

Integrating Local Foods into Child Nutrition Programs

Team Up Thursday



THE
FARM *to* **SCHOOL**
PROGRAM

Today's Speakers



Deborah Kane

*Director, USDA Office of
Community Food Systems*



Kara Sample

*Assistant Director
Greeley-Evans School District 6*



Steve Marinelli

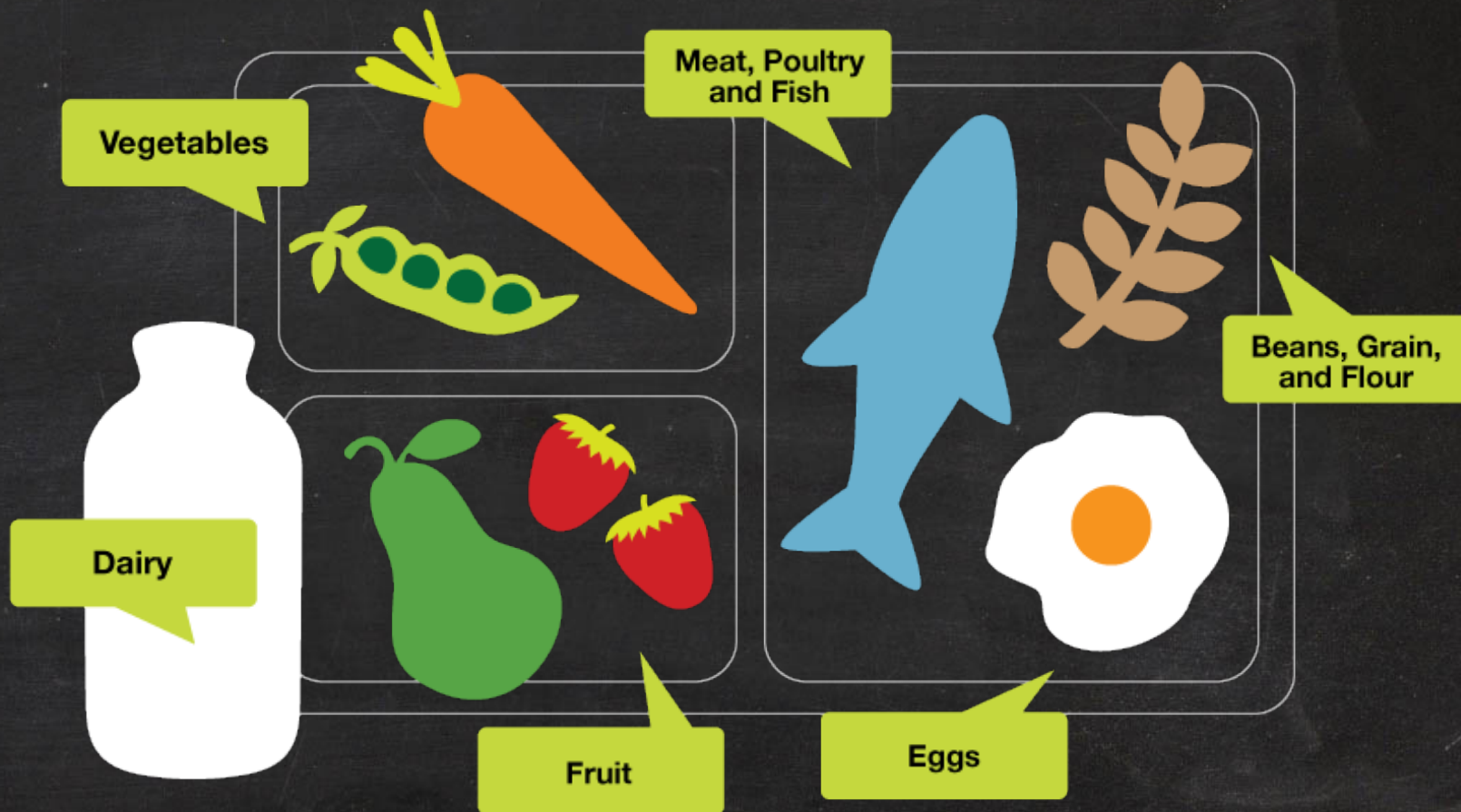
*Director
Milton School District*

Overview

- What are local foods?
- What does local mean?
- Ways to integrate local foods
 - » Weld County
 - » Milton School District



