

habanero pepper



iceberg lettuce



kale



nectarine



quince



yam



zucchini

growing gardens

buying local

activities for children

Florida Farm to Preschool for Early Care and Education Providers




What is farm to preschool?

Farm to Preschool (F2PS) encompasses efforts to serve locally or regionally produced foods to children in early child care and education settings, and encourages hands-on learning activities such as gardening, farm visits and fresh food preparation. F2PS is a great way to introduce young children to where their food comes from, and helps them develop lifelong healthy eating habits.



Florida Planting Dates

	North	Central	South	DAYS FROM: SEEDING TO HARVEST TRANSPLANT TO HARVEST
Beans, green	Mar–Apr Aug–Sept	Mar–Apr Aug–Sept	Mar–Apr Aug–Sept	50–70
Broccoli	Aug–Feb	Sept–Feb	Oct–Jan	75–90 50–70
Cantaloupes*	Feb–Apr	Jan–Mar	Dec–Mar	85–110 70–90
Carrots	Aug–Mar	Aug–Mar	Sept–Mar	70–120
Cauliflower	Aug–Feb	Sept–Feb	Sept–Jan	75–90 50–70
Cucumbers	Feb–Apr July–Aug	Jan–Mar Sept–Feb	Sept–Feb	40–65
Lettuce	Jan–Feb Sept–Oct	Sept–Feb	Sept–Feb	60–80
Peas, Snow or English	Jan–Mar	Nov–Feb	Nov–Feb	60–80
Peas, Southern	Mar–July	Feb–Aug	Sept–Apr	75–90
Peppers	Feb–Mar July–Aug	Feb–Mar July–Aug	Feb–Mar July–Aug	90–100 65–75
Potatoes, Irish	Jan–Feb	Nov–Feb	Oct–Jan	85–110
Potatoes, Sweet*	Mar–Jun	Feb–June	Dec–Sept	85–130
Pumpkins	Early July	Mid July	Early Aug	80–100 70–90
Spinach*	Sept–Mar	Sept–Mar	Oct–Feb	45–60
Squash, Summer* (zucchini)	Feb–Apr Aug–Sept	Jan–Apr Aug–Sept	Aug–Mar	40–50
Squash, Winter (acorn, butternut)	Feb–Apr Aug–Sept	Jan–Apr Aug–Sept	Aug–Mar	85–120
Strawberries*	Sept–Oct	Sept–Oct	Oct–Dec	30–60 90–110
Tomatoes	Feb–Apr July–Aug	Feb–Apr July–Aug	Feb–Apr July–Aug	70–90 80–100
Watermelon	Feb–Apr	Feb–Apr	Feb–Apr	60–90

in the classroom

- Use this chart to plan your class garden.
- Buy local and regional foods for reimbursable meals.
- Use agricultural education programs such as Grow It, Try It, Like It! (see resources).
- Taste test locally-produced foods.
- Participate in a Harvest of the Month program.
- Start and maintain preschool gardens.
- Take field trips to local farmers' markets and farms.

benefits

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recognizes that F2PS can improve early eating habits and obesity prevention.
- Increases children's willingness to try new foods.
- Promotes physical activity through gardening activities.



Buy "Fresh From Florida"

Florida-grown produce is available all year. Use this chart to help plan your seasonal Florida menus. Local strawberries are a special winter treat and look for Fresh From Florida watermelon to serve as a refreshing summer snack.



Yummy Florida Produce All Year Long

Fresh fruit is a healthier choice than fruit canned in syrup.

	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
Bell Pepper												
Blueberry												
Broccoli												
Cantaloupe												
Carrot												
Cauliflower												
Celery												
Cucumber												
Grapefruit												
Lettuce												
Mango												
Orange												
Snap Bean												
Spinach												
Squash												
Strawberry												
Tangerine												
Tomato												
Watermelon												



outside play is healthy!

Take Advantage— We're in the State of D!

Children and infants may not be getting enough vitamin D. Vitamin D is needed for many body processes and development. Getting a few minutes of sunshine every day is important for all ages so we are lucky to have an abundant amount of sunshine in Florida!

