

NATIONAL FARM TO SCHOOL MONTH

Inviting Legislators to Your Events

Building relationships with your legislators is a great way to support systemic changes that can further farm to school programs. One great way to start or continue building relationships is to invite your legislators to your school to see your farm to school activities in action! Here are some tips and resources to help you get started:

- Plan with purpose and be clear and concise. If you are meeting with the legislator at your event, in Harrisburg, or their district office, let them know why! It helps to be upfront so you can gauge their attitudes and so there's clear communication about the purpose of your meeting or attendance.
- Other people in your school community - like the principal, school board and communications director - may want to be informed of your plans or could be helpful in coordinating the invitation to legislators. Include any relevant community members, especially if there are certain approval processes you should follow.
- Contact your legislator's office to give advance notice and share details of the event. You can look up your PA Senator and House Representative [using this link](#). Be sure to tell them when and where the event will take place, the purpose of the event, who will be attending, and if you would like the legislator to participate in any specific way (for example, giving short remarks or participating in a fun hands-on activity in the cafeteria).
- If appropriate, consider inviting a member of your local press to cover the event. Notify the legislator's office if there will be press there—elected officials love press exposure!
- Be prepared to have someone on hand to take photographs. A picture is worth a thousand words! Share these visibly in press releases, on social media or otherwise.
- Thank your legislator for coming both over social media and through email. If any of the legislator's staff attended, be sure to thank them as well!
- Your legislators and their staff will be more available at certain times throughout the year. August is usually the best time for legislators to be back in their districts. However, they can be available at any month during the year between session days. Ask the staffers about the legislator's availability and try to be flexible if possible!



Prioritize National Farm to School Month in October!

- October is [National Farm to School Month](#)! Thousands of schools, early care and education sites, farms, communities and organizations across the country celebrate farm to school by engaging kids in hands-on learning experiences about food and agriculture, through school gardens and by filling lunch trays with healthy, local ingredients that nourish Pennsylvania kids and support our communities' farmers and growers. This is the perfect time to plan events and invite your legislators.
- Think ahead and use this time to highlight your school community's unique activities. Get the community involved in the planning and execution of your events and then reach out to your legislators and ask them to attend and participate in your activities.
- Though many interactions with legislators happen in Harrisburg, legislators are often looking for opportunities to join their constituents in their districts. Even if you want to simply implement your farm to school activities as you usually do, without a specific event or additional resources, your legislators will likely still be interested in seeing your operation in action!
- If you plan to showcase how you procure and serve local food in your school meals or snacks, be sure to share this with your legislators and ask them to support [PA House Bill 2420, the Keystone Fresh Act](#), which will provide Pennsylvania family farmers with access to school food markets and increase the volume and variety of PA grown food products in K-12 school meals.



Today I helped celebrate #paharvestofthemoth at Beaver Main elementary school. Beef from [Davis Grown](#) farms and apples from Moore's Produce. Check out more about this program at <https://www.paharvestofthemoth.org/>. #besttowninpa #USDA #FarmAid

