

ALABAMA FARM TO SCHOOL PROGRAM



THE LOCAL LUNCHBOX

An Alabama Farm to School Quarterly Newsletter



Summer is here, bringing an abundance of fresh, Alabama produce. From sweet corn and tomatoes to peaches, berries, and watermelon, this season highlights the best of our state and the farmers who make it possible.

While students enjoy summer break, schools and partners are already preparing for the new school year. Menu planning, garden projects, taste tests and local food purchasing efforts are underway to ensure a strong start this fall.

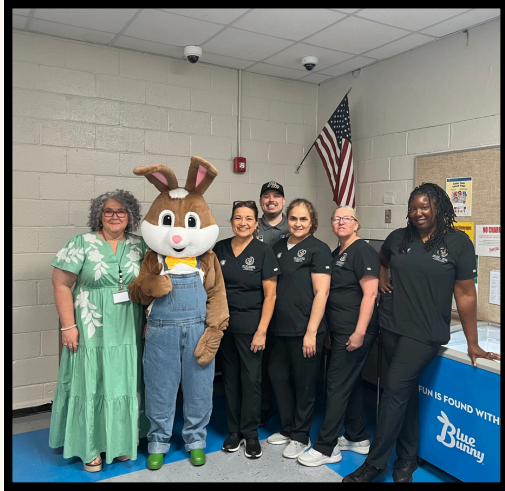
We are grateful for the farmers, educators, child nutrition professionals and partners who continue to support Farm to School efforts year round. Here's to a productive summer and an exciting back to school season ahead!



Recent Events

Alexander Visits Pell City Schools

Our mascot, Alexander, made his very first special visit to Pell City Schools on April 6th! As a reward for their participation in Alexander's Quest for School Breakfast, Alexander stopped by to meet the students, share some smiles and celebrate their enthusiasm for school meals. We loved seeing the excitement on all the kiddos' faces during this special visit! If you want to get a visit from Alexander, email us to let us know!



Florida Farm to School Conference

Alabama Farm to School's Paxton Westbrook attended the Florida Farm to School Conference in Tampa, Florida April 7–9. During the conference, she had the opportunity to connect with both familiar colleagues and new faces from across the region, sharing ideas and learning about innovative Farm to School initiatives. The event provided valuable networking opportunities and inspiration to bring back to Alabama's Farm to School efforts.



SERO Jr. Chef Cookoff

ALSDE proudly hosted the SERO Jr. Chef Cook-Off at Jefferson State's campus in Birmingham on April 24th. Competitors and coaches representing eight southern states enjoyed a delicious showcase of Alabama grown products, including beef from Jones Farm in Autauga County, lettuce from Extreme Green Farms in Lee County, pecan pies from The Alabama Pecan Company in Geneva County and strawberries from Aplin Farms in Geneva County. These local products were made available through the generous support of Sweet Grown Alabama and the Alabama Cattlemen's Association, highlighting the importance of connecting students with Alabama agriculture while celebrating culinary talent from across the region. Alabama's team place third!



Boozer Farms "Scratchworks" Tours

On May 7–8, Alabama Farm to School's Beth Spratt and Paxton Westbrook accompanied three tours of Boozer Farms in Thorsby, Alabama, as part of ALSDE's Scratchworks event. Participants had the opportunity to hear Taylor Hatchett share her family's farming story, learn about the farm's operations and gain insight into exciting plans for the future. The tours provided a valuable connection between local agriculture and school nutrition professionals, highlighting the importance of supporting Alabama grown products and the farmers who produce them.



Jones Valley Teaching Farm Visit

Alabama Farm to School's Beth Spratt enjoyed a visit to Jones Valley Teaching Farm in Birmingham alongside ADAI's Deputy Commissioner Tami Allen. During the visit, they continued building connections with the Jones Valley Teaching Farm team and had the opportunity to experience firsthand what one of their summer camps offers. The visit highlighted hands on agricultural education and the impactful work being done to engage youth in learning where their food comes from. Campers enjoyed a local lunch grown and prepared by JVTF.



