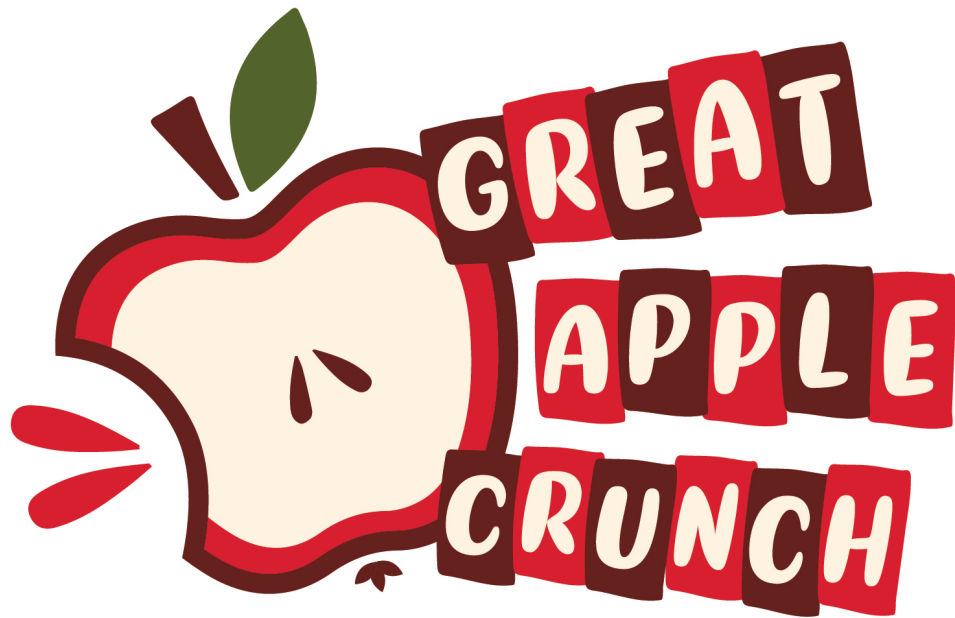


I L L I N O I S



ILLINOIS CRUNCH GUIDE for  
EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION

Join us on the second Thursday in  
October!



NATIONAL  
FARM to  
SCHOOL  
MONTH



# WHAT IS THE GREAT APPLE CRUNCH?

The Illinois Crunch is a part of the Midwest Great Apple Crunch encouraging healthy eating and supporting farm to school and other local food purchasing initiatives throughout the region. It's also a fun way to connect food and agriculture to classroom curricula – from science to art & more!

Join the Midwest states of Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Iowa and Ohio in celebrating [National Farm to School Month](#) ↗ by crunching into locally and regionally grown apples at noon on **the second Thursday in October**. Of course, if you are unable to participate on that day or exactly at noon, we still encourage you to plan an Apple Crunch event anytime during October's National Farm to School Month.

Participants of all ages are invited to crunch!

