



# INDIANA GROWN FOR SCHOOLS NEWSLETTER

Indiana's Statewide Farm to School Network

## LOCAL FOOD FOR SCHOOLS

Since the start of the program in fall 2023, the Local Food for Schools (LFS) program has been a huge success for Indiana school districts and local farmers and ranchers.

Over the last year, school districts around the state had the unique opportunity to increase access to nutritious, local foods for school meal programs by participating in the LFS program.

This program was designed to give students more access to nutritious foods unique to the area in which they live. As of January 2024, the LFS program has distributed local products to approximately 160 schools across Indiana, which has given students all over the state the opportunity to enjoy locally grown produce and meats during school breakfast and lunch meals. The program has also helped establish lasting relationships with local producers. These producers were able to expand their businesses knowing their products have served the nutrient needs of students across the state.

**If you are interested in learning more about the LFS program, please reach out to Brianna Goode ([bgoode@health.in.gov](mailto:bgoode@health.in.gov)) to learn more!**

# MEET ANNA

**Anna Holloway is the new Farm to School value chain professional with the Indiana Department of Health. Anna will serve both producers seeking to enter school markets and schools searching for local food while supporting the existing value chain work in many regions of Indiana.**



## **TELL US A BIT ABOUT YOURSELF**

I was the founding member and teacher of the very first farm to school program at my previous school in Montana. I truly know what it means to “start from scratch.” I have spent the last 20 years as a kitchen manager and farm to school coordinator within a rural school just outside of Yellowstone National Park. My roots and love for Indiana grow deep and I have since returned to live and work on a small old family farm that I inherited last year.

## **WHAT ARE YOU MOST EXCITED FOR TRANSITIONING INTO THIS NEW ROLE?**

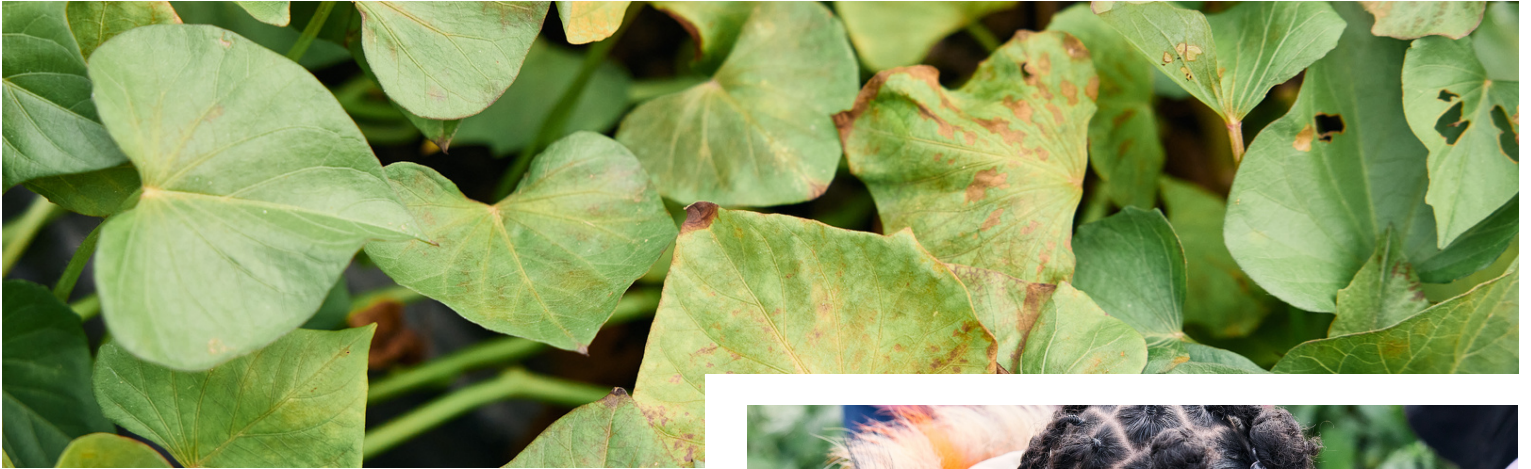
I am excited to be able to assist in creating a thriving and sustainable Farm to School program in Indiana. I am dedicated to making school environments healthy for both students and staff by connecting local farmers and school food service directors.

