



Montana Harvest of the Month

WHAT WORKS PROJECT 1 IN MONTANA

GOALS AND ACTIVITIES

Montana Harvest of the Month aims to improve student nutrition and support Montana's ranchers and farmers by:

- Exposing students to locally grown healthy foods through meals and taste tests
- Providing educational lessons on the nutritional and agricultural aspects of food
- Offering resources to engage teachers, school food service staff, and parents

This farm to school program includes three core elements: procurement, school gardens, and education.

POPULATIONS SERVED

This program currently serves students in K-12 schools and after school programs in 130 sites across the state of Montana. Plans for expansion to early child care centers, grocery stores, hospitals, and other institutions are in the works.

MAJOR PARTNERS AND FUNDERS

Montana State University, Gallatin Valley Farm to School, National Center for Appropriate Technology, Office of Public Instruction, Montana Food Corps, Montana Healthcare Foundation, Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services, Northern Pulse Growers Association, Montana School Nutrition Association, Montana Department of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture

MAJOR OUTCOMES

Data gathered in the program's pilot year indicate that the program did improve children's healthy food preferences.

The program has led to increased purchasing and serving of locally grown food items in schools and has increased schools' collaboration with communities.

INGREDIENTS FOR SUCCESS

Provided training to producers who could benefit from the sales of Harvest of the Month items to schools.

Provided participating sites with a media tool kit and Harvest at Home handouts to help share news about their Harvest of the Month activities and meals.

Involved a broad range of stakeholders in the development of the program through feedback gathered from training and presentation audiences.

Engaged community members in teaching Harvest of the Month lessons in local schools, including farmers, gardeners, and college students.

ADVICE FOR OTHERS

"Appoint a central contact person to coordinate efforts and keep the project on track. Reach out to potential partners even if the fit might be stretch by findings ways to solicit their feedback. Allow more time to complete highly collaborative projects and set realistic deadlines. Continue to monitor and evaluate the program on an ongoing basis."

— Aubree Roth, Farm to School Coordinator, Montana Team Nutrition Program, Montana State University