



# Overview

## of 10 Cents a Meal Evaluation for 2021-2022

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*.

**10 Cents a Meal for Michigan's Kids and Farms (10 Cents) is a state-funded program that matches what participating schools and other non-school sponsors spend on fresh or minimally processed<sup>3</sup> Michigan-grown fruits, vegetables, and dry beans with grants of up to 10 cents per meal.**

Grant amounts are determined by multiplying the previous year's worth of meals by 10 cents. The goals of the program are to improve daily nutrition and eating habits for Michigan children and invest in Michigan's agriculture and local food business economy. Since the pilot program first began in 2016-2017, the total number of participating grantees, the number of children they reach, and the total dollar value of grants awarded have all grown over time, as seen in the table below.<sup>4</sup>



Photo Credit: Sarah Rypma

3 The [USDA Geographic Preference](#) definition of minimally processed includes products that have not been cooked, heated, canned, or contains any additives or fillers.  
4 For a full list of participating grantees over time, see [10 Cents a Meal Grantees Across All Years](#).

**Table 1: 10 Cents Grant Distribution, 2016-2022**

Year	Total grants awarded	Eligible regions*	Counties	Grantee Type			Estimated students enrolled**	Estimated ECE children served***
				Schools/districts	RCCI	ECE/ONSR		
2021-2022	\$2,027,100	Statewide	57	215	5	37	570,504	15,696
2020-2021	\$1,410,700	Statewide	48	129	5	14	423,879	11,683
2018-2019	\$493,500	Prosperity Regions 2, 4, 6, 8, 9	27	57	—	—	134,000	—
2017-2018	\$315,000	Prosperity Regions 2, 4, 9	18	32	—	—	95,000	—
2016-2017	\$210,000	Prosperity Regions 2, 4	8	16	—	—	48,000	—

Note. While the 10 Cents program did proceed in 2019-2020, this year is not included in the chart above because it was operated very differently due to legislative and pandemic-related delays, including to state funding. 10 Cents grants were not made available until August when the traditional school year was already complete, and only previous grantees were invited to participate in this unique year.

\* In prior years, the 10 Cents pilot program referenced Prosperity Regions as used by Governor Rick Snyder’s administration.

\*\* Data were supplied by Michigan Department of Education. Most student data for non-public schools and residential child care institutions (RCCIs) are not publicly available, so they are not included in this chart. For some non-public schools, average monthly enrollment from 2022 lunch claims were used in lieu of Center for Educational Performance and Information’s (CEPI) enrollment counts.

\*\*\* Data were supplied by Michigan Department of Education. License capacity estimates an early care and education site (ECE)’s or other non-school recipients (ONSR)’s maximum number of children served, and it includes capacity for all possible sites under each grantee.



Photo Credit: Sarah Rypma

## How 10 Cents Granting Works

Similar to previous years, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) administered the program with additional 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).

MDE staff selected eligible applicants to receive 10 Cents grants through a competitive application process.<sup>5</sup> Applications were evaluated on the applicant’s capacity to purchase, serve, and market Michigan-grown fruits, vegetables, and dry beans in their food programs. A variety of other characteristics were also considered in the application review and selection process, such as the ability to provide related educational and promotional activities, free and reduced-price meal rates for school applicants (when applicable), food service program type (self-operating or contracted food service operations), and urban and rural settings. For the 2021-2022 year, all applicants who applied to the program were awarded.

10 Cents a Meal reimbursed grantees for 50% of the cost of eligible Michigan grown fruits, vegetables, and dry beans up to their maximum grant. For example, if a grantee was awarded a \$5,000 grant, they were expected to submit \$10,000 worth of purchasing information for Michigan-grown fruits, vegetables, and dry beans to receive the full \$5,000 grant. Reimbursements were issued after participating FPMs responded to surveys and submitted invoices, which were reviewed and validated by MDE staff. Legislation for 10 Cents required grantees to report the name and Michigan location of the farm that grew the food product that is being reported for reimbursement, so all purchases reported by grantees had to list the farm of origin.<sup>6</sup> Eligible Michigan-grown produce could have been purchased from any farm and food supplier, including federally funded programs such as the Department of Defense Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (DoD Fresh). This could have helped to drive demand — and potentially availability over the long-term — for local foods across all market channels, including through customary food suppliers and government-funded food programs for grantees who are schools and other non-school sponsors, because grantees are asking for local foods through these channels. Grantees were required to complete evaluation surveys and submit purchasing information for local foods purchased and served in the program. Results and analyses from these data sources are shared in the report that follows.

