

Final Service Story - 2022-2023
Ithaca School District
AmeriCorps Farm to School
Julie Severance

The Bulldog garden has been planted and the first tomatoes and peppers are ripening on the vines. Soon, students will be back in the commons eating lunch and enjoying the small bounty from the garden. Thanks to the Local Food for Schools grant, students will enjoy many other local fruits and vegetables on the salad bar.

The Local Food for Schools (LFS) grant became available to us in Winter of 2023. Although our district did not receive the funds, many small farms and food hubs in our area did. This enabled Annette, the Ithaca Food Service Director (FSD) to order (for free) many local vegetables for the salad bar. Pleasingly, she was also able to order ground beef and stew meat from a local beef farm (Spring Creeks Beef) which she served in numerous iterations including chili for the Wisconsin Chili Lunch.

The LFS grant benefitted Ithaca in so many ways.

1. Easy to use and navigate
2. Provided money to many small producers in our area
3. Enabled FSD to cook from scratch more often
4. Introduced students to vegetables not often seen on the salad bar at Ithaca
5. Helped cement relationships with local producers
6. Students and Faculty were excited about school lunch - "what will be on the salad bar today?"

The impact of the LFS grant is immense. I truly hope the program continues.

