

Goals for Farm to School and School Gardens in Oregon

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The mission of the Oregon Farm to School and School Garden Network (OFSSGN) is:

“We convene statewide leadership to promote the health and well-being of youth, families, farms and the environment by increasing access to locally grown and locally processed food in schools and by supporting food and garden-based education in Oregon.”

The Oregon Farm to School and School Garden Network supports activities and policies that:

- Increase participation in the school meal program to improve access to nutritious meals;
- Increase consumption of vegetables and fruits to improve nutrition and health outcomes;
- Improve knowledge and attitudes about agriculture, food, nutrition and the environment;
- Support economic development by increasing market opportunities for farmers, ranchers, fishers, local food processors, local food distributors, and food manufacturers;
- Promote environmental stewardship; and
- Promote food justice by supporting healthy and equitable community food systems.

About this document:

This is a working document.

Many of these goals are not currently measurable because there are not systems in place to track them. One of our goals is to establish effective systems to track our progress in the following areas. As we collect data, we will need to be very clear about who provided the data and where it is coming from, so that it can be referenced from year to year.

In two years, we hope to have developed a baseline and tracking system for each of the following goals.

In the areas of Procurement, Promotion, Education and School Gardens we hope to achieve a 10-20 percent increase in these numbers above the baseline in each year that they are tracked. In the area of Health Outcomes we hope to achieve a 3-5 percent increase above the baseline in each year that they are tracked.

And once we have baseline/benchmarks we will set ideal percentages for participation or completion of the following goals in order to track our success.

What is farm to school?

While farm to school programs are unique to the places and people who run them, they generally consist of practices that connect local food producers and processors with the school cafeteria in preschool, grades K-12 and college settings. Effective programs also combine food, agriculture and garden-based education with the classroom, lunchroom and community through activities such as field trips to farms and school gardens. Complementary food, agriculture and garden-based education is vital to the success of programs that incorporate locally produced foods into food served in the lunchroom.

From the National Farm to School Network:

Farm to School is broadly defined as a program that connects schools (K-12) and local farms with the objectives of serving healthy meals in school cafeterias, improving student nutrition, providing agriculture, health and nutrition education opportunities and supporting local and regional farmers.

Local food procurement

1. Increase the percentage of school districts in Oregon that purchase Oregon-grown or processed products, at least once per school year. (Most schools are already purchasing Oregon-grown products, especially milk.)
2. Increase the percentage of the food budget of Oregon school districts that is spent on products grown or processed in Oregon. (Some products purchased regularly by schools do not grow and/or are not processed in Oregon or are seasonal.)
3. Increase the amount, in pounds, of Oregon-grown or raised products purchased by Oregon school districts each year.
4. Increase the amount in dollars that Oregon school districts are purchasing each year of:
 - a. Oregon-grown or raised products
 - b. Oregon-processed products
 - c. milk or cheese
5. Increase the percentage of schools that incorporate school garden produce into cafeteria meals.
6. Increase the percentage of school districts that have increased the frequency at which they serve Oregon products.
7. Increase the percentage of school districts that have increased the variety of Oregon products they serve.
8. School districts across Oregon utilize a wide range of purchasing methods:
 - a. School districts are purchasing Oregon products directly from local farmers ongoing at least once per year;
 - b. School districts are purchasing Oregon products through a distributor;
 - c. School districts are purchasing Oregon products through growers' cooperatives; and
 - d. Schools districts are purchasing Oregon products using utilizing innovative procurement strategies (such as forward contracting).
9. Farms in all regions of the state have access to a distribution network to distribute their products to Oregon's schools.

Promotion of local food purchases

1. Oregon Harvest for Schools materials are developed and available for 20-30 different products including fruits and vegetables, meat, grains, eggs, seafood, beans and dairy.
2. Oregon Harvest for Schools templates are easy to use, downloadable and editable, translated into Spanish, and include space to add producer profiles.
3. Increase the percentage of Oregon schools or school districts that are using Oregon Harvest for Schools materials.
4. Increase the percentage of these schools or school districts that are using these materials as intended, using posters to promote local products being featured at that time, not simply as decoration.
5. Increase the percentage of school districts that are making local purchases that are doing some form of promotion.

6. There are coordinated statewide efforts to increase parents and caregivers of school-age children's knowledge, attitudes and behaviors toward purchasing Oregon foods, that are similarly promoted in schools.

