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2023

Farm to School Census Report

October 2024

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2023 Farm to School Census Report

October 2024

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Introduction

What is farm to school?

The term “farm to school” refers to efforts to serve local foods to children in schools, childcare settings, and summer meal sites as well as providing education to help them understand where their food comes from and the importance of local agriculture. Urbanicity, community values and traditions, and geography can shape a farm to school program and the activities they offer, creating programs that differ in their size and scope throughout the U.S. Programs vary in the extent to which they serve local foods, and even in their definition of a “local” food (such as whether it was produced within a certain mile radius, within the State, or within a multi-State region). Some farm to school programs offer educational opportunities within the traditional classroom curriculum or beyond, such as school gardens, field trips to local farms, and cooking classes. Programs may also include local food promotion and outreach efforts, both in schools and the wider community.

Regardless of the specific activities that make up any individual farm to school program, these programs are working toward many of the same goals, including:

- Enhancing knowledge of and attitudes toward food, nutrition, agriculture, and the environment among children and their communities
- Increasing children’s consumption of fruits and vegetables
- Providing additional market opportunities for farmers, ranchers, fishers, food processors, and food manufacturers
- Supporting community and economic development in various ways, including increasing prevalence of gardens, hosting community events, and increasing purchasing from minority- and woman-owned businesses

What is the Farm to School Census?

To gain insight into the farm to school practices implemented across the country, the U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service (USDA FNS) regularly conducts the Farm to School Census (Census). The Census is an online survey sent to all school food authorities (SFAs) in the U.S. and its territories that participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). The Census collects information on farm to school participation, such as the types of farm to school activities SFAs do and do not participate in, support for these activities, and challenges to participating. Appendix C contains the complete 2023 Farm to School Census survey.

The first Census was conducted in 2013, with additional surveys in 2015 and 2019. This report presents findings from the latest Farm to School Census, which was conducted in fall 2023 and asked questions about

SFAs' activities in school year (SY) 2022-23. A total of 12,559¹ SFAs submitted the survey (67 percent of those invited), and the findings in this report are weighted to be representative of all SFAs in the U.S.²

Key findings in this report

Results of the 2023 Census illustrated that farm to school has become a part of the fabric of U.S. schools, as most schools and SFAs—81 percent of SFAs as of fall 2024—participated in at least one farm to school activity. Despite the stresses on schools and communities caused by the COVID-19 pandemic—such as supply chain disruptions, pivoting to virtual learning, and labor shortages—farm to school programs persisted and even expanded since SY 2018-19. These programs were widespread: students across grade levels were exposed to farm to school activities, and SFAs with large populations of students receiving free or reduced-price (F/RP) meals were just as likely to participate in farm to school as SFAs with low numbers of students receiving F/RP meals.

Many factors in an SFA's environment can affect farm to school participation, and the 2023 Census results revealed that participation in farm to school was possible under a variety of circumstances. For example, while greater kitchen capacity at schools was associated with higher levels of farm to school participation, SFAs with all types of kitchen facilities and food service operations were still able to participate in farm to school activities. Similarly, lack of staff to conduct farm to school activities was a challenge for some SFAs, but the 2023 Census results showed that farm to school has been incorporated into the daily tasks of staff in most SFAs participating in farm to school. The 2023 Census results also demonstrated differences in available funding and policy support for farm to school across SFAs. While some SFAs took advantage of Federal COVID-19 relief funds for farm to school activities, SFAs most commonly used school or district funding for farm to school or operated their programs without any additional funds.

Although farm to school programs may look different from one SFA to another, most (63 percent) served local foods to students. Local spending by SFAs in SY 2022-23 totaled \$1.8 billion, which was approximately 16 percent of their total food purchases. While almost half went to fluid milk, the 2023 Census indicated an expansion in the diversity of local purchases, as more SFAs purchased local grains, proteins, and other dairy products beyond the traditional produce and milk. This spending went directly to suppliers like farmers and manufacturers, as well as to intermediaries such as produce distributors, food hubs, and the USDA Department of Defense Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (USDA DoD Fresh). Furthermore, results showed opportunities to expand vendor partnerships in line with environmentally conscious and equitable values. For example, SFAs indicated that they would like to purchase items with characteristics like environmental and labor certifications or from minority- and woman-owned businesses.

