

October, 2019



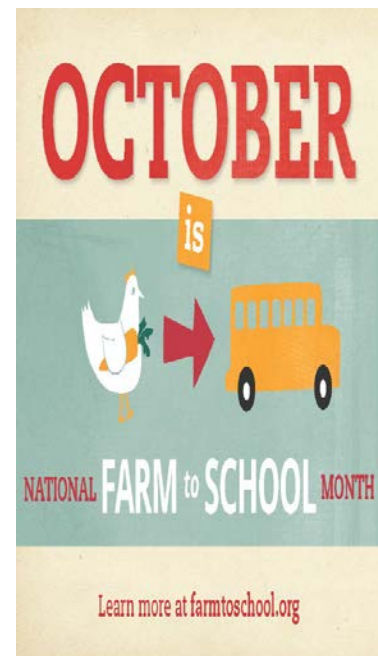
## Nutrition News for the Central Sierra

A monthly newsletter about food, nutrition, and healthy living in the Central Sierra.

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### Celebrate Farm to School Month

October is National Farm to School Month, a time to celebrate connections happening all over the country between schools, food and local farmers! Farm to school enriches the connection communities have with fresh, healthy food and local food producers by enhancing food purchasing and education practices at schools and early care and education sites. In the Central Sierra, UCCE and our many partners celebrate farm to school by teaching in school gardens, bringing farmers into classrooms, supporting school food service departments that want to purchase local foods, and offering kids a taste of fresh fruits and vegetables that they might not have tried before. Learn more about farm to school and find ways to get involved by visiting the National Farm to School Network's website at [farmtoschool.org](http://farmtoschool.org).



Harvest of  
the Month



APPLES



Since apples are available in stores year-round, it's easy to forget that their peak season is in the Autumn – but nothing announces the arrival of Fall quite like a crisp apple. Produced at higher elevations throughout the Central Sierra, apples are available at farmers markets and local you-pick operations. Apples are known for keeping us healthy, as they are good sources of fiber, vitamin C, and potassium. See below for a list of healthy recipes ideas, or simply sprinkle sliced apples with cinnamon in a small container, cover, and shake gently to coat the slices. The cinnamon not only tastes great, it also masks browning from oxidation, which is helpful if the apple slices will be sitting in a lunchbox for a while before being eaten. Learn more about apples and view their nutrition facts at [Harvest of the Month](#).

**Recipe Ideas:**

- [Sweet Potato Apple Bake](#)
- [Apple Celery Slaw with Nuts](#)
- [Apple Oatmeal Crisp](#)
- [Tuna Apple Salad](#)

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**New & Noteworthy**

*Visit these links for a round-up of nutrition news, information, and events from the past month. Note that any particular research finding is only one part of a large and complicated picture of a healthy diet. For general healthy eating information based on an expert analysis of nutrition research, visit [ChooseMyPlate.gov](#). For individual diet questions, consult a registered dietitian or medical provider.*

**FREE SCHOOL LUNCH IMPROVES TEST SCORES** - A report from Syracuse University found that when schools in New York City began offering free lunch for all students, standardized test scores improved significantly. [Universal free lunch is linked to better test scores in New York City, new report finds](#).

**BLOOD SUGAR AND BRAIN HEALTH** - New research shows a possible link between blood sugar and the development of Alzheimer's. The studies were

performed with mice, but researchers believe the link may be similar for humans. [Keeping Your Blood Sugar In Check Could Lower Your Alzheimer's Risk.](#)

**MARKETING TODDLER FOODS** - From UC ANR's Nutrition Policy Institute Director, Lorrene Ritchie: "The amount of funding spent to promote healthy foods, which is mostly via federal nutrition education dollars such as WIC and SNAP-Ed, is dwarfed by food marketing which is mostly for unhealthy and 'treat' foods and beverages." [Sweet excess: How the baby food industry hooks toddlers on sugar, salt and fat.](#)

### *Nutrition Education Spotlight: Farm to Camino Elementary*

During the 2018–2019 school year, UCCE CalFresh Healthy Living Nutrition Educators and El Dorado County farms partnered to bring local produce to Harvest of the Month tastings with kindergarten through 5th grade students at Camino Elementary School. For seven months, 290 students participated in 30-minute lessons and tastings about an in-season crop. Of the seven tastings, three were donated by local farms and one lesson was led by a local farmer.

El Dorado County is a rich agricultural region with over 120 farms, boasting a variety of crops like apples, pears, grapes and berries. While many students have a connection to a local farm through family members or field trips, there remains a lack of understanding about the importance of eating seasonally and supporting local food systems. Harvest of the Month provides the perfect opportunity to discuss the benefits of eating in-season, local produce. Bolstering this discussion with donated fruits and vegetables by area farms has proven to be a huge success among Camino Elementary students and has helped bridge the gap between the farm and the grocery store. Donations from these farms have not only made it financially possible to provide tastings to approximately 290 students each month, but have also enhanced the program by highlighting the agricultural abundance in students' own backyards. Read more on [our blog](#).



Nutrition, Family and Consumers Sciences (NFCS) in the Central Sierra conducts education, outreach, and applied research to support nutrition, food security, and public health in Calaveras, Tuolumne, Amador, and El Dorado Counties. NFCS includes the CalFresh Healthy Living, UC program, which teaches free classes in local schools, community centers, libraries, and other public places. Our classes

show people how to choose, grow, cook, and enjoy affordable healthy foods, and how to make physical activity a regular and fun part of life. We also work to create environments where it's easier for people to make healthy choices by supporting wellness policies, community and school gardens, walking clubs, and more. For more information, visit our [website](#), [Facebook](#), or [Twitter](#), or email NFCS Advisor Katie Johnson at [ckrjohnson@ucanr.edu](mailto:ckrjohnson@ucanr.edu).



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UC Cooperative Extension Central Sierra | 311 Fair Lane, Placerville, CA 95667

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