

VISION

All Rhode Island school food buyers look to Rhode Island farmers FIRST when seeking fresh foods for their students and staff. All Rhode Island school children can eat fresh & healthy foods at school, camp and day care.

MISSION

We bring together Rhode Island schools and Rhode Island farmers for the development of successful and sustainable purchasing relationships.

GOAL

By fall 2009 all of Rhode Island's 36 public school districts and each independent school regularly purchases at least one Rhode Island farm fresh food.



Enjoying RI juicy peaches at a Cranston elementary school

The Rhode Island Farm to School Project

is a collaboration between:

- Kids First
- Farm Fresh Rhode Island
- RI Department of Environmental Management/Division of Agriculture
- RI Department of Health
- Southside Community Land Trust

Thanks to our funders:

- Carter Family Charitable Trust
- Mr. & Mrs. Henry D. Sharpe, Jr.
- van Beuren Charitable Foundation
- Harry M., Miriam C. and William C. Horton Fund
- Rhode Island Foundation
- Jessie B. Cox Charitable Trust
- RI Department of Environmental Management, Division of Agriculture

For more information or assistance, please contact:

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Your tax deductible contribution to the Rhode Island Farm to School Project should be made payable to Kids First with the note "Farm to School" on the memo line and mailed to the address above. Thanks for your support!

RHODE ISLAND FARM TO SCHOOL PROJECT

*Local Food
In
Local Schools*



RI Sweet corn at a Cranston middle school

Rhode Island Farm to School Project

The Rhode Island Farm to School Project is a collaborative project between the State of Rhode Island, Rhode Island public and independent schools, private industry and public nonprofits.

Serving healthy foods in Rhode Island schools is a goal for many. Supporting the local economy and small business owners is a goal for others. This project combines health, business and environmental concerns in a win-win situation.



RI potatoes & apples at a Pawtucket Jr. high school

The Rhode Island Farm to School Project had an un-official start at Kids First from a USDA Team Nutrition Grant in 1999 to support initial meetings and discussions amongst farmers and school food service directors. Within two years, Cranston emerged as a leader in testing the RI Farm to School concept, making initial purchases of RI apples from Hill Orchards. In Fall 2005, Kids First collaborated with RI DEM, Division of Agriculture and Southside Community Land Trust (SCLT) to secure “seed” funding as part of a \$25,000 grant from the Jessie B. Cox Charitable Trust to SCLT, which created the Urban Agriculture Task Force to promote community outreach and education around sustainable agriculture in greater Providence. Today, RI Farm to School is a statewide Kids First project.

RI Farm to School Success

September 2005 – Cranston public schools, in addition to making regular purchases of apples, tomatoes and cucumbers, purchase 1,200 ears of corn from a Rhode Island farm. Parents, state and local officials roll up their sleeves to shuck it for school lunches.

September 2006 – Five public school districts in Rhode Island served locally grown produce as a pilot project of Chartwells Food Services. Cranston, Providence and Pawtucket schools serve RI butternut squash for the first time. Cranston replaces french fries with oven roasted RI potatoes. Four Aramark districts purchase RI apples.

February 2007 – Third Annual Local Food Forum brings together farmers, local businesses, schools & institutions to make connections and strategize on farm to school relationships.

June 2007 – RI grown strawberries are served for the first time ever in RI schools, district wide in four districts: N. Providence, Woonsocket, Lincoln and Central Falls.

October 2007 – Chartwells expands its Farm to School pilot to include all 12 of its public school districts. Cranston makes first-ever purchases of peaches and broccoli. Sodexo purchases and serves RI apples and potatoes in all 14 of its RI school districts. RI Harvest festivals, featuring local produce occur in schools across the state!

Be a Part of Farm to School

Are you a parent? Food service director? Farmer? Student? Teacher? Food lover?

Help us make the connection between our children and our farms. Call Kids First at 401.751.4503 or email info@kidsfirstri.org. Share your expertise, tell us your needs, or volunteer your talent.

WHY LOCAL?

★ Healthy Kids ★

- Kids eat more fruits and vegetables when they are fresh, ripe, and flavorful – wouldn't you?
- Eating more fruits and vegetables helps prevent obesity and chronic disease, growing epidemics among our children.
- Eating habits formed in childhood are usually carried on for life.
- Healthy kids feel better and exhibit better behavior and higher achievement in school.
- Kids that eat local farm products become interested and learn more about food, nutrition, and agriculture.

★ A Strong Local Economy ★

- Wholesale markets for local farm products help keep farms economically viable.
- Farms provide meaningful jobs for Rhode Islanders.
- Every dollar paid to a locally owned farm is worth \$1.30 in local economic development.
- Local economic relationships build community and social capital.
- A strong local food economy will help keep our costs of living low in spite of rising energy prices.

★ Environmental Quality ★

- Rhode Island farms protect open space from development and keep our landscape green.
- Sourcing food locally helps prevent air pollution and climate change.
- Most Rhode Island farms are small scale, family-owned, and sustainable.