



ARKANSAS Farm to School

Local Harvest Calendar

Arkansas grows and raises a variety of foods throughout the year. From fruits and vegetables to grains, protein, and dairy - there is always something local available!



Serving local foods in school cafeterias is a great way to teach students about the local food system while supporting nearby farmers. Don't forget, local food can span the whole plate!

For additional help and support you may contact:


- Lindsey Cartwright, Arkansas Department of Agriculture, lindsey.cartwright@agriculture.arkansas.gov, (501) 442-5710
- Rip Weaver, University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture, rweaver@uada.edu, (501) 671-2182

How to Use the Harvest Calendar

The local harvest calendar shows when vegetables, fruits, grains, proteins, and dairy products are harvested and/or available for purchase in Arkansas. The calendar is based on the school year, beginning in July and ending in June. Each chart on the calendar is a different color to indicate the food group it belongs in.

The harvest calendar is considered an average for the whole state, so harvest season will be slightly shorter in the north, and longer in the south. The darker shaded boxes  indicate peak harvest, whereas the lightly shaded boxes  show when the product might still be available. This could mean the product was processed through freezing, canning, and/or milling to increase storage life.



The phone icon  on the vegetable and fruit charts indicates when to contact a local farmer to place an order. Generally, it is recommended to contact farmers at least a month in advance of harvest. Further, if a school is interested in planning with a farmer, early summer and winter is the best time to connect and provide information on the local products they want to purchase.



VEGETABLE

	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June
Asparagus									🗨️	■	■	
Beans	■	■	■	🗨️							🗨️	■
Beets				🗨️	■	■	■	■	🗨️	■	■	■
Black-Eyed Peas	■	■	■	■								🗨️
Broccoli				🗨️	■	■	■	■	🗨️	■	■	■
Butter Beans	■	■	■	■								🗨️
Cabbage				🗨️	■	■	■	■	🗨️	■	■	■
Carrots			🗨️	■	■	■	■	■	🗨️	■	■	■
Cauliflower				🗨️	■	■	■	■	🗨️	■	■	■
Chard				🗨️	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Collard			🗨️	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Corn, Sweet	■	■	■	■	■	■	■				🗨️	■
Cucumber	■	■	■	■							🗨️	■
Eggplant	■	■	■	■							🗨️	■
Green Beans	■	■	■	■							🗨️	■
Greens, Leafy			🗨️	■	■	■	■		🗨️	■	■	■
Kale			🗨️	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Lettuce			🗨️	■	■	■	■		🗨️	■	■	■
Okra	■	■	■								🗨️	■
Onion	■	■	■						🗨️	■	■	■
Peas				🗨️	■	■	■		🗨️	■	■	■
Pepper	■	■	■	■	■	■					🗨️	■
Potato	■	■								🗨️	■	■
Pumpkin		🗨️	■	■	■	■						
Radish		🗨️	■	■	■	■	■		🗨️	■	■	■
Spinach			🗨️	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Squash, Summer	■	■	■								🗨️	■
Squash, Winter	🗨️	■	■	■	■	■	■	■				
Sweet Potato	🗨️	■	■	■	■	■	■	■				
Tomato	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■		🗨️	■
Turnip			🗨️	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

Icon Key: 🗨️ = when to contact a local farmer ■ = peak harvest ■ = available due to processing

FRUIT

	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June
Apple	📞	■	■	■	■	■	■					
Blackberries	■	■	■	■							📞	■
Blueberries	■	■	■	■							📞	■
Cantaloupe	■	■	■	■								📞
Grapes	📞	■	■									
Nectarine	■	■										📞
Peach	■	■									📞	■
Plum	■	■									📞	■
Raspberries	■	■	■								📞	■
Strawberries	■	■	■						📞	■	■	■
Watermelon	■	■	■	■								📞

GRAIN

	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June
Corn, Dent <i>cornmeal, chips, grits, popcorn, tortillas, etc.</i>		■	■	■								
Rice <i>brown or white, rice flour, grits, etc.</i>		■	■	■								
Wheat <i>chips, flour, bread, tortillas, etc.</i>											■	■

PROTEIN

	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June
Beans	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Beef	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Chicken	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Eggs	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Fish	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Pork	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Turkey	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

Icon Key: 📞 = when to contact a local farmer ■ = peak harvest ■ = available due to processing

DAIRY

	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June
Butter												
Buttermilk												
Cheese												
Cottage Cheese												
Cream												
Milk												
Yogurt												

Icon Key:  = when to contact a local farmer  = peak harvest  = available due to processing

Next Steps

Now that you know when products are in season, you can reach out to farmers and producers to begin the procurement process. If you aren't sure what farms are near you, search [ArkansasGrown.org](https://www.arkansasgrown.org).

When beginning to purchase local foods we recommend you reach out to at least three farmers to start. Remember, local products can be vegetables, fruits, grains, proteins, and dairy! After contacting a few farmers, create a local definition for your school district or child care center, and make a list of product interests based on your menu and meal patterns. Also consider how much you will want to purchase and your budget.

The [Child Nutrition Flowchart](#) and [Farm Food Safety Checklist](#) are also great resources to help with these steps!

Calendar adapted from the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture's Arkansas Fruits and Vegetable Harvest Calendar, Apple Seeds Inc.'s Growing My Plate Seasonal Harvest Calendar, and the National Center for Appropriate Technology's Arkansas School Garden Planting Calendar.
For more information and to sign up for the newsletter, visit [arfarmtoschool.org](https://www.arfarmtoschool.org).

