

2022

MASSACHUSETTS FARM & SEA TO SCHOOL CONFERENCE PROGRAM

MAY
16-21

Join us for a week of
virtual workshops
and in-person
field trips.



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Virtual Workshops

Exploring the Connection Between Food and Culture

Presenter: Brittany Peats, MA Food System Collaborative

Presenter: Jessica Lander, Lowell Public Schools

Presenter: Maria Barrios, Auburn High School

DESCRIPTION: Hear from high school teachers about how they have creatively and thoughtfully included discussions about diverse culinary traditions and sustainability in the food system in their classes. Brittany Peats, Program Manager of MA Food System Collaborative, will moderate a panel of teachers: a history teacher who incorporated a lesson on immigration by creating a cultural cookbook with students' family recipes and a science teacher who connects her lessons to the school garden.. The workshop will begin with an overview of the importance of food system education and the MA Food System Collaborative's campaign to expand food system education.

Myth Busting - Local Seafood

Presenter: Sophie Scott

DESCRIPTION: We hear it over and over again: kids don't like seafood, fish is hard to prepare, local fish is hard to procure. This session, led by Sophie Scott of the Gulf of Maine Research Institute, will discuss common local seafood myths and show participants that local seafood is a climate friendly and environmentally responsible protein that helps to support our working waterfronts, coastal communities, and local economy while being incredibly nutritious for growing hearts, bones, and brains. Through case studies, market research, and experiences from school nutrition directors, attendees will gain the tools to help them become successful in their local sea to school goals.

Open Forum: Fish Sticks & Sustaining the Fleet

Presenter: Jared Auerbach, Founder & CEO, Red's Best; Joseph Jurek, Commercial Fisherman

DESCRIPTION: Join *Red's Best's* Founder & CEO Jared Auerbach and special guest, fisherman Joseph Jurek, for a transparent conversation about the inner workings of New England's lively, historic fishing industry. The focus of this session will be innovative seafood products developed specifically for schools, including those where scratch cooking is less feasible. All are welcome no matter how much seafood knowledge you currently have. Come learn, discuss and get all of your questions answered.

Student Voice Student Choice

Presenter: Karly Dunn, Home Grown Springfield, Student Engagement Specialist

Presenter: Julia Thomas, FoodCorps Service Member

Presenter: Student, TBD

DESCRIPTION: Drawing on their collective experience working at Home Grown Springfield and FoodCorps, Karly and Julia will share how they are incorporating student feedback into their school meals and why it is important to do so. Attendees will be given tools to identify their students' opinions and strengths, and harness their voices to advocate for the changes they would like to see in their school community. Hear from students about their personal experience and how empowering youth to make specialized changes in their communities will enhance their own school experience, and also encourage the life-long habit of amplifying their voices.

Making Sustainable Food Systems Education Part of the Core Curriculum

Presenter: Anna Cynar, Innovation Academy Charter School, Classroom Educator

DESCRIPTION: Come learn from Anna Cynar, Educator and Co-Coordinator of Innovation Academy's Sustainable Food Systems course, an interdisciplinary, full-year lab science class for 11th and 12th graders. You'll learn about how the class is structured, explore class projects, and take a virtual tour of the cooking labs and routines for implementation ideas. After the tour, there will be time to network with one another so we can share information and resources!

Innovation Academy Charter School Farm to School Ambassadors

Presenter: Emilia Perez, Innovation Academy, Student

Presenter: Haleigh Cummings Innovation Academy, Student

Presenter: Alani Vasconcelos Innovation Academy, Student

Presenter: Caroline Bishop, Innovation Academy

Presenter: Anna Cynar, Innovation Academy

DESCRIPTION: Learn about Innovation Academy Charter School's Farm to School Internship program from student ambassadors who will share their challenges & accomplishments. The ambassadors will give a demonstration on growing microgreens indoors, discuss the kitchen library program they implemented to encourage and support teachers who want to cook in the classroom, and talk about how they overcame obstacles to get their entire school involved in reducing food waste. Participants will also come away with ideas for how to raise funds in order to support new projects and programs in their schools.