**10 Cents a Meal reimbursed grantees for 50% of the cost of eligible Michigan grown fruits, vegetables, and dry beans up to their maximum grant.**

<sup>5</sup> Eligible applicants of 10 Cents include all sponsors of a federal child nutrition program in Michigan.

<sup>6</sup> [State of Michigan Public Act 144 of 2022](#).

## Evaluation Activities

For the 2021-2022 year, the Michigan Legislature sought reporting for 10 Cents similar to previous years.

Legislative goals that stemmed from the two primary goals mentioned above 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>7</sup>

Evaluation can help us learn more about the program’s progress toward these goals and its impact, but the program data — responses to evaluation surveys and purchasing information provided by food program managers (FPMs) — are still limited, primarily due to the 10 Cents team’s staff time and capacity. Beyond the findings described in this report, there is still much to learn about the full scope of the impact of 10 Cents on Michigan farms and related businesses as well as the children reached through it.

### Evaluation Surveys

The Michigan State University CRFS leads evaluation of 10 Cents. As in 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 MDE staff.



**This year’s evaluation plan was developed with the consideration of two separate application cycles in the program to maximize grant awards.**

- 1 The first application cycle in September 2021 resulted in 228 grantees.**  
First round grantees completed surveys in October, January, and August.
- 2 The second cycle in March 2022 resulted in an additional 29 grantees.**  
Second round grantees completed surveys in April and August.

For the purposes of evaluation and readability of the report, responses from the April survey were aggregated and analyzed with the previous surveys (October and January). The April survey had all the same questions from the October survey so the total number of responses for the October survey also includes responses from April. Additionally, there was one question from the January survey about food preparation methods that was also in the April survey, so the total responses for this question include both January and April responses. The last survey in August was the only survey that all grantees took in the same time period. For more information, refer to the [Technical Notes](#) summary.

<sup>7</sup> [State of Michigan Public Act 144 of 2022.](#)

**Survey questions were similar to those asked in the previous year to maintain consistency in evaluation, and to allow for more rigorous analyses of responses across years in the future.** Question types ranged from multiple choice to written, open responses. Only one new question was added this year to ask grantees about the food preparation methods used in their food programs. For this program year, we share the results of this question as they relate to how participating FPMs and staff prepared their meals later in this report. We hope to conduct more in-depth analyses in the future as food preparation methods may have implications for the Michigan-grown foods purchased and served through 10 Cents.

**Like previous years, some questions were asked of FPMs in every survey, including the following related to their 10 Cents activities:**

- **Michigan-grown foods served** in the food program for the first time,
- **Michigan-grown foods they wanted to use** but could not find and buy,
- **promotional and educational activities implemented** in the school or child care setting to support Michigan-grown foods (to the best of their knowledge), and
- **open responses for needs and feedback** (positive and negative) related to participating in the program.

Some other questions were designed to capture specific information during the program year. For instance, the October survey included some baseline questions to gauge FPMs' experience with purchasing and serving local foods.

Again this year, MDE staff sent follow up emails to grantees who initially did not respond to surveys, which was especially helpful for the last survey in August when school and district grantees, especially FPMs, may be unavailable. The response rate for this year's August survey was 85%, a significant increase from 67% during the previous year (2020-2021). Each survey's response rates can be seen in the table below. For more information about the survey questions and their respective response rates, please visit the [Technical Notes](#) summary.

