



Executive Summary

of 10 Cents a Meal 2021-2022 Evaluation Results

10 Cents a Meal for Michigan's Kids and Farms, administered by the Michigan Department of Education, matches what participating schools and other non-school sponsors spend on Michigan-grown fruits, vegetables, and dry beans with grants of up to 10 cents per meal. This brief is part of the *10 Cents a Meal 2021-2022 evaluation results: Amplifying Impact with More Michigan Farms and Foods*.

The 2021-2022 school year had the largest number of participating grantees yet for the 10 Cents a Meal for Michigan's Kids and Farms (10 Cents) program. This was the second year that schools and other non-school sponsors participating in United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Child Nutrition Programs across the state were eligible to participate.



The Michigan Department of Education (MDE), which administers the program, awarded over \$2 million in grant funds to 257 grantees in 57 Michigan counties.

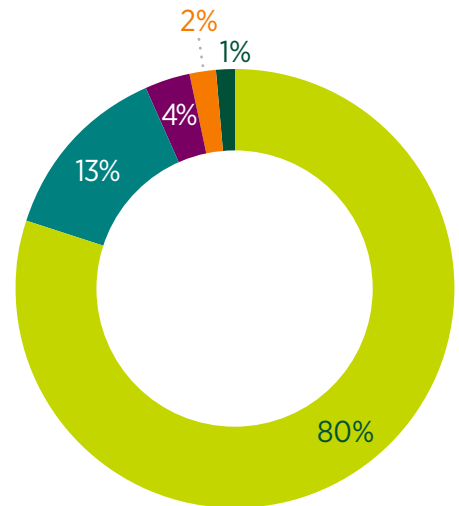
To follow the impact of the 10 Cents program, evaluators conducted three evaluation surveys with participating food program managers (FPMs) throughout the year (October, January, and August). Additionally, purchasing information reported by grantees to MDE was analyzed to learn more about the Michigan-grown fruits, vegetables, and dry beans purchased and served through the program.

Key Findings and Highlights

Key findings and highlights are outlined below, grouped by summaries of results that follow.

10 Cents Grant Distribution

- In 2021-2022, 257 school districts and other non-school sponsors were awarded over \$2 million in grants.
- Grantees across the state were comprised of:
 - 206 public school districts
 - 34 early care and education sites (ECEs)
 - 9 non-public schools
 - 5 residential child care institutions (RCCIs)
 - 3 other non-school recipients (ONSR)



Children Reached Through 10 Cents

- Collectively, an estimated 570,504 K-12 schoolchildren could have been reached by and benefited from the program, about 40% of all K-12 schoolchildren in Michigan the same year (1,443,456 total).
- An estimated 15,696 children are likely to have benefited by the program through grants to ECEs.
- The percentage of schoolchildren eligible for free and reduced-price meals in 10 Cents schools and school districts was two percentage points higher than that of all Michigan schoolchildren overall (51.5% compared to 49.3%).
- Regarding the diversity of schoolchildren reached through the program, 10 Cents school grantees had a higher percentage of African American (19.9%) schoolchildren than the total percentage of the statewide population (17.1%) and just a slightly higher percentage of Asian American (3.9%), and Hispanic/Latinx schoolchildren (8.6%) than the total percentages of the statewide population (3.4%, and 8.3%, respectively).¹

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¹ Demographic terminology and data provided by the state of Michigan's official public portal for education data, [MI School Data](#).

Food Program Managers and Staff Participating in 10 Cents

- **More than half (58%) of all grantees were new to the program** in 2021-2022. Additionally, this was only the second year of participation for a quarter (24%) of grantees.
- **Nearly half (49%) of all responding FPMs had opposite levels of experience:** nearly a quarter (23%) indicated that they had 10 years or more of experience purchasing local foods while another quarter (26%) indicated that they were new to this practice.
- **The majority of responding FPMs (89%) reported a positive staff response** to local foods purchased and served through 10 Cents.