## **WHAT DO YOU ENJOY DOING IN YOUR FREE TIME?**

In my free time, I love to play in the mountains and rivers, harvest and admire wild things, and spend time with my three dogs. Things are a little different out here in Indiana, so I am eager to find new outdoor opportunities to replace the ones I left.

# NEWS & RESOURCES

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## LEVERAGING CACFP FOR FARM TO EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION

A report released by the Food Research & Action Center (FRAC), with support from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, outlines a pivotal cross-sector approach to improving children's equitable access to fresh, nutritious foods to reduce hunger. The report provides recommendations and policy changes that support childcare providers to access the federal Child and Adult Food Care Program and utilize it for eligible farm to early care and education activities.

[LEARN MORE](#)



## NATIONAL CACFP WEEK MARCH 10-16

CACFP Week is a national educational and information campaign sponsored annually by the National CACFP Sponsors Association designed to raise awareness of how the USDA's Child and Adult Care Food Program works to combat hunger.

[DOWNLOAD PROMO FLYERS](#)  
[2024 CACFP WEEK MATERIALS](#)





## **KIDSGARDENING LANDSCAPE DESIGN FOR YOUTH GARDENS E-COURSE**

Thoughtfully developed, piloted, and refined with our peers, this course introduces participants to the basic steps and elements of landscape design that can be used to plan an interactive, fun, and sustainable youth garden. Participants will receive all the knowledge they need to design a youth-friendly garden that is engaging and appealing to youth and their communities. We focus on applying basic design techniques to help gardening educators, community volunteers/leaders, and family members start or expand a gardening journey with the kids in their lives.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

## **USING NETWORKS TO BUILD COLLABORATIVE AND EQUITABLE FOOD SYSTEMS**

This brief focuses on local food systems as vehicles for collaboration and racial equity among multiple stakeholders and networks. Local food systems are widely regarded as go-to examples for fostering rural-urban and farmer-consumer connections, but they require significant investments in stakeholder networks and the institutional infrastructure necessary to sustain and expand them. Examples of statewide, regional, and national initiatives are given to illustrate the power of networks to foster deeper levels of collaboration and reciprocity. The vital roles of Minority Serving Institutions and Cooperative Extension are highlighted.

[VIEW THE BRIEF HERE](#)

## **HEALTHY MEALS INCENTIVES RECOGNITION PROGRAM**

There are many ways to serve school meals and the [Healthy Meals Incentives Recognition Awards for School Food Authorities](#) are designed to celebrate the innovative practices taking place across the country! Whether it is preparation techniques, menu planning, cultural diversity of meals, incorporation of local foods, community engagement, or nutrition education – uplift your school meal program by applying for a Healthy Meals Incentives Recognition Award today. Recognition Award winners will receive national and local recognition, as well as an exclusive invitation and a travel stipend to attend one of the National Healthy Meals Summits.

[LEARN MORE](#)

[REGISTER FOR THE INFORMATIONAL WEBINAR](#)

# UPCOMING EVENTS



## **FARM TO SCHOOL LISTENING SESSION**

**FEB. 21, 1:30-3 P.M. EST**

### **Shape the future of Farm to School in Indiana!**

Join the Indiana Grown for Schools Network's Listening Session at the Orange County Community Center on February 21 to discuss successes, challenges, and priorities for increasing local foods, fostering school gardens, and integrating nutrition and agriculture education in classrooms in your community and statewide.

#### **Who should attend:**

School administrators, educators, school food service personnel, local farmers, food distributors, students, parents, local council members, non-profit organizations, government officials, and community members.

[LEARN MORE & REGISTER HERE](#)

## **INDIANA UPLANDS WINTER FOOD SUMMIT**

**FEB. 21, 9 A.M.-3 P.M. EST**

The Indiana Uplands Winter Food Summit will create and strengthen connections to help reshape our Southern Indiana Food System into a regionally resilient food economy where social, health, and environmental values drive positive change for all.

