



10 CENTS
A MEAL
FOR MICHIGAN'S KIDS & FARMS

10 CENTS A MEAL PILOT: 2018-2019 EVALUATION RESULTS

AUGUST 2020

MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

Center for Regional Food Systems



10 CENTS A MEAL PILOT: 2018–2019 EVALUATION RESULTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	4
PILOT PROGRAM OVERVIEW	5
10 Cents Grantees Across All Three Years of the Pilot Program	7
MONTHLY EVALUATION SURVEY PLAN.....	9
REGIONAL PARTICIPATION AND STUDENTS REACHED	10
MOTIVATIONS, BARRIERS, AND CHALLENGES FOR PURCHASING AND SERVING LOCAL FOODS	12
Motivators, Barriers, and Challenges to Purchasing and Serving Local Foods Across All Program Years.....	14
MICHIGAN-GROWN VEGETABLES, FRUITS, AND LEGUMES PURCHASED AND SERVED FOR THE FIRST TIME.....	15
REPORTED PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES SUPPORTING 10 CENTS	18
REPORTED EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES SUPPORTING 10 CENTS	20
OUTCOMES OF PARTICIPATING IN 10 CENTS	22
IMPACTS OF PARTICIPATING IN 10 CENTS.....	23
INFLUENCE OF 10 CENTS ON FARMS AND FOOD SUPPLIERS.....	24
FEEDBACK FROM FOOD SUPPLIERS ABOUT 10 CENTS	26
FOOD SERVICE STAFF RESPONSES TO PURCHASING AND SERVING LOCAL FOODS THROUGH 10 CENTS.....	27
ADDITIONAL FEEDBACK ABOUT PARTICIPATING IN 10 CENTS.....	28
REFLECTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: SURVEY DESIGN AND DISSEMINATION.....	31
REFLECTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: PROGRAM DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION.....	33



10 CENTS A MEAL PILOT: 2018–2019 EVALUATION RESULTS

Authors

Colleen Matts
Farm to Institution Specialist
Center for Regional Food Systems,
Michigan State University

Andrew Kuhlman
(Former) Farm to Institution Data Manager
Center for Regional Food Systems,
Michigan State University

Zaire Parrotte
Farm to Institution Data Manager
Center for Regional Food Systems,
Michigan State University

Elissa Trumbull
Consultant

Suggested Citation

Matts, C., Kuhlman, A., Parrotte, Z., and Trumbull, E. (2020). *10 Cents a Meal Pilot: 2018-2019 Evaluation Results, Reflections, and Recommendations*. Michigan State University Center for Regional Food Systems. Retrieved from <http://foodsystems.msu.edu/resources/10-cents-a-meal-pilot-2018-2019-evaluation-results>

Acknowledgements

Thank you to all the school food service directors who participated in the 10 Cents a Meal Pilot for responding to monthly evaluation surveys. Special thanks to Diane Golzynski and Jaime Malnar of the Michigan Department of Education and Kathryn Colasanti of Michigan State University Center for Regional Food Systems (CRFS) for their thoughtful reviews of this report. The authors would also like to thank Andrea Weiss and Lindsay Mensch of CRFS for communications guidance and Blohm Creative Partners for copy editing, proofreading, and design.

Thank you to the 10 Cents a Meal pilot project team for their ongoing collaboration and partnership. The project team for the 2018-2019 school year consisted of staff members from the Michigan Department of Education, Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, Center for Regional Food Systems, Groundwork Center for Resilient Communities, Northwest Prosperity Region 2, West Michigan Prosperity Alliance (Prosperity Region 4), Greater Ann Arbor Region Prosperity Initiative (Prosperity Region 9), and Public Sector Consultants.

This evaluation work was conducted with generous funding support from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

For more information about 10 Cents a Meal, visit tencentsmichigan.org. For more information about farm to institution in Michigan, visit foodsystems.msu.edu or contact Colleen Matts, Farm to Institution Specialist, at matts@msu.edu.

10 CENTS A MEAL PILOT: 2018–2019 EVALUATION RESULTS



INTRODUCTION

The response to the 2020 coronavirus pandemic has demonstrated how important schools have become as places for children to access good food. Under typical operations, school food service directors (FSDs) know best their students' tastes, preferences, and willingness to try new foods, including Michigan-grown products. As managers of extremely tight budgets and navigators of layers of requirements for operating child nutrition programs, they cannot afford to continue to serve foods that students will not take or eat. It follows, then, that FSDs participating in the 10 Cents a Meal for School Kids and Farms Pilot (10 Cents) offer the best insights into how the program impacts the children, especially in lieu of the significant financial and staff capacity that would be needed to conduct research studies of the children served by it.

The state-funded 10 Cents a Meal for School Kids and Farms (10 Cents) Pilot program helps school/district grantees source and serve fresh and minimally processed (including frozen) Michigan-grown vegetables, fruits, and legumes in order to meet two goals: improve daily nutrition and eating habits of children through the school setting and invest in Michigan agriculture and the related food business economy.

Across all three years, the Michigan Department of Education administered the program and the Michigan State University Center for Regional Food Systems (CRFS), the evaluation partner, developed monthly electronic surveys for participating FSDs to share their perceptions of the program. The 2018-2019 survey results help tell the story of this innovative, important program and paint a vivid picture of “the ability to which students can access a variety of healthy Michigan-grown foods through schools,”¹ one of the legislative reporting requirements.

To best enable learning and sharing about 10 Cents, the report that follows describes the program as well as evaluation survey results and feedback provided by FSDs in the 2018-2019 pilot year through a series of one- and two-page summaries:

- Pilot Program Overview
- School/District Grantees and their Counties by Prosperity Region, 2018-2019
- 10 Cents Grantees Across All Three Years of the Pilot Program (2017-2019)
- Monthly Evaluation Survey Plan
- Regional Participation and Students Reached
- Motivations, Barriers, and Challenges for Purchasing and Serving Local Foods
- Most Frequent Motivators, Barriers, and Logistical Challenges to Purchasing and Serving Local Foods by Program Year (2017-2019)
- Michigan-Grown Vegetables, Fruits, and Legumes Purchased and Served for the First Time
- Reported Promotional Activities Supporting 10 Cents
- Reported Educational Activities Supporting 10 Cents
- Outcomes of Participating in 10 Cents
- Impacts of Participating in 10 Cents
- Influence of 10 Cents on Farms and Food Suppliers
- Feedback from Food Suppliers about 10 Cents
- Additional Feedback about Participating in 10 Cents
- Reflections and Recommendations: Program Design, Survey Design, and Dissemination

¹ State of Michigan Public Act 265 of 2018. Available at <http://www.legislature.mi.gov/documents/2017-2018/publicact/htm/2018-PA-0265.htm>.

PILOT PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The state-funded 10 Cents a Meal for School Kids and Farms (10 Cents) pilot program helps school grantees source and serve fresh and minimally processed (including frozen) Michigan-grown vegetables, fruits, and legumes in order to meet two goals: improve daily nutrition and eating habits of children through the school setting and invest in Michigan agriculture and the related food business economy.

The third year of the pilot program was one of continued growth. Through the state school aid budget, the Michigan legislature provided \$575,000 for the program. After setting aside some funds for program administration, \$493,500 was made available as matching reimbursement grants to 57 Michigan school grantees for the 2018-2019 school year (2018-19). This funding level was another

incremental increase from previous years, which allowed more schools and districts to participate: \$315,000 was provided to 32 grantees in 2017-18 and \$210,000 was awarded to 16 grantees in 2016-17.

The pilot program also grew to cover a greater geographic area of the state in 2018-2019. Schools/districts in Prosperity Regions 2 (northwest Lower Michigan) and 4 (west Michigan) were eligible to participate in all three years of the program. Schools/districts in Region 9 (which includes Washtenaw County and southeast Michigan) were eligible starting in 2017-2018, and those in Regions 6 (including the Thumb and Genesee County, where Flint is located) and 8 (southwest Michigan) were eligible in 2018-2019.

10 Cents Grant Distribution, 2016-2019

PILOT YEAR	TOTAL GRANTS AWARDED	ELIGIBLE PROSPERITY REGIONS	PARTICIPATING COUNTIES	PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS/DISTRICTS	ESTIMATED STUDENTS ENROLLED*
2018-2019	\$493,500	2, 4, 6, 8, 9	27	57	134,000
2017-2018	\$315,000	2, 4, 9	18	32	95,000
2016-2017	\$210,000	2, 4	8	16	48,000

*Supplied by Michigan Department of Education, the number of enrolled students listed here was from the start of the 2018-2019 school year. It differs from actual enrollment data listed later in this report that was calculated later that same year.

As in previous years, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) administered the program and selected eligible applicants to receive 10 Cents grants through a competitive application process. Applicants were evaluated based upon their capacity to purchase, serve, and market a variety of Michigan-grown foods in school meal programs. Preference was given to applicants that could provide related educational and promotional activities. A variety of school/district characteristics, such as free and reduced-price meal rates and urban and rural settings, were also considered in selecting grantees. Grantees received “fair share” grant allotments based upon a calculation made from each district’s proportion of claimed meals from the previous school year. In addition to completing monthly evaluation surveys, grantees were required to submit purchasing data for local foods used in the program to an online platform.

MDE receives additional program support from a core team consisting of staff members from the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD), the nonprofit Groundwork Center for Resilient Communities, and Michigan State University Center for Regional Food Systems (CRFS). Other entities that provided support include: Prosperity Region offices — Northwest Prosperity Region 2, West Michigan Prosperity Alliance (Prosperity Region 4), East Michigan Prosperity Region 6, Southwest Prosperity Region 8, Greater Ann Arbor Region Prosperity Initiative (Prosperity Region 9) —and Public Sector Consultants, which provides consulting services for Prosperity Region 9 and also supported the pilot evaluation in the 2018-2019 year.