Local Can Span the Meal Tray

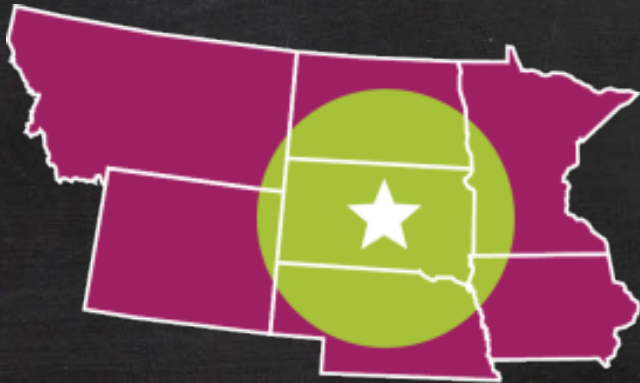


Integrating Local Foods: Defining Local

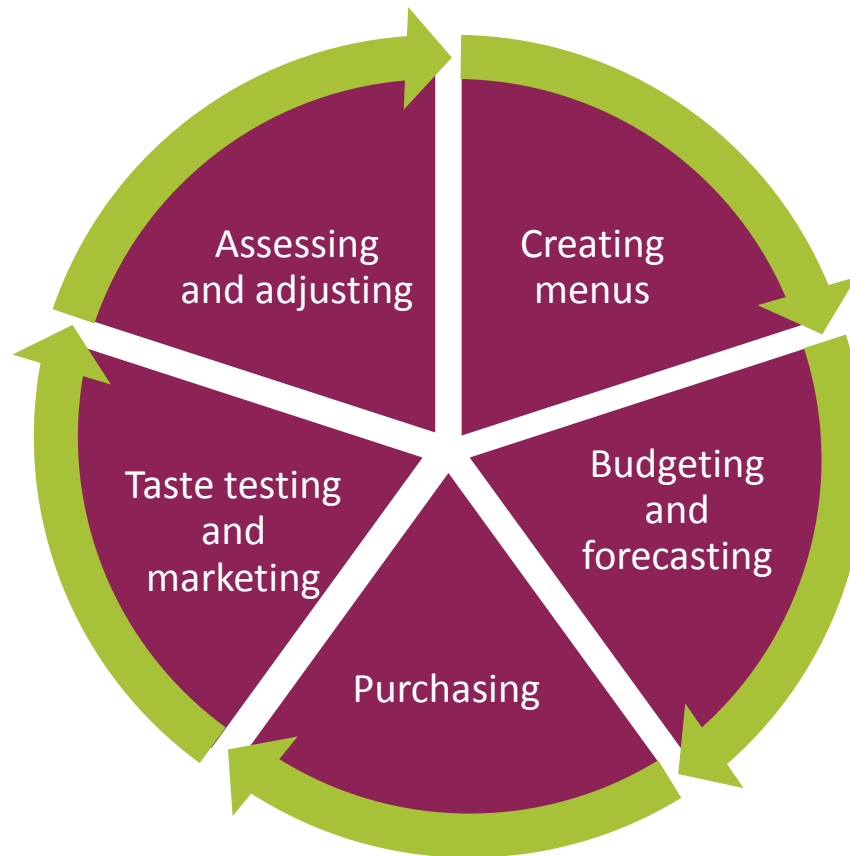
- Within a state
- Within a city or county
- Within a radius
- Within a region

Definition may change depending on:

- Season
- Product
- Special events



The Menu Planning Cycle





Taste Testing



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Ingredient Substitution + New Recipes





Themed Menu – Minnesota Thursday

Take 4 Actions



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LOCAL MEAT

Increasing Opportunities for Small-Sized Livestock Producers

CHICKEN LEGS IN CALIFORNIA. meats, poultry, and seafood are a significant part of the diet. According to the 2011-12 Census (www.fns.usda.gov/farmto), 53 percent of school districts in Alaska serve local meats.* Communities across the country are finding ways to make local food procurement practical and feasible as well. The following are some examples of menus.