[LEARN MORE & REGISTER HERE](#)



## **LOCAL FOOD NETWORKING** FEB 27, 1-3 P.M. EST

Join the Local Food Networking event to meet with the farmers, growers, producers, buyers, sellers, and supporters of local food in northeast Indiana. This event will be a great place to connect with:

- Sellers of locally sourced food products
- Buyers of local foods or products that use local ingredients
- Organizations that support and advocate for local foods in our communities

[LEARN MORE & REGISTER HERE](#)

## **INDIANA GROWN SYMPOSIUM** MARCH 19, 9 A.M.-4:30 P.M. EST

Registration is underway for the 2024 Indiana Grown Symposium, at the Hendricks County Fairgrounds in Danville. The event gives food-based operators and new agritourism operators the opportunity to connect with resources available on-site to enhance their businesses. The Indiana Grown Symposium will feature a tradeshow that day from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., as well as educational sessions, presentations, and networking opportunities.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

## **FARM TO SCHOOL AND ECE SYMPOSIUM** JUNE 2024

Event coming in June 2024! We are hosting a Farm to School and ECE Symposium to gather and learn about gardening, local procurement, and agriculture education! We welcome all teachers, food service staff, and school administration staff to come with other members from your school to plan for your Farm to School projects. Are you a community member, farmer, child nutrition professional, or local food advocate? No problem! We also welcome anyone who wants to learn more about this exciting space. An exact date, time, and location will be announced soon!

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE INVOLVED IN THE PLANNING OF THE EVENT, PLEASE EMAIL SOPHIE LINDLEY AT [SLINDLEY@DOE.IN.GOV](mailto:SLINDLEY@DOE.IN.GOV). MORE DETAILS TO COME**

# WEBINARS

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## **KIDSGARDENING COMMUNITY CHAT: PLAN YOUR PROGRAM**

FEB. 21, 3 P.M. EST

Join this Community Chat to ask your questions and share ideas about all things related to planning a garden and garden program for the year ahead! This Community Chat will be a bit more workshop-style than usual, helping you to think about activities, plants, and programming that is seasonally and regionally relevant to you.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

## **A TRIO OF PERSPECTIVES ON ADDRESSING FOOD WASTE FROM FIELD TO FORK**

FEB. 22, 1-2:30 P.M. EST

Explore insights on factors influencing food loss and waste, delve into innovative recycling techniques, and explore statewide initiatives targeting household food waste. Experts in postharvest handling, food waste recycling, and community education, will share research findings and strategies. Don't miss this dynamic trio of talks aimed at cultivating a more sustainable food system.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

## **SCHOOL BREAKFAST WEEK PREPARATION WEBINAR**

FEB. 22, 2-3 P.M. EST

Hear from the American Dairy Association Indiana on ways to boost your breakfast participation and hear from a field specialist on common AR findings and best practices for the School Breakfast Program.

[REGISTER HERE](#)



## **VIRTUAL FIELD TRIP WEBINAR** FEB. 28, 2 P.M. EST

Virtual field trips are an incredible resource both for you and your students to experience other farm and school garden locations and for you to share about your school garden program with others. Join this webinar to learn about options to attend field trips as well as resources, tips, and advice for creating your own virtual field trip.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

## **ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS IN THE GARDEN** FEB. 28, 7 P.M. EST

Join for a virtual small group discussion on how the garden can be used as a space/tool to teach reading and writing lessons for middle and high school students. Open to anyone gardening with kids in middle and high school settings.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

## **INDIANA GROWN FOR SCHOOLS NETWORK: HARVEST OF THE MONTH 101** FEB. 29, 3-4 P.M. EST

Harvest of the Month is a great opportunity to celebrate local abundance, experiment with new foods and recipes, and get some positive recognition for your school district and/or school. Interested in learning more? Register to learn about Harvest of the Month programming, available resources, and more!

[REGISTER HERE](#)



## **HYDROPONICS FOR THE CAFETERIA**

**MARCH 6, 2-3 P.M.**

Curious about growing and serving hydroponic produce in your school cafeteria? In this workshop, participants will understand how hydroponics can be used in the School Cafeteria to grow food and engage students. You will learn the whole process from assembly to seed planting to cultivating your crop to the program maintenance involved with a Flex Farm. Discover how to raise, harvest, and serve hydroponics all in the same space. Now that's a commitment to local food!

