

**Milton Elementary and Middle Schools - Milton, VT  
2013 Vermont Farm to School Implementation Grantee**



Milton Elementary and Middle Schools are deeply committed to farm to school programming. Embracing FTS culture change, Milton was awarded a \$7,500 VAAFM Farm to School Implementation grant in 2013. Combined, the two schools have over 35 classrooms serving 1,238 preschool through eighth grade students. Thanks to their grant, Milton was able to incorporate new nutrition, cooking, and agricultural curriculum into their classrooms, participate in farm field trips, have weekly local food taste tests, and host several Wellness themed community dinners.

Leading up to receiving their grant, Milton was well on their way to creating a sustainable Farm to School Program, incorporating local food items into their school food program, building a garden, and developing student and community awareness of the connections between local farms and food. Funding from their VAAFM grant allowed them to reach their goals of integrating Farm to School nutrition into regular staff training, creating hands on learning opportunities, and incorporating local food taste-tests into their classroom curriculums.

Through their Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, staff handed out classroom snacks 3 days a week, including info cards with facts, questions, and taste test guides for classroom activities. Students became excited about trying fruits and vegetables and clearly improved their eating behaviors. One teacher proudly reminisced, "Within 5 minutes I saw a student's face change from uncertainty and a reaction of 'I hate kale!' to, 'I decided I'm going to try it', which was possible because of the excitement and positive language from her classmates and teacher." Farm to school curriculum was further developed through Milton's Wellness on Wheels (WOW) cart for cooking, agriculture, composting, and nutrition lessons in the classroom.

With such a heightened awareness of their food and the food system, Milton also began composting in each classroom, creating a long term Waste Reduction program in their school. Milton students were also provided the opportunity to go on farm field trips, giving students a truly enriching experience. Students in the Family and Consumer Science classes helped harvest, mulch, weed, and transplant at MR Harvest Farm in Grand Isle, which helped them prepare for their nutrition and agriculture lessons where they discuss the importance of local food.

The multitude of sustainability and food system activities at Milton is impressive, and is truly inspiring for communities across Vermont.