



**FARM^{to}
SCHOOL**

What's Growing On... Rhode Island Farm to School

What's Sprouting in Rhode Island?



June 2011

"Planting" Ahead

Although it feels far off, September is just around the corner and RI farmers are busy planning for it right now. Broccoli, colored cauliflower, rainbow chard, sugar pumpkin and cherry tomatoes are all being grown for RI school kids. Is there something you are hoping to serve in your school district this coming autumn? If so, please let Kids First, your favorite farmer, or your produce distributor know. We are all happy to help make sure there are RI fruits and veggies reserved for RI school kids.

Hooray for STRAWBERRIES!!!

From

Salisbury Farm

in Johnston

Jaswells Farm

in Smithfield

Goodwin Brothers Farm

in North Smithfield

Attention Food Service Folks:
Kids First has a Facebook page celebrating RI Grown in RI school lunch. Send us photos of your students enjoying RI Grown produce and we will publish them!



Wayne Salisbury

of Salisbury Farm in Johnston
celebrating strawberry season

RI Grown Asparagus served in 3 districts!

RI students in 3 different school districts were lucky enough to get the first crop of the season in their school lunch. West Warwick, the first school in RI to ever serve RI asparagus, bought 80 pounds from Schartner Farms. This was for the second year in a row W. Warwick has served asparagus and the kids are starting to recognize it as a sign of good veggies to come! Students in both Pawtucket and Warwick experienced asparagus for the first time ever in their school meal.

I was fortunate to be at Gorton Jr. High in Warwick on the day it was served. I witnessed a few students expand their horizons and taste fresh asparagus from Jaswell's Farm. The vegetable was a tough sell on the lunch line. I found myself pleading with many of the students to try at least a tiny bit of a skinny stalk. We had few takers, but the brave souls who tasted really liked it. I heard that chicken and asparagus pizza was being planned in order to use the leftovers...Yum!!

The veggie went over really well in nearby Pawtucket, where 50 pounds of Schartner Farm asparagus was roasted and served district wide. Reports were that students enthusiastically greeted the opportunity to experience the new and unusual vegetable. Hooray for spring veggies!!!

Planning for Food Day—October 24

The first ever National Food Day is being planned for this coming October, and the Rhode Island food community is beginning to plan a series of events leading up to an exciting and thought provoking day. Created by the Center for Science in the Public Interest, and coordinated by Rhode Island's State Nutrition coordinator Randi Belhumer, Food Day seeks to transform the way American's eat. A series of events are being planned with the intent to bring awareness and action to food related issues. These activities will take place in schools, community centers, parks, faith based venues, supermarkets and more. The events will be conducted with the purpose of increasing the public's understanding of the dramatic effect America's food system has on health, the environment, hunger and animal welfare. Kids First is participating in the planning meetings and hoping to support food related issues. Rhode Island school communities with their school cafeteria Food Day events. Ideas that have been tossed around include serving a lunch of sustainably and locally produced foods, interactive cooking demonstrations that teach new skills as well as the impact of food choices, and the promotion of a "family dinner night". Please contact Kids First to brainstorm ideas to celebrate Food Day in your community. We will help in any way we can!

For Farm to School programs and technical assistance, contact Farm to School Specialist Kimberly Clark at Kids First 401 475-9696

A special thank you to our Rhode Island Farm to School funders for their generous support - The Sharpe Family Foundation, The Carter Family Charitable Trust, The Jessie B. Cox Charitable Trust, The RI Department of Environmental Management Farm Viability Grant, The van Beuren Charitable Foundation, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Rhode Island and Brown University Food For Thought. We love you guys!!!