



At The Table

USDA nutrition assistance news and information for partners and community organizations

Schools serving, kids eating healthier school meals thanks to Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act

Farm to School efforts help reduce plate waste, increase student participation

Preliminary Farm to School Census data for school year 2013-2014 indicate strong farm to school programs can increase the number of students purchasing school breakfast and lunch, improve consumption of healthier foods at school, and reduce plate waste. Census data also indicate schools purchased nearly \$600 million worth of food locally in school year 2013-2014, a 55 percent increase over school year 2011-2012 when the first Farm to School Census was conducted, creating new marketing opportunities for farmers and ranchers in their communities.

The results are an outcome of efforts by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to target resources to help schools serve healthier meals to students following the passage of the bipartisan Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010. Through its Farm to School Grant Program, established and funded through the Act, USDA offers grants to help schools and other eligible entities establish or expand farm to school programs. In September 2015, USDA released a report that shows the grants alone have helped 12,300 schools improve nutritious meal options made with local ingredients for 6.9 million students, while

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A lunch offering at the Windham Raymond School District in Windham, Maine. (Photo courtesy of Jeanne Reilly, Windham Raymond Food Service Director)

USDA hosts prize challenge to generate innovative ideas for electronic, error-reducing version of the school meal programs application

As part of its commitment to protecting the integrity of the child nutrition programs, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) kicked off a prize challenge to solicit innovative designs for an electronic school meals application. The resulting electronic application is expected to help facilitate accurate completion and processing, thereby reducing improper payments and ensuring eligible low-income students receive free or reduced price meals.

"Over 70 percent of National School Lunch Program participants and nearly 85 percent of School Breakfast Program participants receive free or reduced-price meals. These students count on school meals as a vital part of their daily nutrition, and for many, the application is a key part of ensuring access," said FNS Administrator Audrey Rowe. "FNS is leveraging the challenge model to access a diverse group of innovators, problem solvers, and experienced programmers who can improve the application process and help shape the future of digital design in government."

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Secretary Vilsack announces additional progress in addressing childhood hunger

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack recently announced 97 percent of schools now report successfully meeting updated nutrition standards, and the number of eligible high-poverty schools utilizing USDA's Community Eligibility Provision has increased by 20 percent since last year.

The Community Eligibility Program ensures universal access to healthy food for all children attending high-poverty schools, and this is the second school year that it has been available nationwide.

Secretary Vilsack made this announcement before the members of the American Academy of Pediatrics which demonstrated its commitment to improving child nutrition by releasing a policy statement calling for pediatricians across the country to play a role in reducing childhood food insecurity.

"The numbers and the actions of these pediatricians are a reflection of the commitment by thousands of schools, communities, physicians and nutrition leaders across the country to ensuring a healthier next generation," said Secretary Vilsack.

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USDA Grants Awarded

USDA, Vermont highlight SNAP E&T pilot grant

By Mark Abueg

The U.S. Department of Agriculture and the State of Vermont announced Vermont has been awarded an \$8.9 million federal grant to fund and evaluate pilot projects to help Supplemental Nutrition and Assistance Program (SNAP) participants find jobs and work toward self-sufficiency.

Kurt Messner, the acting regional administrator for the USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (Northeast Regional Office) joined Vermont Governor Peter Shumlin; Hal Cohen, secretary of the Vermont Agency of Human Services; and Ken Schatz, commissioner of the Department for Children and Families, during a press conference to highlight the State's selection as a recipient of a competitive award to assist eligible SNAP Employment and Training (E&T) participants.

"The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program helps eligible low-income families put food on the table and supports critical employment skills and job training so that people can become economically self-sufficient," Messner said. "The pilot project award announced today will help USDA and the State of Vermont identify cost-effective strategies to connect even more SNAP participants to gainful employment."

According to the Vermont Governor's office, the grant will allow Vermont to develop and test innovative ways to help 3SquaresVT recipients find and keep good jobs, increase their incomes, and reduce their reliance on public assistance.

"We know that most Vermonters on food assistance would rather have a full-time job that will allow them to provide for themselves and their family," Gov. Shumlin said. "This pilot program will help us help those Vermonters get the support and training they need to make that a reality. That's good for struggling Vermonters, it's good for our economy and workforce, and it's good for taxpayers."

Vermont has time and time again shown its ability to out innovate other states to solve tough problems. This is yet another example of our state leading in that regard."

Vermont's proposed pilot project, informally titled "Jobs for Independence" (JFI), is a three-year program designed to target Vermonters on food assistance with significant barriers to employment, including those that are homeless, suffering and/or recovering from substance abuse or mental health problems, or with prior criminal convictions. The program aims to enroll at least 3,000 individuals within the first 16 months of the pilot.

Authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill, the USDA's E&T grant funds pilot projects focusing on target populations identified by the legislation, including individuals with low skills, able-bodied adults without dependents and SNAP recipients working in very low-wage or part-time jobs.

The selected pilot in Vermont represents a wide array of balanced approaches—including skills training, work-based learning, support services such as transportation and child care, and other job-driven strategies—and reflect the wide geographic diversity of the SNAP population.



USDA awards grants to improve SNAP processing, technology

Agriculture Under Secretary Kevin Concannon recently announced \$5 million in grants to state and local agencies and community partners to streamline application processing and improve technology in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The competitively awarded grants will fund six projects in four states, improving efficiency in SNAP operations.

"The grants will fund innovative projects that will help make the process of applying for benefits and determining eligibility more efficient for SNAP households and state agency staff," Concannon said. "These projects will serve as a blueprint for improvement in other states, as well."

USDA sought projects that help make the workflow process more efficient, incorporate technology improvements for client services, or reduce churning – when an eligible household exits and then re-enters the program within four months. Churning causes a break in nutrition benefits despite continued eligibility and at the same time requires redundant processing work by state staff. These initiatives will use modern solutions to address such administrative challenges, such as mobile applications, text message reminders, and online portals, or examine and revise office procedures to shorten application processing times for initial applications or re-certifications.

Northeast awardees and grant amounts are:

New York City Human Resources Administration Department of Social Services - \$1,548,065

Jefferson County (New York) Department of Social Services - \$141,716

USDA Grants Awarded



Farmers Market support grants

The USDA Food and Nutrition Service awarded \$8.1 million in grants for projects in 23 states to enhance the effectiveness of SNAP operations at farmers markets. The new funds support broad SNAP related activities and costs, including staff training and technical assistance, creating educational materials, and raising awareness among current SNAP participants that their benefits may be used to purchase the healthy, fresh foods at these outlets.

