

# Team Up for Farm to School Success!

*Erin Hysom*

*June 29, 2017*

**Welcome!**



OFFICE of  
COMMUNITY  
FOOD SYSTEMS



# What is a Community Food System?

A food system in which food production, processing, distribution and consumption are integrated to enhance the *environmental, economic, social and nutritional health* of a particular place.

Four values typically characterize community food systems – *food security, sustainability, proximity, and self-reliance.*





# Food Education



## Local Food



THE  
**FARM** *to* **SCHOOL**  
PROGRAM







If you  
fail to plan,  
you are planning  
to fail.



*B. Franklin*

[jmarkmiller.net](http://jmarkmiller.net)



THE  
**FARM** *to* **SCHOOL**  
PROGRAM

# Objectives

Participants will be able to:

- Identify resources that build, support, and strengthen Farm to School programs
- Discover innovative ways districts have utilized Farm to School grants to plan for programmatic success
- Initiate Farm to School strategic plans that reflect program goals and enhance interaction with stakeholders



# Planning Toolkit

1. Building Your Team
2. Establishing a Vision & Goals
3. Defining Local & Finding Local Foods
4. Buying Local Foods
5. Menu Planning
6. Food Safety
7. Promoting Your Program
8. School Gardening
9. Education & Curriculum Integration
10. Evaluating Your Efforts
11. Sustaining Your Program

[www.usda.gov/farmtoschool](http://www.usda.gov/farmtoschool)



# 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



## Building Your Farm to School Team

Building a farm to school team is a critical first step in the planning process and essential to the long-term success of your program. It's an opportunity to create allies, bring in knowledge and expertise beyond what exists within your core group, and recruit some boots on the ground for planning and implementing your farm to school program, and fundraising to sustain it. Thinking through the questions below, you will be encouraged to define the roles of, and learn more about, your committed team members and advisors; determine what other types of members will make your team stronger; establish a structure for your team and the meetings you hold; come up with a preliminary meeting schedule; and explore existing resources that will help you form an effective group.

### Team-Building Questions to Consider

#### Background

When was your farm to school team established and by whom? What activities has the group participated in to date?

#### Already Committed Members

What are the names, titles, and roles of people who have already committed to being part of your farm to school team?

**TIP!** You might also note other relevant roles that committee members play in the school, the community, or in their personal lives, as well as any helpful skills they might have. Does this member serve on any other committees? Is he or she the parent of a former student (in addition to being, say, the school nurse)? Does he or she love gardening or have fundraising experience?

*"Our biggest contributors and best sounding boards were the students we had on our planning committee. I believe we need to be inclusive of the people who these programs are designed to affect."*

West New York Schools, NJ

#### Advisers

Outside of the team, what people or groups will you look to for guidance and assistance? What are the names, titles, and roles of people who have agreed to advise your committee on specific matters on an as-needed basis?



**TIP!** *Your advisory committee needn't necessarily be formal, but formalizing advisory roles might make the people who you're hoping to get some specific advice or help from more invested in your program.*

## Needed Members & Advisers

What specific people or categories of people would you like to have on your farm to school team or advisory committee but have not yet received a commitment from? Who will be responsible for recruiting these new members? What are your expectations for these members? What role(s) will they play?

**TIP!** *Some possible recruits for your team include:*

- school food service representatives,
- teachers,
- students,
- school administrators (especially the school principal or vice principal),
- school board members,
- parents and grandparents,
- food producers (including farmers, ranchers, and fishermen)
- school nurses,
- guidance counselors,
- staff members of non-profit organizations,
- Master Gardeners,
- researchers,
- school maintenance staff members,
- local chefs,
- state agency farm to school coordinator,
- National Farm to School Network state lead,
- health care professionals,
- extension agents,
- PTA/PTO representatives,
- members of the local media,
- the school or district communications director,
- the school or district curriculum director, and
- other schools or districts that have farm to school programs

## Details & Logistics

### Structure

How is your team structured? Are you a subcommittee of a wellness committee or a food policy committee? Do you have sub-committees? Is there a team lead? Is there a cap on the number of members? Are members appointed, invited, elected, or nominated? Is there a leadership committee? Are all members of the team permanent, or do some serve for a specific period of time (e.g. the school year)?

*"Our coordinator spent a great deal of time during the planning year not only building but constantly maintaining and strengthening relationships with our collaborative partners, often on a one-to-one basis, through meetings, emails, marketing and media updates, and personal visits and conversations. These efforts paid off by making all stakeholders feel they had a personal interest in and commitment to the program."*

*Chico Unified School District, CA*

### Name

What will you call your farm to school team?

*For example: Some popular names include Farm to School Coordinating Committee, Farm to School Organizing Committee, School Nutrition Action Committee (SNAC), and Farm to School Steering Committee. Choose a name that reflects the team's scope. If the team will address issues broader than the term "farm to school" encompasses, its name should reflect that.*

### Responsibilities & Power

What are the functions and responsibilities of the farm to school team? Does the team, or do members of the team, have decision-making power? If not, by what means can the team's ideas and recommendations be realized?

