



*Quarterly Webinar Series*

# **Farm-to-School Partnerships: Expanding Market Opportunities for Farmers and Food Producers**

October 16th, 2024 | 3 PM - 4 PM PST





# Webinar Logistics

- All webinar materials, including the recording and presentation, will be available on the Center's website ([www.swfoodbiz.org](http://www.swfoodbiz.org)) and shared with all registered.
- We encourage participants to turn their cameras on and use the chat to ask questions, share resources, and connect with other participants.
- There is time for Q/A at the end of the webinar





# Tracy Celio

## UC ANR



Tracy Celio is the program manager for the Southwest Regional Food Business Center where she oversees the center's efforts. Her expertise is in program management, community engagement, training and program development.



**UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA**  
Agriculture and Natural Resources

# The Center's Three Pillars



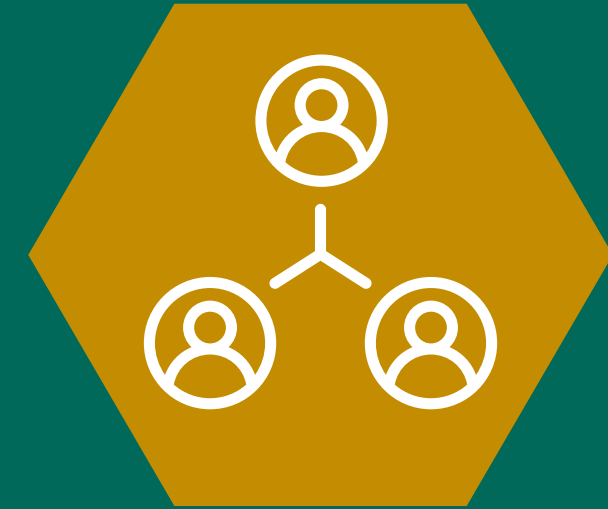
## CAPACITY BUILDING

- We provide financial assistance through business builder subawards to support projects focused on regional needs and businesses that are looking to expand
- We ensure these sub-awards support staff time, business planning activities, software implementations the purchase of special purpose equipment, and other related expenses



## TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

- We provide technical assistance directly to small- and mid-sized food and farm businesses, as well as food value and supply chain coordination
- We will identify priority areas for technical assistance through the Center's Business Builder workgroup



## COORDINATION

- We coordinate across geographic areas with USDA, other federal, state, colonias, and tribal agencies
- We act as a regional hub for sharing best practices and relevant resources
- We conduct outreach to underserved communities and businesses



# Natalie McHale

## Utah Department of Agriculture and Food



Drawing on her experience in youth education and diverse roles within the Utah food sector, Natalie brings her valuable skill sets to the Utah Farm to School movement. With a passion for network expansion, resource development, and fostering collaboration, she is dedicated to enhancing the Farm to School's impact on local communities.





# Claire Tauber

## CAFF



Claire Tauber is the Farm to School Manager for the Community Alliance with Family Farmers. Her work revolves around supporting market access and sales for small-scale, family, and sustainably grown farms within school districts across California. Born and raised in Sacramento, she got her start in sustainable farming and food systems as a farmer's market assistant for Riverdog Farm, and holds a B.S. In Sustainable Agriculture from UC Davis.



**CAFF**  
COMMUNITY ALLIANCE  
with **FAMILY FARMERS**



# Kari Kramer

## USDA Food and Nutrition Services



Kari has spent over the last decade working in food systems as a culinary professional, educator, and program manager. She started her federal career as a program specialist in the national school lunch program for the Western region of Food and Nutrition Services at USDA. She then branched over into the Farm to School program where she currently works to provide technical assistance on operations and food policy with State agencies, grantees, and other stakeholders.



