

Farm Field Trip Toolkit for Teachers



Created by Willamette Farm and Food Coalition, 2016
with support from the Gray Family Foundation

Overview

Taking a field trip to a local farm is a great way to help children understand where their food comes from, how it's grown and why a healthy local food system is important.

We've found that farm field trips are most successful when they include the following components:

- Helping task: A chance for kids to actively help the farmer with some sort of seasonally appropriate farm task. Coordinate with the farmer in advance to find a task that will be helpful and that is age appropriate.
- Harvest opportunities: Many kids have only seen fruits and vegetables in the grocery store. It's valuable for them to harvest fruits or vegetables directly from the plants they grow on.
- Tasting opportunities: Tasting the produce that was harvested from the farm can take place during the farm tour, during the harvest opportunity, or back in the classroom after the farm visit.

Important Steps

1. Secure funding (if needed, 3-6 months before the trip)

- You may need to fundraise to cover some of the costs for the field trip, such as bus transportation for students, field trip supplies, or compensating the farm for hosting students.
- There are a number of small grants available to teachers for field trips. See *Appendix 1* for funding resources.
- Apply in time to receive funding before your field trip, if possible. Because most of the funding sources in *Appendix 1* accept grant requests in the fall, they may provide funding for spring field trips.

2. Coordinate with the farm (2-4 months before the trip)

- Find a host farm. See *Appendix 2* for a list of recommended farms in our area. Let the farmer know what kind of activities you are hoping for (see above) and how much time you'd like to spend at the farm. See *Appendix 3* for a sample schedule that works well for many farm field trips.
- Every farm and farmer is unique. It is best to begin communicating with the farmer early about possible dates for field trips. The best dates for field trips here in Western Oregon are from September to early November and then again from late April to June. Plan on contacting farms at least 2 months prior to your preferred field trip date. Find a time when the farmer will have a variety of crops available for students to see, harvest and taste.
- Arrange with the farmer for any financial compensation for the trip. Some farmers may offer to host your class for free, but many will charge \$2-\$5/child, or you may want to offer that.

3. Coordinate lunches and buses (1-2 months before the trip)

Once the date and times for the field trip are set, order buses and sack lunches (if necessary) and send a note home to parents about the upcoming trip.

4. Recruit volunteers (2-3 weeks before the trip)

If you'd like extra support on the trip, request volunteers from your school community or elsewhere and request RSVPs for the trip. Provide a clear explanation of volunteer roles and expectations. As individuals sign up to volunteer, provide them with the volunteer background check form (if needed, see *Appendix 4*) and a due date for returning the form (giving yourself time to submit forms to the district in advance).

5. Plan and deliver in-class lesson (1-2 weeks before the trip)

The field trip is a much richer experience when tied to the classroom curriculum. Put the field trip into context by spending some time before the trip talking about where food comes from and what your kids already know about farms. Use Willamette Farm and Food Coalition's Lesson on Where Food Comes From (*Appendix 5*) or design your own.

6. Create a schedule for the day with activities (1 week before the trip)

See *Appendix 3* for an example schedule that we've found to work well.

7. Confirm with the farmer and finalize plans (1 week before the trip)

When planning a trip to a farm, it's important to have clear communication with the farmer. Touch base with the farmer to be sure they remember you are coming and to determine or review the helping task, harvest opportunity, tasting opportunity and the overall schedule for the day.

8. Confirm with volunteers (1 week before the trip)

Send an email reminder to volunteers and include volunteer roles, expectations, and the schedule of the day's events. Be sure all volunteers have completed their volunteer background check forms (*Appendix 4*) and are cleared to volunteer.

9. Field trip prep (1-2 days before the trip)

Remind students to dress appropriately, confirm buses are reserved and sack lunches will be ready. Divide the class into groups (if needed) for field trip activities and check to be sure you have everything you'll need for the trip. You can use the Field Trip Prep Checklist (*Appendix 6*) to keep all this information organized.

10. Field trip (day of the trip)

Remember to take lots of pictures, paying attention to photo restrictions provided by the school. Record good quotes, be safe and have lots of fun. Use the Field Trip Info Sheet (*Appendix 7*) to keep track of this busy day.

