



Cafeteria | K-12 School and Early Care Food Service Staff

HOM 101

About Montana Harvest of the Month

The Montana Harvest of the Month (HOM) program showcases Montana grown foods in Montana schools, institutions, and communities. Each month, participating sites focus on promoting one locally grown item (e.g., winter squash) by serving it in at least one meal or snack and displaying or distributing HOM materials. Additionally, schools, afterschool programs, early care and education sites, and summer food service program sites participate by offering taste tests to children and doing educational lessons and activities. Montana Harvest of the Month is a perfect way to launch or grow a farm to school or farm to cafeteria program, as it provides an easy framework to follow and ready-to-use materials. Participating sites receive a free packet of materials (includes posters and cafeteria, classroom, and home handouts) as well as guides, additional resources, and training.

Dig Deeper

Get more information, register, or download resources:

Molly Kirkham

Montana Local Foods Specialist

mollyk@ncat.org | (406) 494-8672

mtharvestofthemonth.org

How You Can Participate

- **Gather your team and register for HOM today!** Your team should include at least a food service staff member, administrator, and educator or provider. Share the short video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=orzwBczAX6A>
- **Find and integrate the HOM foods in at least one meal or snack per month.** The *Cafeteria Bites* handouts include standardized recipes and cooking tips, and the menu templates that make it easy to showcase HOM foods. You can also incorporate the HOM foods into your existing recipes or feature on the salad bar. Need help finding or purchasing local foods? Visit <http://www.montana.edu/mtfarmtoschool/resources/school-food.html>.
- **Display the posters** in the cafeteria or on a bulletin board. Additional posters are available for purchase.
- **Clearly showcase HOM foods on your menu.** We have provided menu calendar templates that include the HOM logo, illustrations, and fun facts that you can easily edit and add your information. Feel free to use these or include the logos or illustrations on your own menu calendar. Be sure to clearly mark the HOM foods on your calendar by bolding, adding a star, or underlining. A dry-erase compatible static cling is provided to showcase the foods right on the serving line.
- **Tell your team when HOM foods are on the menu.** Students will be more likely to try new foods if they first have an opportunity to explore them. Coordinate with your educators so they can conduct activities or taste tests before you serve new foods or recipes. Consider setting up a consistent schedule such as "Montana Harvest of the Month Mondays."
- **Conduct taste tests to help students become adventurous eaters.** Sites should conduct at least one taste test in a cafeteria or classroom each month and submit voting results using the *Tried It, Liked It, Loved It* voting system. Use the *Taste Test Guide* to set up a taste test system that works for you.