

2012 Conference Workshop Presentations

Agriculture as a Living Classroom: The Community Harvest Project and the PEACH Club

Presenters: Kristin Bafaro, Community Harvest Project; José Garcia and students from Doherty Memorial High School

This workshop will provide the working knowledge, curriculum ties, and inspiration to start your own garden/volunteer project. Using the partnership between The Community Harvest Project, a volunteer-based farm with a hunger relief mission, and students from the Doherty Memorial PEACH Club, explore ways to engage students in agricultural activities that benefit their wider community.

Campus Organizing: The Real Food Challenge Model

Presenters: Estefania Narvaez, Northeast Coordinator, Real Food Challenge; Erin O'Donnell, Northeast Regional Field Organizer, Real Food Challenge

This workshop will illustrate the different components involved in purchasing more local and sustainable foods at the college level, and how the Real Food Challenge is working to create the markets that we need to effectively have an impact on institutional procurement, farmers, workers, and the food industry as a whole. During this workshop the presenters will introduce the tools and campaigns that are underway at different campuses and how they have found students to be paramount in driving efforts for genuine change and institutional goal setting.

Community Farms and Local Schools Make Great Partners

Presenters: Wayne Castonguay, Agriculture Program Director, The Trustees of Reservations and Working Group member of the Farm-based Education Association; Tess Sousa, Weston Food Service Director

Farm-based education and community farming are exploding all across Mass. This offers an unparalleled opportunity to support the farm to school movement both on the demand and supply sides of the equation. An overview of Mass. Community Farming and the Mass. network of the Farm-based Education Association will be followed by a conversation on how these resources can help support farm to school in Massachusetts.

Farm to Institution Procurement 101

Presenters: Emily French, Mass. Farm to School Project Technical Assistance Coordinator; Joe Czajkowski, Czajkowski Farm

This workshop will provide participants with the tools to establish or expand a local foods purchasing program in their school. We will discuss common obstacles to local sourcing and suggest solutions to these challenges. The workshop will address procurement logistics as well as tips from experienced food service directors about how to incorporate more local produce into your meals while staying under budget. Ample time for questions will ensure that you get your local sourcing questions addressed.

Farm to Preschool is Awesome

Presenters: Jessica Collins, Director of Special Initiatives, Partners for a Healthier Community; Sara Teece, Food Service Director, Square One; Kathy Treglia, Director of Programs, YMCA

Learn about why preschools are so essential to the local food movement and how the local food movement is essential for preschools. Preschools in Springfield, Mass. have formed a co-op buying model to purchase local

and fresh produce. They have committed staff to professional development trainings to learn how to prepare and serve meals using raw produce. Organizations are changing policies and creating a competitive edge over other preschools in Hampden County. Workshop objectives include: learning about preschool health initiative, transforming a local food system, and policy action for sustainability.

Get Fresh in the Kitchen

Presenter: Didi Emmons, chef, cookbook author, and school food consultant

Join acclaimed chef and school food consultant Didi Emmons in this workshop highlighting the versatility of local fall vegetables. Chef Emmons will demonstrate their use in slaws and salads. She will demonstrate techniques for breaking down the vegetables to facilitate speedy preparation. The workshop will show how to create a fast slaw dressing, how to improvise, and also how to work with fresh ginger in all its glory.

Getting Started in the School Garden

Presenters: Hope Guardenier, Executive Director, School Sprouts Educational Garden; Karen DiFranza, Hubbardston Elementary School/Quabbin Regional High School; Marian Hazzard, Touchstone Community School

This workshop offers an opportunity to share ideas, successes, challenges, and overall know-how with others who have some experience planning and developing a school garden program at their school. Participants are encouraged to bring questions with them to the workshop and any information and materials they believe would be helpful to fellow school garden leaders. We will also discuss Massachusetts Agriculture in the Classroom's new statewide Garden-Based Education Initiative.

Getting your Product to the School, College, or Hospital: New Distribution Models

Presenters: JD Kemp, Founder and CEO of FoodEx; Glen Brunetti, Northeast Executive Chef Chartwells K-12; Joe Czajkowski, Czajkowski Farm; Abbie Nelson, NOFA-VT

Using a series of case studies, this workshop will present innovative models for getting farm products to institutions in ways that are profitable for the farm and feasible for the institution. JD Kemp of FoodEx, a company that facilitates farm to school sales, and Glen Brunetti, Northeast Executive Chef for Chartwells K-12, will describe how this unique partnership has enabled a significant increase in utilization of local produce in institutions. Farmer Joe Czajkowski will discuss how this distribution model has enabled the profitable expansion of his wholesale market.

