













Farm to Early Care and Education

- Group of strategies and activities that offer:
 - increased access to healthy, local foods
 - gardening opportunities and
 - food, nutrition and agriculture education activities
- Targets children ages 0-5
- Adapts to all types of ECE settings and geographic locations



Photo Credit: All Stone for Gardeners



WHAT IS FARM TO ECE?

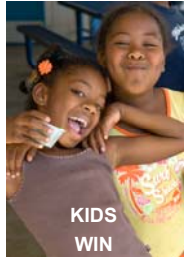
CORE ELEMENTS OF
FARM to ECE



WHY FARM TO EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION: IMPACTS OF A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH



WHY FARM TO ECE?

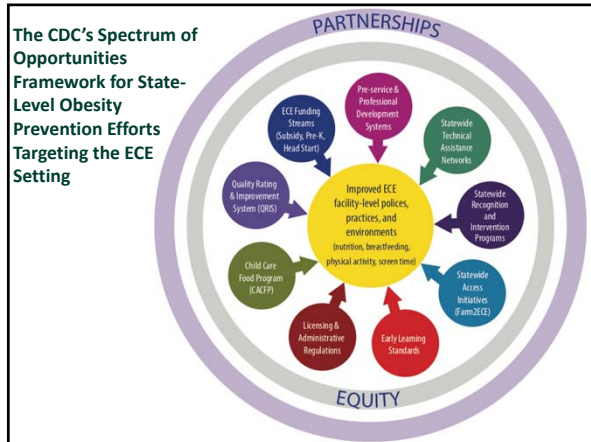




Health and Wellness

- Early development of eating pattern and physical activity habits and preferences
- Rely on parents/caregivers to create food/activity environments
- Increase availability, acceptance, and consumption of healthier foods
- Increase knowledge and improve food choices of parents and caregivers





CDC Spectrum of Opportunities for Obesity Prevention in the ECE Setting

Statewide
Access
Initiatives
(Farm2ECE)

1. Organize stakeholders statewide to develop access initiatives
2. Launch or strengthen statewide Farm to ECE initiative
3. Develop guidance, tools, and incentives for central kitchens
4. Strengthen fresh food procurement and distribution chains

Enhanced Educational Experience

- Experiential education is the norm
- Enhanced learning environment
- Supporting school readiness and appropriate development
- Alignment with ECE standards and systems

Meeting Programmatic and Early Learning Standards

Why on the Farm to Early Care and Education Considerations for Programs in YoungStar

REACH FOR THE STARS WITH FARM TO PRESCHOOL

GROWING HEAD START SUCCESS WITH FARM TO EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION

NATIONAL FARM - SCHOOL NETWORK

Equity

Family Engagement

NATIONAL FARM - SCHOOL NETWORK

Family Engagement and Farm to ECE

- ECE serves the whole family
- Influence multiple settings (ECE site and home)
 - Children as agents of change
- Emphasis on family engagement
 - Most successful parent engagement actively engages with experience and feedback
- Connect to community, culture, and heritage

NATIONAL FARM - SCHOOL NETWORK

Family Engagement Best Practices

- Include the whole family
- Communicate frequently and in different ways
- Provide opportunities for different levels of engagement
- Capitalize on drop-off and pick-up times
- Cultivate an environment that promotes health
- Support parents in playing an active role in learning



Family Engagement Opportunities

- Family dinners
- Family taste tests
- Cooking classes
- Story time
- Garden days
- Field trips
- Community supported agriculture (CSA)



How can farm to ECE advance equity?

- Increasing quality of ECE settings
- Supporting just and equitable food systems
- Farm to ECE as a mirror and a window for children, families, and providers

Approach is everything







Through our connection with the land we learn to live in balance with all relations, we eat seasonally and locally from what the land provides us, and share the bounty of harvest with our communities. This is **farm to school**.





Farm to School employs us to use the same strategies that were used to colonize our people... to decolonize future generations and take back our **food sovereignty**.



NFSN: Lessons Learned

Because our communities and schools are so diverse there are no "best practices" for farm to school in Native Communities...

But there are shared values:

- Homestead solutions work best
- Self-sufficiency supports health
- Honor local heritage with traditional foods
- Empowering the school community = change the relational not just transactional
- Preserve traditional communities











Performance Standard	Farm to ECE Initiatives and Activities
Part 1302. Program Operations	
Subpart C – Education and Child Development Program Services	
1302.36 Tribal Language Preservation and Revitalization	
Tribal Language Preservation and Revitalization	Procurement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include traditional foods and foodways in meals, snacks and taste tests in programs that serve American Indian and Alaska Native children. Gardening: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize Head Start gardens to grow traditional foods to support connection to and preservation of tribal language, culture and community

Early Learning Outcomes Framework and Farm to ECE

Domain Key	Approaches to Learning
	Social and Emotional Development
	Language and Communication
	Cognition
	Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development





Gardening: Hands-on, experiential learning opportunities to facilitate understanding and connection to how food grows

Gardening: Infant/Toddler	
Goal	Farm to ECE Activity
Sub-Domain: Cognitive Self-Regulation (Executive Functioning)	
Goal IT-ATL 3. Child maintains focus and sustains attention with support.	Children actively participate in adult led multi-step <u>seed planting activities</u> ¹⁰ from digging a hole in the dirt to planting seeds, covering seeds and watering.
Sub-Domain: Creativity	
Goal: Goal IT-ATL 9. Child shows imagination in play and interactions with others.	Children use blocks and manipulatives to "build" gardens and mimic plant growth.
Sub-Domain: Relationships with Other Children	
Goal IT-SE 5. Child imitates and engages in play with other children.	Children work together in the garden to achieve a common goal such as planting a seedling or watering the plants.

