



# **INDIANA GROWN FOR SCHOOLS NEWSLETTER**

Indiana's Statewide Farm to School Network

## **INDIANA FARM TO SCHOOL SUCCESS STORIES**

As we begin a new year, it is always important to think back on all of our accomplishments and successes. This is a great time to reflect and share how farm to school has made a difference in your school, business, or community. The Indiana Grown for Schools Network would love to learn how farm to school is making a difference in schools and communities throughout the state. Whether you implemented a school garden, a producer hosted a field trip to their farm, or cafeteria personnel brought local produce into the cafeteria, we want to hear about it! These stories will be featured on our website and social media platforms.

[\*\*SHARE YOUR STORY\*\*](#)

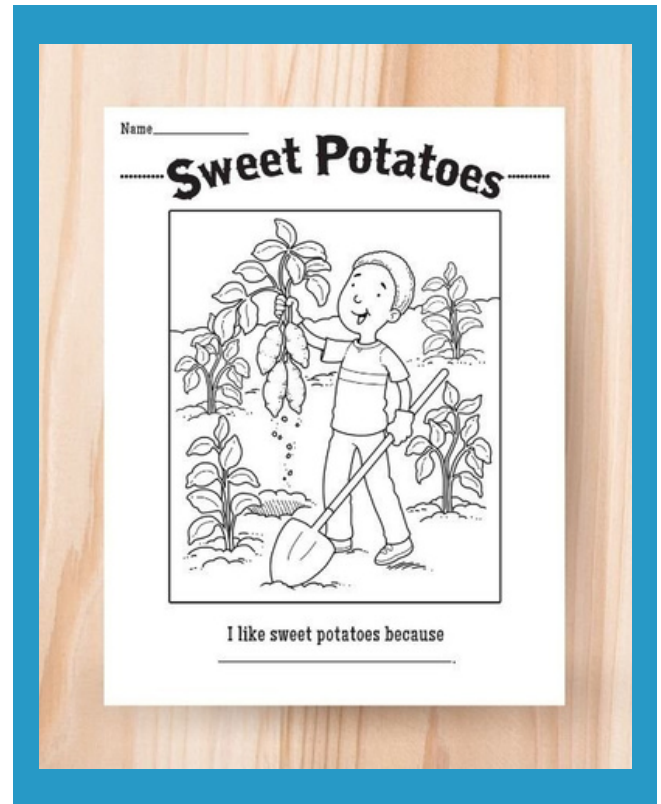
# NEWS & RESOURCES

## INDIANA GROWN FOR SCHOOLS NETWORK HARVEST OF THE MONTH DATABASE

Indiana Harvest of the Month celebrates different in-season, locally-grown food items every month. Harvest of the Month is a great way to buy, grow, and serve more local food while teaching kids about healthy eating, nutrition, and agriculture!

The Indiana Harvest of the Month database provides you with access to classroom and cafeteria activities, lesson plans, videos highlighting Indiana producers, recipes, awesome promotional material, and more! All classroom lessons and activities have been aligned with Indiana Academic Standards for K-5 classrooms.

[ACCESS THE RESOURCES HERE](#)



## INDIANA GROWN FOR SCHOOLS NETWORK RECOGNITION PROGRAM

The IGFSN Recognition Program is a farm to school marketing program for Indiana qualifying entities. Entities may qualify by showcasing their existing projects or practices within each pillar of farm to school (Procurement, Agriculture and Nutrition Education, and School Gardens). K-12 schools will receive certification by individual school buildings, not school corporations. The application for this program is ongoing and approved entities receive all benefits and materials as soon as the application is approved by the Indiana Grown for Schools Network. Engaging students in an environment influenced by farm to school is something to be proud of, and we want to help you market your success!

