

Guide

September 26-October 7, 2022



**SOUTH DAKOTA STATE
UNIVERSITY EXTENSION**





2022 South Dakota Crunch Off Guide

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September 2022

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What is the South Dakota Crunch Off?

The South Dakota Crunch off is a statewide event to celebrate Farm to School by crunching into any South Dakota grown “crunchy” fruit or vegetable.

States throughout the Mountain Plains Region (CO, MT, MO, KS, NE, ND, SD, WY) are competing in the **Mountain Plains Crunch Off** to see which State can get the most “crunches” into a local apple, or other locally grown produce, per capita.

As a Crunch Off participant, you will join students, teachers, farmers, parents, community members, and local food enthusiasts in celebrating the wonderful produce South Dakota has to offer. Your Crunch efforts will encourage healthy eating and support local agriculture while celebrating Farm to School Month and shedding light on the wonderful efforts of our school food service partners.



Steps to Get Started

1. **Find a Crunch Team!** Find a group excited about Farm to School and local food. Examples of crunch teams include classes, grades, schools, districts, 4H clubs, boy and girl scouts, daycares, farms, farmers markets, clinics, offices, and more!
2. **Decide what you will crunch and where you will get it from!** In South Dakota, you may crunch any local crunchable produce, such as apples, beets, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, carrots, cucumbers, peppers, pole beans, beans, peas, etc.
3. **Create your Crunch plan!** The opportunities are endless when it comes to the creativity of hosting a crunch event. Check the SDSU Extension website for Crunch Event Activity ideas. South Dakota crunch events can happen anytime between September 26th and October 7th, 2022.
4. **Register!** If you would like to host a Crunch event, register your event here: ksde.sjc1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_d9VPRUhrVr5ppc. You must register to be counted! Registration will remain open through October 31st in case any events would like to retrospectively be counted. It is preferred that crunch events register prior to events.
5. **Promote your Crunch event!** Share your event on social media, print media, school announcements, newsletters, etc. There are templates in this guide for your use. Use the hashtags #SouthDakotaCrunch and #MountainPlainsCrunch when posting.

How Can I Find Local Products?

- Source apples and produce from a **food hub**. (Eastern SD – Dakota Fresh Food Hub)
- Find a **local farmer or farmer's market**. Helpful tools include Dakota Rural Action's Local Foods Directory and SD Specialty Producers Association's "Find Local Foods" feature.
- Have a **school or community garden** or orchard? Source directly from there.
- Know a **Master Gardener** in your area? Ask if they have a connection to local crunchable produce.
- Have a garden or apple trees or know someone who does? **Donate** to a crunch event!
- School Foodservice
 - Ask your **distributor** if they carry local apples or other local produce.
 - Look for local apples and produce via **DoD Fresh**, when applicable. DoD Fresh allows school districts to use their entitlement dollars to purchase fresh produce. See the [How to Utilize DoD Fresh to Purchase Local Produce](#) fact sheet for more information.
 - Visit the SD DOE CANS website for information on sourcing local, or reach out to the SD DOE CANS Farm to School Lead – Cynda Frey at Cynda.frey@state.sd.us

