

School/Community Advisor Planning Toolkit



Participants: volunteers in high school or above

What is the NJ Farm to School Volunteer Ambassador Program?

The volunteer program provides a leadership opportunity for high school students to engage younger students in the joy of food.

Objective: The lessons provided are meant to be adaptable and replicable for any high school student willing and able to volunteer their time for the purpose of promoting locally grown foods, healthy eating, an appreciation of NJ's farms & agriculture, through hands-on learning. And to Empower children to make informed food choices while strengthening the local economy and contributing to vibrant communities. *Partnerships focused on creating healthy, just communities in advancing food access and education is encouraged.

Procedure

1. Read through Volunteer Ambassador lessons and determine how many activities you will choose to complete and at what time of year. There is no requirement, the lessons can be completed as a stand-alone or in a series.*
2. When choosing lessons, be sure to keep in mind the materials needed/cost.
3. Choose your volunteers based on programming, and ensure all volunteers have access to transportation to and from events and are comfortable with and speaking to children. A minimum of two volunteers and one adult advisor are needed.
4. Advisors should prepare the volunteers for the day of lessons (i.e. timing, troubleshooting, classroom behavior, etc.).*
5. Determine what age group you would like to work with and reach out to local early child care, after-school programs, etc. for interest.
6. Best practice - predetermine all activity dates at the beginning of partnership.
7. Communicate with the school if any additional guests should be invited, for example, school nurse, parent liaison, local farmer, etc.
8. If conducting a lesson with food and food handling, please reach out to the school for any food restrictions. Familiarize yourself with proper [food handling](#) recommendations.
9. If planning a field trip with students, ensure proper paperwork and permissions are prepared.
10. If planning to take pictures, please reach out to the school for photo release permission and keep on file.
11. Encourage feedback from school and students.

*lessons learned during the pilot program - going to the same location multiple times created a pattern of trust and more willingness to try new foods and excitement for learning through hands-on education. Three to four visits is recommended for the run of the program.

*lessons learned during the pilot program - younger children were more receptive to trying new foods when activities are driven by the high schoolers. High schoolers should model a behavior of trying new foods, encourage food nutrition and excitement.