

For Immediate Release:

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## Healthy Snacks from Local Farms for C-PP Students

CORNING, NY – If an apple a day keeps the doctor away, imagine what a kiwi or uglia fruit might do! Through a special grant implemented by the USDA, students at Calvin U. Smith and Winfield Elementary Schools have benefited the past two years from the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP), an innovative pilot program to provide free fresh fruit and vegetable snacks to elementary students. “Smith and Winfield were eligible for the program because 50% or more of their student enrollment is eligible for free or reduced meal benefits,” said C-PP Food Services Director Christine Wallace. “We applied for and received a grant, and have been serving daily fresh fruit and vegetable snacks since September 2009. By the end of June, \$34,860 will have been spent on fresh and healthy daily snacks for the students and staff at these two buildings.”

Monthly snack menus have offered such new tastes as jicama, snow peas, plums, asparagus, mushrooms, three types of apples, red raspberries, brussel sprouts and more. Classes have their snack at either 10:00am or 2:00pm to best complement their scheduled lunch time. On a half day, all students have their snack just prior to dismissal. To support American farmers, all fruits and vegetables except bananas must come from U.S. sources. This year the District has partnered with Tomian Farms of Penn Yan to supply local fruits and vegetables. For example, 26 flats of beautiful, big and sweet strawberries were purchased in June, and in October, two loads of seasonal fall vegetables were provided, including “fresh from the field” stalks of brussels sprouts. Each classroom received a stalk and students snapped off their sprout snack for the day. “Efforts like these help meet the criteria of the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable grant by both exposing children to new snack tastes and by providing some nutrition education along with their snacks. Supporting local farmers and growers is an additional bonus,” said Mrs. Wallace.

According to Mrs. Wallace, the grant offers lots of new fruit and vegetable choices to students who might not otherwise have had opportunities to taste items like brussels sprouts, fresh pineapple or fresh grapefruit. The habit-forming process during this time is crucial and the FFVP can provide exposure that will help develop healthy ways to snack during the day.



***Press Release, continued***

Response from the schools is positive: “The program has been fabulous - for all involved! It is appreciated by the parents, the classroom staff, the cafeteria staff and yes, the kids too,” said Tom Tunney, Winfield Street Principal. “With the experiences of tasting new and different things through the healthy snacks program, the students are also more open to trying different things on the lunch menu.”

“The program remains a huge success at Smith Elementary and something that everyone looks forward to,” agreed Principal Kerry Elsasser. “Many classes do a ‘no thank you bite’ which prompts students to at least give things a try. It reinforces responsibilities such as: going to pick up snack and passing out snack to the class. Students in many classes wait until everyone is served before taking a bite and in other rooms, students enjoy their snack as they work.”

Funding for the FFVP will continue and increase annually for the next four years. The funding formula provides \$70 per student at both Calvin U. Smith and Winfield along with 94 other NYS elementary schools. Total funding for New York State this year is \$2, 967,352 and it is anticipated that 43,390 children will be reached by the FFVP. The FFVP is now operating in all 50 states.

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