

MEDIA RELEASE

Loudoun County, VA, November 18, 2015-Loudoun County School Nutrition Services is pleased to announce that they are the recipients of a competitive USDA Farm to School grant in the amount of \$44,961. Loudoun County is one of 74 projects spanning 39 states receiving support this year through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Farm to School Program, an effort to better connect school cafeterias and students with local farmers.

School Nutrition Services has partnered with Real Food for Kids and the Loudoun County Health Department to execute the grant that will provide planning funds to develop a district wide Farm to School Action Plan and conduct program activities in five elementary schools housing nearly 3000 students. Another important goal of the grant is to increase locally grown products on school menus from approximately 10% to 20% over the next 3 years. The grant will have education and economic impact for students, their families and the local economy.

“Children who have the opportunity to have hands on experiences in school gardens from planting seeds to taking care of the developing plants through harvest time develop an appreciation for where food comes from and a lifelong appreciation for healthy eating,” said Dr. Becky Domokos-Bays, Supervisor of School Nutrition Services. Domokos-Bays added, “we are looking forward to our collaboration with Jenny Hein, executive director of Real Food for Kids and Covington Brown, statistical analyst at the Department of Health.”