

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



## 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 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.**

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*"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."*