



SEED CHANGE

GROWING FARM TO SCHOOL STATE BY STATE

Keep Seed Change Growing

Through Seed Change, the National Farm to School Network works with partners to align and elevate our organizational goals and together envision a unique initiative to grow and strengthen farm to school for the long term.

If you or your organization would like to become a partner in expanding Seed Change, contact seedchange@farmtoschool.org.



**NATIONAL
FARM to SCHOOL
NETWORK**

GROWING STRONGER TOGETHER

The National Farm to School Network is an information, advocacy and networking hub for communities working to bring local food sourcing and food and agriculture education into school systems and early care and education settings. Learn more at farmtoschool.org

We're bringing a wave of Seed Change to states and communities poised for significant farm to school growth. Working at both the state and grassroots levels, Seed Change brings local food into schools, uses school gardens and food-based activities to enhance the quality of the educational experience, and enables lasting changes to support these strategies. Together with local partners, Seed Change is nurturing the next generation of informed food consumers.

What Is Seed Change?

With Seed Change, the National Farm to School Network, in collaboration with state and community partners, is investing in local farm to school activities and in the development and coordination of statewide networks for long-term sustainability. While farm to school has planted roots in communities across the country over the last decade, many states still lack the infrastructure and human capital needed to implement farm to school



programming on a broad scale. Seed Change provides the direct funding, program strategies and proactive technical assistance needed to significantly increase the number of students, farmers and communities benefitting from farm to school activities.

Program Strategies

Seed Change is an opportunity to align your organizational priorities with the benefits of farm to school.

Launched in 2015 in four states, Seed Change program strategies have included:

- Competitive mini grants to fund projects on the ground
- In-person training, technical assistance and online learning communities
- Statewide network building and coordination led by community partners
- Outreach to increase community participation and stakeholder engagement
- Events to bring diverse stakeholders together and to facilitate peer networking
- Education and awareness building about the benefits of farm to school
- Information resource development catering to state and community-specific needs

Seed Change In The Future

The National Farm to School Network seeks collaborative funding partners to help expand, strengthen and enhance proven Seed Change program strategies and to support the development of new and innovative approaches to farm to school at the state and community levels.

Program Outcomes: A Triple Win

Through its programs strategies, Seed Change increases opportunities to expand the benefits of farm to school:

KIDS WIN

Increased school gardens and food-based activities contribute to healthy eating behaviors and improve the quality of the educational environment.

FARMERS WIN

Increased local food procurement strategies create additional market opportunities for producers and stimulate the local economy.

COMMUNITIES WIN

Students take what they learn home to their families, and farm to school engages everyone from teachers and administrators to parents and community members, providing opportunities to catalyze family and community engagement and revitalization.

Seed Change In Action

Training and Technical Assistance Through Peer Learning

“Seed Change has helped us, as technical assistance providers, strengthen relationships with schools statewide. But even more exciting is the peer networking emerging from the demonstration site trainings between the schools themselves. The inspirational value of schools sharing ideas, successes and challenges with their peers has been a tangible, positive outcome in our state.”

- Katie Mularz, Seed Change Louisiana, NFSN Louisiana State Lead



Robust training and technical assistance provided through a peer-learning model is key to short and long term success and sustainability. We observe greater buy-in from school communities when they network with their peers and build relationships that extend beyond grant funding, becoming an essential building block of program sustainability.

Funding Schools Through Mini Grants

“Our administration has suddenly taken an interest in funding a greenhouse through district money whereas this had been previously understood to be out of reach. The spark of interest has caught the attention of parents, [the] business community and staff. We hope to further grow awareness and reach out to our legislators.”

- Seed Change Kentucky Mini Grantee

Competitive mini grants act as a catalyst to bring together students, teachers, families, farmers and policymakers to change school and community food systems. This model empowers schools and communities to start or expand their own initiatives, build partnerships and leverage additional funding, paving the way toward institutionalization and sustainability for successful programs.

Ninety-five percent of the 2015-2016 Seed Change mini grant projects were engaged in garden or on-site food production and associated educational activities.

“Our school garden has made a big impact on many students and their families. We have students that have encouraged their parents to give them gardening opportunities at home and now have raised bed gardens. I had a first grader write a letter asking for a garden for his birthday.”

- Seed Change Kentucky Mini Grantee

State and Regional Collaboration and Network Development

“We are focusing on establishing and growing the Mississippi Farm to School Network, a diverse community of farm to school advocates, experts and stakeholders. Through Seed Change, we have grown from 92 members to 310 in less than a year. With additional strategic guidance from a state level Advisory Board, we are connecting the dots between communities, integrating efforts and building a statewide movement to grow and sustain farm to school into the future.”

- Sunny Young Baker, Seed Change Mississippi, NFSN Mississippi State Co-Lead

Building inclusive farm to school networks connects people and organizations – both state and community partners – in building and maintaining strong coordinating efforts. School districts, farmers and an array of partners working in agriculture, education, early childhood, public health and environmental quality at nonprofits and state agencies join forces to address barriers in order to accelerate and institutionalize farm to school.