89%

of FPMs reported a positive staff response to local foods purchased and served through 10 Cents

Top Motivators

The top motivators of FPMs for purchasing and serving local foods included:

- **benefits to children** (27% of reported motivators), included increasing their consumption of healthy and nutritious foods as well as providing educational opportunities;
- **product attributes of Michigan-grown foods** (24%), such as freshness, increased quality, better taste, and increase in variety;
- **supporting the community** (22%); and
- **helping Michigan farms and food businesses** (20%).

Top Barriers

The top barriers and logistical challenges FPMs reported for purchasing and serving local foods included:

- **lack of availability** of local foods (38% of reported barriers, 25% of reported logistical challenges);
- **issues related to food service operations** such as lack of available labor, equipment or storage (23%, 32%); and
- **supply chain issues** (18%, 32%).

Michigan Farmers and Vendors Participating in the 10 Cents Supply Chain

- **Of the grantees who reported purchases (56%, 145), there were 222 unique vendors reported**, of which 174 were farms that supplied Michigan-grown foods through the 10 Cents food supply chain.
- **Nearly half (48%) of all 10 Cents purchases (in dollars) were from broadline (full-service) distributors** and 39% were from food hubs.
- **Grantees purchased over \$170,000 of Michigan-grown products** directly from 105 individual farms (6% of total reported purchases).
- **Grantees indicated an average of six farms of origin (5.7)** for their local food purchases.
- **Over half of responding grantees reported that participating in 10 Cents allowed them to make connections with new farmers or suppliers**, and that participation improved their existing relationships with farmers or local food suppliers (52%, 111, and 54%, 114, respectively).

Purchase and Use of Michigan-Grown Fruits, Vegetables, and Dry Beans

Throughout the year, grantees' purchases (in dollars) were for:

- Fruits (16 different types) | over 81%
- Vegetables (33 different types) | 18%
- Dry beans and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) boxes | less than 1%



- A majority (66%, 141 of 215) of grantees reported that 10 Cents grants allowed them to try new products in their food program that they would not have otherwise tried. This is a slightly lower percentage than the previous year, which could be due in part to the increase in the number of new grantees (58% of grantees, as noted above).
- As a group, grantees reported trying for the first time 35 types of vegetables and 15 types of fruits. On average, FPMs reported serving three new Michigan-grown foods during the year.
- The top five Michigan-grown foods that FPMs reported trying for the first time (in rank order) were apples, blueberries, cherries, carrots, and asparagus.
- Over one-third of grantees (91 grantees of 241 responding) reported at least once that there were Michigan-grown fruits, vegetables, or dry beans they wanted to use but have not been able to find or buy.

The most common products grantees purchased (by number of grantees purchasing) included:

1. Apples (133 grantees)
2. Blueberries (76 grantees)
3. Peaches (65 grantees)
4. Cucumbers (62 grantees)
5. Carrots (61 grantees)



Top five Michigan-grown foods that FPMs reported trying for the first time (in rank order) were:

