

Faith Fellowship and Food Security Virtual Convening



USDA Office of Partnerships & Public Engagement

Breakout - Houses of Worship and Neighborhood Partnerships

- Julie Brewer, Director, Office of Community Food Systems, Food and Nutrition Service (FNS)
- Joseph Heller, Urban Conservationist, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)
- Latrice Hill, Director, Outreach, Farm Service Agency (FSA)
- Kim Harmon, Grants Specialist, Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)
- Sadie Lackey, Program Assistant - Youth Programs, Office of Partnerships and Public Engagement (OPPE)

USDA Office of Community Food Systems (OCFS)

Our 3 Pillars of Work:

1. Distribute grant funding to improve access to local foods in schools.
2. Disseminate research and data on existing programs and opportunities for expansion.
3. Provide training and technical assistance to improve access to local foods in schools.



Farm to School Grant Program



- **FY 2020 USDA awarded \$12.1 million to 159 grantees**
- **Since 2013, USDA has awarded over \$52 million to 719 grantees**

FY 2021 Farm to School Grant RFA is now Open!

- Implementation
- State Agency
- **NEW!** Turnkey



Fact Sheets

Community Food Systems Fact Sheets

HOME > COMMUNITY FOOD SYSTEMS

Resource Type
Fact Sheets



General Overviews

- [Office of Community Food Systems Resources](#)
- [Research Shows Farm to School Works](#)
- [Integrating Local Foods into Child Nutrition Programs](#)
- [Selling Local Food to Schools: A Resource for Producers](#)
- [How Cooperative Extension Professionals Can Support Farm to School Programs](#)
- [Effective Strategies State Agencies Can Use to Support Community Food Systems](#)
- [Farm to Child Nutrition Programs Planning Guide](#)

Special Topics

- [School Gardens: Using Gardens to Grow Healthy Habits in Cafeterias, Classrooms, and Communities](#)
- [Bringing Tribal Foods and Traditions into Cafeterias, Classrooms, and Gardens](#)
- [Gardens in Tribal Communities](#)

10 FACTS ABOUT LOCAL FOOD IN SCHOOL CAFETERIAS

- 1. USDA supports and encourages the procurement of local foods.**
In USDA's vision, school cafeterias championing U.S. agriculture and properly promoting locally sourced foods are the norm, not the exception.
- 2. The definition of "local" is different from school to school.**
Definitions for local vary widely depending on the unique geography and climate where a school is located and on the abundance of local food producers and manufacturers. Many schools define local as within a certain number of miles from the school, within the county, or within the state. Alternatively, definitions might include more than one state (i.e., Georgia, Alabama, and Florida) or discrete parts of several states (i.e., specific counties in southwest Washington, northeast Oregon, and Idaho). In addition, many schools use different definitions of local depending on the product or season.
- 3. Many local products are easy to find and source.**
Some products are more likely to be local than others. For example, fluid milk is produced in almost every state. Since milk is perishable and expensive to transport, most milk-in-school menus is relatively local. Similarly, schools in California serving avocado are likely using local avocados, while schools in Florida probably serve local citrus. Local products that are unique and/or abundant in a region are generally easier to find and source.
- 4. Food distributors and food service management companies can be great partners for local sourcing.**
Increasingly schools are including expectations regarding local sourcing in their contracts with food service management companies and/or distributors. Even without contractual obligations regarding local, many distributors already offer local products so all a school needs to do is find out what items on the contracted list are local and order those products. This approach is a very easy way to bring local products into schools without creating separate distribution channels.
- 5. Locally sourced fruits and vegetables are available through the DoD Fresh Program.**
Schools can elect to spend a portion of their USDA Foods entitlement money on fresh fruits and vegetables through the DoD Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, operated by the Department of Defense. To supply fresh fruits and vegetables to schools, DoD contracts with over 45 produce vendors across the country. DoD Fresh vendors often have local products and they identify them as such in the FFWFWS catalogue.

THE FARM to SCHOOL PROGRAM

Our E-Letter, the Dirt!