School/District Grantees and Their Counties by Prosperity Region, 2018-2019

PROSPERITY REGION	NUMBER OF GRANTEES	GRANTEE NAMES	NUMBER OF COUNTIES	COUNTY NAMES
2	18	Bear Lake Schools Beaver Island Community School Benzie County Central Schools Boyne Falls Public School District East Jordan Public Schools Forest Area Community Schools Frankfort-Elberta Area Schools Glen Lake Community Schools Grand Traverse Area Catholic Schools (St. Francis High School) Kaleva Norman Dickson School District Leland Public School District Mancelona Public Schools Manton Consolidated Schools Onkama Consolidated Schools Pellston Public Schools Public Schools of Petoskey Suttons Bay Public Schools Traverse City Area Public Schools	9	Antrim Benzie Charlevoix Emmet Grand Traverse Kalkaska Leelanau Manistee Wexford
4	11	Belding Area School District Coopersville Area Public School District Hart Public School District Holland City School District Montague Area Public Schools Saugatuck Public Schools Shelby Public Schools Thornapple Kellogg School District West Ottawa Public School District Whitehall District Schools Zeeland Public Schools	6	Antrim Benzie Charlevoix Emmet Grand Traverse Kalkaska Leelanau Manistee Wexford Allegan Barry Ionia Muskegon Ottawa Oceana
6	7	Elkton-Pigeon-Bay Port Laker Schools Flint Community Schools Genesee Intermediate School District Grand Blanc Community Schools Mayville Community School District Morrice Area Schools Owosso Public Schools	4	Genesee Huron Shiawassee Tuscola
8	8	Battle Creek Public Schools Bridgman Public Schools Coldwater Community Schools Decatur Public Schools Mattawan Consolidated School Paw Paw Public School District South Haven Public Schools Trinity Lutheran School	4	Berrien Branch Calhoun Van Buren
9	13	Ann Arbor Public Schools Bedford Public Schools Chelsea School District Concord Community Schools Dexter Community School District Grass Lake Community Schools Hanover-Horton School District Hillsdale Community Schools Hillsdale Intermediate School District Jackson Public Schools, Manchester Community Schools Monroe Public Schools Whitmore Lake Public School District	4	Hillsdale Jackson Monroe Washtenaw

*Note: Student enrollment numbers and race/ethnicity categories are listed as provided by MI School Data.

10 Cents Grantees Across All Three Years of the Pilot Program

PROSPERITY REGION	GRANTEE SCHOOL/DISTRICT	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	TOTAL PILOT YEARS
2	Alanson Public Schools		X		1
9	Ann Arbor Public Schools		X	X	2
8	Battle Creek Public Schools			X	1
2	Bear Lake Schools		X	X	2
2	Beaver Island Community School			X	1
9	Bedford Public Schools		X	X	2
4	Belding Area School District		X	X	2
2	Benzie County Central Schools		X	X	2
2	Boyer Falls Public School District	X	X	X	3
8	Bridgman Public Schools			X	1
9	Chelsea School District			X	1
8	Coldwater Community Schools			X	1
9	Concord Community Schools			X	1
4	Coopersville Area Public School District	X	X	X	3
8	Decatur Public Schools			X	1
9	Dexter Community School District		X	X	2
2	East Jordan Public Schools		X	X	2
6	Elkton-Pigeon-Bay Port Laker Schools			X	1
6	Flint Community Schools			X	1
2	Forest Area Community Schools			X	1
4	Forest Hills Public Schools	X			1
2	Frankfort-Elberta Area Schools	X	X	X	3
6	Genesee Intermediate School District			X	1
2	Glen Lake Community Schools	X	X	X	3
6	Grand Blanc Community Schools			X	1
4	Grand Haven Area Public Schools	X	X		2
9	Grass Lake Community Schools			X	1
9	Hanover-Horton School District			X	1
2	Harbor Springs School District		X		1
4	Hart Public School District		X	X	2
9	Hillsdale Community Schools		X	X	2
9	Hillsdale Intermediate School District			X	1
4	Holland City School District		X	X	2
9	Jackson Public Schools		X	X	2

PROSPERITY REGION	GRANTEE SCHOOL/DISTRICT	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	TOTAL PILOT YEARS
2	Kaleva Norman Dickson School District		X	X	2
2	Leland Public School District	X		X	2
4	Lowell Area Schools		X		1
2	Mancelona Public Schools			X	1
9	Manchester Community Schools			X	1
2	Manistee Area Public Schools	X			1
2	Manton Consolidated Schools		X	X	2
8	Mattawan Consolidated School			X	1
6	Mayville Community School District			X	1
9	Monroe Public Schools		X	X	2
4	Montague Area Public Schools	X	X	X	3
6	Morrice Area Schools			X	1
4	Muskegon Heights Public School Academy System	X			1
4	Muskegon Public Schools	X			1
2	Northport Public School District	X			1
4	Oakridge Public Schools	X			1
2	Onekama Consolidated Schools		X	X	2
6	Owosso Public Schools			X	1
8	Paw Paw Public School District			X	1
2	Pellston Public Schools		X	X	2
2	Public Schools of Petoskey		X	X	2
4	Ravenna Public Schools	X			1
4	Saugatuck Public Schools		X	X	2
4	Shelby Public Schools		X	X	2
8	South Haven Public Schools			X	1
2	St. Francis High School, Grand Traverse Area Catholic Schools			X	1
2	Suttons Bay Public Schools			X	1
4	Thornapple Kellogg School District		X	X	2
2	Traverse City Area Public Schools	X	X	X	3
8	Trinity Lutheran School			X	1
4	West Ottawa Public School District			X	1
4	Whitehall District Schools	X	X	X	3
9	Whitmore Lake Public School District			X	1
9	Ypsilanti Community Schools		X		1
4	Zeeland Public Schools			X	1

*Note: Student enrollment numbers and race/ethnicity categories are listed as provided by MI School Data.

MONTHLY EVALUATION SURVEY PLAN

As in previous years, the Michigan Legislature outlined desired reporting information for the 10 Cents Pilot in the 2018-2019 year: “increase in market opportunities and income generation” for food suppliers, and “the ability to which students can access a variety of healthy Michigan-grown foods through schools and increase their consumption of those foods.”²

Funds and staff capacity were not available to conduct research studies on income generation for food suppliers and/or students’ consumption of local foods. **The Michigan State University Center for Regional Food Systems (CRFS) gathered feedback from participating school food service directors (FSDs) to point toward students’ access to healthy Michigan-grown foods through this program.** CRFS developed and administered a series of monthly electronic evaluation surveys through Qualtrics that were distributed through email by MDE staff to all participating FSDs. The survey questions were similar to those from previous pilot years to allow for comparison when possible.

Each monthly survey asked participating FSDs to report on the following for their 10 Cents activities:

- Michigan-grown foods served through the food service program for the first time,
- promotional and educational activities implemented to support Michigan-grown foods served,
- adult community members involved in these activities, and
- open responses for positive and negative impacts of participating in the program.

Special surveys conducted at the start of the year, mid-year, and year-end included the regular monthly survey questions plus some additional questions:

- The September baseline survey included questions about food service budgets and spending for the previous school year and motivators, barriers, and logistical challenges for sourcing Michigan-grown vegetables, fruits and legumes/products.

- The December mid-year and May year-end surveys included questions about food service budgets and spending for the current school year and impacts and outcomes of participating in 10 Cents as well as feedback and open responses about the program.

Responses to the budget questions (total food service budget, total food budget, and spending by food categories, including local foods, for the previous and current year) were limited in some cases and unreliable in others, so they are not described or summarized in this report. Participating FSDs indicated that the budget questions take an extensive amount of time to complete. As FSDs do not need to calculate or report these budget numbers for any other reason, we recommend removing these budget questions from future evaluation surveys for the undue reporting burden they impose.

The following summaries present results collected through monthly electronic evaluation surveys, as well as the context around them, and some comparisons with results from previous years of 10 Cents evaluation surveys. Note that the *N* is given in a note below each table or figure where applicable, and it represents the sample of grantee responses collected and analyzed for each question.

A small number of surveys were not returned throughout the year, and the surveys were not always fully completed by each grantee so the *N* for results of survey questions do vary. Additionally, the Michigan Department of Education supplied student population data for participating 10 Cents schools/districts so that CRFS could also report additional information on students reached through 10 Cents grants.



² State of Michigan Public Act 265 of 2018. Available at: <http://www.legislature.mi.gov/documents/2017-2018/publicact/htm/2018-PA-0265.htm>.

REGIONAL PARTICIPATION AND STUDENTS REACHED

In its third year, the state legislature made \$575,000 available for the 10 Cents pilot program. Grant awards totaled \$493,500 after funds for administration were set aside. The tables below show the breakdown of grant awards in the eligible regions and demographics of the student population reached by 10 Cents grants in the 2018-2019 year. Data for all of the following tables were provided by MDE.