In addition to serving local foods, most SFAs promoted local foods to students and offered agriculture education or experiences, such as edible school gardens. The total number of edible school gardens increased since SY 2018-19.

¹ Invitations to participate in the 2023 Census were sent to 18,833 SFAs. After applying a set of criteria to determine eligibility for inclusion, 11,803 respondents were included in the analyses used in this report. See Appendix A for more information on the study sample.

² Appendix A contains a description of the Census methodology, including weighting procedures.

SFAs also experienced benefits from their participation in farm to school. The majority of SFAs participating in farm to school reported at least one positive outcome for students, food service, or the broader community, including increased consumption of fruits and vegetables in school meals and an increased positive perception of the school food program among teachers and administrators.

Many SFAs said that more funding would encourage them to participate in farm to school. They also expressed interest in having access to more technical assistance and training to find local foods. These findings aligned with the most frequently cited challenges of participating in farm to school: availability and cost of local foods. In addition to these challenges, SFAs that did not participate in farm to school cited a lack of available staff as the main barrier to participation.

These key findings are described in greater detail in the remainder of this report, which is organized into four sections:

- Overview of Farm to School Participation, summarizing key descriptors of farm to school participation among SFAs in SY 2022-23;
- Farm to School Activities and Outcomes, providing details about the farm to school activities that SFAs engaged in and resulting outcomes;
- Farm to School Environment, offering information about the policies and infrastructure that make up the context in which SFAs pursue farm to school; and
- The Road Ahead for Farm to School, highlighting opportunities for growth of farm to school programs.

Overview of Farm to School Participation

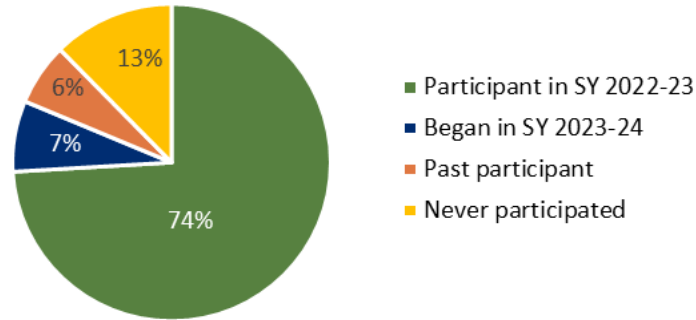
Most schools and SFAs participated in at least one farm to school activity, and participation has expanded since SY 2018-19 despite the challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, including virtual learning and labor shortages. Farm to school programs were not limited to only select schools or students—students of all grades and economic backgrounds were exposed to farm to school activities.

Most of the schools and SFAs in the U.S. were participating in farm to school or plan to start

Nearly three-quarters (74 percent) of SFAs participated in farm to school during SY 2022-23; that is, they reported participating in at least one of over 30 possible farm to school activities during the school year. Throughout this report, these SFAs are referred to as F2S participants or F2S SFAs. Another 7 percent began farm to school activities in SY 2023-24 (Table 1; Figure 1)³. The remaining SFAs were either past participants in farm to school (participated in at least one farm to school activity prior to SY 2022-23; 6 percent) or have never participated in farm to school activities (13 percent). Seventy-seven percent of schools in SFAs that responded to the Census participated in at least one farm to school activity in SY 2022-23 (Table 2).

³ SFAs that reported participating in at least one of the over 30 possible farm to school activities in SY 2022-23 are considered farm to school participants. For the complete list of farm to school activities asked about in the Census, see Q7 of Appendix C. For more information on the definition of participation in farm to school, see Appendix A.