11. Follow-up (1-3 weeks after the trip)

Send any Thank You notes (consider saving copies of good ones) and payment to the farmer. You may want to dive a little deeper by providing Willamette Farm and Food Coalition's Food System Lesson (*Appendix 8*).

12. Reporting & evaluation (1-3 months after the trip)

If you received special funding to cover the cost of the trip, your funder may want to hear how it went. Remember to take pictures and notes on the trip and to gather quotes from the kids, which you can record on the Field Trip Info Sheet (*Appendix 7*). This will make reporting back to funders a breeze.

Appendix 1-Funding Sources

Target Field Trip Grants

<https://corporate.target.com/corporate-responsibility/grants/field-trip-grants>

Resources below are for Lane County, Oregon:

SELCO Mini-grants for Educators

www.selco.org/minigrants/

Eugene Education Foundation

<https://eeflane.org/grants/>

Springfield Education Foundation

<http://www.springfielddeducationfoundation.org/grants-2/educator-grant-application-process/>

Bethel Education Foundation

<https://www.betheleducationfoundation.org/>

Appendix 2- Recommended Farms for Field Trips in Lane County, Oregon

Farm	Address	Contact	Produce	What they do well
Branch Road Farm	79442 Replsleger Rd. Cottage Grove, OR	Phone: 541-517-6405 Email: branchroadfarm@gmail.com	Mixed vegetables, goats	Strong educational focus and commercial kitchen on site
Camas Country Mill	91948 Purkerson Rd. Junction City, OR	Phone: 541-357-5448 Email: stephaniep@camascountrymill.com	Grains	Strong educational focus and well established field trip program
Circle H Farm	81560 Lost Valley Ln. Dexter, OR	Phone: 541-525-6714 Email: eatwell@circlehorganicfarm.com	Mixed vegetables	Small farm modelling sustainable practices
FOOD for Lane County Youth Farm	705 Flamingo Ave. Springfield, OR	Phone: (541)343-2822 x329 Email: tpurdy@foodforlanecounty.org	Mixed fruits and vegetables	Wonderful urban farm associated with our local food bank
Groundwork Organics	30699 Maple Dr. Junction City, OR	Phone: 541-998-0900 Email: groundworkorganics@gmail.com	Mixed vegetables and fruits	A larger scale organic vegetable operation
Living Earth Farm	89030 Fir Butte Rd. Eugene, OR	Phone: 541-683-4635 Email: livingearthfarm@comcast.net	Mixed vegetables, sheep, ducks	Farmer is an experienced educator and very well organized
Phoenix Farm	36986 Camp Creek Rd. Springfield, OR	Phone: 541-510-8888 Email: angela@interact-nature.com	Mixed vegetables, poultry	Farmer is an experienced educator and is very interested in hosting school groups
Riverbend Farm	35027 Fremont Ave. Eugene, OR (Pleasant Hill)	Phone: 541-520-2561 Email: riverbndfarm@gmail.com	Mixed vegetables, tree fruit, hazelnuts	They have been interested in hosting field trips in the past
Ruby & Amber's Organic Oasis	38019 Row River Rd. Dorena, OR	Phone: 541-946-1504 Email: rubyamberfarm@gmail.com	Mixed vegetables	This farm uses working draft horses
Sweetwater Farm	83036 N. Weiss Rd. Creswell, OR	Phone: 541-895-2951 Email: farmers@goodfoodeasy.com	Mixed vegetables, fruit	Great veggie farm with a long interesting history
Thistledown Farm	91455 River Rd. Junction City, OR	Phone: 541-689-2019 Email: phone is best	Mixed vegetables, fruit, hazelnuts	This is an easy place to take your classroom for a hay ride or visit to a pumpkin patch. Less of an educational focus.
Wintergreen Farm	89762 Poodle Creek Rd. Noti, OR	Phone: 541-935-1920 Email: folks@wintergreenfarm.com	Mixed vegetables, berries, cows	Biodynamic farm with interest in hosting field trips

