

Minnesota USDA Farm to School Grant Awards

2013

Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy

Minneapolis, Minnesota

Grant Type: Implementation; \$100,000

Our proposal takes a regional approach. This two-year project will increase farm to school purchases at Minneapolis and St. Paul Public Schools and lay the foundation for further expansion throughout the Upper Midwest. Through technical assistance, we will help these two districts increase their use of high priority locally and regionally grown foods to feed their diverse, low-income student population. We will further support this effort by developing regional strategies for ramping up season-extended production of fruits and vegetables and documenting opportunities for K-12 buyers to purchase regionally grown grains and pulses. Through our partnership with School Food FOCUS Regional Learning Lab, we will share our experiences and findings with six to ten large urban districts across the Upper Midwest who can leverage their collective demand (representing an estimated 650,000 students) to build the market for sustainably produced, regionally grown and healthy foods.

Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa

Cloquet, Minnesota

Grant Type: Planning; \$33,750

The total population of American Indians on the reservation is 2005. Roughly over 25% of our on-site reservation population is 16 or younger. In 2009 American Indian children had the highest prevalence of obesity at 20.7%. Native Americans suffer food insecurity and hunger at twice the rate of the general population. On the Fond du Lac Reservation, our farm to school efforts to date are in the formulation stage; we are working on pulling together partners to have planning meetings and create strategic directions for the future of a fully integrated program. There have been discussions about bringing local foods into the school, but there hasn't been an organized method instituted to make it happen. Interested representatives of the reservation, schools and extension services of Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College and the University of Minnesota are ready to plan and build access to our local and traditional foods to increase the local economic benefits for producers as well as promote a healthy diet for our youth.

2014

Independent School District 197

Mendota Heights, Minnesota

Grant Type: Planning; \$20,693

Independent School District 197 will implement a farm to school program in order to establish the capacity within the district to increase the procurement of local foods used in our breakfast,

lunch, and afterschool meal programs. The focus of our activities will include: establishing a planning committee comprised of school and community members, researching and establishing relationships with local farmers, ranchers, and distributors necessary to establishing supply partners, participating in trainings aimed at increasing our knowledge and confidence in coordinating a farm to school activities, and creating a farm to school implementation plan. These activities will allow this school district to bridge healthy food and nutrition efforts with the greater context of the food system and educate students on this connection.

Minnesota Department of Agriculture

St. Paul, Minnesota

Grant Type: Support Service; \$90,761

This project leverages the experience and expertise of two well established programs within the Minnesota Department of Agriculture: the Minnesota Grown Program and the Minnesota Ag in the Classroom Program. By doing so, we will create linkages between classrooms, school gardens, cafeterias. Project funds will allow us to hire an employee to assist schools in implementing the new Minnesota School Garden Guide and the Farm to School Youth Leadership Curriculum, and work one on one to match school foodservice districts with local farmers who can meet their requests for specific products. The tie to the Minnesota Department of Agriculture's existing programs ensures that the work of this project will be sustained into the future. For example, the work of matching foodservice staff with farmers will further populate our database of farmers who supply school districts, making it easier for other districts to source locally even after this project comes to a close. Requested grant funds are matched with staff time from seasoned professionals who have a wealth of farm to school experience and connections with schools as well as farmers.

2015

Carlton- Cook- Lake- St. Louis County Community Health Board

Duluth, Minnesota

Grant Type: Support Service; \$99,750

The Carlton- Cook- Lake- St. Louis County Community Health Board has distributed funding for farm to school as part of its strategy for the prevention of chronic disease through healthy eating since 2009. It is within these counties of the Western Lake Superior region that two school districts and Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center (ELC) aim to collaborate, educate, and secure equipment that leverages existing farm to school programs and partnerships. This project will consolidate efforts to advance farm to school policy, systems and environmental change in our region through district- to- district and Wolf Ridge ELC collaboration. It will provide educational facilitation to bring agriculture home for our K- 12 students. This project will help make efficient and safe the processes by which we bring local produce into our cafeterias with equipment and a two- year logistics operation to identify relationships between these institutions, Superior Grown producers, and workers along the supply chain.

Minneapolis Public Schools, Special School District No. 1

Minneapolis, Minnesota

Grant Type: Implementation; \$87,816

The proposed “Minnesota Thursdays!” project of Minneapolis Public Schools is a fully-integrated, student-driven campaign to expand the district's local procurement and to assure that the community, students, staff, families, and partners know their farmers and know their food. The project will expand local options in school meals and include a coordinated, clear promotional campaign developed by Minneapolis Public Schools students.