Youth Led School Composting

Presenter: Caroline Cooper, Student, Northampton High School

Presenter: Amelia Ritt, Student, Northampton High School

Presenter: Lily Shimpach, Student, Northampton High School

Teacher Advisor: Bryan Jersky, Northampton High School

During this workshop the Northampton High School environmental club co-leaders will explain how to introduce composting into school cafeterias. They will outline the necessary steps to get administrative approval, explain the nitty-gritty logistics of waste collection and removal (trucks, custodial staff help, compost monitors), and provide the attendees with ways to engage students in the process and incentivize them to help out! They hope to encourage students to start initiatives in their own schools by providing them with a successful example and empowering them with information and resources.

What's Next? Exploring a Career in Food Systems

Presenter: Vanessa Garcia Polanco, Policy Campaigns Co-Director, National Young Farmers Coalition

Presenter: Greta Shwachman, Food Service Director, Greenfield Public Schools

Presenter: Norris Guscott, Equity Policy Network Manager, MA Food Systems Collaborative

Are you interested in a career in the local food system? The career possibilities in this field are many and varied. In this panel discussion you'll learn from young food systems leaders about the paths that led them to their current roles. You'll have the opportunity to ask them candid questions about charting a course in this growing field.

Leading School Food Change in Your Community

Presenter: The Food Project

In this workshop, youth from The Food Project's Root Crew will provide an introductory primer workshop to help demystify how school food works and understand how to undertake effective school food organizing. It will highlight the school food process so that youth and community members can learn how to engage with the most effective leverage points and stakeholders in their districts and reimagine what school food can be.

Creating Cultures of Equitable Belonging in the Classroom Using the 21-Day Racial Equity Habit Building Challenge

Presenter: Karen Spiller

For the past seven years, Food Solutions New England has hosted the 21-Day Racial Equity Habit Building Challenge that has inspired thousands to learn, reflect and act in service of creating a culture of belonging and just practices, with our food system as a frame. Food system practitioners, policy makers, educators, community activists, college students, soil scientists, healthcare professionals and their agencies are among those in diverse sectors who earnestly continue to find ways to build and nurture new relationships, shift policies and challenge norms that once included some and excluded most: With the lens of racial and social equity, we together have been able to create space for dialogue, authentic engagement and allyship leading to action and changes in beliefs and aspirations; the ways in which the work is done, and how decisions are made. With intentionality and intersectionality, the Challenge has been used as a tool to transform the culture at higher education institutions by engaging faculty in syllabi development for their courses across disciplines of agriculture, social work, and business; promoting student-led campus conversations; and hosting point of service and learning activities in the university's dining services and meal plans. In this session, participants will explore ways and strategies to use the 21-Day Challenge as a tool to prepare our younger students to be thoughtful and brave about their multiple identities and celebrate the fullness of the communities in which they will live, work and play. We will together build a menu of possibilities for our school communities – starting with our K-12 students, then their families, school faculty and staff in the quest to be one a community of excellence, equity and belonging.

Youth Climate Action Now: Climate and Food Justice

Presenter: Ollie Perrault

Join youth climate activist Ollie Perrault in this workshop that will explore environmental justice and how climate impacts play out in communities' access to healthy food. This workshop will also examine youth empowerment and the importance of youth voices in this evolving conversation, climate change solutions both big and small from composting and eating local to joining a climate action group that addresses climate policy on a systemic level, how to have inclusive conversations around climate intersectionality, the role that art and creativity has to play in combating climate change, as well as how *you* can get involved and start working to save the future of our planet. This workshop is open to anyone interested in hearing about these issues from the perspective of young people that have grown up in the climate crisis.

Field Trips

Lettuce Show You Our Gardens: How Youth in Worcester MA are leading the Urban Gardening Movement

Presenters: Eliza Lawrence, Worcester REC

Presenter: Students from YouthGROW program

Join the Regional Environmental Council's YouthGROW and School Gardens programs as they lead us in a tour of one of their urban farm campuses, and a school-based garden to showcase how they work together to support a thriving gardening network in the city of Worcester, MA. Youth participants will lead the tour and describe the history of the farm, and how their work addresses issues of food insecurity, empowers youth voices, and has affected the broader garden network throughout the city. Then participants will drive over to North High where they will meet the students that were involved in a summer internship and talk about how the garden is woven into the school community and curriculum, and how it works year round, highlighting the mini orchard, pollinator garden, and art projects that the students helped build.

