The schools are investing in us, which we transfer to our employees. And we spend a lot of money in our local community. Because of our big diversity of varieties, it’s really allowed us to utilize some fruit and keep it in for fresh eating, which is a better return to us than a processing option.

Dave Rennhack
Rennhack Orchards, Oceana County

We introduced students to the different flavors that an apple can have: From tart to sweet and everything in between...My staff love taste-testing all the new apple varieties we are now getting. ‘WOW’ is a word I hear often.

Chris Nelson, Food Service Director
Zeeland Public Schools and West Ottawa Public School District

Students Served
31,227

11 districts
6 counties
13 county region


6 COUNTIES Allegan, Barry, Ionia, Muskegon, Ottawa, Oceana

Using a dried bean product was new for our food service staff. It really helps to boost staff morale when they can learn a new skill. There’s been an increased ‘buzz’ in the food service department around our local items.

Jessica Endress,
Director of Dining Services
Thornapple Kellogg School District

“The schools are investing in us, which we transfer to our employees. And we spend a lot of money in our local community. Because of our big diversity of varieties, it’s really allowed us to utilize some fruit and keep it in for fresh eating, which is a better return to us than a processing option.”

Mary Rose Vanas
Food Service Director
Shelby Public Schools

By the Numbers:
43 different fruits, vegetables, and beans purchased, grown by 85 farms located in 29 counties, plus 10 additional businesses such as processors, distributors, and food hubs.

Photo credit: Lynn DeVlieg, courtesy Whitehall District Schools.


Serving New Foods to Students

31. New Michigan-grown vegetables tried for the first time.  
Top new Michigan-grown vegetables on the menu: Asparagus, bell peppers, salad/mixed greens

15. New Michigan-grown fruits tried for the first time.  
Top new Michigan-grown fruits on the menu: Apples, grapes

5. New Michigan-grown beans tried for the first time.  
Top new Michigan-grown beans on the menu: Black beans, Great northern beans

Preliminary survey results of food service directors, through December of the 2018-2019 school year, MSU Center for Regional Food Systems

“Kids are taking so many more fruits and vegetables from the fruit and veggie bar. We found out kids were open to trying kohlrabi. I was very surprised by that!”
Rachel Johnson,  
Food Service Director  
Coopersville Area Public School District

“Students are able to try food items that they might not have tried before because of 10 Cents a Meal. The intimacy of trying the food in the classroom encourages them to try things that they might not have done on their own in the cafeteria.”
Patty Wall,  
Food Service Director  
Holland Public Schools and Saugatuck Public Schools

“| Fruit | Percent of Students |
---|---|
| Strawberries | 52% Loved it |
| Dried Cherries | 29% Okay |
| Asparagus | 19% No Thanks |

Tasting Surveys

Classroom Surveys on Foods Selected at Lunch-West Ottawa Public Schools

Classroom Surveys on Foods Selected at Lunch-Whitehall Public Schools

Fun Taste Test
Cabbage Salsa

Source: Montague Area Public Schools

Doubling the State’s Investment

$105,500 from state incentive to 11 districts  
$211,000 into Michigan’s economy  
$706,524 from state incentive needed to fully fund all 30 applicants  
$1,413,048 into Michigan’s economy

Ideas in Action

Holland Public Schools and Saugatuck Public Schools food service partners with teachers to carry out classroom Try It Tuesday taste tests, using foods that students will be served in the cafeteria on Farm Fridays.

Muskegon Intermediate School District’s Career Tech Hospitality & Tourism students partner with 10 Cents schools to carry out real-world knife skills, taste-testing with students, and recipe development with Michigan-grown foods.

Montague Area Public Schools starts the year with a Harvest Day picnic for parents, students, and staff featuring Michigan foods. Future Farmers of America students lead educational veggie-themed games.

“I love that our staff and our kids are local food connoisseurs now. They know how good produce should taste and they know where it was grown.”
Caryn Elam, Food Service Director  
Hart Public School District