

National Farm to School
Network
Southeast



Regional Steering Committee Member Beverly Girard

Callie Herron, ASAP

Here in the southeast region, we are fortunate to have such a dedicated Regional Steering Committee. Bringing a variety of experience to the table, these men and women are here to support the Farm to School movement in our region and answer your questions. In each newsletter we will be introducing two steering committee members and highlighting their work. This month we will start with Beverly Girard from Florida and Allison Schaum from South Carolina.



Beverly Girard, Director of Food and Nutrition Services for the School Board of Sarasota County, Florida, and an advocate for local food in schools, explains that sourcing local "just makes sense!" Girard states that there are three important reasons why she buys local; "the local economy impact, the nutrition component, and just that it makes sense from an environmental standpoint." After two and a half years of trying to make Farm to School happen, Beverly is pleased with the success of her program. She is able to get 80% of the produce in the school nutrition program from a local source.

When asked what is the biggest hurdle getting local food in schools, Girard explains that it is distribution. She suggests that both farmers and Child Nutrition Director's should attempt to "find someone they can work with to

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Beverly Girard

Regional Steering
Committee Member: Allison
Schaum

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Gardens

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Miami School Receives PTA
Grant to Start F2S Program

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Calendar

Winter Sowing a Perennial
Garden Workshop
Decatur, GA
November 30

Carolina Farm Stewardship
Association Sustainable
Agriculture Conference
Black Mountain, NC
December 4-6

Introduction the National
Farm to School Network. A
webinar hosted by the

help get [local] products into the schools." She recommends Child Nutrition Directors contact farmers and attempt to find a successful distribution process. It is important to research what resources are available in the local area. In Sarasota, in order to solve the issue of distribution, Girard, while "working on a different type of bid" decided she should have a "Farm to School distributor bid." Beverly gives 1st preference to food grown within 50 miles of Sarasota County, 2nd preference to food grown within 100 miles, and 3rd to food grown within 150 miles. Otherwise she gives preference to food that is grown in Florida.

With creativity, enthusiasm, and an understanding of what makes sense, Girard has created a strong Farm to School program in her area.

Regional Steering Committee Member *Allison Schaum*

Taylor Kirkland, ASAP

Of the more than 30 million children that eat a school lunch five days a week, 180 days a year, four of them belong to Allison Schaum of Anderson County, South Carolina. "This is how I first became interested in Farm to School," Schaum says, "having children in the school system eating in the cafeteria day after day." This interest, along with a county council measure supporting sustainable agriculture and organic farming as an economic development issue, became the catalyst for Grow with Me!, South Carolina's first Farm to School program.



Grow with Me! began shortly after Schaum was brought on as a consultant with Palmetto Agricultural Consultants in 2007. From the beginning, the program has had great support at the local level. "We have had tremendous buy in with local child nutrition directors, school administrators, superintendents, principals and the county administrator." This support has allowed her to work closely with farmers throughout Anderson County, linking them to larger opportunities for marketing their

National Good Food Network
December 17

Farm to Cafeteria Conference
Detroit, MI
May 17-19

National Farm to School Events Calendar

*** Please send your upcoming events to Brook Thompson ***

National Farm to School Network Southeast Regional Steering Committee

Vanessa Mercer
Crabtree Farms
Chattanooga, TN

Erin Croom
Georgia Organics
Atlanta, GA

Wendy Carlin
Coalition for a Fit Kentucky
Frankfort, KY
Mary Whitesell
Florida Healthy Communities Healthy People
Tallahassee, FL

Mark Swanson
University of Kentucky
Lexington, KY

Susan Frost
DHEC Bureau of Community Health and Chronic Disease Prevention
Columbia, SC

Lynn Hoggard

produce locally. Schaum sees school cafeterias as a major opportunity for a sustained relationship between local farmers and the local school district.

Grow with Me! is not just about cafeteria food, however. Equally as important is the educational components of Farm to School: farmer visits, farm field trips, cooking demonstrations, and school gardens. "Linking students to the larger context of food within the classroom is a very exciting aspect of our program."



To read the entire article, [click here](#).

