



Farm to School and Early Childhood Program

June 2020

A Message about Food Justice

There is unequal access to healthy, local, and nutritious food in Arkansas, as illustrated in the [USDA Food Access Research Atlas](#) that lists over 60 areas in the state that have low access to food in both rural and urban areas. The Arkansas Farm to School and Early Childhood Program is dedicated to building a strong and accessible food system for all Arkansans.

Farm to school efforts blaze ahead to support the growth and development of school gardens and locally grown food. We will press on to provide opportunities for professional development, community building, and provide place-based support.

The school year has officially ended, but teachers, garden educators, staff, and administration have stepped up to support their school gardens through the hot and humid Arkansas summer. Furthermore, many incredible Child Nutrition Directors are continuing to provide school meals throughout the summer to their community. Thank you to everyone involved!

Farm to School Discussions

Farm to Early Childhood Education: Arkansas Farm to School Network Conversation

June 23, 2020 at 2:30 PM CST

Join the conversation to hear about Arkansas Farm to School and farm to Early Childhood Education (ECE). Farm to ECE provides children age 0-5 the opportunity to participate in a school garden, learn about gardening, cooking, and nutrition, and eat locally grown foods.



[Register Here](#)

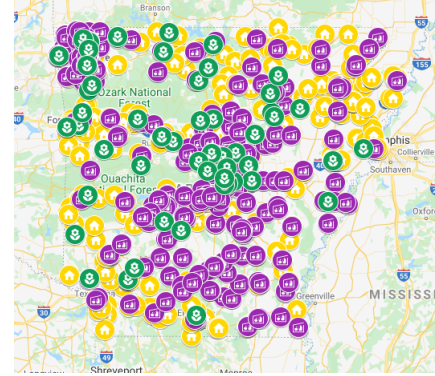
Resources

Arkansas COVID-19 Food Access Map

The Arkansas COVID-19 Food Access Map shows where Arkansas Grown food is available all over the state, including at schools and organizations offering free meals while schools are closed. We

continue to update, verify, and add to the Arkansas COVID-19 Food Access Map. Two partnerships continue to be available with information:

- UpliftArkansas.com - This website provides a resource hub for Arkansans to reach farmers who provide fresh food direct to consumers, farm-to-table restaurants, and local grocery stores through online sales, farmers markets, and on-farm sales.
- No Kid Hungry - Families can text the word "FOOD" (or "COMIDA") to 877877 to find their nearest sites. This new partnership with No Kid Hungry ensures that Arkansas School Meal data is available using the texting hotline.



[View the Arkansas COVID-19 Food Access Map](#)

Seamless Summer Option: Providing Multiple Meals at a Time During the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is working with State Child Nutrition agencies to provide safe and flexible meal service to children during the public health emergency. Under nationwide non-congregate feeding and meal times waivers, State agencies may allow Program operators to provide more than 1 day's worth of meals to eligible children via a single meal pick-up (by the child or the child's parent or guardian) or delivery. The USDA has made available a new publication which provides Program operators with technical assistance on the amounts of foods needed for multiple day distribution, use of "bulk" foods, best practices, and parent communication.



[View the USDA Resource](#)

Grants

Arkansas Grown School Garden of the Year Contest

School entries are now being accepted for the seventh annual Arkansas Grown School Garden of the Year Contest sponsored by the Arkansas Department of Agriculture and the Farm Credit Associations of Arkansas. Applicants may be any public and private: K-12 school, early care facility, and alternative learning environment. Applicants must have had a school garden open during the 2019-2020 school year, or be a school planning to start a garden in the 2020-2021 school year. [Learn more here.](#)

COVID-19 GENYOUth Emergency School Nutrition Funding

GENYOUth is providing grants of up to \$3,000 per school to supply much-needed resources for meal distribution and delivery efforts to get food to students during COVID-19. From soft-sided coolers, bags and containers for individual servings, to protective gear for food service sanitation and safety, this equipment will help ensure our children continue to receive the nutritious meals they need. [Learn more here.](#)

USDA Urban Agriculture and Innovation Production (UAIP) Competitive Grants

Program

Deadline: July 6

USDA has announced the availability of \$3 million for grants through its new Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production. The competitive grants will support the development of urban agriculture and innovative production projects through two categories, Planning Projects and Implementation Projects. There is approximately \$1 million available for Planning Projects and \$2 million for Implementation Projects. The close date is July 6. [Learn more here.](#)

News

- [With Schools Closed, Their Gardens Take on a New Role: Cedarville Elementary and FoodCorps Arkansas](#)
 - [Arkansas Farmers' Market Updated Guidance](#)
 - [USDA Approves Program to Feed Kids in Arkansas: Pandemic EBT to Feed Children During COVID-19 National Emergency](#)
 - [USDA Extends Three Nationwide Waivers](#)
 - [National Farm to School Network: There Is No Food Justice Without Racial Justice](#)
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