Food Bank Farm Regenerative Farming with No-Till Practices

Presenter: Amanda Reynolds, Food Bank of Western Mass, Senior Community Engagement Coordinator

The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts is hosting an interactive workshop on regenerative farming methods on their Food Bank Farm. Participants will receive a farm tour of their greenhouses and walking paths on the 142-acre Food Bank Farm and will get their hands dirty planting vegetables, making farm beds, harvesting seasonally available produce, and tasting the "vegetables of their labor." Other topics will include composting, soil health, ally planting, and the cardboard planting method. Amanda will also discuss how The Food Bank Farm intends to address racial inequalities in the farming community and how they are contributing to community food security.

People, Agriculture, and the Environment: Middle School Programming in the School Garden

Presenter: Hailey Small, Backyard Growers, School Garden Educator

Join Garden Educator, Hailey Small from Backyard Growers, in the gardens at the O'Maley Innovation Middle School in Gloucester to learn about their People, Agriculture, and Environment curriculum including 6th grade corn, 7th grade wheat, and 8th grade soil health programs. Backyard Growers has a long history of developing award-winning school garden programs and will engage participants in the many ways in which outdoor education, and particularly agricultural education, can take place in a traditional school setting. Participants will have an opportunity to kinesthetically and visually understand the environment in which students learn, and access the experience of a young person in an agricultural program.

Connecting our Fishing Fleet with our Schools: A Tour of Red's Best at the Boston Fish Pier

Presenter: Jamey Lionette, Director of Sustainable Seafood Program

In this field trip, participants will have the opportunity to visit a center of the local fishing industry at the Boston Fish Pier; Red's Best, an innovative company aggregating, processing, and distributing fresh local catch from New England fishermen. Hear from Jamey Lionette, Red's Best's Director of Sustainable Seafood about the ways in which creative partnerships with schools are helping support the local fishing fleet. We'll tour the facility, seeing where the boats dock and unload their catch and watch as the fish is processed and packed. May is peak squid season, so it should be a busy and inky visit! Come with questions about bringing local seafood to your school.

Round the Bend Farm Tour

Presenter: Nate Sander

Farm Tours are a great way to be introduced to the mission, vision and farming practices at Round The Bend Farm. They provide us with an opportunity to showcase farm systems as they pertain to restorative living, modeling nature, zero-waste design and redefining wealth. We will explore the gardens, meet some of our animals, and take time to articulate connections between our natural and built environments with our education programs. It's Open Farm Day at Round the Bend, so after the tour there is an opportunity to spend more time or enjoy the farm shop.

From the Farm to Your Table: A Tour of the Boston Food Hub Farm & Distribution Center

Presenter: Annie Broad, Sales Manager, Boston Food Hub

Come learn about the history of Boston Area Gleaners, their involvement in the local farming and hunger relief community, and hear an introduction to the work they are doing in the local produce industry through Boston Food Hub. In addition to a walking tour of the farm and food hub operation, be ready to get your hands dirty by weeding and planting in the field or seeding in the greenhouse!

Youth Leadership from Seed to Fork in Epiphany School's Greenhouse + Garden

Presenter: Dario Brandao

Presenter: Ash Inglis, Epiphany School, Garden Program Director

Join Epiphany School graduate, Dario Brandao, for a fun and interactive workshop in their school garden. After taking part in the program for the past 3.5 years, he'll speak about his passion for educating students on the importance of sustainability, how to grow and cook food, and how to incorporate culturally relevant food and multilingual signage to connect students with veggies. Participants will have a chance to learn to identify crops, start seeds in the greenhouse, make a recipe from the garden, and more!

Life on a Shaker Farm

Host:Christine McCue, Livestock Manager, and Cindy Dickinson, Director of Education

Join us for an afternoon at Hancock Shaker Village, a very special historic site and working farm. During this interactive workshop, you'll immerse yourself in the history and the present of this inspiring place. Learn about the Shakers, a religious group that lived here as an agricultural community from 1790 to 1960, and understand more about their commitment to equality, justice, and making the world a better place. Meet our farm staff, who are working hard to maintain the Shakers' legacy, and find out more about our sustainable farming practices, our livestock (we've got sheep, goats, cows, pigs, chickens, ducks, and donkeys) and our Community Supported Agriculture programs. Observe several of our crafters at work, including our blacksmith. We'll even make a couple of Shaker-inspired crafts (including a seed packet!). After the workshop, you are welcome to stick around the Village until 4 pm to explore more and reflect on your time here.