

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



Are you ready to improve the health of children and support your local economy by bringing Michigan-grown fruits, vegetables, and legumes to your school or child care center? **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.

Let's Get Started!

Eligibility:

- **All school and non-school sponsors in Michigan that participate as a sponsor in a federal child nutrition program.** To clarify: if you receive reimbursement directly from the State of Michigan for your child nutrition program, you are eligible. If you are reimbursed through another sponsor, you are not directly eligible. Please encourage your sponsor to apply!
 - **National School Lunch Program/SSO:** Learn more about that program [here](#).
 - **Summer Food Service Program:** Learn more about that program [here](#).
 - **Child and Adult Care Food Program:** Early child care centers must be currently participating as a sponsor 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.
- **Free & Reduced Lunch/Direct Certification:** Your school does not need to meet a required percentage to be eligible.

Gathering Information:

- **Budget:** How much money do you think you have spent on Michigan-grown fruits, vegetables, and legumes in the past year (Fall, Winter, Spring and Summer)? Be sure to include September if you purchased them for the start of the school year and August in preparation for the next year.
 - This is a rough estimate of how much you spent, it does not have to be the exact number.
- 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.
- Remember also that you can use the funds to purchase Michigan-grown produce for any meals or snacks that are served as part of the United States Department of

Agriculture's Child Nutrition Programs—which include breakfasts, lunches, reimbursable snacks, dinners, and summer meal programs.

- 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 the Michigan Department of Education (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!
 - This is an estimated budget. There is no penalty for not spending all of your grant dollars, and it may be possible to increase your award, so just make a good guess.
- If you are buying 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!*

The application will walk you through the following topics in checklist format:

Procurement:

- Begin to think about all Michigan-grown fruits, vegetables, and legumes your school or early child care center is currently using in eligible meals and snacks; and a list of any products you intend to buy during the year even if you haven't purchased them before.
- Begin to think about the places where your school 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. cultivatemichigan.org is a good resource. Another is localdifference.org, where you will find an [Institutional Sales Directory](#).

Prepare & Menu:

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

Plan Educational Activities:

Think about the educational activities your school or early child care 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 and under the [Tools for Schools & Early Childhood](#) page at 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 a Meal 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 cultivatemichigan.org and under the [Tools for Schools & Early Childhood](#) page at tencentsmichigan.org.

Collaboration:

- Have you collaborated on farm to school or farm to ECE activities with any neighboring schools or child care centers, 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 Wendy Crowley at **CrowleyW@Michigan.gov**

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