The Louisiana Farm to School Program & Louisiana MarketMaker

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What is Louisiana Farm to School Program?
Components of Farm to School

- **Procurement**: incorporating local food in school meals, snacks, or taste tests
- **Education**: promoting curriculum and opportunities for agriculture, food, health, and nutrition education
- **School Gardens**: providing support for schools to develop and maintain school gardens
  - Mini-grants
  - Technical support via community partners
  - Guides and best practices
Farm to School in Louisiana

  - “Develop and implement a farm to school program to promote the use of locally grown and raised agricultural products in school nutrition programs”

- An inter-agency agreement between LSU AgCenter and Louisiana Department of Education Division of Nutrition Services

- Funded by USDA state administrative expense (SAE) funds
Louisiana Farm to School Program Goals

- **Support Local Farm to School Programs**
  - Provide resources and best practices to assist with farm to school programming in the three F2S areas

- **Coordinate Annual Farm to School Conference**
  - Gather F2S stakeholders from across the state to learn, exchange information, and network

- **Program Access & Communication**
  - Ensure all stakeholders have access to trainings, resources, and technical assistance

- **Train School Nutrition Personnel for F2S Implementation and Procurement**
  - Provide recommended practices for local food purchasing/processing, program promotion, and school garden integration
Louisiana Farm to School Program Goals Cont'd

- **Train Producers with MarketReady (MarketMaker)**
  - Provide producers with marketing strategies and best business practices for various retail and wholesale markets
  - Increase growers' understanding of farm to school regulations and required practices through resources and trainings

- **Develop Farm to School Handbook**
  - Create a comprehensive guide for Louisiana Farm to School practitioners with focus on three main program components (school gardens, education, local food procurement)
  - Provide reference materials and guidelines for purchasing local products in school cafeterias, implementing programs such as LA Harvest of the Month, Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), and food safety guidelines
Farm to school programs can vary by location and depth of activities.

Schools can start as small or large as they want.

Some examples of program activities include:
  - Purchasing local produce
  - Great Louisiana Satsuma Peel
  - Field trips to farms
  - Taste tests
### Louisiana Harvest of the Month

- One local food product is highlighted each month throughout the school
- Purchased through schools or grown in school gardens
- Served as a cafeteria menu item or featured in a taste test
- Home & standardized cafeteria recipes
- Monthly educational and promotional materials
Materials & Resources

- Posters
- Newsletters
- Coloring Pages
- Recipes for School & Home
- Participation Letter
- “I Tried It!” Stickers
- Seasonality Chart for Louisiana-Grown Produce
- Lessons & Activities
- Menu Templates
- Social Media Graphics
- Taste Test Guide
- Teacher Resources
- Farmer Conversation Guide
- Tool Kit
- School Guide for Local Food Purchasing
- Calendar
Citrus is this month's Louisiana Harvest of the Month.

Fun Facts About Citrus:
- In tropical climates, citrus skin remains green even when the fruit is mature.
- Citrus leaves can be used to make tea and wine.
- Citrus peel is used to make essential oils and other products.

Citrus is Nutritious and Good for You!
- Excellent source of vitamin C.
- Good source of fiber.
- Good source of folate.
Great Louisiana Satsuma Peel – every October
Great Louisiana Satsuma Peel & Farm to School Challenge

- East Baton Rouge Parish
- Grant Parish
- Lafayette Parish
- LaSalle Parish
- Livingston Parish
- Orleans Parish
- St. Charles Parish
- St. James Parish
- Washington
- Many individual schools

Impacting 42,113 students!

October 2019
Launch of Great Louisiana Satsuma Peel
- Locally sourced every year
- Attended by First Lady Donna Edwards and USDA staff

Sessions on school garden care, integrating curriculum, taste test best practices, procurement examples, and more

Keynote speaker

Networking lunch
Tips for Working with Schools

- Plan in advance – give you and your partners time to organize and prepare

- Be knowledgeable about your product:
  - Volumes
  - Product sizes
  - Quality
  - Price points
  - Packaging
  - Food safety
  - Transportation and delivery options and ranges
  - Product liability insurance

- Establish clear processes that work for you and school food service

Call 225-578-1037 for more information or email cbesse@agcenter.lsuu.edu
Louisiana MarketMaker
What is MarketMaker?

- MarketMaker is a national online portal which links agricultural and seafood markets to buyers and consumers.
- Producers looking for markets or consumers looking for products are able to find one another via statewide or local searches.
- Registration and use is free! You may sign-up via www.la.foodmarketmaker.com.
MarketMaker is not limited to computers but is also available as an app for Apple and Android compatible hand-held devices.

Consumers are able to conduct on-the-go searches for products based on either specific postal codes or by using the current location via the built in GPS function in modern hand-held devices.

The download and use of the app is free! You may visit www.whatsinseasonapp.com for more information.
Why MarketMaker?
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- Increased visibility for your business.
- Increased accessibility for consumers to your business.
- Increased ease of communication between potential customers and yourself – directly and indirectly – profile will answer all FAQs, e-mail communication, mapped location of your business.
- Increased access to useful information, for example, event calendar, interactive maps, and census information to plan for the season ahead.
- It is free! – What do you have to lose?
Well, what if I encounter problems?

- Ease of use – more valuable time on the field or in the classroom and not in front of a computer, but:
  - Instructions, tutorials, and other resources are available on the LSU AgCenter’s Farm to School Program website; including 3 step-by-step videos! [www.lsuagcenter.com/louisianafarmtoschool](http://www.lsuagcenter.com/louisianafarmtoschool)
  - Technical support is available via e-mail. Each partner state has designated personnel while non-partner states will be assisted by National MarketMaker.
  - If there are severe problems then Louisiana users may call the state administrator; an option not available in all states.
Impact

- Reached more than 30,000 people since 2017.
- Provided direct educational contact to 1,277 producers or institutional buyers – or 34% of all contacts.
- New registrations:
  - 58 new producers.
  - 16 new schools.
  - 4 school districts that represent 155 schools.
- 4 Processors.
- 5 Farmers Markets.
- Others:
  - Food service management company.
  - Grocers.
  - Cities.
  - Apiaries.
  - Retailers.
  - General membership/Buyers.
  - Commercial production kitchen.
  - Wholesalers.
  - Community centers.
The Farm to School Program Team has been awarded the national MarketMaker Innovation Award twice for their work with Louisiana farmers and fishermen as well as Louisiana schools and school districts.

Crystal R. Besse and Alessandro Holzapfel were present in Arlington, VA on September 17th, 2018 as well as in Rosemont, IL on October 8th, 2019 to accept the nationally recognized prize on behalf of the whole team.
Summary

- “Find or be found by your next business partner.”
- MarketMaker is a free online resource tool for producers and buyers of agricultural goods.
Questions, Comments, Concerns, Compliments?
Contact

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