



Northeast Farm to School Institute Media Kit

Congratulations on being selected for the 2019-2020 Northeast Farm to School Institute! As one of twelve new NEFTSI participants, your team will be helping to lead this important national movement, being among the growing number of Northeast students engaging in Farm to School activities.

This media kit will help you spread the word about your school's plans, activities, and your selection for the Northeast Farm to School Institute. Publicizing your participation in the FTS Institute through local press and communication channels will help build support for your food, farm, and nutrition work — now and long-term.

In this kit you'll find tips for media outreach and social media and a press release template. Please use and adapt them as you need!



Announcing Your Selection for the Northeast Farm to School Institute

Throughout this year, you'll learn critical skills and practices that will help your students make healthier choices, increase local foods in the cafeteria, and draw innovative connections between classrooms, the cafeteria, and the community. We also want to help you grow your communications capacity, which is a critical part of successful programs. Publicity helps keep the community involved and informed, and media coverage demonstrates support for your project, critical pieces of getting broad-based community support and future funding.

Consider announcing your good news in the following ways:

1. Send a press release to local media outlets (see following template).
2. Share the news on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and/or other social media avenues used by your community.
3. Post a message on local listservs (e.g., Front Porch Forum).
4. Place an announcement in a community or school newsletter.

5 Tips for Getting Press Coverage

Get to Know Local Press

Read your local paper and other media to get a sense for what kinds of stories they cover. Find ways to connect your story to big local issues and themes. Learn your paper's editorial calendar and find out how far in advance (often three weeks!) they need to know about stories or announcements. If you get press coverage, please contact us (info@vtfeed.org) so that we can help spread the good word.

Get to Know Local Reporters

Find out who covers the news for your town or school and reach out with an email or phone call. Meet up for coffee and tell reporters about your program, or invite them for a tour of the garden and lunch at school. Make yourself available to answer questions.

Offer Great Content

Reach out with great stories or events and include a "hook" to draw in the reader. Share photographs and multimedia. Send copies of posters, fliers, and other materials. Develop an elevator pitch and arm yourself with great stories about impact and results.

Develop a Media Kit

Make it easy for media to cover your project by developing a simple media kit. Pull together basic information about your project (include key quotes and stories to illustrate the importance of your program), photographs, logo, and contact information. Have it ready to send out at a moment's notice, or post it online so reporters can find it easily.

Share the Love

Share your news and ask others to spread the word. Have students, community members, and project participants write stories or editorials and contact the paper. Tell the world about the coverage you've received! Join your state FTS listservs to post events. (Vermont schools can go to vermontfarmtoschool.org/get-involved. Look for similar lists in your state.)

We Love Spreading the Word! #NEFTSI

Fb: @Vermont FEED (Food Education Every Day) • Tw: @VT_FEED • Ig: @vermont_feed

Use the hashtag #NEFTSI on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to share information about the 2019-20 Institute! Example posts:

Twitter: Exciting news! We're selected as a @VT_FEED 2019-20 NE #FarmToSchool Institute team! Learn more at vtfeed.org/neftsi #NEFTSI

Facebook & Instagram: We've been selected as a 2019-20 Vermont FEED (Food Education Every Day) Northeast Farm to School Institute team! We're excited to expand our work connecting students to local agriculture and the food they eat. #NEFTSI

Press Release Template & Support

The Vermont FEED and Shelburne Farms media relations team have crafted a template press release for you to adapt and send to your local papers to announce your participation in this year's Institute. If you would like support in preparing and sending this out, please contact Elizabeth Davis at edavis@boardmandavis.com. **Be sure to update the information in bold maroon!**



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[June] 2019

[School Name] Selected For Program to Grow School-wide Farm to School Initiatives

[City, State — School name] was selected as one of twelve Northeast school teams to attend the 2019-20 [Northeast Farm to School Institute](#). [Shelburne Farms](#) and [NOFA-VT](#) offer this year-long professional development program through their [Vermont FEED](#) initiative to support selected schools in designing and implementing effective, school-wide Farm to School (FTS) programs—programs that create a culture of wellness, improve food quality and access, engage students in agriculture and nutrition education, and strengthen local food systems.

Thirty million students participate in the National School Lunch Program daily. Lunch shaming, rising school lunch debts, and highly processed foods are trending topics about school cafeterias in today's media. But school meal programs can—and have—improved, and when FTS is part of those improvements, meal participation increases by 17%. FTS connects schools with their local producers and facilitates getting fresh, whole foods on the lunch tray. As more students eat school meals, school meal program revenue increases, and more local food can be purchased, providing all kids with the chance to participate in the local food system.

“Within weeks [of eating the produce we grew at school], it was getting easier for me to walk up the hill to the garden, my mental health skyrocketed, and I was happy. I know exactly where my food comes from, and it makes me feel good. It makes me feel like I'm involved in it: I've touched it, I've planted it, and I know exactly where it's going.” –Emily, Green Mountain Technology & Career Center student.

This year, Congress will be debating reauthorization of the national Child Nutrition Act, also known as the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (CNR). The legislation supports FTS grants to projects like the Northeast Farm to School Institute. The Institute brings selected school teams together for a three-day intensive to build a FTS action plan for their school community. Then, with the support of a coach, they spend the next year putting their plans into action and implementing new programs like farm visits, gardening and cooking activities, serving seasonal foods in the cafeteria, and offering food-based, hands-on

science, math, and literacy lessons. Over nine years, the FTS Institute has supported programs at 97 schools and districts, impacting over 102,000 Northeast students.

[Add boilerplate language about school and quote from a Farm to School team member, principal, administrator, or parent]

The twelve teams selected for the 2019-20 Northeast Farm to School Institute are: Academy School, Brattleboro, VT; Berne-Knox Westerlo Central School District, Berne, NY; Etna-Dixmont School, Etna, ME; Innovation Academy Charter School, Tyngsboro, MA; Janet S. Munt Family Room, Burlington, VT; Naugatuck Public Schools, Naugatuck, CT; Providence Public School District, Providence, RI; Robert V. Connors Elementary School, Lewiston, ME; Russell I. Doig Middle School, Trumansburg, NY; Williamstown Middle/High School, Williamstown, VT; Windsor Southeast Supervisory Union, Hartland, VT; Windham Northeast Supervisory Union, Westminster, VT.

[Shelburne Farms](#) is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to cultivate and inspire learning for a sustainable future. That means learning that links knowledge, inquiry, and action to help students build a healthy future for their communities and the planet. Shelburne Farms' campus is a 1,400-acre working farm, forest, and National Historic Landmark.

[Vermont FEED](#) is a Farm to School partnership project of Shelburne Farms and [Northeast Organic Farming Association of Vermont \(NOFA-VT\)](#). Their "3C Model" catalyzes change through the Cafeteria, Classroom, and Community to improve knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors toward healthy eating, local purchasing, and our food system.

Media Contacts:

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