

# BROWN COUNTY FARM TO SCHOOL SPOTLIGHT

2018 - 2019



where well-being starts with we

Since 2011, the Brown County Farm to School Task Force, convened by Wello (formerly Live54218) has gathered local partners who are passionate about the health, social, community and economic potential of promoting locally grown food in our schools.

Farm to School programming is broadly grouped into four evidence-based strategic areas: classroom education, school gardens, local food purchasing efforts and sustainability. In 2018-19, all of Brown County's school districts, including seven public school districts, one faith-based school system and the Oneida Nation schools, participated in at least one of these activities. Task Force member districts continue to innovate in the area of Farm to School, with many districts actively growing food for school meals on-site in gardens or inside with hydroponic gardens. This year we've seen a new trend: gardens being used more formally by local districts to not only grow food, but also as classroom space that encourages active, experiential learning for Brown County kids!

And Farm to School is not just for kids. Over the last seven years, districts in our Task Force have increased food service dollars spent on local produce by 500%, an achievement that supports the local economy. Several local farmers' groups, including SLO Farmers Co-Op and Seasonal Harvest, actively participate in the Farm to School Task Force, working together with Food Service Directors to improve supply and remove barriers to local purchasing. These local efforts are also reflected at the national level. The Kids Eat Local Act, a bipartisan bill introduced to Congress in June of 2019, aims to clarify school purchasing rules and allow (but not require) schools to use "local" as specification when sourcing food for school meals. All of this forward momentum helps to ensure our kids are receiving healthy fuel to grow and learn.

## BY THE NUMBERS



school districts in Brown County participating in at least one Farm to School strategy

> \$20,000 =

additional dollars schools leveraged to support their work by showcasing wins in the Farm to School program



11 Farm to School videos featuring local efforts to improve student health and enhance learning



14,951

total Farm to School video views

500%

increase in total food service budget spending on local produce for school lunches

> 4,000 =

number of students receiving Farm to School nutrition education lessons in the classroom

8  
years

of community partners, parents, educators and districts coming together to share best practices through the Farm to School Task Force.



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# ASHWAUBENON SCHOOL DISTRICT FARM TO SCHOOL SHOWCASE 2018 - 2019

## Classroom Lessons

In the 2019-2020 school year, students at Pioneer Elementary, Valley View Elementary and Ashwaubenon High School received classroom Farm to School lessons teaching the importance of healthy nutrition habits and the value of fresh, local produce. Combined with the district's Health curriculum, these lessons provide an enhanced learning experience that allows students to not only learn what to eat, but also where their food comes from and how their nutrition choices impact the local environment and economy. In all, 700 students across 30 classrooms received Farm to School lessons!

Students at Valley View also had fun with a My Plate Culinary Demo that allowed kids to watch a professional chef prepare fresh black bean salsa made with local ingredients - and sample it too! Research shows that Farm to School lessons and produce taste tests make it more likely that kids will eat fresh vegetables.

**“Lessons in the classrooms have an up-close-and-personal feel to them. This connection helps create elevated lifelong eating habits in our students!”**  
~ Betsy Farah, Child Nutrition Coordinator



In addition to outdoor gardens, Ashwaubenon High School Science teacher Dan Albrent continues to produce hyperlocal fruits and vegetables using aquaponics as well as greenhouses and hoop houses in the high school courtyard. Food Service is planning to install hanging herb gardens in the high school dining commons to remind students that the food service is committed to the “farm to fork” movement.

**“Tomatoes are going strong and when they ripen we’ll be in business! We are also trying to start a strawberry patch :)”** ~ Maria Arena, Principal Cormier Early Learning Center



## Local Purchasing

Betsy Farah, Ashwaubenon School District's Child Nutrition Coordinator estimates that each year the district is increasing local purchasing by 5-7%, which represents a boon for our local economy. Farah attributes these gains to the Food Service's commitment to Farm to Fork, and new processes that make it easier to purchase locally. In addition to new federal programs that help connect schools with local farms, Farah regularly purchases the hyper-local produce grown in the high school courtyard and science classroom.

## Sustainability

Ashwaubenon School District continues to prioritize sustainable practices and operations in their Farm to School program. In the coming school year, the Food Service plans to sustain this action-approach and continue to find innovative ways to generate student awareness of where food comes from and how food choices can impact personal well-being and the well-being of the community!

## School Gardens

Gardens at Pioneer Elementary, Cormier Early Learning Center and Ashwaubenon High School are going strong! These teaching tools not only encourage students to participate in healthy, outdoor activity they also teach Ashwaubenon students about the full cycle of food sustainability. Composting and worm farms at the high school supply dirt for the elementary school gardens. In



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