



Farm to Cafeteria Conference Attendee Fundraising Packet

We appreciate your commitment to attending the 7th National Farm to Cafeteria Conference. We know that it can be difficult to cover the costs for attending such a conference, and so we want to provide you with the best resources we can to help you get there! If you need additional resources to help you fundraise, please do not hesitate to [contact us!](#)

Fundraising Information for Farm to Cafeteria Conference Attendees

How does the National Farm to School Network (NFSN) handle donations towards conference registration?

Registration:

- The full scholarship amount is \$400. This can come from one donor, or several. This amount covers the basic conference registration cost, with some extra to go towards registration fees and additional programs you may choose (such as short courses, field trips, etc). When you register, if the total amount of your registration exceeds what you have collected in scholarship donations, you will be responsible to cover the remainder (before you collect donations, you are welcome to go through the registration system to find out your exact final total if you would like). If your donors wish to contribute more than your total scholarship amount, any additional amount you cannot use will be donated into our general scholarship fund. We cannot provide any refunds for donations.
- All donations must be made out to “National Farm to School Network / Tides Center” (National Farm to School Network is a project of the Tides Center) in order to be acknowledged and recognized as a donation. We cannot accept checks written out to an individual or organization other than the Network/Tides, and checks made out to an individual cannot be processed in NFSN’s system. You are welcome to collect donations directly yourself, and then submit your own check to NFSN but please let your donors know that in that process NFSN cannot acknowledge them as donors and they will not receive a thank you, tax donation letter or sponsor acknowledgement in conference materials from us.
- NFSN will acknowledge, thank and recognize any donor who contributes to a scholarship, as long as the payment comes directly to NFSN.
- Donors can send checks, or use our online donation system at: <https://donatenow.networkforgood.org/farm2schoolnetwork>.
- Please include a notation for “2014 Conference Scholarship – scholarship recipients name” on each check. If they donate online, please have them complete the “I want my donation to be dedicated:” field with “Conference Scholarship – Scholarship recipient name”.
- Any scholarship donors who provide \$1500 or more in funds will be acknowledged as a conference sponsor at the level that matches their donation and they will receive the sponsor benefits of that level. Donors who provide under \$1500 in scholarship funds will

get their names printed in the conference program. Please contact [Jaime](#) if you are speaking with a donor who would like to provide \$1500 or above in scholarship donations so we make sure they receive all of their sponsor benefits.

Travel:

- You are responsible for your travel expenses. You can collect donations for your travel if you wish, but you must receive those funds directly and manage them yourself. NFSN cannot process or acknowledge any travel funds.
- Ask your friends, family and relatives to donate their airline miles towards the cost of your flight.

How do you register for the conference with donations?

If you have collected donations that are made out to NFSN via checks:

[Register online](#), and in the participant additional information section answer the question regarding your donors. Then select the “Pay by Check” option during checkout. Mail your check(s) to Conference Registration, NFSN, P.M.B # 104, 8770 West Bryn Mawr Ave, Suite 1300, Chicago, IL 60631-3515 **OR** you can mail a paper registration with payment checks. **MAKE SURE YOUR CHECK ALSO HAS THE NAME OF THE REGISTRANT IN THE MEMO FOR EASY MATCHING WITH REGISTRATION.** Note that if you choose “pay by check” in the registration system, yet no funds have been collected in your name, you will be required to pay your registration fee prior to attending the conference.

If your donors have donated through our online link:

[Register online](#), and in the participant information section answer the question regarding your donors, and indicate that they paid online. Select the “An online donation” option. **MAKE SURE YOUR DONORS WROTE THE REGISTRANTS NAME IN THE DEDICATION SECTION OF THE ONLINE PAYMENT FOR EASY MATCHING WITH REGISTRATION.** Note that if you choose “an online donation” in the registration system, yet no funds have been collected in your name, you will be required to pay your registration fee prior to attending the conference.