*For example: The types of activities a farm to school team might be responsible for include strategic planning, implementation, community outreach, regular reporting to specific people or entities, and fundraising.*

### Relationship building

Do the various team members, [especially foodservice staff, administrators, and teachers] work together often? If not, what activities will build relationships, understanding, and trust between members?

### Meetings

Who is the team accountable to? How often does the team meet? Where are meetings held? Are meetings open to the public? Will meetings be facilitated by a member of the team, or an external partner?

## Team Building Resources

Following is a list of resources you may find helpful for assembling and growing your farm to school team and leading farm to school planning meetings.

### Farm to School: Assemble a Team

*University of Minnesota Extension*

Tips for foodservice directors on building a farm to school team, including a video and many examples.

Building a team is a critical first step in the planning process and essential to the long-term success of your program. It's an

- What are the names, titles, and roles of people who have already committed to being a part of your farm to school team? Do you have

- ## Establishing a Vision

- What is behind your decision to establish a farm to school program? Why does your community value a community food systems approach?

- Before you start purchasing local foods or determining which local foods you are already serving, you must define local, determine what foods are grown, harvested, raised, caught, and processed in the region and when those foods are available. Understanding why local foods are important, as well as the availability of these foods, will help you create a definition that allows you to tap into the bounty of the local food economy without limiting competition.

- 

OFFICE of  
COMMUNITY  
FOOD SYSTEMS

## BUILDING YOUR TEAM

## ESTABLISHING A VISION

## DEFINING LOCAL

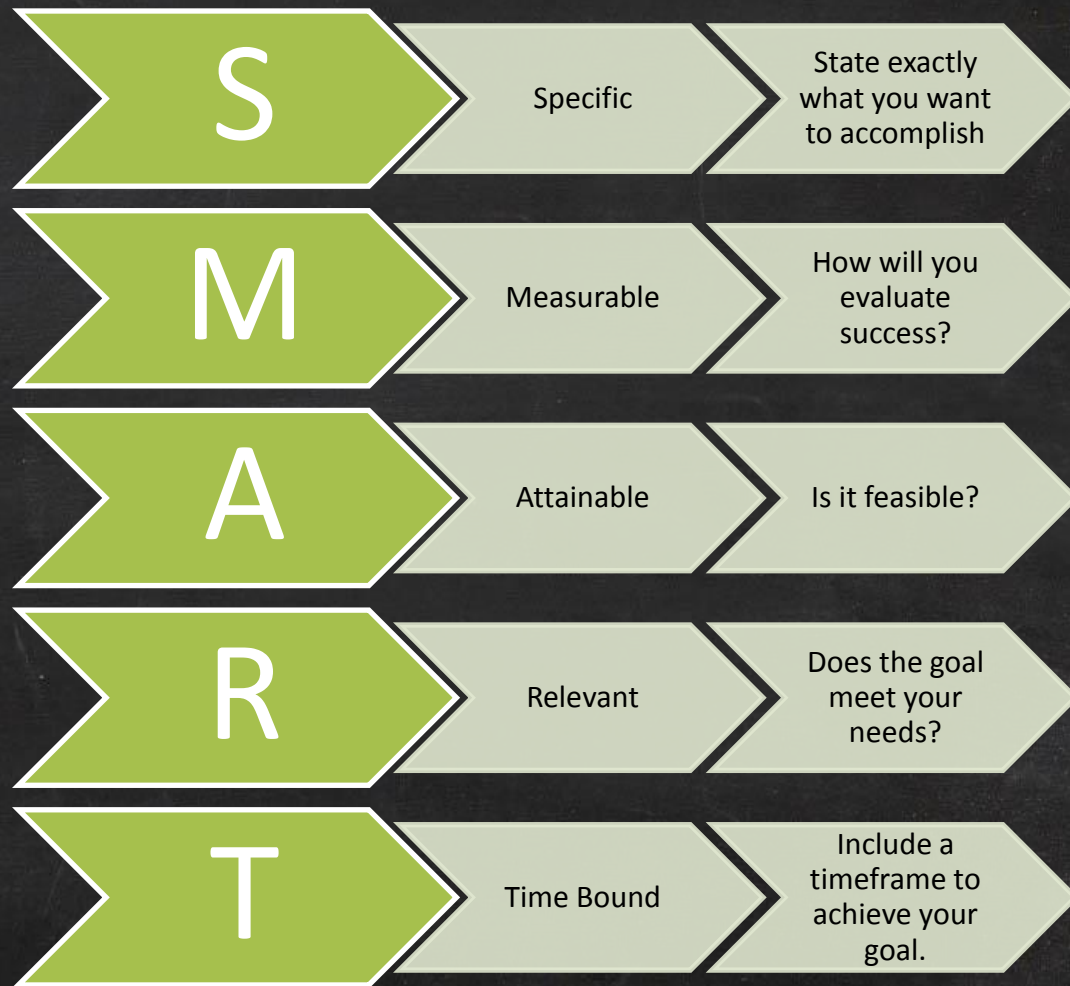
## GOALS

## PROMOTING AND MARKETING YOUR PROGRAM

## EVALUATING YOUR EFFORTS



# Setting SMART Goals



# Planning Grants

## **Intended to**

Help school districts or schools organize and structure their farm to school efforts for maximum impact by embedding known best practices into early design considerations.

