

The Food Trust

Ensuring That Everyone Has Access To Affordable, Nutritious Food



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Twitter: @thefoodtrust

Contact:

Monica Lo

mlo@thefoodtrust.org

p: 215-575-0444, ext. 3344

Pennsylvania's First Farm to Early Care Awards

The Food Trust Awards \$5,000 in Mini-grants to PA Farm to Early Childhood Programs

WHAT: The Food Trust is excited to announce Pennsylvania's first "**Farm to Early Childhood Program**" awards. Recognized for their commitment to teaching young children about farming and nutritious food and connecting them to their agricultural community, awardees were selected through a competitive proposal process.

"Farm to early care practices not only help set young children and their families on paths to good health but also support our local agricultural community and local economy and help build community," says **Deb Bentzel**, associate director of community food systems at The Food Trust.

The following organizations will receive a \$1,000 grant each to support a variety of programming efforts:

A Mother's Touch Center for Child Development (Sharon, PA)

This group childcare program teaches children and their families about growing food through fruit and vegetable gardening. With the award funds, the program plans to expand its garden to produce enough fresh produce for families to take home. It will also be put towards initiating a canning project for preserving Pennsylvania-grow crops as well as supporting field trips to farms.

Gankosky Family Daycare (Brockway, PA)

At Gankosky Family Daycare, young children are taught how foods grow with its on-site garden and get to taste the vegetables harvested. The center also tends to chickens and engages families in garden tending and other food and agricultural events. Award funds will go towards expanding its garden to include new infrastructure such as trellises and structures to support gardening during the winter.

Londonderry School (Harrisburg, PA)

Londonderry connects young children to healthy local foods in various ways: farm field trips, school gardening, family local dinners and school visits from farmers. The school will use the grant money to implement an enhanced composting program for food waste, which can be used to provide much needed nutrition to the garden soil.

Mt. Washington Children's Center (Pittsburgh, PA)

Located in the center of Pittsburgh, the center promotes farming and nutrition education through classroom cooking lessons with healthy local foods, a parent- and staff-led seasonal garden and opportunities for families to take home fresh fruits and vegetables from the garden. Mt. Washington Children's Center will use its award funds

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to build a winter garden so that children can continue their garden and harvesting lessons through the winter months.

York Day Nursery (York, PA)

This nursery teaches children about their agricultural community by making visits to local farmers markets and fruit orchards as well as engaging them with on-site gardening activities. Children get to sample local foods, and parents receive recipe cards and ingredients to take home to use in meals. With the grant, York Day Nursery plans on organizing a “Healthy Eating Day” for families, which will include a locally sourced meal for attendees, cooking demonstrations and other activities design to engage children and their families around healthy food.

The Food Trust will be making site visits throughout the next several months to oversee each organization’s progress. Our Farm to Early Care and Education Awards program is made possible through generous funding by the **W.K. Kellogg Foundation**.

About The Food Trust

The Food Trust, a nonprofit founded in 1992, strives to ensure that everyone has access to healthy, affordable food and information to make healthy decisions. To learn more about our Farm to School work, visit thefoodtrust.org/what-we-do/schools/farm-to-school or thefoodtrust.org.