

FARM TO SCHOOL

Each month the “Farm to School” task force will feature a Madison County farm in the school news. This month’s featured farm is “Cooper Farms”, a 93 acre farm, owned and operated by Chris & Patty Cooper for the last 15 years. With the help of their 4 sons: Blake, Chase, Logan, & Austin, they raise beef cattle, chickens (for the eggs), and hay. The latest premium product they raise is lettuce.

The Coopers grow hydroponic lettuce. Hydroponic is a method of growing plants using water without soil. They are raising three types of lettuce in a greenhouse: Butterhead Bib, Romaine Leaf, and Red & Green Oak Leaf lettuces. Someone needs to transplant and reseed once every week.

The Coopers have taken lettuce to 15 different Madison County schools since the start of school this year! The Coopers sell their lettuce at the Madison County Farmers Market on Saturdays from 8-12am; they also sell to local groceries and restaurants. Many foods travel an average of 1500 miles to get to the schools or groceries in our community. Fresh local grown foods are much tastier and have more nutrition.

Lettuce can be a good source of fiber and many essential vitamins and minerals. Try using lettuce in salads, sandwiches, hamburger, tacos, and other foods. In Chinese foods, the stem is used just as much as the leaf.

Let’s support our farmers by eating fresh healthy foods grown in Kentucky! Special thanks to Cooper Farms.

Written by Lisa Wheat, RD, LD

Madison County Health Department