If you are collecting the donations directly and the payments are made out to you personally, you can pay by whichever method you prefer during registration. We will not acknowledge these payments as donations if they are not made out to NFSN directly from the donors.

What’s the best way to fundraise?

There are several components to a successful fundraising campaign. We hope these steps and tips help you achieve your goal!

Fundraising Planning

1. Set Your Goal
2. Identify potential donors
3. Personalize

4. Follow-up

5. Acknowledge and thank!

1. Goal: Is your goal to raise funds for your own registration? For yourself and the general fund? For another person you know? For a particular group of people (i.e., farmers from Iowa)? Decide who you want to raise funds for, how much funding that will take (keeping in mind the \$400 target per person), and when you want to have the funds secured. If you want to help NFSN raise scholarship funds more broadly, please [contact us](#) directly for more information.

2. Potential Donors: Fundraising becomes much more successful when you contact people and groups who are in some way connected with you. These connections might include:

- Family members, friends, neighbors, employers, co-workers, religious leaders, etc.
- Current and/or past employers, including those of parents, grandparents, and close relatives.
- Customers/clients/associates of your or your families work
- Local civic organizations (Rotary Club, Lion's Club, Elk's Lodge, American Legion, etc.)
- Commercial Non-Profit organizations (Credit Unions, Hospitals, etc.- Inquire at your local Chamber of Commerce/United Way for a list of Non-Profit Organizations in your area)
- Friends of immediate and extended family
- Local businesses
- Don't forget to reach out to your current key partners to explore existing funding opportunities that already exist. Many organizations have travel and registration fees already allocated in their budget, and using them to get individuals to this conference is a great way to use those funds!
- Be creative...who else can you think of?

Tips on Approaching a Potential Donor

- Always speak to a "person," even when you are approaching an organization. This person should be the decision-maker.
- For best results, make a personal visit rather than calling on the phone or sending a letter. A personal visit helps them listen to you and to what you are saying.
- If they tell you that they need time to "think about it," ask them when a good time to return would be. Then be sure to be there when you say you will.
- Start TODAY! Some businesses need time to talk to supervisors or managers in order to fit your request into their budget. Sometimes they may need a month or more to receive permission for your request.
- Be ready to answer questions about the program. Read about the National Farm to Cafeteria Conference on the website (www.farmtocafeteriaconference.org) and about the National Farm to School Network (www.farmtoschool.org).
- Be polite and express your thanks even when you are turned away.

3. Personalize

Letters/Emails

There are many ways to fundraise, but the process often includes a personal visit, a follow-up letter, and a thank you letter. First, prepare by writing a personal fundraising letter (see example included). Then visit people or organizations that you are connected with and make a personalized appeal for financial support to attend the conference. Take your personal letter, information from NFSN, and be ready to promote your cause.

Tips on what should be included in your letter/email

- Include personal information about yourself: why you want to attend the National Farm to Cafeteria Conference, how attending will benefit you, and how you intend to share what you have learned with your community.
- Be specific about what you need. Outline the cost of the conference, including any optional pre-conference events that you want to attend. Give specific instructions about how they can contribute, and include contribution forms. It is also a good idea to include the deadline for registration (March 4 for discounted early registration, April 1 for regular registration).
- Make the letter concise and to the point.
- If mailing the letter, include a smaller envelope addressed to make it easier for potential donors to respond. Write a personal note on the bottom of each letter, and put the name of the person you are writing to at the beginning of each letter.
- Hand address each letter.

Events

Organizing an event before or after the conference is a great way to raise funds. Here are some ideas for events:

- Host an event to share information about your goals in attending the conference or do it post-conference and share what you learned. Ask for donations.
- Combine the above with a fundraising dinner in your dining room, school cafeteria, or community space. Seek out donations from stores and farmers to keep your costs down.
- Clean out your closets (and your friends' closets) and hold a garage sale.
- There is no end to the kind of events you can put on (Bake Sale, House Party/Show, Cake Walk, Car Wash, Cook-off, Movie Showing, Raffle, Auction, etc). Remember that by hosting an event, you will not only raise funds for your trip to the conference but also awareness about Farm to Cafeteria issues.

