

COMMUNICATIONS TOOLKIT



CENTER *for*
RURAL AFFAIRS



NEBRASKA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

These institutions are equal opportunity providers. This material is based upon work that is supported by the Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

3	INTRODUCTION
4	ABOUT
5	SOCIAL MEDIA
6	TIPS AND IDEAS FOR OUTREACH AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT
6	TEMPLATE FOR NEWSLETTERS AND BLOGS
7	LOGOS
7	USAGE GUIDELINES
8	TEMPLATE FOR PRESS RELEASE

INTRODUCTION

Nebraska Thursdays officially kicked off for participation statewide August 2018. This communications toolkit serves to provide your school with resources to plan and promote Nebraska Thursdays in your school district. These outreach tools can be used to reach students, school staff, parents, and the community by leveraging your website, local media, social media, and other communication outlets. This toolkit also provides information about National Farm to School Month and the Great Apple Crunch, a fun event schools can participate in on the second Thursday of October each year.

CONNECT WITH US:

Websites:

[education.ne.gov/ns/farm-to-school/
cfra.org/f2s](http://education.ne.gov/ns/farm-to-school/cfra.org/f2s)

Hashtag:

#NebThursdays

Twitter:

[@NDE_NutrSr](https://twitter.com/NDE_NutrSr)
[@cfra](https://twitter.com/cfra)

Facebook:

facebook.com/NDENutrition
facebook.com/ruralaffairs

ABOUT

Nebraska Thursdays

Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) has partnered with Center for Rural Affairs to bring local foods to Nebraska students. Nebraska Thursdays is a statewide campaign to promote a Nebraska-sourced meal served in the cafeteria on the first Thursday of each month. This program expands farm to school activities in Nebraska's schools to better connect school cafeterias and students with local foods, gardens, farmers, ranchers, agriculture, and nutrition.

National Farm to School Month

October is National Farm to School Month, a time to celebrate connections happening throughout the country between children and local food. People in schools, early care and education sites, farms, communities, and organizations, in all 50 states, join in the celebrations – from taste tests in the cafeteria and nutrition education activities in the classroom, to farm visits and school garden harvest parties.

National Farm to School Month was designated by Congress in 2010 to demonstrate the growing importance of farm to school programs as a means to improve child nutrition, support local economies, and educate children about the origins of food. For more information, visit www.farmtoschoolmonth.org

Great Apple Crunch

Celebrate National Farm to School Month by crunching into locally and regionally grown apples. In the Midwest, we crunch at NOON on the second Thursday of October each year.

The Great Apple Crunch encourages healthy eating and supports farm to school and other local food purchasing initiatives. It's also a fun way to connect food and agriculture to all kinds of classroom curricula – from science to art. We encourage you to plan an Apple Crunch event in October to celebrate National Farm to School Month! For more information, visit cfra.org/f2smoonth.

SOCIAL MEDIA

When you tweet about Nebraska Thursdays, or post on other social media, use the hashtag #NebThursdays.

Tweets to share:

Our school is kicking off #NebThursdays by bringing in local foods to our lunch program. [link to school website for details or insert photo]

We support our farmers and community by using local foods in our school lunches. #NebThursdays [link to school website for details or insert photo]

National #F2SMonth is almost here! We are busy planning our celebration by kicking off #NebThursdays. [link to school website for details or insert photo]

Did you hear the crunch? Students across Nebraska crunched on an apple together today at noon. #AppleCrunch #NebThursdays

Kids + real food from local farms = a healthy Nebraska! We're celebrating National #F2SMonth by kicking off #NebThursdays.

Suggested Facebook and Instagram posts:

This year, our school is participating in Nebraska Thursdays, a program that helps us bring local foods to our school lunch program. Would you like to get involved? Help us celebrate by [insert ideas here: for example, joining your child in the lunchroom on Nebraska Thursdays, connecting the school with a local farmer, volunteering to assist with an event, cooking seasonal and local food at home with your child]. #NebThursdays

We support our farmers and community by using local foods in our school lunches on Nebraska Thursdays. This week, we're having [menu items] from [farm/farmer/business name]. [insert a photo of some of the menu items, kids helping unload, or the farmer delivering] #NebThursdays

National Farm to School Month is almost here! We are busy planning our Nebraska Thursdays kickoff event to celebrate. [link to details on the school website or feature a photo of the menu] #F2SMonth #NebThursdays

