



Montana Farm to School Success

Building Community with Farm to School at Manhattan Christian

By: Karli Sullivan, Montana Dietetic Intern

Manhattan Christian School's foodservice staff are working with the Gallatin Valley and surrounding community to bring fresh, local ingredients and foods to their students, staff, and families. Brenda Flikkema, Foodservice Program Director for Manhattan Christian School, says it all started with potatoes. Gallatin County is one of the highest producing counties for potatoes in Montana. Brenda explains that she receives all of her donations from local producers. She also received a donation from a potato farmer to help her purchase equipment to prepare her potatoes. She likes to use them in a potato bar, or in her homemade potato salad for lunches.

The school's foodservice staff are now working with other local including Root Cellar Foods in Belgrade and Quality Foods Distributing in Bozeman. Brenda has found Montana Harvest of the Month staff, resources, and trainings helpful to get started and gain contacts for where to buy local products. She



acknowledges that it can be scary to get started, but to reach out to the community for help.

Brenda and her staff enjoy conducting taste tests for their students with Harvest of the Month items or other local foods that are different and exciting. Teachers work with the food service staff to create fun, new ideas like kale chips or Parmesan roasted zucchini chips. Sometimes the students love them so much, that they are added to the regular menu. The cafeteria bulletin board also includes a Montana map showing where foods are coming from and the students' taste test voting results. Manhattan Christian School's foodservice staff posts signs in main hallways showing students what they are trying and also post to their Facebook page to show parents what the children are taste testing at school.

The kitchen staff served a special locally sourced meal in October that included local beef burgers, buns, eggs, potatoes, carrots, lettuce,



For More Information

Aubree Roth

Farm to School Coordinator

406-994-5996

aubree.roth@montana.edu



Montana Team Nutrition Program

More information available at www.montana.edu/mtfarmtoschool
Montana Team Nutrition Program is housed at Montana State University and works in cooperation with the Montana Office of Public Instruction. The USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



Building Community

Montana Farm to School Story

tomatoes, onions, apples, and Wilcoxson's ice cream.

Besides their usual crowd of students, they cheerfully served 500 students, parents, grandparents, and community members. Students and teachers helped prepare and serve the excellent meal.

Manhattan Christian School's staff feel it is important to connect with the strong agricultural roots of their community. Brenda hopes to get all of their beef donated from local beef producers so she can spend their budget on buying more of the local produce that is only seasonally available.

Brenda was raised in a farming family and values the benefit of utilizing local products. The farmers and their products are right here in the vicinity, so she feels it is simple to add the products into the school's menu. Brenda believes making connections with the community and farmers is key, because they love to provide their products to benefit the youth in their community.



Oct
2017



Montana Team Nutrition Program

More information available at www.montana.edu/mtfarmtoschool
Montana Team Nutrition Program is housed at Montana State University and works in cooperation with the Montana Office of Public Instruction. The USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