Social Media

Many of us are connected through social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, Linked In and regional or local networks. You can use these forums to support your fundraising efforts.

- Post a condensed version of your fundraising letter.
- Update people on your fundraising goal and how close you are to reaching that goal.
- Share the impacts of your Farm to Cafeteria work (add photos and links).
- During the conference, post or tweet what you are doing and learning at the event.

- There are some peer-to-peer fundraising platforms out there that you may be able to utilize for free. Be creative and see how you can share your fundraising experience online!

4. Follow-up

You should send a follow up letter/email a short time after originally contacting a potential donor, thanking the potential donor for their time and consideration, and letting them know they can contact you with any questions.

5. Thank and acknowledge

A thank you letter is always sent to donors from the National Farm to School Network when funds are received. We recommend you send your own personal thank you as well. Certainly if you collect funds directly that don't get sent to NFSN, you should thank your donors. Also, an additional thank you, with pictures and stories following the conference is another way to connect your donors to the experience.

Please see our sample fundraising letter below. And please do not hesitate to [contact us](#) with any questions or for further guidance on raising funds for your own registration.

January 1, 2014

National Farm to School Network
P.M.B # 104
8770 West Bryn Mawr Ave, Suite 1300
Chicago, IL 60631-3515



Dear Potential Sponsor,

The **National Farm to Cafeteria Conference: Powering Up, April 15-18, 2014 in Austin, Texas**, will convene a diverse group of stakeholders from across the farm to cafeteria movement working to source local food for institutional cafeterias and foster a culture of food and agricultural literacy across America. We are expecting **over 1,000 attendees** at the National Farm to Cafeteria Conference, which is the premiere event for all those involved in sourcing local and sustainable food for schools, hospitals, and other institutions, as well as those involved in health and nutrition policy and practice. Our conference grows in size and energy each year and we are inviting you to be part of it!

What is the Farm to Cafeteria movement?

The term “farm to cafeteria” encompasses all efforts to bring healthy, locally sourced food *and* nutrition and agriculture education opportunities to institutional cafeteria settings. This includes but is not limited to public and private pre-K-12 schools, universities, childcare centers, hospitals and prisons.

Why is Farm to Cafeteria needed?

Cafeterias in schools, universities, prisons, hospitals and childcare centers serve more than 40 million Americans every day during the school year, placing the farm to cafeteria movement at the forefront of the fight to end obesity and strengthen local food systems. Think of it this way: A single school district often feeds more people in a day than all of a city’s restaurants combined. The National Farm to Cafeteria Conference is the only national gathering of stakeholders from across the farm to cafeteria movement, making it the premiere opportunity to learn, network and *power up* with likeminded leaders from across the country!

What are the objectives of the conference?

During the conference, attendees will have the opportunity to learn about initiatives and innovations involving pre-school, K-12, childcare facilities, hospitals, colleges, and prisons. Prospects for professional development will abound with short courses on media training, policy advocacy, and research and evaluation. The conference will help build and strengthen leaders nationally and locally, who will then bring information and expertise back to their communities to nourish people and the economy.

What’s happening locally?

[Insert language here specific to your program and location, for example the number of participating school districts, numbers of school gardens, etc. Really highlight your farm to cafeteria wins!]

How can I sponsor a conference attendee?

Help sponsor a conference attendee by donating to help cover their conference fees:

\$400 – Registration costs and add-on programs (short courses, field trips, etc).

Please make your check out to “National Farm to School Network / Tides Center” or donate online at <https://donatenow.networkforgood.org/farm2schoolnetwork>. With your check or online donation please denote “Conference Scholarship – scholarship recipient’s state/category/name” in the memo/dedication.

Thank you for supporting the Farm to Cafeteria movement through your donation!