# SNP Memo #2022-2023-24

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**COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA   
Department of Education**

DATE: September 16, 2022

TO: Directors, Supervisors, and Contact Persons Addressed

FROM: Sandra C. Curwood, PhD, RDN, ***Sandy***

## SUBJECT: October Farm to School Events and Funding Opportunities

The Virginia Department of Education, Office of School Nutrition Programs (VDOE-SNP) encourages school divisions and community sponsors to celebrate Virginia farm to school events in October 2022. Funding opportunities are available to support related events happening throughout the month:

* October is National Farm to School Month and Virginia Farm to School Week: October 3–7, 2022
* Crunch Heard ‘Round the Commonwealth: Thursday, October 6, 2022.
* Virginia Farm to School and Directors' Conference: October 19–20, 2022

### Virginia Farm to School Week

House Joint Resolution No. 692 (2015) designates the first full week in October as Virginia Farm to School Week. Farm to school initiatives connect schools with farmers and local food hubs, providing opportunities to educate students about the importance of consuming fresh, healthy food, and the impact local food purchases have on Virginia’s communities. When schools purchase local foods, they can provide reliable, ongoing support to Virginia’s agricultural economy.

School divisions in Virginia can celebrate with seasonal foods featured on school menus, poster contests, farm tours, and “meet the farmer” events. Schools may also bring farm to school into the classroom with standards of learning-based lessons that feature [Virginia Harvest of the Month](https://doe.virginia.gov/support/nutrition/hom/index.shtml) crops.

### The Crunch Heard ‘Round the Commonwealth

The VDOE-SNP, in collaboration with the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and the Virginia Department of Health, is excited to announce the sixth annual *Crunch Heard ‘Round the Commonwealth.*

During this event on Thursday, October 6, 2022, Virginians are encouraged to make some noise for farm to school programs by simultaneously taking a bite out of a fresh local apple. To register for the event and download the FREE toolkit and marketing materials, complete the [Crunch Heard 'Round the Commonwealth Registration Form](https://vdoe.iad1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3UHGabJA9wZn6QK).

### Virginia Farm to School and Directors' Conference

Hosted by the VDOE-SNP, the Virginia Farm to School and Directors’ Conference is scheduled for **October 19–20, 2022**,in Charlottesville, Virginia, with optional pre-conference events occurring on **October 18, 2022**. The Farm to School Conference on October 19, 2022, features best practices, resources, and networking opportunities for farmers, school nutrition directors, and educators to elevate farm to school practices across the Commonwealth. Attendance is free. The [conference website](https://cvent.me/xGra3g) includes registration information and additional event details.

### Farm to School Funding Opportunities

The [Virginia Agriculture in the Classroom](https://virginia.agclassroom.org/teachers/grants/) is offering grants to Virginia teachers to encourage the integration of agriculture into their daily curriculum. Grant applications are due **October 14, 2022**.

The Community Food Systems Division at the U.S. Department of Agriculture awards annual Farm to School Grants to local school divisions and federal nutrition program sponsors. Requests for Applications for the Fiscal Year 2022 Farm to School Grants will open this fall. USDA Farm to School Grants help schools and communities incorporate local products into school meals, integrate agricultural education in the classroom, and cultivate and expand farm to school efforts. Refer to the [USDA Farm to School Grant Program website](https://www.fns.usda.gov/f2s/farm-school-grant-program) for more information.

The Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth (VFHY) announced a new round of three-year funding to support community efforts to reduce and prevent childhood obesity. VFHY funding provides infrastructure support to build and sustain Healthy Communities Action Teams (HCATs), and funding can align with farm to school initiatives. Refer to the [VFHY website](https://www.vfhy.org/grants/next-round-of-hcat-grants/) for more information.

### For More Information

For additional information on Virginia Farm to School initiatives, visit the [Farm to School website](https://doe.virginia.gov/support/nutrition/farm-to-school/index.shtml).

Please direct any farm to school related questions to Bee Thorp, SNP Farm to School Specialist, via email at [Brittany.Thorp@doe.Virginia.gov](mailto:Brittany.Thorp@doe.Virginia.gov).

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