United States Department of Agriculture

Volume 1, Issue 2, October 20, 2015

The Dirt

News and Notes from FNS's Office of Community Food Systems

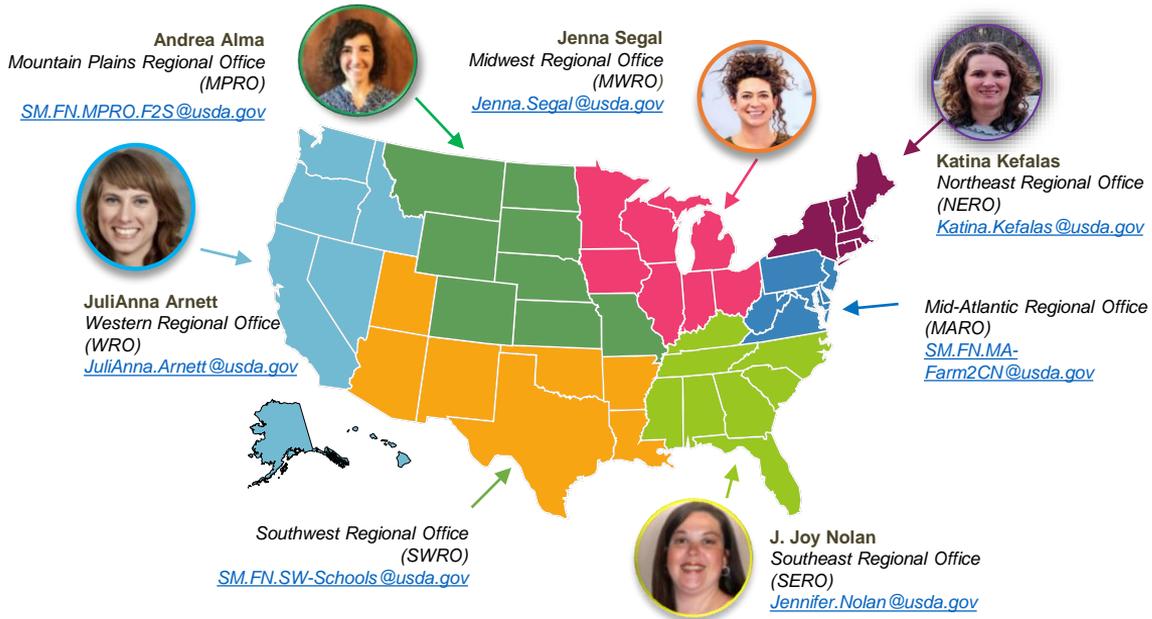


Subscribe at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cfs>



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FOOD SYSTEMS

OCFS Regional Staff





Coming Soon!

USDA **FARM** *to*
 **SCHOOL**
2019 CENSUS

Farm to School Producer Training

Help agricultural producers build their capacity to launch or expand efforts to market to schools, therefore increasing farm to school activity in schools.



NATIONAL CENTER
FOR APPROPRIATE
TECHNOLOGY



NATIONAL
FARM to SCHOOL
NETWORK



OFFICE of
COMMUNITY
FOOD SYSTEMS

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devonab@ncat.org



Questions?

Thank You!

Please contact

SM.FN.FarmToSchool@usda.gov

**for any questions regarding OCFS
resources and the Farm to School
Grant Program!**



OFFICE of
COMMUNITY
FOOD SYSTEMS



Faith, Fellowship and Food Security Webinar

J. Latrice Hill – FSA Director of Outreach

December 17, 2020

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and

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WHO WE ARE

USDA programs provide financing, risk management tools, income support, and conservation resources to American farmers and ranchers

- Many producers have participated in USDA programs, but don't realize they can help shape them.
- USDA has established avenues to keep our programs accountable to you

FSA PROGRAM PORTFOLIO

FARM PROGRAMS

SAFETY NET PROGRAMS
CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM
PRICE SUPPORT PROGRAMS

FARM LOANS

DIRECT FARM OWNERSHIP AND OPERATING LOANS
GUARANTEED FARM OWNERSHIP AND OPERATING
LOANS
DIRECT AND GUARANTEED MICROLOANS
DIRECT EMERGENCY LOANS
DIRECT YOUTH LOANS
GUARANTEED CONSERVATION LOANS

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Examples of FSA Program Provisions

Socially Disadvantaged Loans (SDA Loans)

- Targeted loan funds to purchase farm real estate; livestock; equipment; annual operating expenses.

Down Payment Loan Program (DPLP)

- Assists underserved farmers in accessing capital for farmland by creating a partnership between the farmers, FSA and a private lender.

Non-Insured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)

- Underserved producers receive a 50% discount on annual NAP premiums. Administrative fees area waived.

FSA County Committee Appointed Member

- Targeted underserved secretarial appointments to the local county committee in counties that lack fair representation.