**Food & Nutrition Service**

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE





**Welcome!**





# Farm to Fork

**Utah's chapter of the  
Farm to School Network**



# Our Mission

*Enrich the connection communities have with fresh, healthy food and local food producers by changing food purchasing and education practices at schools and preschools.*

<b>Local Procurement</b>	<b>School Gardens</b>	<b>Education</b>
<p>Equip schools and youth programs with the necessary tools to incorporate local ingredients into their menus.</p>	<p>School and community gardens provide space for growing food, educating people, and connecting communities.</p>	<p>Teachers and caregivers are empowered to integrate food-based learning and agriculture education in all curriculum areas.</p>



# Farm to Fork Team - State Agency Collab



## **Dani Perez**

*Farm to School + Fresh Fruit & Veggie Program (FFVP) Specialist*  
Utah State Board of Education (USBE), Child Nutrition Programs (CNP)  
Email: [danielle.perez@schools.utah.gov](mailto:danielle.perez@schools.utah.gov)



## **Natalie McHale**

*Farm to School Marketing & Outreach Specialist*  
Utah Department of Agriculture and Food (UDAF)  
Email: [nmchale@utah.gov](mailto:nmchale@utah.gov)



# What are our big, long-term goals?

1. **Make agriculture a universal part of the Utah education experience.** Not everyone needs to be a farmer, but everyone needs to know about farming. All students from pre-K on should receive hands-on experience with the whole food chain.
2. **Increase market opportunities for small producers** through education, communication, and infrastructure.

*We need a network to accomplish these goals!*





# Initiatives

**From Farms → Schools**

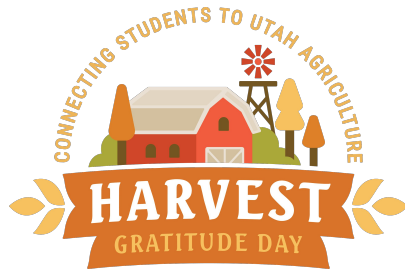
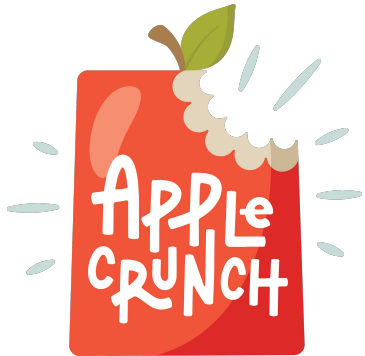
# Annual Promotions



April - Raising the Steaks

June - Squash Summer Hunger

October - Apple Crunch



November - Harvest Gratitude Day



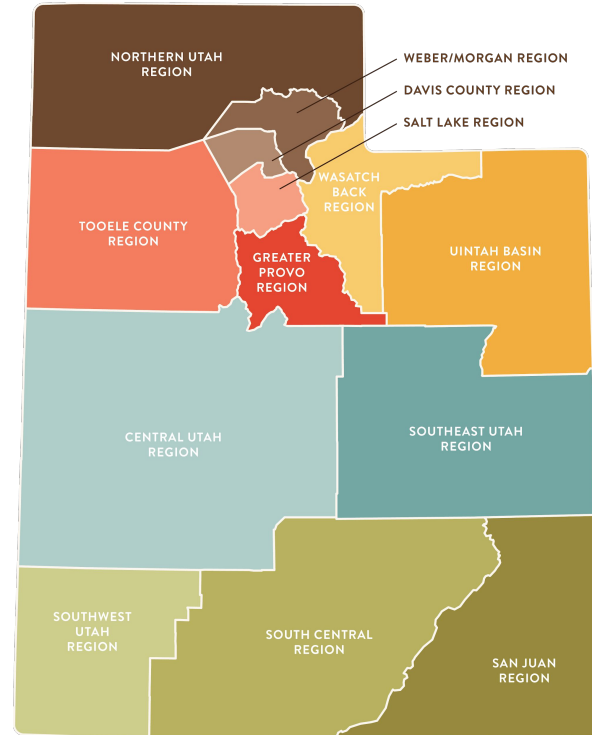
# Culinary Workshops



# Movement Building Workshops



## MOVEMENT BUILDING workshops





# USBE Farm to School Programs



**Goals:** The goals of the program are to improve school meal quality and support Utah farmers, by increasing local food purchases and changing schools' procurement choices.

