



Farm to School Rubric

School Name _____

Date _____

FTS Members Completing Rubric:

The rubric on the following pages is designed to help schools or districts assess the stage of their farm to school program. This can help inform action planning to identify what next steps might be taken to deepen the program and give it greater staying power. It can also be used to identify readiness for farm to school grants and needs for technical assistance.

The rubric is broken into four sections: Cafeteria, Classroom, Community, and Integration. To use the rubric, go through each indicator and identify the description that best matches the **current** state of your farm to school program. In some cases part of the description might apply to your program and part of it might not, or you might feel that your program falls somewhere between two descriptions. In that case, choose the one description that **most fully** describes your program, but also highlight any parts of the adjacent description that may apply to your program. Please use the “notes” column to further describe, clarify, or elaborate on any responses.

While this rubric is designed as a general tool for all farm to school programs, there will certainly be aspects of your program that may not show up in the indicators or descriptions. Feel free to add language in the appropriate section or “notes” column that more fully describes your program. This rubric is simply a starting point for you to create a quick snapshot of your farm to school program, so please adapt it to be useful for your needs.

This assessment can be done by an individual (gathering input as needed from food service staff, faculty, and community members), or collaboratively, by a team. A collaborative assessment will likely lead to the most accurate picture of current practices, and can encourage more strategic action planning.

Section I: Cafeteria

Indicator	Emerging	Developing	Deepening	Thriving	Notes
School Nutrition Staff Engagement	School nutrition staff is interested in the creation of a farm to school program.	School nutrition staff representative regularly attends farm to school committee meetings and activities.	School nutrition staff play active role in developing the farm to school program.	The director or manager and/or several school nutrition staff work with faculty, administration, and community members to coordinate farm to school efforts and programming.	
Local Procurement	Possibilities for incorporating local food into the menu and/or resources to help source local food have been identified.	Local sources of food identified and several local foods purchased via informal bid procedure and incorporated in school meals. School nutrition staff is trained and able to purchase local product through standard buying/bidding practices.	Local food regularly incorporated into menu for school year. School nutrition staff can adapt to fluctuating sources of local food, are regularly purchasing local foods through proper procurement methods and can adapt their budget as necessary.	Annual purchasing contracts have been established between local farmers and the school. System in place to sustain the purchase of local food consistently; new local food sources evaluated regularly.	
Infrastructure & Professional Development	School nutrition staff has begun to identify infrastructure, professional development needs, and necessary changes to be made to incorporate local food into the meal programs.	Infrastructure changes initiated or being planned. Professional development opportunities provided for school nutrition staff	Infrastructure changes allow for incorporation of more local foods. All school nutrition staff has opportunities for professional development.	Food program infrastructure can sustain processing, cooking, and serving local foods over the long term. Plan in place for ongoing evaluations of infrastructure and professional development needs as local food purchasing increases.	
Classroom & Community Connections	School nutrition staff interested in conducting taste tests and/or can identify possibilities for engaging faculty and students in nutrition education and the farm to school program.	School nutrition staff works with farm to school committee to gain feedback from students on the farm to school program, and how to best incorporate nutrition education activities	School nutrition staff works with farm to school committee on taste tests, curriculum integration, and community farm to school events.	Community members, students, and school staff see the school food program as an integral part of the school and community and as part of the educational programming.	

Section II: Classroom

Indicator	Emerging	Developing	Deepening	Thriving	Notes
Faculty Involvement	Faculty interested in creation of farm to school program.	Faculty representative regularly attends farm to school committee meetings or does regular farm to school activities.	Faculty representatives help to plan and implement farm to school activities beyond their own classroom. Faculty has opportunities for farm to school professional development.	Multiple faculty members work with school nutrition staff, administration, and community members to coordinate farm to school efforts. All faculty have ongoing professional development opportunities.	
Integrating with Curriculum	Faculty can identify possibilities for integration of food, farm, & nutrition (FFN) topics into curriculum. (Might also be described as: wellness, food studies, gardening, etc.)	Some faculty teach lessons or units integrating FFN topics.	Most grades teach lessons or units integrating FFN.	School has a coordinated approach to integrating FFN into curriculum across all grades and in multiple disciplines.	
Experiential Learning Opportunities	Faculty can identify possibilities for using hands on experiences (growing, cooking, gardening, etc) as learning experiences.	Some faculty provide experiences for students to engage in hands-on learning experiences related to FFN.	Most faculty provide hands-on learning experiences that are embedded within larger units of study and support established goals for learning.	School has a coordinated approach to providing students with hands-on learning experiences; each grade provides opportunities for scaffolded experiences that build from grade to grade.	
Cafeteria & Community as Resource	Faculty has an interest in connecting their classroom to the cafeteria and community (farms, producers, etc).	Faculty have connected classroom learning with the cafeteria or community. Some grade levels have experiences with local farms/farmers/food producers (field trips, class visits, etc).	Faculty connect cafeteria taste tests with classroom learning. Teachers consider school food program as a nutrition and food education resource. Students have experiences with local farms/farmers/food producers. (field trips, class visits, etc).	School has a coordinated approach to connecting cafeteria taste tests with classroom learning. School has a coordinated approach to providing students experiences with local farms/farmers/food producers.	