Tips for Success

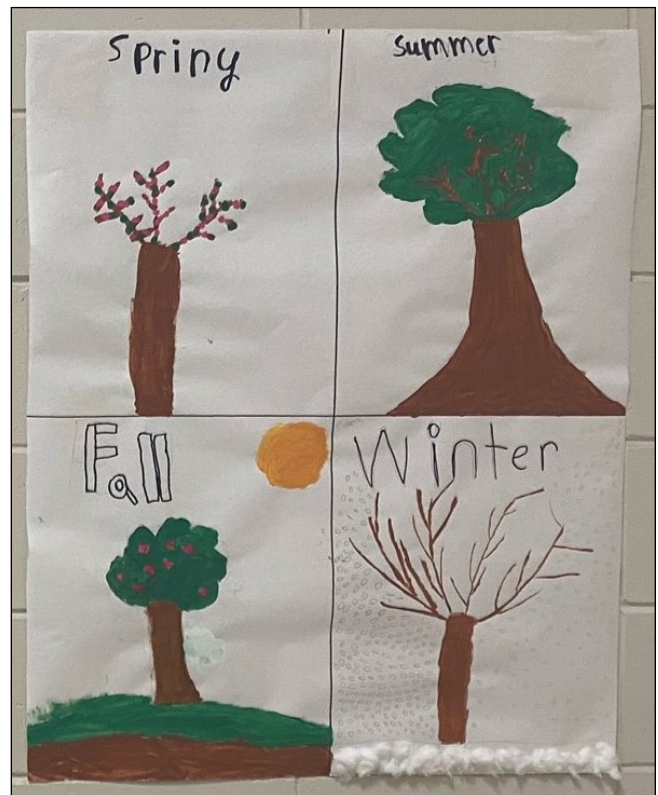
1. **Get as many people involved as you can!** Once you have decided on where your Crunch will take place, start to spread the word! Get students, parents, food service staff, teachers, administrators, and community members excited about your Crunch through social media, newsletters, press releases, PTA announcements and any other way you typically interact with the community.
2. **Do what works for you.** Hosts create their event to suit their group. Activities may range from simply biting into local produce to hosting an assembly with guest speakers.
3. **Schools and Early Care and Education Sites:** You have many opportunities to get involved. Consider registering an event for a class, a grade, or the whole school or district. Have a "crunch at lunch." Local produce could be incorporated into the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) or lunch meal. Individual classrooms may opt to crunch at snack time. The crunch could be incorporated into classroom lessons of many topics for any age. [Register to be counted!](#)



4. **Producers:** Without you, the Crunch Off isn't possible. For commercial growers and hobby gardeners alike, this is an opportunity to engage with your surrounding area. Produce can be sold or donated. Consider sharing this event with area schools and early care settings and offering to provide the produce. [Register to be counted!](#)
5. **Families, Offices, Small Groups, Individuals, or Others:** You are the local food enthusiasts of South Dakota! Gather a group of any size and share photos of your crunch event! Consider sharing fun facts with your posts or making recipes with your Crunch produce and sharing them with your group as you Crunch together. [Register to be counted!](#)
6. **Share your success!** Consider inviting local media or have a point person to capture the event to share on social media and other outlets.

Simple Crunch Time Activity Ideas

- Conduct taste tests with apple (or other produce) varieties.
- Host a cooking contest, class, or demo for fruit or vegetable recipes.
- Set up a crunch themed photo booth for the Crunch event.
- Read fruit or vegetable themed books.
- Ask students to describe verbally or in writing how a certain fruit or vegetable looks, feels, tastes, and smells.
- Ask students to write a story about a fruit or vegetable.
- Ask students to count the seeds in an apple or other fruit.
- Ask students to weigh and measure the circumference of a fruit or vegetable.
- Discuss the life cycle of a fruit or vegetable, how it grows, and photosynthesis.
- Put apple slices into cups with different liquids (water, soda, vinegar) and ask students to hypothesize what will happen in each experiment. Observe for a week and reflect on each hypothesis.



Templates

Press Release Template

{NAME}

{SCHOOL/ORGANIZATION}

{PHONE}

{EMAIL}

{DATE}

{SCHOOL/ORGANIZATION} is joining schools, preschools, nonprofits, and local food enthusiasts in celebrating Farm to School Month by participating in the South Dakota Crunch Off! South Dakota is competing against region states to determine who will be crowned the Mountain Plains Region Crunch Champion through having the most crunches into local apples or produce per capita.

{INCLUDE SPECIFICS ON YOUR EVENT AND HOW TO BE INVOLVED}

This Crunch event encourages healthy eating, supports local agriculture, and helps students and community members gain a deeper understanding of the food system. {INCLUDE DETAILS ON ACTIVITIES YOU ARE DOING FOR THE CRUNCH}

Help South Dakota win the Crunch crown by joining our Crunch event! For more information, or to participate in the Crunch, please contact {CONTACT NAME} at {PHONE} or {EMAIL}.