Procurement and Procurement

Partnerships make the difference. Local food procurement in school districts, vendors, and meat processors are key to the successful integration of meat into school menus. Districts don't need to buy a whole hog or a whole cow to prepare raw products to get local meat on the menu. Well-coordinated partnerships with local ranchers and processors ensure that meat arrives at schools in the form that works best for staff capacity and menu plans. Local meat, cut, pre-cooked, dehydrated, crumble, or frozen, makes its way to the cafeteria.

Many ways to buy local meat. The 2011-12 Census revealed that more than 600 school districts bought local meat or poultry during the school year.* Districts buy local meat via direct purchase, procurement methods such as Request for Proposal, Invitations for Bid, and application of the Federal Acquisition Regulation. Local meat and seafood can also be purchased from local vendors. For example, districts across the country have found ways to make local food procurement practical and feasible as well.

*As a percentage of respondent school districts that stated they were engaged in farm to school activities during the 2011-12 school year.

GEOGRAPHIC

What It Is and How It Works

THE 2008 FARM BILL directed the United States Department of Agriculture to encourage schools to use locally grown and locally raised products to the maximum extent practicable. The Secretary was also instructed to use a "geographic preference" to encourage the use of locally grown and locally raised agricultural products.

There are many ways for school districts to use local food in federal child nutrition programs. Local Food in School Cafeterias is one option. Geographic preference is not the only option. It is a powerful tool and particularly useful where respondents are ranked by price.

Types of Products

The ability to apply a preference for locally grown and locally raised products is only to unprocessed or minimally processed products. The geographic preference rule does not apply to products that have been cooked, heated, or contain additives or fillers. It can be applied to products that meet the definition of local food, such as various farm products, including fish, poultry, dairy, eggs, and grains.

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FARM TO SCHOOL

SCHOOLS FIRST STARTED USING local food in their meals where their food comes from in the community. Farm to school programs are designed to improve children's health and nutrition. USDA Farm to School Census (the Census) shows that school districts are using local food in their meals.

Farm to School Works to Create and Community Benefits

The Census, fielded in 2015, shows that school districts surveyed participate in farm to school programs. It equates to more than 5,200 school districts, more than 42,000 schools, impacting more than 10 million children. Over two-thirds of school districts engaged in farm to school activities said they enjoy positive impacts on student health, acceptance of and participation in school meals, program costs, and less plate waste. School districts with farm to school programs reported three farm to school related activities. The most common included serving local foods in school meals, field trips to nearby farms or orchards, and demonstrations using local foods.

Farm to School Works to Stimulate Regional Economies

School districts spent almost \$790 million on local food purchases during the 2013-2014 school year, an increase over the \$386 million of local food purchases in 2011-2012 school year when the first Farm to School Census was conducted. As of the 2013-2014 school year, 46 percent of school districts purchasing local foods report that they plan to purchase more local foods in future school years.

INTEGRATING LOCAL FOODS INTO CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS



FRUITS AND VEGETABLES, milk and cheese, whole grain breads and pastas, beans, meats, seafood, and poultry; the opportunities for serving local foods in child nutrition programs are abundant. Not only can local foods span the plate, operators can serve local foods in all types of programs – summer meal programs (Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and Seamless Summer Option (SSO)), afterschool and early childhood settings (Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)), snack programs (Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP)), and National School Lunch (NSLP) and School Breakfast Programs (SBP). From childcare to afterschool settings, through the school-year and during summer months, the following steps will help program operators find, buy, and incorporate local foods into any child nutrition program.

