

# An Advocate's Journey to Securing a Farm to School Month Proclamation in Maine



NATIONAL  
FARM to SCHOOL  
NETWORK



healthy  
communities  
OF THE CAPITAL AREA

May 13, 2026





# AGENDA

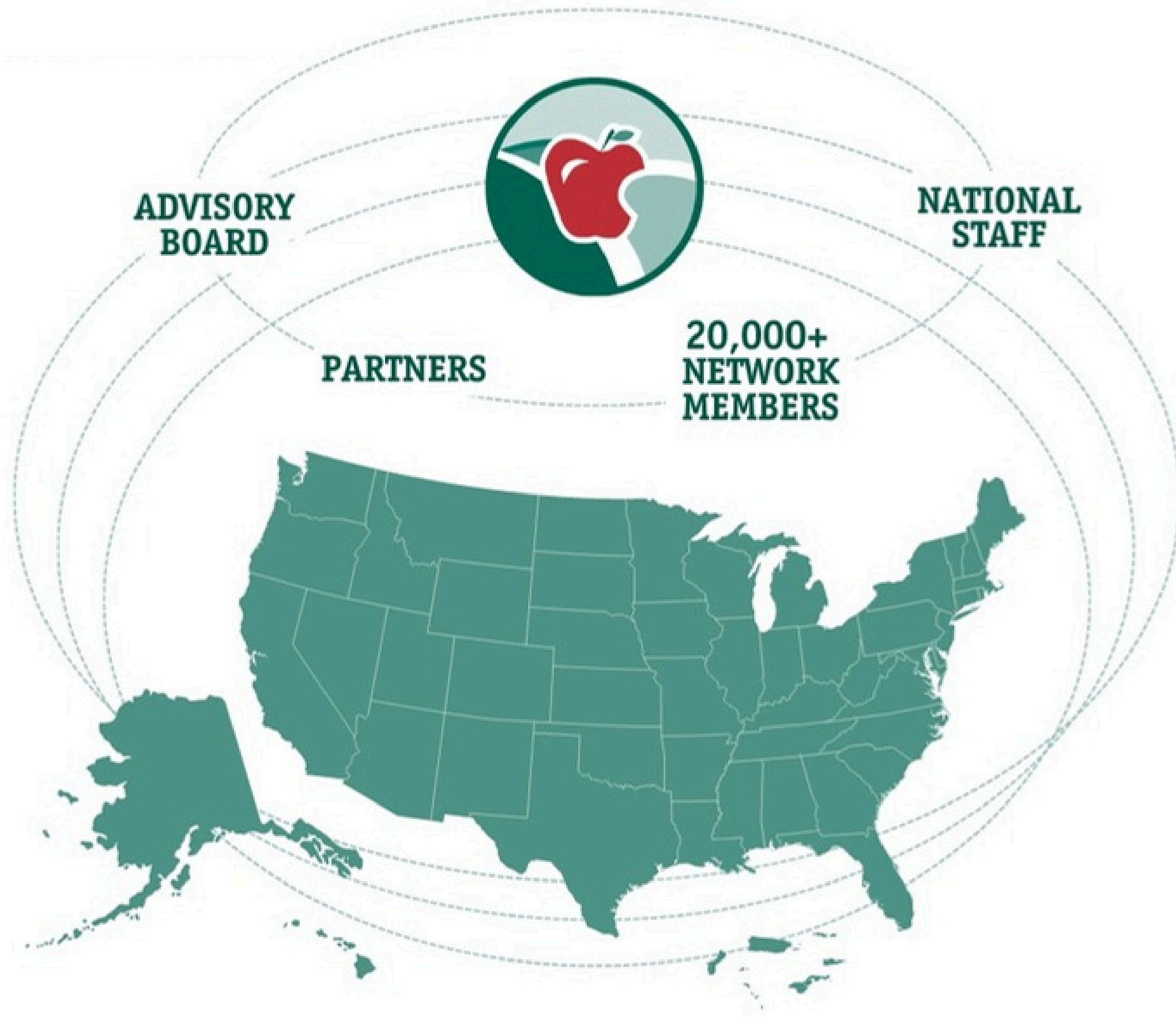
- Intro - 5m
- Spotlight Story - 20m  
Renee Page, Executive Director  
Healthy Communities of the  
Capital Area
- Q&A - 20 m

*Please put questions in the chat!  
We'll answer during the Q&A Portion*

# ABOUT NFSN

## Mission

National Farm to School Network increases access to local food and nutrition education to improve children's health, strengthen family farms, and cultivate vibrant communities.

