

RHODE ISLAND FARM TO SCHOOL COLLABORATIVE

KIDS WIN | FARMERS WIN | COMMUNITIES WIN

Farm to School is active and growing in Rhode Island!

We're looking to add new energy, passion, and knowledge to our efforts to connect kids and families to healthy, local food while supporting local farmers and building communities.

OUR MISSION

The RI Farm to School Collaborative engages statewide partners to develop, expand, and strengthen **local procurement, education, and gardening initiatives** to benefit children and youth throughout the state.

These initiatives connect local agriculture to healthy eating habits which improve public health and the local economy, support local farmers and food producers, and build community relationships.



In 1999, Dame Farm in Johnston was host to a “Farm Supper & Discussion” where interested school food service directors, farmers, and community advocates came together to figure out how local schools could purchase RI grown apples. This was the humble beginning of RI’s Farm to School program. Over the following decades, the RI Farm to School program has grown with greater amounts and variety of local purchasing, more school garden programs, and more classroom education focused on local food systems. Although the RI Farm to School program has remained viable and supported by school communities throughout the state, challenges and opportunities still remain.

OUR HISTORY

The Rhode Island Farm to School Collaborative was established in 2019 to unify advocacy, funding and organizational capacities to address these ongoing challenges and opportunities. The Collaborative is represented by lead organizers from:

- ◆ RI Department of Education Child Nutrition Programs
- ◆ RI Department of Environmental Management Div. of Agriculture
- ◆ Farm Fresh RI
- ◆ RI Healthy Schools Coalition
- ◆ Green Circle Design/URI School Garden Initiative



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Are you interested in the Farm to School movement in Rhode Island and want to learn more or contribute to a specific area or initiative?

We envision a robust and engaged RI Farm to School community where equity, diversity, and inclusion are prioritized by honoring the lived experiences of the racial, ethnic and cultural communities we serve. We are committed to community driven dialogue, participation, and decision-making to inform and influence the structure and work of the Collaborative.



We want to hear your suggestions of how the RI Farm to School Collaborative can best represent and support you and/or your communities and how we can best engage and communicate with you.

We're also actively recruiting people to get involved with work groups:

- ◆ Procurement
- ◆ Education/School Gardens
- ◆ Communication/Engagement
- ◆ Climate Change
- ◆ Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Together we can listen, learn, and forge new connections to advance RI Farm to School policies and activities in every community.

To share your suggestions, interests and how you value Farm to School, please contact:

Karin Wetherill at karin.wetherill@rihsc.org

To learn more about the RI Farm to School movement, visit our website (under construction):

www.RIFarmtoSchool.org