

Farm to School Action Alert!



Bills in Support of Farm to School Programs

All of the following bills support Farm to School Programs by providing tools to connect school food service providers with producers in their areas to source local food efficiently and cost effectively.

More specifically the following bills all:

- Create a national USDA competitive matching grant program, renewable for up to two years, to support planning, implementation, training, and technical assistance grants for communities to implement Farm to School Programs.
- Consider regional and urban-rural balance in project selection, and prioritize applications that serve institutions with a high proportion of children eligible for free and reduce price lunches, have the potential for long-term sustainability, and include collaboration with producer groups.
- Require The Secretary to provide technical assistance and information to further the purposes of this Program.

While the Coalition encourages its members to support all three bills, **we request that particular emphasis, energy and support be given to Rep. Holt's bill for the following reasons:**

- **Rep. Holt is on the HOUSE EDUCATION AND LABOR COMMITTEE**, the Committee with jurisdiction over the Child Nutrition Reauthorization, so this bill has the best chance of being incorporated.
- **This bill contains just ONE ASK** - funding for the Farm to School program. A bill with just one issue has a much greater chance of passing than a bill with multiple issues.
- **Rep. Holt's bill includes MANDATORY FUNDING** – this means we do not need to advocate for funding on a yearly basis, which takes a lot of resources. **NOTE:** The Farm to Cafeteria Program has been on the books and authorized for the past 5 years, but was never funded through an annual appropriation.

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Rep. Rush Holt's (NJ-12) Bill Includes:

- This is a stand-alone Farm to School bill including **mandatory funding**
- \$50 Million (over 5 years) in Mandatory Funding for a competitive grant program for Farm to School Projects

HR 4333: The Children's Fruit and Vegetable Act of 2009

Sponsored by Rep. Sam Farr (CA-17)

- This bill includes Farm to School with **mandatory funding**
- Other mandatory programs are also included in this bill:
 - \$100 Million for School Kitchen Equipment
 - \$20 Million (over 2 years) for School Salad Bars
 - \$50 Million (over 5 years) for a competitive grant program for Farm to School Projects
- This bill also directs the Secretary to promulgate a final rule to update the nutrition standards and meal requirements for School Meal programs no later than September 2011

The National Farm to School Act

Sponsored by Rep. Betty McCollum (MN-04), Rep. Bobby Scott (VA-03), and Rep. Tom Latham (IA-04)

- This bill includes Farm to School with **discretionary funding** as well as directions to USDA to identify existing USDA programs that can be used to facilitate participation of small and medium-sized farmers, ranchers and fisherman in farm-to-school programs
- This bill also authorizes the Secretaries of Agriculture, Education, and Health and Human Services to establish a national web-based Farm to School exchange to facilitate sharing of information, best practices, research and data on Farm to School Programs