Colorado Farm to School Task Force: 2014 Update

Why Farm to School Matters
**Why Farm to School Matters – Children Learn to Eat Better**

- Research on Farm to School demonstrates children’s diets improve both at school and outside of school.
- Children’s intake of fruits & vegetables increase, when multiple FTS components implemented:
  - The locally sourced food in the cafeteria is identified as local
  - Educational food system and nutrition materials are connected to the region & identify local farms
  - Field trips are taken to the farms providing produce in the school
  - Farmers visit students in the classroom
  - School gardens are tended by students and the produce is harvested by students and used in the cafeteria

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**Why Farm to School Matters – Local Foods are More Nutritious**

Research on local produce demonstrates higher nutritional content in fresh-picked & consumed foods.

- On the whole, locally grown produce is more nutritious than fresh produce shipped a thousand miles or canned food.
- Schools that source locally have the opportunity to work directly with the farmer to select cultivars high in nutrition.
Why Farm to School Matters – Public Health Priorities

- Increases in (fresh) fruit & vegetables
- Increase in whole grains
- Sodium reduction
- No trans-fats
- Calorie ranges based on age

Before:

State Policy: Prevention and Reduction of Childhood Obesity
- CDPHE has identified FTS as one of twelve strategies to combat this epidemic

After:

Access to Healthy Foods
- Children eat most of their meals during the school week at school
- High free & reduced populations are more likely to live in “food deserts”

CO FTS Task Force
How it began
Colorado FTS Task Force: In a Nutshell

Legislative Authority

• Created in 2010 legislative session
• 15 appointed members (originally 13, added 2 seats in 2013)
• Specific action-oriented mandates written into statute
• No state general funds supporting it

Operations

• Professional staff selected in competitive state bid process (Spark Policy Institute)
• Grant funding
  • Staffing, meeting costs, development of materials and technical assistance trainings, special projects
• Regular meetings
  • Quarterly meetings around the state
  • Core team meetings once a month
  • Working group meetings on-demand

Advocacy Process for Colorado’s FTS Task Force

The Pre-Legislative Campaign

• Colorado School Nutrition Association (CSNA) partner
• Trusted state legislator
• Six years of prior successful passage of school nutrition legislation
• Local purchasing preference for state agencies passed in 2005
• Fresh F&V pilot program passed in 2006
• Extensive network of supporters

Demonstration Projects/Evidence

• Large: Denver Public Schools joins School Food FOCUS in 2009
• Culinary skills training
• Scratch cooking
• School gardens
• Mid-size: Colorado Springs district procuring from local producers
• Small: Southwest school district buying direct from local farmers
• “List” of types of FTS demonstration projects that would benefit farmers and schools

Advocacy during the Legislative

• Paid lobbyist from CSNA took lead
• Consistent messaging tied to “healthy fresh food in school = improved student outcomes”
• Dynamic, well-respected Food Service Director testifying
• Removed fiscal note
**Legislative Resolutions**

**“Farm to School Coordination Task Force”**

- It is in the best interests of Colorado’s children, farmers, ranchers, food processors, manufacturers, and communities to develop a more robust and self-sustaining agricultural sector that promotes healthy foods at schools.

- Because a child can receive up to 55% of his/her daily nutrition at school, it is important for children to eat a healthy diet of fresh foods at school.

- While children receiving inadequate nutrition are at risk of lower achievement in school, research shows an improvement in student behavior, academic performance, and health scores when nutrition is improved.

- In order to encourage healthy and lifelong habits of eating fresh, minimally processed, and nutritious local foods as well as foster relationships among farmers and schoolchildren, school personnel, and other adults in the Colorado community and to promote the sale of agricultural products produced in the state, it is in the best interests of the state to develop a farm-to-school program.

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**Legislative Details**

**“Farm to School Coordination Task Force”**

- SB10-81 establishes Task Force; SB13-153 “continues indefinitely”

- Required to recommend policies and methods to best implement FTS program that encourages school districts to use local agricultural products.

- Advise FTS pilot programs and consider possible funding sources to recover increased costs of using locally grown products.

- Provide training/assistance to (1) farmers to enable selling to schools, and (2) school food services to integrate state-grown products into school meals.

