

# Massachusetts Farm to School Project

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## How Schools and Colleges Across the State Celebrated Massachusetts Harvest for Students Week 2009

The menu at **Abby Kelley Foster Charter Public High School** in Worcester featured roasted vegetables, orchard fruit, farm fresh tomatoes and stuffed peppers.

**Acton-Boxborough Regional School District** served fresh stir-fry vegetables. Students also husked and enjoyed fresh corn on the cob.

**Auburn-Leister** highlighted local food on their menu all week, including baked potatoes, fresh apples, cucumbers, green beans, corn on the cob, and stir fry with fresh vegetables.

**Belchertown Public Schools** highlighted local produce including apples from Cold Spring Orchard in Belchertown, and carrots, potatoes, and snipped green beans from Czajkowski Farm in Hadley.

**Belmont Public Schools** served local foods all week. The community participated in a town-wide reading and discussion of *Animal, Vegetable, Miracle* by Barbara Kingsolver.

In **Boston**, ten public schools served fresh, Massachusetts-grown corn on the cob, zucchini and apples, and featured lunch table discussion between students and their principals about healthy eating and good nutrition. On Tuesday, September 22, the Superintendent of the Boston Public Schools and other school officials held a Mass Harvest for Students Week school lunch at the South Boston Educational Complex highlighting locally grown fare.

**Cambridge Public Schools** served locally grown apples and peaches throughout the Week. The cafeterias also served daily local food specials, including “Marie’s Haitian Soup,” a vegetarian recipe developed by one of the food service employees, fresh tomatoes, basil, and mozzarella salads, jumbo tacos with Massachusetts-grown tomatoes, as well as lots of local pickles. Cambridge kicked off the week at the first annual Urban Agriculture Fair in Harvard Square on Sunday, September 20. School check Vin Connelly did a cooking demo, and the Tasty Choices food service program talked to residents about the farm-to-school program and healthy foods in schools. All 13 Cambridge public schools enjoyed at least two local items on the menu every day, and received educational flyers about their food and farms in each cafeteria.



“Local Food is Good Food” poster  
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**Chicopee Public Schools** sent students home with a fruit and veggie goody bag to share with their families on Friday, September 25. The bag featured fresh local snacks and a postcard that explained the health benefits of goody bag contents.

**Clark University in Worcester** hosted a celebration for the food service directors, farmers, and public policymakers who make it possible for Massachusetts students to eat healthy local foods. On Friday, September 25, State Senator Michael Moore presented “Get Fresh, Get Local in Worcester - Healthier Students and a Healthier Economy” during a luncheon featuring local Massachusetts foods.

Three chefs representing schools in **Groton** co-sponsored a monthly community dinner with local growers.

A local organization called Fertile Ground helped **Hampshire Regional High School** students and cafeteria staff implement an interactive student-developed survey that included taste-tests of local season vegetables. Students leaders asked their peers what they liked best about school lunch, and got feedback on changes they would like to see regarding healthy food options.

**Leverett Elementary School** celebrated their new salad bar that serves local foods from Swartz Farm and Joseph Czajkowski Farm. During a special recess, students harvested summer crops from their school garden, including nasturtiums for the salad bar. They’ll also put the garden to bed for the winter and harvested apples from their school’s trees. The cafeteria staff made a hot apple crisp for dessert on Wednesday, September 24.

**Lexington** - On Tuesday, September 22, the Kids Cooking Green program took 25 5th grade students to a local farmers market for a field trip. Students met the farmers, tasted local produce and looked for menu ideas to plan an upcoming dinner they will cook at school for family and friends.

**Lincoln Public Schools** featured local produce every day at their 5-A-Day Bar including, cider, peaches, and multiple varieties of apples.

**Marblehead Community Charter Public School** featured a week-long celebration of fresh and local fruits and vegetables on its lunch menu from local farms and harvested from the school’s own vegetable garden planted last spring.

**Maynard** featured local farm products on the lunch menu all week. A class of fifth graders shucked corn and the husks were recycled and used by a teacher who raises pigs.

**North Quabbin Area** - On Monday, September 21, the Seeds of Solidarity Education Center staff traveled to seven North Quabbin area schools for the second annual “Plant Out!” to plant 2009 seeds. Staff worked with students to plant their school gardens with a variety of fall crops including spinach, garlic and asian greens.

**Quaboag Regional School District** featured local farm fresh vegetables from Hampshire and Worcester County producers for each meal served in the district.

**Quincy** waiting for blurb from Anne.

**Sunderland Public School** held a school-wide corn husking and a lunch including fresh corn on the cob.

**UMass Amherst** celebrated Massachusetts Harvest for Students Week by hosting John Ash, nationally renowned wine/food educator, restaurateur, and cookbook author at dinner Wednesday, September 23 at Berkshire Dining Commons. Chef Ash featured his signature recipes utilizing local products at Worcester Dining Commons Thursday, September 24. Local farmers visited the dining commons to meet students and offer samples throughout the Week. The University announced a goal of increasing usage of local produce to 27 percent this year. Locally raised turkey, fresh apples, cider, honey, and assorted vegetables were some of the offerings.

**Ware Public Schools** served fresh vegetables from McKinstry's Market Garden in Chicopee and apples from Breezeland Orchards in Warren all week. The cafeteria also featured cabbage from the school district's garden to make soup and coleslaw.

**Westfield Public Schools** served local fruits and vegetables on the menu all week.

**Williamsburg Elementary School and Fertile Ground**, a local organization, launched a program to encourage intergenerational partnerships with farmers from the Williamsburg Grange and members of the Council on Aging. The aim of the project is to cultivate a food knowledge exchange between seniors and elementary school children through workshops, site visits, and a student built senior-accessible garden.

**Wrentham and Plainville Schools** - Representative Richard Ross ate lunch with students and members of the school committee. The cafeteria served fresh, locally-grown Paula Red apples, butternut Squash, lemon zest broccoli and garden tomatoes. During an open house, parents were offered a light supper of fresh basil and tomato pizzas and Paula Red apples.