

# BEEF *to* SCHOOL



**BRINGING LOCALLY GROWN BEEF**  
to Northeast Montana Schools

# ABOUT THE PROJECT

## OUR PARTNERS

This project was developed to continue the efforts of getting Montana beef into schools spearheaded by Montana State University and Montana Team Nutrition. Through conversations with different schools and producers across the region, we have identified that there's a lack of communication between what the schools need and what the producers have to offer. Many schools' food service directors (FSD) don't have the time to research what local foods are available for purchase and many producers are unaware of what cuts and pounds of meat are easiest for meal preparation for the schools. This led the Eastern Montana Food & Ag Development Center (FADC) to create a liaison position that would aid in such communication. By partnering with AERO, an Abundant Montana Local Food Coordinator (LFC) will act as the liaison for this project.

Thanks to funding made available through the Save the Children Fund received by Great Northern Development Corporation, schools can receive \$440 to purchase local beef for their students from the regional producers listed in this handout.



### MONTANA TEAM NUTRITION

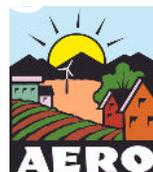
Montana State University



### GREAT NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION



### FOOD & AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT CENTER NETWORK



### AERO (ALTERNATIVE ENERGY RESOURCES ORGANIZATION)



**Save the Children**

### SAVE THE CHILDREN FUND



**Share your ideas, stories, photos, or resources with us for our social media sites.**

**Follow Beef to School progress on social media:**

**Facebook**

@montanafarmtoschool

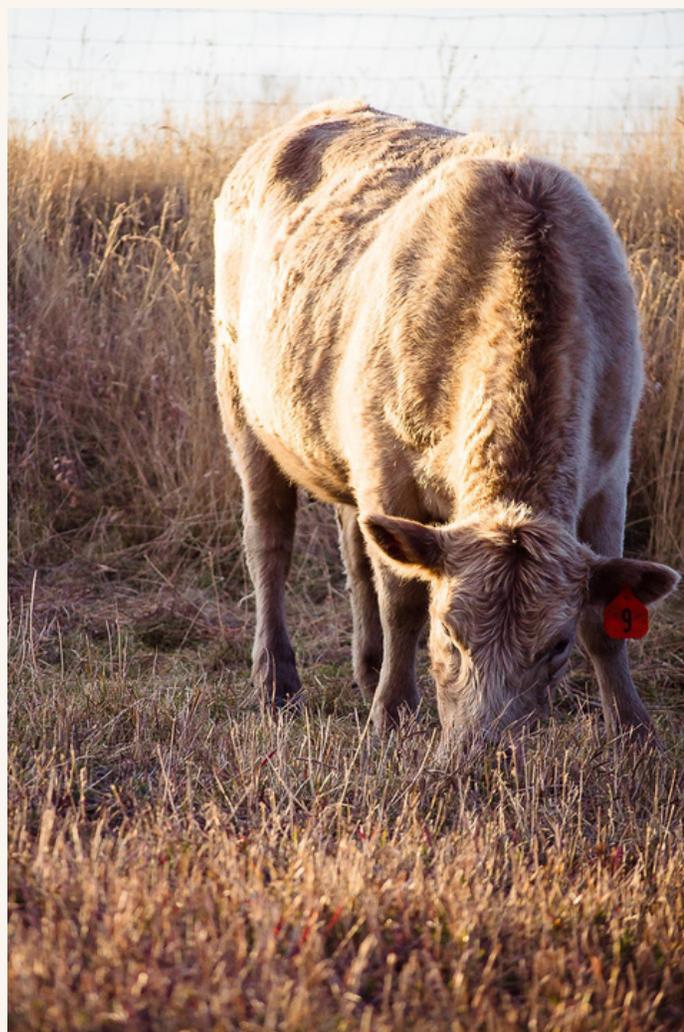
**Instagram**

@MTFarmtoSchool

## **MONTANA BEEF TO SCHOOL COALITION**

The Montana Beef to School Coalition's goal is to increase the use of local beef in Montana schools. The long-term goal of beef to school is improving Montana beef producers' and meat processors' business viability and sustainability, while increasing the availability and consumption of local beef in Montana's schools and communities.