[REGISTER HERE](#)

## **HYDROPONICS FOR THE CLASSROOM TEACHER**

**MARCH 6, 4-5 P.M. EST**

How can hydroponics work in the classroom setting? In this workshop, participants will learn how one high school classroom has been experimenting with different methods for growing plants using hydroponics, conventional raised beds, and various permaculture techniques. Join us to hear how students have been exploring how to get better yields from our aquaponics plants and discussing the potential for aquaculture and hydroponics to help meet global food needs and have time to ask questions on how you can set up a similar system in your classroom.

[REGISTER HERE](#)



# FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES



## **WHOLE KIDS GARDEN GRANT**

**DEADLINE: MARCH 1**

Through the Whole Kids Garden Grant Program, schools and non-profit organizations serving children can receive \$3,000 to support a new or existing edible educational garden located at either a:

- K-12 School
- Not-for-profit organization (501(c)(3) in the US/Registered Charity in Canada) that serves children in the K-12 grade levels

[LEARN MORE & APPLY](#)

## **RESILIENT FOOD SYSTEMS INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT PROGRAM**

**DEADLINE: MARCH 8**

The purpose of this program is to improve food supply resilience in the middle of the food chain through increasing distribution, aggregation, storage capacity, market expansion, and facility updates/expansions. Following federal guidance, the project performance period will be from June 2024 to May 25, 2027.

Applicants must demonstrate how this project will improve resilience in the middle of the food chain and ensure the project will be completed by May 2027.

[LEARN MORE AND APPLY](#)

## **RURAL HEALTH & SAFETY EDUCATION COMPETITIVE GRANTS PROGRAM**

**DEADLINE: MARCH 14**

The Rural Health and Safety Education Competitive Grants Program (RHSE) improves the quality of life in rural communities by providing the essential knowledge necessary for successful programs of rural health and safety in the context of food, agriculture, natural resources, and human sciences. RHSE program proposals are expected to be community-based outreach education programs.

[LEARN MORE & APPLY](#)

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## **BEGINNING FARMER & RANCHER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

**DEADLINE: APRIL 4**

The Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program (BFRDP) supports projects that provide education, outreach, and technical assistance for beginning farmers and ranchers in the United States and its territories. This program provides opportunities for beginning farmers and ranchers to enter and/or improve their success in farming, ranching, and management of non-industrial private forest lands, and provide beginning farmers and ranchers the knowledge, skills, and tools needed to make informed decisions for their operations and enhance their sustainability.

[LEARN MORE & APPLY](#)

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## **LAKE MICHIGAN SCHOOL FOOD SYSTEM INNOVATION HUB AWARDS**

**DEADLINE: APRIL 30**

### **SPARK AWARDS**

Spark Awards fund projects that need a short-term infusion of funds for the school food system and marketplace improvements, such as capacity-building, planning, and product testing projects.

**Award Range: \$10,000-\$75,000**

### **INNOVATION COLLABORATIVE AWARDS**

Innovation Collaborative Awards fund projects that promote systems-level change of the school food system and marketplace, such as scaling up of programs, regional partnerships, or new program or product development and integration.

**Award: \$250,000**

[LEARN MORE & APPLY](#)

# SUCCESS STORY



## **PLANTING SEEDS OF SUCCESS WITH CULVER COMMUNITY SCHOOLS**

The next level of local eating has come to Culver, Indiana. Last year, Culver Community Schools began to build and cultivate a vibrant school garden for middle and high school students. Dedicated teachers were able to offer enhanced learning experiences for middle and high school students in the agriculture classes. Students engaged in planting seeds, learning about different vegetable varieties, and caring for seedlings for the garden. Different varieties of lettuce grown by the students will even be incorporated into the school cafeteria menu, offering a fresh and nutritious “garden to lunch table” experience. For the students, this has been an opportunity to get their hands dirty. For the school, this has been a way to provide students with fresh produce.

[READ THE FULL STORY HERE](#)

# STAY IN TOUCH!



#INGROWN4SCHOOLS

# CONTACT INFORMATION

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