2016

Park Rapids Schools ISD 309

Park Rapids, Minnesota

Grant Type: Planning; \$45,000

Park Rapids and Laporte School Districts will work with community partners to work through barriers to using farm to school foods in school nutrition programs and teach children and families about adopting more nutritious diets. The project will engage students in field trips to local farms and taste testing locally grown menu items.

2017

The Good Acre

Falcon Heights, Minnesota

Grant Type: Support Service; \$99,956

The Good Acre, a mission-driven non-profit food hub aimed at creating a more vibrant just food system for consumers, food-makers, and farmers, is partnering with four local school districts to increase the amount of local food available to schools in the greater Twin Cities Region. The Good Acre will also develop replicable farm to school tools and models, establish food processing capacity to supply local produce ingredients to schools beyond the typical growing season, and provide tailored training and resources to schools appropriate to their current level of farm to school activity and the challenges they face.

2018

Brooklyn Center Community Schools ISD 2866500

Brooklyn Center, Minnesota

Grant Type: Implementation; \$86,376

Brooklyn Center Community Schools will expand their program to include local and regional foods in their universal breakfast and dinner programs by (1) expanding school gardens and hydroponics systems to supply student-grown produce in school meals, and (2) providing culinary training for food service staff to increase their capacity for preparing locally grown food.

2019

Minnesota Department of Education

Roseville, Minnesota

Grant Type: Implementation; \$99,959

The Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) is partnering with The Good Acre and the University of Minnesota (UMN)-Extension to develop and deliver trainings, create an online compendium of resources tailored for the classroom. This program will train 6 teachers to serve as Regional Liaisons to deliver trainings, and assist with accessing resources and communicating feedback and progress to MDE leaders.

Renewing the Countryside

Minneapolis, Minnesota

Grant Type: Implementation; \$99,999

Renewing the Countryside - along with on-the-ground regional partners and collaborators from the Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture, Minnesota Farmers Market Association, The Good Acre, The Minnesota Schoolyard Garden Coalition, and state agencies and institutions - will build capacity in rural Minnesota to leverage the farmers' market aggregation model and other new tools to expand Farm to School initiatives. This will include supportive culinary and gardening practices and knowledge, connecting schools and farmers through regional workshops and technical assistance.

Saint Paul Public Schools

Saint Paul, Minnesota

Grant Type: Implementation; \$100,000

Saint Paul Public School District (SPPS) will launch the "Grow Our Own" (GROW) program to increase fresh food consumption by broadening tastes among students through engaging activities that link classroom to garden to cafeteria. The key component for implementation is the newly developed School Garden Handbook, which will be implemented and evaluated through a pilot program for 10 schools. Testing and evaluation is imperative to systems change in SPPS because of the unique cultural and economic challenges that exist in this large urban school district. SPPS has a partnership with Youth Farm, a non-profit organization that uses urban farming as a platform for youth leadership opportunities and community building. This project is based in collaboration and SPPS has created a web of support from community partners to reinforce the goal of sustainable farm to cafeteria education.

2020

Minnesota Department of Agriculture

St. Paul, Minnesota

Grant Type: State Agency; \$99,811

The Minnesota Department of Agriculture will create a statewide Harvest of the Month (HOTM) program to increase local procurement and further agricultural education. The project will feature three focus areas: (1) Develop and implement marketing materials and curricular resources; (2) Improve producer/school nutrition procurement supports; and (3) Strengthen statewide coordination to ensure success and sustainability. The Minnesota Departments of Education and Health, along with University of Minnesota Extension and state Farm to School Leadership Team, will be close project partners. HOTM will feature a locally grown product monthly in school meals and agricultural and nutrition education. Following a pilot year that includes 10 districts, MDA will create resources for implementation in schools across the state to improve access to local foods.

Northern Pines Medical Center

Aurora, Minnesota

Grant Type: Implementation; \$100,000

Mesabi East Schools will expand its F2S program by having the ability to staff a Farm to School Coordinator and Assistant Coordinator. These positions would allow networking with local producers/growers by increasing the number of contracts awarded, neighboring school districts who have expressed interest would be able to use the expertise and contacts of the Farm to School Coordinator in implementing their programs, and essential time would be available to educate students about sustainability while tending to the school gardens. The key partners include the Coordinator and Assistant Coordinator, the School Board, the Farm to School Committee, the St. Louis County Health Educator, the Rutabaga Project Director, and the Essentia Health Community Health Specialist.

Sherburne County

Elk River, Minnesota

Grant Type: Planning; \$49,925

Sherburne County Seeds to Schools (STS) will develop a comprehensive farm to school action plan for Sherburne County. The project will focus on five public and one charter elementary school in the Elk River area and will include creating a local procurement advisory council, piloting farm to school strategies, establishing partnerships with local farmers and agricultural producers, assess product availability, and researching curricula to support farm to school activities. STS will collaborate closely with Minnesota's Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP) and focus on the three C's of farm to school: cafeteria, curriculum, and community.

