Racial Equity in Farm to School and Farm to Early Care Education
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What is Farm to School and Farm to ECE?
Farm to school k-12 (F2S) connects schools, local agriculture, and communities to improve student nutrition, health, and academic performance. Implementation of farm to school is asset-based so varies from program to program, but farm to school include one or, ideally, all of these components (as FoodCorps organizes them):
- **Healthy School Meals:** Local foods purchased, promoted and served in the cafeteria as meals, snacks, and taste-tests.
- **Hands on Learning:** Active education integrated into the curriculum including teachings on agriculture, local foods, food preparation, and nutrition as well as visits with farmers and chefs.
- **School-wide culture of health:** Communities come together to work collectively creating a whole school environment where health and food are culturally valued.

Farm to Early Care and Education (F2 ECE) addresses the same three components to increase local, fresh food access and consumption as well as enrich the educational experience in all ECE sites, from large centers to small home-based facilities.

Farm to School and Farm to ECE efforts are most rooted in Racial Equity when teachings and practices are place-based and programs incorporate structural strategies to interrupt inequities.

Why Racial Equity?
Although many communities suffer from food system inequities, communities of color suffer disproportionately.

Racial disparities in health, wellness, education, environment, economics, etc. mean that people of color are even more adversely affected by inequities in our food system.

In NC, 1 in 4 children is food insecure but for children of color that percentage is 1 in 3.

Learning to unpack systemic racism leads to work which can help examine all forms of marginalization and undo food system inequities to the benefit of all. Racial Equity is a vital issue across the food system, and urgently needed where food systems most directly impact children.

Racial Equity Outcomes
- when outcomes & opportunities are not dependent on zip code or skin color.
- acknowledge the presence of structures that shape life options and outcomes;
- analyze the impact of structures on a specific issue, condition, or population; and
- develop structural strategies to interrupt inequities and improve outcomes and opportunities for all.

Further RESOURCES
- CEFS, C.O.R.E. website: [https://cfs.cores.edu](https://cfs.cores.edu)
- The Food Opportunity Research Collaborative (FORC): [https://foodopportunityresearch.org](https://foodopportunityresearch.org)
- Dismantling Racial Wealth web workbook: [http://www.dismantlingwealth.org](http://www.dismantlingwealth.org)

Racial Equity trainings
Trainings are simply a starting point. What they provide is a grounding for understanding and communication so that we can work collectively to unpack enshrined thought processes, narratives, and behaviors to shift power inequities.

Begin your efforts with local organizations already doing this work. Our gratitude goes to endless individuals and organizations for their commitment and teachings and the groundwork they have laid.

These trainings build on a **Shared Language** around racial equity According to Critical Race Theory, Racism is:
- Race prejudice + Social and Institutional Power
- A system of oppression based on race
- A system of advantage based on race

Structural Racism is how policies, practices, procedures, and systems operate to perpetuate and promote the advantages of white people and the oppression of people of color.

Shared History on the construction of race and the impact of structural racism on our food system with a focus on land, food, & education

**Shared Analysis** of institutional impact of structural racism on our food system and, seeing that racism works on multiple levels: individual, institutional, and cultural.

A collective plan.

**Application** for addressing structural racism in our Farm to ECE, Farm to School, and General Food System work

**Theory of Change**

Adapted from Linda Stout’s Collective Visioning, this model offers a framework for making sustainable change.

The connections between people and organizations, including both personal and structural bonds

The practices and rules that define how a group or organization operates (little p) as well as our nation’s laws, and the education needed to explain their context and impact (P)

**Equity Principles and Questions**

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<tr>
<th>Equity Principles</th>
<th>and Questions</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Use organizing mind, focus on your circle of influence</td>
<td>What we still struggle to get from this theoretical understanding is how to do this together, and that is new and powerful. <strong>ECE center leaders</strong></td>
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<td>2. Identify explicit goals</td>
<td>It is not, and deeply unhelpful. We all pretty much agree that this is a work necessary for our goals and work of ECE, so that is why we brought it into our monthly staff retreat — it’s a need. <strong>Cooperative Extension director</strong></td>
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<td>3. Speak to, serve, empower, engage those on the margins</td>
<td><strong>“Equity Tool”</strong></td>
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