



THE CRUNCH GUIDE
FOR WISCONSIN APPLE GROWERS



Extension
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

WHAT IS THE GREAT APPE CRUNCH?

The Great Apple Crunch [↗](#) is an annual October event that promotes local food purchasing and encourages healthy eating during [National Farm to School Month](#) [↗](#). For this simple event schools, organizations, and households across the Midwest region commit to crunch into local apples in October.

During its biggest year so far, nearly two million participants crunched into locally procured apples across the Midwest region. The Great Apple Crunch is celebrated across Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Iowa, and Ohio.

In Wisconsin, a primary goal of the Crunch is to encourage Wisconsin schools -- that spend around \$123 million dollars each year on food purchases -- and other institutions to increase local options in cafeterias and keep local dollars in the community and with YOU - our local apple producers.

For more information about the Great Apple Crunch visit the Apple Crunch website at healthyliving.extension.wisc.edu/events/apple-crunch/ [↗](#).

For farmer specific Crunch resources visit foodsystems.extension.wisc.edu/farmer-resources-for-the-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 websites above.



WHY CRUNCH?

There are THREE main opportunities the Crunch provides for apple producers: sales to institutions, farm promotion, and as an educational opportunity to teach your community about your farming.

→ INCREASE YOUR SALES

The Crunch goal is to promote sales from orchards to schools and other institutions. Purchasing local foods is a growing priority for campuses across the state, and many institutions seek apples as their first local purchase. You can use the momentum of the Crunch to access new markets and build long-term relationships with institutional buyers.

→ PROMOTE YOUR BUSINESS

Share your farm with the hundreds of thousands of Crunchers as they celebrate local apples in Wisconsin by hosting your own Crunch event. If you haven't already, register your crunch [HERE](#) ↗ to receive planning tools to make planning and hosting your orchard's Crunch easy and simple.

→ TEACH YOUR COMMUNITY

Many schools combine their Crunch with educational activities. Farmers can use the Crunch to engage with schools to help your community understand what you do at your orchard.



Want to learn more about how to leverage the Apple Crunch as an apple grower?

[CHECK OUT THIS APPLE GROWER CRUNCH WEBINAR](#)



INCREASE YOUR SALES

The Crunch is all about celebrating purchasing from you, Wisconsin's apple growers. But purchasing relationships don't have to stop after Crunch Day. Institutions can provide consistent, stable, high-volume markets for your products. You can use the momentum of the Crunch to access new markets and build long-term relationships with institutional buyers.

→ SELL DIRECT TO SCHOOLS AND OTHER BUYERS

Reach out to your region's schools, early care sites, or other institutional buyers with your apple price and availability list. The goal of the Crunch is to encourage schools to practice purchasing local foods. This is not an event for schools to solicit apple donations, although you are welcome to donate if it is a good promotion strategy for you.

→ ATTEND DATCP MARKETPLACE MEETINGS TO CONNECT WITH BUYERS

[Marketplace Meetings](#) ↗ provide a venue where school nutrition menu planners and buyers, and Wisconsin food producers can build their networks, make procurement connections, and expand farm to school markets. Discussion is lead by participants sharing their own products, services and menu needs.

→ USE YOUR CRUNCH SALES TO INCREASE SALES THROUGH OTHER CHANNELS

Once your apples are in a cafeteria or classroom, everyone will want to know where they're from! [Customize this flyer template](#) ↗ with your farm information and share the flyer with your institutional buyers so that students and other eaters can learn about your farm while they Crunch. Include information about your on-orchard sales channels to promote your orchard and let Crunchers know how to buy your apples in the future.

→ SELL FOR THE CRUNCH THROUGH AGGREGATORS

Some schools look to purchase farm-identified apples grown in Wisconsin from their existing broadline or produce distributors. Consider sales to distributors for high-volume markets for your products for Crunch day and beyond.

→ INTERESTED BUT WANT FURTHER ASSISTANCE?

Contact Cathryn Herlihey, UW-Extension Farm to Institution Specialist, at cherlihey@wisc.edu and April Yancer, DATCP Farm to School and Institution Program Specialist, at april.yancer@wisconsin.gov.

HELP INSTITUTIONS FIND YOU

We know there are many places for you to advertise online. These listed below are provided to institutions when they register for the Apple Crunch to help them find apple growers near them.

→ WISCONSIN APPLE GROWERS ASSOCIATION

Crunch registrants may use the grower list to find local orchard partners near them.

www.waga.org/Member-Orchards ↗

→ WISCONSIN FARMERS MARKET ASSOCIATION

An online tool for Crunch buyers procuring apples at farmers markets.

www.wifarmersmarkets.org ↗

→ WISCONSIN FARM FRESH ATLAS

This online tool allows buyers to search by location or product.

www.farmfreshatlas.org ↗

→ AMERICORPS FARM TO SCHOOL WISCONSIN LOCAL FOODS DATABASE

Buyers can explore a map and directory of farmers who are selling to schools and engaging with kids.

sites.google.com/dpi.wi.gov/wilfd/find-farmers ↗

→ SOMETHING SPECIAL FROM WISCONSIN

Buyers can browse this listing of farmers and vendors for apple items near them.

www.somethingspecialwi.com/map ↗

The goal of the Crunch is to support local farmers by **PURCHASING** the fruits of their labors! Let schools know your regular apple prices if you're approached to donate for the Crunch.