Make sure there are shady spots in your outside area. Children should not be in the sun for long periods of time due to risk of sunburn. Make sure skin is covered with sunscreen and children have plenty of drinking water.

Physical Activity Helps Form a Well-Rounded Child.

ACTIVE CHILDREN TEND TO:

Have fewer behavioral and disciplinary problems.

Do better in school and have longer attention spans in class.

Have improved social skills and brain development.

Feel confident about themselves and their bodies.

Have a reduced risk of feeling stressed or depressed.

Sleep better.

physical activity every day

Toddlers:

60–90 minutes or more.

Half-day programs,
30 minutes or more.

physical activity every day

Preschoolers:

120 minutes or more.

Half-day programs, 30 minutes or more.





outside play is fun!

GARDEN OBSTACLE COURSE: Use your garden furniture to create a maze. Place obstacles such as a rope tied to two chairs for children to crawl under or a hose for them to hop over throughout the maze.



MOVING FRUIT: Stand in a circle with your group. Select three types of fruit. Two or three children are oranges, two or three children are watermelon, and the others are blueberries. Children move to the center of the circle whenever you call out their kind of fruit.



HARVESTING PUMPKINS: Place one or two pumpkins at one end of your daycare. Children take turns transporting the pumpkin(s) to the other end of the daycare. Children will quickly realize just how heavy pumpkins are. Variation: Use very round pumpkins and have children roll them across the daycare.



MY FARMERS' MARKET OBSTACLE COURSE: Create an obstacle course complete with balance beams, a tunnel, hula hoops, etc. Deposit fruit and vegetable illustrations along the obstacle course. Have children carry a basket as they complete the course and encourage them to collect the fruits and vegetables.

PLOUGHING FIELDS: Use rope to tie a cardboard box behind each of your bicycles/tricycles. Children will enjoy pretending to plough the yard. If you wish, you can also place balls here and there throughout the yard. Children will love to pretend balls are pumpkins they can collect in their wagon.

HARVEST TIME: Plant a pretend garden in your sandbox. Hide plastic fruits and vegetables from your play kitchen in the sand and encourage children to dig them out.

DANCING SUN: Stand in a circle and place a hula hoop in the center of the circle. The hula hoop represents Mr. Sun. Children take turns creating a dance step. The other children repeat the dance step.

Reference: Educatall. Activity planning by theme and printable documents.
<http://www.educatall.com/index.html>



Simple Items Can Spark More Creativity.

Fabric, containers of varying sizes, sponges, plastic milk crates, backpacks, small shovels, paint brushes, etc. are easy to use in an outside play area and foster activity, cooperation and creativity.



Mud Pie Anyone? Most adults don't feel comfortable letting children make mud pies, but there is some evidence that playing in the dirt improves the ability to learn new tasks and may decrease anxiety.



outside-garden play is natural for children of all ages!



dirt

Children can stomp down on dirt to flatten it for planting, or just dig in the dirt for fun with small shovels or cups.

water

Children can fill watering cans, and water the garden.

weeds

Teach children to spot and pull out weeds—then they can run to place weeds in a bin.

“I spy”

See who can find the most worms or bugs.

small rakes

Teach children to use small rakes to break up big clumps of dirt, and rake up leaves.

buckets & wheelbarrows

Have children carry compost to the garden using small buckets or wheelbarrows.



GARDEN YOGA: Have a session by the garden. Use nature poses like butterfly and tree pose—the Sun Salutation is perfect for Florida’s early morning sunshine. Check out Mooga from the Florida Dairy Council (see “resources” on the back cover).

PRETEND PAINT: Pretend paint a tree with buckets of water and big paint brushes.

MANGO, MANGO, ORANGE! Instead of Duck, Duck, Goose, play the same game using Florida seasonal fruits and vegetables.

GARDEN BASE: Play Hide and Seek using a part of your garden as home base.

PLAY CHASE: Chase birds and butterflies.

