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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Grant Enables North Carolina Farm to Preschool Network to Expand Capacity

ASAP will co-lead the project to enhance equitable and sustainable farm to preschool education.

ASHEVILLE, NC (Dec. 9, 2020)—ASAP (Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project), on behalf of the North Carolina Farm to Preschool Network, has been awarded a Farm to Early Care and Education Implementation Grant from the Association of State Public Health Nutritionists. These funds are intended to strengthen state-level farm to preschool efforts and enrich young children’s health and lives through greater access to nutritious foods and a hands-on approach to food, health, and agriculture education.

North Carolina is one of 10 states, as well as the District of Columbia, to be awarded this grant. Over the next year, the NC Farm to Preschool Network will use grant funds to expand its capacity and outreach, conduct needs assessments, and administer mini-grants. Forty child care centers across the state will receive mini-grants and be matched with mentors to help implement farm to preschool education.

“North Carolina has been a leader in farm to preschool work and we are excited to continue growing the movement,” said project co-lead Emily Jackson, director of ASAP’s Growing Minds Farm to School program. “We want to reach child care centers that have never heard of farm to preschool.”

Other project co-leads are Jennifer Kozaczek and Diane Beth, Nutrition Program Consultants for the NC Dept. of Health and Human Services, and Caroline Stover, Project Director of the NC Farm to ECE Initiative for the Center for Environmental Farming Systems.

The NC Farm to Preschool Network was founded in 2012 to connect, educate, develop, and share resources between community and state partners, farmers, and early childhood education environments. Led by a 15-member advisory committee with more than 1100 statewide members, the Network is a leader both statewide and nationally. Find out more about farm to preschool and the work of the Network at growing-minds.org.

[High-resolution photos of ASAP’s farm to early care and education work are available. Contact Sarah Hart at sarah@asapconnections.org.]

ABOUT ASAP (APPALACHIAN SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE PROJECT)

ASAP’s mission is to help local farms thrive, link farmers to markets and supporters, and build healthy communities through connections to local food. To learn more, visit asapconnections.org.

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