The grants awarded in the Northeast Region:

Harvest Home Farmers Market - NYC -- \$250,000

Friends of the Rochester Public Market, Inc. - Rochester, NY -- \$178,902

Southern Tier West Regional Planning and Development Board - Salamanca, NY -- \$99,813

Federation of Massachusetts Farmers Markets - Waltham, MA -- \$250,000

Maine Federation of Farmers Markets - Pittsfield, ME -- \$249,677

Farm Fresh Rhode Island - Pawtucket, RI -- \$250,000

Billings Forge Community Works, Inc. - Hartford, CT -- \$198,776

Council on the Environment, Inc. - NYC -- \$186,335

Gloria Tu Gilbert - Westford, MA -- \$27,709

Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont - Richmond, VT -- \$247,048

Descriptions of these projects may be found at www.fns.usda.gov/snap/fmmsg-awardee-summaries

USDA helps schools connect with local farmers and ranchers

Grants will create healthier school meals and support local farmers in 39 states

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) recently announced \$4.8 million in grants for 74 projects spanning 39 states that support the USDA's efforts to connect child nutrition programs with local farmers and ranchers through its Farm to School Program.

USDA's Farm to School Grants fund school districts, state and local agencies, tribal nations, agricultural producers, and non-profit organizations in their efforts to increase local foods served through child nutrition programs, teach children about food and agriculture through garden and classroom education, and develop schools' and farmers' capacities to participate in farm to school. Awards ranging from \$20,000 to \$100,000 are distributed in four different grant categories: Planning, Implementation, Support Service, and Training.

For the 2016 school year, grants will serve more than 5,211 schools and 2.9 million students, nearly 40 percent of whom are eligible for free or reduced-price meals. Funded projects in the Northeast Region include:

Auburn School Department - Auburn, Maine -- Grant Type: Planning; \$45,000

Massachusetts Farm to School, Project Bread -- The Walk for Hunger - Amherst, Massachusetts -- Grant Type: Training -- State; \$25,000

Quincy Public Schools - Quincy, Massachusetts -- Grant Type: Implementation; \$71,958

Somerville Public Schools - Somerville, Massachusetts -- Grant Type: Implementation; \$100,000

The Open Door - Gloucester, Massachusetts -- Grant Type: Support Service; \$100,000

Portsmouth School Department - Portsmouth, New Hampshire -- Grant Type: Implementation; \$100,000

Seabrook School District - Hampton, New Hampshire -- Grant Type: Planning; \$42,376

Brentwood Union Free School District - Brentwood, New York -- Grant Type: Planning; \$44,361

Foodlink, Inc. - Rochester, New York -- Grant Type: Support Service; \$100,000

The New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets - Albany, New York -- Grant Type: Support Service; \$99,793

Niagara Falls City School District - Niagara Falls, New York -- Grant Type: Planning; \$44,028

Poughkeepsie Farm Project - Poughkeepsie, New York -- Grant Type: Support Service; \$99,500

Wayne-Finger Lakes Board of Cooperative Educational Services - Newark, New York -- Grant Type: Planning; \$22,544

The Burlington School Food Project - Burlington, Vermont -- Grant Type: Implementation; \$100,000

Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets - Montpelier, Vermont -- Grant Type: Training -- State; \$25,000

The latest round of USDA Farm to School Grants brings investment since the program's inception in fiscal year 2013 to \$19.9 million. Projects have been funded in all 50 states, DC, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. A report released earlier this year found that a vast majority of grantees use the USDA Farm to School Grant funds to strengthen or develop new partnerships, suggesting the potential for widespread collaboration between eligible schools, nongovernmental and community-based organizations, agricultural producer groups, and other community partners. This is reinforced by a recent USDA Farm to School Census finding that 39 percent of participating school districts saw greater community support as a result of their Farm to School Program.

Celebrating School Breakfast

Why the School Breakfast Program?

The Northeast Regional Office participated in a number of events to help promote expanding the availability, access and participation in the School Breakfast Program.

“We’re very pleased to be a part of these events as a principle goal of the School Breakfast Program is to ensure that all school children have access to a nutritious breakfast to promote learning readiness and healthy eating,” said Kurt Messner, acting regional administrator for the Food and Nutrition Service Northeast Regional Office.

“Significant progress has been made to expand participation in the School Breakfast Program, however, there is still opportunity for growth,” said Messner.



Patriots’ McCourty encourages students to Fuel Up with breakfast

The Trahan Elementary School in Tewksbury, Massachusetts hosted a special event with New England Patriots Defensive Back Devin McCourty on hand to celebrate a \$1,725 grant the school received to start a Breakfast-in-the-Classroom program. McCourty encouraged the 3rd and 4th graders to fuel up with a nutritious breakfast and be active for at least 60 minutes each day. Fuel Up to Play 60 is the nation’s largest in-school wellness program created by the National Dairy Council and the National Football League in collaboration with the USDA. (Photos by Cynthia Tackett)



Massachusetts rolls out red carpet for school breakfast

Inside Medford High School’s auditorium, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s Child Nutrition Outreach Program at Project Bread along with federal, state and local officials commended their collective efforts for increasing participation in the breakfast program.

The state’s outreach team showcased its newest promotional school breakfast video created with the help of Medford High School students. (Photo by Mark Abueg)

Acton in action for school breakfast

Officials from the Food and Nutrition Service Northeast Regional Office and the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education visited the Acton-Boxborough Regional High School during National School Breakfast Week.

“National School Breakfast Week celebrates the fact that a well-balanced breakfast offers an important nutritional foundation and charts the course for a healthier next generation,” said Kurt Messner, acting regional administrator for the Northeast Region. “This high school is a shining example of how breakfast programs operate throughout our region.” (Photo by Mark Abueg)



“I’m very proud of the work the food service team accomplished to put on a very successful breakfast program. But I’m even more proud of all the great tasting and nutritious meals we are able to provide the students.” -- Kirsten Nelson, food service director for Acton Public Schools & Acton-Boxborough Regional Schools

Celebrating School Breakfast



Cranston students grab for the chance at school breakfast

The seventh and eighth graders of the Hugh B. Bain Middle School in Cranston, Rhode Island learned about the benefits of breakfast from city leaders, the New England Dairy & Food Council, football celebrity Jermaine Wiggins, a former New England Patriots player, and representatives from the USDA Food and Nutrition Service.