Figure 1. SFA farm to school participation

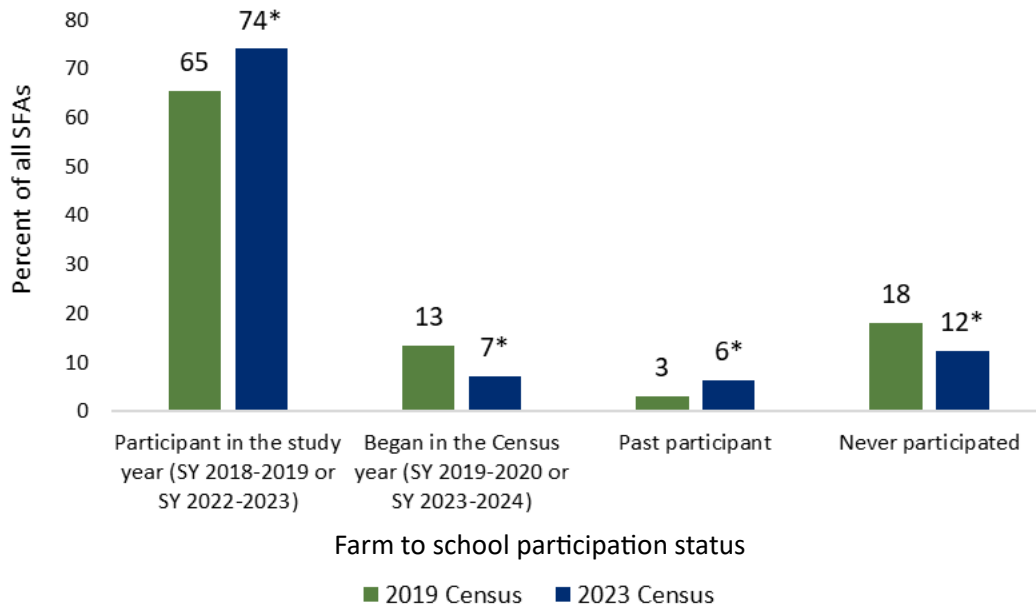


Source: Appendix B, Table 1

Despite the challenges posed by COVID-19, farm to school participation continued and expanded

In SY 2022-23, 74 percent of SFAs participated in farm to school, which was an increase of 9 percentage points from the 65 percent of SFAs that participated in SY 2018-19 (Table 3; Figure 2).

Figure 2. Percent of SFAs with each farm to school participation status over time



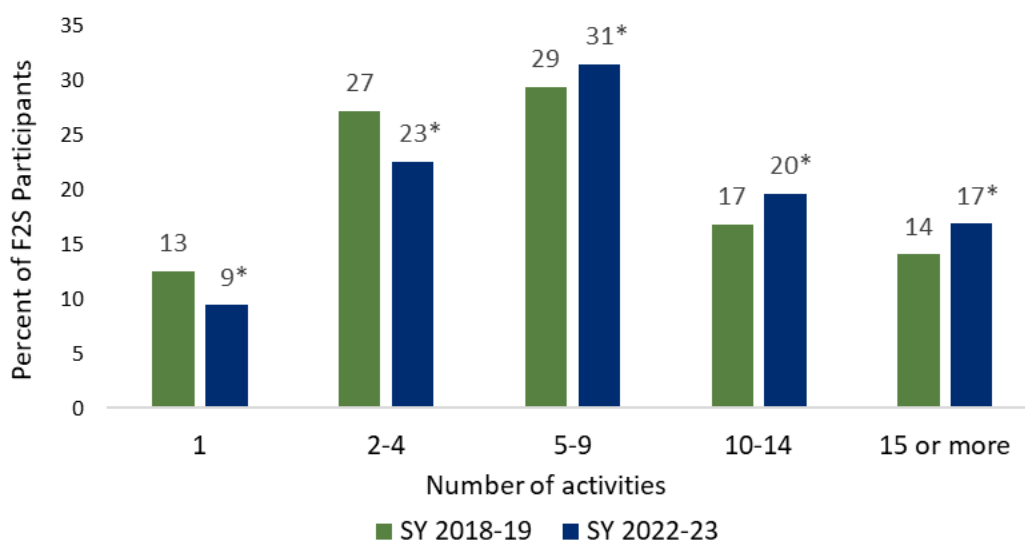
*Difference between SY 2018-19 and SY 2022-23 is significantly different from zero at the 0.05 level.

Source: Appendix B, Table 3

In addition, more SFAs had a longer tenure of farm to school participation: half (50 percent) of SFAs participating in farm to school in SY 2022-23 reported 3 or more years of farm to school participation, compared to 43 percent in 2019 (Table 4). SFAs also participated in more farm to school activities compared to

SY 2018-19. In SY 2022-23, 68 percent of F2S participants engaged in 5 or more farm to school activities, which was an 8-percentage point increase from SY 2018-19 (Table 5; Figure 3).

Figure 3. Percent of F2S participants conducting different numbers of farm to school activities over time



*Difference between SY 2018-19 and SY 2022-23 is significantly different from zero at the 0.05 level.

