



Farm to School: Advancing Racial Equity

Why Racial Equity in farm to school? At the intersections of our Food System and our Educational System, both steeped in a legacy of structural racism and both evidencing numerous racial disparities, farm to school work has the potential to positively impact students, families, schools, farmers, and whole communities. Sharing the Racial Equity impacts and benefits of farm to school can help build support.



data during covid from nccchild.org and nejjustice.org

Terms

Racial Equity: when outcomes & opportunities are not dependent on zip code or skin color

Racial Equity Lens: (not linear nor simple, but an interplay of these steps . . .)

- acknowledge racial disparities that shape life options and outcomes;
- analyze the root causes of racial disparities; and
- develop structural strategies to improve outcomes and opportunities for all.

Actions to Advance Racial Equity in Farm to School

INCLUDING RACIAL EQUITY LANGUAGE AND PRACTICES IN SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICIES

- Identifying the racial demographics and issues particular to your community is part of establishing a need, but Structural Racism impacts all communities through food and educational systems as well as larger systems. Explaining in writing the disparate opportunities and outcomes based on race can build understanding and support for collective action.
- Specifying actions to address inequities can clarify the policies and practices that will support all children and the school environments in which they are nurtured. Engaging your School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) to implement the Whole Child Model and craft concrete equity practices can also strengthen relationships among your team and help shape advocate roles. **see Building Capacity handout*

BRINGING FOOD AND EDUCATION RACIAL EQUITY ISSUES TO YOUR LOCAL FOOD POLICY COUNCILS, SHACs AND SCHOOL BOARDS

- *Local Food Policy Councils, SHACs and School Boards are directed by and responsive to community-based needs so will typically have the partners, perspectives, goals, and resources not only to frame work in farm to school through a whole community and equity lens but to support actions.*
- *See work in Orange County Schools and Chapel Hill Carrboro City Schools, addressing Equity with School Boards in CHCCS and partnering with Local Food Councils in Orange County. In very different ways, each school system has structural changes through these relationships.*



created June 2020














BUILDING LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS WITH HUB/POC AND FOOD JUSTICE ORGANIZATIONS

- Most counties or regions will have groups who have long been doing work on Racial Equity issues. Connecting with work driven by People of Color (POC) led community groups and following POC leadership helps ensure impacts will address root causes and lessen unintended consequences.
- Seeking out POC farmers and Historically Underserved Businesses (HUB) supports enterprises and people that have historically and still face structural barriers plus advances a more equitable economic system.

OFFERING RACIAL EQUITY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT TRAININGS FOR SCHOOL PROFESSIONALS AND PARTNERS

- Racial Equity trainings are not an end in themselves but provide the shared language, analysis, and strategies for collectively developing local approaches to local needs.
- Buncombe County obtained grant funding that supported School Nutrition but also provided an Equity consultant and professional development training in Racial Equity for staff and partners.

PROCUREMENT			SUSTAINABLE ENGAGEMENT	
 Local Food Purchasing: School Nutrition purchases local food for school nutrition programs <i>*purchase from farms who identify as historically underutilized businesses; buy and promote culturally relevant foods</i>	 Local Food Recipes & Taste Tests: Local food recipes are used in school nutrition programs and taste tests expose students to local foods. <i>*share POC cultural history and current food traditions</i>	 Farmer & Food partners: Students are connected to farmers and experience school visits from farmers or farm field trips <i>*partner with farms who identify as historically underutilized businesses, exploring knowledge & history of POC agriculture</i>	 Healthy, Local Food Environment: Schools engage in programs and promotions for healthy school and community environments <i>*display images of current POC and women farmers and the rich cultural history of POC farmers</i>	 Training: Farm to school trainings offered, attended, and supported (such as Culinary Institute) <i>*attend, support, offer trainings in Racial Equity to teachers and f2s partners focusing on bringing a racial equity lens to f2s work</i>
EDUCATION				
 Classroom Curriculum: Lessons offer Food Systems; Agriculture; Local Food Nutrition, Health, & Wellbeing Education <i>*teach the knowledge & history of POC food and ag</i>	 Hands-on Cooking: Students are connected to hands-on cooking of local foods through safe food preparation (such as Jr. Chef competition) <i>*explore POC cultural history and current food traditions and cooking practices</i>	 Hands-on Gardening: Edible gardens located on school grounds or nearby are used by classes <i>*explore different plants related to cultural growing, foodways, or practices</i>	 Community Engagement: Schools and/or LEAs engage community partners in farm to school activities (such as work with Local Food Councils) <i>*prioritize POC leadership and collective work in working with community members</i>	 Policy: Farm to school is named explicitly in school and LEA-level written policies/practices <i>*address racial equity at the school board level and develop school-centered resiliency strategies for emergency times</i>
 Racial Equity: Visibility of equity principles related to farm to school, across criteria: racial equity addressed in policies, educational practices, and the whole school environment; <i>*RE example possibilities in each category, such as attend, support, and offer trainings in Racial Equity for Nutrition and School staff or address Racial Equity issues at the school board level. Please share how YOU address Racial Equity across farm to school efforts!</i> <i>**POC stands for people of color</i>				

Awards Criteria from the farm to school Coalition of NC

Additional Resources

School Data and Equity Action recommendations from NC Forum: <https://www.ncforum.org/committee-on-racial-equity/>

The National Farm to School Network: Racial Equity in Farm to School: <http://www.farmtoschool.org/equity>

The Farm to School Coalition of NC Racial Equity resources folder: www.farmtoschoolcoalitionnc.org/resources

NC Department of Public Instruction's Local Wellness Policy resources, <https://childnutrition.ncpublicschools.gov/information-resources/local-wellness-policies>

More information about NC Local Food Policy Councils can be found at <https://communityfoodstrategies.org/what/network/members/>

For educators and parents as well as child advocates, "Children are not Colorblind: How Young Children Learn Race" Erin N. Winkler: <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.621.9728&rep=rep1&type=pdf>



created June 2020