According to school officials, only 110 of the 400 students at the Bain Middle School eat school breakfast. It is a goal of the school to increase that number to 360 students.

Bain Middle School received funding from the New England Dairy & Food Council to start its new "Grab n Go" breakfast program and a community physical activity program. (Photo by Mark Abueg)

FNS administrator promotes breakfast at two Bay State schools



USDA Food and Nutrition Service Administrator Adurey Rowe visited the Elizabeth Pole School in Taunton, Mass., to meet with students and staff to observe the school's breakfast in the classroom program.

"This school's breakfast program truly should be seen as a best practice," Rowe said. "We need to showcase the school's efforts and success to incorporate breakfast in the classroom as a model for many others to follow." (Photo by Mark Abueg)



FNS Administrator Audrey Rowe joined in the New England Dairy & Food Council's Fuel Up To Play 60 event and helped celebrate the Fuel Greatness Campaign with students and staff from the Thomas Edison Middle School in Brighton, Mass.

"Good nutrition is as critical to a child's overall success as the curriculum that our schools teach every day," Rowe said. (Photo by Mark Abueg)



Connecticut students fuel up

Students at Washington Middle School in Meriden, Connecticut know starting their day with breakfast gives them fuel to help them succeed. New England Patriot safety Devon McCourty made a special appearance and told the students you can tell on game day who ate breakfast.

Meriden Public Schools received a grant from the American Association of School Administrators to increase participation using alternate strategies such as breakfast in the classroom. (Photo by Jane Francis)

Vermont Breakfast Roundtable

School Breakfast - the case for expansion in Vermont



New England Patriots Safety Duron Harmon (above left) and local school leaders gathered to celebrate the importance of school breakfast at the Mount Abraham Middle/High School in Bristol, Vermont. Following breakfast local, state and federal leaders participated in a roundtable discussion on solutions to improving access to and participation in school breakfast programs throughout Vermont. Moderated by Hunger Free Vermont, roundtable participants included representatives from the medical community, local food service directors, the New England Dairy & Food Council, a dairy farmer, state agency staff and representatives from USDA. Harmon spoke to the group about his life-long belief in the importance of breakfast. Also speaking were Jaycie Puttlitz, the Wellness Coordinator for the Winooski School District and her son Domenick (above right). (Photos by Cynthia Tackett)

A Breakfast Success Story: Winooski Middle/High School

By Jaycie Puttlitz

Our school district takes part in the Community Eligibility Provision, providing free breakfast and lunch to all students. In the Winooski Middle/High School, students have a choice to get breakfast before school starts, or use the “grab and go” station set up near their classrooms between the first and second class of the day. Students are given 10 minutes

to get through line and head back to class where they can eat.

The “grab and go” breakfast station was not a new idea to students this year, but with the CEP, our participation in school breakfast increased significantly. In the first few weeks, I noticed two things happening.

One was that the line was not moving smoothly as students were confused about what was a complete meal. Meal pattern requirements had also changed and the food service staff was trying to tell the students what they could

and could not purchase as a meal, but gave no information about the particular components of the meal. There just was no time. Sometimes the staff would just take something out of their hand and move them along without explaining why. Often, the line took so long some students were late for the next class.

The second thing I noticed was the students were leaving a lot of food behind on a table or in the hallways. Milk was the most often item left behind, followed closely by whole pieces of fruit. One day, I counted 25 milks left behind! To alleviate the leftover problem, I began putting out a “share basket.” Students quickly learned to put items they did not want in the basket. Then, I would put the items in a small fridge near my office. Students could go to the basket later in the day if they needed food.

The greater problem was still the congested, confused line. This required an education of the students. I worked with a nutrition student from the University of Vermont (UVM) and our food service staff to develop a basic nutrition lesson for the middle and high school students that emphasized the components of school breakfast. The UVM intern delivered this 20-minute lesson to every middle grade classroom and most of our high school students as well.

Immediate results--within a couple weeks--I noticed that students were able to figure out what they needed to get through line without having to backtrack and interrupt the flow. The second result happened over a couple months--fewer fruits and milks are left behind in the share basket. They are still taking them, but now they are consuming them.

I continue to support school breakfast by standing near the “grab and go” line to answer questions and bring the basket to and from the table. Students are through the line within 5-7 minutes and there is nothing left in the basket when I leave.

The remarks of Domenick Puttlitz, a student at Malletts Bay Elementary School in Colchester, Vermont

I go to school at Malletts Bay School Elementary, in Colchester. We have breakfast in the classroom after school begins. Some kids call it a snack, but the important thing is that kids can buy school breakfast if they want it, and eat it in the classroom. I always eat and get chocolate milk at that time.

This is a good time for me to eat breakfast because I don't always have time to do it in the morning at home. Sometimes, I wake up late and am in a hurry to get the bus. Or sometimes, I just don't feel really hungry after I first wake up. But if I don't eat, and I get hungry, I can't concentrate. Sometimes when I don't eat, I get a headache. So being able to eat later at school always helps me feel good and ready to learn.

It's also important to have an opportunity to eat after school begins because some kids can't get to school to eat breakfast before school starts. One time this winter there were some accidents on the road. My bus couldn't get past an accident until it was cleared. We were 35 minutes late to school. If our school didn't give us time to eat breakfast after the bell, we would have missed breakfast and been very hungry. Lunchtime is at 12:30pm, so we would have been hungry for a really long time.

If a school doesn't have breakfast in the classroom, kids that didn't eat at home wouldn't have good nutrition or be able to think or concentrate and feel good at school. A school that doesn't have breakfast in the classroom is a school that is not considering student health.

Thank you for your time, Domenick.

Team Up Training

Team Up For School Nutrition Success Training

The northeast states are better prepared to serve school meals thanks to the Food and Nutrition Service's Team Up for School Nutrition Success training. 88 school nutrition personnel from Connecticut, Maine, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island, and Vermont completed the two-day workshop in Concord, NH, where they utilized tailored technical assistance and peer-to-peer mentoring. As a result, these schools are better prepared to make their next meal more appealing to students. 18 food service directors from New York participated; 5 as mentors and 13 as participants.

