



# Farm to School and Early Childhood Education Program



## August 2020

The Farm to School and Early Childhood Education Program is committed to providing equitable and just programming, resources, funding, and technical assistance to schools, farmers, and partners in the local food system.

## Team Growth and Open Positions

We are excited to introduce Mark Nelson to the Farm to School team. Mark will serve as the Farm to School AmeriCorps VISTA Innovation Lead at the Department until July 2021 and will spearhead research, development, and implementation of trial initiatives to build the capacity of the Farm to School and Early Childhood Education Program.



Our team will be growing again soon! **We are hiring a School Garden Manager.** The School Garden Manager will provide technical assistance to schools, develop farm to school resources, map school gardens around the state, host webinars and trainings, and lead the school garden contest and grant program. This is a part-time grant funded position available for one year.

[Apply Here](#)

## Webinars and Trainings

### **Grants and Funding: Arkansas Farm to School Network Conversations**

**August 20, 2020 3:30 PM CST**

Join the conversation to hear about Arkansas Farm to School and grants and funding. Speakers will share about grant programs in Arkansas that support farm to school programming.



[Register Here](#)

Missed a previous network conversation?

[Find them on our YouTube Channel](#)

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## Resources and Grants

### **Arkansas Grown School Garden of the Year Contest**

*Deadline: September 13, 2020*

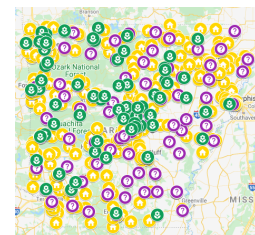
School entries are being accepted for the seventh annual Arkansas Grown School Garden of the Year Contest sponsored by the Arkansas Department of Agriculture and the Farm Credit Associations of Arkansas. Applicants may be any public or private K-12 school, early care facility, and alternative learning 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.



[Apply Here](#)

### **Arkansas COVID-19 Food Access Map**

The Arkansas COVID-19 Food Access Map lists information for school and summer meals, county resources like foodbanks, and local food access points such as farmers markets and on farm sales.



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

### **New Video Featuring Apple Seeds Inc. in Fayetteville**

Apple Seeds Inc. is a non-profit organization that creates programs that educate young students about healthy food and increases their access to those foods. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Apple Seeds has been donating the majority of their food to local food pantries, schools, and community centers to help those who have found

themselves food insecure. As of July 2020, they have donated 2,038 pounds of food to the Northwest Arkansas area.



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## **News**

### **Small Farm to Schools Act Introduced in House**

Rep. Antonio Delgado (NY-19) and Rep. Jim Sensenbrenner (WI-05) introduced the Small Farm to School Act, bipartisan legislation that would create an eight state pilot program where local public schools would be reimbursed at a higher rate for sourcing school lunches from small farmers under the National School Lunch Program.

[Read more here.](#)

### **Green Schoolyard Americas COVID-19 Outdoor Learning Resources and Guidance**

Schools across the United States are facing an uphill battle as they figure out how to navigate COVID-19 physical distancing requirements that will allow students to return to campus. Repurposing outdoor spaces is a cost-effective way to reduce the burden on indoor classrooms while providing fresh air, hands-on learning opportunities, and the health benefits associated with increased access to nature. This webpage shares information for the new National COVID-19 Outdoor Learning Initiative. [Learn more.](#)

### **Growing Healthy Communities in School Gardens During COVID-19**

With schools closed and orders to shelter in place, COVID-19 shuttered gardens and altered meal service in cafeterias—a critical safety net for those who depend on school meals for nourishment. School nutrition professionals quickly launched emergency meal distribution programs to connect kids and families with their next meal. Naturally as part of this heroic effort, school gardens and food educators took on a new essential role: helping feed the community. [Read more here.](#)

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**ARKANSAS Farm to School**