



June 2004

Dear Food Service Director:

Mark your calendars! This year **New York Harvest for New York Kids Week** is October 2—10, 2004! This fun celebration is an opportunity for schools and communities to learn about New York agriculture, enjoy locally-grown foods, and inspire healthy food choices. Below is information to help you find New York foods as well as partners and resources for your celebration.

New York Harvest for New York Kids Week was initially launched and nurtured by the New York State Assembly Task Force on Food, Farm and Nutrition Policy. It has grown with the support of the New York State School Food Service Association (NYSSFSA), NY Farms!, Cornell's Farm-to-School Program, New York Farm Bureau, and many teachers, parents, and community groups. With the 2002 Farm-School legislation, **New York Harvest for New York Kids Week** is now part of New York State's efforts to encourage schools to feature New York foods, and inspire children to choose healthy foods. The New York State Departments of Agriculture and Markets and Education are working with all state and local partners to help you make the Harvest Week bigger and better than ever.

Because of your commitment to children's health and education, we ask you to join with us, your school colleagues, and your community to promote good nutrition using New York State foods during this special week. Cafeterias can feature New York farm products and partner with classrooms for food-tastings and nutrition games. Students can visit farms and farmers' markets, or harvest their school gardens and prepare the food for a classroom feast.

Finding New York Foods

- Let your suppliers know that you want New York-grown farm and processed products.
- Please fill out a Notice of Intent to Purchase Fresh Fruits & Vegetables Locally and publish this intent in your school newsletter. For a sample see: <http://portal.nysed.gov/cn/Userhelp/portal/farmtoschool1.pdf> This form has been produced by the New York State Department of Education to help facilitate such purchases.
- Find out what fresh fruits and vegetables are seasonally available at <http://www.nutrition.cornell.edu/FoodGuide/>
- Find food producers who sell wholesale to institutions in your area by following the links on the Pride of New York web site at <http://www.prideofny.com/PONYSearch.asp>
- For fresh apples and cider, check the New York Apple Association web site www.nyapplecountry.com or request the Wholesalers Directory from NYAA, 585-924-2171, joan@nyapplecountry.com

Finding Partners and Resources

- Sample menus, classroom activity sheets, more resources and web links are available on the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets web site at www.agmkt.state.ny.us/farm2school.html
- The Cornell Farm-to-School Program provides ideas and resources on-line at www.cce.cornell.edu/farmtoschool
- To partner with community and farm organizations in your area for New York Harvest Week, contact NY Farms!, at nyfarms@baldcom.net.
- For more information on finding New York food products or with other questions and ideas, contact Bill Jordan, New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets at 518-457-0752 william.jordan@agmkt.state.ny.us

We look forward to working with you and all the partners in your school district, government, and communities. Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to celebrate **New York Harvest for New York Kids Week**. Our State's children, families, and farmers also thank you.