## **Intended for**

School districts or schools that are just getting started in farm to school activities.

## **Who can apply?**

PreK-12 SFA's, nonprofit private schools, charter schools, Indian tribal schools.





# Resources



United States Department of Agriculture

## SCHOOL GARDENS

Using Gardens to Grow Healthy Habits in Cafeterias, Classrooms, and Communities



United States Department of Agriculture

## INTEGRATING LOCAL FOODS INTO CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS



United States Department of Agriculture

## THE USDA FARM TO SCHOOL GRANT PROGRAM



EVERY YEAR, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) awards grants to help schools connect with local producers and teach children where their food comes from.

### Eligible Entities

Grantees include schools and districts (large and small, rural and urban), Indian tribal organizations, agricultural producers or groups of agricultural producers, non-profit entities, and

### Timeline

Beginning in 2016, USDA plans to release a request for applications (RFA) in early fall. Applications are due approximately three months after the RFA is released, and



United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Procuring Local Foods  
for Child Nutrition Programs



**hot-  
LANTA**

# Planting Seeds to Grow Farm to School

*Building Your Program Through Partnerships*



# Regional Leads

**Andrea Northup,**  
*Mountain Plains*  
(MPRO)



**Jenna Segal,**  
*Midwest*  
(MWRO)



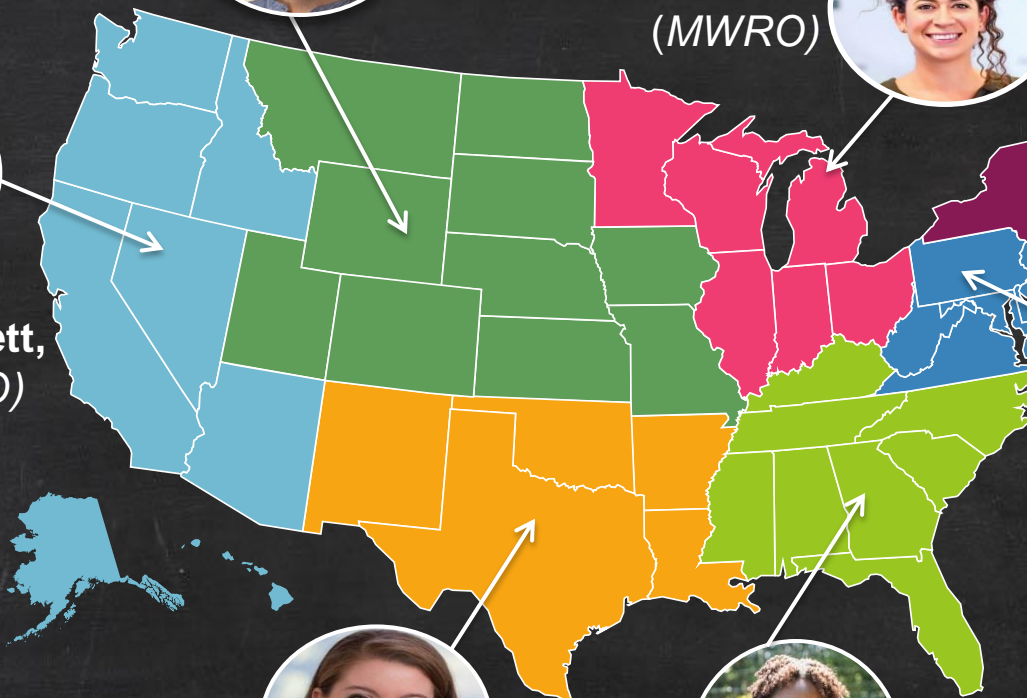
**Danielle Fleury,**  
*Northeast*  
(NERO)



**JuliAnna Arnett,**  
*Western*  
(WRO)



**Tegan (Hagy) Bernstein,**  
*Mid Atlantic*  
(MARO)



**Rachel Spencer,**  
*Southwest*  
(SWRO)



**Samantha Benjamin-Kirk,**  
*Southeast*  
(SERO)

# National Staff



**Erin Healy**

*Director*



**Christina Conell**

*Senior Technical Advisor*



**Mieka Sanderson**

*Grant Program*



**Erin Hysom**

*Training + Technical  
Assistance (NSLP, SFSP)*



**Janell Walker**

*Communications, Evaluation,  
Technical Assistance (CACFP)*

National Staff is based in Alexandria, Virginia



# Questions?

[www.usda.gov/farmentoschool](http://www.usda.gov/farmentoschool)



THE  
**FARM** *to* **SCHOOL**  
PROGRAM