

Benefits of Farm to School *Canada*



HEALTHY KIDS + HEALTHY COMMUNITY + HEALTHY PLANET + HEALTHY ECONOMY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – The Benefits of Farm to School: Evidence from Canada

Victoria, October 26th, 2018 – *Evidence in Canada is growing that Farm to School activities benefit public health, education and learning, the environment, community connections, and the economy.*

Farm to Cafeteria Canada (F2CC) is pleased to announce the release of [The Benefits of Farm to School, Evidence from Canada](#). This new resource brings together, for the first time, the results of Canadian studies showing that Farm to School activities increase students' consumption of vegetables and fruits; raise student knowledge of the local food system; contribute to community building; and increase business and income for local farmers.

Farm to School brings healthy, local food into the minds and onto the plates of students. Farm to School activity has been [recorded](#) in every province and territory in Canada. Since 2014, when Farm to Cafeteria Canada began tracking and mapping activity, 1176 pre-schools, schools and campuses across the nation have registered their farm to school efforts. Today, 818 391 Canadian students have been recorded to be growing, harvesting, preparing and eating healthy local foods at school. The contribution of the procurement practices of these schools to local farmers and the local food economy is significant. These schools estimate they spend more than \$16 Million annually on local foods.

"The Farm to School program we are celebrating today ensures that healthy, local foods are making their way into our schools," said Agriculture Minister Lana Popham. "It is a win for students, a win for B.C. agriculture, and a win for communities throughout the province."

Farm to School momentum is visibly growing with the support of government and communities across the nation. Today we are joined by BC's Minister of Agriculture, the Honourable Lana Popham and BC's Minister of Education, the Honourable Rob Fleming, and our provincial partners, the Public Health Association of BC, to participate in a Farm to School *Dig In!* event at Colquitz Middle School in Victoria, BC. Together, we are pleased to be celebrating Farm to School month in BC and in Canada, to announce the release of the latest fact sheet demonstrating the impacts of Farm to School, and to announce the upcoming [pan Canadian Farm to School Conference](#), taking place in BC May 15-17, 2019.

"It is always great to see initiatives in our schools that promote healthy lifestyles for students," said Minister of Education Rob Fleming. "I look forward to watching this program continue to grow so that students have more knowledge of the benefits of local food."



Today's event is part of the 5th annual [Farm to School Month Canada](#) celebrations: #DigInCanada. Farm to School Month takes place each October and provides an opportunity to engage and connect pre-school, school (K-12) and campus communities to showcase the diverse farm and local food to school initiatives across the country, while inspiring others to join the movement. For more information about Farm to School Month, schools are encouraged to visit <http://www.farmtocafeteriacanada.ca/farm-to-school-month-canada-2018/> to participate in this year's campaign and to be entered to win one of three \$1,500 grants courtesy of Whole Kids Foundation.

About Farm to Cafeteria Canada

Farm to Cafeteria Canada is a pan-Canadian organization that educates, builds capacity, strengthens partnerships, and influences policy to bring local, healthy, and sustainable foods into all public institutions. Farm to Cafeteria Canada is proud to lead the national Farm to School movement. For more information about F2CC, visit www.farmtocafeteriacanada.ca

About Farm to School BC

Established in 2007, Farm to School BC (F2SBC) is a diverse and expanding provincial network administered by the Public Health Association of BC and supported by the Province of British Columbia and the Provincial Health Services Authority. F2SBC promotes, supports, and links Farm to School activities and programs across the province in addition to providing regional support (Capital, Kamloops Nanaimo North, Northwest and Vancouver Regions) through community animators. To date, F2SBC supported over 160 schools and communities. For more information about F2SBC, visit www.farmtoschoolbc.ca.

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