Getting a farm number with FSA

- Register your farm or ranch in our database
- A map will be created outlining your farm or ranch boundaries with acreage figures
- You'll get a farm number, which will allow you to access key USDA programs and eligibility to vote in county committee elections.
- Staff will provide you with routine program notifications



HEIRS' PROPERTY LANDOWNERS

Establishing a Farm Number

Operators on heirs' property who cannot provide owner verification, or a lease agreement, may provide alternative documents to FSA to substantiate they are in general control of the farming operation.

www.farmers.gov/heirs

Advocating for yourself and other farmers

Get started with us

- Come visit our local offices and ask about programs and resources.
- Beyond your local office, every state has a FSA State Outreach Coordinator and USDA Beginning Farmer Coordinator

Work with us

- Report changes to your operation
- File regular acreage reports! This can make you eligible for disaster assistance and other critical programs
- Sign up to get regular local newsletters and follow FSA and Farmers.gov on social media



Advocating for yourself and other farmers

Work with us (continued)

- Ask for assistance in filling out loan and program applications
- You are entitled to a Receipt for Service after every FSA office visit
- You can appeal program denials

Get help when needed

- Intermediaries like local ag organizations or FSA Outreach Coordinators can help you navigate FSA
- Every local FSA office has a County Executive Director, and every Loan Officer has a Farm Loan Manager. They report to a District Director and ultimately to the State Executive Director



FSA County Committees

FSA County Committees (COC) help administer and oversee FSA programs that make a difference for farmers and ranchers in your community:

- Represent local farmers, provide agricultural guidance and insight to county office staff, and assist with outreach to farmers, hire County Executive Directors (CED)
- More than 7,000 farmers serve on COCs
- Elections happen locally every year and elected members serve three-year terms in their Local Administrative Area (LAA). COCs meet periodically and committee members are paid a stipend and mileage reimbursement



FSA Urban County Committees

- FSA is piloting urban county committees to make sure our programs reach and serve urban producers.
- 5 locations in pilot (more coming):
 - Philadelphia, PA
 - Richmond, VA
 - Albuquerque, NM
 - Portland, OR
 - Cleveland, OH
- How to get involved:
 - Sign up for FSA email newsletters, and contact your local FSA office if your city is identified as a pilot location
 - Farmers can nominate themselves



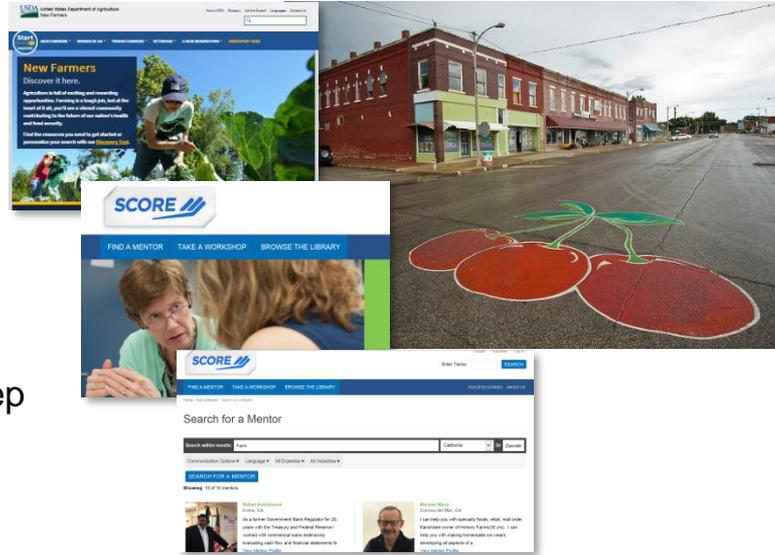
Farmer mentorship

- One way to support other farmers is to mentor them one-on-one
- You can share your knowledge by signing up to be a SCORE mentor
- How to get involved:
 - [Register with SCORE](#) and go through their volunteer development to start working with other farmers and ranchers



How Mentorship can Help, and Where to Start

- Starting up
 - Review business ideas
 - Help create Business plan
 - Navigate legal and financial topics
 - Explain how to apply for licenses, purchase equipment, lease real estate
- Preparing for growth
 - Coach through pre-finance prep
 - Identifying new markets
 - Assist with SWOT analysis



<https://newfarmers.usda.gov/mentorship>

Subscribe to FSA Outreach Updates

Subscribe to FSA and FSA Outreach news & alerts: www.fsa.usda.gov/subscribe

- Enroll & Select Outreach and Education



USDA

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

Joseph Heller

Urban Conservationist

New York

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Where do we find Urban and Suburban Agriculture?



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The Role of NRCS

NRCS has field staff in communities across the nation to provide technical and financial support.

SERVICE CENTER LOCATOR

<https://www.farmers.gov/service-center-locator>

Our staff begin by helping farmers develop a conservation plan to meet grower objectives.