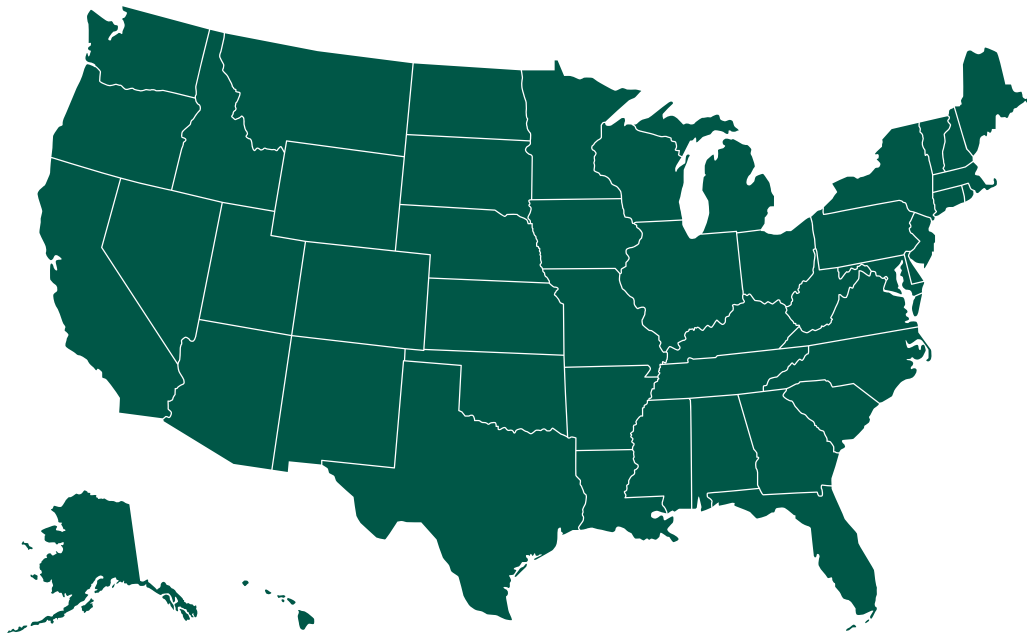




# H.RES.1655 2010

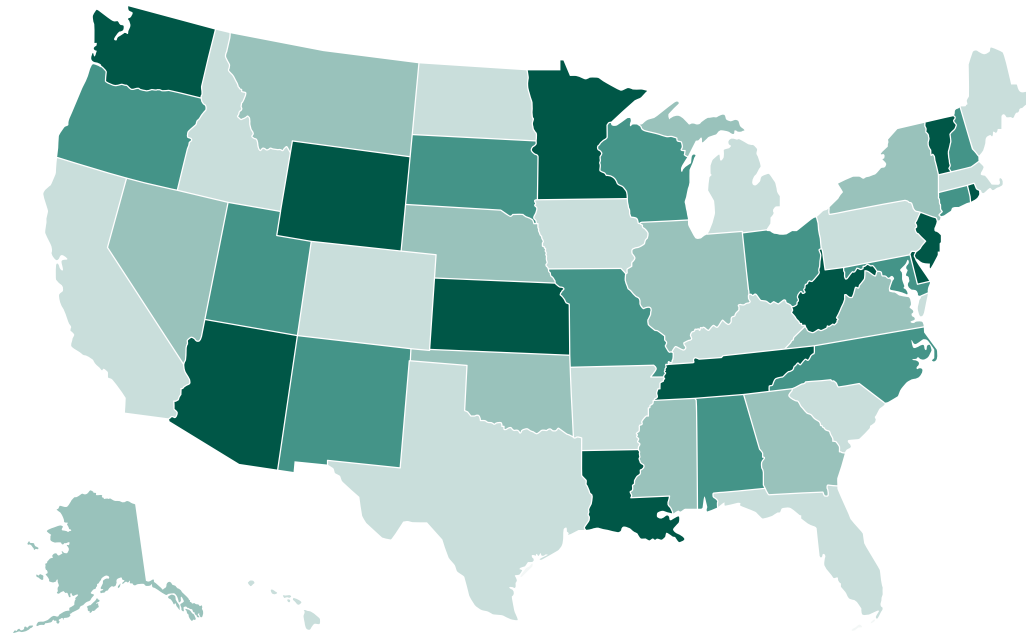
EXPRESSING  
SUPPORT FOR  
DESIGNATION OF  
OCTOBER AS  
"NATIONAL FARM TO  
SCHOOL MONTH"

