

December 2013

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FLORIDA Food Connect



Working to Connect Florida's Producers and Schools

By Anna Prizzia, Director, University of Florida Office of Sustainability

Every year, Florida schools spend millions of dollars for fresh produce. Farm to School is intended to open the door for more of those dollars to stay within Florida, and [Florida Food Connect](#) is a tool to connect those schools with the local producers who can meet their needs.

Over the past year, stakeholders from the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS), the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agriculture Extension Service (UF-IFAS) and the University of Illinois MarketMaker team, have worked to develop **Florida Food Connect**.

It was developed in response to a desire to have a user-friendly interface for connecting farmers with schools to enhance the statewide Farm to School program, and to improve the overall experience for producers and buyers throughout Florida.

Initially, a team of researchers from UF-IFAS Center for Public Issues Education on Agriculture and Natural Resources (Cener PIE) collected data from current and potential MarketMaker users to determine some of the challenges and opportunities for modifying the site to enhance use. This data informed the process for re-imagining the interface, and, along with the talent of [Hatchet Design](#), Florida Food Connect was created.

Like the MarketMaker site, Florida Food Connect has a Business Directory that hosts business profiles, and "the Market" where sellers have the ability to post products currently available for sale and buyers may request for products they need. In addition, the site also has specific information on the Farm to School program and resources on local food and the partners who developed the site.

The site was launched in November, and already is getting a great response. Developers from MarketMaker and the team from UF-IFAS, FDACS, and the designers continue to work on enhancements and ways the site can expand.

Questions? Contact Anna Prizzia at aprizzia@ufl.edu.

National MarketMaker
wishes you and yours
all the best
this Holiday Season!



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BUY 10 listings	SELL 85 listings	SERVICES/EQUIPMENT 2 listings	TRANSPORTATION 0 listing	OTHER 0 listings
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