Special School District No. 1

Minneapolis, Minnesota

Grant Type: Implementation; \$100,000

Minnesota Public Schools will increase student access to local foods by building educational connections between district cafeterias, school gardens, and the MPS Education Farm. The

project will increase student consumption of local foods as well as deepen student understanding of the agricultural food system, the components of healthy eating, and the importance of local foods. The project focuses on three specific, yet connected, areas of work: 1) developing an agriculture education program at the MPS Education Farm; 2) expanding agriculture education at schools; and 3) increasing local procurement. Both the agricultural education and the procurement efforts integrate the Farm to School (F2S) Fabulous Five: kale, kohlrabi, legumes, radishes, and squash.

Sprout MN

Little Falls, Minnesota

Grant Type: Implementation; \$50,795

Sprout MN aims to grow Farm to School by maximizing current resources through hands on "Train the Trainer" to improve access to local foods in eligible schools. The project will engage students, local culinary experts, and food service staff to develop recipes that maximize Minnesota's short growing season of local commodities. The project will also create a model for farm to school stakeholders to communicate assets and challenges, finding solutions through interactive and educational experiences.

Urban Ventures

Minneapolis, Minnesota

Grant Type: Planning; \$37,500

The goal of Urban Ventures is to see every child in a 25-square block radius graduate from high school and continue on to post-secondary education. Food insecurity and poor nutrition are huge players contributing to poor graduation rates. To address these challenges, the Urban Ventures Farm and Nutrition Program operates a 6-acre farm that produces local, affordable, organic produce for a low income neighborhood designated as a food desert. Through partnership with the University of Minnesota School of Horticulture Science and Agriculture, the project plans to operate a Mobile Farmers Market for Kids at two urban elementary schools with 94% free and reduced lunch respectively. The project will include building a collaborative effort between urban farm, community partners and schools that will serve the nutritional needs of the schools.

2021

Boys & Girls Club of the Bemidji Area

Bemidji, Minnesota

Grant Type: Turnkey; \$49,287

The Boys & Girls Clubs of the Bemidji Area will expand its robust gardening and healthy lifestyles programming from 3 months to 12 months by adding a sustainable indoor edible garden. Through partnerships, this program will reach 10 of the 14 local schools teaching healthy eating and nutrition and provide year round access to fresh produce to support their

Child and Adult Care Food Program and Summer Food Service Program which will serve 17,000 meals to youth during out of school time.

ISD 623 Roseville Area Schools

Roseville, Minnesota

Grant Type: Turnkey; \$47,095

The target population will be the students of Roseville Area and St. Anthony New Brighton Schools as well as the students of many of the other first ring suburban districts of the Twin Cities. This grant would allow for Project Manager to organize concerted outreach and coordination among school districts and resources to create a cohesive, non-redundant approach to farm to school that maximizes the audience and impact, streamlines procurement, and creates opportunities for smaller districts that might not be able to meet minimum quantities or price points for orders on their own without group purchasing. This will allow for greater strategizing, streamlined sourcing with an RFP, professional marketing and outreach to improve their story with students, staff, families, and the community, and tools to continue to grow the program for years to come.

Providers Choice Inc

Hopkins, Minnesota

Grant Type: Turnkey; \$47,780

During this pilot year, Providers Choice Inc (PCI) will install edible gardens at several early care centers in the Twin Cities metro area that predominantly serve low-income families of color. The project will provide healthy snacks to centers within the PCI network and give children the opportunity to learn about how food grows while promoting healthy eating habits and filling the gaps in children's diets. The project will also increase families' access to fresh produce, as many of the families in PCI's network live in food deserts where produce is expensive or hard to find.

Shakopee Public Schools ISD 720

Shakopee, Minnesota

Grant Type: Turnkey; \$45,082

Shakopee Public Schools will implement a Hydroponic Flex Farms Edible Garden Project in four of their buildings. This will provide the ability for each school to grow and serve fresh, locally grown produce for their student population. Each school receiving the hydroponics will create its own garden committee, and determine the level of community and student involvement, which will help them better meet the nutritional needs of their students, and will allow them to enhance learning and build community at the building and district level.

The Good Acre

Falcon Heights, Minnesota

Grant Type: Implementation; \$92,182

The Good Acre (TGA) is excited to be in a position to help affect statewide farm to school expansion in Minnesota. TGA will engage in three main areas of work that together would improve access to local foods and training in schools across the state: (1) Connect with producers of local items available during parts of the year when there is less farm to school activity, especially Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) producers. (2) Offer culinary training to school staffs in rural and urban districts, both virtually and in-person. (3) Sustain a statewide community of farm to school champions.