

Oregon Farm to School & School Garden Network

Farm to School Month Newsletter | September 2023

A Note From Our Director

Welcome Back to School!

I hope everyone is having a smooth transition from summer into the school year schedule. It's a busy time for families, teachers, child nutrition programs and food producers. It's also a time of great abundance in our local food supply, so I hope local items are on your school menu and in your home kitchens and gardens! I also hope everyone is staying safe and finding fresh air in the midst of so many regional wildfires. Special wishes to food producers and others who work outdoors in the smoke.

We're looking ahead to October and hoping you can take a moment to plan how you will celebrate farm to school month in your community. Consider joining us in the first annual Oregon Farm to School Crunch or celebrate by featuring a locally sourced meal, visiting a farm or farmers market, or get students out into the school garden for some hands-on learning! However you plan to celebrate, please let us know so we can support your efforts and share the collective impact across the state.

Best wishes,

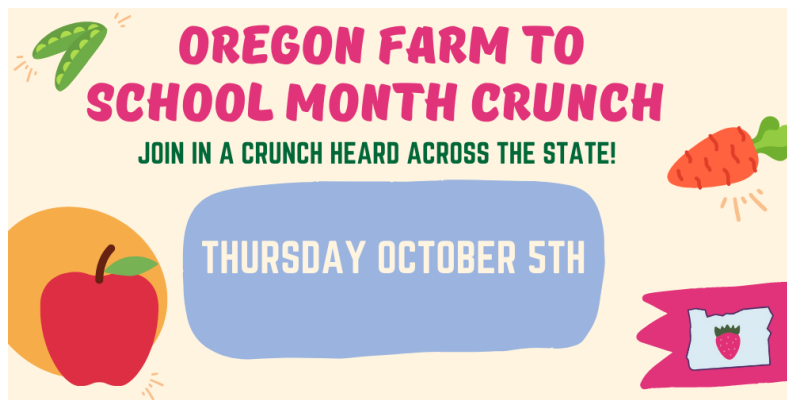
Melina



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Featured Topic - Oregon Farm to School Month!



Mark your calendars for Thursday, October 5th: Oregon's first Farm to School Month Crunch!

What's a Farm to School Crunch, you ask? It's a simple and fun way to feature Oregon produce in your school or community. All you have to do is: 1) [Register](#), 2) Choose a crunchy Oregon grown fruit or vegetable, 3) Coordinate a school or site-wide time, and 4) Crunch together! Check out the [Crunch Toolkit](#) for more information. **Register to receive free stickers, printed materials and other Farm to School month resources and goodies!**

We're delighted to report that schools and early care centers—so far serving a total of 5,489 students—have already registered to participate in the Crunch! We hope you'll join in the fun!

If you have other Farm to School Month events planned, [let the OFSSGN know](#) so we can share the great events you're putting on with the rest of the state! [Visit the OFSSGN website](#) for all things Oregon Farm to School Month!

Regional Roundup - Farm to School Month Celebrations



Willamina School District

In October 2022 Willamina Elementary School celebrated Farm to School Month by inviting Carrie Sendak, Owner and Farmer at MaMa Tee's Farmstead. Nutrition Services Director Lynne Shore donned her apple costume to greet students as they entered the cafeteria where students played a vegetable bean bag toss game and participated in a VIP meet and greet session with Carrie who signed autographs. Locally grown peaches, zucchini, tomatoes and cucumbers were featured on the salad bar.

"Carrie received the celebrity status that she deserves"- Miaja Lopez, Kindergarten Teacher

"We are so excited to have local foods for our students"- Cera Norwood, Principal

"I love this so much! Thank you"- WES Parent

MaMa Tee's Farmstead is only 6 miles from the school and provides a variety of produce for the Willamina School District.

"Since this event, we have been able to work even closer with MaMa Tee's and other local farmers on projects like our kid's farmer's market last May. We are looking forward to more events in the future." - Lynne Shore



Klamath County School District

Since 2018 Klamath County School District has celebrated their annual “Countdown to Crunch.” In 2022 more than 3,270 students from 12 schools counted down together and crunched into locally grown carrots produced by Simple Gifts Farm in Klamath Falls. “The Countdown to Crunch is such a fun event because it engages on so many levels: Administrators, teachers, kitchen staff, community partners, and students,” said Jordan Rainwater, Farm to School coordinator for the Klamath County School District. “It is always fun to see the unique and creative ways each school celebrates.”

Content and photos sourced from the following articles:

<https://www.kcsd.k12.or.us/district/countdown-to-crunch-2022.cfm>,

<https://www.kcsd.k12.or.us/district/counting-down-to-crunch.cfm#d819058>

Oregon Harvest for Schools Directory Spotlight

If you’re looking to source local ingredients for your CRUNCH event, Local Lunch Week or other Farm to School Month events, the [Oregon Harvest for Schools Directory](#) should be your first stop! Search by product type to find Oregon grown and produced foods in your area! The farms highlighted this month both have local, crunch apples and carrots for sale!