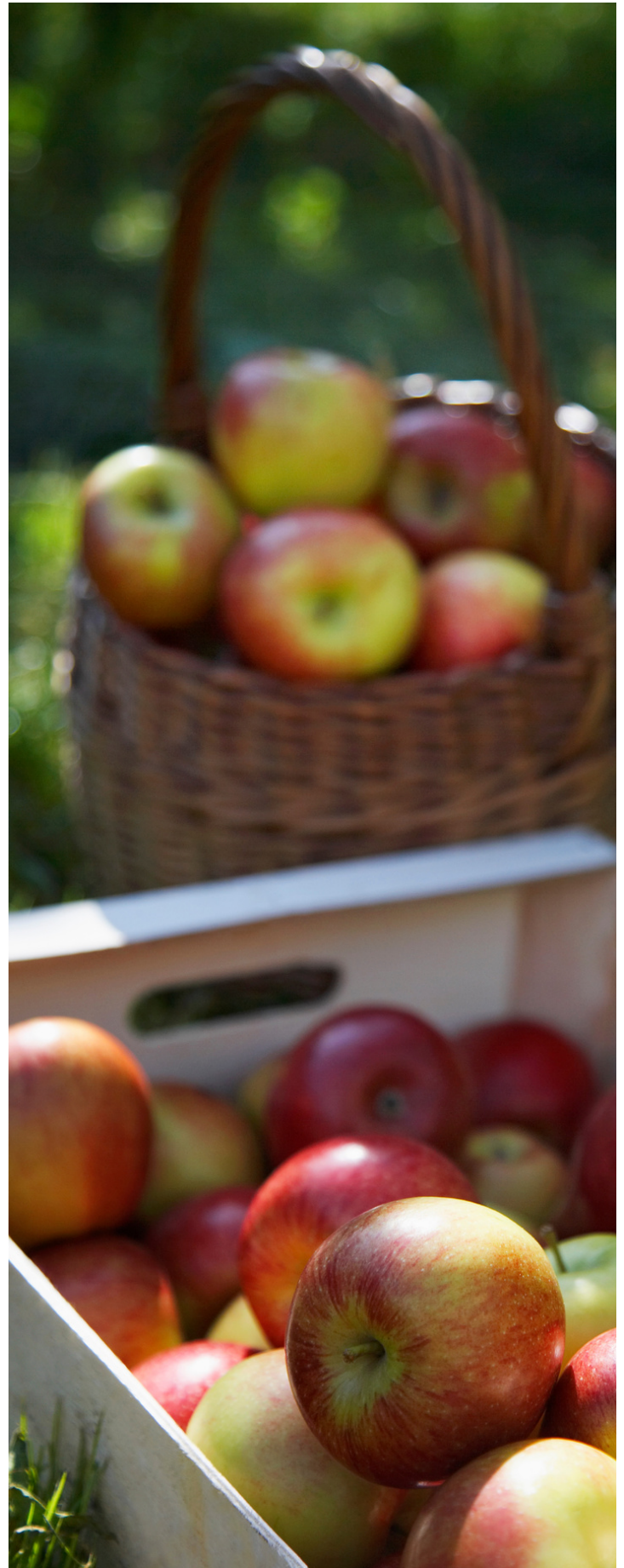
For more information about the Great Lakes Great Apple Crunch visit our Crunch website at [www.illinoisfarmtoschool/Great-Apple-Crunch](http://www.illinoisfarmtoschool/Great-Apple-Crunch) ↗

Please note: This PDF includes clickable links to additional online resources. Clickable links are [blue](#) and followed by a blue arrow (↗) like the Apple Crunch website above.



# HOW TO GET STARTED


- **REGISTER YOUR CRUNCH!**  
The best first step is to make your Crunch count. Be sure to register your Great Apple Crunch at <https://forms.gle/EVRCx9gpnPPusk9u5> ↗
  
- **ASSEMBLE AN APPLE CRUNCH PLANNING TEAM**  
Invite teachers, food service staff, administrators, parents, and students to participate in the event planning process.
  
- **FIND YOUR APPLES**  
Review the "Find Your Local Apples" section for tips on finding local orchards to supply apples for your Crunch.
  
- **CHOOSE YOUR CRUNCH DAY ACTIVITIES**  
In addition to your Great Apple Crunch at noon, plan fun and engaging educational activities, lessons, field trips, or farmer visits to celebrate Crunch day!
  
- **PREPARE YOUR COMMUNITY FOR THE CRUNCH**  
See "Promote Your Crunch" for tips to spread the word about your Crunch -and build excitement, fundraise, or find volunteers for your event!
  
- **AMPLIFY YOUR CRUNCH**  
Read "Share Your Story" and learn to amplify your Crunch through photos, social media, TV, newspaper, and radio!





# FIND YOUR LOCAL APPLES

- **APPLE ORCHARD LIST, UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS EXTENSION**  
Look for orchards near you, including pick-your-own and farm stand options.  
<https://web.extension.illinois.edu/apples/appleorchards.cfm> ↗
- **ILLINOIS FARMERS MARKET ASSOCIATION**  
Find a farmers' market near you, or search for local apple growers.  
[www.ilfma.org](http://www.ilfma.org) ↗
- **ILLINOIS MARKET MAKER**  
Find orchards, cafeteria food service contractors, farmers markets, processors, and more apple sources near you!  
<https://il.foodmarketmaker.com/main/mmsearch> ↗
- **ILLINOIS ORCHARD DIRECTORY, ORANGE PIPPIN**  
Use this list to find orchards, apple varieties, u-pick, and other options in Illinois.  
[www.orangepippin.com/orchards/united-states/illinois](http://www.orangepippin.com/orchards/united-states/illinois) ↗
- **USDA ON-FARM MARKET DIRECTORY**  
A great resource for finding farm stands and markets with local apples.  
[www.ams.usda.gov/local-food-directories/onfarm](http://www.ams.usda.gov/local-food-directories/onfarm) ↗
- **IL HARVEST OF THE MONTH REGIONAL FOOD HUB LIST**  
A helpful tool for finding local food distributors and aggregators near you.  
[IL Harvest of the Month Regional Food Hub List](#) ↗
- **USDA GUIDE TO PROCURING LOCAL FOOD FOR CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS**  
All you need to know about purchasing local foods through USDA programs  
[Click here to access the PDF](#) ↗



