

- **One-third of U.S. children are obese and overweight.**
- **The typical food item in the U.S. travels 1,500 to 2,400 miles from farm to plate.**
- **With only 2.2 million farmers, the U.S. has more prisoners than farmers.**

Farm to School programs across the country want to change these statistics.

Farm to School lessons help children understand where their food comes from and the labor involved in bringing it to their table. They learn how plants grow, what they need to survive, and how foods affect their body, environment and community.

What are the benefits?

- The cafeteria becomes a classroom.
- Students and teachers discover the improved taste (and benefit from additional nutrients) of locally grown and freshly picked produce.
- Farmers restore a connection to consumers and gain reliable new markets in schools.



Farm to school programs are a win-win-win for children, farmers, and communities.

WHY FARM TO SCHOOL?

Our local Farm to School team includes members from the following organizations:

Lexington-Fayette County
Health Department

Fayette County Public Schools,
Child Nutrition office

The Lexington Farmers Market

UK Cooperative Extension

Fayette Co. Farm Bureau

Food Chain

Explorium of Lexington

Bluegrass Greensource

This brochure has been adapted from the National Farm to School Network brochure, www.farmtoschool.org

Fayette County Farm to School

Anyone is welcome to join our team!

For more information, please contact:

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Fayette County

Farm to School

**Nourishing
Kids and
Communities**



What's Happening Now?

Teachers who would like the Farm to School program for their students can complete our interest inquiry, found on the FCPS Child Nutrition or Sustainability pages at www.sustainability.fcps.net/teacher's-corner

Since our coalition was founded in 2010, we have brought local food taste testings, field trips to local farms, and lessons on nutrition, environmental impact and food economics to over 60% of Fayette Co. Public Schools. Growing Together Preschool has also joined in.



IN THE CAFETERIA

- Throughout the school year, FCPS child nutrition office works hard to put **local foods onto the lunch trays** as much as possible with limited funds. They regularly offer local lettuce and apples.
- **Signs** describing local foods on the cafeteria line that day will be placed on the counter, describing the food and the farm it came from.

IN THE CLASSROOM

- **Classroom taste tests** have offered watermelon, beets, cherry tomatoes, cheese, eggs, raspberries, just to name a few. All the children willing to taste receive an "I tried it!" sticker.
- Our coalition has developed three **lesson plans** with power point presentations for teachers to use, as desired. The lesson topics cover **human nutrition** and the benefits of eating locally grown fruits and vegetables, the **environmental impact** of food traveling across the country—and world—to reach our table and how buying local can help, and the **economic impact** and how buying local helps our farmers grow their market.
- A **Farm to School Kit** is available for check-out from any of our coalition members. The kit contains a CD of the lessons, pre & post tests, props needed for the economic lesson activity, "I tried it" stickers, farmer trading cards and bookmarks for the students. Kits are available free of charge to teachers or community members who volunteer to teach lessons at their school.
- Members from our coalition volunteer to be guest speakers to teach the lessons if the



Bluegrass Aquaponics is one of several local farms that contracts with the Child Nutrition Program.

classroom teacher is not comfortable doing so with the kit. Please request speakers at least a month in advance, the sooner the better.

IN THE COMMUNITY

- **Farm field trips** are funded when grant money is available. Fayette Farm Bureau is funding a field trip for the 2015-2016 school year. Children often remember field trips for years to come and learning how food is grown has been linked to more "mindful" eating and lower rates of obesity. If you or an organization you are part of would like to assist with the costs of a field trip, please let us know.

What Could Happen?

It takes a whole community to put nutritious, local foods on the menu in cafeterias and in the classroom.

With more support from parents, policy-makers, private donations, administrators, teachers, farmers, and the community, the ideas below could become reality:

- Feature more local foods on menu.
- Plan nutrition education activities, such as Harvest of the Month, featuring local foods
- Connect instructional school gardens to the curriculum
- Use local foods as a healthy fundraiser or featured at a special event.