"Networking with directors from across the Northeast was such a learning experience. I learned many new techniques and approaches to my particular concerns," said Ken Warner, Syracuse City School District.

Team Up For School Nutrition Success is customized for schools that attend based on their specific training and resource needs. It covers topics like menu planning, financial management, procurement, meal presentation and appeal, as well as youth engagement tactics and strategies to reduce plate waste. Northeast participants chose to focus on menu planning, meal presentation and financial management. Schools have the opportunity to learn from each other in order to make positive strides toward providing healthy school environments with financial stability and strong student participation.

FNS partnered with the National Food Service Management Institute (NFSMI) to conduct the original Team Up pilot in November 2014. The training was expanded nationwide in March.

"It was very encouraging to see that many other directors are experiencing the same struggles. I also realized that I am doing some good things and have some good ideas. People were interested in what I had to say,"

said Liza Zdenek, Food Service Director for West Islip School District.

NFSMI is conducting a 3, 6, and 12-month follow up with the school nutrition personnel to assess progress made and any needs for additional training.

Attendees at the pilot training requested additional forums where specific topic areas could be further discussed and best practices shared. As a result, FNS and NFSMI started conducting a monthly Team Up Thursday webinar series. These webinars are focusing on highly requested topics in the area of meal pattern implementation. The webinars are available to all school nutrition personnel and state agencies in order to broaden the reach of this training opportunity.

For more information about Team Up and to listen to previous webinars visit: <http://www.nfsmi.org/ResourceOverview.aspx?ID=527>.

What they said about the Team Up Training...

Team Up was valuable to me because...

"Over my years of working in this business and attending many training sessions, this was one of my top 10. The information was presented clearly, everyone was engaged in sharing. All that was presented was related, helpful and doable. Best Experience!"

-- Donna Walker, West Warwick Public Schools,
West Warwick, Rhode Island

Team Up was valuable to me because...

"I got to extend my network and learn new techniques as well as gain access to new tools to help me in my job."

-- Alisa Roman, Director of Nutrition, Lewiston Public Schools,
Lewiston, Maine

Team Up gave me ideas on how to address...

"My lack of breakfast in one of my districts. I have now set a goal to increase participation by 50 students in each school in that district."

-- Holli LaBarbera, Education Connection,
Litchfield, Connecticut

After attending Team Up I can now...

"Better plan on how to make changes that will positively effect my school meal programs."

-- Steven Learned, Food Service Manager, SAU7,
Colebrook, New Hampshire

HealthierUS School Awards

HealthierUS Schools by the numbers

Since the beginning of the HealthierUS School Challenge in 2004, awards have been given to schools in 50 states and the District of Columbia. There are currently 636 schools certified in the Northeast Region.

- Bronze - 560
- Silver - 57
- Gold - 10
- Gold of Distinction - 9

The U.S. Department of Agriculture commends these schools for the exemplary steps, leadership and team work employed to make changes to their schools' nutrition environment; improve the quality of the foods served; provide students with more nutritious, healthy choices; and, enhance their physical activity program.



John F. Ryan Elementary School celebrates bronze

The John F. Ryan Elementary School in Tewksbury, Massachusetts became the 136th school in Massachusetts to earn a bronze HealthierUS School Challenge award. (Photo by Cynthia Tackett)



Elias Brookings Museum Magnet Elementary School earns silver

Students and officials at the Elias Brookings Museum Magnet Elementary School in Springfield, Massachusetts display their silver banner. (Photo by Mark Abueg)



Swanton, Vermont starts school year with gold

The Swanton School in Swanton, Vermont celebrated the first day of school with a HealthierUS Gold Award presentation. (Photo by Cynthia Tackett)



HUSSC schools get moving

(Left) Students at the Kathleen E. Goodwin Elementary School in Old Saybrook, Connecticut demonstrate their Zumba skills during their HUSSC bronze award ceremony. (Photo by Mark Abueg)

(Right) The bronze award ceremony at the Mast Way School in Lee, New Hampshire had everyone up and moving to the music. The Oyster River School District also celebrated another bronze at the Marimet Elementary School in Madbury. (Photo by Cynthia Tackett)



Power Panther

Power Panther visits Bradley Schools in Rhode Island



To all the staff and students who visited with the Power Panther,

The Power Panther would like to say thanks! I enjoyed meeting you and hearing how much students knew about eating smart and playing hard. Some of the things Power Panther learned were...

- eating a watermelon is healthy but eating 12 watermelons is not
- lots of students love carrots, apples, yogurt, and bananas
- some students wish cake was a healthy choice
- many students like to play sports and swim and take a walk for good exercise
- lots of students liked Power Panther, and some students loved Power Panther

I can't wait to tell my friends at the USDA (where I live) about my visits to the Bradley Schools. Thanks again for letting me visit.



Remember to Eat Smart Play Hard!
Your friend,
Power Panther

"The Power Panther is very relatable to the children as they often have characters or superheroes that they look up to in their own lives. To have the Power Panther at an event really engages the children and makes the event more interactive. I find that when the Power Panther is present, the children seem more interested in the matter at hand. I would recommend the Power Panther to anyone looking to hold an event and engage our young ones!"

*Chris Anna Rogers
Child Nutrition Outreach
Coordinator
Project Bread*



El Mundo Latino Family Festival

The Power Panther mingled with festival goers at the El Mundo Latino Family Festival at Fenway Park in Boston. The festival, the largest Latino event in New England, transforms Fenway Park into a one-day extravaganza of activities, information and music. More than 10,000 persons participated in this year's festival. (Photo by Eddie Ortega)

Cops N Kids summer kickoff

The Power Panther joined the Cops n Kids Program summer meals kickoff in Southbridge, Massachusetts. Initiated 20 years ago as a means to reduce juvenile delinquency and build stronger relationships with Southbridge's youth, the program has seen juvenile delinquency rate drop by more than 85% in the past seven years. For the past few years the efforts have been focused during the summer months when statistics show juvenile delinquencies rise when youth are left unsupervised. A partnership with Project Bread adds the Summer Food Service Program. (Photo by Cynthia Tackett)



