



For Immediate Release
October 23, 2017

Local Schools Celebrate National Farm to School Month With a “Crunch”

TRAVERSE CITY, MI--**Traverse Heights Elementary and Rapid City Elementary to celebrate the Michigan Apple Crunch on October 25.** The Michigan Apple Crunch is a celebration of the state’s agricultural heritage and the consumption of local whole, fresh foods during National Farm to School Month.

The fifth annual Michigan Apple Crunch will be celebrated at Traverse Heights Elementary and Rapid City Elementary on October 25 as part of National Farm to School Month celebrations taking place across the country. Traverse Heights will also serve a locally-sourced school lunch to students on October 19.

Tom Freitas, the Food and Nutrition Services Director for Traverse City Area Public Schools says “farm to school programming is beneficial to students because they are able to make connections between food and farms. Because we follow Northwest Michigan Farm to School’s Harvest of the Month, students are able to look for the same seasonal and locally grown produce at the grocery stores and markets with their parents.”

This year, local FoodCorps service member will support farm to school programming at both Traverse Heights Elementary and Rapid City Elementary. FoodCorps is a nationwide team of AmeriCorps leaders who collaborate with community partners to make schools healthier places for kids to eat, learn and grow. Sarah Perez-Sanz, the service member hosted by Michigan State University Extension Grand Traverse County office in Traverse City, will implement hands-on lessons in classrooms and school gardens, encourage healthy school meals, and promote a school-wide culture of health.

Michigan State University Extension Grand Traverse County is one of seven local service sites for FoodCorps in Michigan. Service sites are FoodCorps’ community partners who are responsible for guiding service members as they make measureable differences in supporting school health. Foodcorps partners with school communities to create healthy school food environments with staying power by transforming students’ experience of food in schools in three key areas: hands-on learning, healthy school meals, and schoolwide culture of health. If you would like to learn more about FoodCorps at MSU-Extension Grand Traverse County, please visit http://msue.anr.msu.edu/program/info/michigan_foodcorps. Local FoodCorps service placement is made possible through the financial support of United Way of Northwest Michigan and Oryana Cooperative.

National Farm to School Network has representatives in every state to help connect schools with local farmers. If you are unable to attend a Michigan Apple Crunch event, you can still celebrate National Farm to School month by supporting school field trips to farmers' markets and farms, volunteering to host a taste test at a school, or helping to take care of a school garden. For more information about the Network visit farmtoschool.org.

Please feel free to contact Sarah Perez-Sanz (sarah.perez-sanz@foodcorps.org) with questions. Media should call the school office (Traverse Heights: 933-6500, Rapid City: 331-6121) to let school officials know that you plan to come.

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