

BEEF TO SCHOOL PROMOTION KIT



Montana Beef to School Coalition

INTRODUCTION

The Beef to School Promotion Kit provides you with templates and examples to help you share your beef to school plans and progress. This resource was developed by the Montana Beef to School Project, a three-year collaborative project between beef producers, processors, schools, researchers at Montana State University, National Center for Appropriate Technology, Montana Department of Agriculture, and various community partners. This material is based upon work that is supported by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, U.S.

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For more information:

Visit online at www.montana.edu/mtfarmtoschool/beeftoschool.html

E-mail the Montana Beef to School Team at beef2school@gmail.com

Call Aubree Roth, Montana Farm to School Coordinator at (406) 994-5996.

Included in this kit are draft announcements for you to modify and use. The content was created for you to send to students, staff, community members, and others to educate about your growing beef to school program. Below you will find content for you to use in: (1) newsletters and/or emails, (2) social media posts, (3) announcement letter, and (4) school menus.

NEWSLETTER + EMAIL CONTENT

You can send the following content out in your newsletter and/or to an email list. Be sure to edit the content to meet your needs.

Have you herd? Montana beef is on the mooove - and it's made its way into our school cafeteria's menu! We will be featuring beef from {INSERT TOWN OR RANCH} in our menus for {INSERT MEAL} on {INSERT DAY}!

We are excited to be part of the Montana Beef to School movement not only for its nutritional benefits, high quality taste, and freshness, but also for the partnerships it cultivates between our school and Montana ranchers.

Did you know that Montana is home to more cattle than people and ranks sixth in the nation for the number of beef cattle? Montana has just over 1 million residents, 2.5 million cattle, approximately 20 state and federally inspected processors, and about 145,000 students across 821 schools. It just goes to show – beef is a befitting component of farm to school efforts in Montana!

Additionally, beef packs a powerful nutritious punch. It is an excellent source of protein for building strong muscles and contains important nutrients like iron and B vitamins. In the 2015 school year, approximately 40% of Montana schools participated in farm to school efforts and 47% of those schools source local meats, including beef.

To learn more about Montana Beef to School and what they're doing to increase local beef in Montana schools and communities visit the Montana Beef to School webpage (www.montana.edu/mtfarmtoschool/beeftoschool.html).

SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

The Montana Farm to School Facebook and Instagram accounts regularly feature Montana beef to school efforts. Follow these accounts and repost relevant posts or gather ideas for your social media accounts. We have also created post language for you to use on your social media account.

You can follow and/or tag Montana Beef to School using the following accounts:

Facebook: [@MontanaFarmtoSchool](https://www.facebook.com/MontanaFarmtoSchool)

Instagram: [@MTFarmtoSchool](https://www.instagram.com/MTFarmtoSchool)

You can use the following language to post to your social media accounts:

Where can you find delicious local beef? Our calf-eteria! Okay we admit it, we butchered that one. Learn all about Montana Beef to School Project and what they're doing to increase local beef in Montana schools and communities! #beeftoschool <http://bit.ly/2jjHUXh>

Our school is proud to support our community by serving local beef from {INSERT TOWN, RANCH, OR PROCESSOR} in our school meals! #beeftoschool

{INSERT RANCH, PROCESSOR, BUSINESS NAME} is proud that our quality beef is featured in {INSERT SCHOOL NAME}'s meals! We believe that Montana kids should enjoy Montana beef. #beeftoschool

Montana is home to over 2.5 million cows; that's more than twice the number of people living in our state! So, grab a plate at our cafeteria and beef up on beef. Learn all about Montana Beef to School Project and what they're doing to increase local beef in Montana schools and communities! #beeftoschool <http://bit.ly/2jjHUXh>

We're serving up local beef with a side of beefy facts! Did you know that cattle are ruminants, meaning their stomachs have four chambers, allowing them to digest grasses? Learn all about Montana Beef to School Project and what they're doing to increase local beef in Montana schools and communities! #beeftoschool <http://bit.ly/2jjHUXh>