Summer Food Service Program Celebrations



Manchester, New Hampshire

Janeen Sorrentino and her son create a healthy snack during the first ever Summer Food Service Program kick-off event at the Boys & Girls Club. (Photo by Mark Abueg)



Brattleboro, Vermont

A young participant takes advantage of lunch during a summer meals kickoff event in Brattleboro, Vermont. (Photo by Mark Abueg)



Concord, New Hampshire

USDA Deputy Secretary Krysta Harden visited a summer breakfast site. The site, located at a low-income apartment complex, is one of 37 sites operated by the Belknap-Merrimack Community Action Program. (Photo by Cynthia Tackett)



Roxbury, Massachusetts

Families and children of the Bromley Heath Housing Development celebrated the beginning of summer at the Anna M. Cole Community Center. Former New England Patriot Jermaine Wiggins, Pat the Patriot and the Power Panther joined the celebration. The event was sponsored by Fuel-Up to Play 60 and Project Bread. (Photo by Eddie Ortega)

Summer Food Service Program Celebrations



Providence, Rhode Island

This young participant enjoyed the launch of the Summer Food Service Program. Providence operated more than 30 sites across the city.

(Photo by Jane Francis)



Ware, Massachusetts - The Summer Food Rocks Tour

U.S. Congressman Jim McGovern (I) embarked on his second annual Summer Food Rocks Tour to highlight the Summer Food Service Program and how it helps low-income students in Massachusetts. Joining the tour this year were USDA Under Secretary for Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services Kevin Concannon (2nd from left) and USDA Rural Development Massachusetts State Director Scott Soares (3rd from left).

The tour visited summer sites in Ware, Orange, Leominster and Worcester.

(Photo by Cynthia Tackett)



Waterbury, Vermont

Northeast Acting Regional Administrator Kurt Messner visited the Thatcher Brook Primary School summer meals program with Katherine Ash, Field Representative for the Office of U.S. Senator Patrick Leahy. Approximately 100 children are provided breakfast, snacks and lunch at the site. *(Photo by Eddie Ortega)*



Revere, Massachusetts

Staff at the Ciarlone Park summer program stand ready to serve lunch. The site served as the venue to present the Governor's Summer Meals Proclamation. *(Photo by Eddie Ortega)*

Summer Food Service Program Celebrations



U.S. Senator Gillibrand leads fight against weakening school nutrition standards

Standing at the Walter Crowley Intermediate School in Queens, New York, U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand visited with children and joined local elected officials and advocates to fight against efforts to weaken school nutrition standards, as well as push to ensure students get fresh fruit and vegetables at school. She also announced bipartisan legislation to provide more children with nutritious meals throughout the summer. (Photo by Cynthia Tackett)



Hartford, Connecticut

Connecticut Lieutenant Governor Nancy Wyman joined End Hunger Connecticut!, the USDA, HUD and other key partners in celebrating a successful partnership which led to the opening of multifamily developments at summer meal sites in Connecticut. (Photo by Cynthia Tackett)



WIC Loving Support Awards



Vermont leads the nation in Gold Premiere Loving Support Awards

Northeast Acting Regional Administrator Kurt Messner presented five Vermont local agencies with awards of excellence for efforts to increase breastfeeding. Only five local agencies across the nation qualified for the Gold Premiere award; four of which were in Vermont. Receiving Gold Premiere awards were the Bennington District Office, Middlebury District Office, Rutland District Office and the Burlington District Office. Receiving Gold was the St. Albans District Office. (Photo by Cynthia Tackett)

WIC Loving Support Awards

The Food and Nutrition Service established the Loving Support Awards Program to recognize local WIC agencies that have provided exemplary breastfeeding promotion and support activities to increase breastfeeding initiation and duration rates among WIC participants.

A total of 55 local WIC agencies across the nation qualified for a Loving Support Award. Fifty agencies were selected for a Gold award and only five agencies were selected for a Gold Premiere award, four of which are in Vermont.

The Northeast Region led the country with a total of 18 awards.

Massachusetts (5 Gold) - Harbor Health Services/Dorchester South WIC, Health Imperative Plymouth WIC Program, Northern Essex WIC/CAI, Outer Cape WIC Program and BAMSI-Brockton WIC.

New York (8 Gold; most in nation) - Schoharie County Community Action Program, Brownsville Community Development Corporation, Morrisania Diagnostic and Treatment Center, Delaware Opportunity Inc., CEO-WIC, Brooklyn Hospital Center WIC Program, Wychoff Heights Medical Center, and Jamaica Hospital Medical Center.

Vermont (5 - 1 Gold, 4 Gold Premiere; highest number in nation) - Bennington District Office, Middlebury District Office, Rutland District Office and Burlington District Office and gold - St. Albans District Office.



New York Capital Region

The Schoharie County Community Action Program, Delaware Opportunity, Inc., and the CEO-WIC Program were recognized with their gold awards during the Capital District WIC Breastfeeding Coordinator and Peer Counselor Annual Conference.



New York City

Brownsville Community Development Corporation, Morrisania Diagnostic and Treatment Center, Brooklyn Hospital Center WIC Program, Wyckoff Heights Medical Center, and Jamaica Hospital Medical Center were recognized with their gold awards.

Around the Region

Go local - promoting healthy habits and boosting local communities

The following guest blog highlights Providence, Rhode Island school district's exemplary commitment to purchase and source local food into the school meal programs. Going local economically supports RI farms and small businesses and provides opportunities for students to consume healthy, fresh foods and learn how their food is grown and promote healthy food choices.

By Providence Public Schools, Rhode Island

Providence Public School District (PPSD) is the largest school district in Rhode Island, serving 24,000 students. In the heart of New England, PPSD has had historical ties to locally grown agriculture and food for centuries. For the past few years, PPSD requires that RI-grown products compose at least 15% of all food purchases annually, helping to economically support the RI food system with local dollars, while promoting the environmental benefits of local land stewardship.

As part of an innovative "Adopt a Farm" collaboration with Pezza Farm in Johnston, R.I, Sodexo Providence, the district's food service management company, leases farmland specifically for PPSD school food production. The past four years, PPSD acreage on Pezza Farms has grown from 15 acres to more than 25 acres, producing a variety of vegetables used throughout the District's school food service.

