



Conserving our natural resources through education, demonstration, and collaboration.

The Great Sweet Potato Project: Local Food at Last in our Moore County Schools.



The Sustainable Sandhills' Local Food Program advocates and celebrates local sustainable agriculture. Food that is grown locally is growing in popularity with consumers that recognize purchasing local goods is fresher, healthier, and supports the local economy. Buying local also reduces carbon impacts, since food is not processed or transported as far.

Incorporating local food into schools is a difficult process. Schools must contract with food service companies, providing barriers to sourcing from locally farms. However, Moore County FoodCorps Service Member Sebastian Naskaris, Moore County Schools CFO Mike Griffin, and Moore County School Child Nutrition Director Amanda Cagle have been working to incorporate locally grown produce into the Moore County School system, and their hard work has paid off! CV Pilson Farm's sweet potatoes will now be served in Moore County Schools in support of our local Farm to School efforts.

By coordinating their efforts with Layton's Produce Company in Raleigh – the Moore County School's fruit and vegetable supplier – the group was able to connect CV Pilson sweet potatoes with the school district's supplier, brokering a fair price so local sweet potatoes could be available in school cafeterias. Sebastian even spent seven hours with other farm workers on the Pilson Farm harvesting these beauties.

On November 22nd consider having a baked sweet potato lunch at a Moore County School cafeteria near you. It can be purchased as an *a la carte* item. We are asking parents and other community volunteers to join students for lunch this day, sharing the experience and talking about the value of eating fresh local vegetables.

Hats off to Sebastian, FoodCorps, Mike Griffin, Amanda Cagle, Layton's Produce, and Chester Pilson for taking the big step, and to the BCBSNC Foundation for their funding in support of the GAPS training. Thank you to everyone who has cheered us on toward this first step.

To learn more about Sustainable Sandhills' Local Food Program, visit our website at www.sustainablesandhills.org or contact Kea Meacham at keam@sustainablesandhills.org. To learn more about local food and school gardens in Moore County, contact Kathy Byron at kathy@cismoore.org.