



## MASSACHUSETTS FARM TO SCHOOL MONTH

Healthy students are better learners. When students eat nutritious meals, they tend to be sharper and to achieve better grades, test scores, and attendance. Conversely, students with poor diets have lower academic performance, higher absenteeism, and more social and health problems. Students from low-income families experience greater food insecurity and more of the associated academic and health problems. Meals served during the school day are crucial to supporting academic performance and health, because students spend a major part of their days in school.

MAPC is making it easier for schools to buy fresh fruits and vegetables. On behalf of 10 school districts, MAPC manages a produce contract with distributor A. Russo and Sons, supporting school food directors and helping to streamline

purchasing. Our contract helps schools source more local produce, through Russo's partnerships with farms across Massachusetts and New England.

These efforts support the health and academic performance of nearly 50,000 students enrolled in participating schools, including more than 12,000 economically disadvantaged students who qualify for free meals. The schools' purchases also support the New England farm and food economy and encourage sustainable practices throughout the food supply chain.

To learn more about school produce procurement, contact MAPC Municipal Collaboration Director Mark Fine at [MFINE@MAPC.ORG](mailto:MFINE@MAPC.ORG).