Remember: The goal of the Crunch is to support our local farmers by purchasing the fruits of their labors! Always inquire about buying apples, but be open to donations if they are offered.



# HOW TO PURCHASE YOUR APPLES

## → VISIT THE FARMERS' MARKET

Here you'll find the most apple varieties, meet your farmers, and hand pick the right-sized apples, while using your nutrition program dollars too.

## → ASK YOUR CURRENT VENDORS

Ask your broadline or produce distributors if they have any local, farm-identified apples available.

## → BUY FROM LOCAL ORCHARDS

Ask for small apples that are harder for farmers to sell, but perfect for kids! Find local farms in the "Find Your Local Apples" section of this Crunch Guide.

## → FIND A FOOD HUB

Food hubs and regional produce aggregators may have just what you need. Check out the [IL Harvest of the Month Regional Food Hub List](#) ↗

## → STOP AT A FARM STAND

Visit a local farm stand or U-pick and get apples from where they are grown!

## → SHOP LOCAL AT THE GROCERY STORE

Look for apples identified as "local" or "Illinois-grown" at your local grocery store or food co-op.

## → ASK FOR HELP

Contact [Illinois Farm to School Network](#) ↗ for assistance to locate apples near you!



Nature Exploration Academy Early Childcare  
Orland Park, IL





## → CRUNCH TIME TIPS

- To ensure everyone can enjoy the Crunch and that apples don't go to waste, consider cutting apples into halves or slices for younger students.
- Make the Midwest Great Apple Crunch into a school-wide celebration by pairing older students and younger students together for crunch time.
- Don't forget to appoint a parent, teacher, student or community member to act as photographer or videographer and capture all the action of the Great Apple Crunch!
- Post to Instagram, Facebook or Twitter using [#GreatAppleCrunch](#) [#ILAppleCrunch](#) [#F2SMonth](#)


## → KEEP THE CRUNCH GOING ALL DAY!

- Taste test multiple apple varieties and vote on your favorite.
- Feature a recipe with local apples in school breakfast or lunch throughout October.
- Invite a local farmer to the classroom or cafeteria to participate in the event!
- Arrange a field trip to a local orchard and Crunch under the trees.
- Lead a hands-on cooking class for students featuring a healthy apple recipe.
- Take a look at the apple-based learning ideas on the next two pages to connect your Crunch to the classroom.

# CONNECT TO LEARNING

The Midwest Great Apple Crunch is easily extended into developmentally appropriate apple-based learning activities for a creative way enhance children's connections with food and healthy eating! Check out the resources below for apple-themed learning activities.


## → LESSON PLANS AND FARM TO ECE RESOURCES FOR APPLE CRUNCH


 [Wisconsin Farm to ECE Interest Areas For Young Children](#) ↗  
Community GroundWorks

 [The Apple Market: Apple Dramatic Play in Preschool](#) ↗  
Teach Preschool

 [Apple Taste Tests for Young Children](#) ↗  
Community GroundWorks

 [The Hayride, A Resource for Educational Field Trips](#) ↗  
Growing Minds


 [Search Online For Informal Activity Resources](#) ↗  
Eg: Teaching2and3yearolds.com


 [Search Pinterest for "Early Care Apple Activities"](#) ↗  
Eg: Pinterest Page



East Aurora Preschool - Aurora IL,

 [Farm to Preschool Taste Test Guide](#) ↗  
Quality Care for Children

 [An Apple A Day Lesson Plans](#) ↗  
IL Ag in the Classroom

 [Michigan Apples Educational Kit](#) ↗  
Michigan Apple Committee

 [Apple Science Experiments](#) ↗  
Little Bins for Little Hands



# MORE FUN APPLE LEARNING ACTIVITIES

It's simple to include books, songs, cooking activities, dramatic play, drawing, charts & graphs, classroom murals and visits from special guests to celebrate the Apple Crunch. These activities are a great way to include farm to early care and education (ECE) into your classroom on a regular basis. Farm to ECE teaches kids where food comes from, what is grown in you local area, and is a perfect way to meet learning standards.

