



WEESSN Food Systems Snapshot - 2024

December 2023 to February 2024

- **Partnership for a Healthy America/City of Milwaukee:** Distributed online grocery delivery service (Instacart) funds to 220 families in Milwaukee with successful participant engagement. [Good Food at Home Video](#)

February

- **CSA Opportunity Rollout:** Providers in WEESSN's former Tier 2 and Tier 3 services were eligible for reimbursement for Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) shares. Nearly 130 child care programs, with capacity to serve 9,772 children, chose to receive CSA share reimbursements totaling \$58,000 for the 2024 season.

March

- **Seed Distributions:** Seed donations totaling 2,000 seed packets from Johnny's Selected Seeds, Baker Creek Seeds, and Seed Savers were packaged and distributed to providers.

April

- **Roots in the Ground On-demand Training Launch:** The Roots in the Ground Training became available to all providers via the Talent LMS online learning platform.
- **Edible Gardens Projects Launch in Racine and Milwaukee Counties:** Early care and education (ECE) programs in Racine and Milwaukee counties (10 in each county) participated in a yearlong opportunity to increase access to local food through gardening, food preparation and preservation resources, and technical assistance.
- **Garden Tips Texting Program:** Throughout the gardening season (April-October), weekly texts were sent to 257 people (up from 95 last year), a total of 6,425 texts. The program offers seasonally and geographically relevant tips on gardening with children, designed for both novice and veteran gardeners.

May

- **WEESSN/WFHC Food Box Deliveries:** A total of 37 group and family child care programs in Dodge, Grant, Jackson, Waupaca, and Vernon counties serving 1,193 children received eight weeks of local food deliveries through the Wisconsin Food Hub Cooperative (WFHC).
- **Garden Channel Video Series Launch:** An eight-episode [instructional gardening video series](#) featuring local providers and their gardens debuted at the Children & Nature Network's Nature Everywhere Conference at Olbrich Gardens. The series features providers across the state and highlights how they incorporate gardening into their programs.

July

- **WEESSN Begins ASPHN FARMWISE Collaboration:** A state collaborative team is participating in the Association of State Public Health Nutritionists (ASPHN) Farm to CACFP (Child and Adult Care Food Program) Institute and Learning Collaborative for two years.

- **Three New Farm to ECE Toolkits Launch:** Family child care programs are eligible to borrow their choice of five toolkits for eight weeks: Cooking/Baking, Growing Mushrooms, Seed Starting, Gardening, and Pollinators.

October

- **[What's Cooking at WECA](#):** The first-ever WECA cookbook was published (digital and print) to celebrate the nutritious foods Wisconsin ECE programs serve young children. It features kid-approved recipes submitted by providers, helpful resources, and other nutrition tips.

December

- **Milwaukee Virtual Cooking Class:** Families and staff members from Milwaukee Edible Gardens child care programs participated in a virtual cooking class that was a joint project between WECA Food Systems and [Pasture and Plenty's Black Excellence Project](#).

Ongoing

- **Monthly [Farm to ECE newsletter](#)** (sample newsletter for reference)
- **Open Office Hours:** Child care providers across the state are welcome to join the monthly Farm to ECE Open Office Hours to learn gardening basics, ask questions, and inspire each other. Nearly 200 providers registered for the series in 2024.