FARMER SIMON SAYS: Play Farmer Simon Says using the garden setting: “Simon says stretch your hands up toward the sun”; “Simon says run to the tree and back”; “Simon says squat low like you’re picking strawberries,” etc.





questions?

Guidance for Child Care Food Program (CCFP) contractors, home providers and sponsored centers (facility).

Can funds from the nonprofit food service account be used to purchase items for gardens such as seeds, fertilizer, watering cans, rakes, etc.?

Yes. As long as the produce grown in the garden will be used as part of the reimbursable meal or for nutrition education activities. When using garden produce in CCFP reimbursable meals, document the weight and/or volume of the produce.

Can produce be purchased from a school garden or another CCFP contractor or facility?

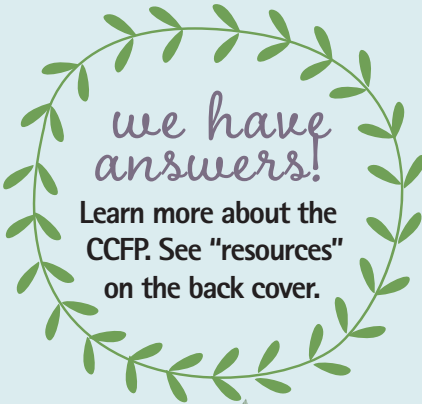
Yes. Produce may be purchased from a garden run by a school organization such as Future Farmers of America (FFA) or another CCFP center or facility as long as documentation includes the date of purchase, name of organization, item cost, amount of produce (lbs, each, etc.), and total cost.

Can food that was donated from local community gardens or farms be used as part of the reimbursable meal?

Yes. Records must be maintained of the types and quantities of donated foods received from community gardens or farms.

When purchasing food from a farm stand, farmers' market, Community-supported Agriculture (CSA), or directly from a farm, are handwritten receipts acceptable forms of documentation of purchase?

Yes. Handwritten receipts for items purchased are acceptable documentation as long as the receipt includes the date of purchase, name of vendor/farmer, item cost, amount of produce (lbs, each, etc.), and total cost.



resources

THE CHILD CARE FOOD PROGRAM (CCFP) The CCFP and two related programs, the Afterschool Meals Program and the Homeless Children Nutrition Program, are administered by the Bureau of Child Care Food Programs (Florida Department of Health). These programs provide nutritious meals and snacks to children through public-private partnerships with organizations committed to caring for children. To learn more and find out if your organization is eligible to participate, call 850-245-4323, or visit www.floridahealth.gov/ccfp.

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA, INSTITUTE OF FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES (UF/IFAS) EXTENSION UF/IFAS Extension has offices in each of Florida's 67 counties. UF/IFAS Extension helps provide information on gardening, nutrition and youth development (4-H) to the public through classes, consultations, demonstrations, educational materials, field days, meetings and workshops. Contact your local office: <http://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/map/index.shtml>.

GROW IT, TRY IT, LIKE IT! Garden-themed nutrition education kit for child care center staff. Click on *Resource Order Form* to order your own free copy: www.fns.usda.gov/tn/grow-it-try-it-it.

FARM TO SCHOOL RESOURCE LIBRARY Search for curriculum, menus, recipes, and much more from the National Farm to School Network: www.farmentoschool.org/resources.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE Farm to Preschool information, fact sheets and activities: www.fns.usda.gov/farmentoschool/farm-preschool.

A DOZEN WAYS TO BE HEALTHY Twelve easy-to-follow lesson plans brought to you by the CCFP: www.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/childrens-health/child-care-food-program/nutrition/_documents/lesson-plans/introduction.pdf.

FLORIDA DAIRY FARMERS—KIDS' CORNER Resources from the Florida Dairy Farmers for an interactive and fun way to learn about Florida dairy: www.floridamilk.com/in-the-schools/kids-corner/.

COMMUNITY FARMERS MARKET LOCATOR Easily browse for nearby farmers' markets throughout Florida by county, city or zip code: www.freshfromflorida.com/Divisions-Offices/Marketing-and-Development/Consumer-Resources/Buy-Fresh-From-Florida/Community-Farmers-Markets.

