



STATE OF IDAHO



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Idaho State Department of Agriculture Will Host Farm to School Conference for Producers

Every weekday from September to May, nearly 280,000 students in Idaho have the opportunity to eat a nutritional and affordable lunch or breakfast at their school. Meals served in 762 public schools across the state include a wide variety of foods including fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grain breads, beans, meats and dairy products – many of which can be produced by Idaho farmers, ranchers and dairymen. To help Idaho producers take advantage of this vast consumer market, the Idaho State Department of Agriculture's Idaho Preferred program will host a "Farm to School" workshop on Friday, February 6, 2015 in Nampa. This workshop is funded by a USDA Farm to School Conference and Events grant awarded to ISDA in September 2014.

The Farm to School Producer Seminar will provide information on how to sell food products to this very unique market. Sessions on procurement and the bid process, nutrition standards, food safety requirements, menu planning and financial issues will be presented by Foodservice Directors from across the state. The workshop will also include tours of two school foodservice kitchens to provide insight into preparation, cooking and serving challenges faced by schools on a daily basis. Producers attending the workshop will also hear from food companies successfully marketing to schools and from schools already implementing Farm to School in their cafeterias. To complete the training process, in the summer of 2015, three regional workshops will be held across the state to help school foodservice personnel find ways to incorporate more local foods into their menus. Those 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.

The Idaho Farm to School Producer Seminar is open to all producers of fresh or processed food products. The workshop will begin at 8:00 am of Friday, February 6th at the Hampton Inn and Suites at the Idaho Center, 5750 E. Franklin Rd in Nampa. To register, call 208-332-8535 or register on-line at <http://idahopreferred.com/events/idaho-farm-school-workshop-producers/>. Early bird registration of \$15.00 per person is available through February 1st or \$20.00 at the door.

For more information on the Farm to School Producer Seminar contact Leah Clark at the Idaho State Department of Agriculture, leah.clark@agri.idaho.gov or 208-332-8684.

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