

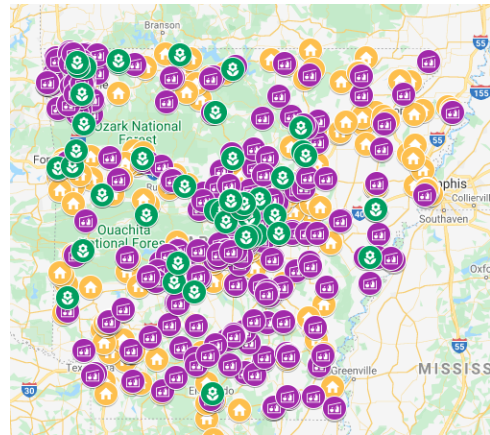


Farm to School and Early Childhood Program

April 2020

Farm to School and COVID-19

With the spread of COVID-19, farm to school systems have felt major impacts. Helping children across Arkansas access school meals in alternative ways is a primary focus. We have seen creative and innovative ideas blossom from Arkansas child nutrition directors, kitchen staff, and volunteers. In addition, food pantries, community organizations, farmers, and restaurants are stepping up to provide access to food. We want to send a huge thank you for their hard work!



To improve access to food across the state, we have developed an [Arkansas COVID-19 Food Access Map](#). The map features school meals, food pantries and community meals, and local food. This map is possible because of countless partnerships with agencies, nonprofits, farmers, and dedicated individuals, and we couldn't be more thankful for collaboration! Thank you, thank you, thank you!

If you have information to add to the map, click the link below to fill out the survey.

[Arkansas COVID-19 Food Access Survey](#)



Arkansas Farm to School Network Conversations

Network conversations are a time to share successes in farm to school, problem solve farm to school barriers, and provide peer to peer mentorship. The topics vary, but are centered around school gardens, education, local procurement, and farmer support. Network Conversations are held digitally on Zoom.

- **March: Summer Garden Successes March 31, 2020 at 4:00 PM**

Forest Park Elementary, Carolyn Lewis Elementary, Marshall Elementary, and FoodCorps Arkansas will each share one of their summer garden successes that will highlight partnerships with the community. [Register here.](#)

- **April: Food Safety in the School Garden April 27, 2020 at 3:30 PM**

The University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture Produce Safety team will discuss produce safety as it relates to worker health, soil, wildlife, water, and post-

harvest handling. [Register here.](#)

VISTA AmeriCorps Position

The Arkansas Department of Agriculture is seeking to fill a VISTA position to serve as the Farm to School Innovation Lead! The Farm to School Innovation Lead will conduct research on farm to school programs in the United States and pilot an innovative farm to school project at a child learning facility such as a school, early childcare facility, or an alternative learning facility in Arkansas. [Apply here.](#)



Grants

American Farmland Trust (ATL) - Farmer Relief Funds

AFT's Farmer Relief Fund will award farmers with cash grants of up to \$1,000 each to help them weather the current storm of market disruptions caused by the coronavirus crisis. [Learn more here.](#)

No Kid Hungry Grants Available to Support Coronavirus Response

No Kid Hungry is offering emergency grants to support local school districts and nonprofit organizations in their efforts to ensure kids get the nutritious food they need. [Learn more here.](#)

Arkansas Department of Agriculture Specialty Crop Block Grants

The Arkansas Department of Agriculture is now accepting applications for the 2020 Specialty Crop Block Grant Program. These grants are funded through the U.S. Department of Agriculture to enhance the competitiveness of the Arkansas specialty crop industry. Specialty crops are defined by USDA as fruits, vegetables, horticulture, floriculture, and tree nuts. [Learn more here.](#)



<https://www.agriculture.arkansas.gov/farm-to-school>



ARKANSAS Farm to School