

# Farm-to-School Project, 2012

UW – MHP & Washington State Department of Agriculture



Cascade Middle School, Auburn - Ken Lambert, Seattle Times

# The overview...

- The story of school food
- Policy and action
- Farm-to-School
- WSDA Survey
- Course project and our work together



Van Asselt Elementary – Ken Lambert, Seattle Times

# National School Lunch Program

Signed into law by Harry S. Truman in 1946



Bryant School Cafeteria, MT 1947

Military Service

Outlet for agricultural products

Lunch critical to successful learning

In 2010, over 31 million children received school lunch each day.



# Meal Participation in Washington State (OSPI 2010)

Districts participating= 281

School sites participating = 1,969

Number of students enrolled in NSLP = 1,027,899

Number of students participating each day = 510,152



La Conner School District, Taste Washington Day, 2010

“We've seen the connection between what our kids eat and how well they perform in school ...

It is critical that we work to ensure that all children have the basic nutrition they need to learn, grow, and to pursue their dreams”

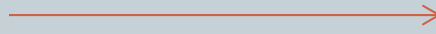
- Michelle Obama, 2011



Van Asselt School District, Seattle, WA

# Governance and Administration of School Food

Policy



Practice

United States Congress

Federal

United States  
Department of Agriculture  
(USDA)  
Food and Nutrition Service (FNS)

Washington State  
Legislature

State

Office of  
Superintendent of  
Public Instruction  
(OSPI)

School Food Authorities  
(SFAs)

Local

School Food Authorities  
(SFAs)

In 2010, the National School Lunch Program cost the US Federal Government \$10.8 Billion

Washington State spent \$357 Million

### Cost Breakdown



Federal Reimbursement per meal = \$2.77

Production cost per meal = \$3.00

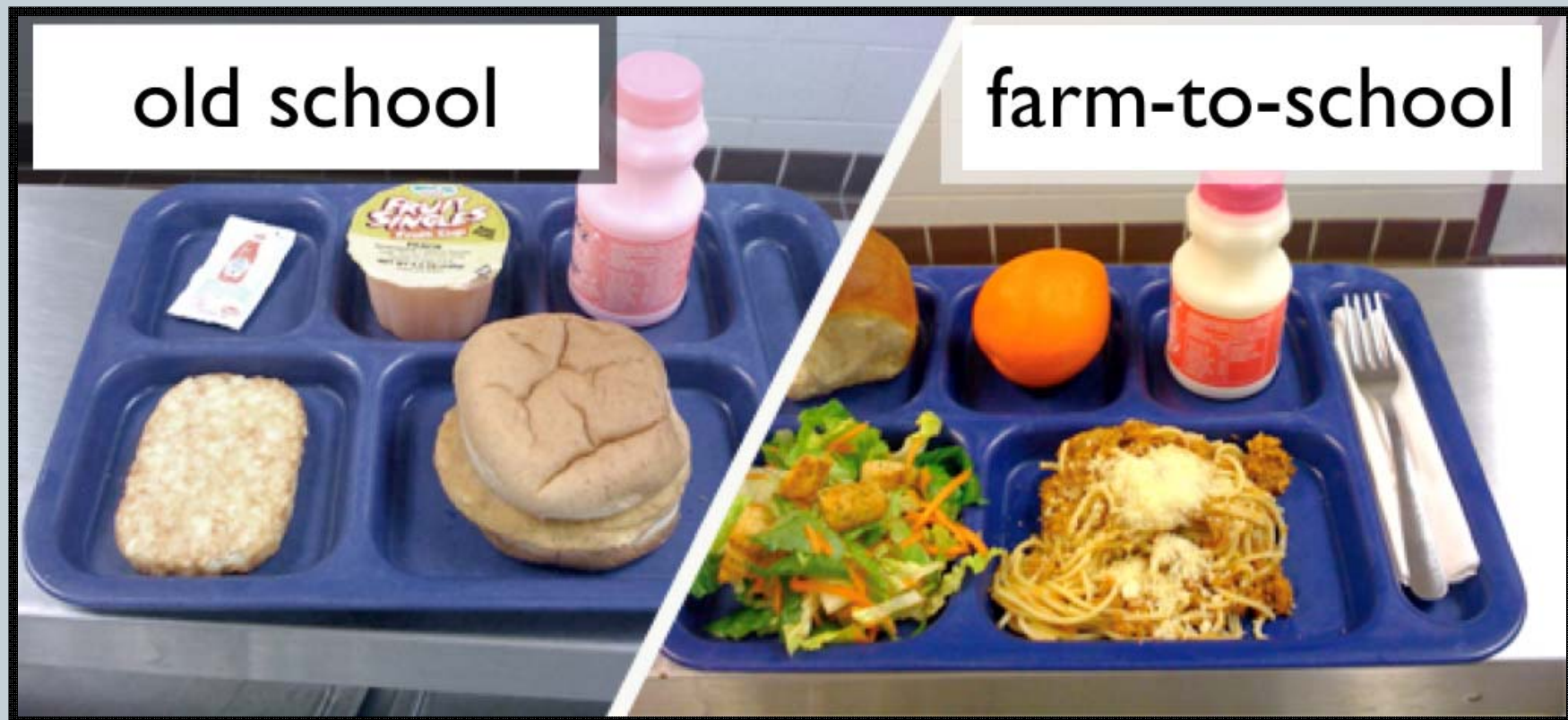
Actual available for food purchasing = \$1.16

