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### **Introducing the Northern Fruit and Vegetable Program**

The Timiskaming Health Unit (THU) is excited to welcome the Northern Fruit and Vegetable Program (NFVP) which is being delivered to 22 elementary schools throughout the district of Timiskaming including the First Nation community school on Bear Island, as of February this year.

The NFVP supplies each student two free servings of fresh fruit or vegetables each week, with a focus on Ontario-grown produce when available, reaching over 3055 students. The goal of the program is to promote consumption and awareness of fruit and vegetables among children in Northern Ontario. The program will run from February until June, 2018.

“Through the Northern Fruit and Vegetable Program, fresh fruits and vegetables are distributed in class on Tuesdays and Thursdays at Ste Croix School, helping students to discover and taste fruits and vegetables among their peers,” says Claire Mackey, Principal of École Catholique Ste-Croix in Haileybury. “The NFVP program complements the existing breakfast program which helps the students start their day with energy and enthusiasm,” adds Mackey.

Educational materials are also provided to help increase awareness among students and their families about the importance of vegetables and fruit, and regular physical activity, for good health and the prevention of chronic diseases. “The program helps to create environments that support healthy eating habits,” says Valène Aylwin, RD, NFVP Coordinator at THU.

THU is pleased to partner with the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers’ Association, First Nations organizations and communities, school boards and elementary schools throughout the catchment area to offer this great program.

For more information about NFVP, please contact your local THU office or visit [timiskaminghu.com](http://timiskaminghu.com)

#### **Quick Facts**

- It may take two, three or even 15 tries before a child gets used to the taste of a new food.
- School-aged children should consume 5 to 6 servings of vegetables and fruit per day.

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