

Farm to Institution

PURPOSE

By increasing the demand for fresh locally grown food by large institutions, and by making the procurement process easier and more manageable, farm to institution initiatives help keep farming viable, promote good jobs and a strong agricultural economy, and also improve people's health and well-being.

EXAMPLES

Massachusetts Farm to School Project

Mass Farm to School Project (www.massfarmtoschool.org) is one of the oldest Farm to Institution initiatives. Started in 2003 as a pilot project in 5 schools, the program now includes 114 Farmers working in 231 school districts and 89 colleges or individual schools. Mass Farm to School facilitates sustainable purchasing relationships between local institutions and local farms, promotes local food and agriculture education for students, and supports state, regional and national networking of farm to school practitioners. They offer technical assistance.

University of Massachusetts-Amherst

UMASS-Amherst offers an example of high volume, affordable sourcing of locally grown foods purchased direct from a farmer who aggregates products from neighboring farms. Through this streamlined supply chain as well as purchases from traditional distributors and on-campus production, the University has increased local procurement within their produce budget to over 30%, and has signed onto the Real Food Challenge Commitment to reach 20% Real Food in their overall food spending by 2020. Success with the local foods program has fostered more opportunities – securing private foundation funds to expand the program and document the structure as a model for other campuses, solidifying student support for and participation in campus dining, and expanding key partnerships across campus and the surrounding community to institutionalize local foods procurement through administrative policy.

LINKS TO MORE INFORMATION

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT FARM TO INSTITUTION PROGRAMS, VISIT THE LINK BELOW.

<http://www.whyhunger.org/getinfo/showArticle/articleId/93> Policy and Advocacy on Farm to Institution

<http://www.localumass.com/> for more information on UMASS Dining Services' commitment to local food

<http://toolkit.centerfornutrition.org/> Nebraska-based toolkit for starting Farm to School projects

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT

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