Farm to Early Care and Education

Georgia's Early Care and Education (ECE) programs serve more than 330,000 children, many of whom consume 1-3 meals and 2 snacks a day onsite. 1, 2

Why Farm to Early Care and Education?

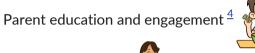
Research shows Farm to School initiatives improve children's health and nutrition.³ Most of these programs start in K-12 schools, but children can be reached earlier with Farm to Early Care and Education (FTECE).

Top Reasons Providers Choose to Participate in FTECE

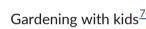
- Teach children where food comes from and how it is grown
- Improve child health
- Provide children with experiential learning

Strategies that Work





Curriculum where kids touch and taste food $\frac{6}{2}$





Meal planning and preparation





Fruit and vegetable boxes for home consumption⁸

What FTECE Supports

- Fruit and vegetable consumption, some of which may increase vitamins A, C, and E intake²
- Healthy food consumption at home¹⁰
- Willingness to try new foods¹¹
- Development of motor skills¹²
- Life skills, social skills, and self-esteem ¹³
- Increased physical activity <u>14</u>
- Reduced diet-related diseases among children¹⁵
- Reduced food waste

FTECE and Agriculture



FTECE benefits children, as well as supports Georgia farmers. FTECE encourages childcare providers to:

- Purchase and serve fresh, nutritious, local foods for their children
- Host on-site farmers markets for parents and staff
- Develop partnerships with local farms for experiential learning

Georgia Supports Farm-to-Academia



Georgia's Farm-to-Early Care and Education (FTECE) Coalition¹⁶

Supports children ages 0 to 5

During the 2021-2022 school year:

55+ FTECE Coalition members

83 farm-to-academia professional development or activities (e.g., presentations, trainings, technical assistance, etc.)

FTECE Coalition provided **130** ECE sites with support



Farm-to-School (FTS) Alliance ¹⁷

Serves K-12 students in increasing knowledge, experiences, and exposures with local foods

During the 2021-2022 school year:

30+ FTS Alliance members

83 farm-to-academia professional development or activities (e.g., presentations, trainings, technical assistance, etc.)

FTS Alliance provided approximately **35** awards to support local, regional, and statewide efforts and purchased **\$11 million** purchased from local farmers among the member organizations.

Policy Recommendations

Allocate funding to reimburse ECE programs when meals incorporate local foods.

Develop and fund a pilot for ECE providers to purchase larger quantities of food from local farmers.



References for Farm to Early Care and Education

Suggested citation: Voices for Georgia's Children. (2023). Fact Sheet: Farm to Early Care and Education. Voices for Georgia's Children. https://adobe.ly/47yGbGz.

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- 2 Child Care Aware. Georgia 2020 State Fact Sheet. Retrieved June 12, 2022. https://www.childcareaware.org/our-issues/research/ccdc/state/ga/? doing wp cron=1686510733.7528870105743408203125.
- 3 National Farm to School Network. "The Benefits of Farm to School." Retrieved June 11, 2023. <u>http://www.farmtoschool.org/Resources/BenefitsFactSheet.pdf</u>.
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 Ibid.
- 6 National Farm to School Network. "Results from the 2015 National Survey of Early Care and Education Providers: Local Procurement, Gardening, and Food and Farm Education." Retrieved June 11, 2023. <u>https://assets.website-</u> files.com/5c469df2395cd53c3d913b2d/6110460d61ddcbc94002c752_ECESurvey_Report-min.pdf.
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- 8 National Farm to School Network. "The Benefits of Farm to School." Retrieved June 11, 2023. <u>http://www.farmtoschool.org/Resources/BenefitsFactSheet.pdf</u>.
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- 10 Ibid.
- 11 Ibid.
- 12 Ibid.
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- 14 National Farm to School Network. "Results from the 2015 National Survey of Early Care and Education Providers: Local Procurement, Gardening, and Food and Farm Education." Retrieved June 11, 2023. <u>http://www.farmtoschool.org/Resources/ECESurvey_Report.pdf</u>.
- 15 National Farm to School Network. "The Benefits of Farm to School." Retrieved June 11, 2023. <u>http://www.farmtoschool.org/Resources/BenefitsFactSheet.pdf</u>.
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17 Ibid.