The management company incorporates locally sourced food into school meals throughout the day. For school breakfast, muffins made by a local bakery not only meet the federal nutrition guidelines but also meet the more stringent Rhode Island Nutrition Requirements (RINR). The muffins are a popular breakfast item with students and often contain locally grown zucchini and carrots as primary ingredients. Steady orders for these muffins, and the bakery's locally produced breakfast bars, have helped revitalize the company and both breakfast items are now found in several other RI school districts statewide.

PPSD school lunch also incorporates local food into the school day. Every September, Providence schools celebrate the beginning of the school year and the



Local bakery owner Susan Murray with freshly baked local muffins for school breakfast in Providence schools. (Photo courtesy Providence Public Schools)

New England harvest season with "All RI Day". The students receive locally produced Catanzaro's pasta sauce, local Venda Ravioli pasta and several locally grown vegetables, including fresh spinach, kale, tomatoes, peppers and lettuce. In October, Providence schools celebrate Farm to School Month and National Kale Day. This past October, a kale and quinoa salad and a warm kale and quinoa vegetable side, based on a kale recipe provided by PPSD's Superintendent Christopher Maher, a kale hero, was featured.



"Insufficient access to healthy food can have serious implications for a child's physical and mental health, as well as academic achievement," says Superintendent Maher. "Providence Public Schools are committed to increasing opportunities for local, healthy food in our school meals, which helps our students learn about how their food is grown and how to make healthy food choices."

PPSD is lucky to have many committed partners in their efforts to use more locally sourced food products. The University of RI (URI) SNAP-Ed Program regularly runs educational programming and taste tests in PPSD elementary schools for menu items that contain locally grown produce. URI SNAP-Ed and Farm Fresh RI also help to promote local offerings in school salad bars and help educate food service employees on the benefits of healthy eating during annual employee trainings and meetings.

A local produce distributor, Roch's Fresh Foods in East Greenwich, R.I, has been an instrumental partner in ensuring that the district receives produce from a variety of local RI farms. Roch's also delivers the fresh fruit and vegetable snacks as part of the national FFV Program, giving Providence elementary students even more opportunities to consume healthy, fresh and locally grown foods.

Below: Providence students visit Pezza Farm where more than 25 acres have been planted for use in the school meals program. (Photo courtesy Providence Public Schools)

Around the Region



A farmers' market visit

Kevin Concannon, USDA Under Secretary for Food, Nutrition and Consumer Services picks out some herbs at the Exeter, New Hampshire Farmers' Market. He visited New Hampshire and Maine to learn more of how each state is increasing food security and reducing hunger. (Photo by Mark Abueg)



Wellness in the Schools (WITS) tomato lab

Chef Luba Peys helps students at Dos Puentes/PS132 grate garlic for their Tomato Lab (seasonal, culinary education courses).

Changing the food and fitness culture in a school can be an uphill battle, but our Chefs and Coaches are committed to creating healthier environments so that our students can learn and grow. Recently, Wellness in the Schools (WITS) Chef Luba was recognized by a senior school food staff member for the change she has helped to lead in her school. We're thrilled to share her uplifting message with all of you:

"I recently got to sit down with my school food manager and have a heart to heart. She told me today that the PB&J sandwich selection (*one of the substitute meals NYC schools provide to students who do not wish to take the day's hot lunch*) had dropped by more than 40 kids each day. This means the vast majority of the kids are eating the hot food! The manager told me she hopes our Alternative Menu (a less-processed, more plant-based menu developed by WITS and the NYC Department of Education) continues for years to come because she really sees the difference and the need. She wants me to continue doing as many tastings as possible because she sees the positive results and success. She told me both of the principals are very happy with the changes and that they too see a difference in the kids' attitude toward the menu. At the end of our conversation, she thanked me for helping out and making a difference in the kids' lives. I was so heartened to hear such beautiful words. I'm so happy that she shared with me today and made me feel wanted and useful."

*Submitted by Reana Kovalcik
Development Coordinator, Wellness in the Schools
New York City*



Foodlink - abundance shared

Foodlink, Inc., of Rochester, New York played host to USDA Under Secretary Kevin Concannon and Acting Northeast Regional Administrator Kurt Messer for a day long tour of food access programs throughout the city. Foodlink is a regional food hub and Feeding America food bank serving 10 New York counties. Stops included a tour of the Foodlink Distribution Center; the Rochester Public Market where a "Cooking Matters Pop-up" class was also taking place; the Lexington Avenue Community Farm; a Curbside Market stop and a summer food service program site. (Photo by Cynthia Tackett)

Around the Region



Lexington Avenue Community Farm

Rochester, New York - Julia Tedesco, Co-Executive Director of Foodlink and Northeast Acting Regional Administrator Kurt Messner tour the hoophouse. This urban farm serves 36 households from the Nepalese refugee community in Rochester. The farm also grows crops for the Curbside Market, a farm stand on wheels, and incubates plants for the Garden Project, which links community gardens to the emergency food network. *(Photo by Cynthia Tackett)*



Rochester Public Market

Rochester, New York - USDA Under Secretary Kevin Concannon (l) and Acting Northeast Regional Administrator Kurt Messner (r) marvel at the quality and variety of produce available. *(Photo by Cynthia Tackett)*



Regional WIC Meeting

Portsmouth, New Hampshire - The annual WIC Regional Meeting provided an opportunity for Northeast Regional Office and state WIC staff and partners to discuss a myriad of topics. Special national office guest Julie Brewer, Chief of the Policy Branch for Supplemental Food Programs, provided a national update and had the opportunity to hear regional concerns. *(Photo by Cynthia Tackett)*

Around the Region



Breastfeeding in Rhode Island

Eddie Ortega
NERO FNS Public Affairs

“Should I breastfeed?” is not a question some Providence, Rhode Island women will have to face alone. Women & Infants Hospital is helping expectant and new mothers by providing guidance and promotion of newborn nutrition through its lactation consultant and breastfeeding education program.

Serving as a lead in this integral effort is Mary Catherine Curran, an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant (IBCLC), who works at Women & Infants Hospital and Hasbro Children’s Hospital.

Curran was inspired to begin the career path 20 years ago during her “Formula versus

Breastfeeding” thesis composition – since then, she has never looked back.

“I realized my lifelong passion of becoming a lactation consultant as I researched and completed my thesis,” said Curran. “I knew my work in this field would make an impact on families of many diverse backgrounds in the community.”

