Illinois USDA Farm to School Grant Awards

2013
Chicago Public Schools, District 299
Chicago, Illinois
Grant Type: Implementation; $100,000

This project proposes a two-track approach to make more locally grown produce available in Chicago Public Schools, including implementing a school garden safety program and formalizing a locally farmed produce procurement program. The one-year project will make school-garden grown produce available on the menu and promote nutrition/gardening education in schools in addition to creating a sustainable procurement agreement with local farmers.

2014
Children’s Home Association of Illinois
Peoria, Illinois
Grant Type: Planning; $36,562

Children's Home Association of Illinois, which operates a private, not for profit K-12 school, will implement a farm to school program to benefit 200 students across two campuses that are served by the National School Lunch Program. Nearly 70% of the students receive free/reduced price breakfast and lunch and medical records indicate 59% of students are overweight or obese. Although farm to school activities have been conducted successfully, the grant would align our farm to school activities and coordinate resources across programs. A coordinated planning effort would also ensure the development of a robust farm to school program that engages students in educational activities, transforms our kitchens into those that cook healthy, locally sourced ingredients from scratch and provide a framework for future farm to school efforts.

2015
Southern Illinois University, Board of Trustees
Carbondale, Illinois
Grant Type: Conference and Event - State; $24,929

Southern Illinois University will be partnering with the Illinois Farmers Market Association, University of Illinois Extension, and the Illinois State Board of Education to host regional farm to school conferences in Carbondale, Springfield, and Chicago. The conferences will speak to two key stakeholders in the movement: farmers and school foodservice managers. Topics will include economic opportunities for local farmers; education on the importance and requirements for safe food handling, including Good Handling Practices and Good Agricultural Practices; cooking demonstrations by professional chefs; and information concerning the rules and regulations of local food procurement at schools. We anticipate reaching a minimum of 75-100 attendees at each conference.
small and medium size farms throughout the state, as well as 100-150 school foodservice managers.

2016

**Seven Generations Ahead**

*Oak Park, Illinois*

*Grant Type: Support Service; $85,767*

Seven Generations Ahead and the Kane County Health Department will increase local food distribution, access, and education within Kane County schools while building a sub-regional Kane County farm to school network. The project will support school districts with classroom and cafeteria promotions of healthy eating and locally grown food, and will implement fruit and vegetable promotional events that coincide with National Farm to School Month in October.

2017

**Aurora East Unified School District 131**

*Aurora, Illinois*

*Grant Type: Planning; $44,996*

Through partnerships with Seven Generations Ahead, VNA Health Care, and Sodexo, Aurora East Unified School District will develop a plan to increase the amount of local and regional foods served in the district's schools. This project will also improve students’ access to fresh foods while increasing students' understanding of food sources through the development of school gardens. Students will receive additional instruction in nutrition and healthy eating through Harvest of the Month promotions and family-oriented Cooking Matters classes.

2018

**Kane County**

*Geneva, Illinois*

*Grant Type: Implementation; $98,330*

Kane County will work with the Juvenile Justice Center (JJC) and community partners to expand and sustain a farm to school program piloted at the JJC facility last summer. The program will combine the installation and planting of raised-bed vegetable gardens with hands-on learning demonstrations and classroom nutrition curriculum. The project will focus on technical assistance to modify the JJC’s food service procurement policies to include more fresh, healthy, locally grown foods.

**Pilot Light**

*Chicago, Illinois*

*Grant Type: Implementation; $62,555*
Pilot Light will expand their farm to school program to three new high schools, reaching more than 550 9th and 10th-grade students. Their program, which pairs school meals with classroom curriculum, will highlight locally sourced food and educational opportunities in the classroom. Pilot Light will disseminate findings from their research and conduct outreach to increase school participation in the future.

2019

**Chicago Public Schools**  
*Chicago, Illinois*  
**Grant Type:** Implementation; $100,000

The Chicago Public Schools “Bringing the Bounty Inside” (BBI) will integrate large-scale indoor production into a school garden platform. BBI will focus on school garden programs at three high schools—Englewood High School, Carl Schurz High School, and John Marshall Metropolitan High School—to serve as district wide knowledge hubs. These schools will install agricultural systems that will expand the yield of produce and expose their students to exciting new agricultural methods. Simultaneously, these schools will serve as mentors and empower burgeoning school garden programs at schools in their region of the city.

**Seven Generations Ahead**  
*Oak Park, Illinois*  
**Type of Grant:** Implementation; $92,998

The Seven Generations Ahead “Enhancing Farm to School Support for Illinois Child Nutrition Providers” project will support SGA’s education and outreach efforts to expand participation in its Illinois Harvest of the Month and Great Illinois Apple Crunch programs, increase the depth of participation of existing schools and early childhood education centers through consulting, resources and technical assistance, and implement learning opportunities—including a podcast series and a school food service personnel Institute—for schools across Illinois. SGA will partner with Angelic Organics Learning Center to implement the Institute, and will work with IL Farm to School Network partners to support increased program participation.

2020

**Adelante Center for Entrepreneurship**  
*Waukegan, Illinois*  
**Grant Type:** Planning; $47,593

The Adelante Center’s Farm on Sheridan Young Farmer’s program will be supported by Adelante Center’s Farm on Sheridan indoor aquaponics farm. The project will build a community network of community stakeholders, volunteer experts, and consultants to develop a Farm to School Action Plan. The Farm to School program will be supported by Adelante Center’s Farm on Sheridan indoor aquaponics farm. The Farm to School Action Plan will be facilitated by Farm on Sheridan; it will provide an active procurement source within the community that needs it the most and it will provide a robust venue for hands on agriculture education by both students and
families. The project will focus on engagement of the students, school districts, volunteers and agriculture and nutrition experts to provide a comprehensive education platform that teaches the principles of foods grow and the effect on health.