## Enhanced Local Reimbursement

The Utah State Board of Education provides an extra per-meal reimbursement for National School Lunch Program participants who spend a higher percentage of their budget on Utah-grown food.

## Local Food for Schools Cooperative Agreement - AKA The Local Beef Project

A nationwide USDA program aimed at enhancing school meal programs. Under the oversight of the Utah State Board of Education (USBE), they are leveraging these funds to allocate over \$1.9 million to schools, facilitating the increased procurement of local beef and bison for school meal programs.



# Up and coming

## Ambassadors



**AMBASSADORS**  
serving utah's children local food

## Virtual Network







**Thank you!**

**Natalie McHale**

**[nmchale@utah.gov](mailto:nmchale@utah.gov)**



# USDA Patrick Leahy Farm to School Program

Presented by: Western Regional Office  
Kari Kramer

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October 16, 2024



# Farm to School Can Be.....

- Farm to Child Nutrition (F2CN)
- Farm to School
- Farm to ECE or CACFP
- Farm to Summer
- Bay to Tray
- Garden to Cafeteria
- Beef to School/Bison to School





# History of Farm to School at USDA

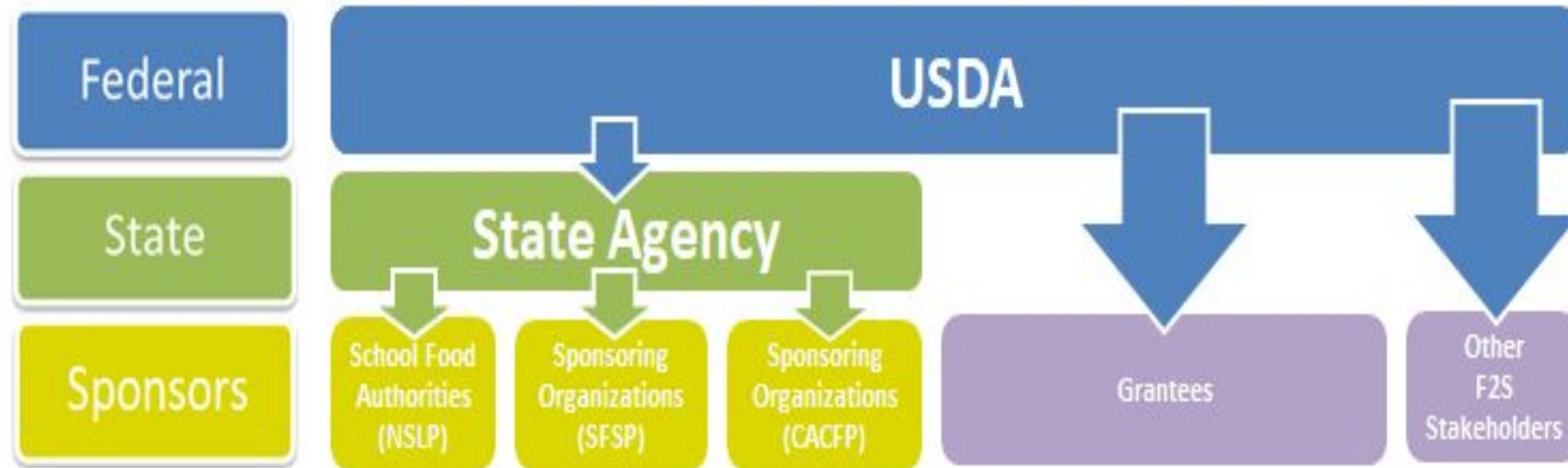
In 2010 the Farm to School Program was funded to:

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





# How We Work



# Farm to School Regional Specialists







Farm to School opens new, significant, and meaningful markets to local farmers, ranchers, and fishers.



