

# TEXAS

## FARM FRESH E-HARVEST

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE | COMMISSIONER SID MILLER

July 2019

### Farm Fresh Spotlight Story

#### Spotlight Stories

Any school with a Future Farmers of America (FFA) program or an agriculture teacher has potential partners for bringing fresh foods and lessons in agriculture to the cafeteria. The following ideas and examples can help you initiate an agricultural collaboration for your nutrition program.

#### Collaborate with the Ag Teacher

Agriculture teachers can contribute expertise and more to developing and maintaining school gardens. In turn, child nutrition programs can help fund school gardens using their nonprofit food service account so long as the produce grown in the garden supports the child nutrition program in some way. [USDA Memo SP06-2015](#) provides more information about how to use child nutrition funding to support school gardens.

#### Use Agricultural Products in Fundraisers

Healthy fundraisers help reinforce healthy habits and keep nutrition top-of-mind for students. Products grown and raised in the garden by students and staff create innovative fundraisers unique to your school. In West Texas, [Ector County ISD agriculture program](#) students raise different breeds of chickens and they sell the eggs. Egg buyers from the community can purchase the eggs at the ECISD school farm. The agriculture teacher uses the chickens and eggs to give students hands-on lessons about poultry production and the economics of agriculture. The teacher has plans to grow the program.

#### Support Agriculture Students Raising High-Quality Protein

FFA programs often raise cattle, pigs and chickens to help students learn about animal husbandry. These animals typically receive high-quality feed and attention and offer a great source of protein for a child nutrition program.

Child nutrition directors must work in coordination with county health inspectors to ensure all food safety standards are met prior to purchasing animals raised by an FFA program. It is also important to ensure all USDA regulations are followed in the processing of the animal. [USDA memo SP 01-2016](#) provides some additional information about local meat in schools.

These are just a few ways existing agriculture programs can contribute to a child nutrition team's effort to introduce local foods in their programs. Visit [Texas Farm Bureau](#) for lesson plans, videos and more resources. If you're aware of any successful collaborations between child nutrition and school ag programs in Texas, please email details to [FarmFresh@TexasAgriculture.gov](mailto:FarmFresh@TexasAgriculture.gov).



#### Contact TDA

Emilee Case  
Coordinator for Farm  
Fresh Projects

[Email](#) us or call  
(877) TEX-MEAL

#### Connect with Others

##### Texas Statewide Network

This [LinkedIn Group](#) is an online network connecting schools, child and adult care centers, producers, support organizations and community members with important information about expanding local food efforts in Texas.

#### [Join Today!](#)

##### Texas Farm Fresh Network

[Use this tool](#) to connect with Texas food companies that currently sell or are interested in selling to schools, child care centers and summer meal programs. Company listings include contact information, product availability and distribution radius.

#### Funding Opportunities

Financial support from organizations may help

### Farm to School Spotlight



STUDENTS ARE LEARNING  
TO LOVE LOCAL



## Registration is now open for the 2019 Farm Fresh Challenge!

The Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) Farm Fresh Challenge has already received more than 120 pledges from across the state! Your schools can get in on the excitement in 2019 too. To learn more about the Farm Fresh Challenge and what's new for 2019, visit [Squaremeals.org/FarmFreshChallenge](https://squaremeals.org/FarmFreshChallenge) and pledge your participation today!



## Farm to Summer Spotlight

*Eat Local. Teach Local. Be Social.*

The deadline to submit attestation information for the 2019 Summer Farm Fresh Challenge is fast approaching. All documentation must be completed by July 15, 2019, for a program to be eligible to receive Best of the Bunch recognition.

If you have completed the challenge, don't let this last hurdle stand in the way. Complete the [attestation form](#) and earn recognition for your efforts today!

[Complete the Form](#)



## Producer Spotlight

### What We Learned from June's Business of Numbers and Nutrition Conference

Thank you to all the businesses that joined us for the 2019 Business of Numbers and Nutrition Conference. We were glad to host you for exciting learning sessions with child nutrition directors and TDA leadership.

The biggest take away for our team was to continue keeping the communication channels open. Many child nutrition directors and network members mentioned that the greatest barrier is not understanding the language of child nutrition. Our team is committed to helping all companies better understand the business of child nutrition in order to strengthen local purchasing relationships statewide!

organizations may help establish or advance local Farm Fresh initiatives.

[Go here](#) for a list of opportunities from TDA, USDA and other organizations.

### Stay Connected



Interested in learning more about Texas products?

Sign up for the [Go Local](#). [GO TEXAN E-zine](#) today.



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