



**October 8, 2019**

**For immediate release**

**FirstOntario Credit Union donates \$20,000 for Farm to School program**

**Fenwick, Ontario. (October 8, 2019)** – FirstOntario Credit Union has committed to providing \$20,000 toward Niagara Nutrition Partners’ (NNP) Farm to School initiative. The donation assists NNP in giving 180 schools access to local whole fruits and vegetables once a month throughout the school year.

As part of a true community effort, DeVries Fruit Farm provides in-kind transportation services. The goods are delivered to hubs across the region for schools and volunteers to pick up. In addition to providing finances, FirstOntario Credit Union Blue Wave volunteers donate time at pick-up hubs, distributing the product to schools.

“Being more than a financial institution means making an impact in our community,” said Joanne Battaglia, VP Marketing, Communications & Community Partnerships FirstOntario Credit Union. “We are committed to Student Nutrition Programs across all of our regions and we value the relationship we have with Niagara Nutrition Partners. It’s not just about financial support – our volunteers are passionate about making sure students have what they need to get through the day.”

NNP supports, facilitates and helps fund Student Nutrition Programs in 180 schools region wide –17,000 student meals are served daily. The goal of the program is to provide children with the necessary nutrition required for energy, concentration and ultimately an increased chance of success at school.

NNP’s Program Manager, Jessica Stephenson reiterated the benefits of the Farm to School initiative with the group, “Thank you, FirstOntario and DeVries Fruit Farm for your investment. Not only are we providing students with healthy and accessible food options, we’re connecting them to local farmers. The message that fresh fruits and vegetables have a life long before they ever reach the shelves of a grocery store is invaluable.”

NNP is able to offer support to Student Nutrition Programs through provincial grant programs, individuals, community and corporate donations.

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**Niagara Nutrition Partners** is a Region-wide initiative, providing coordinated nutrition programs in elementary and secondary schools, as well as community based programs.

For more information, please visit [www.niagaranutritionpartners.ca](http://www.niagaranutritionpartners.ca).

**FirstOntario** is a full service cooperative financial institution, serving Members for 80 years throughout the Golden Horseshoe, Niagara Region and Southwestern regions of Ontario. With \$5.4 billion in assets under management, FirstOntario is one of Canada's largest credit unions. Everyone is welcome to be part of FirstOntario for financial services including daily transactions, mortgages, lines of credit, loans and investments. FirstOntario profits are invested into the communities we serve through support for entrepreneurs, competitive rates and charitable pursuits including our award winning student nutrition program. For more information, please visit [www.firstontario.com](http://www.firstontario.com)

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**Picture:** FirstOntario Blue Wave Volunteers, Niagara Nutrition Partners and Students from St. Ann Catholic Elementary School in Fenwick

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