Schools spent nearly

**\$1.8  
billion**

On local foods in 2020



## Farm to school participation increased from 2019 to 2023

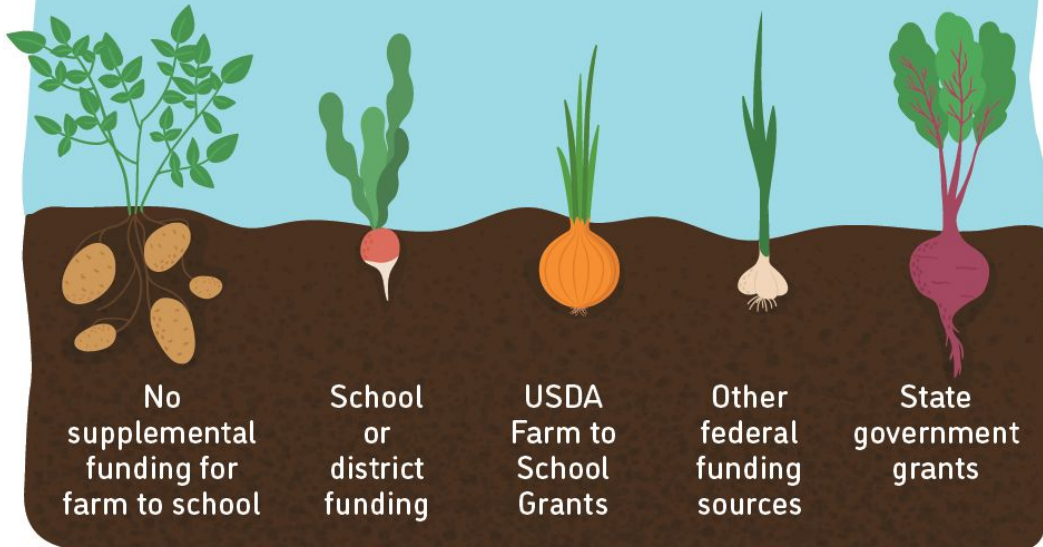
2019 **65%** of SFAs did at least one farm to school activity

2023 **74%**

These SFAs included **86,086** schools and **45,661,333** students

### How SFAs fund farm to school

23% 18% 16% 14% 13%





# Technical Assistance


- Procurement/Policy Resources
- Bringing the Farm to School Trainings
- Support of SA's
- Tool kits
- Fact Sheets



# Fact Sheets



**USDA Food and Nutrition Service**  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

## FOOD SAFETY INFORMATION AND RESOURCES FOR THE FARM TO SCHOOL COMMUNITY



The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) works with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to ensure the Nation's food supply is safe. The FDA is the Federal agency responsible for ensuring the security and safety of many foods, including fresh fruits and vegetables. Many farms are required to comply with the **Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA)** and **Produce Safety Rule (PSR)** and many commercial food operations that manufacture, process, pack, or hold human food are required to comply with the **Preventive Controls for Human Food Rule (PCHFR)**.<sup>1,2</sup>


- The FDA **Technical Assistance Network (TAN)** is a central source of information for questions related to the FSMA rules, programs, and implementation strategies. Answers have been provided in response to **frequently asked questions on the FSMA** and the **FSMA Rules and Guidance for Industry** can also be used to find answers to questions.<sup>3,4</sup>
- The FDA has a **Cooperative Agreement Program** with many States to implement the PSR. Your **State agency** may offer assistance and more information, and if this does not apply to your State or territory, you can visit the **FDA Produce Safety Network** for more information.<sup>5,6</sup>
- The **Produce Safety Alliance (PSA)** is a collaboration between Cornell University, the FDA, and the USDA which offers approved trainings to prepare fresh produce growers to meet the regulatory requirements included in the FSMA Produce Safety Rule.<sup>7</sup>
- The **Food Safety Preventive Controls Alliance (FSPCA)** is an alliance consisting of industry, academic and government stakeholders that develops curricula, and training and outreach programs to support compliance with the prevention-oriented standards of the FSMA.<sup>8</sup>
- Many **local Cooperative Extension** offices provide information and resources about farm-to-school programs. For information about food safety in the **FNS webpage**.