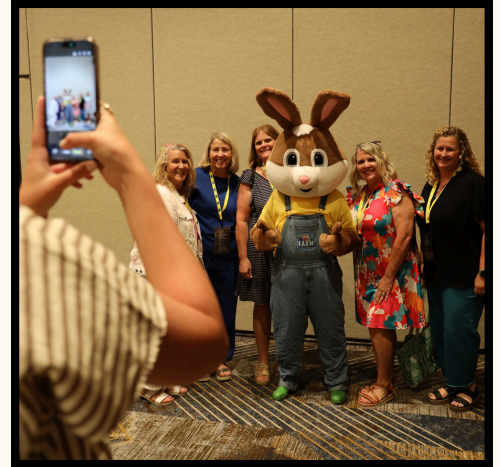
Autauga County Summer Feeding

Alabama Farm to School's Beth Spratt and Paxton Westbrook participated in one of Autauga County Schools' Summer Feeding meal pickups alongside Boozer Farm's Taylor Hatchett. During the event, students received fresh, locally grown produce, including lettuce from Riley Creek Farms and squash and zucchini from Boozer Farms and Penton Farms. It was a wonderful opportunity to connect students and families with Alabama grown products, while supporting local farmers and promoting healthy eating throughout the summer.



Alabama Ag in the Classroom 2026

Alabama Ag in the Classroom was hosted in Prattville, Alabama June 9–12, bringing together educators from across the state for a fun filled week of learning all things agriculture and discovering creative ways to incorporate it into their classrooms. Participants also enjoyed several farm tours, giving them hands-on experiences that deepened their understanding of agriculture and strengthened connections between farms and education. Educators learned about ADAI's Harvest of the Month Program and got to meet Alexander!



Elmore County Summer Feeding

Alabama Farm to School's Beth Spratt and Paxton Westbrook recently had the opportunity to assist with Elmore County Schools' Summer Feeding Program at Wetumpka Middle School. They had a wonderful time serving local families and sharing fresh, locally grown fruits and vegetables with children throughout Elmore County. Students received items ranging from lettuce, squash, plums, blueberries, potatoes, tomatoes and peaches sourced from several Alabama farms, including Boozer Farms, Extreme Green Farms, Penton Farms, McKenzie Farms and Ferguson Farms. Programs like these help connect students to Alabama agriculture while ensuring they have access to nutritious foods throughout the summer months.



Tomato Sandwich Lunch 2026

Nothing says summer quite like a fresh tomato sandwich lunch!

This year's Tomato Sandwich Lunch featured locally grown items from Alabama farmers, including juicy tomatoes from Aplin Farms in Slocumb, crisp lettuce from Extreme Green Farms in Auburn and sweet corn from McKenzie Farms in Fairhope. Stay tuned for this fall as we offer a farm tour of McKenzie Farms and give you a behind the scenes look at where some of these delicious Alabama grown products begin!



Jones Valley Teaching Farm & Alabama Farm to School: Growing Opportunities for Students Across Alabama

Jones Valley Teaching Farm is excited to formalize its collaboration with Alabama's Farm to School Program as we work together to expand access to agriculture education, school gardens, local food systems, and hands-on learning opportunities for students across Alabama. Through this partnership, "JVTF" and Farm to School will share resources, highlight successful programs, and explore new opportunities to connect students with food, agriculture, and healthy communities.

To view the full JVTF story visit our website by [clicking here!](#)





INCENTIVE PROGRAM

Since the incentive program started in school year 2020–2021, Alabama Schools have...



SPENT **\$5.1 MILLION** WITH ALABAMA FARMERS



BOUGHT **2.9 MILLION** POUNDS FROM ALABAMA FARMERS



SERVED **12.3 MILLION** MEALS FEATURING ALABAMA ITEMS



Upcoming Events

Back to School!

Back to school will be here before you know it! Keep us updated on any fun plans you might have for your cafeterias and classrooms!



Farm to School Month!

October is Farm to School Month! Stay tuned for all the fun things we have planned for the special month!

Apple Crunch Day!

Apple Crunch Day is October 13th! We will be live on Facebook! Be on the lookout for a sign up link soon!





Flat Alexander

Have you met Alexander, the Alabama Farm to School mascot?

Just like Flat Stanley, he's ready to travel far and wide to learn more about where our food comes from, meet local farmers and visit your school cafeterias!

Take him on an adventure, snap some photos and tag us to share the journey. Let's see how far Alexander can go!

Click [here](#) to print your own Flat Alexander and let your students color them to get this journey started! The school with the most posts by the end of the year, will win something special!

Also, don't forget to visit our [website](#) for updated free resources!



Be sure to check out our [Facebook](#) page for updates around the state!



Meet Jasmine Roberts! Jasmine is a graduate of Tuskegee University, and she worked for PepsiCo since 2017. She is our new Farm to School Specialist. Jasmine enjoys cooking for events, spending time with her son, Ashton, and coordinating travel for her and family. She is excited about creating meaningful connections between students and the food they eat--bringing fresh, local agriculture to life that's fun and educational!



If you know of any events coming up that you would like us to share, please email Jasmine at: jasmine.roberts@agi.alabama.gov