Beef to School (B2S) poses a unique opportunity for Montana, a national leader in bringing local beef to our schools. Did you know that Montana is home to more than twice the number cattle than residents living in our state? Montana has just over 1 million residents, 2.5 million cattle, approximately 20 state and federally inspected processors, and about 145, 000 students across 821 schools. With cow-calf operations weighing in as the second largest agricultural commodity in Montana, it makes sense for schools and other institutions to purchase and serve beef that is raised and finished in Montana. Montana schools and students can benefit from delicious high quality Montana and educational opportunities, while supporting local producers, processors, and economies.



# GET STARTED WITH BEEF TO SCHOOL

The Get Started with Beef to School Flowchart (pg 5) walks you through the steps of implementing Beef to School. B2S focuses on procuring local beef in school nutrition programs around the state in order to increase the sustainability and quality of beef in schools. From procurement to promotion, this resource provides you with step-by-step options for launching a successful B2S program. These efforts were kicked off in 2018 with the Montana Beef to School Project, a three-year collaborative project between beef producers, processors, schools, researchers at Montana State University, National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT), Montana Department of Agriculture, and various community partners funded by a Western SARE grant. This project researched ways that Beef to School can benefit schools, ranchers, and local meat processors, as well as highlight best practices from Montana communities. Since then, there has been many successes across Montana in the B2S realm. Get started with B2S in your community by following the steps in the flow chart and using the resources available on the Montana Beef to School Project webpage.

There is roughly **\$440** available for each school district to use for beef purchases from this grant. To receive these specific funds, schools can **only** purchase from the producers listed in this guide. Schools are encouraged to work with producers to negotiate price and discuss bulk order options. This money can be used to help spur relationships between producers and schools.

## Protein Requirements by Age

Grade Level	Minimum Ounces Served Per Day	Minimum Ounces Served Per Week
K-5	1 oz	8-10 oz
6-8	1 oz	9-10 oz
9-12	2 oz	10-12 oz

## Is This Right For Our School? Beef to School Decision Tree

scan me



<https://www.montana.edu/mtfarmtoschool/documents/BeefToSchool/Beef%20Decision%20Tree%202018.pdf>

