



STATE OF NEW YORK
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND MARKETS

George E. Pataki
Governor

Nathan L. Rudgers
Commissioner

June 2, 2003

Dear Food Service Director:

Mark your calendars! **New York Harvest for New York Kids Week** is September 27 - October 5, 2003! This celebration is an opportunity for schools and communities to learn about New York agriculture, enjoy locally-grown foods, and make healthy food choices. In this mailing you will find the information to help you start planning – how to find New York grown food, potential partners, ideas and resources you can use, and web sites with much more.

New York Harvest for New York Kids Week was launched and nurtured during the past six years by the New York State Assembly Task Force on Food, Farm, & Nutrition. It has grown with the support of the New York State School Food Service Association (NYSSFSA), NY Farms!, Cornell's Farm-to-School Program, New York Farm Bureau, and many teachers, parents, and community groups. With passage of the 2002 Farm-to-School legislation, **New York Harvest for New York Kids Week** is now part of New York State's efforts to encourage schools to feature New York foods, and encourage children to select healthy foods. The New York State Departments of Agriculture and Markets and Education are working with state and local partners to help make the Harvest Week bigger and better than ever. This year, NY Farms! is coordinating the promotion of **New York Harvest for New York Kids Week**.

Knowing your commitment to children's health and education, we ask you to join us, your school colleagues, and your community and the New York State Farm-to-School Coordinating Committee to promote good nutrition using New York State foods during this special week. Cafeterias can feature New York farm products and partner with classrooms for food-tastings and nutrition lessons. Students can visit farms and farmers' markets, or harvest their school gardens and prepare the food for a classroom feast.

Getting Started

With this letter you will find a comprehensive list of organizations and resources including: the NYSSFSA, NY Farms! Partnership Award information, a tip sheet with examples from Partnership Award winners and a master of the poster you can photocopy. We also ask that you fill out the simple survey enclosed and return it to the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets. This will help us implement the New York State Farm-to-School Program and help you source more New York foods.

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Finding New York Foods

- Let your suppliers know that you want New York grown farm and processed products.
- Find Seasonal Availability of fresh fruits and vegetables at <http://www.agmkt.state.ny.us/AP/FFGSearch.asp> or <http://www.nutrition.cornell.edu/FoodGuide/>.
- Find food producers who sell wholesale to institutions in your area by follow the links on the Pride of New York web site at <http://www.prideofny.com/PONYSearch.asp>.
- For fresh vegetables, request the Growers/Shippers Directory from NYS Vegetable Growers Association with a letter on your school letterhead to: NYSFGA, P.O. Box 70, Kirkville, NY 13082-0070.
- For fresh apples and cider, check New York Apple Association web site www.nyapplecountry.com, or request the Wholesalers Directory from NYAA, 585-924-2171, joan@nyapplecountry.com.

Finding Partners and Resources

- Sample menus, classroom activity sheets, more resources and web links are available on the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets' web site at www.agmkt.state.ny.us/farm2school.html. If you do not have access to the web, contact us for printed copies.
- Find ideas and resources from the Cornell Farm-to-School Program at www.cce.cornell.edu/farmtoschool.
- To partner with community and farm organizations in your area for New York Harvest Week, contact Glenda Neff, NY Farms!, 1-888-693-2767, nyfarms@baldcom.net.
- For more information on finding New York food products or for other questions and ideas, contact Bill Jordan, New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets at 518-457-0752, william.jordan@agmkt.state.ny.us.

We look forward to working with you and all the partners in your school district, government, and communities. Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to celebrate **New York Harvest for New York Kids Week**. Our State's children, families, and farmers also thank you.

Sincerely,



Nathan L. Rudgers
Commissioner