- Must submit report of recommendations and progress to legislature.
What the Task Force Does
**Toolkits**

**Grant Template**
- Locate grants
- Select grants
- Write grant proposal

**Evaluation Toolkit**
- Students
- Parents
- Teachers
- Food Services
- Producers
- School Leadership
- Community

**Food Safety Project**
- “Just the Facts”
- Policy Guidance

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**Making Evaluation Easy**

**Resources and Tools for Implementing an Evaluation of Your Farm to School Program**

Accountability * Improvement * Results * Marketing

**Farm to School Food Safety Project**

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**Interactive & On-Line Tools**

**Food Safety Prezi Presentations**
- Producers
- Food Service Directors

**FTS Webinar Series**
- FTS Primer
- CO Proud School Meal Day
- CO MarketMaker
- Youth Farmers Markets
- Local Bids
- School Gardens

**Self-Assessment Tools**
- Choose your own FTS Adventure!

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Colorado Farm to School Task Force
Policy & Legal Analysis/Guidance

50 State Legislative Scans
- FTS bills
- Food Safety
- Local Preference

Q&A Formats
- Geographic Preference
- Food Safety Flow Chart

Growing New Markets
- Direct Market Options
- Food System Assessments

Community Food Assessments

Outreach & Technical Assistance

Quarterly Meetings & Listening Sessions
- Pueblo, North Conejos, Longmont, Yuma, Las Animas, Montrose, Carbondale, Fort Collins, Alamosa, Denver

Share Stories & Peer-to-Peer Learning
- Blog
- Ask an Expert
- FTS Champions
- FTS Case Studies

Subscribe to Our Blog
Get email notifications for new blog posts!

Ask an Expert
Intensive Technical Assistance Workshops

- Stakeholder Strategic Planning Session
- FTS Purchasing 101
- FTS and the New Meal Pattern
- FTS & Pre-bid Conferences
- Farm to Institution Safety First
- School Gardens
- FTS Evaluation Toolkit

Develops & Disseminates Resources

- [ColoradoFarmToSchool.org](http://coloradofarmtoschool.org)
  - Audience-specific pages
  - Event calendar
  - Daily FTS RSS feed
  - Task Force work
  - Grant resources
  - Blog & Ask an Expert

- [CO FTS Updates E-News](http://coloradofarmtoschool.org)

- [Colorado FTS Resources](http://coloradofarmtoschool.org)
  - Recipes – schools & home
  - Garden Food Safety Protocols
  - Webinars
  - Local & Regional Partners

- [The Colorado Farm to School Cookbook](http://coloradofarmtoschool.org)
  - School Edition – Colorado Schools, Colorado Produce
Special Projects

YEAR 1: FOOD HUB IN SOUTHEAST COLORADO

YEAR 2: FTS MARKETING TOOLKIT

How the Task Force is Funded

The Colorado Health Foundation
Gates Family Foundation
United States Department of Agriculture
Healthy Farms Healthy People

National Network of Public Health Institutes
Colorado FTS has Grown Four-Fold since 2010
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task Force Seat</th>
<th>Current Organization</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>School Food Service Directors</strong></td>
<td>Durango School District 9-R</td>
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<td>Denver Public Schools</td>
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<td>Weld County School District 6</td>
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<td>University of Colorado - Boulder</td>
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<td><strong>K-12 Teacher/Principal</strong></td>
<td>Adams-12 School District</td>
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<td><strong>Producer</strong></td>
<td>Leffler Family Farms</td>
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<td><strong>State Agencies</strong></td>
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<td>CO Dept. of Public Health &amp; Environment</td>
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<td>CO Commission on Higher Education</td>
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<td><strong>Industry</strong></td>
<td>CO Potato Administration</td>
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<td>CO Beef Council</td>
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<td>FreshPack Produce</td>
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<td>Western Dairy Association</td>
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Weld 6 School District Greeley-Evans

- Purchasing locally grown produce for six years
  - Began with one crop from a single farm to purchasing over 30 crops from five local farms
- Collective Bid process with NOCO - The Northern Colorado Coop. (10 Districts bid together for FTS)
- “School Food Renaissance” → scratch cooking using good and wholesome ingredients.
- Obtained USDA FTS Implementation grant funding for Food Hub Implementation.

Greeley-Evans Weld 6 Central Kitchen/Food Hub Facilities
**Greeley-Evans D6**

**Produce Purchasing History**

- 2008-2009: $239
- 2009-2010: $11,643
- 2010-2011: $50,849
- 2011-2012: $28,297
- 2012-2013: $40,094

**Actual Purchases 2012-2013 SY**

- Total Farm to School Purchases - 12-13 SY: $713,611
  - Dairy Products: 88% ($631,630)
  - Grains: 4% ($28,297)
  - Produce: 6% ($40,094)
  - Beef: 2% ($13,637)
Types of Products Purchased

- Apples
- Peaches
- Pears
- Corn on the Cob
- Pinto Beans
- Melon (cantaloupe, honeydew, watermelon)
- Onions
- Bell Peppers
- Carrots
- Summer Squash (zucchini and yellow squash)
- Tomatoes
- Romaine Lettuce
- Potatoes
- Beef Patties
- Cinnamon Rolls
- Milk

Colorado FTS Updates

Subscribe to Colorado Farm to School Updates at

www.coloradofarmtoschool.org/current-happenings
Questions?

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