Regional Breakdown of Grant Awards

PROSPERITY REGION	GRANTEE SCHOOLS/DISTRICTS	TOTAL STUDENT ENROLLMENT	SCHOOL LUNCH COUNT (2017-2018)
2	18	22,496	1,981,190
4	11	31,227	2,827,721
6	7	18,890	2,000,858
8	8	16,602	1,766,220
9	13	44,821	3,146,562
Total	57	134,036	11,722,551

Demographics of Student Population Reached Through 10 Cents Grants

STUDENT DATA	REGION 2* GRANTEES	REGION 4 GRANTEES	REGION 6 GRANTEES	REGION 8 GRANTEES	REGION 9 GRANTEES	ALL ELIGIBLE REGIONS	STATE OF MICHIGAN
Aggregate enrollment	22,496	31,227	21,473	16,602	45,144	136,942	1,520,065
American Indian/Alaska Native (percent)	2.23	0.31	0.22	0.41	0.23	0.60	0.62
Asian (percent)	1.02	3.00	1.60	1.72	6.40	3.42	3.35
African American (percent)	0.76	2.49	28.80	10.99	11.28	10.26	17.97
Hispanic/Latino (percent)	4.06	23.13	3.86	9.99	6.42	9.87	7.85
Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander (percent)	0.10	0.07	1.09	0.07	0.11	0.25	0.09
White (percent)	83.29	67.45	60.56	69.73	64.02	68.21	66.20
Two or more races (percent)	3.34	3.55	4.89	6.11	6.69	5.07	3.92
Free and reduced-price meal eligibility (percent)	44.17	47.37	59.97	53.35	35.72	45.7	50.74

*Note that student data for Grand Traverse Area Catholic Schools are not publicly available, so they are not included as part of Region 2 in this chart.

Student population data were provided by MDE later in the 2018-2019 school year than enrollment information referenced in their initial press release about the grant awards for 2018-2019; it differs from their initial estimates of students served in each region at the start of the school year (and mentioned earlier in this report). Race and ethnicity categories provided here are as MDE tracks and supplied them.



10 Cents grant funding available through the state legislature reached fewer than 10% of the over 1.5 million K-12 school children counted in Michigan in 2018-2019.

10 Cents grant funding available through the state legislature reached fewer than 10% of the over 1.5 million K-12 school children counted in Michigan in 2018-2019. The student population reached through 10 Cents grants can be described as follows:

- The percentage of students eligible for free and reduced-price meals in 10 Cents schools/districts was five percentage points lower than that of the students in the state overall (45.7% compared to 50.74%).
- Overall, 10 Cents grants reached a lower percentage of African American students than the total percentage of African American students in the state student population (10.26% and 17.97%, respectively) and a slightly higher percentage of white students than in the state (68.21% compared to 66.20%).
- Grantees served a higher percentage of Hispanic/Latino students (9.87%) and students of two or more races (5.07%) and a slightly higher percentage of Asian students (3.42%) than state-level percentages (7.85%, 3.92%, and 3.35%, respectively).
- Grantees in Region 2 in northwest Lower Michigan served the highest percentage of both white students (83%) and American Indian/Alaska Native students (2.23%).

- Grantees in Prosperity Region 4 in west Michigan reached the highest percentage of Hispanic/Latino students (23.13%).
- Covering a portion of eastern Michigan including Flint and the Thumb, Region 6 participating schools/districts served the highest percentage of African American students (28.80%) of all 10 Cents participating regions.
- Participating schools/districts in Region 9 in southeast Lower Michigan (stretching from Ann Arbor to the southeastern state border) served the highest percentage of Asian students (6.40%) and students of two or more races (6.69%).

Despite growing interest from local stakeholders in the program, Wayne County, which is home to the City of Detroit, has not yet been eligible to participate in 10 Cents in any of the three pilot years. Student population data for 10 Cents grantees may change significantly if and when Detroit Public Schools Community District is eligible and awarded a grant to participate, as it is one of the largest of school districts in the state and has the highest number of African American students enrolled of any school district in the state, according to the Center for Education Performance and Information (CEPI). (CEPI data indicates that Oak Park, Southfield, Harper Woods, and Benton Harbor school districts have the highest percentages of African American students of all school districts in the state.)

Across the state, students' eligibility for free and reduced-price meals is expected to sharply increase for the 2020-2021 school year due to decreased income and increased unemployment for many families as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.

MOTIVATIONS, BARRIERS, AND CHALLENGES FOR PURCHASING AND SERVING LOCAL FOODS

In the September baseline evaluation survey, school food service directors (FSDs) participating in 10 Cents were asked to select their top three responses (in any order) from a list of response options, including an open-ended “other” option for each of the following three questions:

- What motivates you to purchase and serve local foods in your school food service program?
- What barriers do you face in purchasing local foods for your food service program?
- What logistical challenges do you face in serving local foods in your food service program?

Of FSDs from 57 participating schools/districts, 55 responded to this set of survey questions.

The top three motivators:

- **support the local economy,**
- **increase student consumption of fruits and vegetables, and**
- **help Michigan farms and businesses.**

The top three motivators for purchasing and serving local foods selected by participating FSDs were:

- support the local economy,
- increase student consumption of fruits and vegetables, and
- help Michigan farms and businesses.

These responses are listed in order of frequency selected. Although in a different order than most frequent motivators selected the previous pilot year (2017-18), the same three motivators were chosen both years. “Help Michigan farms and businesses” was chosen most frequently, and “support the local economy” was chosen third most frequently in 2017-18. The remaining response options for motivators were selected with relatively similar frequency in 2017-18.

The top three barriers to purchasing local foods selected by participating FSDs were:

- lack of products available at certain times of the year,
- inconvenience, and
- budget constraints.

“Lack of products available at certain times of the year,” related to the seasonal availability of Michigan agricultural products, was selected by FSDs as a barrier to local food purchasing over twice as many times as other barriers.

It has also been the most frequently selected barrier over all three of the 10 Cents pilot years. This barrier was also mentioned numerous times through open-ended feedback in the monthly surveys. “Budget constraints” was the second most frequently selected barrier over all three years of the pilot. In the 2017-18 year of the pilot, “federal procurement regulations” was the third most frequently selected barrier, but it fell to the fifth most frequently selected barrier in 2018-2019. This change may represent a positive response by FSDs to increasingly supportive federal rules for local food procurement. Most significantly, these include an increased threshold for micro-purchasing, the easiest way for FSDs to properly procure local food directly from farmers and local food vendors. Other barriers FSDs reported through the open-ended option included lack of quality produce available, difficulties associated with delivery of local foods, lack of time for food service staff to clean, prepare and/or pick up local foods, staff members’ ability to prepare local foods, and, for one district, difficulty sourcing local foods while using USDA Foods.

The top three logistical challenges to purchasing local foods selected for 2018-19 were the same as those selected by FSDs participating in the 2017-18, just in a slightly different order. They were:

- lack of a distribution method to get local foods to my building(s),
- lack of staff labor to prepare local foods, and
- and lack of storage.

Frequency of Selected Motivators, Barriers, and Logistical Challenges for Purchasing and Serving Local Foods*

MOTIVATORS	
Support the local economy	37
Increase student consumption of fruits and vegetables	31
Help Michigan farms and businesses	25
Access to fresher food	20
Higher quality food	17
Knowing food sources	11
Good public relations	10
Parent demand for local foods	5
Ability to purchase special varieties or types of produce and legumes	5
Ability to purchase special quantities	2
Less use of pesticides	1
Student demand for local foods	0
Lower transportation costs	0
Other (please describe)	0
BARRIERS	
Lack of products available at certain times of the year	40
Budget constraints	19
Inconvenience	16
Lack of growers/producers in the area from whom to purchase	14
Federal procurement regulations	13
Food safety concerns	11
Other (please describe)	9
Liability concerns	8
Lack of information about how to source local foods	7
Lack of demand from student customers	3
District procurement regulations/policies	3
Lack of support from school district	1
LOGISTICAL CHALLENGES	
Lack of a distribution method to get local foods to my building(s)	29
Lack of staff labor to prepare local foods	29
Lack of storage	13
Lack of staff training to prepare local foods	11
Lack of facilities to handle, fresh, whole foods	9
Other (please describe)	8
Lack of equipment to prepare local foods	8
Lack of equipment to serve local foods	7

Note: N = 55, September baseline survey

*Food service directors who responded to this question could select all responses that applied and did not rank order their responses.

MOTIVATORS, BARRIERS, AND CHALLENGES TO PURCHASING AND SERVING LOCAL FOODS ACROSS ALL PROGRAM YEARS

Most Frequent Motivators, Barriers, and Logistical Challenges to Purchasing and Serving Local Foods

		2016-2017 (N = 16)	2017-2018 (N = 32)	2018-2019 (N = 55)
MOTIVATORS	1	Increase student consumption of fruits and vegetables	Help Michigan farms and businesses	Support the local economy
	2	Higher quality food	Increase student consumption of fruits and vegetables	Increase student consumption of fruits and vegetables
	3	Support the local economy	Support the local economy	Help Michigan farms and businesses
	4	Access to fresher food	Higher quality food	Access to fresher food
	5	Help Michigan farms and businesses	Access to fresher food	Higher quality food
BARRIERS	1	Lack of products available at certain times of year (seasonality)	Lack of products available at certain times of year (seasonality)	Lack of products available at certain times of year (seasonality)
	2	Budget constraints	Budget constraints	Budget constraints
	3	Food safety concerns	Federal procurement regulations	Inconvenience
	4	Federal procurement regulations	Inconvenience, Food safety concerns, Lack of demand from student customers (tied)	Lack of growers/producers in the area from whom to purchase
	5	Inconvenience		Federal procurement regulations
LOGISTICAL CHALLENGES	1	Lack of distribution method to get local foods to my building(s)	Lack of staff labor to prepare local foods	Lack of distribution method to get local foods to my building(s)
	2	Lack of staff labor to prepare local foods	Lack of distribution method to get local foods to my building(s)	Lack of staff labor to prepare local foods
	3	Lack of equipment to prepare local foods	Lack of storage	Lack of storage
	4	Lack of storage	Lack of equipment to prepare local foods	Lack of staff training to prepare local foods
	5	Lack of staff training to prepare local foods	Lack of facilities to handle fresh, whole foods	Lack of equipment to prepare local foods

MICHIGAN-GROWN VEGETABLES, FRUITS, AND LEGUMES PURCHASED AND SERVED FOR THE FIRST TIME

In the year-end May survey, participating school food service directors (FSDs) were asked “Has funding through the 10 Cents a Meal Pilot allowed you to try new products in school meals you otherwise would not have tried?” with a simple Yes/No response option. Of those who responded, 96% of participating FSDs (53 of 55) responded affirmatively that 10 Cents allowed them to try new Michigan-grown foods in school meals they otherwise would not have tried.