## Combine to Win

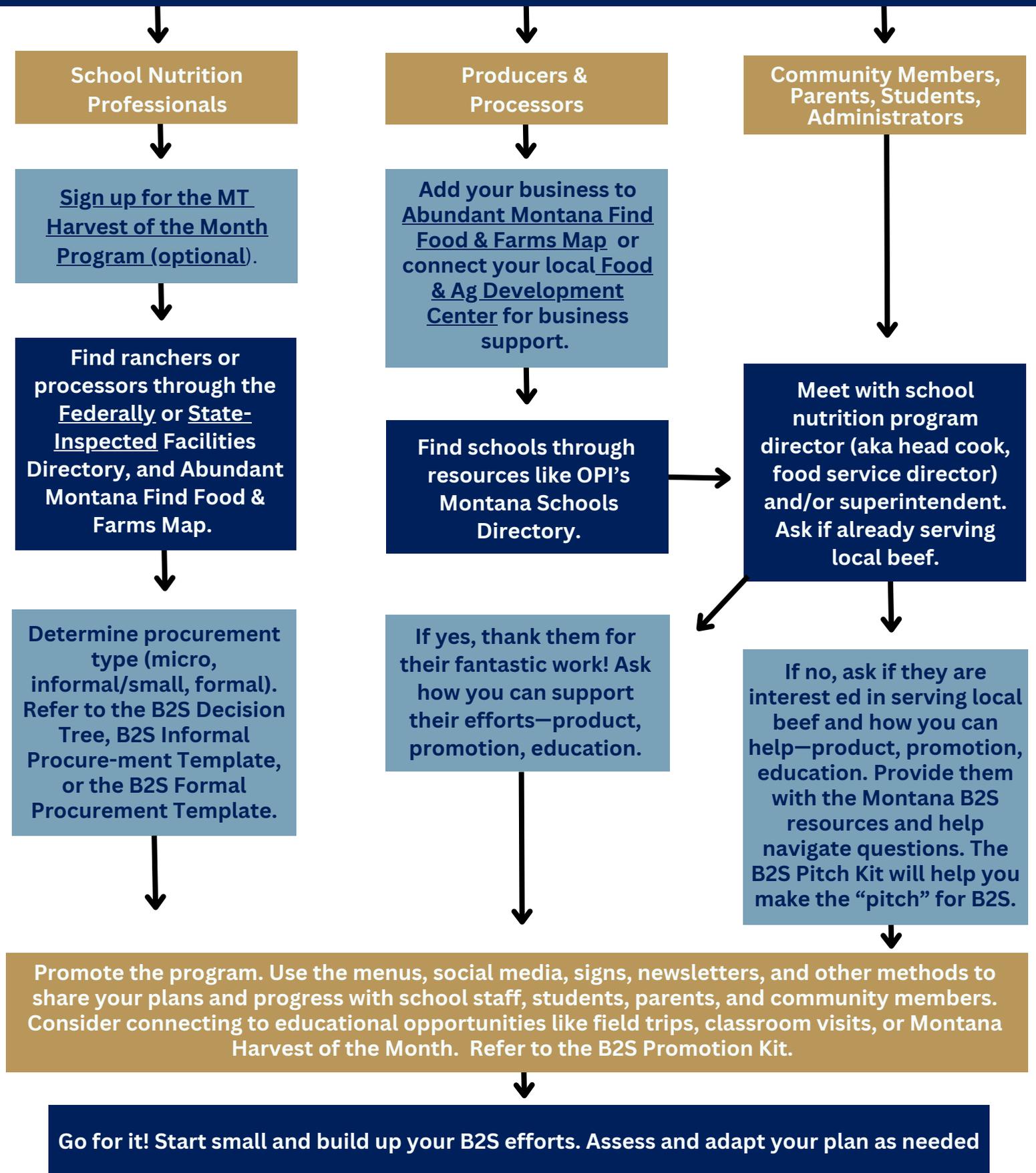
**Plant-based proteins such as lentils, chickpeas, tofu, etc. often cost less than animal-based proteins (e.g., beef, pork, eggs, dairy products). Substituting a portion of animal-based protein with plant-based protein can help make local proteins more affordable for schools while incorporating a variety of foods into children's diets. There are several ways to incorporate plant-based proteins into main dishes.**

### Examples:

- Sloppy joes with beef and lentils
- Lentil and ground beef tacos
- Pasta with chicken and white beans
- Bison and chickpea chili
- Taco bake casserole with ground beef and pinto beans

Understand regulations and costs. Any meat served in Montana's child nutrition programs must be processed in either an official Montana Department of Livestock-inspected (state-inspected) or a USDA inspected (federally-inspected) facility.

- Montana Farm to Cafeteria Manual
- B2S FAQ
- Cost of Local Beef



**School Nutrition Professionals**

**Sign up for the MT Harvest of the Month Program (optional).**

**Find ranchers or processors through the Federally or State-Inspected Facilities Directory, and Abundant Montana Find Food & Farms Map.**

**Determine procurement type (micro, informal/small, formal). Refer to the B2S Decision Tree, B2S Informal Procurement Template, or the B2S Formal Procurement Template.**

**Promote the program. Use the menus, social media, signs, newsletters, and other methods to share your plans and progress with school staff, students, parents, and community members. Consider connecting to educational opportunities like field trips, classroom visits, or Montana Harvest of the Month. Refer to the B2S Promotion Kit.**

**Go for it! Start small and build up your B2S efforts. Assess and adapt your plan as needed**

**Producers & Processors**

**Add your business to Abundant Montana Find Food & Farms Map or connect your local Food & Ag Development Center for business support.**

