

# 10 CENTS A MEAL PILOT: 2018–2019 EVALUATION RESULTS



## 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.”*

### 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.

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*"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."*

## 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.

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*"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."*

## Some provided feedback on more general program improvements and challenges.

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*"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..."*