



## SECTION 1

# Evaluation Activities

10 Cents a Meal for Michigan’s Kids and Farms (10 Cents), administered by the Michigan Department of Education, matches what participating schools, districts, and early care and education centers spend on Michigan-grown fruits, vegetables, and dry beans with grants of up to 10 cents per meal.

This brief is part of *10 Cents a Meal 2020–2021 Evaluation Results: Expanded Eligibility Increased Impacts*.

**In the 2020–2021 year, the Michigan Legislature sought similar reporting for the 10 Cents a Meal for Michigan’s Kids and Farms (10 Cents) as previous pilot years.**

**This reporting included “increase in market opportunities and income generation” for farmers and related businesses and the ability for children to “access a variety of healthy Michigan-grown foods through schools and child care centers and increase their consumption of those foods.”<sup>1</sup>**

This evaluation provides a glimpse into the program’s impact on these legislative reporting goals, including the market opportunity through 10 Cents. However, given the limitations of staff capacity and data this program collects—evaluation surveys and purchasing information from food program managers (FPMs) only—there is still much to learn about 10 Cents’ full impact, such as the income generation for farmers and related businesses.

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## Evaluation Surveys

**The Michigan State University Center for Regional Food Systems (CRFS) leads evaluation of 10 Cents. CRFS staff gathered feedback from participating FPMs on schoolchildren’s access to healthy Michigan-grown foods through the program.**

Similar to previous years, CRFS staff developed and administered a series of electronic evaluation surveys through Qualtrics that were distributed to all participating FPMs via email by the Michigan Department of Education (MDE). Due to delays in state funding for 10 Cents, no surveys were administered in the fall of 2020, and all four surveys were conducted in 2021 (February, April, June, August).

<sup>1</sup> State of Michigan [Public Act 165 of 2020](#).

**Survey questions were similar to those asked in previous years to maintain consistency in evaluation, but some adjustments were made due to the statewide expansion of the program, the pandemic, and reviews of how FPMs responded to the way some questions were worded.** Some changes included the adjustment from a multiple-choice response format to written, open responses (for questions about motivations, barriers, and challenges to purchasing and serving local foods), and combining questions about educational and promotional activities that support local foods served through 10 Cents into a single question.

**Some survey questions were designed to capture specific information between survey periods.** For instance, the February survey included some questions that covered grant activities related to 10 Cents during the school year until January.

### Each survey asked participating FPMs to report on the following for their 10 Cents activities:

- **Michigan-grown foods served in the food program for the first time;**
- **Michigan-grown foods that grantees wanted to use but could not find and buy,** promotional and educational activities implemented in the school or childcare setting to support Michigan-grown foods;
- **open responses for needs and feedback** (positive and negative) of participating in the program.

The image displays three sequential screenshots of the '10 Cents a Meal Evaluation Survey August 2022' form. The first screenshot shows a dropdown menu for selecting a county, with options including Alger, Allegan, Alpena, Antrim, Barry, Bay, Benzie, Berrien, Branch, Calhoun, Cass, Charlevoix, Cheboygan, Chippewas, Clare, Delta, Eaton, and Emmet. The second screenshot shows a question: 'Did you serve any new Michigan-grown fruits, vegetables, or legumes for the first time in your program since the last survey?' with radio buttons for 'Yes' and 'No'. The third screenshot shows a list of 12 product categories for reporting: Product 1: Apples, Product 2: Asparagus, Product 3: Blueberries, Product 4: Butternut squash, Product 5: Cucumber, Product 6: (blank), Product 7: (blank), Product 8: (blank), Product 9: (blank), Product 10: (blank), Product 11: (blank), and Product 12: (blank).