Section III: Community

Indicator	Emerging	Developing	Deepening	Thriving	Notes
Community Engagement	<p>Community members (including local organizations) interested in the creation of a farm to school program.</p> <p>Community members (including parents and organizations) can identify possibilities for community involvement in a farm to school program.</p>	Community members have committed to be a resource for farm to school program.	Community members actively participate on farm to school committee and provide help with fundraising, classroom and cafeteria activities, or field trips.	<p>A network of community members has been established to provide on-going help with fundraising, classroom and cafeteria activities, and field trips.</p> <p>The farm to school program is linked to community events.</p>	
Family Engagement	Families interested in creation of farm to school program.	<p>Families have opportunities to get involved in farm to school efforts (taste tests, farm to school committee, etc.).</p> <p>Family representatives regularly attends farm to school committee meetings or participates in farm to school activities.</p>	Families actively participate in a range of farm to school activities (taste tests, field trips, classroom activities, fundraising, cafeteria, etc.).	<p>PTO/PTA or other family organizations have made long-term commitment to farm to school program.</p> <p>A network of families has been established to provide ongoing support.</p>	
Farms & Community-based Purchasing	Farmers/producers interested in partnering with school.	Farmers, food producers, and local food-based businesses have offered to sell a product for school meals.	School is sourcing product from local farmers, food producers, and food-based businesses at multiple times during the school year.	Long-term relationships established between local farms, food producers, and food-based businesses for sourcing food and providing food and nutrition-based experiences throughout the school year.	
Community Educational Opportunities (businesses, non-profits, government agencies, civic groups, etc.)	Community members interested in partnering with school.	Community members and organizations offer to be resource for school educational opportunities (field trips, farm visits, class speakers, etc.).	School is using community members and organizations as resource for educational opportunities during the school year.	Long-term relationships established between community members and organizations to provide educational opportunities throughout the school year.	

Section IV: Integration and Staying Power

Indicator	Emerging	Developing	Deepening	Thriving	Notes
Administrative Support	School administration is interested in the creation of a farm to school program.	Administration is in regular contact with farm to school activities and/or farm to school committee.	Administration supports staff-wide farm to school professional development and participates in farm to school activities.	Administration supports inclusion of farm to school tasks into job descriptions and/or provides release time for staff to do farm to school work. Administration is a resource to other school administrators on how to start and sustain a farm to school program.	
School Culture	There is general interest in the school community in the creation of a farm to school program.	A farm to school committee has been created and is active with representation from school administration, school nutrition staff, faculty, and community members.	School community members continually revisit their farm to school action plan and develop ideas for the future. All school community members are provided on-going opportunities for farm to school professional development. School community has waste reduction strategies that meet state guidelines and are implemented school-wide (classroom, cafeteria, events, etc).	School community members feel farm to school is integral part of school, part of "who they are." School is showcased as farm to school model for district or state and school practices are shared at local, regional, or national level. When new school staff are hired, interest in and ability to contribute to farm to school program is considered as a hiring criterion.	
Communication	Communication about farm to school takes place within peer groups (faculty, administration, school food service, families, community members).	Some members of school community are aware of farm to school program. School community members start to communicate about farm to school across peer groups.	Most members of school community are aware of farm to school program. Vehicles for communication across peer groups have been established (such as meetings, e-mail list, newsletters, website, etc.)	All members of the school community are aware of farm to school program. System in place for communicating about farm to school that allows everyone to have access to information.	
Funding/ Resources	Funding or resource possibilities identified to launch farm to school program.	Initial funding or resources secured to support farm to school efforts.	Diversified sources of funding and resources developed to sustain farm to school.	System for funding and access to resources in place that can sustain farm to school program over the long-term.	