

Benefits for School Communities

Farm to school gets students eating, cooking, growing, and embracing healthy local food. Through farm to school activities students connect with their broader communities and learn food literacy, all while strengthening vibrant, sustainable, economically viable regional food systems.

Implementing farm to school can be as simple as having a farmer visit a classroom, and can be as big as having students grow, cook, and serve food for their entire school.

As part of the *Farm to School: Canada Digs In!* Initiative, 86 farm to school salad bar programs were established in five provinces across Canada. Students ate local and healthy food, participated in hands-on food literacy activities, and connected with local food providers, growers, chefs, knowledge keepers, public health professionals and many other community partners.



The Farm to School Approach

Between 2016-2020:

87% of schools reported the salad bar created a greater sense of vibrancy and excitement

87% of schools reported they had increased connections, partnerships and participation within the school and the broader community including with Indigenous communities, local farmers and chefs, other schools, neighbouring preschool programs and seniors residences, and groups such as the local Boys & Girls Club

85% reported students were more excited about healthy eating

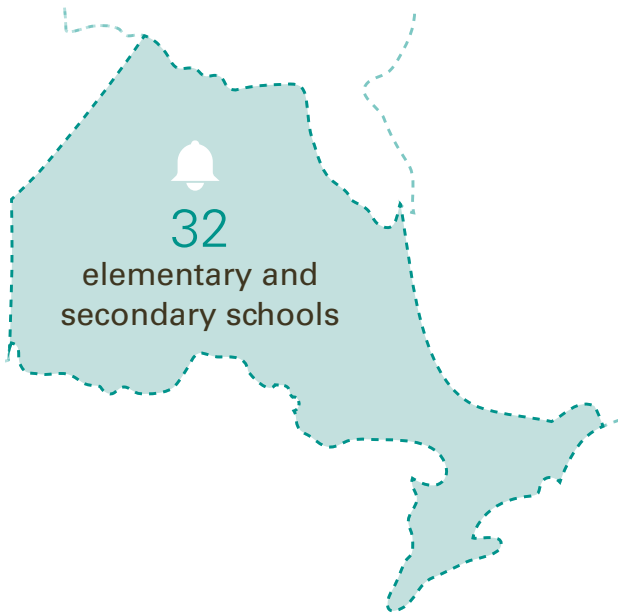
33% of students reported their confidence had increased

32% of students reported their focus in class had increased

26% of students reported they had more desire to be at school

“The salad bar is visually appealing and teachers note some students are opting for the salad bar rather than going to the store for pop and chips. Students are better focusing in class after lunch and look forward to the salad bar. **K – 8 TEACHER**”

“The garden is a great opportunity for my class to be out there learning about local foods and then to take these foods and prepare them in my class. This makes the curriculum so much more relevant to the students. **SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHER**”



15,381 + \$343,000

students

given directly to Ontario schools

= 32 farm to school salad bar programs

where students eat local and healthy food, participate in hands-on food literacy activities, and connect with local food providers, growers, chefs, knowledge keepers, public health professionals and many other community partners.

Growing farm to school in Ontario and across Canada



The lead provincial organization championing the farm to school movement in Ontario

is **Sustain Ontario**, a province-wide, cross-sectoral alliance that promotes healthy food and farming. Sustain Ontario is one of 11 partners in the *Farm to School: Canada Digs In!* initiative.

Learn more at www.sustainontario.com



Leadership and coordination of Canada's national farm to school movement is provided by **Farm to Cafeteria Canada**, a partnership-based organization that

collaborates to educate, build capacity, and influence policy to put more healthy, local and sustainable food on the minds and plates of students. Farm to Cafeteria Canada manages *Farm to School: Canada Digs In!* and is proud to partner with **Sustain Ontario** and 9 other organizations on this exciting initiative.



“ This Salad Bar project has had a positive impact at our school. Salad sales and consumption of vegetables and fruit purchased in the cafeteria have increased progressively by 30-40% since receiving the grant.

ST. LUKE SALAD BAR

Farm to School: Canada Digs In! is a pan-Canadian multi-sectoral chronic disease prevention initiative.



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