



Classroom | K-12 School and Early Care Educators

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:

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mtharvestofthemonth.org

How You Can Participate

- **Gather your team and register for HOM today!** Your team must include at least a food service staff member, administrator, and educator. Share the short video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=orzwBczAX6A>.
- **Conduct at least one HOM lesson each month.** The *Classroom Bites* handouts include a lesson plan, recipes, fun facts, cooking tips, and children's book ideas. Coordinate with food service staff so HOM activities occur before the item is served in a meal or snack. If the HOM item is served before the lesson, remind the students when it was available. The most effective lessons include a taste test or a cooking project but start small and make it manageable for the year. Additional lessons, educational standards, and guides are available for registered sites. Explore the food system with your students by visiting a nearby farm, ranch, or food business or invite a farmer, rancher, or other guest into the classroom to learn more about the HOM food(s) and how they make it to our plates.
- **Involve parents and community members.** HOM is a perfect way for parents or other community members (such as Master Gardeners, MSU Extension Agents, college students, non-profit organizations, etc.) to be involved. Send recipes and *Harvest at Home* handout with students to share with parents.
- **Join forces with other educators and students.** Invite other educators and student club advisors to team up for joint learning and mentorship. Schools have worked with culinary, Family and Consumer Science, Agriculture Education, and marketing classes and clubs to do cooking projects, lead activities, promote HOM items, and conduct taste tests while giving older students leadership opportunities.
- **Display the posters** in a visible location. Additional posters are available for purchase.
- **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.