

Event Guide



**SOUTH DAKOTA STATE
UNIVERSITY EXTENSION**





South Dakota Crunch Off Guide

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What is the South Dakota Crunch Off?

The South Dakota Crunch off is a statewide event to celebrate local produce and farm to school by crunching into any South Dakota grown 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 and SD agricultural producers.

When is the South Dakota Crunch Off?

The South Dakota Crunch Off is held every year over the last two weeks of September and the first two weeks of October. Individual Crunch events may occur anytime within that time frame.



Steps to Get Started

1. **Find a Crunch Team!** Find a group excited about Farm to School or local food (or that you hope to make excited about farm to school or 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! There is no wrong team. Anyone may participate.
2. **Decide what you will crunch and where you will get it from!** In South Dakota, you may crunch any local fruit or vegetable, 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.
4. **Register! You must register your crunch.** If you would like to host a Crunch event, register your event here: extension.sdstate.edu/farm-school. 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 #SoDakCrunch and #MountainPlainsCrunch when posting.

How Can I Find Local Products?

- Source fruits or vegetables 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.
 - Visit the [SD DOE CANS](#) website or reference the [South Dakota Farm to School Resource Guide](#) for information on sourcing local.

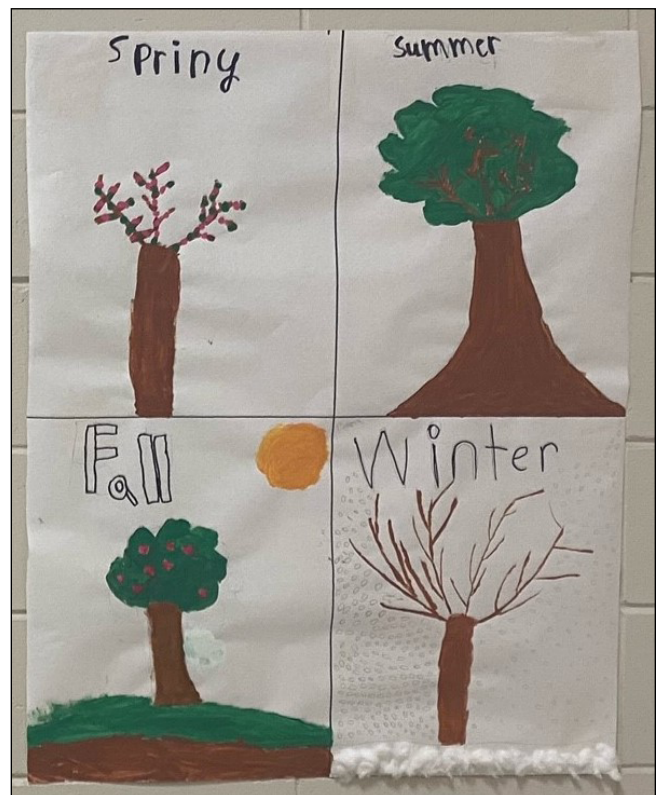
Tips for Success

1. **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!
2. **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!
3. **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!
4. **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

- Check out [SDSU Extension's Crunch Off](#) crosswords, word find, trivia game, CRUNCH bingo card, and color your very own Crunch Crown.
- 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 are grown in the United States? Bite into your favorite local apple to be a part of the {ENTER ORGANIZATION/SCHOOL NAME} Crunch! #MountainPlainsCrunch #SoDakCrunch
- 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 to be part of the crunch off! #MountainPlainsCrunch #SoDakCrunch
- Did you know apples are a member of the rose family? Crunch into this beautiful fruit to be part of the crunch off! #MountainPlainsCrunch #SoDakCrunch
- Create your own post and use these hashtags: #MountainPlainsCrunch, #SoDakCrunch

Contact information

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