# VDOE SNP logo

Farm to Breakfast

## Incorporating Fresh, Local Foods into Breakfast

Serving fresh fruit for breakfast increases the nutritional profile of breakfast, adds dietary fiber, nutrients, and a pop of color. One of the Breakfast Club’s five best practices for serving a nutritious breakfast, released summer 2020, promotes reducing sugar consumption by decreasing the number of days fruit juice is offered; serving more fresh fruit in place of fruit juice.

According to the United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Services (USDA- FNS) Federal Code of Regulations [eCFR220.8(c),](https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=0b6d9eb3b1003736d8382cdb48461ef6&mc=true&node=se7.4.220_18&rgn=div8) schools must offer one cup of fruit daily for breakfast; a vegetable may also be served with or in place of the fruit serving.

## What is Farm to Breakfast?

* + Procurement – purchasing unprocessed foods from local farmers;
  + School gardens – connecting nutrition education and core learning objectives in hands-on learning settings;
  + Nutrition and agriculture education and marketing – Marketing plays an important role in children’s food choices in the cafeteria and at home. [Virginia Agriculture in the Classroom](https://agclassroom.org/va/about/index.cfm) provides resources to support nutrition and agriculture by providing classroom lesson plans and fact sheets for educating Virginia’s children on the importance of agriculture.

## What is Virginia Harvest of the Month (VA-HOM)?

The Virginia Department of Education’s Office of School Nutrition Programs (VDOE-SNP) developed a HOM program which provides learning opportunities in classrooms and cafeterias around seasonal and locally-available foods. The VDOE-SNP provided sets of 12 posters, point-of-sale signs, and digital toolkits for each school in the division during the 2018 Farm to School Week.

## Virginia Farm to Breakfast Examples

* Apples are the most obvious choice. A whole apple is a great grab-and-go choice. Apple cider in oatmeal or diced apples in overnight oats add crunch and nutrition to breakfast. Apples are the VA-HOM produce item for the month of October.
* Kale is the nutrient king in the Dr. Seuss Green Eggs and Ham recipe from Staunton City Schools. It is actually greens, eggs, and ham; a slice of ham and piece of cooked kale around a hardboiled egg on a stick. The VA-HOM produce item for the month of March.
* Sweet potatoes are an easy addition as scratch cooked sweet potato tots or wedges with an egg or ham breakfast sandwich. The VA-HOM produce item for the month of January.
* Strawberries are a student’s sweet favorite as a garnish to overnight oats or oatmeal cups. They also shine in Harrisonburg’s breakfast parfait as a colorful way to attract students to eat breakfast. The VA-HOM produce item for the month of May.
* Zucchini is a great way to try the “fifth season”, which means preparing and freezing produce when it is cheap and fresh at peak season to use throughout the school year. Williamsburg-James City County’s School Health Initiative Program has a great recipe for student’s favorite [zucchini bread](https://wjccschools.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/F2S-Cookbook-Spring-2018-Farmers-Market.pdf). The VA-HOM produce item for the month of July.
* Sweet bell peppers are a colorful, tasty, and nutritious addition to many savory breakfast items. Pepper and turkey bacon egg bites can be made in muffin pans and served as grab-and-go breakfast for an easy, protein packed breakfast. Peppers also shine in breakfast quesadillas and breakfast tacos. The VA-HOM produce item for the month of September.
* Spinach adds essential nutrients to breakfast quesadillas and tacos, egg scrambles, or green breakfast smoothies. The VA-HOM produce item for the month of December.
* Local grains are not a commonly used local product but may be something new to consider. The [Common Grain Alliance](https://commongrainalliance.org/how-to-buy/) has a list of vendors growing and milling local grains in the Mid-Atlantic region. This is not a VA-HOM item, but is a great idea for expanding farm to breakfast programs.

## National Farm to Breakfast Examples

* In Iowa, local sausage and egg breakfast pizza is garnished with oregano or garlic chives from the garden. Eggs are a lower-cost item to buy locally and pizza is a student favorite.
* In Rhode Island, incorporating local zucchini, carrots, and apples into breakfast bars and muffins for schools makes great grab-and-go and breakfast in the classroom meals. A quick tip is to peel zucchini and give items fun names to improve the perception of these offerings. Utilize the fifth season and buy, shred, and freeze zucchini in summer months when it is inexpensive and readily available.
* In Texas, breakfast in the classroom includes breakfast tacos with local eggs. These servings are versatile and take into consideration regional preferences to increase student acceptance.
* In Massachusetts, muffins made with local zucchini, carrots, and apples are designed for breakfast in the classroom, grab-and-go, and second chance breakfast models in mind. Apples are a favorite fruit and are used in new ways to show students their versatility like using local cider to cook oatmeal or in overnight oats for a variation on the flavor profile.