

TEXAS

FARM FRESH E-HARVEST

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE | COMMISSIONER SID MILLER

October 2019

Farm Fresh Spotlight Story

October is National Farm to School Month

October is Farm to School month, a time for schools to celebrate agriculture and the benefits of eating food grown and raised close to home! More than 250 school districts and charter organizations have already pledged their commitment to the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) Farm Fresh Challenge. These schools will Eat Local, Teach Local and Be Social to show their support for agriculture in the Lone Star State. Schools not participating in the annual challenge can still support farm to school using social media and TDA resources.

TDA provides resources to help you celebrate through social media using #FarmFreshTexas and #F2SMonth. Visit [Squaremeals.org/FarmFreshChallenge](https://squaremeals.org/FarmFreshChallenge) to download the [Be Social toolkit](#) and show us your trays of local foods and your school garden celebrations.

For even more resources, visit [FarmtoSchool.org](https://farmtoschool.org).

Farm to School Spotlight



STUDENTS ARE LEARNING
TO LOVE LOCAL

School Spotlight

Farm to School Activities and Student Outcomes: A Systematic Review



Contact TDA

Emilee Case
Coordinator for Farm
Fresh Projects

[Email](#) us or call
(877) TEX-MEAL

Connect with Others

Texas Statewide Network

This [LinkedIn Group](#) is an online network connecting schools, child and adult care centers, producers, support organizations and community members with important information about expanding local food efforts in Texas.

[Join Today!](#)

Texas Farm Fresh

Network

[Use this tool](#) to connect with Texas food companies that currently sell or are interested in selling to schools, child care centers and summer meal programs. Company listings include contact information, product availability and distribution radius.

Funding Opportunities

Studies of farm to school-related activities consistently show these efforts have positive impacts on food and nutrition-related knowledge; most studies also suggest a positive relation between farm to school-related activities and healthy food selection during school meals, nutrition self-efficacy, and a willingness to try fruits and vegetables. Access the abstract [here](#) to read more about the results of this systematic review.

Authors: Melissa Pflugh Prescott, Rebecca Cleary, Alessandro Bonanno, Marco Costanigro, Becca B R Jablonski, Abigail B Long

USDA is Currently Conducting the 2018 Farm to School Census

School districts should be on the lookout for an email from ABT Consulting to complete the 2018 Farm to School Census. By taking the survey, you help USDA assess the growth of farm to school across the nation. This is the first survey since 2015 and USDA has put together the [Census preparation survey](#) to help contracting entities (CEs) complete the survey answers.

The 2018 Census will ask questions similar to those asked in the past, including the following:

- What is the CE's definition of local?
- How much money is spent on local food purchases annually?
- What local products are most commonly purchased?
- Where are the local foods from?
- What are the biggest challenges and benefits of engaging in farm to school?
- How many edible school gardens are in the district?
- How many salad bars are in the district?

All answers will be publicly available in 2020. View previous Farm to School Census data at farmtoschoolcensus.fns.usda.gov.

Serving Local Food to Millions of Children

Thanks for being up to the 2019 Farm Fresh Challenge, part of Texas Agriculture Commissioner Sid Miller's Farm Fresh Initiative! Your participation in the challenge is a big part of bringing local, healthy food to 2.85 million children across the great state of Texas. We look forward to seeing your social posts and tweets over the next month. Keep up the good work and don't forget to use #FarmFreshTexas.

Farm to Child Care Spotlight

Serving Local Food to Millions of Children

Each year, early child care providers are eligible to apply for funding to support projects to enhance their outdoor spaces, improve meals and snacks and enhance the overall child care experience through the Farm Fresh Initiative. This year's E3E Farm Fresh grantees are embarking on projects to build gardens, partner with nearby schools, take children on field trips and so much more! If you're a Child and Adult Care Food Program operator with interest in enhancing Farm Fresh projects for your program, look for updates to TDA's E3E grant and the application that will open this spring.

Head Start Programs Eligible for 2020 Gro More Good Garden Grants

Deadline: Oct. 11, 2019

Get a jump start on planning for the 2019-2020 program year! The Gro More Good Garden Grant application is now open for Head Start programs.

How to apply:

Review the [FAQ](#) to learn about grant eligibility.

[Apply for the grant](#) by Oct. 11, 2019.

For grant related questions, email gardens@nhsa.org.

Producer Spotlight

Produce Marketing Association - Networking Opportunity

Are you a Texas producer interested in connecting your food business with large retailers nationally and

Financial support from organizations may help establish or advance local Farm Fresh initiatives.

[Go here](#) for a list of opportunities from TDA, USDA and other organizations.

Stay Connected



Interested in learning more about Texas products?

Sign up for the [Go Local](#). [GO TEXAN E-zine](#) today.

globally? TDA will attend a Produce Marketing Association Fresh Summit in Anaheim, California and wants to share your contact information with these buyers. In the past, producers have been connected to Walmart, HEB, Target, United Affiliated Foods and global marketplaces. For more information, please send an email to Scott.Sroufe@Texasagriculture.gov by Oct. 9, 2019.

Texas Fruit Conference

New Braunfels Civic Convention Center

8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Oct. 28 and 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Oct. 29

Registration fee: \$85.00

The 8th Annual Texas Fruit Conference, convened by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, offers a combination of fundamental and advanced presentations on fruit growing for Texas conditions. Individuals interested in starting an orchard for fun or for profit will find the program content beneficial. Experienced growers will also benefit from presentations that cover a range of production and marketing topics. Dr. John Clark, distinguished professor of horticulture at the University of Arkansas and a blackberry and fruit tree breeder, will be a featured out-of-state speaker.

Registration fee includes a "Taste of Texas Fruit Reception" on Monday, and lunch both days.

Optional Texas Fruit Post-Conference Tour

- 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Oct. 30

Starting location: Studebaker Farm, 9405 E. U.S. 290, Fredericksburg 78624

Tour sites include commercial orchards and the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Viticulture and Fruit Lab with a focus on high tunnel production and other protective culture methods for perennial fruit crops.

To register visit : <https://agriliferegister.tamu.edu/productListingDetails/2907>

Welcome new Farm Fresh Network members!

In September, TDA welcomed nine new members to the Farm Fresh Network, including companies that provide Texas grown beef, fresh and frozen blueberries, pecans and ready to eat salad dressings. If you haven't visited Squaremeals.org/FarmFreshNetwork recently, now is a great time to explore all the food companies taking advantage of the network.



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