10 Cents allowed 96% of participating food service directors to try new Michigan-grown foods they otherwise would not have tried in school meals.

For each monthly survey, FSDs were asked “In the past month, which new Michigan-grown vegetables have you purchased and served for the first time in your food service program? Michigan-grown vegetables can be in fresh, frozen, dried, and minimally-processed forms to apply.” They were asked the same of Michigan-grown fruits and legumes and to check all products that applied including an “other” option with a write-in response. Duplicate responses were removed before analysis. There were no responses recorded for just five districts across all nine surveys for a total of 508 responses. Due to a number of duplicate responses from month-to-month in previous years’ survey responses, additional language was added to the instructions: “Please note that this question, and the two that follow, focus on products NEW to your program. Please record each new Michigan-grown food product only once in this series of surveys. Tracking from your invoices/receipts will document the ongoing variety of products you purchase otherwise through the 10 Cents Pilot.”

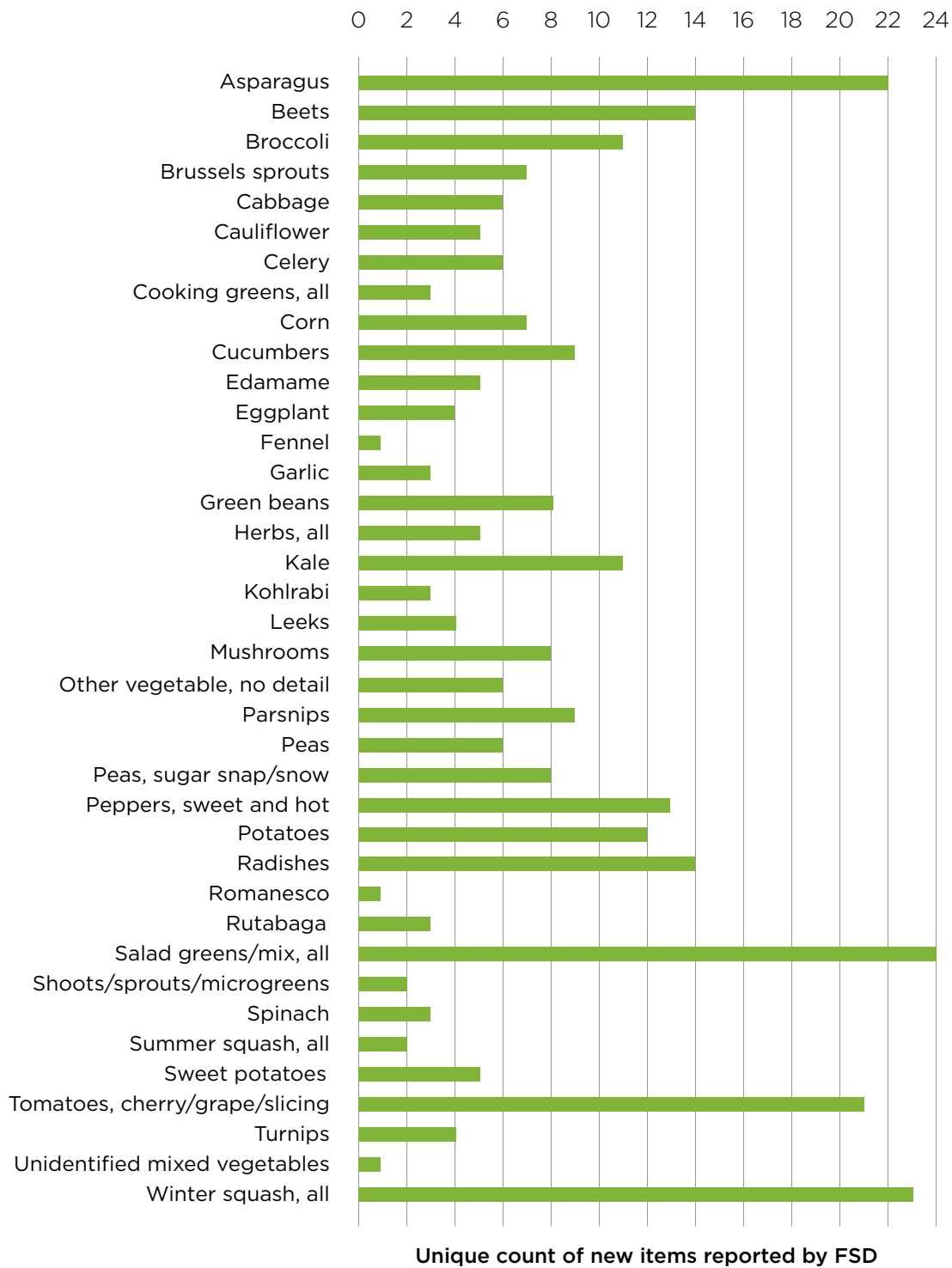
Across all participating grantees, there were 544 reported instances throughout the school year of FSDs trying a Michigan-grown fruit, vegetable, or legume for the first time. Over half of participating

FSDs (54%, or 31 of 57) reported serving between one and eight new items for the first time. Four FSDs reported trying only one new Michigan-grown food for the first time across all nine months, and one reported trying 31. **On average, FSDs reported trying 10 new Michigan-grown foods.**

- In total, FSDs reported trying a new Michigan-grown vegetable a total of 311 times. **The top three new Michigan-grown vegetables were salad greens/mix (24), winter squash (23), and asparagus (22).** FSDs were able to indicate the types of Michigan-grown winter squashes they tried for the first time, which included at least 11 varieties: acorn, butternut, carnival, chayote, delicata, Heart of Gold, blue Hubbard, kabocha, pumpkin, red kuri, and spaghetti.
- Overall, there were 191 reported instances of FSDs trying a new Michigan-grown fruit. **Apples (28), blueberries (26), and plums (22) were the Michigan-grown fruits FSDs reported most frequently as trying for the first time.** Eight FSDs served saskatoon berries for the first time.
- **FSDs reported trying new Michigan-grown legumes 40 times across all monthly surveys throughout the school year.** Nine FSDs each reported serving black beans and pinto beans for the first time, and six each reported trying Great Northern and red kidney beans.

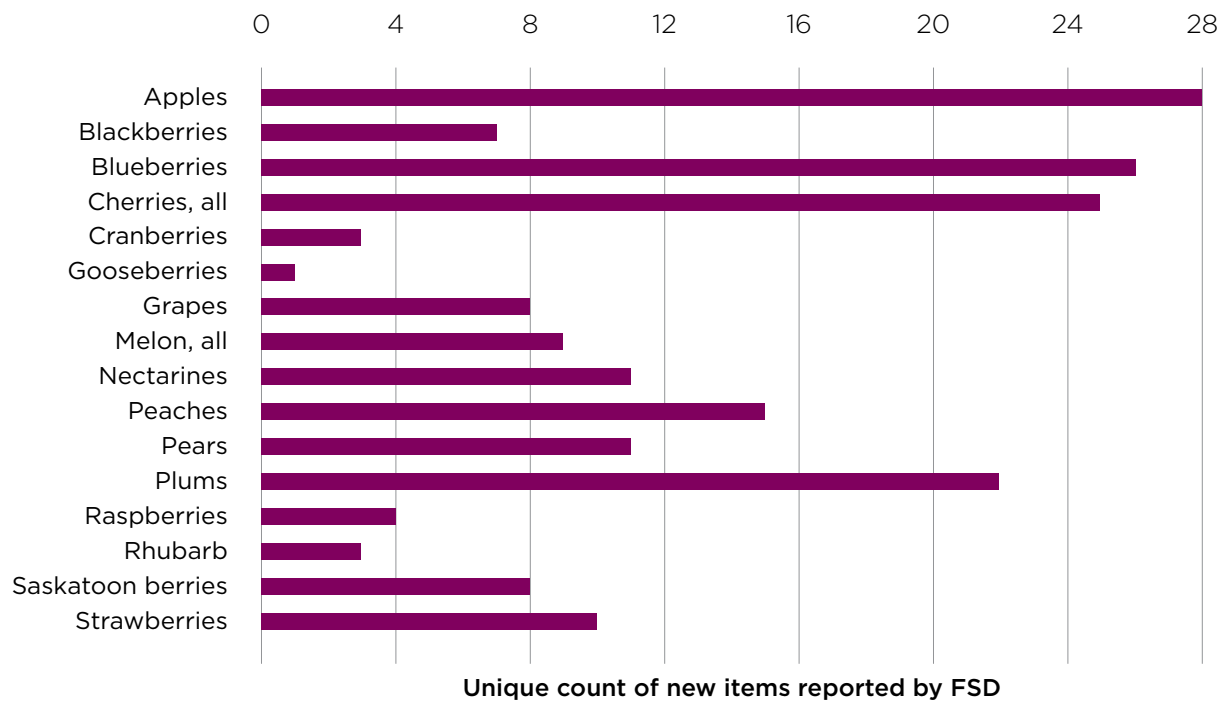
As mentioned above, duplicate responses were removed before analysis. FSDs duplicated their responses to these “new food” questions a total of 292 times across all surveys. On average, each FSD duplicated their responses four times during the reporting year. In other words, they reported that they served an item for the first time in four different months. For example, one FSD reported serving winter squash for the first time in October, November, December, and January monthly surveys. To gather more accurate data in future years, we recommend comparing survey responses from one simpler question, either in the application or in the baseline September survey, about local foods used in previous years with purchasing data from invoice information input separately by FSDs in the tracking platform for that specific year of the program.

