

Farmers get last chance to put school district first

Written by Holyoke Enterprise

With rural schools feeling the pinch of tightening budgets, now is the time for farmers to support their school district through America's Farmers Grow Rural Education.

Sponsored by the Monsanto Fund, the program gives farmers the opportunity to nominate their public school district to compete for a grant of \$10,000 or \$25,000 to support a science and/or math educational program.

"The deadline to nominate your school district is April 15, so act now before you head back into the field," said Monsanto Fund President Deborah Patterson. "A \$25,000 grant can make a big difference in school districts that support small farming towns. The nomination process is quick, easy and can be completed at growruraleducation.com."

This past fall, Olympia Community School District in McLean County, Ill. was one of 16 school districts to receive a grant through the America's Farmers Grow Rural Education pilot. The school created the Growing Our Own Vegetable program with the \$25,000 grant they received this past fall. The Olympia students are now able to grow vegetables in their greenhouse to study in science class and, ultimately, to be used in the school's cafeteria.

"The Growing Our Own Vegetable program is something we've wanted to do for years, and we finally got the opportunity, thanks to the Monsanto Fund and America's Farmers Grow Rural Education," said Brad Hutchinson, superintendent of Olympia CUSD. "We now have the resources to continue providing the very best education to our students."

Farmers can nominate their local school district by visiting growruraleducation.com until April 15.

Through America's Farmers Grow Rural Education:

—Farmers in 1,245 eligible counties can nominate their local public school districts to apply for a \$10,000 or \$25,000 grant.

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—The Monsanto Fund will award 199 grants this year. There will be 177 \$10,000 grants and 22 grants of \$25,000 awarded.

—The Monsanto Fund will invest more than \$2.3 million to school districts in 39 states this year.

—A list, which includes Phillips County, of eligible states and regions can be found at [growrural education.com](http://growruraleducation.com)

America's Farmers Grow Rural Education is part of a broad commitment by the Monsanto Fund to highlight the important contributions farmers make every day to society by helping them grow academic opportunities for their youth. Visit growruraleducation.com for additional information.

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