Assisting producers in urban areas presents unique challenges for conservationists

NRCS Conservation Planning

What are the resource concerns?
Where can there be efficiencies?



Inefficient Moisture and erosion



Rainwater Catchment
Storage Tanks



Practice: Micro-Irrigation

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Identifying Resource Concerns



Resource Concerns: Plant Vigor



Practice: Seasonal High Tunnel System (325)

Extend the Growing Season
Must grow in the soil

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Planning is the gateway to financial assistance



USDA MIDDLETOWN SERVICE CENTER
225 DOLSON AVE ROOM 103
MIDDLETOWN, NY 10840-6539
(845) 343-1872

RESOURCE CONSERVATIONIST

Conservation Plan

OBJECTIVE(S)
Improve Plant Vigor

Crop
Tract: 403
Critical Area Planting(342)
Establish vegetation on severely eroding areas or other areas requiring extra ordinary means to establish vegetation on locations specified on the conservation plan map. Follow all installation specifications (i.e. species selection, PM type, rate/spacing, planting methods, planting dates, fertility, etc.) detailed on the implementation requirements documents (i.e. job sheets, IR, etc.). Operate and Maintain the installed practice for its entire lifespan as specified.

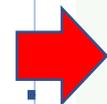
Field	Planned Amount	Month	Year	Applied Amount	Date
3	0.1 Ac	9	2020		
Total	0.1 Ac				

High Tunnel System(325)
Install an enclosed polyethylene, polycarbonate, plastic, or fabric covered structure that is used to cover and protect crops from sun, wind, excessive rainfall, or cold, to extend the growing season in an environmentally safe manner. Design and install High Tunnel based on manufacturer's recommendation at the location specified on the conservation plan map. Operate and maintain according to the requirements specified in the Implementation Requirements Document.

Field	Planned Amount	Month	Year	Applied Amount	Date
3	2880 SqFt	9	2020		
Total	2880 SqFt				

Mulching(484)
Apply and anchor plant residues or other suitable material produced off site to provide cover and protection to the soil surface, add organic matter to the soil, and/or protect growing vegetation and crops. Apply to the locations and extent identified on the Conservation Plan Map. Design, install, and maintain according to the requirements outlined in the Implementation Requirement Document and vegetative seeding specifications.

Field	Planned Amount	Month	Year	Applied Amount	Date
3	0.1 Ac	9	2020		
Total	0.1 Ac				



- Funding Sources at NRCS**
- AGRICULTURAL MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE (NOT ALL STATES)
 - ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVES PROGRAM & ORGANIC
 - CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM
 - CONSERVATION INNOVATION GRANTS
 - AGRICULTURAL LAND EASEMENT PROGRAM
- National Service Agency**

Meet with the Farm Service Agency (FSA)
&
Natural Resources Conservation Staff (NRCS).



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What are Specialty Mushrooms?



Outdoor Production



Indoor Production



Economics & Markets



Connect (email list, supplier directory)

What works: specializing in:

- High-value crops
- Partnerships
- Educational and Programs

Project Partners



Cornell Cooperative Extension-NYC and FarmSchool NYC teach urban farmers how to **grow, process and market specialty mushrooms.**

[online course](#) on the subject.



