

Cream of the Crop Guidelines:

- Choose a minimum of 6 out of 12 options to be completed
- Applications are for one full calendar school year and are due by August
- Enter as a school or district. If entering as a district, the application must be completed by an overseer of the school district
- *Please note, some of your activities can overlap, for example:
 - Your class has a hands-on food cooking activity featuring a local item and they participate in a taste test of this item; this can be counted as “one time” in both Option 2. & Option 5.
- Don’t forget to take pictures and tag activities @farmtoschoolNJ!
- Applications & supporting documents can be submitted via Survey Monkey at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/HFT7W33>
Or application below & supporting documents can be submitted via email to: NewJerseyF2S@ag.nj.gov

Name of Participating School/District:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Your Full Name / Job Title:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Participation Level:	<input type="checkbox"/> Whole School <input type="checkbox"/> District* *If entering as a district the application must be completed by an overseer of the school district, for ex; a superintendent, school board member

Option 1. Locally Grown Items on Menu	Sprouting	Flowering	Full Bloom	Cream of the Crop
Offer locally grown items on the school menu, during breakfast and/or lunch	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 - 7 times per year	<input type="checkbox"/> 8 – 19 times per year*	<input type="checkbox"/> 20 or more times per year*	<input type="checkbox"/> 20 or more times per year*
Example:	- Feature a local item on the menu for ex; “Local Strawberry Day” at ABC Elementary is one time per year.			
Accepted documentation (please provide at least ONE) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - School menu with featured local food notated - Photograph of school meal tray with local meal items noted - Distributor delivery form or invoice indicating local items - *May be substituted for Sustainable Pathways Activity 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sprouting – no substitutions ▪ Flowering – minimum 5 locally grown menu items & sustainable pathways option ▪ Full Bloom/Cream of the Crop – Minimum 15 locally grown menu items & sustainable pathways option 				

Option 2. Locally Grown Taste Tests	Sprouting	Flowering	Full Bloom	Cream of the Crop
Classroom/school/district participate in taste tests that feature locally grown food	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 – 3 times per year	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 – 7 times per year*	<input type="checkbox"/> 8 or more times per year*	<input type="checkbox"/> 8 or more times per year*
Example:	-One taste test of locally grown apples in one classroom is ONE time. -One taste test of locally grown apples in the whole school/district is ONE time.			
Accepted documentation (please provide at least ONE) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - List of all taste-tested items - Name of the farm from which taste-tested items were sourced. - Taste test survey results - Quotes of students’ opinions about the taste test - *May be substituted for Sustainable Pathways Activity 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sprouting – no substitutions ▪ Flowering – minimum 3 locally grown menu items & sustainable pathways option ▪ Full Bloom/Cream of the Crop – Minimum 4 locally grown menu items & sustainable pathways activity. 				

Option 3. Interaction with Farmers		Sprouting	Flowering	Full Bloom	Cream of the Crop
Students interact with farmers through field trips to farms that grow food and/or through farmer visits to the school.**		<input type="checkbox"/> 1 interaction per year	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 interactions per year*	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 or more interactions per year*	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 or more interactions per year*
Example:	<p>-One class/grade visiting a farm on a field trip day is ONE interaction.</p> <p>-Farmer addressing an individual class or the entire school for an assembly is ONE interaction.</p> <p>-Two farmers addressing the entire school for an assembly on the same day is One interaction.</p> <p>- **School may substitute direct farmer interaction with a taste test from the farm and highlight the farmer with their Farmer Trading Card, up to 2 times in a calendar year.</p> <p>- *May be substituted for Sustainable Pathways Activity 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sprouting – no substitutions ▪ Flowering, Full Bloom, & Cream of the Crop may substitute 1 interaction for sustainable pathways activity #3 				
<p>Accepted documentation (please provide at least ONE)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - List of farmers with whom students interacted, including their farm name - List of activities done on the farm or with a farmer - Photograph of field trip or farmer visit - Photograph of taste test and farmer trading card display 					

Option 4. Farm to School Promotions		Sprouting	Flowering	Full Bloom	Cream of the Crop
Farm to School promotions are done throughout the school environment		<input type="checkbox"/> 1 – 3 times per year	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 – 7 times per year	<input type="checkbox"/> 8 or more times per year	<input type="checkbox"/> 8 or more times per year
Example:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promoting one local item in one way at one time (i.e.: local sweet potatoes promoted in the classroom/school newsletter) is ONE time - Promoting one local item in two ways at one time (i.e.: local sweet potatoes promoted in the school newsletter and in the morning announcements) is TWO times 				
<p>Accepted documentation (please provide at least ONE)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sample of Farm to School promotional materials used - Photograph of posted materials 					

