



Basics

HOM 101

About Montana Harvest of the Month

The [Montana Harvest of the Month](#) (HOM) program showcases Montana grown foods in Montana schools, institutions, and communities. Each month, participating sites focus on promoting one locally grown item (e.g., winter squash) by serving it in at least one meal or snack and displaying or distributing HOM materials. Additionally, schools, afterschool programs, early care and education (ECE) sites, and summer food service program sites participate by offering taste tests to children and doing educational lessons and activities. Montana Harvest of the Month is a perfect way to launch or grow a farm to school or farm to cafeteria program, as it provides an easy framework to follow and ready-to-use materials. Participating sites receive a free packet of materials (includes posters and cafeteria, classroom, and home handouts) as well as guides, additional resources, and training.

Dig Deeper

Get more information, register, or download resources:

Molly Kirkham

Montana Local Foods Specialist

mollyk@ncat.org | (406) 494-8672

mtharvestofthemonth.org

How You Can Participate

- **Gather your team and register for HOM today!** Your team should include at least a food service staff member, administrator, and educator or provider. Share the short video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=orzwBczAX6A>
- **Find and integrate the HOM foods in at least one school meal or snack per month.** The *Cafeteria Bites* handouts include standardized recipes, cooking tips and menu templates that make it easy to showcase HOM foods. You can also incorporate the HOM foods into your existing recipes or feature on the salad bar. Need help finding or purchasing local foods? Visit: <http://www.montana.edu/mtfarmtoschool/resources/school-food.html>.
- **Involve parents and community members.** HOM is a perfect way for parents or other community members (such as Master Gardeners, MSU Extension Agents, college students, non-profit organizations, ranchers, farmers, food businesses, grocery stores, etc.) to be involved. Send recipes and *Harvest at Home* handouts with students to share with parents.
- **HOM in Action.** Show the public and inspire other HOM sites by becoming featured on the [HOM in Action](#) page. Do this by posting your HOM activities, meals, and taste tests on social media and tag #MTHarvestoftheMonth or share your activities directly with HOM coordinators.
- **Display the posters** in the cafeteria or on a bulletin board. Additional posters are available for purchase.
- **(Schools, After-school, ECE, Summer) Conduct at least one HOM lesson each month.** The *Classroom Bites* handouts include a lesson plan for elementary-aged audiences, recipes, fun facts, cooking tips, and children's book ideas. Coordinate with food service staff so HOM activities occur before the item is served in a meal or snack. The most effective lessons are ones that include a taste test or a cooking project, but start small and make it manageable for the whole school year. Additional lessons, educational standards information, and guides are available for registered sites.
- **(Schools, Afterschool, ECE, Summer) Conduct taste tests to help students become adventurous eaters.** Sites should conduct at least one taste test in a cafeteria or classroom each month and submit voting results using the *Tried It, Liked It, Loved It* voting system. Use the *Taste Test Guide* to set up a taste test system that works for you.



August 2024 – July 2025

Calendar

Although we recommend following this calendar, your school or program can change the order of the calendar to suit your needs. None of the materials are printed with the month. The calendar will likely change each year to include new foods!



August – Herbs



September – Brassicas



October – Apples



November – Potatoes



December – Carrots



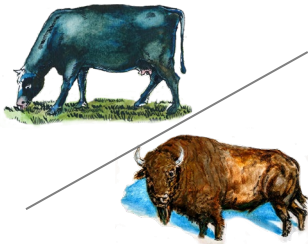
January – Winter Squash



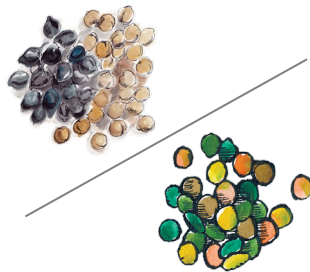
February – Beets



March – Grains



April – Beef + Bison



May – Chickpeas + Lentils



June – Leafy Greens



July – Summer Squash



The Montana Harvest of the Month Program showcases Montana grown foods in Montana communities. This program is a collaboration between Montana Farm to School, Montana Office of Public Instruction, Montana Team Nutrition Program, National Center for Appropriate Technology, Montana State University Extension, Montana State University, AgCorps, Montana Department of Agriculture, and Abundant Montana. More information and resources are available at mtharvestofthemonth.org.

Funds were provided in part by USDA Team Nutrition Training grants, USDA funds, USDA Farm to School grants, Montana Healthcare Foundation, Northern Pulse Growers Association, Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services, Montana School Nutrition Association, Montana Department of Agriculture Specialty Crop Block Grant, Montana Grains Foundation, Dairy MAX, Montana Pulse Crop Committee, and Montana Wheat and Barley Committee.