

Cornell Cooperative Extension | Saratoga County

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Cornell Cooperative Extension of Saratoga County's Farm to School Program Catches Students Eating Their Veggies

This month, our Farm to School Educator had the opportunity to visit the Schuylerville Elementary students during their lunchtime. Sarah Keen, the Foodservice Manager at Schuylerville Central School District, partnered with local *King's Brother Dairy* to provide a fun opportunity and incentive for students to eat their vegetables. A "Caught Eating Veggies" contest was held during the students' lunch period, the week of December 7th. If students were "caught" eating their vegetables they would receive a ticket. At the end of their lunch period, the tickets were collected for each class and counted. At the end of the week, the class with the most students "caught" eating their veggies got an Ice cream party.

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Saratoga County's Farm to School Coordinator, Nicolina Foti, asked participating students about their experience, vegetables they tried, and what their favorites were. A tally was kept for each lunch period of how many students enjoyed their vegetables. The students at Schuylerville Elementary were very excited to get "caught" eating their vegetables!

The overall winner for the "caught eating veggies" contest was Mrs. Rathbun's 3rd grade class with 91% of students eating vegetables!!

The top class in each grade won an ice cream party donated by Kings Brothers Dairy:

- Kindergarten - Mrs. Curtis (79%)
- 1st grade - Mrs. Weed (89%)
- 2nd grade - Mrs. Becht (73%)
- 3rd grade - Mrs. Rathbun (91%)
- 4th grade - Mr. Carner (80%)
- 5th grade - Mrs. Penniman (74%)
- McMurray & Jordan (honorable mention)

"This was so well received! Multiple parents emailed to tell me how excited their kids were about the contest, and even kids who pack lunch were begging their parents

to put veggies in it. The kitchen went through nearly double our usual quantities of veggies during the contest. It was so nice to do something fun and 'normal'."

The Farm to School program for Saratoga county has been working away to keep things going during these unfortunate and unusual times of COVID-19. It was excellent to get back into the school and get to hear firsthand how this program impacts students all over our county.

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