As a lactation consultant, Curran specializes in the clinical management of breastfeeding. She is a licensed nutritionist and a University of New Hampshire graduate.

Curran began her career in Maine following her graduation. After moving to several states she returned to her native Rhode Island, where she works in the Women, Infant and Children (WIC) Program.

“When I got my first job in the WIC clinic in Maine, I knew I would continue to work with this most valuable program,” said Curran. “Today I know I made the right career choice.”

Daily, Curran spends around four hours teaching correct breastfeeding techniques and helping mothers whose babies have difficulty gaining weight. She also assists mothers experiencing breastfeeding complications, such as latching difficulties, low breast milk production and nursing pain.

Curran also provides breastfeeding resources to mothers wishing to enter the workforce, or continue their education to include teaching mothers the ins and outs of breast pumps and proper breast milk storage.

“We are always able to address the breastfeeding education and resources needs of our mothers,” said Curran. “Becoming a mom is such a life changing experience, and we are here to help.”

Hasbro Children’s Hospital also provides multidisciplinary primary care to mothers less than 17 years of age and their newborns through the Teen Tot Program. Curran provides breastfeeding support to these young moms when needed.

“Long term breastfeeding success in these teen moms has shown to be beneficial for both the mother and child,” said Curran. “I absolutely love what I do.”



The Cafeteria Chronicles - new publication released

The Northeast Regional Office of the USDA Food and Nutrition Service just released a new publication - The Cafeteria Chronicles.

The Cafeteria Chronicles aims to highlight school food directors and school personnel throughout the Northeast Region who are leading the lunch line. The individuals profiled share a commitment to serving the healthiest school meals possible; a commitment to their staff; a commitment to their students and commitment to their community.

If you would like to receive a copy, contact us at pa-nero@fns.usda.gov

People News



Matthew Henschel received the Fresh New Hire Award at the 2015 Excellence in Government Awards at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum. Matt is pictured with Bonnie Brathwait, Northeast Region SNAP Division Director (l) and Mary Ann Marshall Valair, Branch Chief, SNAP Program Operations (r). (Photo by Mark Abueg)

Matthew Henschel - Fresh New Hire at 2015 Excellence in Government Awards

Matthew Henschel, SNAP Program Specialist in the Northeast Regional Office was selected as the Fresh New Hire at the 2015 Excellence in Government Awards held at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum.

The Greater Boston Federal Executive Board's Excellence in Government Awards are celebrated annually and honor Federal employees who go above and beyond the call of duty and have achieved extraordinary success. The Fresh New Hire Award is presented to a Federal employee who has been employed the Federal Government for five years or less and has made a significant contribution to the furtherance of a successful operation in their Federal workplace.

Henschel is an outstanding representative of FNS and is the face of NERO's SNAP Division according to his supervisor, Mary Ann Marshall Valair. "Since joining us in August 2012, Matt quickly distinguished himself as the 'go to' person on the Policy Team," Valair said. "His knowledge of SNAP policy and State program operations has earned him the recognition of his peers across the country, as well as staff at all levels at the National Office as a State Program operations subject matter expert. He has worked tirelessly to assist states with delicate and difficult implementation issues. He doesn't hesitate to jump in and assist on any project and willingly takes on additional assignments and time-sensitive tasks."

A former Peace Corp volunteer and director with the Red Cross, Henschel always seeks out opportunities to help others and opportunities to learn. "Matt lives the life of a true public servant and we're proud of his well-deserved recognition," said Valair.

Retirement news

The FNS Northeast Regional Office wishes the best in retirement to Margaret Murphy and Lisa Richards.

Margaret Murphy - Murphy retired from the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Public Health after 21 years of service. For the past eight years, she has been the Administrator for the Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Section, which includes the Diabetes Program, Obesity Prevention Program, WIC, Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program, Commodity Supplemental Food Program and Breastfeeding Peer Counselor Program.

Lisa Richards, MS, RD - Richards retired on October 30, 2015 from the New Hampshire WIC Program after 31 years of service. She was the Nutrition Services Manager of the Nutrition Services Section of the New Hampshire Division of Public Health Services, Department of Health and Human

Services. She worked at a local WIC agency for a short time before coming to NH WIC in 1984. Ms Richards shared her top ten favorite memories at WIC:



1. September 14, 1984, the day my status at the State was changed from a temporary Nutrition Coordinator to a permanent position, because the person

who was out on maternity leave decided NOT to come back...and thus began my WIC employment!

2. 1986 when we started the WICLINC computer system and we began printing vouchers and mailing them in huge batches to local agencies.

3. The day my daughter was born in January, 1991, and I started my breastfeeding journey with everything I had learned at WIC!

4. Receiving notice in 2006 that New Hampshire was selected for a WIC Special Projects Grant to do FitWIC.

5. September 2009 when we added new and healthy foods to the WIC food package -- that was very exciting to finally happen!

6. July 2011 when we released the first NH State WIC and CSFP Policy and Procedure Manual, thanks to Lissa and Fran!

7. June 2014 when I received an award from the NH Breastfeeding Task Force for promotion, protection, and support of breastfeeding, presented by my old friend Paula Oliveira.

8. September 29, 2014, when we all celebrated 40 years of WIC services in New Hampshire, feeding and nourishing so many moms and children.

9. Invitations to speak at the UNH Community Nutrition course and being able to promote the WIC Program to future nutritionists and dietitians!

10. Traveling to WIC clinics and offices from Colebrook down to Nashua and always being warmly greeted by WIC staff even though we were usually there to do the dreaded clinic reviews and management evaluations.

Wrapping up

Farm to School continued from page 1

expanding market opportunities for family farmers and ranchers in their communities.

The Farm to School Census is a nationally representative survey of school districts. Nationwide, more than 42,000 schools have farm to school programs, which operate in conjunction with the National School Lunch Program and other school meal programs. Seventy-five percent of respondents with farm to school programs reported at least one of the following positive benefits as a result of participating in farm to school:

- Reduced plate waste (17 percent);
- Improved acceptance of the healthier school meals (28 percent);
- Increased participation in school meals programs (17 percent);
- Lower school meal program costs (21 percent); and
- Increased support from parents and community members for the healthier school meals (39 percent).

