



National Farm to School Network Innovation Awards 2016

With funding support from Newman's Own Foundation and Farm Credit, the National Farm to School Network presented Innovation Awards in February 2016 to three projects by our Core Partners in Georgia, the Great Lakes and the Northeast. This year's theme, *Engaging Farmers and Producers in Farm to School*, brought forward projects that will use creative approaches to outreach and resource development to bring new farmers and producers into the farm to school movement.

Projects will take place throughout 2016, and each will result in the creation of shareable information resources for farmers and farm to school practitioners about innovative strategies to engage farmers that can be used across the country.

Pop-Up School Market: Engaging Farmers at Preschools

Georgia Organics

Award: \$5,000 // Estimated completion by December 2016

This project will pilot 10 pop-up farmers markets at childcare facilities across Georgia as direct marketing opportunities for small/medium family farmers, while engaging parents in farm to school through incentives to purchase, cook and eat healthy farm fresh food at home. Nutrition education and cooking demonstrations will be provided at the pop-up markets, and to the extent possible, farmers will be able to accept WIC vouchers. A shareable guide to pop-up markets will be produced as part of the project.

Sea to School in New England

Maine Farm to School, Massachusetts Farm to School, New Hampshire Farm to School

Award: \$5,000 // Estimated completion by October 2016

Three Northeast states will create a Sea to School resource guide based on New England efforts including: case studies, best practices, recipes and an educational video appropriate for elementary school classrooms about sustainable fishing and aquaculture in the Gulf of Maine. To the extent possible, farmers/fishers will be engaged in this project and sea to school work through state and regional conferences and events throughout 2016.

Growing Farm to School by Sharing Farmer Stories

University of Wisconsin, Madison - Center for Integrated Agricultural Systems

Award: \$5,000 // Estimated completion by October 2016

The six Great Lakes states will team up to develop a series of short videos featuring conversations between regional farmers and food service directors who have good working relationships. This series of professionally filmed and edited videos will highlight a diverse collection of farmers, production methods, success stories and relationships between farmers and food service directors.

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Innovation Awards 2015

In 2015, the National Farm to School Network presented its first Innovation Awards, thanks to the generous support of the Newman's Own Foundation. NFSN's strategic plan identified "Structuring for Innovation" as an important priority area for the organization. The Innovation Fund was established to increase the number of new initiatives with the potential to make significant contributions to NFSN's mission of increasing access to local food and nutrition education to improve children's health, strengthen family farms and cultivate vibrant communities. The focus of the 2015 Innovation Fund was *Farm to School in Native Communities*.

Growing Farm to School in Native Communities Fact Sheet

Farm to school in Native communities leadership team: Pamela Kingfisher (NFSN South Regional Lead), Alena Paisano (NFSN New Mexico State Lead), Le Adams (NFSN Southwest Regional Lead) and Jim Dyer (NFSN Colorado State Lead)

Award: \$3,000 // Expected completion April 2016

This resource will provide an innovative and culturally appropriate lens for looking at the benefits and challenges of farm to school in Native communities, and will include: prioritizing a community based and multi-generational approach to farm to school programming, illustrating the priorities of community and tribal leaders; highlighting indigenous knowledge; utilizing case studies to share best practices; addressing the challenges for beginning and building support for farm to school programs; and addressing the challenges of sustaining a comprehensive farm to school program.

Storytellers: Sowing seeds of knowledge for future generations

Farm to school in Native communities leadership team: Pamela Kingfisher (NFSN South Regional Lead), Alena Paisano (NFSN New Mexico State Lead), Le Adams (NFSN Southwest Regional Lead) and Jim Dyer (NFSN Colorado State Lead)

Award: \$3,000 // Project in progress

This project will provide an innovative and culturally appropriate lens for celebrating the history of, and current successes in farm to school programs in Native communities through case studies from the NFSN Native Communities Cohort convened in 2014-2015. Case studies will be presented in a multi-media format: utilizing video, photographs and artwork, audio narratives and text.

Farm to School Garden Blitz

Urban Roots, Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe, Natchez Elementary School, University of Nevada Cooperative Extension, Desert Research Institute, Nevada Department of Agriculture, Washoe County School District

Award: \$3,000 // Project completed in 2015

To support Nevada's rural and tribal communities, Urban Roots and its partners will mobilize teams to visit communities for three to five days to consult with school administrators, teachers, parents, community leaders and students on projects such as STEM and standards-based interdisciplinary curriculum, community building/volunteerism, grant writing, and garden design and maintenance. Through intensive workshops, the community will be able to begin building a sustainable project around the school garden and education.

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Bison Procurement Solutions for South Dakota Tribal Schools

Dakota Rural Action, InterTribal Buffalo Council and tribal schools

Award: \$3,000 // Project in progress

Dakota Rural Action (DRA) will help facilitate relationships between local bison producers and tribal schools in South Dakota, helping identify barriers standing in the way of bison procurement by the school system. DRA will meet with schools and bison producers to discuss what is and is not working well. Once barriers are identified, DRA will assist in developing solutions to the procurement process, as well as plan learning opportunities such as farm tours to emphasize the educational aspect of farm to school. Emphasis will be placed on utilizing bison raised by tribal entities, such as the InterTribal Buffalo Council.

Highlighting Local Food through In-Class Activities and Cafeteria Promotions

Cherokee Central Schools, Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project (ASAP), Cherokee SHAC, FoodCorps

Award: \$3,000 // Project completed in 2015

Cherokee Central Schools serves the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians in Western North Carolina. Students who live within the Qualla Boundary attend the elementary, middle or high school located on the central campus. This project will build upon the procurement work Cherokee Central Schools has started by connecting the local food in the cafeteria to school gardens, classroom activities and farm field trips. Local food in the cafeteria will be highlighted to students and families through product posters and activities.

About National Farm to School Network

The National Farm to School Network is the leading voice for the U.S. farm to school movement, providing information, advocacy and networking for communities working to bring local food into schools and use school gardens and food-based activities to enhance the quality of the educational experience and nurture the next generation of informed food consumers. To meet your State Lead and learn more about what farm to school activities are happening in your region, visit farmtoschool.org.

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