



Farm to School Lessons from Wisconsin Homegrown Lunch



Summary / Background

- Wisconsin Homegrown Lunch (WHL) is a farm to school initiative started in 2002 by the REAP Food Group and the UW-Madison's Center for Integrated Agricultural Systems. USDA SARE (LNC04-247) provided start-up funding.
- Initial efforts focused in the Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD) with goals to: 1) increase the amount of locally grown food served in the MMSD lunch program, and 2) teach students about food and sustainable farming.
- WHL piloted new menu items and instituted educational programming but could not expand district-wide due to MMSD's lack of capacity and flexibility (one central kitchen assembles and delivers 15,000 meals to 45 schools daily).
- Found more success with a **classroom snack program** and **pilots in smaller school districts** (with more flexible kitchen operations and motivated nutrition directors) - see right.
- WHL continues to facilitate educational programming in Madison schools and facilitating an alternative school fund raiser using local foods (which had sales of \$32,000 in 2007).

Full report at www.reapfoodgroup.org/farmtoschool



"The students were so excited about the quality of the local apples that we used twice as many apples in our elementary school as in years past."

Vicki Hoyer, School Nutrition Director
Waunakee Community School District

Classroom Snack Program

- Local grocery coop purchases produce from farms, processes it into ready-to-eat snacks, and delivers to the MMSD kitchen
- MMSD food service delivers snack to elementary schools once/wk
- 1,310 students receive the weekly snack
- Snacks are chosen based on local availability and feasibility for coop to efficiently process large quantities (160-200 lbs/weekly)
- Local produce is available September through March
- 3,000 lbs of vegetables and 3,200 lbs of apples purchased per year
- Snack costs covered by school PTOs and parent donations

Snack costs per week

Snack item	Purchased (per week)	Cost of raw item	Yield after prep	Cost of prep/delivery (\$0.77/lb)	Cost per 1.6oz serving (1,310 servings)
Carrot coins	160 lbs	\$144.00	131.0 lbs	\$123.20	\$0.20
Sweet potato slices	160 lbs	\$160.00	131.0 lbs	\$123.20	\$0.22
Kohlrabi slices	200 lbs	\$100.00	131.0 lbs	\$154.00	\$0.19
Apples (whole)	360 lbs	\$252.00	360.0 lbs	\$0 (delivered by orchard)	\$0.19

"My entire class loved the kohlrabi. I wasn't too suprised since last year's class did also. They waited with great anticipation for each child to get theirs, so we could see if they could get seconds. What a great snack!"

Laura Koechel, 2nd/3rd Grade Teacher
Falk Elementary



Case Study: Evansville School District

- Evansville is a successful farm-to-school site because of the kitchen staff's capacity to prep whole produce, a supportive food service management company (Taher, Inc.), and an enthusiastic Nutrition Director
- WHL facilitated meetings between School Nutrition Director and local suppliers
- WHL established successful purchasing relationships with organic vegetable farm, orchard, and yogurt producer



Local foods purchased	How they were used
Melon, yogurt, raspberries, broccoli, eggs, bacon, apples	Served to 200+ district staff for August 'welcome back brunch'
150 lbs organic watermelon and muskmelon	Served district-wide (1,800 students) in Sept.
120 lbs organic carrots	Cut into coins, steamed, and served on menu district-wide in September
10 cases of low-fat rBGH-free yogurt purchased monthly	6 oz flavored cups sold on a la carte line at middle and high school and 24 oz used for yogurt parfait bar at elementary school
240 lbs of organic potatoes (including all blue and all red)	Diced and roasted w/ oil, salt and herbs. Offered as a 'lunchroom tasting' and on menu.
1,400 lbs of apples	Served a la carte and on menu August through December

Yield/cost analysis for roasted potatoes	Time to wash and prep by hand	# 1/4 cup servings	Cost per serving (without labor)
20 lbs potatoes (\$1.00/lb) Diced and roasted	1 hour 20 minutes	256	\$0.09

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Wisconsin Homegrown Lunch is a joint project between the REAP Food Group and the UW-Madison Center for Integrated Agricultural Systems
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