# FARM TO SCHOOL MONTH RECOGNITION SCALES



## FEDERAL

- H.Res. 1655 (2010)



## STATE

- **Resolutions**  
(Legislative)
- **Proclamations**  
(Governor)



## LOCAL

- School boards
- City and county legislatures

# FARM TO SCHOOL MONTH PROCLAMATION BENEFITS

- Create an official public record of governmental support
- Build political will that paves the way for deeper support
- Give local champions a tool to bring to skeptical administrators and school boards
- Recognize and strengthen coalition efforts
- Generate media moments and community visibility
- Create a recurring annual platform for events and engagement
- **No-cost = Advance the mission in difficult political moments**



# FARM TO SCHOOL MONTH RESOURCES



*New  
in  
2024*

- Celebration Toolkit
- Fact Sheet
- Posters
- Logos
- "Save the Date" Postcards
- Stickers
- Bookmarks
- Coloring Page
- Google Slide Deck Template
- Zoom Backgrounds

# FARM TO SCHOOL MONTH PROCLAMATION RESOURCES

## Sample Farm to School Month Government Resolutions

National Farm to School Network | May 8, 2026

Farm to School Month resolutions and proclamations are powerful tools in any advocate's playbook. They signal official government recognition of our movement, elevate public awareness, and can open doors to deeper policy conversations and partnerships. They are particularly in areas where passing more comprehensive financial support for farm to school/ECE programs is challenging.

In addition to the **national declaration** that was passed in 2010, many states have passed resolutions declaring October as Farm to School Month. Similar language can usually be used in the House, Senate or for a proclamation by the governor. Your local government and school board can also formally recognize October as Farm to School Month to formally show their support for broader state policies on farm to school/ECE issues.



- State Language **Examples** (both proclamations and resolutions)
- Webinar Recordings

<https://www.farmentoschool.org/resources>

# An Advocate's Journey to Securing a Farm to School Month Proclamation in Maine

**Don't wait –  
Spring is the  
best time to  
start planning!**



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# Maine Farm & Sea to School Month

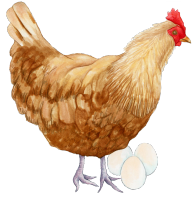
## Gubernatorial Proclamation

*An Advocate's Journey*

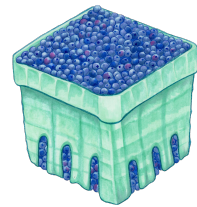
Renee Page, MPH, PS-C, CLC  
Executive Director  
Healthy Communities of the Capital Area  
May 13, 2026



# A little history and context



- Healthy Communities of the Capital Area
- Maine Farm & Sea to School Network
- Maine Farm & Sea to Institution
- Maine Food Policy Work Group
- Bucket List
- The time was right



# About the process

- A little bit of who you know, not what you know
  - NFSN - Cassandra
  - Contact in the Governor's Office
  - State agency partners
- Deciding what to include in the language - will it stand the test of time
  - Health
  - Economy
  - Data
  - Sense of Place
  - Alignment with other priorities



[Contact](#)[Share Your Opinion](#)[Request for Assistance](#)[Schedule a Meeting or  
Invitation](#)[Event Request](#)[Congratulatory Letter  
Request](#)[Request a Proclamation](#)

## Request a Proclamation

### Proclamation Request

Proclamations are issued by the Governor to recognize and celebrate the extraordinary achievements of state citizens and non-profit organizations, to honor occasions of importance and significance to the citizens of the state, and to increase public awareness of issues with the hope of improving the well-being of Maine citizens.

Requests are reviewed on a case-by-case basis and are issued at the Governor's discretion. Issuance is not automatic and the Governor's Office reserves the right to edit all draft language. These documents are strictly ceremonial, not legally binding and should not be interpreted as a political or policy endorsement of any kind.

### Requesting a Proclamation

Constituency groups and individuals are encouraged to submit proclamation requests to the Office of the Governor. The Governor's Office reserves the right to modify or deny any proclamation request.

As all of Maine citizens are called upon to recognize and observe each proclamation, all proclamations should be Maine-centric and broad in application. Requests to honor specific organizations, groups, individuals and/or events will not be honored.