Grassroots Farm to School: Tales of Patience and Perseverance

Presenters: Karen DiFranza, Founder, Quabbin Composting and Organic Gardening Program; Glenroy Buchanan, Pioneer Valley/New England Growers Co-op; Ana L. Jaramillo, Child & Adolescent Health & Wellness Coordinator, Holyoke Health Center, Inc.

Grassroots farm to school initiatives are everywhere, but starting them and keeping them going can be daunting. Hear from a high school agriculture club that is self-sustaining, a chef and nutrition expert dedicated to the goals of one district's wellness policy, and a farmer starting the conversation on bringing farm to school efforts to families in low-income areas. Presenters will share organizing principles, communication techniques, and the perseverance that is the cornerstone of their grassroots efforts.

Innovative School Kitchen Partnerships

Presenters: Brendan Ryan, Framingham Food Service Director; Noli Taylor, Island Grown Schools; Sally Loomis, Fertile Ground; Reneé Harvey, Williamsburg Elementary Schools

Think outside the box and increase the local produce in your school kitchen! Framingham Food Service Director Brendan Ryan will discuss his successful use of large quantities of produce from the school garden; Sally Loomis of Fertile Ground and Reneé Harvey of Williamsburg Elementary Schools will discuss how incorporating gardens into the school culture has influenced the food service program in Williamsburg; and Noli Taylor of Island Grown Schools will talk about a new gleaning program that uses volunteers to bring previously un-harvested produce from Martha's Vineyard farms to school kitchens, as well as a model for bringing local meat to schools at a competitive price.

The Kindergarten Initiative in Worcester

Presenters: From the Worcester Public Schools: Donna Lombardi, Director of School Nutrition, Laurie Kuczka, Early Childhood Education Coordinator, and Albert Ganem, Principal, City View School; Rita Brennan-Olson, Mass. Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education, Maggie Shar, Fertile Ground; Anne Cody, Mass. Farm to School Project KI Coordinator

The Kindergarten Initiative is a partnership between the Mass. Farm to School Project and the Worcester Public Schools that uses local food to teach very young students about healthy eating and where food comes from. Based on a curriculum created by the Food Trust, the KI includes a Mass. Farm to School Project coordinator, school nutrition staff, administrators, principals and teachers, educational support professionals, parents, and local farmers who supply snacks and host school field trips. Learn how Worcester pulled together a KI team, about the program's impact on classroom learning, the critical role of the School Nutrition Dept., and how creative use of the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program can support a locally grown foods program like the KI.

Local Foods Can Enhance Summer Feeding Programs

Presenters: Ashley Hall, Sr. Child Nutrition Outreach Manager, Mass. Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education; Jen Perry, Nutrition Coordinator, The Open Door; Julie LaFontaine, Executive Director, The Open Door; Simca Horwitz, Mass. Farm to School Project TA Specialist

Local foods purchasing is a natural fit with summer feeding programs. The bounty of Massachusetts agriculture is available throughout the summer and bumper crops often make local produce incredibly affordable. Learn how to take advantage of these local fruits and vegetables and come away with an understanding of how to negotiate with a local farmer or distributor to optimize your use of fresh locally grown foods.

Local, Fresh, and Healthy: Implementing Nutrition Standards with National School Lunch or Breakfast

Presenter: Mary Joan McLarney, MS, RD, LDN, Special Nutrition Programs Nutritionist, USDA Food and Nutrition Service

This workshop will cover the requirements for schools to implement the new meal patterns in the National School Lunch and National School Breakfast programs. It will provide successful strategies for schools to establish sustainable local purchasing systems through the power of partnership.

Mass. FoodCorps: Building and Integrating New School Gardens

Presenters: FoodCorps members Sarah Rubin, Erin Taylor, Grace Cherubino, Sadie Richards-Brown

Hear FoodCorps garden educators share the challenges and successes of their first year building school gardens. They will give an overview of FoodCorps as a national organization and their work in Massachusetts, including their experiences in Boston and Gloucester with the logistics of building school gardens; connecting the garden with students, teachers, and the cafeteria; incorporating the garden outside of the classroom; and thinking about long-term sustainability. They will demonstrate at least one example activity and leave ample time for questions catering to educators, community members, and anyone interested in school gardening, as well as to potential future FoodCorps service members.

School to Farm Composting: Make Local Lunches and Food Events Trash Free!

Presenters: Deb Habib, Executive Director, Seeds of Solidarity Education Center; Amy Donovan, Program Director, Franklin County Solid Waste Management District

When a yummy local carrot is served on a polystyrene plate or kale stems from a cooking workshop end up in the trash, opportunities to educate about composting are missed. This workshop will provide strategies for a critical element of any farm to school program: waste reduction and transformation. What can be recycled and composted? What are environmentally friendly, compostable, and recyclable products for lunches, snacks, taste-testing, and events? Learn strategies for making composting and recycling a fun and educational part of your school culture and curriculum. Some basics on composting onsite in school gardens and off-site at farms and commercial facilities will be addressed.