**Common Threads**  
*Chicago, Illinois*  
*Grant Type: Implementation; $100,000*

Common Threads' project will develop the programmatic infrastructure needed to begin sourcing from community-based urban farms for its school-based cooking and nutrition education programs in Chicago. Common Threads will make curriculum adaptations that emphasize seasonality and local food systems learning, implementing comprehensive Farm to School educational programming in three schools over the course of the project period for students, families, and teachers. Additionally, the project will increase awareness of local food and agricultural education resources in the community. The project will collaborate with three Chicago Public School sites and urban farms in close proximity to the schools. Common Threads' ultimate goal is to create a scalable model for local procurement that can be replicated at other schools in both Chicago and our 11 other program markets in future years.

**Sola Gratia Farm**  
*Urbana, Illinois*  
*Grant Type: Planning; $47,960*

The “twin cities” of Champaign and Urbana have very different school food service programs, but both are serving schools located in multiple Opportunity Zones and a high proportion of children who are eligible for free or reduced price meals, averaging 57% between the two districts. Sola Gratia Farm and CU Public Health District will collaborate with the districts to plan a F2S Program in which: 1) Each child/student has the opportunity to try a wide variety of locally sourced foods in a variety of forms/recipes; 2) Each child/student has the opportunity to learn about food production and the significance of local food production in the greater economic and environmental food systems, and meet the people producing the food; and 3) School meals not only contribute to equality (all children have access to balanced meals), but also equity (all students have access to locally sourced, healthy foods through the school lunch program)

**Sterling Community Unit School District #5**  
*Sterling, Illinois*  
*Grant Type: Implementation; $100,000*

Sterling Schools, in collaboration with the Dillon Foundation and the Community General Hospital (CGH) Health Foundation, will implement a Farm to School program to change students’ relationships with food. The program will use a school greenhouse garden to add fresh, local produce to the food service program. An agricultural educator will be hired to teach horticulture, greenhouse management, and environmental science, through which students will learn how to produce and harvest local foods while also respecting the environment. A nutrition-
based cooking class will teach students to incorporate fresh foods into daily recipes appropriate for a variety of dietary needs.

2021

**Academy for Global Citizenship**  
*Chicago, Illinois*  
*Grant Type: Turnkey; $50,000*

The Academy for Global Citizenship (AGC) is preparing for the transition to a future six-acre campus in Southwest Chicago where they will significantly expand organic food production through three greenhouses, ten hoop houses, a learning barn, food forest, community gardens and orchard. Once in place, this will continue to enrich the learning opportunities of AGC students through their unique whole-child approach focused on sustainability and wellness.

**Champaign-Urbana Public Health District**  
*Champaign, Illinois*  
*Grant Type: Turnkey; $47,558*

The Central Illinois city of Urbana is home to Urbana School District 116 (USD 116), which has students that represent over 50 countries and speak over 40 different languages at home. What better way to bring these students together and enhance their socioemotional development, as well as academic achievement, than through edible school gardening. Champaign-Urbana Public Health District, in partnership with Sola Gratia Farm and USD116, will target the roughly 2,000 students in grades K-8 who attend USD116 schools that have no edible gardening spaces, and a student population in which 71-85% qualify for free or reduced price lunch. The goal is to get all USD116 students on a level playing field by installing edible gardens at the four schools lacking them, and then build on that foundation to develop and implement a comprehensive, districtwide farm to school program.

**Fit-2-Serve, Inc.**  
*Mattoon, Illinois*  
*Grant Type: Turnkey; $39,877*

Fit-2-Serve will facilitate the development of curriculum and delivery working with a team of teachers, university personnel and students and community residents as they seek to move agricultural lessons delivered in the classroom out and into the community. Currently, Fit-2-Serve is in the process of developing longitudinal service-learning experiences for youth grades K-5. K2 grade youth who attend three elementary schools in the county will be the target audience for agriculture based learning activities. University students enrolled in Agriculture Education at Lakeland College and in the College of Education at Eastern Illinois University will be invited to assist with curriculum development and delivery. Additionally, vested community volunteers will work with the organization as they seek to move the ag-based lessons delivered in the classroom out and into the community.
Pilot Light
Chicago, Illinois
Grant Type: Turnkey; $42,627

Pilot Light will leverage 10 years of experience in lesson development, its many partnerships, and its existing online platform to create lessons that connect students with food, develop foodrelated competencies, and deliver agricultural education in an engaging way. Lessons will be developed by Pilot Light’s Director of Education, a curriculum specialist who was Principal Investigator on a 2018 Farm to School Implementation grant. Lessons will address Common Core academic and Food Education Standards and will be accompanied by videos - filmed at established partners like The Roof Crop, Mighty Vine, Herban Produce - that serve as engaging teaching tools to promote curriculum adoption. Lessons and videos will be disseminated via a cohort of 15 Food Education Fellows who lead food education lessons weekly, and to a national audience via Pilot Light’s online Food Education Center. Lessons will also be shared with partners, including Chicago Public Schools and the Urban School Food Alliance.