



NEWS

**Delaware Farm to School Program
2320 South Dupont Highway, Dover, Delaware 19901**

To Newsroom Directors and Assignment Editors

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Governor proclaims week of May 17—21 to be Strawberry Week in Delaware All Delaware school districts are now participating in the *Delaware Farm to School Program*

Today, Governor Jack Markell joined Delaware farmers and state agencies at Harlan Elementary School in Wilmington to celebrate locally grown Delaware strawberries, declaring the week of May 17 – 21 to be Strawberry Week in Delaware. The Governor signed House Bill 203 last week designating strawberries as the official state fruit.

During today’s visit, the Governor touted strawberries as one of the fruits in the state’s *Farm to School* Program, which promotes farm to school partnerships to encourage schools to purchase more locally grown food which provides more healthy fresh food for school children, educates children and families about foods grown in their communities and expands market opportunities for local farms.

“Delaware’s strawberry growers are part of our farm-to-school efforts and I am pleased to say that all 19 of our school districts are now participating in the *Farm to School* program, which is an economic benefit to Delaware farmers, Delaware’s agricultural industry, and Delaware’s economy,” said Governor Markell. “This program is about sustaining and expanding a strong local and regional food system that involves not only growing food, but also processing food, marketing food, and transporting food, all of which sustain and create jobs for Delawareans and help us preserve farmland and open space.”

Others speaking at today’s event with Governor Markell were Curt Fifer a Kent County strawberry grower, Ed Kee, Delaware Secretary of Agriculture, Dorrell Green, Principal of Harlan Middle School, Dr. Mark Holodick, Superintendent of the Brandywine School District, and Linda Wolfe, Director of the School Support Services Workgroup, Delaware Department of Education.

Dr. Holodick said, "This is truly a win-win for everyone involved," said Dr. Mark Holodick, Superintendent of the Brandywine School District. "Through the Farm to School program, we are teaching our children about healthy eating and economics while supporting local farmers. Furthermore, study after study has shown that children who eat a healthy breakfast and lunch are more ready to learn in the classroom, see higher academic scores, are less likely to be tardy or absent, and demonstrate improved behavior at school."

In closing, Ed Kee said, “The *Delaware Farm to School Program* is growing and will expand to include all Delaware products – products that are second to none in quality and nutrition. Farmers in all three counties are participating and bringing products to all of the school districts in Delaware. Curt Fifer, today’s strawberry grower, said that he is making 100 deliveries of strawberries to schools this week. I am pleased that we were able to showcase the Brandywine School District’s commitment to the program today.”

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FUN FACTS ABOUT STRAWBERRIES

<http://www.londonstrawberryfestival.com/facts.htm>

- Americans eat 3.4 pounds of fresh strawberries each year plus another 1.8 pounds frozen per capita.

<http://strawberriesweb.com/strawberries/Facts+and+Trivia+about+Strawberries/>

- Over 53-percent of seven-to-nine-year olds picked strawberries as their favorite fruit.
- Ninety-four percent of U.S. households consume strawberries.

<http://strawberriesweb.com/strawberries/Facts+and+Trivia+about+Strawberries/>

Harlan students enjoyed fresh, local strawberries from Fifer Orchards in Wyoming, Delaware.



Governor Markell speaking to Harlan students.
Left to right: Mr. Dorrel Green, Principal of Harlan Elementary School, Governor Markell, Dr. Mark Holodick, Superintendent of Brandywine School District, Linda Wolfe, Director of the School Support Services Workgroup, Delaware Department of Education.



Governor Markell proclaiming the week of May 17 – 21 to be Strawberry Week in Delaware.



Harlan student making the “healthy choice.”



Harlan students at lunch, responding to “Who likes strawberries?”

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