Instances of Michigan-Grown Vegetables Reported as Purchased and Served for the First Time Through 10 Cents



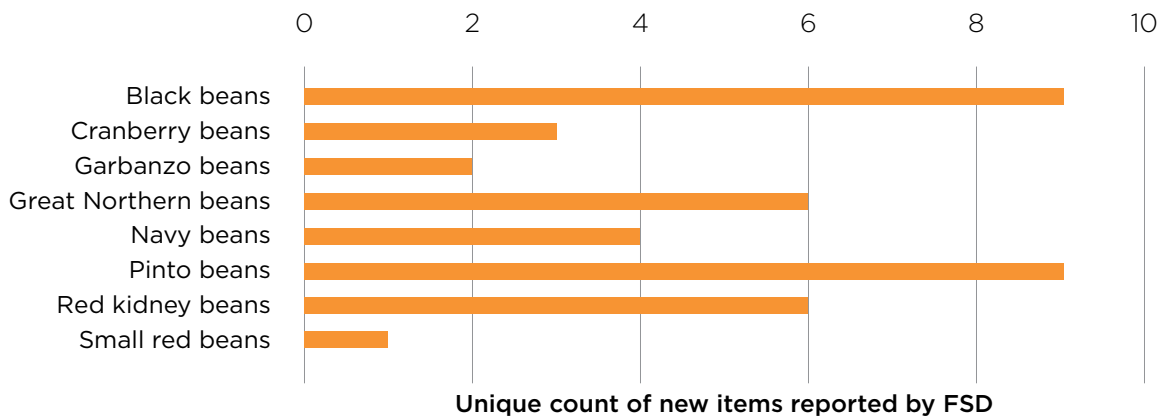
Note: N = 508, September 2018 – May 2019

Instances of Michigan-Grown Fruits Reported as Purchased and Served for the First Time Through 10 Cents



Note: N = 508, September 2018 - May 2019

Instances of Michigan-Grown Legumes Reported as Purchased and Served for the First Time Through 10 Cents



Note: N = 508, September 2018 - May 2019

REPORTED PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES SUPPORTING 10 CENTS

Each monthly survey asked participating school food service directors (FSDs) about the type, number, and success of promotional activities conducted in support of 10 Cents. It is important to note that 10 Cents grants only provide funding for the purchase of Michigan-grown foods in school meals programs, not for promotional and educational activities to support them. FSDs were asked “In the past month,

have you conducted any promotional activities in your food service program focusing on the local produce and/or legumes purchased through the 10 Cents Pilot?” If they responded yes, they were asked a follow up question about which types of activities were conducted from a provided list with an “other” response option to describe additional activities.

Reported Promotional Activities

TYPE OF PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITY	REPORTS OF ACTIVITY (N = 506)	REPORTS OF ACTIVITY BEING MOST SUCCESSFUL (N = 288)
Tasting activities	174	174
Cultivate Michigan seasonal menu feature	61	8
Cultivate Michigan posters	71	5
Cultivate Michigan window clings	24	1
Harvest of the Month menu feature	87	24
Materials featuring Michigan farmers	64	15
Creative menu names	29	8
Promotional posters	67	14
Message boards/electronic signage	23	2
Decorations	29	6
Window clings	14	5
Other	39	25
Total	682	-

*Note: September 2018-May 2019

Together, FSDs reported 682 instances of conducting promotional activities throughout the school year. Tasting activities were by far the most commonly reported. FSDs reported 174 total tasting activities throughout the year. Harvest of the month menu features were the next most frequently conducted type of activity with 87 reports, half as many as tasting activities. One FSD reported conducting 74 types of promotional activities throughout the school year and another reported 53 types while three reported zero activities. The mean number of promotional activities reported throughout the school year was nearly 12 (11.96), the median was nine, and the most frequent number of reported activities (mode) was seven.

FSDs were also asked to indicate which single activity they considered most successful of those they conducted each month. Far fewer FSDs responded to this question across the nine months of surveys than reported activities (288 responses compared to 506), but tasting activities received the same number of reports of being “most successful” as being conducted, each with 174 total responses. **Survey results indicate that FSDs both conducted tasting activities most frequently and consider them the most successful type of promotional activity.** We suggest that tasting activities be recommended to FSDs participating in the program in future years as an ideal promotional activity, especially given limited funds and resources to conduct these activities.

FSDs who reported “other” types of activities described a range of additional promotional efforts. A number of FSDs reported different menu themes including Michigan Mondays, Farm to School Fridays, Michigan-Grown Meal Days, Back to School farm to school dinners, and Every Kid Healthy Week. Five FSDs reported hosting farmers markets and one reported a smoothie fundraiser event. Others reported social media promotion, food preparation and cooking demonstrations, and promotional events including Michigan Apple Crunch and a Valentine’s Day feature of beets.

Participating food service directors used menu themes including:

- Michigan Mondays
- Farm to School Fridays
- Michigan-Grown Meal Days
- Back to School Farm to School Dinners
- Every Kid Healthy Week

Reported Promotional Activities by Month

PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES	SEPT. (N = 55)	OCT. (N = 57)	NOV. (N = 57)	DEC. (N = 55)	JAN. (N = 57)	FEB. (N = 57)	MAR. (N = 56)	APR. (N = 56)	MAY (N = 56)	TOTAL
Number (and percent) of grantees reporting activities	39 (71%)	41 (72%)	38 (66%)	40 (72%)	29 (51%)	29 (51%)	34 (61%)	28 (50%)	22 (39%)	-
Number (and average) of types of different types of activities reported*	97 (2.5)	112 (2.7)	91 (2.4)	89 (2.2)	60 (2.1)	63 (2.2)	71 (2.1)	77 (2.8)	49 (2.2)	682

* There were five instances (two in December and three in January) of FSDs reporting that they had conducted promotional activities without providing more detail on the types of activities they conducted, so their activities were not included in the total count of activity types.

The months in which FSDs reported promotional activities seem to have a seasonal pattern similar to that of Michigan agriculture, with promotional activities peaking in October when Michigan-grown harvest season is also at its peak and at the lowest in March at the end of the coldest winter months when sun can be scarce for growing food in Michigan, even in indoor environments. **With an average of nearly 12 instances of promotional activities per grantee, over 680 different types of promotional activities were reported throughout the year.** Three FSDs reported no promotional activities at all, and six FSDs reported conducting promotional activities in each of the nine survey months.

FSDs were asked to provide the number of new adults, including teachers, parents, farmers, and other community members, involved in the promotional activities supporting 10 Cents. Together FSDs reported 7,588 new adults engaging in these promotional activities. The majority were new parents (6,900). This total was primarily comprised by two reports of over 1,500 new parents and one of over 3,000, which may mean that these data are inconsistent and/or unreliable. FSDs also reported 154 farmers, 461 teachers (461), and 73 other adults (primarily community members). Additional responses were provided but not in a countable form, so these numbers likely do not capture all engaged adults.

REPORTED EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES SUPPORTING 10 CENTS

In addition to promotional activities, each monthly survey asked participating school food service directors (FSDs) about the type, number, and success of educational activities conducted in support of 10 Cents. FSDs were asked “In the past month, have you conducted any educational activities in your food service program focusing on the local produce and/or legumes purchased through the 10 Cents

Pilot?” If they responded yes, they were asked a follow up question about which types of activities were conducted from a provided list with an “other” response option to describe additional activities. Again, it is important to note that 10 Cents grants do not support direct costs for FSDs to conduct either promotional or educational activities.

Reported Educational Activities

TYPE OF EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY	NUMBER OF TIMES ACTIVITY WAS REPORTED (N = 506)	REPORTS OF ACTIVITY BEING MOST SUCCESSFUL (N = 207)
Tasting/taste testing activities	166	149
Nutrition education in the classroom	72	13
Nutrition education in the cafeteria	96	16
School garden activities	35	9
Other classroom activities	17	2
Other cafeteria activities	20	8
Other district activities	7	4
Other	48	19
Total	461	-

*Note: September 2018-May 2019

Nine FSDs reported no educational activities, and one reported the maximum of 34. The average was just over eight (8.09), the median was six, and the most frequent number (mode) of educational activities conducted was three. FSDs reported a total of 166 instances of conducting tasting/taste testing activities for educational purposes. Tasting/taste testing activities were included as a type of educational activity as well as a type of promotional activity because they can serve either or both purposes, depending on how and why they are conducted. Given that, though, we cannot know if there are duplicate responses of tasting activities among reports of promotional and educational activities. In future years, we recommend revising the design and reducing the frequency of these activities questions to minimize the tendency for duplicate responses within a single month or over multiple months.

There were more than double the number of reports of tasting/taste testing activities than the next most frequently reported type of activity, nutrition education in the cafeteria. Other educational activities in the cafeteria described by FSDs included both a pop-up and traveling farmers market as well as a farmers market display; taste testing including a Harvest of the Month feature, Michigan plums, and Try It Tuesday; a survey activity on locally grown foods; cooking classes; both a challenge and March Madness tournament around fruits and vegetables; and education about new salad bar items. Other classroom activities included providing information about different apple varieties, making applesauce, and learning division with apples; graphing taste test results; cooking classes and food preparation; and activities provided by partner organizations. Other district-level activities included education about fruit and vegetable waste reduction and a smoothie blender bike during breakfast.