 Education: Classroom and community experiences that connect curricula and learning to food, nutrition, and agriculture	
Sub-Domain: Phonological Awareness	
Goal P-LIT 1. Child demonstrates that spoken language is composed of small segments of sound.	<p>Teach farm and garden related songs or rhymes¹⁴¹ that utilize rhyming words. For example, "Wow, Mom! I saw a Cow, Mom and it went Moo, Mom and I said Wow, Mom"; Little Boy Blue; Little Bo Peep; or I Hop on my Horse.</p> <p>Read a poem, such as "Eat the Rainbow"¹⁴² with children and discuss rhyming words in the poem. Brainstorm other food words that rhyme with words in the poem.</p>
Sub-Domain: Comprehension and Text Structure	
Goal P-LIT 4. Child demonstrates an understanding of narrative structure through storytelling/re-telling	<p>Read "Little Red Hen"¹⁴³ and then engage in sensory play and re-telling of the story using actual seeds, flour and wheat.¹⁴⁴ Use the local grains to make "bread in a bag"¹⁴⁵</p> <p>Read "The Enormous Turnip"¹⁴⁶ to children and have children identify the sequences of which puppet in the book (see Turnips, p. 14).¹⁴⁷ Have children place pictures of the characters from the story on the board in the correct sequence of events.</p>

DIGGING INTO THE CORE ELEMENTS

Education

- Farm and garden books
- Cooking activities
- Taste tests
- Sensory exploration



Photo Credit: Fairland Family Childcare and YMCA of Madison, WI



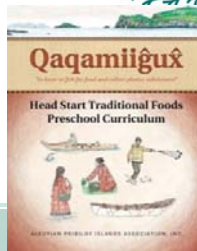
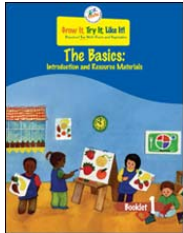
NATIONAL
FARM TO SCHOOL
NETWORK

Education (cont.)

- Field trips – farms, gardens, farmers' markets.
- Learning how food grows and where it comes from
- Special visitors - farmers, chefs
- Math, science, literacy lessons



Curriculum Resources



Key Approaches for Education



- Frame within existing structures and activities
- Align with learning and programmatic standards
- Build provider knowledge and confidence

Photo Credit: Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation



Mystery Bag

Early Learning Alignment

- Sensorimotor
- Nutrition
- Expressive Communication



Gardening

- Containers
- Raised Beds
- In ground gardens
- Hydroponics
- Vertical gardening



Photo Credit: NFSN





Photo Credit: Fairyland Family Childcare, YMCA of Madison, WI, Taking Root Tennessee, IATP Farm to Head Start



Key Approaches in Gardening

- Start small
- Create a team
- Identify resources and supports
- Clarify goals
- Connect to education and curricula
- Integrate traditional foods and gardening approaches



Three Sisters Garden Stretch



Early Learning Alignment

- Culture
- Gross Motor Skills
- Early Reading and Book Appreciation



Local Foods

- Meals
- Snacks
- Taste Tests



Photo Credit: Fairyland Family Childcare, JATP Farm to Head Start

Local Food Opportunities in ECE



- Flexibility of purchasing
 - Varying class and program sizes
 - Year round programming
- ECE Priority Areas
 - Experiential learning opportunities
 - Family style meals
- Best Practice in CACFP



Local Foods in the CACFP Meal Pattern

Local foods, gardening experiences, and food and nutrition education support:

- Fruit and vegetable variety
- Increased whole grains
- Reduced sugar in snacks and beverages
- Acceptance and enjoyment of healthy foods.



Photo Credit: Little One's Learning Center

Local Foods Resources



Key Approaches in Local Foods



- Build on existing systems and partners
- Know the audience – barriers and assets
- Start with dialogue
- Identify flexible approaches

Photo Credit: All Stone for Gardeners



Taste Test Activity



Early Learning Alignment

- Culture
- Sensorimotor
- Language and communication



Bringing Farm to ECE to Your Community

- Goal: Identify a farm to ECE activity (gardening, local food procurement, food, nutrition, and agriculture education) and modify it so it is applicable in your ECE setting and culturally appropriate for your community.




Questions and Discussion






NFSN Farm to ECE Resources

- NFSN Farm to ECE Landing Page
 - www.farmtoschool.org/ECE
- Fact Sheets
 - Getting Started with Farm to Early Care and Education
 - Local Purchasing for Family Child Care Homes
 - Local Procurement for Child Care Centers
- Resource Database
 - www.farmtoschool.org/resources
- NFSN Farm to ECE Quarterly Webinars
- NFSN Farm to ECE Listserv





Lacy Stephens
Program Manager
lacy@farmtoschool.org
816-914-0597

Alena Paisano
Program Manager
alena@farmtoschool.org
505-819-8277