Appendix 3- Sample Schedule for Farm Field Trip

- 8:30-9:00 Prep in classroom
9:00 Depart school for farm
9:30-9:45 Arrive at the farm, welcome and ground rules with farmer
10:00-10:35 Split into two groups for first rotation
 Group 1: Farm tour, taste food in the fields (arrange with farmer in advance) and plant parts scavenger hunt (*Appendix 10*)
 Group 2: Helping task and harvest opportunity (arrange with farmer in advance)
- 10:35-11:15 Groups switch (pick a meeting spot) and second rotation
11:15-11:20 Groups meet near (pick a meeting spot)
11:20-11:30 Kids wash hands and prepare for lunch
11:30-12:00 Lunch at the farm
12:00-12:15 Reflection activity (drawing pictures for the classroom works well)
12:15-12:30 Pack up and load bus
12:30 Leave farm and return to school
1:00-1:15 Recess at school
1:15-1:45 Write Thank You notes to farm and have snack from the farm

Appendix 4- Background Check Forms

For some school districts in Lane County, Oregon

As of Spring 2016, each school district has its own background check form. Make sure all volunteers have completed volunteer background check forms and are cleared to volunteer.

Eugene 4J School District forms available online:

<https://www.helpcounterweb.com/welcome/apply.php?district=eugene>

Bethel School District forms available online:

<http://fm3.bethel.k12.or.us/background1/default.htm>

Springfield School District forms available at district office:

Address: 525 Mill Street Springfield

Phone: 541-747-3331

Email: pr@springfield.k12.or.us

Creswell School District forms available at district office:

Address: 998 West A Street, Creswell

Phone: 541-895-6000

Pleasant Hill School District forms available as PDF:

<http://www.pleasanthill.k12.or.us/shop/wpimages/combinedvolunteerpacket.pdf>

Junction City School District forms available as PDF:

<http://www.junctioncity.k12.or.us/PDF%20Files/volunteerbackgroundcheckapplication.pdf>

Fern Ridge School District forms available at district office:

Address: 88834 Territorial Road, Elmira, OR 97437

Email: dmoore@fernridge.k12.or.us

Phone: 541-935-2253

Appendix 5-Pre-Trip Lesson

Lesson: Where Food Comes From

1. Introduction:

Tell class about the farm they will be visiting on their upcoming field trip and then have kids brainstorm things they know about farms.

2. Some food comes from gardens:

Gardens are awesome; we can grow our own food and make yummy snacks out of it. Getting food from our garden is cheaper than buying produce and the food is much fresher! Talk about students' experience at their school garden or other gardens they've seen.

Farms are like gardens but they are bigger and grow more food.

3. Almost everything else we eat comes from farms:

Can you think of something you eat that comes from a farm?

They might guess eggs. *Yes, eggs come from chickens and chickens come from farms.*

They might guess corn. *Yes, corn grows on a farm.*

What is something you eat that doesn't come from a farm?

For example, they might guess pizza. *Actually, all the parts of pizza come from a farm. The crust is made from flour which is made from wheat which grows on a farm. The cheese is made from milk which comes from a cow, which comes from a farm. The tomato sauce comes from tomatoes, which grow on a farm. If there are other veggies on the pizza, they grew on a farm. If there is meat on the pizza, it came from an animal that lived on a farm.*

They might guess chocolate:

Even chocolate comes from a farm. The cocoa pods grow on a tree that grows on a farm.

Almost everything we eat comes from a farm!!

4. Let's talk about tropical foods!

Tropical foods grow in the tropics and need warm weather all year long.

(maybe find a map and point out the equator/tropical locations)

What are some tropical foods? Foods that need warm weather all year?

For example: Pineapple (Costa Rica), Oranges (FL), Bananas (Ecuador), Avocado (Mexico), mango, etc.

Is Oregon Tropical? Does it stay warm all year long?

It does get warm here, but it doesn't stay warm all year long. Oregon has a temperate climate which means we can't grow tropical foods, but we can still grow a lot!

Q: What kinds of things grow in Oregon? What have you seen growing in a garden or on a farm?

Blueberries, melons, strawberries, corn,... So many foods grow in Oregon!

