

KDA Celebrates Kansas Farm to School

Secretary of Agriculture Dale Rodman was joined by Kansas Commissioner of Education Dr. Diane DeBacker and Douglas County officials to celebrate and recognize Kansas Farm To School month and tour the West Middle School garden and learn more about the food education program.

The event included a meal in the school cafeteria featuring produce grown in the school garden and secured from other local sources, a tour of the school's garden led by West Middle school students, a visit to a local farm providing food for the school district with a presentation covering challenges of local food distribution and the First Lady Mary Brownback reading to a preschool classroom concluded the day.

"KDA commends the Lawrence School District for their exceptional commitment to growing food in the school garden to be used in the cafeteria as well as securing locally grown, high quality products from Kansas farmers and ranchers," Rodman said. "Teaching students the connection between planting and producing food and then getting to enjoy those foods in the lunch room is a concept we need to see used in more schools across Kansas."

One of the more memorable parts of the event was the meal prepared by the USD 379 staff. The meal included over 50 percent locally sourced ingredients including produce from the school garden raised by students. Secretary Rodman and Commissioner DeBacker joined West Middle School students for the official Farm to School meal, promoted by KSDE. The meal included the choice of a locally sourced Lasagna or chef salad entree, green beans, self-serve salad bar, with produce from the school garden a locally grown apple and milk.

Lawrence School District Superintendent Dr. Rick Doll noted that the effort to provide high-quality food is important to his district. "Our food and nutrition services team is committed to finding sustainable ways to bring local food products into the school cafeteria. Farm to School programs allows us to have a positive effect on education, nutrition and our local economy."

KDA, KSDE and the Lawrence School District are committed to the Farm to School program concept including: promoting well-balanced, nutrient rich eating habits; purchase food locally when available, support all Kansas farmers and ranchers; continuously improving agricultural production; and reducing hunger in Kansas communities.

For more information about Farm to School Month please visit the [KDA Website](#).

Pictures from the tour are available on the [KDA Facebook Page](#).