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## Taste Washington Day celebrates farm-to-school connection

**OLYMPIA** – Heard the phrase “you are what you eat?” For school children, this is especially true. Researchers find that a high quality diet and academic performance go hand-in-hand. On Oct. 7, Taste Washington Day will again recognize how our state’s agricultural industry contributes to providing healthy school meals.

For the fifth year, the [Washington Department of Agriculture](#) and the [Washington State Nutrition Association](#) will partner with many farmers and schools around the state to feature Washington-grown foods in school cafeteria meals.

In [proclaiming](#) Oct. 7 as Taste Washington Day, Gov. Jay Inslee noted that the diversity of our state’s agricultural industry makes us top national producers of many healthy foods, including fruit like apples, pears and cherries and vegetables like peas, potatoes and sweet corn.

“The federal Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act has increased emphasis on making sure school children have access to healthy food options,” said WSDA Director Derek Sandison. “Our [Farm to School](#) program works year-round linking farmers and ranchers with local schools to provide the freshest possible food for school meals. Taste Washington Day is the annual celebration of this important partnership.”

The day has become popular with farmers, school administrators and students. Many participating schools use the day to highlight special menus that make the most of their local seasonal fall harvests. Schools may also plan special events for the day, such as inviting a farmer to lunch or visiting a farmers market.

Trisha Dela Cruz, president of the Washington State Nutrition Association said, “We build our legacy by the seeds we plant for our future.”

Visit the WSDA Farm to School program’s [Taste Washington Day](#) web page for more information, including suggested recipes and ways to participate. Or contact the program’s manager, [Tricia Kovacs](#) at 206-256-6150.

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