Florida Partners Unite to Support School Fruit and Vegetable Gardens

Katie Rainka, Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program Coordinator, Office of Food and Nutrition Management and Office of Healthy Schools

In an effort to help schools create and sustain school-based fruit and vegetable gardens, the Florida Department of Education's Office of Food and Nutrition Management in partnership with the Office of Healthy Schools recently convened a School Garden State Level Partnership including representatives from state agencies, universities, regional and local extension offices, nonprofit organizations, media, and city government. The purpose of the meeting was to create a comprehensive approach for providing Florida school districts with information, funding sources, peer-reviewed literature, and lesson plans correlated to the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards regarding school fruit and vegetable gardens.



The School Garden Partnership Committee agreed on goals and objectives for 2009-2010 and provided input into a strategic plan. Activities of importance are:

- Development of an online school garden clearinghouse.

NC Department of Public Instruction
Raleigh, NC

Allison Schaum
Palmetto Agricultural Consultants
Woodruff, SC

Lisa Long
Jubilee Project
Sneedville, TN

Michelle Futrell
Division of Public Health,
NC Fruits and Veggies
Nutrition Coalition
Raleigh, NC

Diane Beth
Division of Public Health,
NC Fruits and Veggies
Nutrition Coalition
Raleigh, NC

Todd Bedenbaugh
SC Department of
Education
Columbia, SC

Rachael Terrin, SNS
Food and Nutrition
Management
Florida Department of
Education
Tallahassee, FL

Beverly Girard, R.D.
School Board of Sarasota
County
Osprey, FL

Kaycie Len Carter
Community Farm Alliance
Frankfort, KY

Amanda Manning
GA Department of

- Correlation of fruit and vegetable garden concepts to the Next Generation Sunshine State Standards.
- Identification and application of grant funding for the purposes of advancing the initiative in Florida.

To read the entire article, [click here](#).

Local Food Highlighted in Kentucky Schools

Montgomery Schools' Use of Local Food Recognized

Lexington Herald-Leader

Oct. 08, 2009

Fresh, local foods are on the menu at three elementary schools in Montgomery County, and the first school district to serve Kentucky Proud products celebrated on Tuesday. Camargo, Mapleton and Mount Sterling schools each received the HealthierUS School Challenge gold award from Janey Thornton, USDA deputy undersecretary for food and nutrition. Thornton, former food service director in Hardin County, was appointed to the position by President Barack Obama in April.

"This fall, we have purchased produce from three different farmers (Arnold Greenhouse, Bramble Apple Orchard, Girod Amish Farm)," said Julie Tuttle, school nutrition director for Montgomery County Schools. "We have taken pictures of the farmers and farms and are getting ready to display them in the cafeterias for the students to see where their food is coming from locally."

TO read the rest of this Lexington Herald-Leader news article, [click here](#).

Congratulations, Ada Merritt K-8 Center!

Education
Atlanta, GA

Regional Lead Agency
Appalachian Sustainable
Agriculture Project
*Emily Jackson and Molly
Nicholie*

Sarah Messiah

A National Parent Teacher Association (PTA) award will allow Ada Merritt K-8 Center in the East Little Havana neighborhood of Miami, Florida to be the first demonstration/pilot Farm to School program in South Florida.

To kickoff the grant, on November 13th the school will host Tony Geraci, Director of Food and Nutrition for the Baltimore School District and a strong Farm to School proponent. He will deliver a keynote presentation to students, parents/families, teachers, local and state congressional



representatives, and district administrators about how to initiate a Farm to School program in our community. During this presentation, Mr. Geraci will provide training and technical assistance, information resources, networking advice and answer questions from the audience. In the afternoon, he will lead in hands-on food preparation activities with the students to include a "Redlands Raised" or local South Florida stir fry. The day will culminate with an International Food Festival that will occur between 4:00p-8:00p. During this time, food items and dishes that include a wide variety of tropical and ethnic fruits and vegetables will be available for purchase by all attendees. This food festival is a celebration and appreciation of our multiethnic student body, faculty and staff, and their families and cultures.

Ada Merritt will have their first official vegetable planting on November 20th. Students will plant their classroom's seedlings and learn about the health benefits of eating fresh vegetables.

If you would like to learn more about this project or get involved, contact Sarah Messiah.

Thank you to everyone who submitted information for the November edition of the e-newsletter! The next e-newsletter will come out in mid January and I encourage everyone to send me personal stories, articles, pictures, and event information related to Farm to School by **January 11**.

Sincerely,

Brook Thompson

Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project's Growing Minds Program