Option 5. Hands-on cooking	Sprouting	Flowering	Full Bloom	Cream of the Crop
Students participate in hands-on cooking and food activities featuring local food with chefs, teachers, parents, school nutrition staff or other leaders	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 – 2 activities per year	<input type="checkbox"/> 3 – 7 activities per year*	<input type="checkbox"/> 8 or more activities per year*	<input type="checkbox"/> 8 or more activities per year*
Example:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One class participates in a make-your-own-yogurt parfait with local blueberries is ONE activity. - Whole school participates in making your own yogurt parfait with local blueberries is ONE activity - Individual class or whole school participates in making your own yogurt parfait with local blueberries and making a healthy smoothie with local spinach is TWO activities. - *May be substituted for Sustainable Pathways Activity 4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sprouting – no substitutions ▪ Flowering – minimum 2 hands-on cooking per year and sustainable pathways activity ▪ Full Bloom/Cream of the Crop – Minimum 4 hands-on cooking per year and sustainable pathways activity #4 			
Accepted documentation (please provide at least ONE) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - List of cooking and food activities that occurred - Photograph of students preparing food - Recipe students prepared - List of community volunteers (i.e., chefs, parents, etc..) who helped lead food activities - Lesson plans 				

Option 6. Growing Activity	Sprouting	Flowering	Full Bloom	Cream of the Crop
Schools learn where their food comes from through a growing activity	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 growing activity	<input type="checkbox"/> 2-3 growing activities	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 or more of the following: * <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grow tower • School garden (with maintenance plan) • School garden club (meeting once a month) 	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 or more of the following:* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grow tower • School garden (with maintenance plan) • School garden club (meeting once a month)
Example:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - One growing activity can include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dissecting a seed ○ Experiments with plant nutrients ○ Growing a seed in a plastic bag on the window in the classroom or cafeteria - School garden club with structured activities meeting at least once a month - School garden installed with a maintenance plan. - *May be substituted for Sustainable Pathways Activity 5 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sprouting/Flowering – no substitutions ▪ Full Bloom/Cream of the Crop – school garden in place with maintenance plan can be substituted for sustainable pathways activity #5 			
Accepted documentation (please provide at least ONE) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Photograph of windowsill or container garden, preferably in bloom - Photograph of children engaged in activities with experiments with grow tower, or school garden. - Lesson plans - Student work from the activities/lesson - Designs or pictures of grow tower, or school garden 				

Option 7. Farm to School Integrated into NJLS		Sprouting	Flowering	Full Bloom	Cream of the Crop
Educators integrate Farm to School into the New Jersey Student Learning Standards		<input type="checkbox"/> A minimum of 2 lessons per year	<input type="checkbox"/> A minimum of 6 lessons per year	<input type="checkbox"/> A minimum of 10 lessons per year	<input type="checkbox"/> A minimum of 10 lessons per year
Example:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Individual class, one teacher teaching the same lesson to one class (i.e., 4th grade science receives a lesson about plant nutrients) is ONE activity - Whole school, one or multiple teachers give a farm to school lesson to the entire school (i.e., whole school learns about nutrition from health teacher or during a farm to school celebration, one class rotates through multiple lessons, area of a garden bed for math, plant nutrients for science, etc.) EACH lesson is ONE activity 				
Accepted documentation (please provide at least ONE)					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lesson plan for one Farm to School integrated lesson being taught - Student work from a Farm to School integrated lesson - List of NJLS addressed through Farm to School integrated lessons - Photograph of Farm to School integrated lesson being taught 					

Option 8. Farm to School Week / National Farm to School Month		Sprouting	Flowering	Full Bloom	Cream of the Crop
Participates in Jersey Fresh Farm to School Week / National Farm to School Month		<input type="checkbox"/> Participates 1-2 days	<input type="checkbox"/> Participates 3-4 days	<input type="checkbox"/> Participates 5 days or more	<input type="checkbox"/> Participates 5 days or more
Example:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Visit to a local farm or visit from a farmer - Local chef demonstration on seasonal produce - Feature local New Jersey produce on your menu for Jersey Fresh Farm to School Week - Host a gardening opening event in the garden for Jersey Fresh Farm to School Week 				
Accepted documentation (please provide at least ONE)					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pictures of your event(s) - Lesson plans or other forms of documentation that quantify the event (i.e., school menu featuring local produce, copies of recipe students prepared, fun facts sheet from educational bulletin board, etc.) 					

Option 9. Farm to School Professional Development		Sprouting	Flowering	Full Bloom	Cream of the Crop
School staff (teachers, school nutrition staff, administration, etc.) participate in Farm to School professional development		<input type="checkbox"/> At least 1 training per year	<input type="checkbox"/> At least 2 trainings per year	<input type="checkbox"/> At least 3 trainings per year	<input type="checkbox"/> At least 3 trainings per year
Example:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attend a workshop on integrating Farm to School in the classroom - Host a training for kitchen staff on how to prepare a new recipe using local produce - Attend a workshop on using the garden in a school 				
Accepted documentation (please provide at least ONE) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pictures from the training(s) and description of what type of training occurred - Lesson plans, presentations, flyers, certificates, or other forms of documentation that quantify the event - Testimonials from staff on what they learned at the training and how they will use the new knowledge or skill back at school 					