Good Rain Farm

xäst sqit means Good Rain in farm founder Michelle’s Ancestral Sinixt language. They are a 3 acre multi veggie



Lehne Farms

The Norm Lehne Garden and Orchards, LLC outside of Roseburg, OR has been growing since 1974. They are a 3rd

CSA farm in the Greater Portland Metro area. They feature Indigenous First Foods of Turtle Island and believe in reverent reciprocity through community, education, and environmental stewardship. Currently they grow over 100 varieties of tomatoes, potatoes, onions, garlic, peppers, squash, turnips, beets, kale, collards, lettuce, kohlrabi, carrots, peas, beans, and herbs.

generation farm growing over 100 types of seasonal vegetables on a year round basis. They have several acres of fruit with many different varieties of apples, pears, peaches, Asian pears, and nectarines.



[VISIT THE OREGON HARVEST FOR SCHOOLS DIRECTORY](https://directory.oregonharvestforschools.com)

Seasonal School Gardens

Late summer and early fall are arguably the most exciting time of year in school gardens—Abundant produce, the return of excited, helpful hands, one last window to plant again before winter.

But how to best store and utilize the garden abundance?! Consider: taste tests in the cafeteria, classroom, or even out on the recess grounds! If you have produce to share, offer it to the Nutrition Services staff at your school! [The Oregon Department of Education has School Garden Safety resources available](#) to safely prepare incorporating garden-grown goods into the cafeteria.

If you have access to cold storage, refrigeration or freezer space, or other food preservation options save your excess produce to celebrate Farm to School Month in

October! Save carrots and apples for your CRUNCH event! Freeze, can or dehydrate other garden produce to utilize during Local Lunch Week or taste tests!

Announcements: Funding, Webinars, Job Opportunities

<p><u>Oregon Farm to Institution Collaborative (OFIC) Information Session</u></p> <p>On Sept 14th from 3-4pm PST join the information session about the newly forming Oregon Farm to Institution Collaborative (OFIC). This is a three year project funded by the USDA's Regional Food Systems Partnership program. The intention is to leverage existing proofs of concept in farm to institution (F2I) and take them to scale at state level. Priorities will also be to increase rural engagement and BIPOC producer involvement in the Farm to Institution system at large.</p>	<p><u>Oregon Farm to School Month Resources</u></p> <p>As you plan for your Farm to School Month festivities, visit the OFSSGN website for inspiration, resources and to share your celebrations!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">•Register for the Oregon CRUNCH•Check out CRUNCH and Local Lunch Toolkits•Download customizable flyers and social media posts•Submit your celebrations to the statewide calendar!
<p><u>Eating, Learning, Growing Workshop</u></p> <p>Eating, Learning, Growing is a virtual professional development workshop on culturally relevant farm to school education. Join this workshop to learn how to improve student outcomes by welcoming diverse student voices, histories, learning styles, and values into your classroom. There is no cost to participate, and educators will receive a \$100 stipend. Learn more and apply on their website.</p>	<p><u>Selling into Farm to School Resources</u></p> <p>The Community Alliance with Family Farmers has released a new video and article with resources for farmers and food producers to enter the Farm to School market and communicate with the school district nutrition services department. Consider sharing this resource with farmers who show interest in selling to schools!</p>

OFSSGN Staff Updates

The Oregon Farm to School & School Garden Conference is coming in 2024!

OFSSGN staff and Conference Planning Committee members are working hard to plan our next Conference. We haven't come together in person since February 2020 and we can't wait to see you! The Oregon Farm to School & School Garden Conference is a two-day gathering filled with workshops and opportunities to connect with peers across the state. Whether you're new to farm to school or have years of experience we're committed to providing enriching content for all! Keep your eyes out for a save the date and call for proposals in the next couple of weeks!

Farm to School + Farm to ECE Institutes Coming to Oregon

We're thrilled to announce that we've received funding to work collaboratively with our partners at Ecotrust, FoodCorps, OSPI, WSDA, and Washington Department of Health to pilot Farm to School and Farm to Early Care Institutes this summer! Institutes offer in-depth professional development and coaching over the course of a full year to teams from schools or early childhood education centers. Teams work with a coach to craft farm to school goals that they work towards throughout the school year. Training events, affinity groups, and a dedicated coach support their work to integrate farm to school into the classroom, cafeteria and community. We're excited to begin planning the institutes and look forward to sharing more as the project progresses.

Oregon Farm to Institution Collaborative

OFSSGN Director, Melina Barker is a member of the Organizing Team for the newly forming Oregon Farm to Institution Collaborative. OFSSGN is excited to work together with partners to support increased local purchasing across all institutions. By working collaboratively, we hope we can address some of the systemic challenges producers face in accessing institutional markets and stand up real solutions to supply chain issues and equitable market access. Please consider joining the [information session](#) shared in the announcement section of this newsletter.

Connect with the OFSSGN

Do you have school garden content you want featured in the next quarterly newsletter? Send it to Nadia at nadia@oregonfarmtoschool.org



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