



Independent School District No. 252
Cannon Falls Area Schools
820 E. Minnesota Street
Cannon Falls, MN 55009

Phone (507) 263-6800 * Fax (507) 263-2515

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to offer my support and also to urge you to support the Farm to School & Early Care Bills, H.F. 2043 (Pursell) & S.F. 2158 (Gustafson) and include it in the final Agricultural Finance Omnibus bill.

I believe in Farm to School because of its unique benefits. It's good for kids. It's good for farmers. It's good for local communities.

Farm to School is good for our kids because it gives them access to and knowledge of healthy local foods. The link between the food kids eat and their educational and health outcomes is becoming increasingly clear. Access to fresh, healthy food, starting as young as possible, fuels brain development and shapes food preference over a lifetime. Here in Cannon Falls we buy from our local farmers as much as possible.

Farm to School is good for farmers. Farmers growing foods for their local communities is a rapidly growing important area of Minnesota agriculture that needs public support and investment to expand markets. Our AG Department had a project last Summer, where 2 students rented land, planted and produced sweet corn and husked 1,000 pieces one morning before school. The kitchen staff took the sweet corn and served it for lunch that day and the students (especially the early elementary ages) LOVED the taste and the story as they met the girls who grew the sweet corn.

Farm to School gives farmers a large, stable, predictable market that they can plan for in advance. It also allows them to grow value added crops that boost the bottom line and keep more families living on and caring for the land

Farm to School is good for local economies. A study out of Oregon showed that for every dollar spent on Farm to School programs, \$2.16 is generated in additional economic activity for the local economy. The Farm to School bill would not only support farmers directly, it would also give small businesses and entrepreneurs in Greater Minnesota a boost in revitalizing their communities

This Farm to School & Early Care bill is a worthy investment that supports the health of our children, the health of our family farms and the health of our local communities. Minnesotans can easily agree that this makes sense for our state to grow our statewide farm to school program through our public support and public investment.

Please support and vote "yes" on the Farm to School & Early Care bills.

Sincerely,
Lori Hanson
Cannon Falls Area Schools