In addition to serving local food, farm to school programs often include food, agriculture, and nutrition education that emphasizes hands-on experiential activities, such as school gardens, field trips to local farms, and cooking classes.

Recent studies published in *Childhood Obesity and Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior* reiterate the Farm to School Census findings, indicating that strong farm to school programs can positively impact consumption of fruits and vegetables, leading to reductions in plate waste.

Farm to school programs present economic opportunities for farmers and ranchers as well. Updated Farm to School Census data show that the value of local food purchases by schools increased by 55 percent in just two years, from \$385.8 million in school year 2011-2012 to \$598.4 million in school year 2013-2014. Nearly half (47 percent) of respondents indicated they plan to increase local food purchases in the coming years.

Census results can be accessed online at farmtoschoolcensus.fns.usda.gov. Final Farm to School Census results will be released in early 2016.

Challenge continued from page 1

Through March 1, 2016, any U.S. citizen or organization can submit prototypes of an electronic school meal application to the E.A.T. School Lunch UX Challenge. The submissions will be used to develop a model electronic application, which states and school districts can adapt for their own use, or borrow its design elements and source code to improve existing electronic applications. A panel of judges will select the winning submissions, which will be awarded a total of \$50,000 in cash prizes.

This competition is held under the authority of the America COMPETES Act, which encourages government agencies to use prize challenges to spur innovation, solve tough problems, and advance their core missions. USDA and other government agencies have engaged and benefited from prize challenges, such as the Tall Wood Building project.

In total, approximately 100,000 schools and institutions serve more than 30 million children each day through the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and 13 million children through the School Breakfast Program (SBP). Many of these children qualify to receive free or reduced price meals according to income-based eligibility.

While USDA promotes the use of direct certification – using pre-existing data from SNAP and other assistance programs to certify students for free meals – when possible, there are still many scenarios where it is necessary for families to submit an application. Using an electronic application that provides prompts and feedback to the user during the application process could reduce reporting and calculation errors.

Progress continued from page 1

"Thanks to the improvements we have made in school nutrition, our nation's children show up each day to healthier school environments, where they can easily get the nutrients they need for academic success and healthier futures," said Vilsack.

More than 15 million American children live in food-insecure households, without consistent access to sufficient food. In high-poverty schools, where a large percentage of students are in households receiving certain types of means-tested assistance, the Community Eligibility Provision allows schools to provide free meals to all students through a cost sharing model where part of the cost is covered by the federal government and the rest is picked up by the school. To date, more than 17,000 schools in high-poverty areas are offering nutritious meals to about 8 million students at no direct cost to the students through this provision.

Across the country, schools participating in CEP are making great strides in the fight against childhood hunger. They're also experiencing a number of other positive effects, such as significantly lower erroneous payments, decreased administrative burden for schools and parents, and increased participation in meal programs. This is, in part, because CEP works well with alternative breakfast models -- such as breakfast in the classroom, grab-n-go and second chance breakfasts -- that incorporate breakfast into the school day. The meals they serve are healthier than ever; nationwide, 97 percent of schools are now meeting the updated nutrition standards, and, as a result, students are trying new foods and eating more fruits and vegetables.



(Photo by Jane Francis)

The Last Word



A message from Kurt Messner Acting Northeast Regional Administrator

This issue of *At the Table* provides us an opportunity to look back and highlight some of the remarkable accomplishments we've made working with our partners to ensure access to our nutrition assistance programs.

School Breakfast

Increasing access to and participation in School Breakfast continues to be a focus for us. We participated in several school breakfast celebrations with our partners the New England Dairy and Food Council and Fuel Up to Play 60. Our national administrator, Audrey Rowe, came away impressed by her visit to the Elizabeth Pole School in Taunton, Massachusetts and its breakfast in the classroom efforts. And who could sum up the importance of school breakfast better than Vermont student Domenick Puttlitz?

Summer Food Service Program

The Northeast Region developed and piloted a model to institutionalize best practices and expand/enhance partnerships that result in the ongoing expansion of the summer program and retention of effort from year to year. Thank you to Rhode Island, Connecticut, New Hampshire and Maine for their leadership in this process.

Across the Region, every state increased the number of summer sponsors (+94 = 15% growth) and sites (+986 = 20.5% growth). Additionally, our staff had the opportunity to participate in nearly 50 summer site events.

HealthierUS School Awards

I enjoy my visits to present these awards. The energy and enthusiasm at these schools is contagious. Thanks to a lot of hard work, there are currently 693 schools certified in the Northeast Region.

Community Eligibility Provision

The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act made possible the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP). This was a strong step to offering breakfast and lunches to all students at no cost. Through training and outreach efforts of regional, state and local partners, CEP election expanded in SY2015-16 to include all seven states in the Northeast Region. As of September 1, 2015 the number of schools participating in CEP in the Northeast increased by 53% over the prior year. This represents 2,150 schools providing free meals to 873,000 students each day - a 68% increase. We continue to work with our partners to promote the ongoing regional expansion of CEP.

WIC Loving Support Awards

The Northeast Region led the nation with a total of 18 awards - four Gold Premiere and 14 Gold. Nationally, there were only five Gold Premiere awards and Vermont earned four of them. Massachusetts received five

gold awards; New York received eight - the most in the nation; and Vermont received one gold award.

SNAP Employment and Training

I had the opportunity to represent the USDA in Vermont to highlight its SNAP Employment and Training pilot project award that will help Vermont identify cost-effective strategies to connect even more SNAP participants to gainful employment.

USDA Grants

A large number of our partners received USDA grants to improve SNAP processing & technology; to improve SNAP operations at farmers' markets; and to connect child nutrition programs with local farmers through the Farm to School Program. We look forward to seeing the outcome of these projects.

In Summary

The continued dedication and efforts of our staff and partners enabled us to be successful with so many other projects and initiatives.

I am fortunate, as the acting regional administrator, to have many opportunities to visit schools, WIC clinics, summer feeding sites, and local agencies and I can tell you that each time I walk away impressed.

I know all that great work will continue in 2016. We won't know all the challenges that we may face in 2016, but I'm confident that together we will meet those challenges.

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At the Table is produced for our partners throughout the Northeast Region. If someone you know has an interest in our programs, we would be happy to add them to our distribution list. Contact us at pa-nero@fns.usda.gov or call 617.565.6418

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