Defining Local

It is up to you to define what local means for your program, and there are many options! Local for one program operator might mean within the county, while local for another might include the entire state and even adjacent states. Definitions of local can also vary depending on the season, type of product, and may also change by program or event.

Getting Started

When planning how to integrate local items into meals, start by reviewing your menus to see what local foods you are already serving. Talking with suppliers and checking packaging and invoices for city/state of origin may reveal that local foods are already being served. The next step is determining how to feature additional local products. Here are several ideas for incorporating local items:

Harvest of the month program: Pick one seasonal item to highlight each month your program is in operation. Feature special menu items, taste tests, or educational activities to showcase local products.

Ingredient substitution: Look for ways to trade out items in recipes to highlight local foods when they are available in your area.

Seasonal cycle menus: Plan what to serve based on the season as an excellent way to keep menus fresh and to find local foods at an affordable price.

New recipe development: Create recipes based on what is in season for a fun way to integrate new foods. For recipe ideas and cookbooks, check out the What's Cooking? USDA Mixing Bowl website.

Salad Bar: Kids love to help themselves! Feature local foods on salad bars in order to highlight local produce and allow kids to choose new foods on their own.

Themed menus for special events: Celebrate the season! Include local items to compliment special events, such as summer kick-offs, back to school BBQs, holiday harvest meals, or spring flings.

Gardens: Harvest foods from school, day care, or community gardens and feature them in the meals you serve or coordinate garden crops with what you are serving to help introduce children to new foods and understand where their food comes from. Check out the garden-based nutrition education curricula from Team Nutrition.

Learn More

A list of helpful menu planning and recipe resources can be found on USDA's Office of Community Food Systems website: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/farm-to-school/farm-to-school-resources>

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The USDA Farm to School Planning Toolkit



Questions and Resources for Designing a Robust Farm to School Program

United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service



Menu Planning

The questions and resources below are meant to help you move towards developing menus that feature more locally produced foods. As you work through the prompts, you will be encouraged to think through the stages of the menu planning process, from taste testing to budgeting and forecasting to serving local foods and assessing the results.

Menu Planning Questions to Consider

The Five Step Menu Planning Cycle



Background and Progress to Date

To date, what steps have you taken to assess your budget to determine how much you might be able to spend on local items, begin incorporating local foods into existing menus, and even develop or use new recipes that feature local foods? Have you taste-tested any local foods or new recipes?

Budgeting & Forecasting

How will the procurement of local items affect your budget? Are the local foods you intend to purchase more or less expensive than what you currently buy? Will they take more or less staff time or training to prepare? What is your budget for holding taste tests?

Will you build taste-tests in as a regular part of your budget?

Once you have a sense of what students will eat, what your budget will allow, and what menu items you'll serve, how will you determine exactly what quantities of which products to procure? What is your current food forecasting process and how will you incorporate local foods into that process?

"We analyzed a typical month's breakfast and lunch menu to find all the products used. We then rated the produce items by frequency of use and separated the produce by season and ability to produce locally."

TIP! The budgeting and forecasting processes will play an important role in determining what type of procurement you conduct. For example, your budget for a local item or several local items will help you determine whether it falls above, or below, your small procurement threshold.

Fond Du Lac Ojibwe School, MN





Five Ways to Integrate Local Foods



1

Identify what is local on the current menu

Conduct a menu audit and find out what products the school is already purchasing locally.

2

Substitute ingredients

Explore what products are available locally and substitute a non-local item with one available locally.

3

Serve local products on the salad bar

The salad bar offers the perfect opportunity to serve fruits and vegetables. The offerings can easily be modified as seasons change.

4

Start a "harvest of the month" program

Consider showcasing one local ingredient every month or each season. Schools may serve the item just once or may prepare the food in several different ways throughout the month to highlight how it can be used.

5

Develop new recipes

Create brand new menu items to highlight local foods.