**Table 2: Evaluation Survey Response Rates for 2021-2022**

	SURVEY MONTH		
	October	January	August
<b>Total grantees who received the survey</b>	257	228	257
<b>Number of responses</b>	224	178	217
<b>Response rate</b>	87%	78%	85%

*Note.* Second round grantees completed a survey in April and their responses were aggregated into the October survey because they were the same questions. There was one additional question in the April survey that was also in the January survey. The last survey in August was the only survey that all grantees took in the same time period. See [Technical Notes](#) for more information.

## Demographic and Purchasing Data

MDE supplied data, when available, for schools and other non-school sponsors participating in 10 Cents to help us understand children potentially reached and served by the program. This included K-12 enrollment and meal counts, and license capacities for child care centers (ECEs and other sponsors).

The license capacity is an ECE site's maximum number of children served, and it includes all possible sites or locations under the management of each grantee. Demographics for K-12 schoolchildren, including race and ethnicity, were sourced from the [MI School Data's website](#), the State of Michigan's official education data source.

**MDE also supplied purchasing data reported by grantees through an online reporting system. Grantees self-reported their purchases of Michigan-grown fruits, vegetables, and dry beans for 10 Cents reimbursement, including the product, cost, its farm and county of origin, and additional vendors and suppliers to get the product from the farm to the grantee.** With these purchasing data (from those grantees who reported it), we assessed the number of different types of Michigan-grown foods purchased for the program, the number of different types of vendors and food suppliers (including farms) and market channels used, and patterns and opportunities related to grantees' food purchasing overall. This information can be found in the [What Foods Are Served Through 10 Cents](#) and [Michigan Farmers and Vendors Participating in the 10 Cents Supply Chain](#).

There are some limitations with these purchasing data. First, only 145 of the 257 awarded grantees provided information about their food purchases, so the findings shared in this report are representative of only these 145 grantees, and not of all grantees participating in the program in 2021-2022. Next, there were confirmed instances in which errors in invoice submissions by some grantees, as determined by MDE staff review, resulted in overall underreporting of the total dollars spent on foods purchased for the program. Additionally, FPMs may have had limited capacity to report every transaction, and they also may have also received incomplete product and sourcing information from some suppliers, particularly more traditional school food suppliers, so these **data may underrepresent the actual number of transactions, dollars spent, total farms participating in the 10 Cents supply chain, and the total Michigan-grown foods purchased this year.** Finally, purchasing information was required for products to be counted toward 10 Cents, but FPMs may purchase more Michigan-grown products than their grant award plus match dollar amount. They may even purchase Michigan-grown or raised products that are not eligible for 10 Cents, such as ground beef, honey, or grains, so the potential impact that 10 Cents can have on local food purchasing may extend beyond what we can currently see through data collected in our evaluation.



145

out of 257 awarded grantees provided information about their food purchases

## Structure of the Evaluation Report

This summary began with a brief overview of the 10 Cents program, how it works, and evaluation activities. In the following three summaries, we share evaluation findings starting with who was involved program:

- 1 Children reached through the program** and served Michigan-grown foods.
- 2 10 Cents grantees** and their respective food program managers (FPMs).
- 3 Michigan farmers and food business operators** who supply Michigan-grown foods to 10 Cents grantees and their food programs serving children.

These are followed by a summary about the Michigan-grown foods purchased and served through 10 Cents and a summary that reflects on how the program worked to reach its goals. Additionally, we share a summary that examines public school grantees and their use of the program, as the largest type of grantee participating in the program. The report concludes with a summary of recommendations, technical notes on evaluation, and appendices. Throughout the report, the voices of participating food program managers, suppliers, and community members are represented, through feedback from evaluation surveys and interviews that were conducted by partners from Groundwork Center for Resilient Communities.

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](https://tencentsmichigan.org), [foodsystems.msu.edu/10-cents-a-meal](https://foodsystems.msu.edu/10-cents-a-meal), and [mifarmtoschool.msu.edu](https://mifarmtoschool.msu.edu).