(USDA Food and Nutrition Services; OSPI)



“It's a long road from pizza to black-bean burgers, from chicken nuggets to quinoa salad.”

Los Angeles Times, Dec 20<sup>th</sup> 2011



Adapted from JamieOliver.com



# Farm to School

- Getting locally grown foods into school lunches and snack programs
- Education about food, nutrition, agriculture and the environment
- Experiential learning through school gardens and hands-on food skills projects
- Farm visits
- Farmers and chefs in the classroom



# Why farm-to-school?

Fresh, tasty, healthy  
food for kids . . .



Photo by: Sam Tonn at Van Asselt Elementary



and more reasons to  
want to eat them!

# Why farm-to-school?



Focus, behavior  
and attention

Readiness to learn





# Why farm to school?



Learning where and how  
our food is grown

the role of farmers in  
land and water  
stewardship

and how agriculture  
contributes to  
Washington's economy



# Why farm to school?



Support Washington  
agriculture and  
farmland preservation



# Why farm to school?

Encourage healthy eating habits and food skills that will last a lifetime



Photo by: Eva Ringstrom of Eat Better, Feel Better



Photo Courtesy of Blue Earth Farms



## Political Framing of Farm to School

### WHY Farm to School?



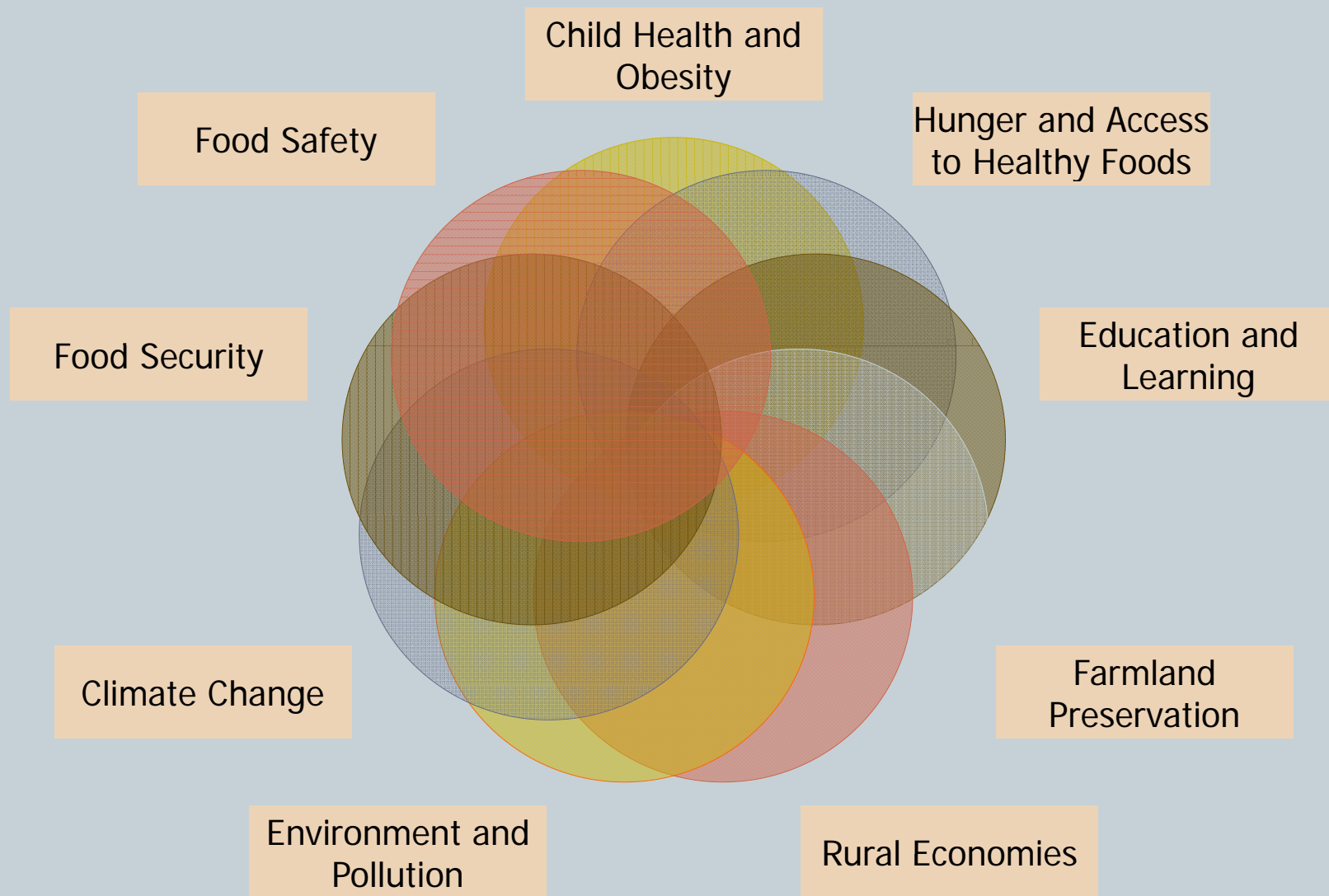
**HEALTH: Kids Win**



**AGRICULTURE: Farmers Win**



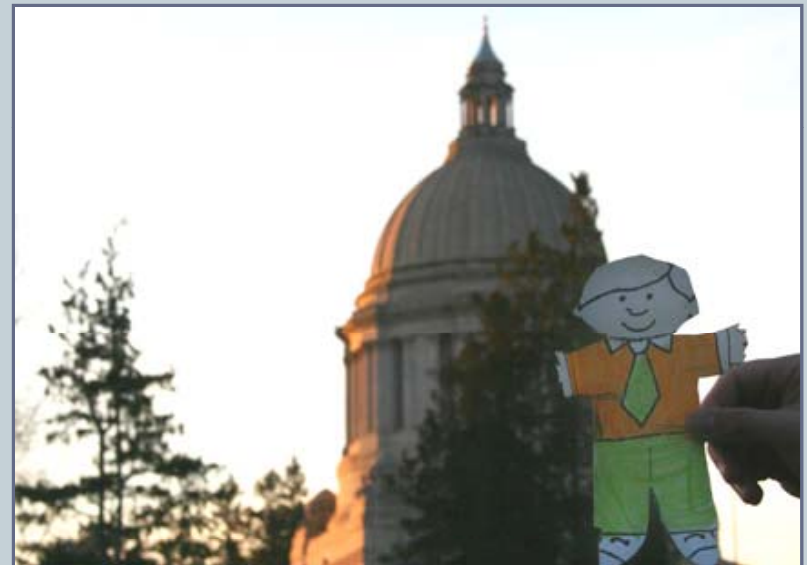
**ECONOMY: Communities Win**





# The Local Farms-Healthy Kids Act: policy changes relating to schools

- Farm to School Program (WSDA)
- WA Grown Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Grants (OSPI)
- Eliminates low-cost bidding requirements in school food purchases
- Encourages School Gardens to grow food for educational purposes and offer the food for consumption in school snack and meal programs.



# WSDA Farm-to-School Program



- Assist producers, distributors and brokers to market WA Grown food to schools
- Assist schools in connecting with local producers
- Identify and share education resources on the nutritional, environmental, and economic benefits of locally grown foods
- Support efforts such as school gardens and farm visits

# Challenges in WA Schools

- Product availability
- Operational challenges
- Complex procurement process
- Food safety and liability
- Logistics



