



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA
Department of Education

DATE: September 7, 2018

TO: Division Superintendents

FROM: James F. Lane, Superintendent of Public Instruction

SUBJECT: Celebrate Virginia Farm-to-School Week: October 1-5, 2018

The purpose of this memo is to encourage school divisions to participate in Farm-to-School Week scheduled for October 1-5, 2018, and to recognize October as National Farm-to-School Month.

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE), in collaboration with the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS), is excited to announce the second Annual Crunch Heard 'Round the Commonwealth!

On Friday, October 5, 2018, Virginians are encouraged to “make some noise for Farm to School” by simultaneously taking a bite out of a fresh local apple during The Crunch Heard 'Round the Commonwealth. Learn more and plan your “Crunch” event by downloading the [digital toolkit](#).

The Virginia Farm-to-School program enriches relationships between students, schools, and their communities by shifting food purchasing practices and enhancing learning opportunities about food, nutrition, farming and environmental stewardship in schools across the Commonwealth. Virginia Farm-to-School is celebrated every first week of October, in accordance with House Joint Resolution 692 passed in 2015. School divisions in Virginia can celebrate with locally-procured foods featured on school menus, school garden celebrations, field trips to local family farms, poster contests, guest farmers in classrooms and cafeterias, and other educational activities. Schools may also bring Farm to School to the classroom with SOL-based lesson plans and grant opportunities available on the [Virginia Ag in the Classroom website](#).

Agriculture is the largest industry in Virginia. According to the VDACS, agriculture generates \$70 billion annually and provides more than 334,000 jobs in Virginia. Farmland comprises 32 percent of land in the Commonwealth, providing tangible products such as food and intangible benefits, including wildlife habitat, biodiversity, recreation, tourism, and soil and water quality management. Virginians reap the benefits of Farm-to-School not just during Farm-to-School month, but year-round.

Visit the National Farm-to-School website at <http://www.farmtoschool.org/> for additional ideas on how to celebrate in your division. For more information, please contact Trista Grigsby, School Nutrition Programs Farm-to-School Specialist, at (804) 225-2331 or Trista.Grigsby@doe.virginia.gov.

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