PROMOTE YOUR FARM

Connect with the Crunch audience to promote your farm! Use these promotional tools to share information about your orchard.

→ CAFETERIA LINE FLYER

[Customize this flyer template](#) ↗ and share it with your buyers at institutions so Crunchers can celebrate their farm-identified apple from your Orchard at their Crunch. Make sure to include information about other sales channels so they can find your apple outside of the cafeteria line too!

→ FACEBOOK POSTS

Check out facebook posts available on the [Apple Crunch Farmer Resource webpage](#) ↗. You'll find facebook posts including a "We Registered Badge," registration is open announcement, and countdown posts. Use your own social media platform to promote your farm and connect with customers through the Crunch event!

→ FARMERS SUPPORT FARM TO SCHOOL POSTER

[Use this poster](#) ↗ at your farmers market, road side stand, or where ever else you want to share about the Crunch and promote your Crunch sales.

→ APPLE CRUNCH DESCRIPTIVE ONE-PAGER

[Here's a one-pager](#) ↗ that describes the Apple Crunch and introduces the benefits of Farm to School. Use it to invite your community to Crunch with your apples.



HOST A CRUNCH

Promote your orchard by hosting a Crunch. The Crunch is a flexible event with a simple premise that you can leverage to meet your specific promotional capacity and needs. Your Crunch can be as simple as taking a selfie enjoying an apple on your orchard, or as big of a celebration as you want it to be! Here are some general outreach ideas:

- Get out your camera or smartphone, or video devices and take a “crunch byte” to share through social media. Share your event widely through Facebook using the hashtags #GreatAppleCrunch #WIAppleCrunch and #F2SMonth.
Facebook: www.facebook.com/GreatLakesGreatAppleCrunch ↗
- Announce the event in your orchard's newsletter or e-newsletter.
- Use the [flyer template](#) ↗ to promote your farm, or add the [Crunch logo](#) ↗ to you own existing orchard promotional materials for the event.
- Inform local newspapers and television reporters 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 orchard and you farm to school activities.



One example of a farmer's simple Crunch celebration and used as a promotional tool through Facebook.

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

TEACH ABOUT YOUR FARM

Many schools combine their Crunch with educational activities. Some farmers choose to use the Crunch to educate their communities too. As a grower, you may want to educate about your farm and growing practices in your own unique way; but if you're looking for easy-to-use existing education lessons, check out the resources below for apple-themed learning activities geared to different ages.

→ MIDDLE SCHOOL & HIGH SCHOOL

- [Apple Cider Lesson](#) ↗
The Edible Schoolyard Project
- [Food Miles Lesson](#) ↗
Sustainable Schools Project
- [F2S Youth Leadership Curriculum](#) ↗
Institute for Ag and Trade Policy
- [National Ag Literacy Curriculum](#) ↗
National Ag in the Classroom
- [Nourish Curriculum Guide](#) ↗
Center for Ecoliteracy
- [#AgCensus and MyPlate Maps](#) ↗
United States Department of Agriculture

→ PRE-K AND ELEMENTARY LESSONS

- [Apple Taste Test For Young Children](#) ↗
Rooted
- [A Is For Apple](#) ↗
Utah Ag in the Classroom
- [Educational Resources for Teachers](#) ↗
Ohio Apples
- [Michigan Apples Educational Kit](#) ↗
Michigan Apple Committee
- [Apples, A Class Act](#) ↗
US Apple Association
- [Food Fun: From Apples to Zucchini](#) ↗
University of Illinois Extension
- [Harvest of the Month, Apples](#) ↗
Groundwork Center
- [The Hayride, A Resource for Educational Farm Field Trips](#) ↗
Growing Minds



GREAT LAKES APPLE CRUNCH LOGO

Don't forget to download your copy of the Great Apple Crunch logo. You can use the logo to promote the Great Apple Crunch around your community, on your website, and on social media. You can also add it to your own posters, email communications, and social media content.

Click [HERE](#) ↗ to download the logo.



FOR MORE INFORMATION FOR FARMERS

Cathryn Herlihey
Farm to Institution Specialist
UW-Madison Division of Extension
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Register here:

healthyliving.extension.wisc.edu/events/apple-crunch ↗

Discover Farm to School Month:

www.farmtoschool.org/our-work/farm-to-school-month ↗

Learn more about farm to early care and education in Wisconsin:

dpi.wi.gov/community-nutrition/cacfp/farm-2-ece ↗

Dig into Wisconsin Farm to School:

dpi.wi.gov/school-nutrition/farm-to-school ↗

datcp.wi.gov/Pages/Growing_WI/FarmToSchool.aspx ↗