PATRICK LEAHY  
FARM to SCHOOL PROGRAM

**USDA Food and Nutrition Service**  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

## AN OVERVIEW OF GOOD AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES (GAPs)



In the food supply chain, there can be contamination risks at every step from farm to fork. Preventing microbial contamination is particularly important for fresh produce because there is no heat treatment or "kill step" before it is consumed. When purchasing fresh produce, child nutrition professionals should be aware of key food safety practices that all fruit and vegetable producers should follow. Producers should be aware of key food safety practices that all produce growers should follow.

**What are Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs)?**


**Good Agricultural Practices, or GAPs,** are voluntary science-based guidelines that help to reduce the risk of microbial contamination during growing, harvesting, and packing of fresh fruits and vegetables. The guidelines are based on the **U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)'s Guide to Minimizing Microbial Food Safety Hazards for Fresh Produce.** GAPs help to identify and control potential risks that affect the safety of produce on the farm and in the packinghouse.<sup>1</sup>

The main principles of GAPs focus on **water, manure and municipal biosolids, worker health and hygiene, sanitary facilities, field sanitation, packing facility sanitation, transportation, and traceback and recordkeeping.** On a farm, the main sources of contamination are humans, animals, water, and soil. GAPs address how to control these contamination risks. For example, GAPs identify how to:

- Reduce the potential transfer of microbial contamination from the soil to the crop.
- Ensure water used in various phases of production is not a source of contamination.
- Help workers to practice good personal hygiene and ensure that clean facilities are provided for visitors.
- Ensure that there is good sanitation, in storage areas, equipment, and transport that are properly cleaned and maintained.

**There is no Federal requirement for schools to purchase food from farms that have a GAP certification or other third-party food safety certification.**

It is recommended that a farm implement GAPs in its food safety plan to ensure the safety of produce grown and harvested during each phase of production. Keep in mind that farms can follow GAPs and have a food safety plan in place without having a formal GAP certification. Schools may purchase food directly from any farm that meets the applicable food safety requirements defined by the school and any existing Federal, State, Tribal, and local regulations. Review the **Keychain On-Farm Food Safety** fact sheet for more information on how to address and verify on-farm food safety practices.




PATRICK LEAHY  
FARM to SCHOOL PROGRAM

**USDA Food and Nutrition Service**  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

## SCHOOL GARDENS

### Using Gardens To Grow Healthy Habits In Cafeterias, Classrooms, and Communities



**TEACHING GARDENS** in Tennessee, aquaponics systems in Montana, salad bars in New Mexico, garden-based curriculum in Guam...across the Nation schools are growing gardens to provide food for child nutrition programs, connect children to the source of their food, and create hands-on interdisciplinary classrooms.

School gardens pre-date the National School Lunch Program; the Federal Government has been encouraging school gardening since the early 1900s, even building a "School Garden Army" during World War I and supporting victory gardens at schools during World War II. USDA encourages school gardens by providing grant funding, guidance and resources, and support for food service personnel who are interested in purchasing products from a school garden. For additional information on school gardens across the Nation, check out the latest findings from the **USDA Farm to School Census** ([farmtoschoolcensus.usda.gov/](http://farmtoschoolcensus.usda.gov/)).

