

# Expanded Eligibility, Increased Impacts

## 10 CENTS A MEAL 2020-2021 EVALUATION RESULTS



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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*.

### The 2020–2021 year for 10 Cents a Meal for Michigan's Kids and Farms (10 Cents) was notable in a few ways.

1

It was the program's first full school year since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020.

2

Early care and education (ECE) sites were eligible to participate for the first time.

3

2020–2021 marked the first year that schools and centers across the state participating in United States Department of Agriculture Child Nutrition Programs were eligible to apply and participate.

This allowed the program to reach nearly 450,000 Michigan children, more than ever before. Nearly \$1.4 million in grants were awarded to 143 grantees located in more than half (48) of Michigan's 83 counties.

**450,000**

**MICHIGAN  
CHILDREN**

**\$1.4**

**MILLION  
IN GRANTS**

**143**

**GRANTEES**

**48**

**COUNTIES  
ACROSS  
MICHIGAN**

To better understand the impact of the 10 Cents program, evaluators conducted **four evaluation surveys with grantees in 2021** (in February, April, June, and August) and analyzed information reported by grantees about their purchases of Michigan-grown fruits, vegetables, and dry beans.

## Key Findings and Highlights

### GRANT DISTRIBUTION AND CHILDREN SERVED

143

The statewide expansion of 10 Cents between 2020 and 2021 resulted in **the highest number of participating grantees to date** (143) with a diverse range of school, school district, and childcare center grantees distributed throughout Michigan (129 school/district grantees and 14 ECE grantees).

438K

For K-12 schools, **nearly 438,000 schoolchildren—almost one-third (30%)** of all K-12 schoolchildren in Michigan the same year (1,443,456 total)—could have been reached by and benefited from the program.



10 Cents grantees as a group appear to **serve a higher percentage of schoolchildren of color** (African American, Asian American, and Hispanic/Latinx) and schoolchildren eligible for free and reduced-price meals when compared to the statewide population of schoolchildren.<sup>1</sup>

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

### GRANTEE FOOD SERVICE PROGRAMS

Food Program Managers (FPMs) reported the following experience levels, motivators, barriers, and logistical challenges in their responses:

#### Experience Levels of FPMs

- **Six+ Years** – 54% of FPMs reported at least six years of experience purchasing local foods
- **New to Purchasing** – 19% of FPMs indicated they were new to purchasing local foods

#### Top Logistical Challenges

- **Distribution methods** (22%)
- **Lack of available local foods** (19%)
- **Lack of staff labor to prepare local foods** (19%)

#### Top Motivators

- **Support for Michigan farms and businesses** (21%)
- **Higher quality food** (19%)
- **Access to fresher food** (14%)

#### Benefits

- **New Connections** – 10 Cents allowed FPMs to make new connections with farmers or local food suppliers (47%)
- **Improved Existing Relationships** – 10 Cents helped FPMs improve existing relationships with farmers or local food suppliers (63%)

#### Top Barriers

- **Limited availability** (37%)
- **Supplier logistics** (14%)
- **Budget constraints** (13%)

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### PURCHASE AND USE OF MICHIGAN-GROWN FRUITS, VEGETABLES, AND DRY BEANS

**73%**

The majority of FPMs (73%) affirmed that 10 Cents allowed them to **try new Michigan-grown foods** in school meals that they otherwise would not have tried.

**5  
NEW**

FPMs reported trying an average of **five new Michigan-grown foods** during the program; collectively, they reported trying 30 different types of vegetables and 16 types of fruits.

**30%**

In February, April, and August surveys, approximately 30% of responding grantees responded yes, there were Michigan-grown foods they were **unable to find and buy**.

**1%**

Throughout the year, 70% of spending by all grantees (in dollars) on fruits (15 different types), 29% on vegetables (34 different types) and **1% on dry beans**, indicating an opportunity for growth in purchases of dry beans in future years.

**TOP  
5**

The **most common products** purchased by grantees included apples (98 grantees), cucumbers (57 grantees), peppers (45 grantees), carrots (41 grantees), and green beans (37 grantees).

**Top 10 Michigan grown foods FPMs tried for the first time** (in rank order of responses):

- 1. Apples**
- 2. Asparagus**
- 3. Blueberries**
- 4. Carrots**
- 5. Cherries**
- 6. Potatoes**
- 7. Radishes**
- 8. Dry beans**
- 9. Winter squash**
- 10. Lettuce**

### THE 10 CENTS SUPPLY CHAIN

**150**

For 10 Cents purchases, grantees reported using **150 unique vendors**, of which 100 were Michigan farms, that supplied Michigan-grown fruits, vegetables, and dry beans through the 10 Cents food supply chain.

**50%**

Half (50%) of all 10 Cents spending (in dollars) reported by grantees was from **broadline (or full-service) distributors** and one-third (34%) was from food hubs.

**\$47K**

Grantees purchased more than **\$47,000 of Michigan-grown products** directly from 21 individual farms, comprising 4% of total reported purchases (in dollars).

**5**

The 100 grantees (of 143) who reported purchases indicated an **average of five farms** of origin for their local food purchases, regardless of the market channel used.

## Legislation for 10 Cents sets forward two program goals:

- a To improve daily nutrition and eating habits for children through the school and childcare setting
- b invest in Michigan agriculture and the related food business economy.<sup>1</sup>

Evaluation results from this year show that **the program is reaching these goals despite pandemic-related interruptions** to food service operations and supply chain issues.

Statewide expansion allowed the program to reach nearly 450,000 Michigan children. Survey responses also illustrate that grantees are trying for the first time new fruits, vegetables, and dry beans in their food programs and that there is a desire to purchase and serve even more Michigan-grown foods. Additionally, reported purchasing information shows that grantees are buying a wide variety of foods sourced from more than 100 different Michigan farms and food businesses across the state.<sup>2</sup>

**The 10 Cents program presents a big opportunity—and possibly motivation—for FPMs to purchase and serve more Michigan-grown fruits, vegetables, and dry beans to children.**

Continued program evaluation will allow us to follow and report on the progress of 10 Cents and better understand the impact it has on our schoolchildren, farms, and food businesses.

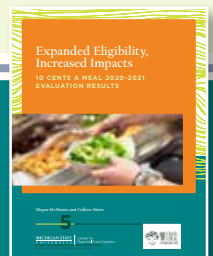
**450K**  
CHILDREN IMPACTED  
BY 10 CENTS

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

<sup>2</sup> Evaluators examined characteristics among the different types of grantees (public schools, nonpublic schools, ECEs, and Residential Child Care Institutions [RCCIs]), but due to the limited number of grantees that shared purchasing data, there was not enough information to provide specific summaries about them.

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.

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).



## VISION

CRFS envisions a thriving economy, equity, and sustainability for Michigan, the country, and the planet through food systems rooted in local regions and centered on Good Food: food that is healthy, green, fair, and affordable.

## MISSION

The mission of CRFS is to engage the people of Michigan, the United States, and the world in applied research, education, and outreach to develop regionally integrated, sustainable food systems.

## ABOUT

CRFS joins in Michigan State University's legacy of applied research, education, and outreach by catalyzing collaboration and fostering innovation among the diverse range of people, processes, and places involved in regional food systems. Working in local, state, national, and global spheres, CRFS' projects span from farm to fork, including production, processing, distribution, policy, and access.

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