## READING BOOKS ABOUT APPLES IS A GREAT WAY TO CELEBRATE THE CRUNCH

- Ten Apples Inside by Dr. Seuss
- The Seasons of Arnold's Apple Trees by Gail Gibbons
- Up, Up, Up! It's Apple-Picking Time by Jody Fickes Shapiro
- How Do Apples Grow? by Betsy Maestro
- Just One Apple by Janosch
- Apples, Apples, Apples by Nancy Elizabeth Wallace
- A Tree Is a Plant by Clyde Robert Bulla
- The Apple Pie Tree by Zoe Hall
- Anna Cultiva Manzanas by Monica Wellington
- Apple Farmer Annie by Monica Wellington
- ¡Deliciosas manzanas! by Tina Athaide
- The Apple Tree, A Modern Day Cherokee Story
- Told in English and Cherokee by Sandy Tharp-Lee

## SINGING SONGS ABOUT APPLES ENGAGES CHILDREN IN A FUN WAY

### Three Red Apples

Adapted from a song by Jean Warren

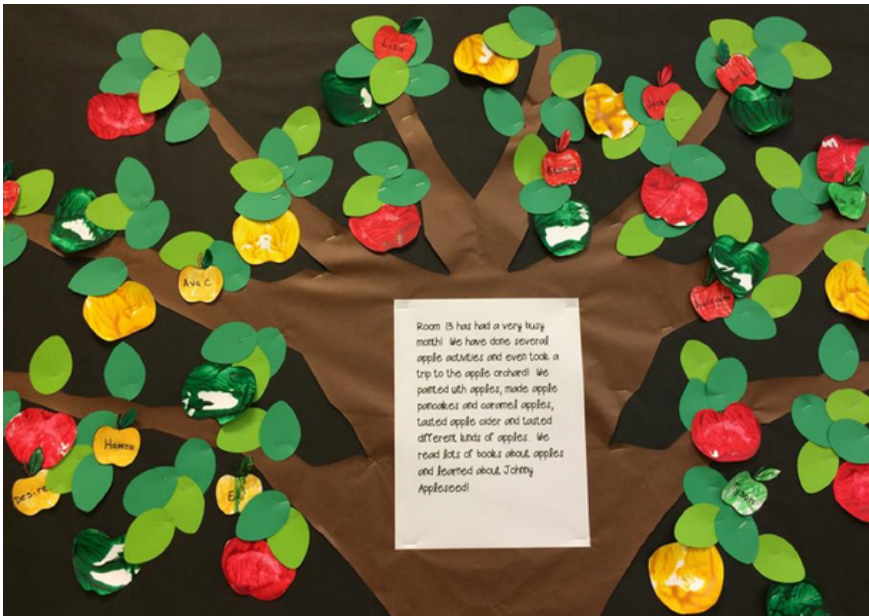
Three red apples high on the tree,  
One fell down next to me.  
I gave it to mother and this is what she said,  
"I love apples, juicy and red".  
Two red apples high on the tree,  
One fell down next to me.  
I gave it to sister and this is what she said,  
"I love apples, juicy and red".  
One red apple high on the tree,  
One fell down next to me.  
I gobbled it up and this is what I said,  
"No more apples, juicy and red!"

### Apples, Apples

Sung to the tune: Twinkle,  
Twinkle, Little Star

Apples juicy, apples round;  
On the tree or on the ground.  
Apples yellow, apples red,  
Apple pie and juice and bread!  
Apples crunchy, apples sweet;  
Apples are so good to eat

# CREATIVE APPLE LEARNING EXAMPLES



Decorate an apple tree with colorful apples painted by children



Mooseheart Child City and School - Mooseheart, IL

				How many seeds? 
Sofia	Sweet	Good	like candy	
Halle	Good	Sour	Sour	
Kai	Yummy	Sour	Juicy	
Braydan	Good	Nice - I like it	Good	
Andrew	Delicious	It's good	Juicy	
Shaun	Juicy	Juicy	Juicy	
Treylen	Super Good	Juicy	Tastes like green	
Alex	Delicious	Delicious	Juicy	
Gracie	Delicious - I liked the pink	Juicy + Yummy	Tastes like Pineapple	

Create a taste test with different varieties of apples, and children to describe the taste of each. Make a chart to write down apple flavors or vote with stickers.