School Gardens and Curriculum Connections

Presenters: Francey Slater, Education Coordinator, CitySprouts; Erica Curry, Farm to School Coordinator, Shelburne Farms, VT; Kaila Binney, Island Grown Schools

Learn a step-by-step process for finding authentic curriculum connections between garden and farm experiences and classroom standards-based learning. This workshop will use UBD templates, Curriculum Webbing, and a hands-on activity to demonstrate tools that can be used for creating curriculum connections. It will also discuss the challenges of doing this work in an increasingly complex school culture.

Taking Agriculture into the Classroom With a Focus on Dairy Farming

Presenters: Marjorie Cooper, President of Mass. Ag. in the Classroom; James Cooper from Coopers' Hilltop Dairy Farm in Rochdale; Debi Hogan, Executive Director of Mass. Ag. in the Classroom

Mass. Agriculture in the Classroom has been providing resources, educational materials, and workshops to make connections between the farm and the classroom since 1984. Dairy farmers Marjorie Cooper and nephew James provide an example of Ag. in the Classroom activities with an overview of the dairy industry in Massachusetts today. They will demonstrate making cheese from the milk of the cow, which is a simple process that can be easily adapted to the classroom.

Tools for Successful Menu Change

Presenters: Alden Cadwell, Concord-Carlisle Food Service Director; Vin Connelly, Cambridge Rindge and Latin High School Kitchen Manager; Dawn Olcott, School Nutritionist, Cambridge Health Alliance; Melissa Honeywood, Cambridge Food Service Director

In this workshop participants will hear about two different models of menu change in Massachusetts public school districts – Cambridge and Concord-Carlisle. These food service programs have engaged in cross-community conversations, mobilized a parent advisory council to lead food tastings, and engaged students in the menu planning process, followed by implementation of their suggestions and preferences. Two

Food Service Directors, a Chef/Kitchen Manager, and a School Nutritionist will explain how these techniques have supported their efforts to improve the healthiness of their meals and source more local ingredients while increasing participation.

Using Collaborative Purchasing and DoD Fresh for Healthy, Affordable School Meals

Presenters: Scott Richardson, Director of Strategic Initiatives, Project Bread; Kimberly Clark, Farm to School Coordinator, Kids First Rhode Island

Creative use of “free” USDA foods is an excellent tool for stretching your dollars to buy more locally grown healthy foods. In this workshop you will hear about innovative models in New England that are helping food service directors do more healthy, local cooking while staying within their budgets. The workshop will profile the power of collaborative purchasing as well as regional models that use the Department of Defense Fresh Program to incorporate local foods.

The UMass Permaculture Gardens and Student Farm: Growing a Sustainable Campus

Presenter: Amanda Brown, UMass Student Farm

Why and how are UMASS Amherst students creating permaculture food gardens across their campus? What is the UMASS student farm? Explore two different ways that students are leading the movement for sustainable food on campus. Get an introduction to a sustainable, regenerative gardening and design technique in this interactive lecture, and learn how to start a permaculture garden at your own school. Attendees will walk away with a few activities for engaging students in permaculture learning. This workshop is particularly geared towards college and high school students.

Using Contracts to Increase Local Foods

Presenters: Noli Taylor, Island Grown Schools; Kim Szeto, Farm to School Coordinator, Boston Public Schools; Dorothy Brayley, Executive Director, Kids First RI

How can the language you use in your school food service contracts promote local food sourcing? Learn about three models in which contracts have been used to ensure the ability of schools to purchase local produce directly from farmers. Following a review of contract parameters developed by MDESE, Noli Taylor of Island Grown Schools will explain how school districts in Martha's Vineyard returned to self operation and now preferentially purchase local foods; Kim Szeto of Boston Public Schools will discuss the use of a separate produce bid just for locally grown produce; and Dorothy Brayley of Kids First RI will talk about the contract changes made in RI and their experiences, good and bad, with getting management companies to comply, as well with communities to understand, know, and enforce farm to school contract language.

Year Round Sales: Season Extension & Processing for the Institutional Market

Presenters: John Waite, Executive Director, Franklin County CDC; Liz Buxton, Food Service Director, Mohawk Public Schools; Chelsea Lewis, New England Beef to Institution Project; Glenn Brunetti, Chartwells Northeast Executive Chef, Chartwells K-12; Joe Zgrodnik, J.J. Zgrodnik Farm

While Massachusetts has a short growing season, opportunities to use local produce in schools do not end when the first snow falls. In this workshop participants will learn about the newest strategies being used to extend the number of months that local products are available for use in institutions. Come hear about the New England Beef to Institution project and the Greenfield Food Processing Center's initiative to process and freeze thousands of pounds of local produce for year round sales.