Appendix 6- Field Trip Prep Checklist

Field Trip Prep Checklist

STUDENT FARM FIELD TRIP to:
Date:
Start time - end time:

Packing List (what to bring):

Teacher/Field Trip Coordinator:

- Name tags (for all adults and students)
- Field Trip Info Sheet(s) (*Appendix 7*) (enough for all adults)
- Printed copies or supplies for any educational activities
- Camera
- Trash bag (its respectful to take your garbage and recycling away)
- First aid kit
- Directions to the farm

Students:

- Sturdy shoes or boots (no open toes)
- Rain coat
- Sun hat
- Additional layers
- Water bottle
- Bagged lunch (minimize waste)
- Journal/notepaper and pencil (for reflection activity, if planned)

On the day of the Farm to School field trip:

- Students are assigned in _____ different groups
- Every student has a name tag
- Every student has a lunch packed from home or from the cafeteria
- Students are wearing farm-appropriate clothing (closed-toe shoes, raincoats, etc.)
- Someone to take pictures

Appendix 7- Field Trip Info Sheet

Field Trip Info Sheet

Farm: _____

Date/Time: _____

Address of the farm _____

Phone number for farm _____

Phone number for bus company _____

Number of kids on trip: _____

Names of any students with photo restrictions:

Allergies/health concerns:

Volunteers/Chaperones:

Activity schedule (with times for each activity):

Good quotes from the day:

Notes on day:

Appendix 8- Post-Field Trip Lesson

Lesson: Food System

Let's talk about our food system (show Food System Poster (Appendix 9))

A food system is the process of how plants/animals on a farm become food on our plate; growing, processing, transporting, selling, and eating food. Most food starts on the farm. From there it can go from the farmer, to the distributor, to the store and then to the eater.

OR food can go from the farmer to the eater directly.

Why eat local?

For kids who've had some exposure to these ideas already: *"Does anyone have any ideas about why we should eat foods from farms nearby?"* (Get reasons from kids and affirm good ideas.)

Buying food from local farms can be better for:

- 1. The environment*
- 2. Our health*
- 3. The farmers*

Environment:

When food comes from far away it affects the environment.

Using a map show where some tropical foods come from. Point out how far these foods had to travel. *When food travels that far it uses lots of fuel which can cause pollution and climate change.*

Now let's think about how far food has to travel if we get it from Oregon. What are some foods that grow in Oregon? Using the same map show the short distance these foods had to travel.

When food travels a shorter distance it uses less fuel, which is better for the environment.

Health:

As we just saw, food can come from very far away and take a long time to get to us or they can come from farms and gardens very close to us and get to us quickly.

Fruits and veggies taste better when they are ripe and picked and eaten right away. And they have more nutrients in them, when they are fresh, too, which is good for our bodies.

