

# MINNESOTA HARVEST OF THE MONTH

## for Early Care Providers



**We are excited to announce that Hutchinson is participating in the Minnesota Harvest of the Month program for Early Care providers throughout the 2024 fruit and vegetable growing season.**

Children at participating daycares in our community will have the opportunity to learn about, see, touch, and taste locally-grown fruits and vegetables from July to October. Foods to be featured might include fresh greens, snap beans, sweet corn, peppers, potatoes, melon, apples, and squash.

The Minnesota Harvest of the Month program was established in 2021 to inspire schools statewide to use locally-grown crops in school nutrition programs. It provides a seasonal structure to source, cook, and serve these foods while providing classroom lesson plans that support agricultural and nutritional education. The Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP) is currently working on adapting the existing resources to meet the needs of Early Care settings.

Hutchinson providers will get a first look at these resources and receive nutrient dense, locally-sourced foods from July through October. Depending on the success of our local fundraising, we will source and deliver 4-6 of the featured foods. This program is free of charge for daycare providers.

### **By providing access to this program, we can:**

1. Create familiarity of seasonally available crops for our youngest eaters as they develop taste preferences and eating habits.
2. Provide free resources to encourage positive food experiences at early care homes and centers. Supporting activities and recipes will be provided to make these foods fun.
3. Increase awareness and enthusiasm for local foods while forming community connections.
4. Improve nutrition by offering the freshest fruits and vegetables.

If you are interested in helping increase local food access to our youngest eaters we could use your help! Please contact Ari at [ariannaz@cbhutch.com](mailto:ariannaz@cbhutch.com) if you would like to learn more about how you can support the Farm to Early Care efforts this summer. This is COMMUNITY FEEDING COMMUNITY!