Consistent with State law, proclamations – which include the seal of the State of Maine – may not be used or displayed for commercial promotion, without the written permission of the Governor.

## Requirements and Guidelines

### All requests must:

- Be made 45 days in advance
- Be made by a Maine citizen or a Maine-based organization
- Not take sides in matters of political controversy
- Affect a broad group of citizens

### All requests should include:

- The name and date(s) of the day, week, or month to be proclaimed
- Proposed verbiage, including 4-5 WHEREAS clauses
- Sponsor's full name and contact information (mailing, email, telephone)
- A brief summary and/or background regarding the individual, group or organization making the request
- An indication of whether the completed document should be mailed or picked up
- A requested date for when the document is needed

## Where to Send Requests

The Office of the Governor prefers requests be submitted through the form below.

[Request a Proclamation](#)

Alternately, requests may be mailed to the following address:

Office of the Governor  
Attn: Constituent Services  
#1 State House Station  
Augusta, ME [04333-0001](tel:04333-0001)

# Proclamation Request Form

At her discretion, Governor Mills will issue proclamations for noteworthy state events that deserve special recognition as a courtesy to Maine residents. These public service documents are strictly honorary and are not legally binding. All proclamation requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. The Governor reserves the right to decline any request for a proclamation.

If you need further information, please contact constituent services at (207) 287-3531. Proclamation requests must be submitted at least 45 days in advance of the date needed.

All fields marked with an asterisk (\*) are required.

\* Date when the proclamation is needed:

\* Name of the proclamation:

\* Date(s) of the day, week, or month to be proclaimed:

\* Has this proclamation been issued in ME in the past?

If so when?

\* Is this in conjunction with a National Recognition?

If so what States issued this proclamation this year?

Remove

Add Another State

\* Will the proclamation be presented at an event?

If so provide details of the event (itinerary, attendees, etc)

\* Requesting organization:

\* A summary and background of the requesting organization:

Requesting organization's website:

What additional groups are involved?

Remove

Add Another Group

\* Is Honoree named in proclamation text?

Honoree Name, if named in proclamation text:

Background of Honoree, if named in proclamation text:

Proposed text for the proclamation, including 4-6 "Whereas" clauses:

(Draft language provided may be edited or rewritten at the discretion of the Governor's office)

Primary Contact Person Information:

Prefix

\* First Name

MI

\* Last Name

\* Address Line 1

\* City

\* State

\* Zip

\* Email

\* Phone

\* How would you like to receive the completed proclamation?

## \* Proclamation Terms & Conditions

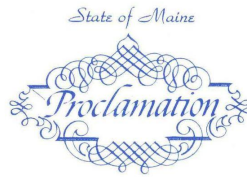
- Proclamation requests are accepted six weeks in advance of the event date or proclaimed date.
- Requests will be accepted no more than 6 months in advance and will not be issued more than 3 months in advance of the event.
- Proclamations recognize a day, week or month.
- Proclamations are issued for Maine residents or approved non-profit organizations with preferably statewide, but at least regional interest. Local (city or county wide proclamations) can be issued by local officials (mayors or county commissioners).
- Proclamations are issued for one period of time only. For example, if "Litter Cleanup Day" is proclaimed on January 1, then "Litter Cleanup Week," "Litter Cleanup Month" will not be proclaimed later in the year. Maine organizations are encouraged to coordinate their efforts with other similar groups before contacting the Governor's office. Organizations are encouraged to request proclamations that coincide with national or state- designated dates.
- Requests that are similar to already issued proclamations will be declined. For example, if "Ballet Week" was proclaimed in January and a request for "Ballet Dance Month" is received in June, the request for "Ballet Month" would be declined. A copy of the "Ballet Week" proclamation could be provided instead.
- Proclamations are **not** issued for conferences, birthdays, retirements, weddings, or anniversaries.
- An exception may be made when a large statewide organization is celebrating a milestone anniversary in conjunction with a state convention. The Governor may declare to honor an anniversary of the association in conjunction with the convention.
- Another exception may be made when a national organization is holding a national meeting in Maine. The Governor may issue a proclamation in honor of the state and national organization in conjunction with its convention.
- Any draft language provided may be edited or rewritten at the discretion of the Governor's Office. Every request must gain official approval before being issued.

