



ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

FARM TO SCHOOL AND EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAM

Arkansas Farm to School Month

ABOUT THE MEDIA AND PROMOTION TOOLKIT

Every year since 2015, Governor Hutchinson has proclaimed October as Arkansas Farm to School Month. This year we are “Celebrating Local!” From the farmers who grow our food to the educators and parents who teach children about gardening, cooking, and nutrition, together we create a strong local food system.

Farm to School Month is a time to celebrate the connections happening all over the country between children and local food. Schools, early care and education sites, farms, communities, and organizations in all 50 states, Washington, D.C., and U.S. Territories join in celebrations such as taste tests in the cafeteria, nutrition education activities in the classroom, farm visits, and school garden harvest parties.

HOW TO USE THE TOOLKIT

The resources, graphics, language, and examples throughout this toolkit are intended to help promote your Arkansas Farm to School activities. Everything included has a downloadable version for editing and customization.

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN THIS TOOLKIT

1. Poster
2. Graphics
3. Example Social Media Language
4. Template Press Release
5. Template Public Service Announcement
6. Template Email Blast
7. Examples of Arkansas Farm to School Activities & Where to Find Local Food



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POSTER

[Download from Google Drive](#)



Celebrating Local.

Eating local, growing local, learning about local.

Arkansas Farm to School Month “Celebrating Local.”

From the farmers who grow our food, to the educators and parents who teach children about gardening, cooking, and nutrition, we together, create a strong local food system.

#ARF2SMonth #CelebrateLocal





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GRAPHICS

[Download from Google Drive](#)



Celebrating Local.

Eating local, growing local, learning about local.



Celebrating Local.

Eating local.



Celebrating Local.

Growing local.



Celebrating Local.

Learning about local.



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EXAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA LANGUAGE + GRAPHICS

This year for Arkansas Farm to School Month we are “Celebrating Local!” From the farmers who grow our food, to the educators and parents who teach children about gardening, cooking, and nutrition, we together, create a strong local food system. #ARF2SMonth #CelebrateLocal



Eating local

Without Arkansas farmers and farm workers, we’d be up a creek without a paddle. Show your appreciation by eating locally grown fruits and vegetables during Arkansas Farm to School Month this October! #ARF2SMonth #CelebrateLocal

There are nearly 50,000 farms all across Arkansas and 97 percent of them are family owned. Celebrate Arkansas Farm to School Month by visiting a local farmer’s market or farm stand to buy Arkansas grown fruits and vegetables! #ARF2SMonth #CelebrateLocal



Eat locally grown food and celebrate Arkansas Farm to School Month by showing gratitude for all the work that it takes to bring a bite of food from the farm to your fork. #ARF2SMonth #CelebrateLocal

Growing local

Celebrate Arkansas Farm to School Month by getting your hands dirty. Find a pot and some soil. Pick a sunny spot in the yard or on a windowsill. Plant a seed and nurture its growth! #ARF2SMonth #CelebrateLocal

Do you know how many days it takes to grow a radish? Celebrate Arkansas Farm to School Month by planting some seeds and tracking how many days until they’re ready to be harvested! #ARF2SMonth #CelebrateLocal

Can’t wait for all your veggies to grow? You can thin them out and eat the sprouts! Celebrate Arkansas Farm to School Month by thinking of different ways to use the vegetables growing in your garden! #ARF2SMonth #CelebrateLocal





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Learning about local

Did you know that cooked sweet potato leaves are an excellent source of vitamins and nutrients? Celebrate Arkansas Farm to School Month by learning about the different ways of using locally grown fruits and vegetables! #ARF2SMonth #CelebrateLocal

The Quapaw, Caddo, and Osage Indigenous groups all lived in the land that became Arkansas. As part of your Arkansas Farm to School Month celebrations, find some ways to learn about the traditional foods and agricultural practices of these Native American communities! #ARF2SMonth #CelebrateLocal

Old McDonald had a farm, but COVID-19 restrictions make a visit challenging. Celebrate Arkansas Farm to School Month by incorporating a virtual farm field trip or other virtual garden-based lessons into your plans! #ARF2SMonth #CelebrateLocal

Virtual Farm Field Trip

Celebrate local this October during Arkansas Farm to School Month by eating local, growing local, and learning about local food. Join the Arkansas Department of Agriculture and Heifer USA for a LIVE and INTERACTIVE virtual farm field trip. #ARF2SMonth #CelebrateLocal

Register here:

<https://www.cognitoforms.com/ArkansasAgriculture1/ArkansasFarmToSchoolMonth>





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TEMPLATE PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release: [MONTH, DAY, YEAR]

Media contact:

[NAME]

[EMAIL]

[PHONE]

[YOUR ORGANIZATION] is Celebrating Local this October for Arkansas Farm to School Month

[CITY], AR – Governor Asa Hutchinson has proclaimed October as Arkansas Farm to School Month and [YOUR ORGANIZATION] is joining in the celebration! This year we are “Celebrating Local!” From the farmers who grow our food to the educators and parents who teach children about gardening, cooking, and nutrition, together we create a strong local food system.

At [ORGANIZATION] we are Celebrating Local for Arkansas Farm to School Month by [ACTIVITY] on [DAY].

[PARAGRAPH WITH SUCCINCT DETAILS ABOUT LOCAL PROGRAM: FARMS AND SCHOOLS PARTICIPATING, TYPES OF LOCAL FOOD IN SCHOOLS, DATE/TIME OF CELEBRATORY EVENT, INVOLVED ORGANIZATIONS]

[“QUOTE ABOUT CONNECTING KIDS WITH PEOPLE WHO GROW THEIR FOOD OR OTHER BENEFITS OF FARM TO SCHOOL,” said FOOD SERVICE DIRECTOR / PRINCIPAL / OTHER.]

