Last year, the United States House of Representatives declared October National Farm to School Month, recognizing the strong role Farm to School (FTS) plays in promoting good health and strong economies. FTS programs are an effective way to encourage healthy eating and boost local agriculture sales by bringing local vegetables, fruit, and other products into schools. Alaska joined the FTS movement this year with a program in the Division of Agriculture. We are raising awareness of the program by launching a FTS challenge in October.

Who is eligible?

- Anyone who has, or plans to, engage in FTS activities at any time in the 2011-2012 school year.
- School principals, teachers, students, school food service staff, agriculture producers, other food producers, community advocates, culinary experts, gardeners, distributors, processors, parents, and more!

Where to apply? Applying is quick and easy!

- Fill out the electronic application at https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/FTS_challenge2011
- Paper applications available at http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag/ag_challengeFTS.htm

When can I apply?

- Survey will open online 8 a.m. on Monday, October 3 and end at 5 p.m. on Friday, November 4. Paper applications will be accepted during the same time frame.

Ideas and Examples on pages 2 and 3

Prize list on pages 4 and 5

Challenge score sheet on page 6

“Develop, Conserve, and Enhance Natural Resources for Present and Future Alaskans.”

Ideas and Examples

Help promote Farm to School and earn prizes for your Farm to School project! All you need to do is create an inspiring, original poster to express the theme of “Celebrate Farm to School!” Posters can be submitted by both classrooms and individuals. More details at <http://www.farmtoschoolmonth.org/?p=6> . You can also help raise awareness by creating any number of these events.

Principals

- Hold a special day or event that features a food producer or local chef and talk about local food.
- Encourage the PTA and teachers to host an activity or classroom lesson.
- Example: Have a potluck for the staff using local foods and invite a local chef to make dessert.

Teachers

- Invite a food producer, local chef, or expert from the community to come talk to your class about the food system.
- Hold a “Farm to School Friday” activity during October.
- Assign a class project to search the media for news related to Farm to School.
- Have your students identify a favorite food and try to figure out how far they would have to go to get the ingredients.
- Example: Invite a local farmer, like Ben VanderWeele, to your classroom to do a presentation about their farm. (Need help finding a farmer? Call us!)

Students

- Poll your fellow students on what healthy local foods they would like to see served at lunch.
- Host a taste test with local product to see what is the most popular.
- Make a collage, story, or poem about what Farm to School means to you.
- See if you can tour the school kitchen and learn about the school food challenges.
- Example: Draw a cartoon clip to put into the school newsletter that uses Farm to School themes.

Food Service Staff

- Have a ‘Local Food Lunch’.
- Try a ‘Fish Friday’ or ‘Wild and Local Wednesday’.
- Visit a classroom to talk about food safety, school nutrition, or challenges for serving local food.
- Poll the students about what they like and don’t like in the school lunch.
- Example: Visit the science classes and discuss the possibility of creating a school garden.

Food Producer, Distributor, Chef, or Processor

- Visit a school or class and talk about what you do in the food system.
- Bring in a sample of food for students to try.
- Team up with the food service to see if you can feature something local.
- Example: As a Distributor you could bring a variety of products to show what’s available to restaurants and discuss the important role you play in getting the food from the farm to the end user.

Community Member, PTA, Local Food Advocate

- Help facilitate any of the above activities.
- Sponsor or link up with a local school to feature a Farm to School theme project.
- Example: As a member of the PTA you might sponsor a class snack time using local foods.

People to Involve

- Ag. in the Classroom-Victoria Naegele, akaitc@alaska.fb.org, www.agclassroom.org/ak
- Alaska FFA- Rayne Reynolds, 907-953-0093 or Amy Harmon, 907-982-2310
- Pro-Start- Sara Shepard, 907-223-7138, prostart@alaskacharr.com
- Alaska 4-H- <http://www.uaf.edu/ces/4h/> to find the local chapter representative in your area.

Media Suggestions

- Contact your local newspaper.
- Write, draw, or color something for your school newsletter.
- Ask your school to put your activity on Facebook, put on your wall, or post it on the Alaska farm to school facebook page: <http://www.facebook.com/AlaskaFarmToSchool>.

Additional Opportunity

Here's something we can all sink our teeth into ~ National Food Day on October 24th! For Food Day, there is an excellent website resource for posters, PSA's, videos, webinars, etc. that you are welcome to use in planning your activities.

Go to: <http://www.foodday.org/participate/resources#FDCurriculum>

So, come on, let's celebrate the nationally recognized Food Day in October with some spirit!

Prize Sheet

One Grand Prize

- A guest visit from a local food celebrity, details determined by winner and celebrity!
Value: priceless

Twelve Runner Up Prizes **

- (3) GROWLAB II Compact Garden



The ideal setup for an indoor garden! Features include: sturdy 1" square aluminum frame, two removable 22" x 11" trays, 24-hour timer, lightweight custom aluminum light fixture on easy-to-adjust slide rods, wide spectrum lamps, two moisture grids to provide water on weekends, and humidity tent. Dimensions: 40" H x 53" L x 12" D. Comes with a comprehensive manual: *GROWLAB: A Complete Guide to Gardening in the Classroom*.

- (9) Wisconsin Fast Plants®: Growth, Development, and Reproduction Kit



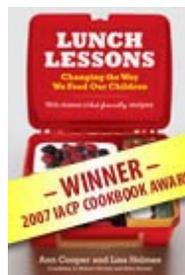
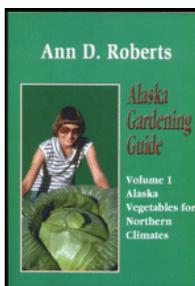
For 32 people. A basic kit for growth, development, and reproduction studies, including measuring and quantifying germination, pollination, and seed development. Experiment times vary (3 to 40 days). Kit includes: Standard Fast Plants® Seed, all planting materials, and instructions.

50 Third Place Prizes **

Books:

(10) Alaska Gardening Guide

(20) Lunch Lessons



Video's

- (20) Lunch Line



Many Participation Prizes

- Hopeful Harvest (for Jr. – Sr. High) or My Neighbor is a Farmer (for grade school) Stories about Alaska farming developed by Alaska Agriculture in the Classroom
- Promotional give away's
- T-shirts
- Agriculture In The Classroom CD

**A sincere thank you goes out to the Obesity Prevention and Control Program, Alaska Department of Health and Social Services for contributing many of the runner up and third place prizes!

* Bonus Points: 10 points

If your activity takes place during the month of October you will automatically get 10 extra points. For those of you who have projects already planned for dates outside of October...don't worry. Just present your project during the month of October to help spread awareness of how and why it made a difference with your group.

1. Creativity of project: 30 points

How does your project incorporate ideas about farm to school and engage kids in understanding the food system better?

2. Variety of involvement: 30 points

There are many different people that have something to contribute to farm to school projects. Try getting involvement from some non-traditional partners like a distributor or processor. Do you have community members that are good at growing things, hunting, or fishing? How can school food service be involved?

3. % Student enrolled reached: 20 points

Is your school able to do an assembly or a single day designated as a day to teach or talk about concepts from farm to school? Still not sure what that means...check out some of the information on the state site: http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag/ag_FTS.htm

4. Media plan: 20 points

What are your plans to share your project success with a wider audience? Teaching kids about food and learning about the local food system are gaining attention; share your story with a wider audience using media as a resource!