

I L L I N O I S



## ILLINOIS CRUNCH GUIDE

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 Great Lakes 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/MPrT3YAJrpEUySaH9> ↗

## → 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

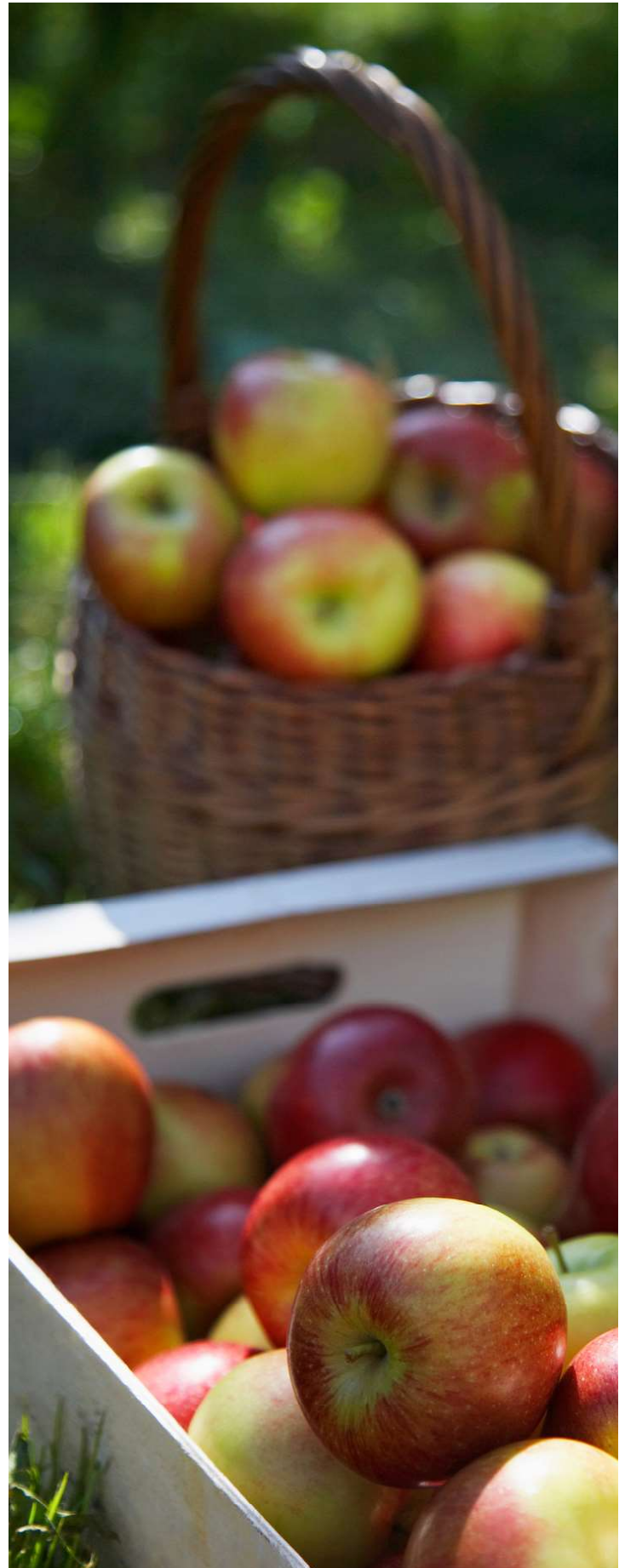
In addition to your Great Apple Crunch at noon, plan fun and engaging educational activities, lessons, field trips, or farmer visits to celebrate Crunch day!