# Whereases - statements about...

- what FTS programs are
- who FTS programs benefit
- how FTS programs support Maine's heritage agriculture and fishing industries
- the economic impact of FTS programs
- how Maine upholds the Dirigo motto
- how FTS supports the Maine State Constitution's Right to Food
- how the proclamation supports 2025 as Maine's Year of Youth in Agriculture



# Hear ye! Hear ye!



**WHEREAS**, Farm and Sea to School programs enrich the connection communities have with their local food producers by bringing fresh, locally produced and harvested food into schools throughout Maine; and

**WHEREAS**, Farm and Sea to School programs benefit both our students and food producers by increasing fresh, whole food consumption and improving health outcomes while also increasing revenue and customer base for Maine food producers; and

**WHEREAS**, more than 30,000 Maine people are employed in agriculture and fisheries, and it is crucial that we continue to support these vital heritage industries; and

**WHEREAS**, in school year 2023-24, 119 of Maine's 215 school food authorities purchased \$968,163 of Maine-produced food with the help of Maine's Local Foods Fund, leveraging over \$300,000 in matching state dollars; and

**WHEREAS**, Maine was one of the first states in the nation to implement Farm and Sea to School programs and continues to be a leader in the national movement; and

**WHEREAS**, Maine's constitution recognizes the right to food, and Farm and Sea to School programs ensure access to fresh, healthy food in our schools; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2025, Maine's Year of Youth in Agriculture, it is important that we continue building the understanding and connection between Maine children and the source of their food, so that we may encourage and support the next generation who will feed our state;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, be it resolved that I, Janet T. Mills, Governor of the State of Maine, do hereby proclaim October 2025 as

## Maine Farm & Sea to School Month

and I encourage schools, food producers, community groups, and others to help support the purchase and sale of locally harvested and produced Maine food products.



In testimony whereof, I have caused the Great Seal of the State to be hereunto affixed GIVEN under my hand at Augusta this eleventh day of September Two Thousand Twenty-Five

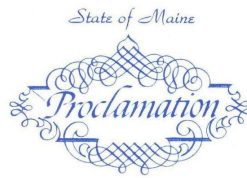
A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Janet T. Mills".

Janet T. Mills  
Governor

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Shenna Bellows".

Shenna Bellows  
Secretary of State





What FTS programs are

WHEREAS, Farm and Sea to School programs enrich the connection communities have with their local food producers by bringing fresh, locally produced and harvested food into schools throughout Maine; and

WHEREAS, Farm and Sea to School programs benefit both our students and food producers by increasing fresh, whole food consumption and improving health outcomes while also increasing revenue and customer base for Maine food producers; and

Who FTS programs benefit

How FTS programs support heritage industries

WHEREAS, more than 30,000 Maine people are employed in agriculture and fisheries, and it is crucial that we continue to support these vital heritage industries; and

WHEREAS, in school year 2023-24, 119 of Maine's 215 school food authorities purchased \$968,163 of Maine-produced food with the help of Maine's Local Foods Fund, leveraging over \$300,000 in matching state dollars; and

Economic Impact

Dirigo - I lead

WHEREAS, Maine was one of the first states in the nation to implement Farm and Sea to School programs and continues to be a leader in the national movement; and

WHEREAS, Maine's constitution recognizes the right to food, and Farm and Sea to School programs ensure access to fresh, healthy food in our schools; and

Constitutional Right to Food

Supports Year of Youth in Ag

WHEREAS, in 2025, Maine's Year of Youth in Agriculture, it is important that we continue building the understanding and connection between Maine children and the source of their food, so that we may encourage and support the next generation who will feed our state;

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### Maine Farm & Sea to School Month

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- ✓ Health
- ✓ Economy
- ✓ Data
- ✓ Sense of Place
- ✓ Alignment with Other Priorities



In testimony whereof, I have caused the Great Seal of the State to be hereunto affixed GIVEN under my hand at Augusta this eighteenth day of September Two Thousand Twenty-Five

Janet T. Mills  
Governor

Shenna Bellows  
Secretary of State



# Promotion

- Enews & Socials
- Press Release
- Legislators & Members of Congress
- Partner Organizations
- Leverage for other event promotion
  - National FTS Month
  - Apple Crunch Day



# Thank you

- [www.hccame.org](http://www.hccame.org)
- [www.mainefarmtoschool.org](http://www.mainefarmtoschool.org)
- [www.mainefarmtoinstitution.org](http://www.mainefarmtoinstitution.org)
- [https://www.maine.gov/governor/mills/contact/request\\_proclamation](https://www.maine.gov/governor/mills/contact/request_proclamation)

