



## **NH Farm to School Program Orchard Fieldtrip Guide**

We hope you can take a class trip to an apple orchard. Orchard visits can be designed for students of all ages, including pre-schoolers. The following ten tips will stretch the value of the time you spend "in the field".

1. **Research local and regional orchards** which invite visitors and decide which orchard is best for your class, based on its scope of operations, visitation program and fees (if any).
2. **Request a copy of teaching materials** the orchard may have developed. You may also direct the farmer to the NH Farm to School Program's Farmers' Guide to Hosting a Class Fieldtrip (visit [www.nhfarmtoschool.org](http://www.nhfarmtoschool.org)).
3. **Prepare your class and yourself** for inclement weather and field conditions. Orchards are usually located on hillsides and have cool breezes and wet morning grasses. Don't forget bee kits if you have students who are allergic. Inquire about places to eat lunch or snacks.
4. **Go to the orchard on your own** before you bring the whole class. Introduce yourself, pick up relevant information, and try to watch another class having the tour if possible.
5. **Develop various interest and educational points** you'll want to cover with your group about the harvest, handling, packing, cider-making, selling and storing processes.
6. **Plan pre-visit classroom activities and discussions** to stimulate curiosity and to help the children develop questions that they can research at the orchard. In order to help the children think of the questions, give them categories and record their ideas under the separate headings. Example: jobs, people, machines, trees, seasons, or who, what, when, where, why.
7. **Find out whether there will be an opportunity for an interview with an "apple expert"**, and other ways to make the visit as interactive as possible. For instance, each child could have his/her own clipboard, or they can work in pairs or small groups. If the children need help recording information, a chaperone can be assigned to that responsibility.
8. **Help your students to experience the beauty and productivity of the orchard** and to recognize that it is not a playground. Possible activities to do while at the farm include:

# Get Smart Eat Local



- Take a hayride or a guided walking tour through the farm
- Pick fruit to take home
- Take a class photo
- Visit the storehouse where the products are kept
- Taste test the different varieties of apples grown at the orchard
- Conduct a planting lesson where each child gets to prepare the soil, and plant their seed (learning all the steps needed to make a plant grow)
- Bring lunch to enjoy at the farm
- Visit the farm animals (if applicable)
- Hear about the farmer's daily routine

9. **Plan some post-visit activities** such as:

- Make individual or class books
- Make a "Jeopardy"-style game with the information everyone has gathered
- Make up a quiz to give parents, or another class, or the chaperones.
- Make a mural of the orchard based on sketches
- Have an apple tasting parents' night
- Plan an off-season visit to the orchard to see what is different

10. **And, please remember:** An apple orchard is a busy place! While your orchard hosts have made a commitment to teaching children about apples, this is not their primary job. Please be active in the control of your class and careful in the selection of your chaperones. Orchards are full of equipment and workers who are rushing to get the crop harvested and stored and there may be additional schools or classes visiting at the same time. To assure your safety and quality of experience, your orchard hosts have likely planned a route and presentation within this busy context. Enjoy!