[LEARN MORE](#)

# INDIANA GROWN FOR SCHOOLS NETWORK TOOLKITS

The Indiana Grown for Schools Network toolkits are modeled after the four pillars of farm to school as recognized by the National Farm to School Network: Farm to ECE, Agriculture and Nutrition Education, School Gardens, and Procurement. The goal of these toolkits is to support the implementation and/or expansion of farm to school programs.

[DOWNLOAD TOOLKITS HERE](#)



## KIDS ENJOY LOCAL SWEET POTATOES

The dedicated Northeast Indiana Farm to School Team sourced and distributed over 850 pounds of sweet potato grown by Berry Hill Farm to 20 schools in 11 different school districts across Northeast Indiana. Over 3,400 PreK-12 students enjoyed local sweet potatoes, some as part of classroom activities and others in their school cafeteria. The food service teams were very impressed by the size of the potatoes, asking “Oh my gosh, What’s in their soil? They must have magic soil” We agree! Berry Hill Farm does grow huge, nutrient dense sweet potatoes. It’s not magic, just years of hard work and lots of compost to create rich, fertile soil.

## KINDER GARDEN AT DALEVILLE COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

Imagine the school of your dreams, where learning at the ages of 5 and 6 is not only fun and creative, but something of a live fairy tale immersed in an environment of living, growing fruits, vegetables, trees, and flowers. Timothy Long and Julian Ravenscroft have helped create a magical environment for kindergarten and first grade students at Daleville Elementary. And their story just gets better and better.

[Read the Full Story Here](#)





# UPCOMING EVENTS



## LAKE MICHIGAN FOOD SYSTEM INNOVATION HUB'S LAUNCH WEBINAR

JANUARY 24, 2024

The Lake Michigan School Food System Innovation Hub fosters collaborations that nourish students, connect schools with local farms and businesses, and celebrate our region's cultures and communities. In February 2024, they will open applications for two new funding opportunities: the Spark Awards and the Innovation Collaborative Awards. Additional grant cycles will continue through 2028. They are hoping to hear from local food system leaders across Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, and Indiana – especially in areas that don't have equitable access to resources. Save the date for their January 24 launch webinar, and in the meantime, check out their grant website.

[LEARN MORE](#)

## ADVANCING RACIAL & SOCIAL EQUITY IN WISCONSIN FARM TO SCHOOL WEBINAR

JANUARY 17, 2024, 1:00 PM ET

How can schools, support organizations, and policymakers improve access for historically underserved producers to participate in farm to school procurement? On January 17, Allison Pfaff Harris of REAP Food Group and Jess Guffey Calkins of University of Wisconsin-Madison Extension will share findings from their 2023 study report that delved into the needs and opportunities of historically underserved Wisconsin producers for engaging in farm to school markets.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

## VETERANS IN FARMING WORKSHOP

JANUARY 19-21, 2024

This workshop is designed for veterans who want to learn about homesteading or farming, with program topics for both beginning and experienced farmers.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

## INDIANA SUSTAINABILITY & RESILIENCE CONFERENCE

FEBRUARY 9, 2024

The Indiana Sustainability and Resilience Conference (ISRC) connects Hoosier climate leaders to the knowledge, tools, and resources that can accelerate climate action and resilience efforts in Indiana. The conference brings together sustainability professionals, scholars, and climate advocates from across the state to enhance cross-sector collaboration, share best practices, and strengthen Indiana's climate and resilience network.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

# FARM TO SCHOOL AND ECE SYMPOSIUM

## JUNE 2024

Save the date for 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.

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!

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## FREE FARM TO ECE LEARNING COLLABORATIVES

### OFFERED BY SPARK LEARNING LAB

#### JANUARY 22-APRIL 29, 2024

This session will focus on the how, when, what, and why of Local Foods. Procuring and serving local foods can strengthen healthy nutrition and development for children and provide other benefits to your program. We will cover those, as well as the preparation and proper storage of fresh foods for safety, freshness, and health. This learning collaborative will be helpful for family child care homes and for centers with cooks/food preparers and/or food purchasers. Learn about local food purchasing now to be ready for farmer's market season and gardening season.

