



Washington
State Department of
Agriculture

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Taste Washington Day celebrates farm-to-school connection

OLYMPIA – For the sixth year, the [Washington Department of Agriculture](#) (WSDA) and the [Washington State Nutrition Association](#) will partner with farmers and schools to feature Washington-grown foods in school cafeteria meals. On Oct. 5, Taste Washington Day will again recognize how our state’s agricultural industry contributes to providing healthy school meals throughout the school year.

Thirty-four school districts and 50 farms are participating this year and there’s still time for more to sign up.

In [proclaiming](#) Oct. 5 as Taste Washington Day, Gov. Jay Inslee noted that the diversity of our state’s agriculture makes us top national producers of many healthy foods, including fruit like apples, pears and sweet cherries and vegetables such as potatoes, sweet corn and peas.

“The Washington State Local Farms Healthy Kids Act of 2008 has increased emphasis on making sure school children have access to healthy food options,” said WSDA Director Derek Sandison. “Our [Farm to School](#) program links farmers and ranchers with schools to provide the freshest possible food. Taste Washington Day is the annual celebration of this partnership.”

The day has become popular with farmers, school administrators, students and parents. 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 doing the Washington Apple Crunch.

“The key to getting our children to want to eat healthy and nutritious foods is to introduce them early and often in their meals,” said Vickie Ayers, vice president of the Washington State Nutrition Association. “Taste Washington Day is also a good reminder of the bountiful agriculture we have right here in our own back yard.”

Visit the WSDA Farm to School program’s [Taste Washington Day](#) web page for more information or contact Chris Iberle at (206) 256-1874.

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Note for news media: To learn whether a school in your area is participating in Taste Washington Day, visit our TWD partners [web page](#) or contact Mike Louisell at mlouisell@agr.wa.gov (360-902-1813).