



## FARM TO SCHOOL IN EVERY COMMUNITY

Farm to school is a common sense approach to child nutrition that empowers children and their families to make informed food choices while strengthening the local economy and contributing to vibrant communities. Schools want to serve more local food and kids want to eat it. But outdated kitchen equipment, a need for staff training, and ways to connect with local farms are standing in their way. There's a bill to overcome these barriers, **An Act Establishing Farm to School Grants to Promote Healthy Eating and Strengthen the Agricultural Economy** (S.243 & H.558).

### PILOT PROGRAM SUCCESS

- \$1 million in ARPA funding allocated to Mass. Dept. of Elementary & Secondary Education (DESE) to launch pilot program in 2023
- 59 public school districts and early education providers requested over \$1.6 million in the first round of funding
- DESE funded 17 projects
- Funds needed to meet the strong program demand

### CORE ELEMENTS OF FARM to SCHOOL



Support "An Act Establishing Farm to School Grants to Promote Healthy Eating and Strengthen the Agricultural Economy" (S.243 & H.558)

## BILL OVERVIEW

- Introduced by Representative Smitty Pignatelli and Senator Jo Comerford.
- Establishes a competitive grant program within the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for eligible public schools and licensed child care programs.
- Grants build the capacity of public schools and licensed child care programs to purchase ingredients grown and produced in Massachusetts, prepare scratch-cooked meals, and educate students about the food system.
- Has cross-sector impact by updating infrastructure, providing job training, supporting local business growth, educating students, and improving public health.

## TAKE ACTION

Please sign on as a co-sponsor of S.243 or H.558, "An Act Establishing Farm to School Grants to Promote Healthy Eating and Strengthen the Agricultural Economy."

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Please contact Simca Horwitz at [simca@massfarmtoschool.org](mailto:simca@massfarmtoschool.org) or 413-253-3844 to learn more.

# IMPACT OF FARM TO SCHOOL PROGRAMS

*Farm to School is a win for students, farmers, fishermen, and communities.*

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Farm to School keeps purchasing dollars local. Massachusetts schools spend approximately \$75 million on food annually. Let's invest that money in Massachusetts farmers, fishermen, and food producers.

Massachusetts schools spend over \$10 million annually on local foods.

Every \$1 spent on direct farm purchases in MA, generates another \$1.12 in local economic activity.

110 Massachusetts farms sell to schools and 25% have grown their businesses to meet this demand.



## HEALTH & NUTRITION

Farm to School programs increase student consumption of fruits and vegetables.

Farm to School can increase participation in school nutrition programs, so more kids, especially those coming from homes that are struggling to put food on their own tables, are eating nutritious meals, which help them grow and thrive at school.

25% of Massachusetts teens are overweight or obese and farm to school can help reverse that trend, saving on future health care costs.



## EDUCATION

Farm to School strengthens knowledge and attitudes toward agriculture, food, nutrition, and the environment.

Farm to School improves academic outcomes and social and emotional learning.

Farm to School provides experiential learning opportunities that reach students of all abilities.

1/3 of Massachusetts K-12 students currently access local food or food education in school.