**Some surveys included additional, unique questions to collect specific feedback.** The February survey included preliminary or baseline questions to gather data that could be used to make comparisons at the end of the program. These questions included FPMs' experiences with purchasing local foods and the motivators, barriers, and logistical challenges for purchasing and serving fresh or minimally processed Michigan-grown vegetables, fruits, and dry beans. The February survey also included new questions about local food purchasing during the pandemic. Because the June survey was administered toward the end of the program year, the survey asked grantees questions about new and existing relationships with farmers or local food vendors/suppliers and partnerships with other schools, districts, centers, institutions, or organizations to support local food purchasing efforts as a result of participating in 10 Cents. Impacts and outcomes of participating in 10 Cents were also addressed in this June survey.

Thanks to follow up from MDE staff, only a small number of surveys were not returned throughout the year. However, surveys were not always fully completed by each grantee, so response rates (February, 83%; April, 91%; June, 89%; and August, 67%) varied by question and for each survey during the program year.

## Demographic and Purchasing Data

MDE supplied schoolchildren population data for participating 10 Cents schools, districts, and centers to help us understand children potentially reached by the program.

This included:

- meal counts
- K-12 enrollment
- license capacities for Residential Child Care Institutions and early care and education (ECE) centers

The license capacity estimates an ECE site's maximum number of children served, and it includes all possible sites under each grantee. K-12 schoolchildren demographic data and terminology, such as race and ethnicity, were sourced from the [MI School Data](#) website, the state of Michigan's official education data source.

### Grantees self-reported invoice information:

- Product and cost
- Quantity
- Farm and county of origin
- Additional vendors and suppliers needed to get the product from the farm to the grantee

To provide insight into the 10 Cents' impact on grantee spending, MDE also supplied purchasing data as submitted by grantees through an online reporting system managed by an independent firm MDE hired. Grantees self-reported the following invoice information for their purchases of Michigan-grown fruits, vegetables, and dry beans for 10 Cents: the product, cost, and quantity; its farm and county of origin; and the additional vendors and suppliers needed to get the product from the farm to the grantee. With these purchasing data from all reporting grantees, we can assess the number of different types of Michigan-grown foods purchased for the program; the types of vendors, food suppliers (including farms), and market channels used; and the patterns and opportunities related to grantees' food purchasing.

**However, there are some limitations with these purchasing data. First, only 100 of the 143 grantees provided information about their food purchases.** The dataset of reported purchases used for this report was provided by MDE in September 2021 and contains information reported by grantees from September 2020–August 2021. However, additional grantees submitted purchasing information at a later date, and some grantees submitted additional purchases beyond this date. Therefore, the findings outlined in these summaries are limited to the original information that we obtained and do not capture the full scope of spending during the program year, which includes more grantees and more spending.

100

OUT OF 143 GRANTEEES  
PROVIDED INFORMATION  
ABOUT THEIR FOOD  
PURCHASES



This report contains information reported by grantees from September 2020–August 2021

Next, it should be noted that characteristics of ECE grantees as a group were examined, but due to the limited number of grantees that shared purchasing data, there was not enough information to write an ECE-specific summary. Another limitation was that FPMs may have had limited capacity to report every transaction or may have received incomplete product and sourcing information from some suppliers, particularly more traditional school food vendors. Because of this limitation, **these data may underrepresent the actual number of transactions, dollars spent, and products purchased for the program this year.**

Finally, purchasing information is required for products sought to be counted toward 10 Cents, but FPMs may purchase more Michigan-grown products than their grant award plus match amount. They may even purchase Michigan-grown or raised products that are not eligible for 10 Cents, such as ground beef or grains.

In the future, we hope to expand evaluation efforts among grantees as more continue to participate over time. Partners like MDE could also use geographic mapping to better visualize and understand the impact of 10 Cents on children served and the local foodshed throughout the state. These efforts could help the 10 Cents team, grantees, and stakeholders better understand the program in action and identify how the program could be improved for the future.<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> See [Recommendations for Future Years of 10 Cents](#) for more information.

Evaluation of 10 Cents is led by the Michigan State University Center for Regional Food Systems (CRFS). The work presented here is part of *10 Cents a Meal 2020–2021 Evaluation Results: Expanded Eligibility Increased Impacts* by Colleen Matts and Megan McManus of CRFS and was generously funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and 10 Cents administrative funds for partner organizations.

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