



Creating a healthy community: one lesson, one child, and one bite at a time.



By Kelsey Newman

I remember first finding out about the posting for a Farm to School Nutrition Educator in Portage County, and it instantly sparked my interest. I am just finishing up my degree in Family and Consumer Sciences Education, and this seemed like a perfect fit. I went in for the interview and could see how passionate the people that had served before me were about this program, and I knew right then and there that my time serving with Farm to School would be much more than just a job, but it would be an experience that would change my life.



I listened to past members and their advice and I read as much as I could about AmeriCorps Farm to School, but it wasn't until I went to training that I really learned what Farm to School was (and the crazy ride I was in for). The training was overwhelming, but in the best way possible. My head was flooded with ideas on how to make Farm to School thrive in our community. Additionally, I was able to meet the wonderful people that would be serving alongside me all across Wisconsin this year. I knew that they would be there to lean on when I needed it, and we all became instant friends, sharing the same passion for educating our youth about local foods and nutrition.

It seemed that not shortly after training, I hit the ground running. We planned community events, prepped nutrition lessons, and were on our way to an awesome service year. There have been many parts of my service thus far that have made me smile and recognize that all the hard work I put in is absolutely worth it. When I see the students smiling and excited when I come in to teach them about nutrition, eager to learn and try new things, I get excited right along with them. I had one student tell me that as long as I kept coming to teach them, they would eat their fruits and vegetables every day. That was when I knew that what I was teaching was making an impact. I truly believe that children that are exposed to nutrition education and healthy foods at a young age will live a healthier lifestyle in the future. By the time I finish my lessons and bring in a nutritious snack, every child wants to try it, even if they never would have touched it before. It is amazing how powerful Farm to School service can be.



Looking back on these past few months, there were a lot of late nights planning lessons for the next day, time spent in the kitchen making healthy snacks, and hours planning community events, but I would not change a thing. Every single hour spent goes towards making our community healthier, stronger, and more sustainable, and I would spend a thousand hours over if it meant that I got to play a small piece in the process of creating that healthy community, one lesson, one child, and one bite at a time.



Digital Resources Created and Shared During COVID-19

Links to Farm to School Nutrition Lessons

- [Sugar in Snacks](#)
- [MyPlate Activities](#)
- [Who Grew My Soup](#)
- [Virtual Farm Tour – Feltz Family Farms](#)
- [Earth Day](#)

Links to “Fun Food Friday” Recipe Demonstrations

- [“Banana Sushi”](#)
- [Pumpkin Pie Oatmeal](#)
- [Homemade Hummus](#)
- [Banana Split Breakfast](#)
- [Orange Smoothie](#)