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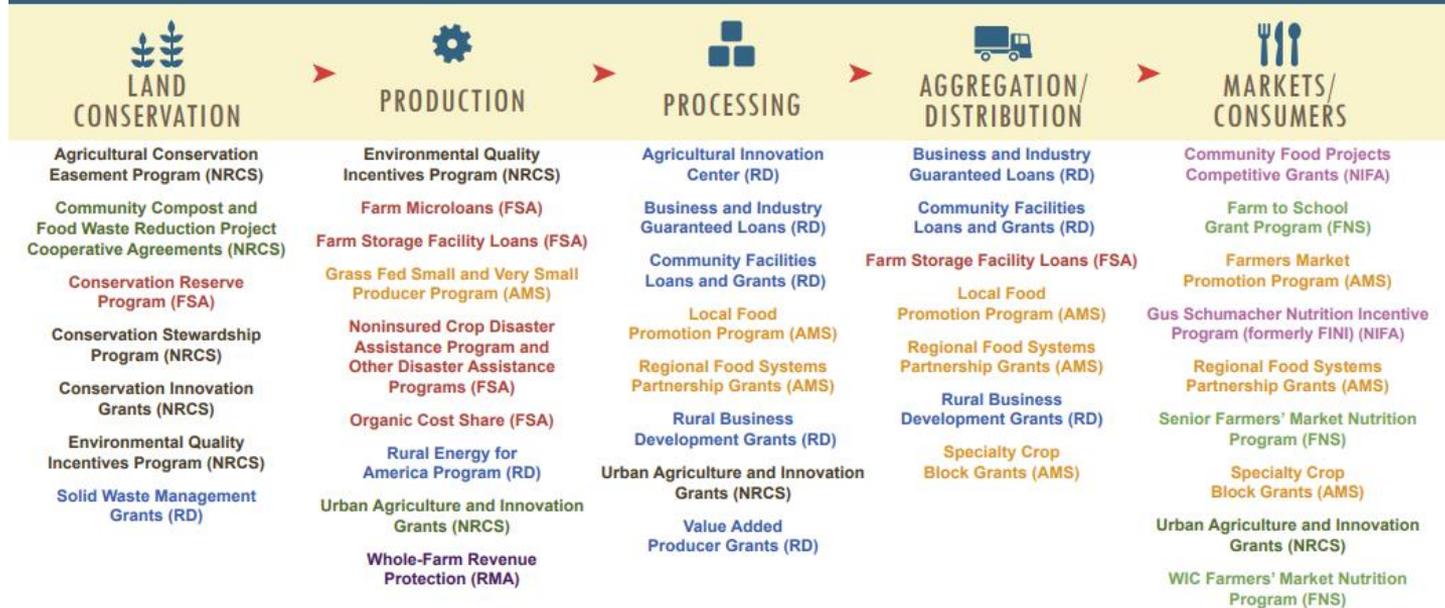
AMS Local and Regional Food Systems Resources



United States
Department of
Agriculture

USDA PROGRAMS IN THE LOCAL FOOD SUPPLY CHAIN

USDA is committed to supporting robust regional food economies across the food chain through the programs noted below.



RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS ALONG THE SUPPLY CHAIN

- Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (NIFA)
- Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program (NIFA)
- Community Prosperity Funding Opportunity (OPPE)
- Conservation Technical Assistance (NRCS)
- Enhancing Agricultural Opportunities for Military Veterans (AGVETS) (NIFA)

- Extension Risk Management (NIFA)
- Federal State Marketing Improvement Program (AMS)
- Food Safety Outreach Program (NIFA)
- Organic Research & Extension Initiative (NIFA)
- Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged and Veteran Farmers and Ranchers Program (2501 Program) (OPPE)

- Rural Cooperative Development Grants (RD)
- Small Business Innovation Research (NIFA)
- Socially Disadvantaged Group Grant (RD)
- Specialty Crop Block Grants (AMS)
- Specialty Crop Research Initiative (NIFA)
- Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program (NIFA)

Famers Market Promotion Program

Two types of project applications were accepted in 2020 under FMPP (could change):



Capacity Building

\$50,000 - \$250,000 (25% match)
36 month grant period

Community Development, Training, and Technical Assistance

\$100,000 - \$500,000 (25% match)
36 month grant period



FMPP Project Types

Capacity Building

- Local Training
- Start-up
- Strategic Planning
- Market Analysis
- Recruitment
- Outreach

Community Development Training and Technical Assistance (CTA)

- Statewide Training
- Technical Assistance
- Advertising & Promotion
- Network Building
- Technical Support

Local Food Promotion Program

Two types of project applications were accepted in 2020 under LFPP (could change):



Planning

\$25,000 - \$100,000 (25% match)

18 month grant period

Implementation

\$100,000 - \$500,000 (25% match)

36 month grant period

LFPP Project Types

Planning

- Feasibility study
- Business plan
- New food hub
- Food Transportation

Implementation

- Food Incubators
- Expanding business
- Food processing
- Certifications
- Market Channels
- Food Transportation



USDA Youth Programs

“

Promote intra-curricular and extracurricular agricultural education while building a strong, sustainable pipeline for careers in agriculture, food and natural resources through USDA outreach initiatives and partner/stakeholder engagement.



CONNECTION

The food we eat, the clothes we wear, and the fuel that powers our lives is produced with agriculture. **USDA fosters a connection between youth and agriculture.**



COMMUNITY

Lessons found in the agriculture industry provide unique opportunities for youth to develop into strong leaders who will go on to lead local, state and national communities. **USDA partners with student organizations and provides programs to assist the next generation of community leaders.**



CAREERS

Careers in agriculture are diverse, rewarding, and in demand. **USDA supports student engagement, recruitment, retention, and agricultural workforce development, from the classroom to the workplace.**

Interested in internships at the USDA? Please visit usda.gov/youth/careers

Connecting the Dots

What'll ya have?





Stay connected!

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www.usda.gov/youth

Discussion



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