Educational activities in cafeterias included:

- Pop-up and traveling farmers markets
- Farmers market display
- Taste testing, including Harvest of the Month features and Try It Tuesdays
- Locally grown foods survey
- Cooking classes
- Fruit and vegetables challenge and March Madness tournament
- Education about new salad bar items

Reported Educational Activities by Month

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES	SEPT. (N = 55)	OCT. (N = 57)	NOV. (N = 57)	DEC. (N = 55)	JAN. (N = 57)	FEB. (N = 57)	MAR. (N = 56)	APR. (N = 56)	MAY (N = 56)	TOTAL
Number (and percent) of grantees reporting activities	21 (38%)	32 (56%)	25 (44%)	29 (53%)	20 (35%)	25 (44%)	23 (41%)	27 (48%)	18 (32%)	220
Number (and average) of different types of activities reported*	42 (2)	61 (1.9)	44 (1.8)	51 (1.8)	30 (1.5)	44 (1.8)	49 (2.1)	58 (2.1)	38 (2.1)	461

*There were two instances (both in January) of FSDs reporting they had conducted educational activities without providing more detail on the types of activities they conducted, so their activities were not included in the total count of different activity types.

Overall, FSDs less frequently reported instances of conducting educational activities than promotional activities (207 compared to 288) and reported conducting fewer different types of educational activities (461) than promotional activities (682) throughout the year. The months in which FSDs reported educational activities did not seem to follow a similar seasonal pattern as promotional activities. Nine FSDs reported no educational activities throughout the school year, and four FSDs reported educational activities in each of the nine survey months.



Again, FSDs were asked to provide the number of new adults, including teachers, parents, farmers, and other community members, involved in educational activities supporting 10 Cents. These data seem more conservative and may be more reliable than those reported for promotional activities, but their overall reliability is difficult to assess. Together, FSDs reported 594 new adults who were involved in these activities. Unsurprisingly given the educational nature of these activities, the majority of new adults reported were teachers (354). Additionally, 131 parents, 44 farmers, and 65 other adults (primarily community members) were reported. Again, descriptive responses were not counted here so these may be low estimates of adults engaged in educational activities.

OUTCOMES OF PARTICIPATING IN 10 CENTS

The May year-end evaluation survey asked, “Related to your food service operation, which of the following outcomes has the pilot program helped you to achieve?” FSDs were asked to select all that applied from a list of outcome statements. An “other” option was also provided with space for FSDs to describe their response. (This was a new addition to the electronic survey tool in 2018-

2019 so it was unavailable for previous surveys.) The chart below shows outcomes selected by respondents over each of the three 10 Cents pilot years with the top three most frequently selected outcomes shaded. In the first two years all participating FSDs responded to this question, and in the third year all but one FSD responded (56 of 57).

Outcomes of Participating in 10 Cents Across All Program Years

RELATED TO YOUR FOOD SERVICE OPERATION, WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING OUTCOMES HAS THE 10 CENTS PILOT HELPED YOU ACHIEVE?	2016-17 (N = 16)	2017-18 (N = 32)	2018-19 (N = 56)
The variety of produce served in school meals has increased.*	13	27	41
We can plan local produce and legume purchasing with greater certainty.*	12	4	32
Food vendors and farmers are more willing to supply our food service program.	-	-	27
We have better support from our farm and food vendors/partners.	8	11	-
We have better support for school meals from the community.	8	8	24
Our purchasing power is enhanced.*	9	4	23
Our food purchasing budget has increased.*	5	8	22
Challenges to purchasing local foods are reduced.*	8	1	21
The cooking skills of food service staff have improved.	6	4	21
Food waste has decreased.	3	9	19
Participation in school meals has increased.	2	3	16
Marketing menus is easier.*	7	4	14
Our food service budget is more stable.*	4	2	13
We are better able to meet school meal requirements.*	5	11	10
Other (please describe)	-	-	2

Note: May surveys from each year, *Indicates that statements were slightly reworded across surveys but not so much to change the meaning.

For the third year in a row, FSDs most frequently selected “The variety of produce served in school meals has increased” as an outcome of participating in 10 Cents. Forty-one of 56 FSDs chose this outcome from a list of statements. “We can plan local produce and legume purchasing with greater certainty” was selected second most frequently in 2018-19 whereas it was the eighth most frequent selection in 2017-18. “Food vendors and farmers are more willing to supply our food service program” was selected third most frequently in 2018-19.

In the 2018-19 year, FSDs selected an average of five positive outcomes from participating in the program. Five FSDs selected just one outcome, and two selected 12 of the provided options. With less than double the number of grantees in 2018-19 compared to 2017-18, FSDs selected three times the number of different types outcomes. Only one FSD who chose the “other” outcome added a description: “The quality has improved so much!”

IMPACTS OF PARTICIPATING IN 10 CENTS

The May year-end evaluation survey asked participating school food service directors (FSDs), “To what extent are each of the following impacts true for your school food service operation since starting the 10 Cents Pilot?” FSDs were provided with a list of provided statements and asked to choose their level of agreement from a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. A whole number from 2 to -2 was assigned to

responses to calculate average responses for each statement, which are presented in the table below in descending order of average agreement. A higher average response indicates stronger agreement to the statement by FSDs overall. Note that one of the 57 participating FSDs did not respond to the May survey. Due to a flaw in survey design, two FSDs were able to indicate two responses for one statement, so those responses were excluded.

Impacts of Participating in 10 Cents by Levels of Agreement

IMPACT STATEMENT	STRONGLY AGREE (2)	SOMEWHAT AGREE (1)	NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE (0)	SOMEWHAT DISAGREE (-1)	STRONGLY DISAGREE (-2)	AVERAGE RESPONSES
We offered more local fruits in our school meals. (N = 56)	40	15	1	0	0	1.70
We offered more local vegetables in our school meals. (N = 56)	37	19	0	0	0	1.66
I have identified new Michigan-grown fruit, vegetables and legumes that are eaten by our student customers. (N = 56)	31	21	4	0	0	1.48
The quality of our food has improved. (N = 56)	28	24	2	2	0	1.39
Our students are eating more fruits. (N = 56)	26	25	5	0	0	1.38
Our students are eating more vegetables. (N = 55)	23	28	4	0	0	1.32
We added more legumes (dry beans in any form) to our lunch menus. (N = 56)	9	23	16	8	0	0.59
Our students are eating more legumes. (N = 55)	6	28	14	7	0	0.59

*Note: May surveys from each year

FSDs agreed most strongly with the impact statements that they offered both more local fruits and more local vegetables in their school meals due to 10 Cents. Average responses about program impacts for 2018-19 are similar with those reported in 2017-18. The statement “I have identified new Michigan-grown fruit, vegetables, and legumes that are eaten by our student customers” received

slightly lower agreement (0.12) on average in 2018-19 than in 2017-18. Again in 2018-19, FSDs reported the lowest level of agreement with statements on “adding more legumes to our lunch menus” and “our students eating more legumes.” The agreement with “Our students are eating more legumes” changed the most from the previous year, increasing in average response from 0.33 in 2017-18 to 0.59 in 2018-19.

INFLUENCE OF 10 CENTS ON FARMS AND FOOD SUPPLIERS

In the May year-end survey, participating school food service directors (FSDs) were asked to provide open-ended feedback to the question “In what ways has the 10 Cents pilot influenced farms, distributors, processors or other food businesses or service providers to better meet your district’s food service needs?” Of the 56 FSDs who responded to this monthly survey, 44 wrote in responses to this question and 12 provided no response at all. Below are the majority of the responses, grouped by themes. One respondent indicated being unsure about the program’s influence on suppliers.

“We have had great difficulty getting local products after October each year since we are rural and remote.”

“Distributors are not readily accessible.”

“It was hard to serve fresh produce other than apples and radishes during the winter months.”

General feedback

“They know it’s helping our community at the same time and getting people excited about school lunches.”

“I think they have received an increase in business for sure.”

“We have more money to spend and can make the increased cost of purchasing locally.”

“[They] increased local sales.”

“...there is an increase in demand for local foods.”

“Purchasing power is enhanced with vendors.”

“[10 Cents] provided a network that makes it easier to purchase local.”

“We have more access through the connections with the 10 Cents pilot.”

“Local interest has increased as a result of receiving the grant.”

“We are using more products from Michigan.”

Challenges

“Adjusting how we can purchase from them has been a challenge, however we are committed to building the relationship to buy local.”

“We didn’t work on a personal level with any farmers.”

“It was hard to serve fresh produce other than apples and radishes during the winter months.”

Relationship development

“It has opened ideas in finding mutually beneficial partnerships that we can build on for the future.”

“They prepare for the business in the fall when schools are up and running and produce is plentiful.”

“We have built relationships with local farmers.”

“We have formed relationships with three local farms.”

“They are more willing to deliver and want to connect with the food service department.”

“We had a local farm approach us about providing local produce to our schools.”

“[We] introduced farmers to the program.”

“We have been approached by local farmers to offer their products.”

“[They are] more receptive to having the conversation with us.”

“It has helped us build relationships with local farmers, distributors, and the like.”

Communication

“They are helpful and willing to work with our schedule.”

“Keeping in touch with our farm suppliers is easy and efficient.”

“We are building closer relationships with local and setting up a process to get local into schools.”

"They are better with following up on requests when you tell them you have grant funds to spend."

"They communicate weekly and go out of their way to accommodate."

"They (food suppliers) have become more creative with their items and processing certain things to help the schools use them with less prep time needed. They have blended more greens too."

Product availability

"We are offered better variety every year. (This statement, or similar, was reported four times.)"

"Farms and distributors have been able to grow more stock to keep up with the rising demand. (This statement was reported three times.)"

"Letting the farmers know what we will be purchasing on a weekly basis allows them to make sure there is product for us to use."

"Some farmers have planted more of certain items that the schools in the area are requesting and have run out in previous school years."

"They make sure to have adequate amounts available for us to purchase."

"They have become more creative with their items and processing certain things to help the schools use them with less prep time needed. They have blended more greens too."

"They are trying to meet our quantity demand for a large district."

"[They have] more fresh produce available."

"Our local farmer partner now plans his crops and harvesting with us and our needs in mind."

