

SNA of Ohio
April 2025
Success Story



Project: Beyond the Kitchen

As a unique way to connect farm and kitchen, the Food Services Department at Austintown Local Schools has found a way to benefit their kitchen while also benefitting a local farm.

Project: Beyond the Kitchen launched at the beginning of the 2024-2025 school year, with a partnership between the Austintown Fitch High School Kitchen and Charlotte's Webb Farm, LLC located in Austintown Township. The project focuses on waste diversion of food items that are still viable for farm animals.

Viable food items include raw and cooked fruits and vegetables, fruit and vegetable peels and stems, day-old bread, dairy products, reheated meat products, and other discarded food products that can no longer be served. Austintown Fitch High School has offered a self-serve salad bar for over 10 years and this program is the perfect solution to produce that has aged past its prime. Kitchen staff place these food waste items into a specific trash can designated for the farm each week. The waste is weighed and sent to the farm each Friday morning.

Charlotte's Webb Farm cares for over 100 geese, chickens, ducks, quails and turkeys, three livestock dogs, three dairy goats, three dairy cows, and several hogs and rabbits.

Over the past 8 months, the project has been able to contribute over one ton of viable food waste to the farm. Nearly 2,750 pounds of food waste has been diverted from a landfill and been repurposed to feed these farm animals.

This project is a unique take on the USDA's programs connecting farms and schools. The contributions have been beneficial for the local farm and for the school district and the partnership is expected to continue next school year.