Option 10. Farm to School Language	Sprouting	Flowering	Full Bloom	Cream of the Crop
Farm to School language is adopted into school / district wide policy or procedure (i.e., Wellness Policy)	<input type="checkbox"/> Include Farm to School language in 1 area of the school environment	<input type="checkbox"/> Include Farm to School language in 2 areas of the school environment	<input type="checkbox"/> Include specific Farm to School language to implement throughout the school environment	<input type="checkbox"/> Include specific Farm to School language to implement throughout the school environment
Example:	<p>Sprouting - Include Farm to School in 1 area of the school environment, language can be general and not comprehensive. For example, a policy or procedure might state, “The School System shall support the integration of a Farm to School program into the school food program to support the nutritional goals of the school nutrition program.”</p>			
<p>Flowering - Include Farm to School in more than 1 are of the school environment. For example, a policy might state “The school district will integrate farm to school through local food purchasing in the school nutrition program and make the school garden available for use as an outdoor classroom for educators.”</p>				
<p>Full Bloom and/or Cream of the Crop - Include specific Farm to School language to implement throughout the school environment. For example, a policy or procedure might state, “The school district is committed to implementing a Farm to School initiative focused on serving locally grown foods as defined by the School Nutrition Program. Meals served through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs will: plan menus to accommodate the seasonality of local agriculture according to availability of produce from local farms and school gardens. This effort will be supported with nutrition education in the schools. Teachers will incorporate the school garden multiple times a year as part of curriculum to enrich students’ learning opportunities by presenting academic projects around food, nutrition, mathematics, science, language arts and the environment.”</p>				
<p>Accepted documentation (please provide at least ONE)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Copy of policy with an example in action - Copy of school board procedures, regulations, or rules with an example in action - Copy of school nutrition staff, admin and /or educator job description that includes Farm to School duties with an example in action 				

Option 11. Community Involvement	Sprouting	Flowering	Full Bloom	Cream of the Crop
Community members/volunteers are involved in the Farm to School program	<input type="checkbox"/> Participation in at least 2 activities per year	<input type="checkbox"/> Participation in at least 4 activities per year	<input type="checkbox"/> Participation in at least 8 activities per year	<input type="checkbox"/> Participation in at least 8 activities per year
Example:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Parent/guardian serving a taste test in the classroom or the whole school - Community members helping with a school garden planting day. - A combination of parents, community members, teachers, administrative, and/or nutrition staff having a Farm to School focused committee meeting - School implements NJ Farm to School Volunteer Ambassador program. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Flowering – 2 outreach sessions can replace the 4 required activities per year. o Full Bloom/Cream of the Crop – 4 outreach sessions can replace the 8 required activities per year. 			
Accepted documentation (please provide at least ONE) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sign-in sheet of volunteers who helped lead food/gardening activities - Lesson plans - Pictures from the event(s) 				

Option 12. Farm to School Committee	Sprouting	Flowering	Full Bloom	Cream of the Crop
There is a Farm to School Committee comprised of different stakeholders within the school/district. *The Farm to School Committee can be a sub-committee of the school district’s Wellness Committee.	<input type="checkbox"/> There is a least a 3-person committee	<input type="checkbox"/> The committee covers at least 2 stakeholder groups	<input type="checkbox"/> Committee covers at least 3 stakeholder groups	<input type="checkbox"/> Committee covers at least 3 stakeholder groups
Example:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The committee can consist of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Members of the school’s or district’s administration o Members of food service and or cafeteria staff o Educators from different grade levels o Students o School nurse o Parents o Member of the community from outside non-profit or farm o Custodial staff o After-school program staff 			
Accepted documentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - List of names of committee members, what type of stakeholder they are, and their signatures - Please indicate who is the team lead and who is the alternative and provide contact information for each 				

Sustainable Pathways Activities	Activity	Accepted Documentation
1) Locally Grown	School/cafeteria conducts a food waste audit & shares the results with students. A plan is put in place to reduce food waste.	The results of the food waste audit. The plan to reduce food waste.
2) Taste Tests	Conduct 4 taste tests using locally grown food (3 if flowering category) & tally the results of all 4 tastings. Serve the taste test with the most positive responses on the school menu.	The results of the taste test, for example, a picture of the tally, a graph showing the results. Copy of school menu where the winning item was served.
3) Farmer Interaction	School/grade/classroom conduct research on sustainable farming. Students locate farmers in NJ that practice sustainable farming the students have researched.	Examples of student work for ex; research projects, letters to farmers from students
4) Hands-on cooking	School/grade/classroom compost of food scraps.	Photos/lessons demonstrated food scraps were properly composted.
5) Growing Activity	School composting or worm bin in place with a maintenance plan.	Photos/lessons from composting or vermiculture.

Successful completion of the Cream of the Crop will automatically enter you in the Best of NJ Farm to School Award.

*Please note it is possible for an individual class to participate, however, there will only be one entry per school accepted

Created with help from:

- Golden Radish Award Criteria from Georgia Organics
- Vermont FEED's Farm to School Rubric