

Sample letter to the editor

[School/school system] is pleased to announce that it is participating in the Jane Lawton Farm-to-School initiative and the Maryland Homegrown School Lunch Program from Sept. 13-17. During the week, students can expect to find [name the item from name of farm, town] in the cafeteria as well as educational materials about the benefits of fresh, local foods. For students who bring their own lunches, we encourage parents to incorporate local products during the week and as often as possible.

The Farm-to-School program, which was established during the 2008 session of the General Assembly and signed into law by Governor Martin O'Malley, is designed to bring more Maryland-grown products to school lunches and to help educate students about the source of their food, how it is produced, and the benefits of a healthy diet.

With nearly [add number from the chart in the tool kit] school lunches served during the last school year in [your county], just think of the impact on our families and our communities if even one local item is included in each student's lunch each day. Farmers would have additional income, thereby strengthening the local economy and keeping farm land open and productive, our children would receive the nutritional benefits of fresh, local products as well as the knowledge of why this matters, and the financial, environmental, and nutritional costs of transporting food would decrease.

[Name of school/system] is committed to participating in the Jane Lawton Farm to School initiative this year and to expanding the variety of local products included in school lunches over time. Including local food in school lunches and related information in the classroom is good for our students and good for Maryland. More information about the program is available online at www.marylandfarmtoschool.org.