

(10/2/24 District Administrator's Corner Article)

October is **National Farm to School Month**. This highlights and celebrates food education and related elements, such as school gardens and lunch trays filled with healthy, local ingredients.

Here are a couple easy ways to get involved, as shared on the website (www.farmtoschool.org):

1. Be Inspired: Follow the National Farm to School Network on our blog, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to see inspiring examples of farm to school success and innovation. (www.farmtoschool.org)
2. Get Involved: Explore our national calendar of Farm to School Month events to see how you can celebrate in your state. If you are hosting events for Farm to School Month, we encourage you to submit them to the calendar!
3. Enter the Sweepstakes! This year, we're making Farm to School Month extra special with a giveaway for our community!
4. Spread the Word: Shout out about farm to school and share what you're doing for National Farm to School Month with the hashtags #F2SMonth and #farmtoschool on social media.
5. Visit a farmer's market or regional vendor.

Locally, on October 10 our River Valley students will be taking part in **The Great Apple Crunch**. This will encourage healthy eating and support farm to school and other local food purchasing initiatives throughout the state. It's also a fun way to connect food and agriculture to classroom curricula.

So, students and staff members will be crunching into **locally grown apples at noon on the second Thursday in October**. We want to thank Oakwood Fruit Farm and Sunset Orchards for helping us get a great local product for students and staff. If that timeframe doesn't work for you, we still encourage you to plan an apple crunch event anytime during October's National Farm to School Month.

As I researched, I discovered that Wisconsin's apple crop is more varied than one might expect. The chilly Wisconsin weather, no matter location, is something farmers have to watch out for and is hard to predict. We are lucky to have some very successful orchards close by. I have fond memories of the drive annually to Gays Mills with my grandparents to check out the grafted tree with over 25 varieties on one tree. This year, southeastern Wisconsin faced some low temperatures in May, but it is comparable in apple production areas of other leaders, such as the states of New York, Michigan, Oregon, and Washington. All in all, Wisconsin is expected to have an average harvest.

Celebrating local food producers is a good thing. It is good for River Valley kids, good for our communities, and good for our farmers.

Mr. Loren G. Glasbrenner
District Administrator