Delivery of apricots to from Tonnemaker Farm  
Kent School District, 2011

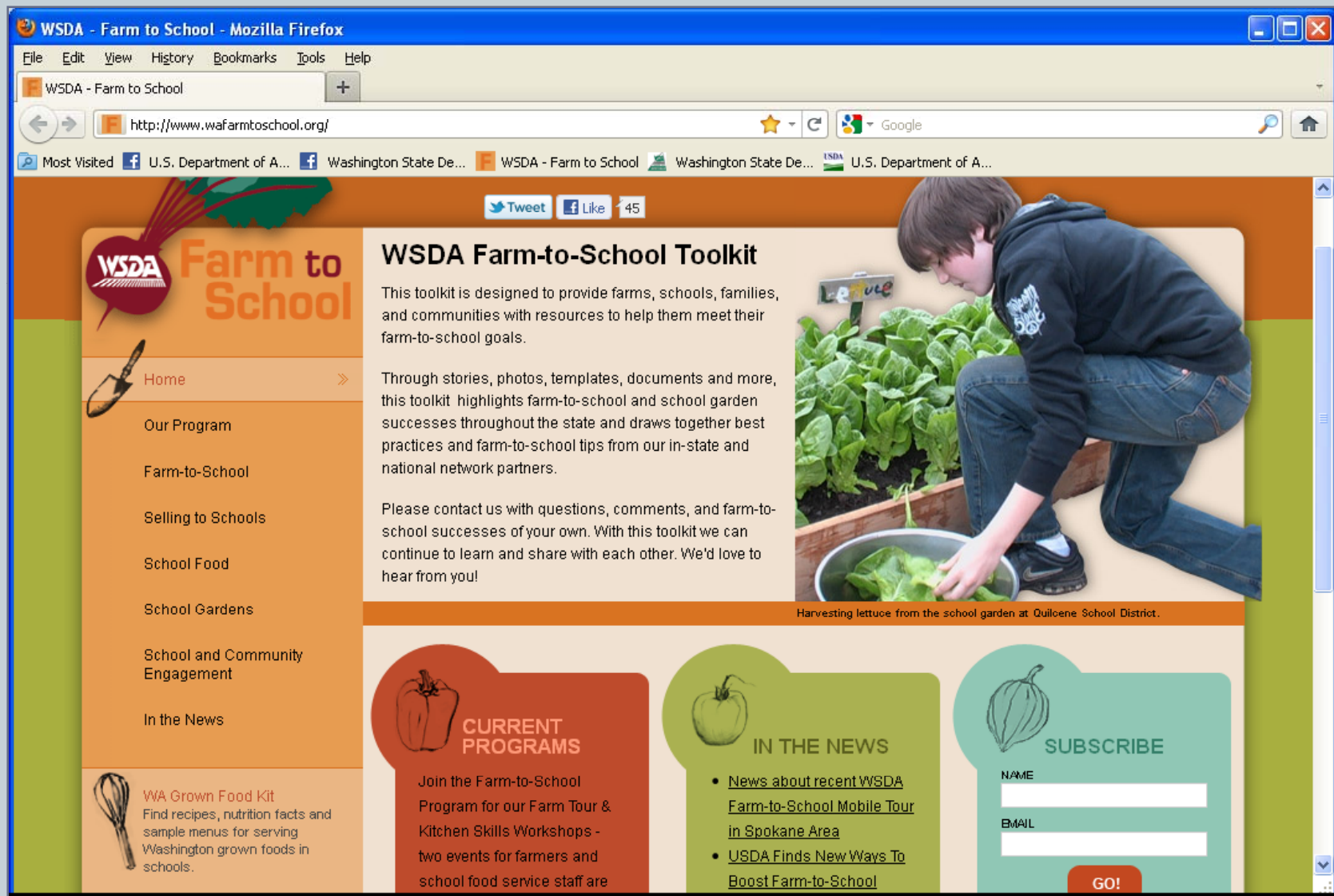
# What this means for our work

- Building knowledge, networks and relationships
- Helping schools navigate the rules and logistics
- Helping farms meet market requirements
- Pilot projects in various institutions





# What this means for our work now



# Funding this work

“Effective July 1, 2011, the Farm-to-School Program has been eliminated due to legislative budget reductions”

**WSDA** Washington State Department of Agriculture

Updated: 7/28/2011

*Effective July 1, 2011 the Domestic Marketing & Economic Development, Small Farm Direct Marketing and Farm-to-School programs have been eliminated due to legislative budget reductions and these programs have ceased operation.*

## WSDA Farm-to-School Program Activities & Services

The WSDA Farm-to-School Program coordinates a range of activities and services to help foster farm-to-school connections.

**WSDA Home**  
**Marketing & Business Services**  
**Farm-to-School Program**  
**Farm-to-School Activities & Services**  
**Publications & Resources**  
**Farm-to School Toolkit**

Search: enter search terms **Search**

**Farm to School**



Auburn School District



East Valley Spokane School District



Moxee School, Yakima, WA



# Goals of a survey

- What does farm-to-school look like in Washington?
- Identify opportunities and challenges for schools in WA (practice and P/policy)
- To gauge progress (of F2S in WA, and of program activities), to inform program development
- Advocacy – data and storytelling combo needed
- Have information that addresses communication needs for diverse audiences



# How the survey is constructed

- What are the existing efforts and current capacities?
- What foods are being used and what foods are schools interested in using?
- What are perceived possibilities for expanding Farm-to-School?
- What policies are at play?
- What are the perceptions of Farm-to-School?

# Survey Stats

- 38 Questions
- 84 respondents (out of 295 districts)
- Question response variability
- Range of school sizes, operations, locations



Snohomish Farm-to-School Tour, 2011

# Sample Reports

- Colorado
- Minnesota
- Oklahoma
- Vermont



Orcas Island Farm-to-School

# Policy Briefs

## Speaking to different audiences

- **General Public** – state of F2S, celebrate successes/increases, awareness and support
- **Stakeholders – farmers, food companies**- quantify school interest as market opportunity
- **Stakeholders – schools** - nutrition programs and administrators – state of F2S in WA, WSDA programs that can assist
- **Advocates** – what policy solutions are needed, why is work important, what are schools asking for?
- **Guidance to WSDA** – what programs are needed, why is work important, what are schools asking for?