

Helpful Tips for Preparing Your  
**10 Cents a Meal**  
Grant Application



Are you ready to improve the health of your students and support your local economy by bringing Michigan-grown fruits, vegetables, and legumes to your school district? **10 Cents a Meal for Michigan's Kids & Farms is here to help.**

The following tips have been organized to help you be as prepared as possible to begin the 10 Cents a Meal grant application process (*also called the Purchase of Locally Grown Fruits, Vegetables, and Legumes grant.*)

## Let's Get Started!

### Eligibility:

- **Location:** 10 Cents is now providing grant fund opportunity for all school districts in Michigan, and also to sponsors of early child care centers across the state.
- **National School Lunch Programs:** 10 Cents requires eligible school districts to have been participants of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) or other USDA school lunch programs during the previous school year and to participate in the NSLP or other USDA school lunch programs throughout the coming school year. Learn more about these programs click [here](#) and [here](#).
- **Free & Reduced Lunch:** Your school does not need to meet a required percentage of free/reduced lunches.
- **Child and Adult Care Food Program:** Early child care centers must have successfully participated in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Learn more about that program [here](#). Sponsors may apply on behalf of any number of their sites based upon interest. Early childhood education (ECE) involvement is for Centers only due to federal regulations. Learn more about ECE opportunities with this grant and resources [here](#).

CACFP Applicants: If you have questions, please contact Melissa Lonsberry at [lonsberry@michigan.gov](mailto:lonsberry@michigan.gov) or call 517-241-0526.

### Gathering Information:

- **Budget:** How much money do you think you could spend on Michigan grown fruits, vegetables, and legumes in the coming year (Fall, Winter, Spring and Summer)? Be sure to include all of August and September if you purchased then for the start of the school year this year and/or will next year.
- Think about how much you could buy in the fall, when farmers have a bounty of produce available. You can spend more of your grant dollars in the fall if you want. Remember, though: Michigan also grows storage crops like apples, potatoes, and carrots that are available all year. Many Michigan-grown products also are available year-round in frozen and dried form. Don't forget dry beans!
  - Learn more at [CultivateMichigan.org](http://CultivateMichigan.org).

- Remember also that you can use the funds to purchase Michigan-grown produce for any meals that are served as part of the United States Department of Agriculture's child nutrition programs -- which includes breakfast, lunch, reimbursable snacks, dinners, and summer meal programs.
- 10 Cents provides schools up to 10 cents per meal in incentive match funding. The application will automatically calculate your school district or ECE sponsor's maximum possible grant through this helpful formula:

**Previous Year October Breakfast and Lunch Meal Count X 10 (Months) X \$0.10 = Maximum Amount of Grant Funds Available**

- Remember: This is match funding. You must spend at least double the amount of your grant on Michigan-grown fruits, vegetables, and legumes. (So, if your grant is \$10,000, you will spend a total of \$20,000, with \$10,000 of that coming from the grant. You would put \$10,000 on the budget page for the maximum grant award desired.
- You are not required to request a maximum grant. In the application, be prepared to tell MDE how large a grant you would like to receive, recognizing that you will be expected to spend double that amount. Starting small is fine!
- If you are obtaining Michigan-grown fruits, vegetables, and legumes with the support of other programs – including the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, Department of Defense Produce, the Unprocessed Fruit and Vegetable Pilot Program, or Hoophouses for Health – those transactions (with invoices that show the name of the farm where it was grown and the county the farm is in) can be used as part of meeting your match requirement.

**Reminder:** *This is a competitive grant. Scoring will prioritize districts and early child care sponsors that demonstrate the greatest ability to **procure, prepare, and promote** Michigan-grown fruits, vegetables and legumes, and plan for related educational activities. See the additional note below in the promotion and marketing section!*

### Procurement:

- Create a list of all Michigan-grown fruits, vegetables, and legumes your district or early child care center is currently using in eligible meals; and a list of any products you intend to buy during the year even if you haven't purchased them before.
- Create a list of the locations where your district or early child care center is currently purchasing its Michigan-grown fruits, vegetables, and legumes (ex. Direct from Farm, Food Hub, Distributor), and sources for any products you intend to buy during the year even if you haven't purchased them before. [Cultivate Michigan.org](http://CultivateMichigan.org) is a good resource. Another is [localdifference.org](http://localdifference.org), where you will find a [farm to school directory](#).

## Prepare & Menu:

- Create a list detailing all of the ways in which your schools or early child care centers incorporate Michigan-grown fruits, vegetables, and legumes into eligible meals (ex. Entrées, Soups, Salad Bars).
- Create a list of all preparation techniques used by your schools or early child care centers to incorporate Michigan-grown fruits, vegetables, and legumes into school meals (ex. Baking, Steaming, using Fresh or Frozen).
- Create a list of equipment used by your schools to prepare and serve Michigan-grown fruits, vegetables, and legumes (ex. Oven, Salad Spinner, Tilt Skillet).

## Plan Educational Activities:

List the educational activities your school or early childcare center will carry out to support one or more of these project goals:

1. Promote healthy food activities, including taste tests.
2. Increase student knowledge and consumption of Michigan grown products.
3. Have clear educational activities.
4. Involve parents or the community.
5. Connect to a school's farm to school procurement activities.

Find ideas at [www.canr.msu.edu/michigan-farm-to-ece/index](http://www.canr.msu.edu/michigan-farm-to-ece/index) and under the **Tools for Schools** tab at [www.tencentsmichigan.org](http://www.tencentsmichigan.org).

## Promote & Market:

*Scoring places particular importance on marketing, promotion, and educational activities. Preference will be given to applicants with robust plans to promote and market Michigan grown fruits, vegetables, and legumes; and plan for educational activities that engage students.*

- Create a list of ways in which you currently market Michigan grown fruits, vegetables, and legumes (ex. Flyers, Taste Tests, Social Media).
- Think about: If you receive 10 Cents grant funds, how will you market the program and the food you purchase with it in ways that lead to increased student knowledge and consumption of Michigan-grown fruits, vegetables, and legumes?
- Think about: What are ways you could track or evaluate whether your promotion, marketing, and educational activities result in increased student knowledge and consumption of Michigan-grown fruits, vegetables, and legumes?

Find ideas and resources at [Cultivate Michigan](http://Cultivate Michigan) and under the **Tools for Schools** tab at [www.tencentsmichigan.org](http://www.tencentsmichigan.org).

## Collaboration:

- Have you collaborated on farm to school or farm to ECE activities with any neighboring districts, or shared information or strategies around locally grown fruits, vegetables, and legumes and/or this grant program? If so, write it down!

Now that you've gathered this information, completing the 10 Cents a Meal grant application will be simple! Can't find the application for the grant? Please contact Liana Bennett at [bennettL4@michigan.gov](mailto:bennettL4@michigan.gov) or call 517-241-5349.

For additional ideas for procuring, preparing, and promoting locally grown foods or planning related educational activities, visit [tencentsmichigan.org](http://tencentsmichigan.org) and its [Tools for Schools](#) page, where useful resources have been specially curated to help you succeed.