**Find schools through resources like OPI's Montana Schools Directory.**

**If yes, thank them for their fantastic work! Ask how you can support their efforts—product, promotion, education.**

**Community Members, Parents, Students, Administrators**

**Meet with school nutrition program director (aka head cook, food service director) and/or superintendent. Ask if already serving local beef.**

**If no, ask if they are interested in serving local beef and how you can help—product, promotion, education. Provide them with the Montana B2S resources and help navigate questions. The B2S Pitch Kit will help you make the "pitch" for B2S.**

# BEEF PACKAGE LABELING

## WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Label Element	Requirement
<p>Inspected Stamp/Legend</p> <p><i>MT State Inspection Logo NOT Shown</i></p> <p>*during inspection some carcass parts will be stamped similarly with food safe dye</p>	<p>Any one of the following inspection stamps are allowable on the Principal Display Panel (PDP)</p> <p>Any inspected meat product will carry, on it's packaging, an inspection label*. This label or stamp, sometimes called an 'inspection bug' will be a crest or circle identifying either <b>USDA or MT Department of Livestock</b> as the inspecting agency and will include a unique premise ID/number. Such properly labeled meat is inspected by either the Federal or State government and deemed wholesome and legal for all consumer uses. This includes institutions such as schools, daycares, senior centers, etc.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: flex-start;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>USDA inspected stamp on exotic species (e.g. bison)</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>USDA inspected stamp on raw beef *</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>USDA inspected stamp on processed beef</p> </div> </div> <p><i>#38 is used in USDA stamps as sample establishment number</i></p>
<p>Common Product Name</p>	<p>Required on the PDP</p>
<p>Ingredient Statement</p>	<p>Required if the product contains more than one ingredient; may be on the PDP or information panel</p>
<p>Handling Statement</p>	<p>Required on the PDP</p>
<p>Signature Line - Processor Name and Address</p>	<p>Required; may be on the PDP or the information panel</p>
<p>Safe Handling Instructions</p>	<p>Required for raw or partially cooked meat; may appear anywhere on the package</p>

# PRODUCERS

## (by County)



Here's a list of regional producers who have beef products available for your school!

## SHERIDAN

### Montana Branded Inc.

Josh and Maggie Johnson

Closest Town: Plentywood

Contact Info: Maggie Johnson  
montanabranded@gmail.com  
(406) 385-7014

Products Available: USDA Inspected 10lb Chubs Ground Beef, 8lb Boxes Hamburger Patties 1/3lb or 1/4lb, Rump Roasts, Chuck Roast, Sirloin Tip Roast, Cube Steak, Flank Steak, Brisket, Tri-Tip, Steaks  
Direct Delivery or Shipping

## PRAIRIE

### Keltner Cattle Company, LLC

Burt Keltner

Closest Town: Equal distance from Terry and Baker, closest to Plevna. Not far from Wibaux

Contact Info: Burt Keltner  
bjkeltner@yahoo.com  
(406) 860-1876

Products Available: State Inspected Frozen packs of: Ground Beef (2lb sleeves), Roasts, Steaks  
Delivery available

## VALLEY

### North of Nowhere Farm

Daren Nordhagen & Darlis Nordhagen

Location: Opheim, Montana

Contact Info: Darlis Nordhagen  
darlis@northnowhere.net  
(206) 947-0683

Products Available: USDA inspected, regeneratively raised grass-fed, grass-finished beef snack sticks and 1-lb ground beef (can do 20lb chubs with advance notice)  
Direct Delivery Available

### The Belle's Beef & Lamb, LLC

Britt Allestad

Closest Town: Opheim, MT  
Contact Info: Britt Allestad  
brittanyallestad@icloud.com  
(406) 209-0915

Products Available: USDA Inspected quarter half and whole of both lamb and beef. 2lb packages of ground beef, steaks, roasts, ribs. 1lb packages of ground lamb, leg of lamb, shanks, chops roasts and ribs