Invite a chef to prepare a healthy apple recipe with children.

# PROMOTE YOUR CRUNCH

Gather a few staff, parents, or community members and create a small team to plan your Crunch activities, find local apples, and promote your event. Make sure you spread the word to children, families, staff, teachers, and the community to maximize the learning opportunities from the Crunch. Here are some general outreach ideas:

- Announce the Crunch in your newsletter, email, or during pick-up and drop-off. Use this opportunity to find volunteers to help with classroom or kitchen Apple Crunch activities.
- Promote the Crunch through social media using the hashtags [#GreatAppleCrunch](#), [#ILAppleCrunch](#), [#F2SMonth](#), and [#ILLittleCrunchers](#). On Facebook, repost the "We Registered" badge and share the Crunch Countdown posts.
- Ask parents to donate local apples, or funds you can use to purchase apples from the local farmers' market.
- Arrange a special Apple Crunch education session that's open to everyone. Offer apples, share apple nutrition information, and hand out recipes to use at home. Be sure to find a time where most parents and caretakers can join.
- Create Crunch flyers or posters to decorate your classroom, hang in your center, or send home. Use the Great Lakes Great Apple Crunch logo, or ask children to draw apple designs for your event!
- Mark the Crunch on your meal and snack menu, include the orchard that grew the apples.
- Make a Crunch Countdown calendar for the classroom and practice counting each day!



Get everyone involved in your Crunch photos! Shiloh Elementary - Hume, IL



# SHARE YOUR STORY

It's not a Crunch heard 'round the region unless you get the word out far and wide!

- Inform local newspapers and television reporters know about your Apple Crunch. Send a press release or invitation to join your event. [Click here](#) ↗ for a template press release to customize for your outreach. Use the celebration as a way to share more about your farm to school activities, local food purchasing, and **National Farm to School Month**.
- Get out your camera, smartphone, or video device and take a “crunch byte” to share through social media.
- Share your event widely through Facebook and other social media! Post to your page and with the Great Apple Crunch pages too!  
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/GreatLakesGreatAppleCrunch](http://www.facebook.com/GreatLakesGreatAppleCrunch) ↗  
Instagram: [@GreatAppleCrunch](https://www.instagram.com/GreatAppleCrunch) ↗  
Twitter: [@Gr8AppleCrunch](https://twitter.com/Gr8AppleCrunch) ↗

Note: any photos posted to social media may be used in future Apple Crunch promo material.

- Use the hashtags **#GreatAppleCrunch** **#F2SMonth** and **#ILAppleCrunch** to share your images on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook.



Important reminder:  
Make sure you have  
appropriate photo release  
forms for youth featured in  
your Great Apple Crunch  
photos.

# GREAT APPLE CRUNCH LOGO

Don't forget to download your copy of the Illinois Great Apple Crunch logo. Use the logo to promote the Great Apple Crunch around your community, on your website, and on social media.

You will find various public logo files for your state at the link below. Customize promotional items like posters, blog posts, and social media content.

Click this link to access the logo files:

<https://bit.ly/ILAppleCrunch> ↗



## FOR MORE INFORMATION

► Contact the Illinois Farm to School Network Program Manager

Illinois Farm to School Programs Manager

Seven Generations Ahead

[farmtoschool@sevengenerationsahead.org](mailto:farmtoschool@sevengenerationsahead.org)

► Check out the Illinois Great Apple Crunch website for more resources:

[www.illinoisfarmtoschool/Great-Apple-Crunch](http://www.illinoisfarmtoschool/Great-Apple-Crunch) ↗

► Dig into National Farm to School Network resources to celebrate Farm to School Month:

[www.farmtoschool.org/our-work/farm-to-school-month](http://www.farmtoschool.org/our-work/farm-to-school-month) ↗

► Ready to take your farm to school program to the next level? Check out the **Illinois Harvest of the Month!** Learn more and request access here:

[www.illinoisfarmtoschool.org/harvest-of-the-month/](http://www.illinoisfarmtoschool.org/harvest-of-the-month/)