Farm to School educational programs/activities

1. There is an easily accessible compilation (possibly a searchable website) of Farm to School and School Garden curricula available via the OFSSGN. These materials are specific to Oregon, reviewed/approved by the OFSSGN, place-based, tied to academic content standards where appropriate, tied to Oregon's Environmental Literacy Plan, and include preschool through high school curricula. Materials developed nationwide are also linked here.
2. Increase the percentage of school districts procuring local foods that accompany these purchases with educational activities.
3. Increase the percentage of schools in Oregon that report student involvement in some form of farm to school and/or school garden educational programming (farm field trips, local food cooking activities, school garden usage, classroom presentations, tasting tables, etc.) for all students in at least one grade level and these students receive at least 10 or more hours of this educational programming during the year.
4. Increase the percentage of schools that are offering students experiential, farm/food related field trips (could include a farm, ranch, fishing boat, etc).
5. Increase the percentage of schools that are connecting to their food and agricultural community by having farmers, chefs or others in the food and agricultural community visit their school.
6. Increase the percentage of students who are receiving educational activities that are able to demonstrate knowledge of where their food comes from and how it is grown.
7. Increase the percentage of students receiving educational activities who are able to demonstrate knowledge, skills and motivation to make responsible food choices and how they impact their health, the environment and their community.
8. Increase the number of trainings for garden educators, nutrition services staff, teachers and non-profit partners.

School gardens

1. Increase the percentage of schools in Oregon that have an edible garden which is actively used for educational activities.
2. Increase the percentage of school gardens that are contributing some produce to their school's meal program.
3. Increase the percentage of school gardens that have a designated, funded School Garden staff position (School Garden Coordinator or Educator).
4. Increase the amount of school gardens in Oregon to include at least ONE school garden in each County, to assist with assistance and best practices for neighboring school districts.

Policy and State Agency Support

1. State funding is *available* for every district for purchasing Oregon-grown and processed food products that meet certain criteria. Funding is also available for food-based, agriculture-based and garden-based educational activities, through HB2800 or equivalent. This funding is established as permanent/recurring in the state budget.
2. Funding for Farm to School and/or School Garden Programs and staff within Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) and Oregon Department of Education (ODE) are secure with resources for these agencies to provide technical assistance and support (funding could go elsewhere) for farm to school and school garden implementation at the school and district level.
3. Funding for implementation of HB2800 includes 1) funding for districts, ODE or other entities to track and monitor local purchases, 2) funding for districts to link cafeteria with classroom/garden activities, and 3) funding to encourage community support. Additional capacity at ODE is available to administer funds if the pilot HB2800 expands.
4. State agencies support incorporation of food from school gardens into meals served in schools when those school gardens' coordinators are following school garden food safety recommendations. These agencies provide consistent food safety recommendations for school gardens in Oregon that are protective of student health, feasible for school garden programs to implement, and consistent with the educational goals of school gardens. These recommendations are consistent with USDA's recommendations and are specific to county health inspector requirements, if possible. State agencies will be able to identify all school gardens and their contact people to disseminate this information.

Health Outcomes

1. Increase the number students in schools/districts with farm to school programs (including procurement, promotion and/or education) consuming the daily recommended amount of fruits and vegetables (5 serving)
2. Increase the number of **school districts** documenting wellness policies that include Farm to School programming as part of their efforts to address childhood nutrition.
3. Increase the number of **schools** with Farm to School programs (including procurement, promotion and/or education) reporting school specific written wellness policies in addition to the district policy , that address school nutrition environments and practices, and include Farm to School programming, as part of their efforts to address students' health.
4. Increase the number of eligible students in school districts with Farm to School programs participating in free/reduced meal program (NSLP and NSBP).
5. Increase the number of all students in school districts with Farm to School programs participating in federal school meal programs (NSLP and NSBP).

Partnerships

1. The Oregon Farm to School and School Garden Network includes stakeholders from all geographic regions of the state and includes participation from Oregon Department of Agriculture, Oregon Department of Education, Oregon State University (OSU) Extension, non-profit organizations, farms, school food services administrators, Commodity Commissions, distributors, youth, public health professionals, farms and food producers, and educators.
2. New cross-discipline (producer and school, or community health organization and school), alliances have been formalized have strengthened the movement in Oregon.
3. Existing programs, such as Oregon State Extension Master Gardeners, Oregon State University Extension 4-H School Garden Program, FFA, Oregon Health Authority, Oregon Food Bank and public state universities (i.e. OSU, Eastern Oregon University, U of O, PSU) collaborate with other farm to school and school garden stakeholders across the state to efficiently utilize existing resources to support farm to school and school garden efforts.
4. Relevant local research is conducted on farm to school and school garden programs and policies in Oregon by collaborative arrangements (may include local non-profits, schools, districts, the Oregon Health Authority, ODE and ODA, OSU Extension, and others within and outside the state).