"[We] did not run into a shortage of any kind."

Vendor-specific feedback

"Our local orchard is very interested in providing the apples that we need."

"[I was] happy that we were able to get Michigan produce from [Michigan] Farm to Freezer and set up delivery from them directly to our school."

"Our partnership with Cherry Capital [Foods] allowed us to secure a certain case [quantity] weekly of artisan lettuces."

"Cherry Capital Foods have been very good to work with."

"Cherry Capital [Foods] found a way to get me on their delivery route even though we are off the beaten path."

"We are now getting a weekly delivery from Cherry Capital [versus] a bi-weekly (delivery)."

"Cherry Capital [Foods] did not deliver to us until this pilot."



FEEDBACK FROM FOOD SUPPLIERS ABOUT 10 CENTS

The May year-end evaluation survey asked participating food service directors (FSDs) to “Share any feedback you have received from food producers/farmers/processors and distributors that you have worked with since starting the 10 Cents pilot.” Of the 56 FSDs who responded to this survey, 34 provided responses to this open-ended request.

Two statements related to challenges were reported:

“We have been able to purchase apples from a local farmer longer this season than previously [and] they liked that, but [they] had to cut us off so that they had something to sell in their farmers market.”

“They can’t deliver to us since we are too small.”

“Our farmer partner’s business is enhanced and more reliable and profitable with us as customers. Before this grant, he only sold to individual customers at his farm stand/store. Now [two school districts] are regular customers and his volume of sales has soared.”

Responses that more directly met the request are listed below here:

“Farms and distributors have told me how satisfied they are to see how much of their produce is going back into schools since starting the pilot. (This response was reported three times.)”

“[Food producers] are so happy and said this should have always been a thing. (Another similar response was also reported).”

“The local farmers that we have been working with are very pleased about the program and would like to see it continued. It has definitely made a positive impact on the students.”

“Our farmer partner’s business is enhanced and more reliable and profitable with us as customers. Before this grant, he only sold to individual customers at his farm stand/store. Now [two

school districts] are regular customers and his volume of sales has soared.”

“They are thrilled to see children consume healthy meals. Product from farms are allowing us to utilize fresh product in recipes and students and staff know the difference just by looking at the food selection.”

“Distributors and farmers always go out of their way to make sure we get what we want, and if they are out of something they inform us and try to substitute a similar product because they understand it could affect our menu for a day if we are shorted something. They are accommodating as well if you need things on different delivery dates for an event or a different summer site at the last minute.”

“The farmers like having a regular income during the school year.”

“Farmers are excited to provide us with fresh and local produce.”

“They are happy to hear that we utilize local products.”

“They are glad we are buying local to help support them.”

“[They are] mostly excited about it and preparing to get more involved.”

“We use a family farm, and this helps them with money during winter to get seed for spring.”

Some responses were more general in nature, and they are listed below here.

“...Community [members] and parents who are also farmers have expressed appreciation for the variety and quality of the food served this year.”

“They keep us in the loop and let us know “what’s fresh” pretty much every week.”

“[They are] helpful and knowledgeable about produce that is available.”

“[We] had a problem with delivery and worked out an alternative place to pick up fresh produce.”

“Happy to work with the local farmers.”

“Cherry Capital Foods have been a great to work with.”

FOOD SERVICE STAFF RESPONSES TO PURCHASING AND SERVING LOCAL FOODS THROUGH 10 CENTS

In the May year-end evaluation survey, school food service directors (FSDs) participating in 10 Cents were asked to “How has your staff responded to the purchase and service of local foods purchased through the 10 Cents pilot?” Of the 56 FSDs who responded to this monthly survey, 45 provided responses to this open-ended question.

Three FSDs indicated a positive response from staff, indicating that “they love it” and that staff are “excited.” Another three indicated that the program and/or the products sourced were well received by staff, and two FSDs noted a general “positive” response. One FSD indicated staff were “very pleased” they were “supporting local,” and another said, “they have been very willing to service the local foods (because of their) better taste.” Others reported that staff members like that the food service program sources local food (1), supports local growers (1), or both (1).

“Some like the fresh food, others do not like the extra prep.”

Some FSDs indicated a mixed reaction by food service staff members to the program.

“Most [staff members are] very happy, a few more [are] hesitant about the extra work.”

“Some...like the local, some see it as additional work.”

“Some like the fresh food, others do not like the extra prep.”

“(Staff) like it as long as the quality is good.”

Some other reports of school food service staff responses to the program were not as positive.

One FSD reported that staff “don’t like it. They don’t like that they have to do more prep work.” Another reported Michigan-grown foods purchased and served through the program “take more time for cleaning and prep work for serving,” and another said, “foods are more labor intensive and require more prep time.” One FSD reported

issues with getting weekly deliveries due to an increased minimum delivery requirement by a food distributor, and another complained of having to order two weeks in advance of deliveries due to a food distributor’s delivery routes. One FSD noted “we already were doing this pre-grant, [so it] hasn’t changed” for their staff members.

A number of FSDs indicated that staff responses to the program evolved over the course of the year.

“The work of washing lettuce overwhelmed them to begin with.”

“They were hesitant at first but are very excited about it now.”

“[They were] skeptical at first.”

“It took a while for them to understand that it was ok to purchase local even if the price was a little higher.”

“My staff has become so much more comfortable with working with the different items. Their concerns about extra prep time have decreased as they become more familiar with working those processes into their day. They are giving great feedback on what works well and how we can improve.”

Some FSDs indicated positive responses from students as well as from staff members.

“More teachers [are] eating lunch.”

“[Food service staff members] are buying more meals from the school, so we infer that they like the changes.”

“They are excited about the new offerings and seeing the students willing to try new items.”

“They take great pride in serving and preparing local foods. They frequently report positive feedback from the kids, report less waste, and refuse to order apples other than the ones grown here in town.”

“Our staff loves utilizing the fresh farm product. It is easy to prepare, and our students love it.”

The remaining descriptive reports about food service staff responses to the program are all positive.

"My staff just love seeing all of the colorful fresh fruits and vegetables we bring to our school. It really brightens up our bar!"

"They expect to see different local items in the walk-in and know to use them on salad bars in the very least. We like to try all sorts of things on our salad bar and test reactions of students to new items."

"It has provided more options when preparing meals, more ideas and delicious outcomes."

"Staff look forward to the local deliveries."

"Staff has been excited to learn how to prepare different fresh items."

"They were happy to know about the local produce and informed the students during meal service."

"They have enjoyed the variety."

"They are excited to make fresh recipes and put new ideas on the food line."

"Staff have shirts and are excited about the program."

"They love the fact that there is less waste and quality of produce improved."



ADDITIONAL FEEDBACK ABOUT PARTICIPATING IN 10 CENTS

The May year-end evaluation survey asked participating food service directors (FSDs) to "please describe any additional feedback about participating in the 10 Cents Pilot that you would like to share. Please include any ideas for program improvement, should the 10 Cents Pilot be continued or expanded." Of the 56 FSDs who responded to this survey, 36 provided feedback for this request. Feedback that included identifying information was removed to maintain anonymity.

Much of the general feedback received about the program was positive.

"Please keep it!"

"Yes, please continue the program."

"I think it's a wonderful program, and we are so fortunate to have this in our area!"

"Please continue and expand...it is a program that needs to be kept and offered to more districts."

"...we did a video on YouTube and on our school website and Facebook page because we have been so happy about it."

"We hope this program continues and we are able to participate in the coming years. This has been an amazing program for our district, for our students and staff. It would be nice to expand

our purchasing to more localized farms, but we're currently purchasing most product through Cherry Capital - they've been wonderful to work with. It's been difficult to make purchasing happen directly from farmers."

"This is an amazing program that I hope will continue to grow and become a constant for schools and farms/processors to use as a springboard for growing our local economies and showcasing the breadth of Michigan items that are available to our students and communities. This program has helped me to connect with our community members and show them what is possible with school lunch while educating the students and their families along the way."

"Having the 10 Cents project has allowed us some freedom in experimenting with what the students like. We are able to provide them fresh, local, quality product. The kids are quick to comment on how much they like the items."

Some FSDs provided feedback about the variety and quality of Michigan-grown products they were able to purchase and through the program.

"[We] appreciate the resources and money to be able to purchase local produce."

"Farm to table is a great way to introduce students to local, fresh produce."

"Having the 10 Cents project has allowed us some freedom in experimenting with what the students like. We are able to provide them fresh, local, quality product. The kids are quick to comment on how much they like the items."

"Students love fresh fruits and vegetables. Taste and quality are overwhelmingly better."

"We tried asparagus and although it went well at most schools, we did have some students using the asparagus as a weapon to slap each other with. Overall, it's been a joy to introduce and teach students about local produce."

"It was a great experience and opened my eyes to all the different fruits and vegetables grown here in Michigan."

"The 10 Cent pilot program has been very beneficial to our program. Without it, I do not see how we would be able to continue to purchase so many different fresh fruits and vegetables. Our students and teachers know the difference and love having the farm product available daily."

Other FSDs shared what they perceived as impacts of the program on students and/or farmers.

"Thank you for the opportunity to provide higher-priced locally grown items. Our students really enjoy them."

"Yes, the pilot should be continued to sustain and expand the growth that has occurred. Farmers will be more willing to participate when they see continued support of the program."

"I sincerely hope the program is continued as it is a win-win for growers and schools."

"I hope the program continues and definitely hope it expands! It's a great program benefiting our students and our local farmers. The legwork

isn't too much either if you're an organized, plan-ahead type of person!"

"The students liked to read about the farm that grew the food they were eating."

"I hope the program continues and definitely hope it expands! It's a great program benefiting our students and our local farmers. The legwork isn't too much either if you're an organized, plan-ahead type of person!"