# RICHLAND

## Balducke Ranch

David Balducke

Closest Town: Sidney

Contact Info: David Balducke  
dkbalducke@live.com

(406) 489-1425

Products Available: USDA or State Inspected with anything needed- hamburger beef

Delivery or shipping available

# MCCONE

## Cattlemen's Standard

Bill Harris

Closest Town: Circle

Contact Info: Bill Harris  
harrisbill50@gmail.com

(406) 974-3671

Products Available: USDA Inspected 10# chub bags of ground beef. 1lb available upon request

Will deliver to: McCone, Roosevelt, and Prairie county. Others possible with arrangements

## Bred Red Meats, LLC

Lee & Michelle Gibbs

Closest Town: Circle

Contact Info: Michelle Gibbs  
imgibbs70@yahoo.com

(406) 974-9726

Products Available: USDA Inspected beef sticks, 1lb & 5lb chubs of ground beef

Delivery and shipping available

# ROOSEVELT

## Smoke Creek Meats

Darren O'Connor

Closest Town: Wolf Point

Contact Info: Darren O'Connor  
info@smokecreekmeats.com

(406) 671-0356

Products Available: USDA inspected Grass Fed Beef (85/15 hamburger, roasts, T-Bone, Ribeye, Flank, Sirloin, Round steaks)

Delivery or shipping available

## How can your school use this grant to purchase local beef?

1. You can purchase beef from any of the producers listed in this handout.
2. Connect with the producer(s) and notify them you would like to purchase beef as a part of the Northeast Montana Beef to School project. You will need to give them the name of the school for which you are placing the order.
3. Great Northern Development Corporation will administer the grant on behalf of your school. You will not directly receive \$440 but will make the purchase order from the respective producer and GNDC will handle the invoice from there. All producers listed in this handbook have been notified to send the invoice to GNDC.
4. You can order up to \$440 worth of beef. You do not need to order from only one producer but can split this amount among several. It will be the school's responsibility to pay for any beef purchases that exceed \$440.
5. It will be the school's responsibility to pay for any shipping expenses related to the beef order. Grant funds can be used for the beef purchases only.

## Helpful Points From the FAQ:

### #20- How can I make locally sourced beef fit within my budget?

This is a common frustration expressed by foodservice personnel as local beef is often more expensive than conventional beef. Processor pricing is determined by their input costs and they often have little leeway in terms of lowering prices. That being said, there are a few strategies that you can use to make using local beef fit your budget:

- Try budgeting school meals over a semester or a year, rather than by meal, in order to balance the cost of more, and less expensive, food products.
- Instead of buying a whole cow, work with a processor to buy their less expensive cuts and products (i.e. burger) which still allows the processor to market their premium cuts (e.g., sirloin) to other markets such as restaurants.
- Seek beef donations from ranchers within your community, incentivize this by finding ways to provide donors with a tax-deductible donation receipt.
- Purchasing beef from culled animals is often an easy way to save money.
- Work with other members of your community to source and cover the cost of processing a cow.
- Utilize other locally grown products which may be less expensive (e.g., vegetables from a school garden), or pair with a lower cost menu item (e.g., USDA Foods canned fruit) to offset the cost of using local beef in a meal.
- Apply for grants to increase access to local products or purchase new kitchen equipment.
- Use a combination of local and conventional beef throughout the year.
- When using local beef, serve smaller portion sizes (e.g., smaller hamburger patties).
- Extend ground beef by using mushroom, lentil, or other ingredients.

## LEARN MORE

There are many resources to help you in your B2S journey! Visit the [Montana Beef to School webpage](#) for all of the resources mentioned in this handout and many others including stories of successful B2S programs.

[www.montana.edu/mtfarmtoschool/beeftoschool](http://www.montana.edu/mtfarmtoschool/beeftoschool)

Still have questions? The Montana Beef to School website has answers to the most frequently asked questions.

[www.montana.edu/mtfarmtoschool/b2s-faq](http://www.montana.edu/mtfarmtoschool/b2s-faq)

**Do you have questions about how to start a Beef to School Program?**

**Angela Miller**

Beef to School Liaison

(406) 478-1124

[angela@abundantmontana.com](mailto:angela@abundantmontana.com)