To register, contact Marsha Hearn-Lindsey at [marshahl4554@gmail.com](mailto:marshahl4554@gmail.com) or (317) 379-5984

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## PRODUCE SAFETY TRAINING FOR GROWERS

### JANUARY 17 & FEBRUARY 24, 2024

The Produce Safety Alliance (PSA) is offering several no-cost remote or in-person trainings this winter. These full-day training sessions cover information about worker health, soil amendments, animals on farms, water sources, and postharvest handling.

[REGISTER HERE](#)



# FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

## SCHOOL FOODSERVICE WORKFORCE RESEARCH PROJECT COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT

DEADLINE: FEBRUARY 9

USDA's [Food and Nutrition Service](#) has recently released the Request for Applications (RFA) for the [Fiscal Year 2024 School Foodservice Workforce Cooperative Agreement](#). This funding opportunity will support research projects that increase understanding of the school food service workforce, including dimensions like worker satisfaction, workforce experience, and training and development.

[APPLY HERE](#)



## HEALTHY MEALS INCENTIVES RECOGNITION AWARDS PROGRAM

DEADLINE: JAN. 24, 2024

Do you know a school district that has implemented innovative practices to advance their school meals? If you answered yes, we encourage the district to apply for a [Healthy Meals Incentives Recognition Award](#). As part of USDA Food and Nutrition Service's Healthy Meals Incentives Initiative, [Action for Healthy Kids](#) is offering Recognition Awards for Breakfast Trailblazers, Small and/or Rural Lunch Trailblazers, Innovation in the Cultural Diversity of School Meals, and more. SFAs meeting the Recognition Award criteria will receive national and local recognition, an awardee toolkit, and travel stipends to attend a national Healthy Meals Summit. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis until June 30, 2025, and applicants will be notified of their results within two months after submission. Click below to learn more about the Recognition Awards.

[LEARN MORE](#)

# FUNDING OF INNOVATION AND PARTNERSHIPS IN RURAL SCHOOL FOOD SYSTEMS

DEADLINE: JANUARY 26, 2024

As part of the USDA's Healthy Meals Incentives Initiative, funding and learning support are now available for a cohort of up to 35 rural school food authorities (SFAs) across the nation. Project SCALES (Supporting Community Agriculture and Local Education Systems) will work with SFAs over a two-year period as they engage in projects to build partnerships for innovative solutions to increase local procurement in their school meal programs. The Center for School and Community Partnerships at Boise State University will provide a grant (up to \$150,000) for each SFA, with expert technical assistance from LunchAssist.

[APPLY HERE](#)

# FARMER VETERAN FELLOWSHIP FUND APPLICATION

DUE FEBRUARY 14, 2024

The 2024 Farmer Veteran Fellowship Fund application is now open! The Fellowship Fund is a small grant program that provides direct assistance to veterans who are in their beginning years of farming or ranching.

[LEARN MORE & APPLY](#)



# SALAD BARS FOR SCHOOLS ROLLING APPLICATION

Is your district ready to implement salad bars as part of your reimbursable meal program? To qualify for a Salad Bars to Schools grant you must offer the salad bar as part of the reimbursable meal served in your district. The 6-foot, five-well salad bar package is for locations that serve at least 100 reimbursable meals daily. Any district or independent school participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) is eligible to apply.

[LEARN MORE & APPLY](#)



# STAY IN TOUCH!



#INGROWN4SCHOOLS



# CONTACT INFORMATION

**BRIANNA GOODE**

 [bgoode@health.in.gov](mailto:bgoode@health.in.gov)

**SOPHIE LINDLEY**

 [slindley@doe.in.gov](mailto:slindley@doe.in.gov)

**WEBSITE**

[www.ingrown4schools.com](http://www.ingrown4schools.com)

**ON ALL SOCIAL MEDIA:**

@ingrown4schools