



Dr. John D. Barge, State School Superintendent

Department of Education Meets with Representative Thomas Smith to Discuss Farm to School Program

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March 15, 2011 - Georgia Department of Education Deputy Superintendent Dan Carter, along with Director of Governmental Affairs Tom Wilson and External Affairs Specialist Weston Burlison, met with House Representative Thomas Smith to discuss the use of fresh local produce in Georgia's School Nutrition Programs. Discussed was their commitment to implement a plan that increases the knowledge and use of Farm to School. The program will focus on providing local schools with the option of using local farmers to supply produce for school meals.

According to the Department of Agriculture, Farm to School has specific goals:

- To meet the diverse needs of school nutrition programs in an efficient manner
- To support regional and local farmers and thereby strengthen local food systems
- To provide support for health and nutrition education.

Farm to School decreases the distance between producer and consumer, while benefiting the local economy and enhancing nutrition education within Georgia's Schools. The Department of Agriculture has set plans to conduct a study of the use of Farm to School in the summer of 2011. Information will be gathered to identify how local farmers may efficiently provide Georgia-grown products that fulfill the needs of schools.

To date, schools districts including Cobb County, Decatur City, Rockdale County and Carrollton City use the Farm to School Program by planting school gardens, visiting local farms and using local produce for school meals.

More information:

Farm to School Program - <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/F2S/about.htm#Initiative>

Farm to School Network - www.farmtoschool.org

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