Over the past decade, the farm to school movement has exploded across the United States, reaching millions of students in all 50 states, Washington, D.C., and U.S. Territories. Every year since 2015, Governor Hutchinson has proclaimed October as Arkansas Farm to School Month. Find the Governor’s Arkansas Farm to School [video here](#), and the full Arkansas Farm to School [proclamation here](#).

“The Arkansas Farm to School program has experienced tremendous growth over the past year,” said Arkansas Secretary of Agriculture Wes Ward. “We celebrate its successes this month by applauding the efforts of those involved in bringing local food to children. From the farmer who produces food to the educators and parents who teach children about gardening, cooking, and nutrition, all are critical to the creation and sustainability of strong local food systems.”



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For more information about farm to school in Arkansas, contact Sarah Lane, Farm to School and Early Childhood Education Coordinator at the Arkansas Department of Agriculture, at sarah.lane@agriculture.arkansas.gov. Learn more about farm to school at agriculture.arkansas.gov/arkansas-department-of-agriculture-programs/farm-to-school/

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[ATTACH PHOTOGRAPHS (OPTIONAL)]



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TEMPLATE PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

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PSA: [YOUR ORGANIZATION] is Celebrating Arkansas Farm to School Month
(0:45-1:00 length)

This year we are “Celebrating Local!” From the farmers who grow our food to the educators and parents who teach children about gardening, cooking, and nutrition, together we create a strong local food system.

At [ORGANIZATION] we are Celebrating Local for Arkansas Farm to School Month by [ACTIVITY] on [DAY].

[PARAGRAPH WITH SUCCINCT DETAILS ABOUT LOCAL PROGRAM: FARMS AND SCHOOLS PARTICIPATING, TYPES OF LOCAL FOOD IN SCHOOLS, DATE/TIME OF CELEBRATORY EVENT, INVOLVED ORGANIZATIONS]

Over the past decade, the farm to school movement has exploded across the United States, reaching millions of students in all 50 states, Washington, D.C., and U.S. Territories and every year since 2015, Governor Hutchinson has proclaimed October as Arkansas Farm to School Month.

Farm to school is a triple win for Arkansas! Student health improves when they eat more local and nutritious food, our farmers are supported from school cafeteria purchases, and our communities are strengthened!



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TEMPLATE EMAIL BLAST

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Subject Line: [YOUR ORGANIZATION] is Celebrating Local this October for Arkansas Farm to School Month

October is Arkansas Farm to School Month and we are joining in the celebration! This year we are “Celebrating Local!” From the farmers who grow our food to the educators and parents who teach children about gardening, cooking, and nutrition, together we create a strong local food system.

At [ORGANIZATION] we are Celebrating Local for Arkansas Farm to School Month by [ACTIVITY] on [DAY].

[PARAGRAPH WITH SUCCINCT DETAILS ABOUT LOCAL PROGRAM: FARMS AND SCHOOLS PARTICIPATING, TYPES OF LOCAL FOOD IN SCHOOLS, DATE/TIME OF CELEBRATORY EVENT, INVOLVED ORGANIZATIONS]

Over the past decade, the farm to school movement has exploded across the United States, reaching millions of students in all 50 states, Washington, D.C., and U.S. Territories. Every year since 2015, Governor Hutchinson has proclaimed October as Arkansas Farm to School Month.

For more information [CONTACT INFORMATION].

Please share this opportunity widely and forward to anyone you know who may be interested in participating.

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EXAMPLES OF ARKANSAS FARM TO SCHOOL MONTH ACTIVITIES + WHERE TO FIND LOCAL FOOD

Several resources are available for locating Arkansas farmers. The Arkansas Grown and Arkansas Made membership page can be found at www.arkansasgrown.org. And, Arkansas MarketMaker can be found at <https://ar.foodmarketmaker.com/>.

Eating local

- Serve a local food for a healthy snack. Make a snack by combining two local food components, like apples from your local farmer and yogurt from your local dairy.
- Cook with your students. Try a simple smoothie, tortilla wrap, or a no-bake granola bar.
- Visit a farmers market or locally owned co-op. Many markets and grocery stores have double up food dollar programs for families who purchase local produce using SNAP.
- Cook and enjoy a family meal together, incorporating local foods.
- Share family recipes. Have your child/grandchild copy down a family recipe or cook a meal that you enjoyed when you were their age.

Growing local

- Plant seeds and watch them grow!
- Whether it's a container garden inside, a raised bed in the backyard, or a plot at a community garden, get out and garden as a family.
- Visit a farm, orchard, or pumpkin patch with your students. If you can't get to the farm, attend a virtual farm field trip.
- Participate in a school or community garden clean-up or planting day.
- Plant radishes, a quick growing root, and record observations of their changes every day.

Learning about local

- Sing the "plant parts" song with your students (to the tune of Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes): "Roots, Stem, Leaves and Flowers, Leaves and Flowers (Repeat)/ Flowers grow to Fruits then drop their Seeds/ Root, Stem, Leaves and Flowers, Leaves and Flowers."
- Use a pumpkin to highlight math concepts by measuring its weight, height, and circumference and counting the seeds inside.
- Read a new book about apples, like "Apple Farmer Annie" by Monica Wellington, and make applesauce together.
- Use arts and crafts such as coloring, painting, cutting, and pasting or other creative projects to reinforce excitement for fruits and vegetables.



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- Make time for your students to practice their literacy while cultivating gratitude by writing “Thank You” notes to the school food service team and/or local farmers.