Another perk to local beef is its clean and traceable label. Conventional or commodity market beef is often an aggregated product from many cattle raised in different locations. Learn how to support your local ranchers through #beeftoschool <http://bit.ly/2jjHUXh>

Serving Montana beef in Montana schools helps keep local economies strong by keeping funds circulating in our communities! Learn more about Montana Beef to School and how to start moooving on your beef to school endeavors! #beeftoschool <http://bit.ly/2jjHUXh>

Schools across Montana are serving up local beef! Learn how innovators like Jay Stagg in Whitefish are making it work at Montana Beef to School. #beeftoschool <http://bit.ly/2jjHUXh>

ANNOUNCEMENT LETTER

Encourage your community to get involved in your beef to school program. Below is a template letter that explains what beef to school is, the benefits of beef to school, and asks for participation. Please adapt this template to meet your needs.

Greetings,

{INSERT SCHOOL NAME HERE} is planning to feature local beef at our school! We are excited to be part of the Montana Beef to School movement not only for its nutritional benefits, high quality taste, and freshness but also for the partnerships it cultivates between our school and Montana ranchers and businesses.

Beef to school efforts can increase the sustainability and viability of regional food systems as they have the potential to:

Enhance food literacy and connections to local agriculture.

Keep money circulating in local economies by supporting local ranchers, processors, and businesses.

Reduce the need for transportation, packaging, and other inputs.

Increase access to high quality local food.

Provide producers an additional stable market for their beef.

Utilize cattle that are fed and finished on locally available feeds as opposed to importing feeds into the state.

In the 2015 school year, approximately 40% of Montana schools participated in farm to school efforts and 47% of those schools sourced local meats, including beef. In our state, and across the county, producers and consumers experience a host of social, environmental, and economic benefits from local procurement efforts that link local beef producers and processors with schools in their communities.

This school year, we will be featuring beef from {INSERT TOWN(S) OR RANCH(ES)} in our menus for {INSERT MEAL(S)} on {INSERT DAY(S)}. We welcome you to join us in this opportunity to promote healthy eating and strong economies. Please participate in our beef to school program by {CHOOSE ONE OR A FEW OF THE FOLLOWING}:

Eating lunch with us on {INSERT MEAL(S)} on {INSERT DAY(S)}. {INSERT INSTRUCTIONS FOR RESERVING A SPACE}. {INSERT ADULT MEAL COSTS}.

Donating to our beef to school program. We need your help {INSERT COSTS NEEDS – purchasing a cattle, paying for processing}. Any amount will help to support local beef on the lunch menu. Donate by {INSERT DIRECTIONS AND CONTACT PERSON AND INFO FOR DONATIONS}.

Thank you for supporting the use of local beef in our school.
Sincerely,
{NAME}

SCHOOL MENUS AND CAFETERIAS

School nutrition program menus and are a perfect location to promote your beef to school efforts.

- Add a symbol or highlight the menu items that feature local beef. See example from Monforton School
- Include the name of the ranch and/or processor, and if there's room include a photo.
- Add beef facts to your menu to provide educational opportunities while featuring local beef in meals.
- Sites participating in Montana Harvest of the Month have access to menu templates that feature the Harvest of the Month foods, including beef! Learn more and sign up at www.montana.edu/mtharvestofthemoth



Bulletin boards, cafeteria signage, and signs on the service line will help to remind students, staff, and others about the delicious local beef that's on the menu!

- A simple sign works! Post a sign on the service line near the menu item. See example from Ennis Elementary School. Take this opportunity to feature the name or location of the ranch or processor.
- Work with teachers to have students create posters or signage to post on local beef days.
- Sites participating in Montana Harvest of the Month receive posters, logos, and illustrations that feature the Harvest of the Month foods, including beef! Learn more and sign up at www.montana.edu/mtharvestofthemoth

