



# STATE OF IDAHO



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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Idaho State Department of Agriculture Receives USDA Farm to School Grant**

Idaho will continue increasing the amount of local foods used in school lunch menus as a result of being named a recipient of a national Farm to School grant! The United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) announced Monday that it has selected the Idaho State Department of Agriculture to receive funding through a Farm to School Conference and Event Grant. Idaho was selected from nearly 100 applicants across the country who were considered for some of the limited funding available through this inaugural round of USDA Farm to School Conference and Event Grants.

Funding from this grant will support four seminars across Idaho designed to increase use of local foods on school lunch menus. The first conference will be held in February for producers who would like to learn more about marketing to school foodservice, including procurement, nutrition standards, food safety requirements and the bid process. Three regional workshops also will be held across the state in the summer of 2015 to help school foodservice personnel find ways to incorporate more local foods into their menus. The workshops will include farm tours, seasonality issues, geographic preference in bids, recipe ideas, menu development and hands-on skill development to utilize more fresh foods in school kitchens.

According to the USDA announcement, Idaho was chosen to receive a Farm to School Conference and Event Grant because previous Farm to School programs – including two pilot projects and one statewide conference in 2012 – demonstrated strong experience and readiness to host a conference that builds capacity among local and regional foods system stakeholders, has partners in place to disseminate accurate and valuable information, and proposed a reasonable scope and budget. USDA found that Idaho's goals were closely aligned with national initiatives, giving them confidence that the statewide project will help build stronger local economies and improve school meal programs.

"We are very pleased to have been awarded this USDA Farm to School grant," said Celia Gould, director of the Idaho State Department of Agriculture. "It will allow us to continue to work with our Farm to School partners to provide information to producers and to schools that will lead to more healthy, local foods being served to Idaho's school children."

If you have questions about the USDA Farm to School Conference and Event Grant, please contact Leah Clark at [leah.clark@agri.idaho.gov](mailto:leah.clark@agri.idaho.gov) or 208-332-8684.