



## Nebraska Farm to School Institute

The Nebraska Farm to School Institute was established to strengthen local food purchasing and education practices within interdisciplinary school teams. Eight school teams were competitively selected to participate in the Institute during the 2021-22 school year, engaging in training, technical assistance, and coaching support. The Nebraska Farm to School Institute is modeled after the “3 C’s” approach, pioneered by Vermont FEED, which integrates the Classroom, Cafeteria, and Community into the development of farm to school action plans. Nebraska Farm to School Institute teams were granted \$3,000 in funds to assist in advancing their farm to school goals.

### Farm to School Goals

- Overton students will engage in at least one farm to school educational opportunity each month.
- Overton’s food service team will serve at least one local food item each month in the cafeteria.
- The Overton community will be invited to a kick-off event at the beginning of the school year.

### Accomplishments

- In addition to the monthly educational opportunities, students went on field trips, grew food in the greenhouse, and led lessons with younger students. Each lesson was tied to a local food item being served in the cafeteria.
- Local food items were served more than 1x/month.
- Over 100 community members showed their support at the kick-off event.



<b>Overton Public Schools</b>	Overton Public Schools participated in the inaugural school year 2021-2022 Nebraska Farm to School Institute as a full school district.
<b>Student Population</b>	Pre-K to 12th grade students: 298
<b>Farm to School Team Members for School Year 2021-2022</b>	Mark Aten: Superintendent Brenda Buchholz: School Food Service Director Angie Ehlers: 7-12th Family & Consumer Science Teacher; FCCLA Adviser Seth Ehlers: Science Teacher/Greenhouse Manager Julianna Loudon: Agricultural Educator Patricia Luck: NEP Extension Assistant
<b>School Year 2021-2022 Coach</b>	David Lott: Community Environment Extension Educator; Horticulturist



## Outcome

Overton Public Schools has learned a lot about the rewards and challenges of running a successful farm to school program. The Pre-K-12 school district in Central Nebraska serves nearly 300 students and wanted to integrate farm to school with their existing FFA and FCCLA programs. During the Farm to School Institute in June 2021, the Overton team developed an ambitious set of goals for the 2021-2022 school year.

To accomplish these goals, it took a true team effort: food service director Brenda Bucholz sourced and integrated seasonal local food items into school meals. Agriculture Education teacher Julianna Loudon and FCS teacher Angie Ehlers developed lessons and activities for students to learn about the local food items served that day. High school students got involved by leading lessons with students in younger grades, modeling leadership skills and helping encourage younger students to get excited about farm to school.

The team didn't stop at the doors to the school. The Overton community stepped up in support of these new efforts. At their kick-off event, over 100 community residents showed up, including organizations like Farm Bureau, Farm Credit Services, and local banks all contributing funds and supplies to the event. The community support was so strong, the Overton team spent a fraction of the funds they were planning to use on this event.

Looking into the future, Overton's Farm to School team sees a lot of potential to incorporate more classrooms and students into their efforts. Their greenhouse has become an incredible learning opportunity for high school students and going forward getting younger students into the greenhouse for learning opportunities is a priority.

Part of their future includes a team trip to Vermont to learn hands-on with one of the nation's leading farm to school organizations, Vermont FEED. Overton team members will get to spend a week in Vermont, learning best practices and creating plans for the upcoming school year!



### Contact Information:

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