**In rural Montana, the growing season is short, but that doesn't stop the team from Farm to School of Park County in Livingston, MT, from growing food year-round. High school students manage an aquaponics greenhouse, growing a nutrient ecosystem that combines fish and plants. The students learn rich lessons in chemistry and biology, as well as the business skills needed to sell the fish to local restaurants.**

**Using School Garden Produce in the Cafeteria**

Food service directors use school garden products in the cafeteria every day, from herbs to spice up a pizza, to serving garden-grown lettuce on the salad bar, to providing a variety of fresh produce to school nutrition programs.

**Space for Gardens in All Seasons**

School gardens come in all shapes and sizes, and with varying amounts of land are finding ways to grow gardens both within and outside of school grounds. Gardens can be as simple as a few containers on a wall to cover many acres, and gardens can thrive in Program operators find that even small gardens can provide children gain familiarity and comfort with the vegetables they are seeing more of at meal time.

Districts are also overcoming growing season challenges by using creative and innovative ways. Even in Montana, the traditional growing season just barely covers the school year, season extension techniques make it possible for students to garden all year long.



PATRICK LEAHY  
FARM to SCHOOL PROGRAM

**USDA**  
United States Department of Agriculture

## GARDENS IN TRIBAL COMMUNITIES



**TRIBAL COMMUNITIES** are growing gardens of all forms from medicinal gardens and small community gardens to larger food production gardens to school gardens. This fact sheet will primarily focus on tribal school gardens. Tribal Nations are increasingly leveraging school gardens as tools to preserve tribal language, a connection to the land, culture and a source of food for child nutrition programs.

Introducing whole, traditional foods into student diets can help children form life-long, healthy eating habits. Research indicates that children are more likely to taste, consume, and have positive opinions of fresh produce when they are given hands-on opportunities to plant and harvest. School gardens offer an interactive, outdoor classroom for engaging both elders and students in linking their past and future, and a broader educational and cultural history. USDA supports tribal communities and schools who use school gardens for educational purposes and as a source of produce for child nutrition programs.

The following are examples of tribal schools growing gardens to provide food for child nutrition programs and connect children to the source of their food, and hands-on interdisciplinary learning experiences.

**Arizona: Rooting Traditions to Today with Three Sisters**

Service to All Relations (STAR) School has a garden program that includes outdoor, hydroponic, and greenhouse gardens. The greenhouses, certified by the Arizona Department of Health Services, provide the school's salad bars. STAR also hosts a garden where students prepare a feast for the community using the garden's bounty. The "three sisters" – blue corn, beans, and squash – play a prominent role in the gardens, teaching students about their heritage, health, and sustainable growing strategies.

**New York: Kanenhsio & Akwesasne Freedom School (AFS)**

The Akwesasne Freedom School conducts full-day Mohawk language immersion classes for students in pre-K to grade 8. The AFS owns a 10.5 acre site where Kanenhsio, a collective of community farmers, educators, and entrepreneurs, has developed a community garden, greenhouse, and cannery. In addition, school staff and parents are partnering with Kanenhsio members to involve students in the growing and production of food.

**Colorado: Montezuma School to Farm Program**

Since 2009, Montezuma School to Farm Program has used their Seed to Table curriculum to teach students how to grow, harvest, and cook local foods. Students receive experiential education related to water and soil conservation practices. The school garden produces are used in the school's salad bars.



PATRICK LEAHY  
FARM to SCHOOL PROGRAM





## Local Food for Schools Cooperative Agreement Program

\$1.2 billion to support local food purchases  
\$500 million for NSLP/SBP  
\$200 million for CACFP





# Grants

## Competitive Grant

- \$14.3 million supporting 154 project in 2024!
- FY25 RFA coming this Fall!
- Three tracks:
  - State Agencies
  - Turnkey
  - Implementation

## State Formula Grant

- 4-year grant awarded in FY22
- Support State Agency efforts to implement and expand farm to school activities





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# Questions?





**Q&A**



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SOUTHWEST

The next webinar in the series will take place on **January 15th** and will focus on Institutional Procurement!

Scan the QR code below to learn more about the Southwest Center:



# Thank you!

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