

10 CENTS A MEAL FOR SCHOOL KIDS & FARMS: STATE PILOT PROJECT OVERVIEW

- Project Description and Goals:** *10 Cents a Meal for School Kids & Farms* (10 Cents) is a pilot project to:
- Provide schools with an incentive match up to 10 cents per meal to purchase Michigan fruits and vegetables.
 - Improve daily nutrition and eating habits for children through the school setting.
 - Invest in Michigan agriculture and related local food business economy.
 - Implement a \$250,000 pilot program with \$210,000 for school food reimbursements.

- Pilot Locations:** Competitive grants made available to districts in Prosperity Region 2 and Region 4
- 52 districts applied, which would have required \$882,110 for full funding.
 - 16 districts funded, seven in Region 2 and nine in Region 4.
 - Scored based on capacity to purchase, market and serve, and provide related education activities.
 - Region 2 districts: Boyne Falls, Frankfort-Elberta, Glen Lake, Leland, Manistee, Northport, Traverse City.
 - Region 4 districts: Coopersville, Forest Hills, Grand Haven, Montague, Muskegon, Muskegon Heights, Oakridge, Ravenna, Whitehall.

Number of Students Impacted: 48,000

Preliminary Outcomes and Related Measurements: Outcomes were planned in two key areas.

1. Agricultural Economic Development

- As of December 2016, 86 different Michigan farms received business from the pilot.
 - Those 86 farms are located in 28 Michigan counties: Allegan, Antrim, Barry, Benzie, Berrien, Cass, Charlevoix, Grand Traverse, Gratiot, Ionia, Isabella, Kalamazoo, Kalkaska, Kent, Lapeer, Leelanau, Lenawee, Manistee, Mason, Monroe, Montcalm, Muskegon, Newaygo, Oceana, Otsego, Ottawa, Van Buren, Wexford.
 - In addition, 16 other Michigan food businesses were impacted, including distributors and processors.
 - The districts spent \$113,976.49 so far, with \$56,569.32 from the reimbursement funds. Not all data is yet complete.
- Preliminary data, Networks Northwest Prosperity Region Office

Farmer Feedback: “The 10 cents a meal program has greatly increased our fresh produce business to area schools. The students are getting healthy, tasty local fruits and vegetables, which school food service directors tell us the students like and eat. The local farmers get to sell more produce, which helps the growers’ economics. Basically, great benefits for all involved.”

—Jim Bardenhagen, Leelanau County farmer and MSU Extension Director Emeritus

—Stakeholder interviews, Groundwork Center for Resilient Communities

2. Children’s Nutrition

- Children were served 49 different types of Michigan-grown produce as of September through December 2016.
 - Apples, pears, carrots, plums, and nectarines were most popular, purchased by nearly all schools.
 - Bell peppers, winter squash, tomatoes, cucumbers, green beans also widely purchased.
- Preliminary data, Networks Northwest Prosperity Region Office

Food Service Feedback:

- “Students appreciate that food is coming from their area and supporting local farmers. We started a Farm to School Friday once a month where all menu items are local, and they really are embracing the menus.”
- “‘Local’ has become a cool buzzword with the little guys (K-5).”
- “Have been able to purchase different fruits and vegetables. Kids look forward to new ones.”
- “Program helps keep participation numbers up.”

Top Three Outcomes Achieved for Food Service

- The variety of produce served in school meals increased.
- Purchasing can be planned with greater certainty.
- Purchasing power is enhanced.

Ability to Try New Things

Food service directors named 30 foods that they tried in meals. New foods tried by the largest number of districts were cherries, multicolored carrots, peaches, blueberries, strawberries, asparagus, squash, navy beans, and Romanesco.

—Preliminary Evaluation Surveys, MSU Center for Regional Food Systems

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