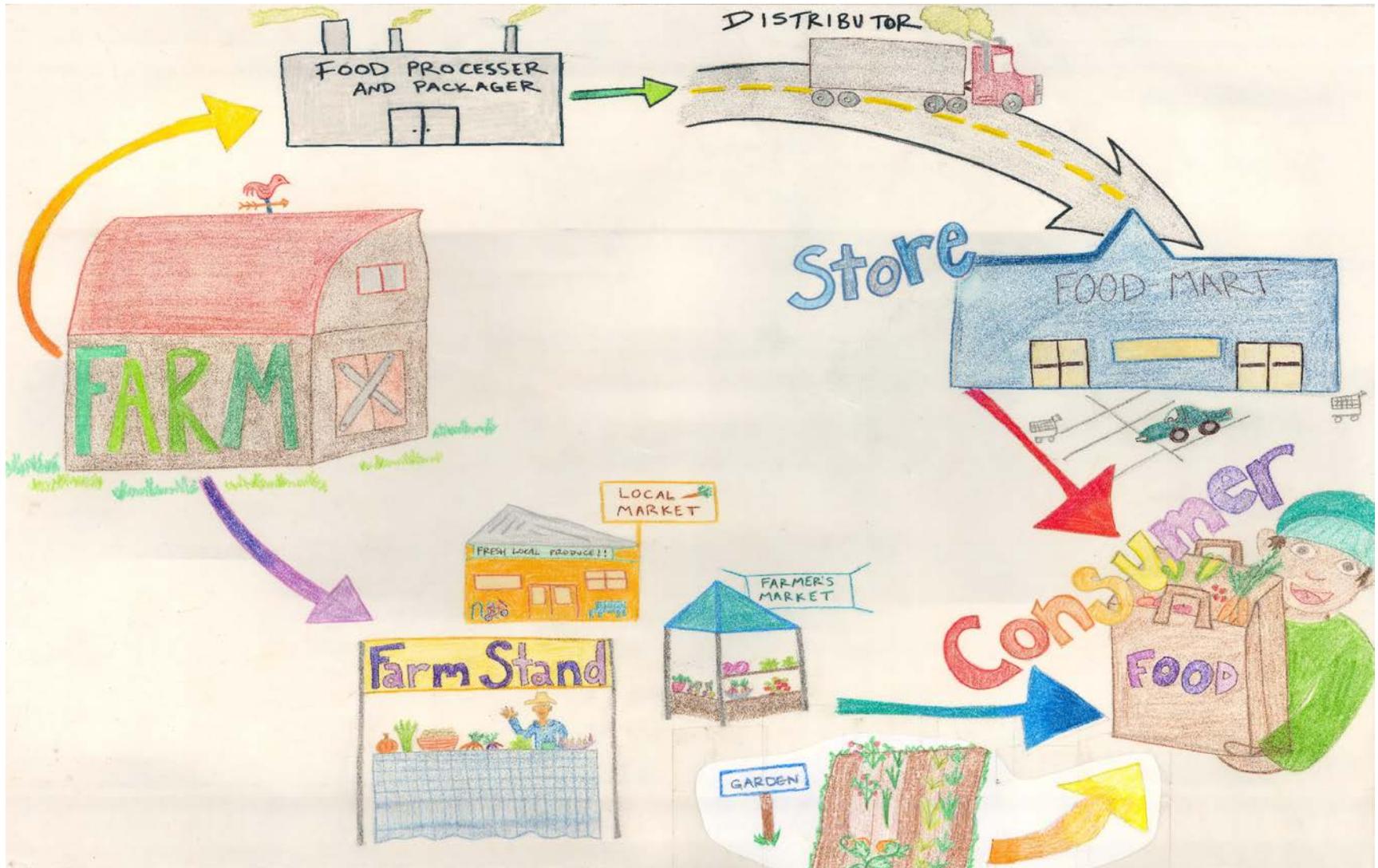
Farmers/Community:

Buying local foods can also help the farmers who grow the food.

If we buy food that has travelled very far, some money goes to the distributors and truck drivers who brought it here, and some goes to the store where it will be sold. When we buy food from farmers who live in our community, the money goes straight to them!

You can show food system poster again here. *A kid (on the poster) buys an apple at the store and it costs one dollar. 10 cents might go to the people who sort and box up the apples, 10 cents to people who store the apples in a warehouse, 10 cents to the people who figure out where the apples have to go, 10 cents to the trucker who delivers them, and 10 cents to the store that sells them (show these steps on the food system poster). The farmer is left with only 50 cents! If the kid buys an apple directly from the farmer, then the whole \$1 goes to the farmer and his farm helpers.*

Appendix 9: Food System Poster



Appendix 10: Farm Scavenger Hunt

While we are walking around the farm today look for a...



FLOWER that we eat:

LEAF that we eat:

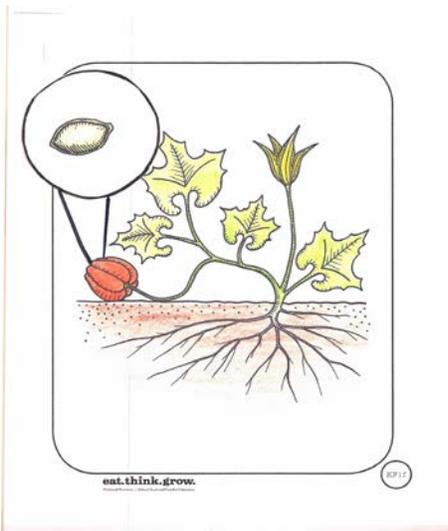
STEM that we eat:

ROOT that we eat:

FRUIT that we eat:

SEED that we eat:

While we are walking around the farm today look for a...



FLOWER that we eat:

LEAF that we eat:

STEM that we eat:

ROOT that we eat:

FRUIT that we eat:

SEED that we eat:

