



# Farmers & Farm-to-School

## Why Would Farm-to-School Be Good for Oklahoma Farmers?

- **The two-year pilot program was a success**
  - In 2005, 4078 Oklahoma-grown watermelons were sold to six Oklahoma school districts (148 schools) for \$22,163. The volume had nearly tripled from a 2004 pilot project.
- **Many schools want to buy Oklahoma-grown**
  - 158 school districts in 63 counties have expressed interest in buying locally-grown produce and other items
- **Oklahoma farmers are interested in this new market**
  - 277 farms in 59 counties are interested in selling to schools
- **Farms of various sizes can participate**
  - Smaller farms could supply small, rural school districts
  - Larger farms and cooperatives could sell to big urban schools
- **Dollars spent on Oklahoma-grown produce benefit rural communities**
  - Produce sales could reach \$6 million per year.



## What is farm-to-school?

- In farm-to-school programs, schools buy fruits and vegetables (and sometimes other food items) from local farms to serve in the cafeteria and as snacks
- Activities such as school gardens, nutrition lessons, farm visits, cooking classes, and agriculture education can also be part of farm-to-school programs
- Research shows farm-to-school programs improve kids' eating habits and nutrition
- Farm-to-school programs are growing in popularity nationally; programs exist in an estimated 24 states and 400 school districts.



*Bringing Oklahoma Food to Oklahoma Tables*

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