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The Dirt

News and Notes from FNS's Office of Community Food Systems



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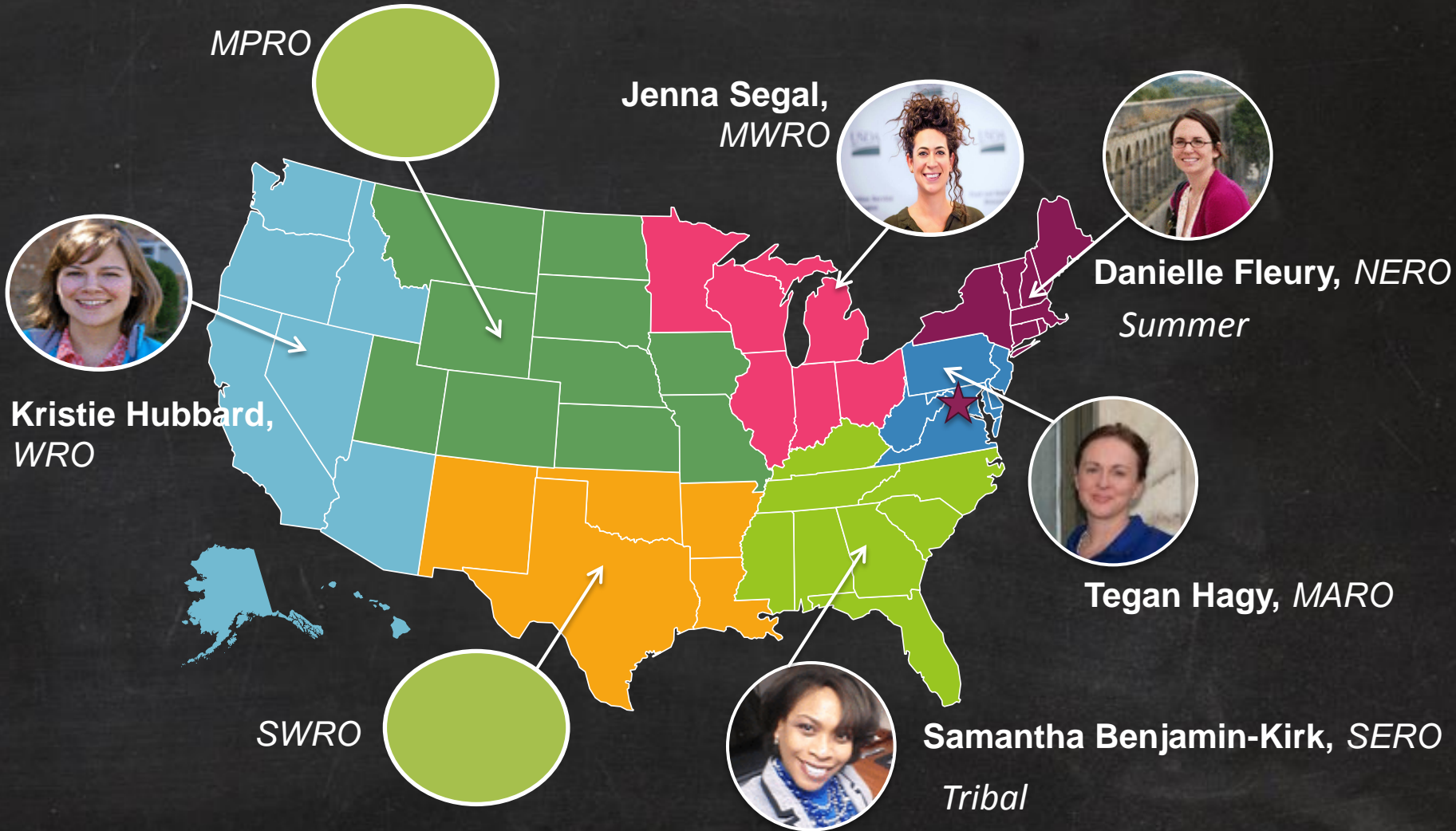


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Connect w a USDA Farm to School team member



Regional Leads



Start or go further with local in 2016-17!



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