

Each year as the days grow shorter and summer turns to autumn, farmers across Wisconsin turn their attention to harvest. Potatoes, cranberries, apples, carrots, and pumpkins are now on their way to kitchens across our state to be made into stews, ciders, and pies. Thanks to the Farm to School programs in Wisconsin, many of these locally-grown autumn favorites are making their way into school cafeterias as well.

October is National Farm to School Month, a time to recognize and celebrate the relationships that are being built between farms and schools throughout Wisconsin. Behind these new relationships is the National Farm to School Network, which works to develop programs that deliver healthy foods from farms directly to nearby schools. For Wisconsin, these programs create two major benefits; fresh, nutritious food for school children and new business for local farmers.

As Chairman of the Senate Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee, one of my top priorities is promoting public health. Recent University of Wisconsin studies have shown that the seven Farm to School programs in Wisconsin are using hands-on teaching to educate students about health, nutrition and the farms in their communities.

Farm to School also creates new business opportunities for Wisconsin farmers. Over 99% of Wisconsin farms are family owned and it is crucial that we support Wisconsin's families. Farm to School helps to connect farmers with schools in their area providing them with a new market and the opportunity to educate children about local farms.

Our state has a proud agricultural tradition and a shared commitment to give our children the best chance to succeed in life. Farm to School programs contribute to both of these on a daily basis, improving Wisconsin in the present and for the future. If you are interested in learning more about the National Farm to School

Network and the programs that operate in Wisconsin, I encourage you to visit www.farmtoschool.org.

Sincerely,

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