

FORWARD CORNER

October is National Farm to School Month!

FORWARD joins the *National Farm to School Network*, schools, early care and education sites, farms, communities and organizations across the country to celebrate food education, gardens and meals and snacks filled with healthy, local ingredients. FORWARD encourages you and your program to take time in October to

- Increase children's access to local and nutritious food by growing your own gardens, visiting farmers markets and shopping at local grocers who sell local produce
- Provide hands-on learning opportunities, selecting themes like *harvest month*, letting children explore a new food (sharing how it grows, conducting a taste test and planning ways to use it in a recipe or cooking project)
- Influence eating habits and food preferences during formative years by polling children and creating grafts and being a good role model by showing interest and enthusiasm as you share and eat new foods with the children
- Educate children about food systems and local agriculture through hands-on activities, books, posters and props and special guests (connect with a local farmer or ask a local grocer about their commitment to local produce)
- Support local farmers and local communities.

Check out these websites for information on how to get started and for ideas to bring farm to school to life in your classrooms/programs:

- [Illinois Farm to School](#)
- [National Farm to School](#)

FORWARD recommends centers use this specific [Illinois Farm to School resource](#) to spur ideas. For Families: [Harvest for Healthy Kids](#) creates a monthly newsletter in English and Spanish. This month's theme is beets. Download both the English and Spanish version from this website and distribute to families in your program.

JOIN THE HEALTHY MOVEMENT TODAY BY TAKING ACTION!

Families: Visit your local farmers' market (most run through mid to late October). Buy something you've never tried before, cook it and share with your family and friends.

Early Childhood Providers: Set children on a path to enjoy vegetables for life. Use this amazing tool kit: [Got Veggies](#) to think through your options and plan lessons.

For information on healthy eating and active living initiatives in DuPage county, check out www.forwarddupage.org. For more early childhood healthy resources for families click [here](#).

To learn more about the Healthy Child Care project and how your program can get involved, click [here](#):