



MI Farm to ECE Webinar Series:

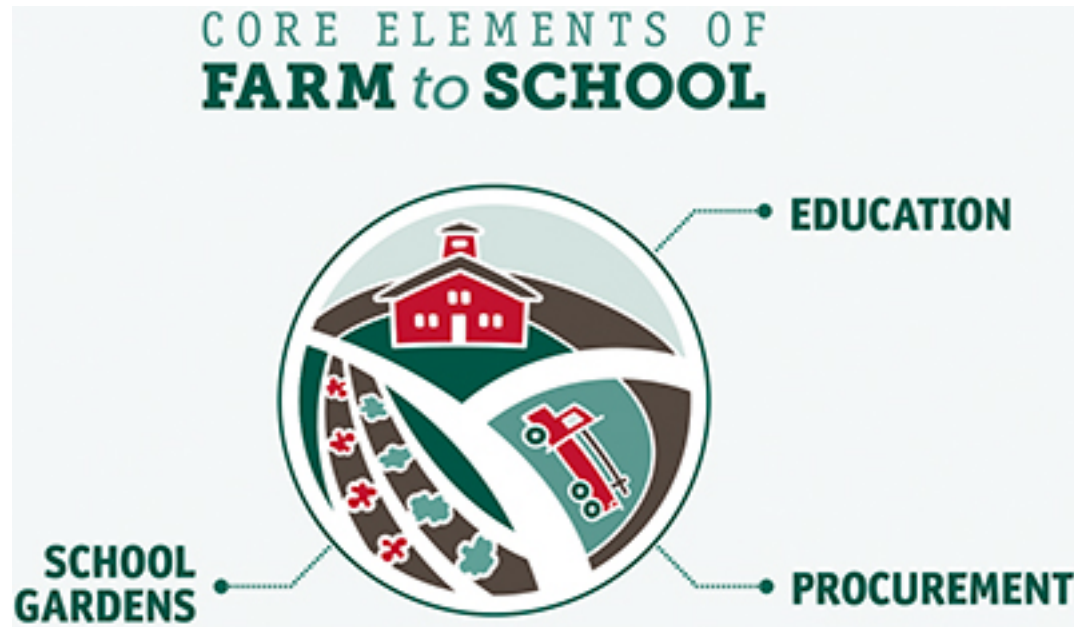
Introduction to Farm to Early Care and Education

MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

Center for
Regional Food Systems

FARM TO EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION

Centers around **buying and using local foods** in early childcare and education programs.



National Farm to School Network, farmtoschool.org

WHO IS INCLUDED?

All programs serving children ages 0-6

- Family and group childcare homes
- Private centers and preschools
- Head start, Early Head Start, and Great Start Readiness Programs
- Faith-based early childcare programs
- Early education programs based in K-12 schools/districts

BENEFITS OF FARM TO ECE

- **Increases access to fresh, local foods**
- **Helps promote healthy eating habits and exposes children to healthy foods at a young age**
- **Expose children to healthy foods**
- **Opportunities to include culturally relevant foods**



Photo courtesy of Becky Kwasteniet

BENEFITS OF FARM TO ECE (CONT)

- Opportunities for parent engagement
- Build stronger community connections
- Support local farmers and local economies



Photo courtesy of Doreen Simonds

LOCAL PROCUREMENT

- Purchase from farmers, food hubs, farmers markets, grocery stores and broadline distributors
- Develop menus seasonally around what's available
- Encouraged as a best practice under new Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) standards



Photo courtesy of Becky Kwateniet

EDUCATION

- Field trips to farms and farmers market
- Turn meal time into educational opportunity
- Stories and activities revolving around local foods and agriculture
- Can support receptivity to new foods brought in



Photo courtesy of Doreen Simonds

GARDENS

- Hands on educational opportunities
- Opportunity for parent engagement
- Exposure to food from seed to plate
- Children can eat what they grow!



Photo courtesy of Tiffany Menard

UPCOMING WEBINARS

mifarmtoschool.msu.edu

2016-2017

- November 30 – Strategies for introducing new foods

Local Purchasing sub-series

- December 14 – Introduction to Local Procurement
- January 11 – Purchasing from Farmers
- February 1 – Purchasing from Food Hubs
- February 22 – Purchasing from a Broadline Distributor

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- March 8 – Early Childhood Gardens
 - March 29 – Seasonal Menu Planning
 - April 19 – Farm to ECE Taste Tests
 - May 10 – Culturally Relevant Farm to ECE Programs
 - May 31 – Farm to ECE Lesson Plans
 - June 14 – Engaging Parents in Farm to ECE

RESOURCES



MI Farm to School

- mifarmtoschool.msu.edu
- Listserv to stay updated on opportunities
- Resources and technical support
- Farm to Early Childhood Program Guide

Cultivate Michigan

- cultivatemichigan.org
- Local food purchasing campaign

National Farm to School Network (Early Care and Education)

- farmtoschool.org
- National hub of information and resources

MICHIGAN FARM TO EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION (ECE) PROGRAM GUIDE
A STEP BY STEP GUIDE

WHAT IS FARM TO EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION (ECE)?
Farm to ECE centers around **buying and using fresh, local foods** in early childcare and education programs. Farm to ECE can also include activities such as children's gardens, educational activities and farm field trips.

WHO IS INVOLVED?
Farm to ECE includes all sizes and types of ECE settings:

- Family childcare homes
- Private childcare centers and preschool programs
- Head Start programs
- Early Head Start programs
- Great Start Readiness programs
- Faith-based early childcare programs
- Early education programs based in K-12 schools/districts

WHY FARM TO ECE?

- Increases access to fresh, local food
- Helps promote healthy eating habits
- Supports local farmers
- Builds community connections
- Increases family engagement

FARM TO EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS: A STEP BY STEP GUIDE

- 1) GET STARTED**
 - Learn about seasonality and local production
 - Find places in your menu to use local foods or develop new recipes
- 2) BUILD COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS**
 - Connect with farmers and vendors near you
 - Build a farm to ECE team and connect with other local organizations
- 3) PREPARE TO PURCHASE LOCAL FOODS**
 - Understand your options (see table)
 - Prepare a cover letter and vendor questionnaire
- 4) CHOOSE FOOD PRODUCTS AND VENDORS**
 - Ask local vendors about their products, practices and prices
- 5) PURCHASE LOCAL FOODS**
 - Create activities and taste tests around new foods

SIZE	LOCAL PURCHASING OPTIONS AND RESOURCES
Small family child care homes and centers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Purchase from a local farmers market or farm stand farma.org/the-local-farmers-market/Purchase a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) share localharvest.org/csa/Start a garden on-site. Contact your local MSU Extension educator for information and resources msue.ans.msu.edu/experts
Large childcare centers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Purchase directly from a farmer localharvest.org, hoophousesforhealth.orgFind local, seasonal foods from a broad line distributor, specialty distributor or food hub. Learn more with Cultivate Michigan cultivatemichigan.orgAsk your food or food service provider, if applicable, for a list of local products

For more information, to access the Farm to Early Childhood Programs Guide and to sign up for our listserv, visit mifarmtoschool.msu.edu, or contact:
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THANK YOU

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