Did you hear the crunch? Students across Nebraska crunched on an apple at noon today and we helped make it louder during our Nebraska Thursdays meal. [use group photo or a few snapshots from the day] #AppleCrunch #F2SMonth #NebThursdays

Kids + real food from local farms = a healthy Nebraska! We're celebrating National Farm to School Month and kicking off Nebraska Thursdays. [insert link from school website, lunch menu, or a photo] #F2SMonth #NebThursdays

TIPS AND IDEAS FOR OUTREACH AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- Involve parent-teacher organizations or associations by asking for their support or send a communication about volunteer opportunities to support your cafeteria on Nebraska Thursdays.
- Inquire with staff to learn whether a classroom activity ties into what is being served into the cafeteria. For example:
 - » Snapping beans to learn integers or measuring;
 - » Family consumer science or culinary class to help with food prep;
 - » Agriculture or horticulture class to help with harvesting or bringing in food items; or
 - » Art class to design local foods, culture, or Nebraska-themed projects.
- Connect with local farmers and ranchers to see if they are interested in participating in farm to school.
- Invite your local government officials or community leaders to dine at the school on Nebraska Thursdays.
- Make an intercom announcement on Wednesdays to remind staff and students.

TEMPLATE FOR NEWSLETTERS AND BLOGS

October is National Farm to School Month and we are celebrating at [school name] by kicking off Nebraska Thursdays! This program helps connect school cafeterias and students with local food, gardens, farmers, and ranchers.

On the first Thursday of each month, a Nebraska-sourced meal will be on the school lunch menu. We're looking forward to working with [names or farms and/or businesses] to serve items on the lunch menu, such as [food items] and [food item].

We have [these activities or future menu items] planned for the upcoming school months. We know lunch is a highlight of many of our students' days, and we can't wait to serve them foods produced right here in Nebraska!

Pro-tip: Ask your child what new foods they tried on Thursdays or what they might have learned about a farm or particular food that day at lunch.

Are you interested in getting involved with Nebraska Thursdays? [insert here the best way for them to contact or volunteer, etc.]

LOGOS



CENTER *for*
RURAL AFFAIRS



NEBRASKA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

USAGE GUIDELINES

1. Always position the logo to the top of the document, with plenty of space around it.
2. Do not crop the image.
3. Make sure the logo is proportionately enlarged or reduced in size.
4. When reproducing, be conscious of its size and legibility.
5. The logo has been carefully designed and should not be altered in any way, including: coloring, retyping of text/changing fonts, distorting, adding shadow, adding other graphics, rotate, place foreground on top of the logo, or adding additional copy to the logo.

TEMPLATE FOR PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release - [insert date]

Media contact:

[Name], [Email], [Phone]

[Logo]

[School name] celebrates Nebraska Thursdays in the school cafeteria

[Location] - [school district name] has joined Nebraska Department of Education Nutrition Services and Center for Rural Affairs in supporting local food by joining Nebraska Thursdays. This statewide campaign celebrates farm to school by serving a Nebraska-sourced meal in the cafeteria on the first Thursday of each month.

The school will kick off its Nebraska Thursdays season on [date] with [local menu items and where they are coming from].

“Participating in Nebraska Thursdays provides students and school staff with an opportunity to celebrate our local farmers and seasonal Nebraska foods,” said [media contact name or staff name].

[Specific plans or activities, for example, farmer visits, using school garden produce, or taste tests.]

[Any information you have about local farmers, ranchers, or markets you are using can go here.]

“If you would like to be involved in Nebraska Thursdays, [Ideas: for example, join your child in the lunchroom on Nebraska Thursdays, connect the school with a local farmer, volunteer to assist with an event, cook seasonal and local food at home with your child],” said [media contact or staff last name].

[This quote could be used in place of one of the other quotes: “Our school wanted to bring local foods to our school lunches,” said [name]. “This program helps us highlight Nebraska foods on our lunch menu and supports our community by purchasing meat and produce from local farms and businesses.”]

Nebraska Thursdays is sponsored by Nebraska Department of Education with partner organization Center for Rural Affairs, and supported by Omaha Public Schools Nutrition Services. Additional support is provided by Nebraska Dry Bean Commission, Midwest Dairy Council, and Nebraska Beef Council.

###