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## Alaskans take part in National Farm to School Month

(Palmer, AK) – In recognition of National Farm to School Month in October, the Division of Agriculture is collaborating with the Department of Education and Early Development's childhood nutrition programs to promote Farm to School activities in Alaska communities. Furthermore, the division is encouraging Alaskans to take advantage of opportunities to advance local food in their schools.

Ten-year-old Sable Scotton of Galena is an example of a young Alaskan who is promoting local foods in schools. She is one of 55 children this year who submitted a winning entry to the national Healthy Lunchtime Challenge recipe contest. In July Sable and her mom Sandy joined the other contest winners in Washington D.C. for a White House state dinner and visit with First Lady Michelle Obama. On that trip, Sable and Sandy learned about the national Kids and Chefs Cook for Success program and they worked with the Division of Agriculture and local schools to bring the program to Galena in late September. The division helped facilitate a visit by Fairbanks chef Danielle Flaherty who conducted two cooking demonstrations that included locally-grown foods, taught two culinary classes, and held taste tests and lessons in the Galena schools.

Whether you're a teacher, food service professional, farmer, teacher or food-loving family, there are plenty of other ways to participate in Farm to School Month:

- Hold a special day or event that features a food producer or local chef.
- Talk with students and faculty about local food.
- Assign a class project to search the media for news related to Farm to School.
- Host a taste test with local product to see what is the most popular.
- Participate in a Local Lunch Day at the school if offered.
- Join the Big Day of Farm to School Action event on social media to share your photographs and show your support on October 22 by using hashtags #farmtoschool, #F2SMonth, and #moreF2SinCNR.
- Apply for or encourage another Alaskan to apply for one of four national scholarships that will be awarded to attend the 8<sup>th</sup> National Farm to Cafeteria Conference on June 2-4, 2016 in Madison, Wisc. Apply at <http://www.farmtoschool.org/our-work/farm-to-school-month#sweepstakes>. Alaska residents who apply for the scholarship will be entered into a drawing to win one of eight Alaska

Grown aprons or Root Viewer kits from the Division of Agriculture. Winners will be randomly selected by 3 p.m. on Nov. 3. Limit of one prize per person. Winners will be notified through the email account used in the above sweepstakes entry.

The farm to school movement has exploded across the United States during the past decade and now reaches millions of students in all 50 states and Washington, D.C. Farm to school programs enrich communities by providing access to healthy foods that improve child nutrition, influencing purchasing decisions that support local economies, creating gardens, providing cooking lessons, and conducting farm field trips that educate children about the origins of their food. For more information about Alaska's program, go to [http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag/ag\\_FTS.htm](http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag/ag_FTS.htm).

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