## → 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

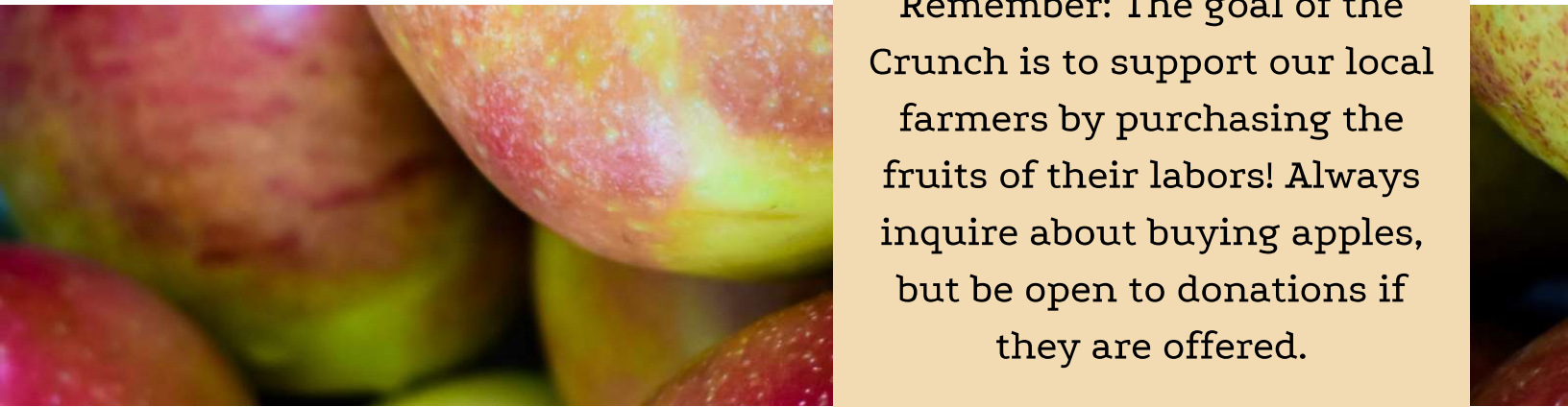
→ Read "Share Your Story" and learn to amplify your Crunch through photos, social media, TV, newspaper, and radio!





# 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.

# RECIPES AND MORE



THESE RECIPES ARE FROM [ILLINOIS HARVEST OF THE MONTH](#) ↗

## → APPLE MUFFIN SQUARES

An easy-to-make breakfast or lunch item featuring local apples! Try different apples varieties for flavor.

[Recipe Here](#) ↗

## → APPLE CRANBERRY COLE SLAW

This is a superb autumn school food service recipe to feature local apples, cabbage, and honey!

[Recipe Here](#) ↗

## → CRAN-APPLE CORNBREAD MUFFINS

Sweet and tart, with cheddar cheese, these muffins are sure to please!

[Recipe Here](#) ↗

## → FRESH APPLE CRISP

A quick, hot, and easy breakfast or lunch to feature local apples!

[Recipe Here](#) ↗

## → CRUNCHY APPLE SALAD

Crunchy, sweet and tart, this salad will brighten any menu or salad bar!

[Recipe Here](#) ↗

## → CUCUMBER & APPLE SALAD

A light and tangy salad with cucumbers, bell peppers, fresh herbs, and local apples!

[Recipe Here](#) ↗

## → CHICKEN SALAD WITH APPLES, CRANBERRIES & WALNUTS

A quick cold chicken salad featuring USDA chicken, local apples, and regional cranberries!

[Recipe Here](#) ↗

## → FRESH KALE, APPLE & CRANBERRY FALL SALAD

A no cook recipe featuring leafy greens, regional cranberries, and delicious local apples!

[Recipe Here](#) ↗



## → CRUNCH TIPS

- A conference, staff meeting, or all-business event is perfect for a Crunch because everyone is already in the same place.
- Make the Midwest Great Apple Crunch into a celebration to raise awareness! Invite your organization's leaders to your Crunch.
- Don't forget to appoint a photographer or videographer to capture all the action of the Great Apple Crunch!
- The Crunch makes a great fundraiser! Provide locally-sourced apples, and ask participants to make a donation for their apple.
- 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 local apple recipe in your cafeteria or catering on Crunch day.
- Invite a local farmer to join your Crunch.
- Arrange an event to a local orchard. Pick your own apples and Crunch under an apple tree.
- Lead a hands-on cooking class for staff featuring a fresh, healthy apple recipe.
- Ask all staff to dress in the color of their favorite apple!
- Bring fresh-pressed apple cider, or warm mulled cider in a crock pot.

# PROMOTE YOUR CRUNCH

Once your planning team has established your Great Apple Crunch activities, share the word with your entire community, office, agency, and partners to build the excitement and increase participation. Here are some general outreach ideas:

- Announce the event in your staff, office, or community newsletter or e-newsletter. Use this as an opportunity to invite volunteers to lead Apple Crunch activities, find local apples, or invite a local farmer to come visit.
- Promote the event through social media using the hashtags [#GreatAppleCrunch](#), [#ILAppleCrunch](#), and [#F2SMonth](#). On Facebook, repost the "We Registered" badge and share the Crunch Countdown posts.
- Arrange a special Apple Crunch planning meeting that's open to the public—be sure to find a time where many community members can join.
- Create flyers or posters to hang around your office, business campus, or eating space. Use the Illinois Great Apple Crunch logo to advertise, or create your own design.
- Talk to the chef or cafeteria staff at the office campus about including a local apple dish on the Crunch Day menu, or purchasing local apples for your Crunch. Put the Crunch on the office menu, and highlight your local farmer.



Local apples as a snack or in a meal! The Day Nursery - Oak Park, 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 Great Lakes 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/)