Social Media Post Templates

- Did you know there are 2,500 varieties of apples grown in the United States? Bite into your favorite local apple on {Sept. 26th – Oct. 7th} to be a part of the {ENTER ORGANIZATION/SCHOOL NAME} Crunch! #MountainPlainsCrunch #SouthDakotaCrunch
- Did you know one apple has five grams of fiber? Fiber is a healthy part of all diets and can help reduce blood sugar swings, lower cholesterol, and keep you full. Crunch into this healthy snack on {Sept. 26-Oct. 7}. #MountainPlainsCrunch #SouthDakotaCrunch
- Did you know apples are a member of the rose family? Crunch into this beautiful fruit on {Sept. 26-Oct. 7}. #MountainPlainsCrunch #SouthDakotaCrunch
- Create your own post and use these hashtags: #MountainPlainsCrunch, #SouthDakotaCrunch

Email/Phone Invitation Template
(Producers to Schools or other Potential Crunch Hosts)

Hello {INSERT NAME OR ORGANIZATION},

I am reaching out to see if you are interested in participating in a fun event called the 2022 South Dakota Crunch Off. Simply put, participating in the Crunch Off means organizing a group to bite into a local “crunchable” fruit or vegetable between September 26 and October 7, and sharing a photo with #SouthDakotaCrunch. Crunching on local produce encourages healthy eating, supports local agriculture, and helps students and community members gain a deeper understanding of the food system.

Not only is this event fun, it’s also a competition. South Dakota competes against states in the Mountain Plains Region annually to see which state can get the most “crunches” into a local apple or other local produce, per capita and is a celebration of National Farm to School Month (October).

I thought you may be interested in this event because ____ (INSERT REASONING. ex: I know you serve snacks to students daily and thought this would be a fun twist to snack time). There are many diverse, fun, and educational ways to bring this event to fruition. To learn more about the Crunch-Off and how to participate, visit the SDSU Extension website at extension.sdstate.edu.

I have local produce available and would be happy to work with you on supplying a Crunch Event. {INSERT PRODUCT, PRICE, AND TRANSPORT INFORMATION.}

{IF APPLICABLE}: If you are interested, I would be more than happy to visit your facility for your crunch event to educate students about growing local foods.

I realize that finding local produce can be a barrier to participating in the Crunch Off, so, I thought I would reach out to make this connection. If you have any questions, you can reach me at _____. I look forward to hearing from you!

Healthy Regards,
{YOUR NAME}
{YOUR PHONE NUMBER}
{YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS}

Email/Phone Invitation Template

(Crunch Event Hosts to Local Food Producers)

Hello {INSERT NAME OR FARM NAME},

I hope this message finds you well. I am hosting a South Dakota Crunch Off Event at {INSERT YOUR GROUP NAME AND LOCATION} and am looking for local produce to Crunch On. I found your information {INSERT SOURCE OF INFORMATION}, and see you have {INSERT TYPE OF PRODUCE YOU ARE INTERESTED IN}. I am interested in purchasing {INSERT QUANTITY AND ITEM} for our crunch event on {INSERT DATE}. Does this sound like something we could arrange?

{IF APPLICABLE}: If you are interested, I would also welcome you to visit our Crunch Event. Crunching on local produce encourages healthy eating, supports local agriculture, and helps students and community members gain a deeper understanding of the food system. Our group would value the opportunity to “Crunch” with the producer who grew our food.

Not only is this event fun, it's also a competition. South Dakota competes against states in the Mountain Plains Region annually to see which state can get the most “crunches” into a local apple or other local produce, per capita and is a celebration of National Farm to School Month (October). To learn more about the Crunch Off, visit the SDSU Extension website at extension.sdstate.edu.

I look forward to talking with you more.

Healthy Regards,

{YOUR NAME}

{YOUR PHONE NUMBER}

{YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS}

Contact information

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