1. Apples
2. Blueberries
3. Cherries
4. Carrots
5. Asparagus

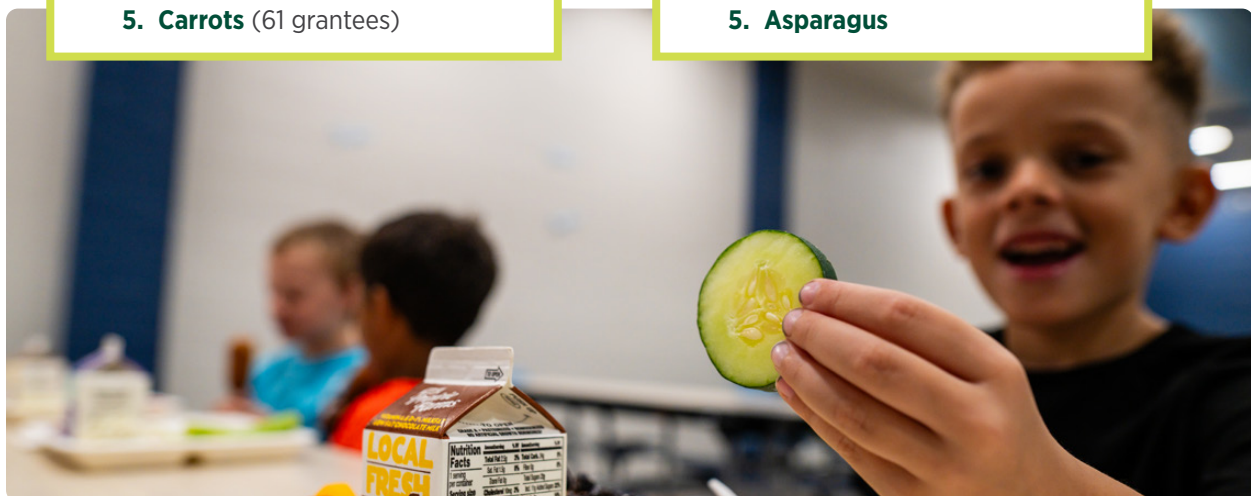


Photo Credit: Sarah Rypma

A Closer Look at the Program

- **A majority of grantees agreed that their food program was positively impacted** through participating in 10 Cents, including that they:
 - **offered more local fruits** (78% of grantees)
 - **offered more local vegetables** (75%), and
 - **increased fruit consumption** among children (69%).

- **The most commonly reported needs** reported by FPMs to support their efforts to purchase and serve Michigan foods included:
 - **programmatic support for 10 Cents participation** (45% of responses for both current and future needs),
 - **support related to the food supply chain** (22% of responses for current needs, 13% of responses for future needs), and
 - **support with food service operations** (8% of responses for current needs, 10% of responses for future needs).

- **Over half (63%, 98 grantees) of all FPMs who shared program feedback responded positively** about participating in the 10 Cents program (39% of all responses).
 - **Most positive feedback was about general support and positive reception** towards the program, including a positive impact on food service staff, teachers, and students.
 - **Other positive responses** shared about the benefit of 10 Cents grants
 - to help them **afford more local foods**, and
 - the **positive influence of the program on new and existing relationships** with farmers and local food suppliers.

Over

75%

of grantees were able to offer more local fruits and vegetables because of 10 Cents

63%

of all FPMs who shared program feedback responded positively about participating in the 10 Cents program

2x

Public school grantees with 5 years or more of experience participating in 10 Cents reported:

- **nearly twice as many different farms of origin** (9.3) and
- **more than twice as many Michigan grown products** (17.0) as grantees with 2 years or less of experience (4.7 and 7.9, respectively).

Recommendations for Evaluation Purposes and Program Practices

- 1 **Continue providing targeted technical assistance** to individual grantees over the program year.
- 2 **Continue advocating for farm of origin information** for Michigan-grown foods from food suppliers.
- 3 **Collect data and track participation** of Early Care and Education (ECE) grantees.
- 4 **Help inform grantees about additional funding opportunities** to better leverage 10 Cents funds.

Evaluation shows that as the program continues to grow it is making significant progress towards its two main goals to:

- improve daily nutrition and eating habits for children through the school and childcare setting, and
- invest in Michigan agriculture and the related food business economy.²

Survey responses reveal that grantees continue to purchase and serve a diverse range of Michigan-grown foods to children across the state, despite reported barriers to purchasing local foods such as limited staff capacity and ongoing supply chain issues. As we look to the future of the program, evaluation can continue to help us identify and explore what parts of the program do and do not work well, suggest program improvements, and gain insight into the impact that 10 Cents can have on Michigan's children, agriculture, and local economy.

2 Goals are set by the Michigan Legislature. [Michigan Public Act 144 of 2022](#).

Evaluation of 10 Cents is led by the Michigan State University Center for Regional Food Systems (CRFS). The work presented here is part of the *10 Cents a Meal 2021-2022 evaluation results: Amplifying Impact with More Michigan Farms and Foods* by Megan McManus and Colleen Matts, CRFS, and with support from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and 10 Cents administrative funds for partner organizations.

To learn more, visit tencentsmichigan.org, foodsystems.msu.edu/10-cents-a-meal, and mifarmtoschool.msu.edu.

