



Mount Horeb Area School District

Mount Horeb, WI

District Enrollment: 2404 **Production Model:** Partial Scratch Cook

District F/R: 16%

School Year Implemented: 2015/2016

District ADP: 59%

No. of Grants Awarded: 1

Mount Horeb Early Learning Center

Age Group: K-5

School Size: Small (Under 300)

School Environment: Town Fringe

School F/R: 21%

School ADP: 54%

Project Description

Passport to "Get Fit" Helps Kindergartners Try New Things

All 167 Kindergartners at Mount Horeb Early Learning Center received a passport to "Get Fit" during the school year. Every month, the children got a sticker in their passport when they sampled produce, helped make a recipe at home, visited a farmer's market, or participated in other health and nutrition related activities.

School staff worked with local farms to find seasonal, local produce to feature each month. The fresh fruits or vegetables chosen were presented to the students as both a sample, and incorporated into the lunch menu throughout the month. A sampling of the meals were also featured on monthly recipe cards, which the students could take home and share with their families.

In addition to lunchroom activities, the students were encouraged to visit the local farmer's market to make personal connections with the farmers and their produce. The school gave the children coupons that the students could exchange at the farmer's market for fresh fruits and vegetables.

District Food Service Director Michelle Denk found the program a key component in developing relationships, not just for this school, but for district-wide improvements:



"I have made new connections with farms. We are now purchasing local carrots year round," she noted. "We have also made a great connection with the Farmer's Market and plan to partner with them in the future to enhance our community nutrition education."



Successes

- Through the program students were able to try many new activities and foods.
- The school was able to get students excited about the passport program and had steady participation throughout the year.
- The school is now able to purchase carrots year round from a local farmer and has been approached by other farmers about potential partnerships.

Challenges

- Because all the students are in kindergarten with limited reading ability the school found it was difficult to disseminate any written educational materials.
- Some parents were concerned that their children would be tasting new and unusual foods, so we had to explain the program and what produce was going to be offered in great detail.