Some FSDs commented on challenges with or suggested improvements to processes for monthly evaluation surveys, claims, or the electronic platform for submitting invoice details to track purchases.

"I find it hard to figure out how to allocate the 10 Cents when doing claims."

"I like to purchase and serve but the tracking is for the pilot program is time consuming."

"The monthly surveys are redundant. Can they be quarterly? In the winter month (there are) not [many] new items."

"Getting the documentation needed for the [claims process] and monthly surveys from the vendors took too long and we had to call them EVERY month to request the documentation."

"... I struggle to complete reporting on time...Our district loves bragging about our Farm to School program and our grants. I will say the [tracking platform] site is counterintuitive and still a bit hard to use, but it gets better every year. Please don't take away our funding!"

"It would be great if the reporting could be allowed for direct reporting from [Gordon Food Service] and Cherry Capital [Foods], and we could add local vendors."

"Get the reporting function in [the tracking platform] to work so that we can download our own reports and keep track of where we are so we can make adjustments as needed to fulfill the grant obligation and use up all of our money and then some to promote the need for expansion."

"Get [Gordon Food Service] and Cherry Capital [Foods] to report directly to [the tracking platform]."

"I feel that the program should be expanded to allow for additional Michigan processed foods. Also, the [tracking platform] program should be enhanced to better account for the distributors product offerings by identifying the product by item order number and manufacturer's identification number."

"The program needs to do a better job of helping us find sources for locally grown product during the winter months. Districts who have existing relationships should share their learnings with those new to the program."

Some provided feedback on more general program improvements and challenges.

"It would be nice if [food] deliveries could be made to more than one central location."

"[10 Cents] should be continued with more available vendors."

"It should be continued; more flexibility from farmers in the area would help..."

"The program needs to do a better job of helping us find sources for locally grown product during the winter months. Districts who have existing relationships should share their learnings with those new to the program."

"[I would like] to be able to know what items are available over a four-week span as we do menus. For example, June menus are completed mid-May."

"It should be expanded and being from a small district, we have to dip into general fund to help pay for the program. The district likes supporting local items as well, so I feel any money coming back in helps our program spend less of the general fund dollars and those dollars can be spent elsewhere."

"...There are just not enough products available to supplement the needs of our program."

"We have so appreciated the...program. It provides a motivation to change things for the better... My suggestion would be to streamline all 10 Cents activities under one person in each district..."



REFLECTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: SURVEY DESIGN AND DISSEMINATION

First, it must be acknowledged that the high response rate to these monthly evaluation surveys conducted by MSU Center for Regional Food Systems (CRFS) was only possible thanks to the diligent work of staff members at the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) who regularly reminded school food service directors (FSDs) to complete surveys with follow up emails. Given its role in administering 10 Cents, MDE was in the most effective position to take on the task of encouraging FSDs complete these required surveys. This level of support from MDE would also be required in future years to maintain such a high response rate, but that effort will be more time consuming if the program grows to include more schools/districts.

In reviewing survey responses received across all months of the survey, a number of the evaluation questions could be asked less frequently and still provide solid results but with less duplication. Survey design could be improved for a few sections in particular: school food budgets, promotional and educational activities, and Michigan fruits, vegetables, and legumes purchased and served for the first time.

Survey design could be improved for a few sections in particular: school food budgets, promotional and educational activities, and Michigan fruits, vegetables, and legumes purchased and served for the first time.

Food service budgets

As mentioned above, responses to the budget questions asked in the September baseline, the December mid-year, and the May year-end surveys were limited in some cases and unreliable in others, so we could not report them here. They were intended to set a baseline for grantees' school food budgets, including percentages of local food expenditures of their total food budgets, that would

allow us to gauge how much 10 Cents helped to increase spending on local foods including and beyond the grant and matching requirement. Participating FSDs indicated that these questions require significant information-gathering and time to complete, as the answers are not needed for other purposes. We recommend removing or simplifying these questions from future surveys given the undue reporting burden they impose on already busy FSDs.

Promotional and educational activities

We have tracked promotional and educational activities on a monthly basis, but we cannot know if there were duplicate responses of tasting activities among reports of both types of activities. In future years, we recommend revising the design and reducing the frequency of these questions about supporting activities to minimize the tendency for duplicate responses within a single month or over multiple months.

Given that cafeterias fall under the purview of FSDs, it is not surprising that they reported more nutrition education activities in cafeterias than in classrooms, which would likely require a partnership with teachers. As mentioned above, one additional limitation of the question about educational activities is that FSDs may have limited knowledge of these types of activities outside of the cafeteria that support 10 Cents. Therefore, summaries of survey results for questions related to educational activities describe those that FSDs were involved in and/or knew about and should not be considered exhaustive of what happened in the whole school environment.

Michigan-grown foods purchased and served for the first time

The new foods questions asked in each monthly survey pose challenges for long-term tracking. While the question can be reworded in an attempt to be clearer, some level of ambiguity is built into responses as FSDs may have differing degrees of understanding about Michigan agricultural product types versus varieties. Also, natural variation exists in Michigan-grown fruits, vegetables, and legumes available to FSDs based on their



geographical locations, the diversity and scope of agricultural production in their communities, and their current vendors and contract requirements.

The majority of participating FSDs reported that yes, funding through 10 Cents allowed them to try new products that they would not have otherwise tried. Of the 57 FSDs participating in the program, 56 responded to the May survey and 51 responded affirmatively to this question. Only five FSDs responded “No” to this question. As some pointed out in open-ended feedback, some FSDs have more mature farm to school programs, in which they are already purchasing and serving a wide-variety of Michigan-grown fruits, vegetables, and dry beans as they are available to them, when they enter the pilot program. As a result, they did not have many new foods to report throughout the school year. Therefore, it is possible that FSDs experienced in farm to school may have accounted for some of the “No” responses, but we did not look across responses at those patterns.

The number of foods FSDs purchased and served for the first time cannot necessarily be viewed as marker of the pilot’s success, since many FSDs come into 10 Cents with farm to school experience. As the 10 Cents program continues, and if it expands geographically and in the number of grantees over time, the number of new foods could actually go down instead of up as more FSDs gain more experience purchasing and serving local foods. So, these questions have limited applicability to gauging progress. They would be more useful if evaluated alongside an FSD’s years of experience in farm to school prior to joining the program. As mentioned earlier in this report, data about new foods could be more accurately gathered through comparison of responses to one simpler question, either in the application or in the September baseline survey, about local foods used in previous years with purchasing data input separately from invoice information for that specific year of the program. Although time consuming, this analysis would supply more accurate information for this set of questions. On the other hand, since the value of this question would decline over time, the effort involved in this analysis may not be justified.

REFLECTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: PROGRAM DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION

Promotional and educational activities

If the legislature continues to have interest in promotional and educational activities supporting Michigan foods purchased and served through 10 Cents, we recommend additional funding be provided to grantees to conduct some of these activities. Tasting activities could be recommended to FSDs participating in the program in future years as an ideal promotional activity to conduct, given limited funds and resources as well as the prevalence of these activities per survey results.

Tracking local food purchases

The Michigan Department of Education worked with FarmLogix, a Chicago-based firm that supplies technology solutions, to support an electronic platform for FSDs to track their purchases of Michigan-grown foods used for the program. Based on feedback from FSDs, FarmLogix's platform, while improving, is still challenging to use. It would be beneficial to FSDs, in terms of saving time and maintaining the integrity of purchasing data for program evaluation, to work toward having local food vendors, especially the largest and/or most frequently used by FSDs, supply purchasing data for participating districts directly to FarmLogix.

Connecting to local food suppliers

Some FSDs seek additional information to connect with farmers and food vendors who supply local foods. This type of technical assistance will be required for grantees in future years who may have less experience with local food purchasing prior to participating in the program, but additional administrative or in-kind funding would be needed to support the staff capacity to effectively offer it. In the meantime, we recommend space be made within future program years for more experienced FSDs to share their farmer and vendor partners, tips, and even recipes with grantees newer to purchasing and serving local foods.

Equity

Staff members at the National Farm to School Network have suggested that 10 Cents and similar incentive programs could be implemented with a preference for sourcing food from farms and businesses that are owned by women or people of color as one way to further social equity on the food supply side of these programs.³ Health equity, according to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation website, “means that everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible. This requires removing obstacles to health such as poverty, discrimination, and their consequences, including powerlessness and lack of access to good jobs with fair pay, quality education and housing, safe environments, and health care.” In order for 10 Cents to promote racial and health equity with intention, grant applications should be reviewed with sharper focus on student population data, including race/ethnicity data combined with free and reduced rates, and the program should be available first in communities where it can have the greatest opportunity to improve school meal quality, increase students' access to good food, and contribute to health equity.



³ Dombalis, H. (February 2019). NFSN Resource Roundup Webinar. National Farm to School Network. Available at <http://www.farmtoschool.org/resources-main/webinar-series-resource-roundup?A=SearchResult&SearchID=10817209&ObjectID=17244269&ObjectType=35>.

MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

Center for Regional Food Systems

The Michigan State University Center for Regional Food Systems advances regionally-rooted food systems through applied research, education, and outreach by uniting the knowledge and experience of diverse stakeholders with that of MSU faculty and staff. Our work fosters a thriving economy, equity, and sustainability for Michigan, the nation, and the planet by advancing systems that produce food that is healthy, green, fair, and affordable. Learn more at foodsystems.msu.edu.

**Center for Regional Food Systems
Michigan State University**

480 Wilson Road
Natural Resources Building
East Lansing, MI, 48824

For general inquiries:

EXPLORE: foodsystems.msu.edu

EMAIL: CRFS@msu.edu

CALL: 517-353-3535

FOLLOW: @MSUCRFS

Email addresses and phone numbers for individual staff members can be found on the [people page](#) of our website.

