



## Event Guide

Since the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) assumed responsibility of the National School Lunch Program in 2012, Commissioner of Agriculture Adam H. Putnam has made it a priority to increase the amount of fresh Florida products purchased by and served in schools as part of the Farm to School initiative.

In May 2017, Sarasota County Schools hosted the first My "Fresh From Florida" Plate Day. All students were offered a hamburger, featuring a Florida beef patty and Florida lettuce and tomatoes, with Florida milk and a side of seasonal Florida fruits and vegetables, including green beans, potatoes, blueberries and watermelon.

**Florida's growing season aligns with the school year, creating many opportunities for schools to host their own My "Fresh From Florida" Plate Day.**

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## How to host a successful My "Fresh From Florida" Plate Day:

### Procuring Florida Products

- Check the "Fresh From Florida" Seasonal Availability Poster provided by the Division of Food, Nutrition and Wellness for in-season produce.
- Plan the menu around seasonality.
- Contact your distributor to order available products and/or reach out to local producers, following procurement standards, if the distributor does not carry desired products.
- If ordering new products, such as a new beef variety, ensure the product source is set up with your distributor.



*This institution is an equal opportunity provider.*

**Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services**  
**Adam H. Putnam, Commissioner**

## Picking a Location

- Choose a school that will allow farmers/producers to attend and participate in the My “Fresh From Florida” Plate Day event.
- Work with school principals to choose a school that will have high participation rates.
- Prep the school’s cafeteria staff on the mission and vision of the event.

## Marketing Your Event

- Utilize the division’s promotional materials, such as flyers, banners, posters, trading cards, etc. Best practice is to post posters, flyers, banners, etc. one month in advance.
- Notify parents and students through district and school websites, online menu applications and social media accounts. Best practice is to begin online promotion two to three weeks in advance.
- Invite your superintendent and school board members, as well as community partners to your event.
- Coordinate with your public information office to invite the media and arrange for a photographer to capture images of the event.
- Invite the farmers/producers responsible for products served in the meal for a meet and greet with students. If possible, invite them to serve alongside cafeteria staff.

## After The Event

- Post pictures of your event on district and school websites and social media accounts.
- Talk to the students about what they liked, and continue to have it on the menu.
- Ask teachers and clubs affiliated with your school garden if students can grow their favorite products.
- Thank your farmers/producers for being a part of your My “Fresh From Florida” Plate Day.
- Be sure to track your results and see how your participation changed on My “Fresh From Florida” Plate Day.

The Department can provide assistance with planning, promoting and executing your My “Fresh From Florida” Plate Day.

Contact us at [InfoFNW@FreshFromFlorida.com](mailto:InfoFNW@FreshFromFlorida.com) or (800) 504-6609.

