



An AmeriCorps School Garden and Farm to School Service Program

National Contact
Debra Eschmeyer
(419) 905-8612

N.C. Contacts
Liz Driscoll
(919)-302-2090
and
Tes Thraves
(919)-619-8897

HELPING GROW HEALTHY KIDS: NORTH CAROLINA TO SERVE AS FOODCORPS SITE IN TEN-STATE LAUNCH

**High-caliber organizations with demonstrated experience implementing
Farm to School and school garden programs selected as inaugural host sites for 2011**

RALEIGH, NC – (November 30) — 4-H and the Center for Environmental Farming Systems proudly announce their role as hosts for [FoodCorps](#), a new national AmeriCorps school garden and [Farm to School](#) service program, launching in 2011. FoodCorps will serve vulnerable children, improving access to healthy, affordable food, while training young leaders for careers in food and agriculture.

North Carolina was chosen from 108 national applications as one of 10 states from across the United States to pilot the FoodCorps program. As a pioneer in applying the proven model of national service to the widening epidemic of childhood obesity, FoodCorps and the 10 chosen host sites are poised to improve the well-being of thousands of children in its first year and millions over the next decade. Eva Clayton says, “As the former Assistant Director General of the United Nations’ Food Agriculture Organization (FAO), a former member of the United States Congress and a citizen of Warren County, North Carolina, I welcome this opportunity to demonstrate how an effective and targeted nutrition program for schools can make a significant difference in addressing health disparities.”

Nationwide, FoodCorps will put 82 members on the ground in 10 states to work 139,400 hours during the 2011-2012 school year. North Carolina expects eight to 10 FoodCorps members to be placed at four or five school locations across North Carolina, contributing upwards of 1,300 work hours. FoodCorps members will build and tend school gardens, conduct nutrition education, and increase the amount of local, fresh produce served in lunchroom cafeterias, all in the spirit of service for healthier kids.

Utilizing the public service model of AmeriCorps, FoodCorps leverages federal funds to place young adults in high-need communities, with the mission of improving children’s knowledge and access to healthy food. FoodCorps also gives hands-on training to future farmers and food systems professionals.

FoodCorps service members will receive training and support from the FoodCorps national office, and then will be placed across the United States where they will be directed by high-impact organizations working in home communities. North Carolina 4-H and CEFS have partnered with the Physical Activity and Nutrition branch of the Division of Public Health plus Cooperative Extension offices, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and schools across the state to form a collaboration of organizations committed to increasing the capacity and success of school garden programs.

Congratulations to all the 2011-2012 FoodCorps Host Sites nationwide:

- Arkansas: The Delta Garden Study at Arkansas Children’s Hospital Research Institute
- Arizona: Johns Hopkins Center for American Indian Health
- Iowa: National Center for Appropriate Technology
- Massachusetts: The Food Project
- Maine: University of Maine Cooperative Extension

- Michigan: C.S. Mott Group at Michigan State University
- Mississippi: Mississippi Roadmap to Health Equity
- North Carolina: North Carolina 4-H and the Center for Environmental Farming Systems
- New Mexico: Office of Community Learning and Public Service at the University of New Mexico
- Oregon: Oregon Department of Agriculture

“These organizations demonstrated a clear commitment to combating childhood obesity through hands-on school garden programs,” said Debra Eschmeyer, a FoodCorps Founder. “Essentially a domestic Peace Corps, FoodCorps is poised for a fruitful first year.”

ABOUT FOODCORPS:

FoodCorps is a national AmeriCorps program that focuses on service in rural, urban and suburban school food systems that have children challenged with high rates of obesity and limited access to healthy foods. Service members will build and tend school gardens, conduct hands-on nutrition education experiences, and facilitate Farm to School programming that brings high-quality local food into public schools. FoodCorps, a New York-based nonprofit organization, was developed with funding from AmeriCorps and the WK Kellogg Foundation, in partnership with Occidental College, the National Farm to School Network, Slow Food USA, the National Center for Appropriate Technology, and Wicked Delicate, as part of an open planning process engaging stakeholders from around the country. www.food-corps.org

ABOUT NC 4-H

4-H is a youth organization committed to building citizen leaders with marketable skills. The N.C. 4-H Youth Development Program has long held a specific emphasis on cultivating another generation of youth engaged in sustainable agriculture, health and well-being. Statewide efforts include school gardens that foster a connection to nutrition through growing fruits and vegetables, building farm-to-school relationships, traditional 4-H community clubs focused on local foods, afterschool garden programs, and youth agricultural entrepreneurial programs. The N.C. 4-H Youth Development Program is a program of the N.C. Cooperative Extension involving adults and youth in all 100 counties and on the Qualla Boundary of the Cherokee Nation. www.nc4h.org

ABOUT CEFS

The Center for Environmental Farming Systems develops and promotes food and farming systems that protect the environment, strengthen local communities, and provide economic opportunities. CEFS was established in 1994 as a partnership between the two land grant universities, N.C. State University and N.C. A&T State University, and the N.C. Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (NCDA&CS) to serve as a center dedicated to sustainable agriculture research, extension and education. CEFS developed its 2,000-acre research farm in Goldsboro in 1996, still today one of the nation’s largest centers of sustainable farming practices. In 2008, CEFS launched a statewide sustainable local foods initiative in which more than 1,000 North Carolinians participated. In addition to the state action guide [*From Farm to Fork*](#), the initiative sparked the development of the N.C. Sustainable Local Food Advisory Council, the establishment of a local food representative in each county Cooperative Extension office, and the development of a 10% Campaign for building a local food economy. <http://www.cefs.ncsu.edu>

ABOUT DPH, PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND NUTRITION BRANCH:

The Physical Activity and Nutrition (PAN) Branch is housed in the Division of Public Health of North Carolina. The mission of the PAN Branch is to, “Reverse the rising tide of obesity and chronic disease among North Carolinians by helping them to eat smart, move more and achieve a healthy weight.” The Branch is one of more than 60 partner organizations supporting Eat Smart, Move More North Carolina, a statewide movement that promotes increased opportunities for healthy eating and physical activity wherever people live, learn, earn, play and pray. <http://www.ncpanbranch.com>