



Farm to School Routes

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POLICY

NEW Healthy Farms, Healthy Schools Bill

Pennsylvania's New Healthy Farms, Healthy Schools Bill

Pennsylvania passed the new Healthy Farms, Healthy Schools Bill (SB1209) in 2006. This exciting initiative is modeled after the Kindergarten Initiative program piloted by The Food Trust in southeastern Pennsylvania.

What is the Healthy Farms, Healthy Schools Bill?

Administered by the PA Dept of Agriculture, the purpose of the Bill is to educate kindergartners and their families about the importance of choosing healthy, fresh foods and increase awareness of Pennsylvania agriculture. Further, the law will help Pennsylvania farmers gain access to new markets within the Commonwealth. The Bill has been funded at \$500,000 in the 2007-2008 Pennsylvania state budget.

Components of the program include nutrition education in the classroom, locally-grown healthy snacks, family and community participation, and visits to local farms. PA farmers will benefit from the program's emphasis on locally-grown produce, as the Act provides new opportunities for farms to partner with neighboring schools to provide PA-grown fruit and vegetable snacks to students on a regular basis.

How does the Healthy Farms, Healthy Schools grant program work?

Any Pennsylvania school district, charter school or private school with a kindergarten program is eligible to apply for up to \$15,000 annually, per school. Grant amounts are limited to 75% of the amount necessary to develop the program. The required matching ratio is 3:1 and in-kind support may be used to match the amount granted. Funds may be used for administrative costs of executing the program, including contracting with one or more entities.

For what types of programs can Healthy Farms, Healthy Schools funds be used?

Funds can be used for implementing programs that:

- Provide nutritional and agricultural education, including the integration of such information into regular classroom subjects
- Focus on locally grown foods provided by Pennsylvania farms
- Train teachers and other educational staff on nutrition and agricultural education
- Include parents, caregivers and community groups in educational activities
- Offer field trips to Pennsylvania farms or other direct agricultural educational experiences that teach children about sources of food and Pennsylvania agriculture.

Please note: The Healthy Farms, Healthy Schools application deadline for the 2007-2008 school year was October 5, 2007.