Source: Appendix B, Table 5

Farm to school reached students across the spectrum of age and household income

The proportion of SFAs participating in farm to school remained even across SFAs (approximately three-quarters), regardless of the percentage of the student population certified for F/RP meals (Table 6; Figure 4).

Figure 4. Percent of SFAs with each farm to school participation status, by F/RP lunch certification

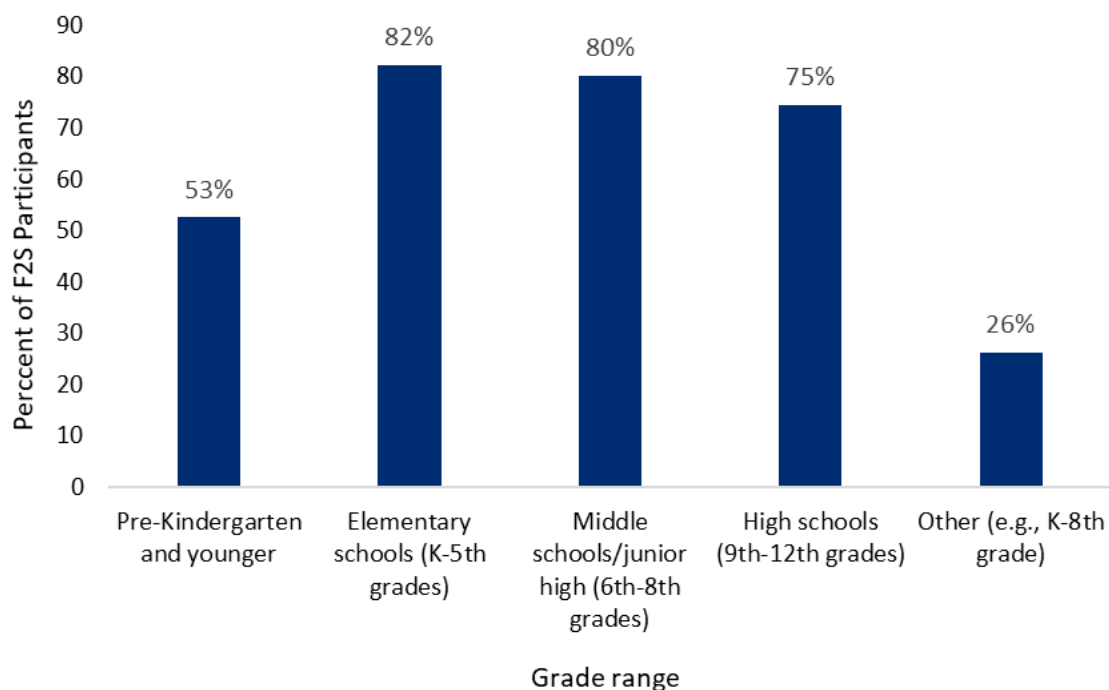
| Participation status | Tercile 1 (35% or fewer students certified) | Tercile 2 (More than 35% and up to 80% of students certified) | Tercile 3 (More than 80% of students certified) |
|-----------------------------|--|--|--|
| Participant in SY 2022-2023 | 75.1 | 74.7 | 73.4 |
| Began in SY 2023-2024 | 7.4 | 7.1 | 7.0 |
| Past participant | 6.5 | 5.9 | 6.6 |
| Never participated | 11.0 | 12.4 | 13.0 |

Note: All numbers represent percentages of all SFAs. F/RP refers to the percentage of students in the SFA certified to receive free or reduced-price school meals in SY 2022-23.

Source: Appendix B, Table 6

In addition, SFAs provided farm to school activities for students at all grade levels. At least 75 percent of SFAs participating in farm to school reported that elementary schools (K-5th grades), middle schools (6th-8th grades), and high schools (9th-12th grades) engaged in at least one farm to school activity (Table 7; Figure 5).

Figure 5. Percent of F2S participants reporting participation in farm to school activities in each grade range



Source: Appendix B, Table 7

Farm to School Activities and Outcomes

Serving local foods was the most popular farm to school activity reported in the 2023 Census. SFAs procured local food items from a variety of sources, and they expanded the diversity and frequency of their local purchasing beyond milk and produce to include local grains, protein, and other dairy products. In addition to serving local foods, most SFAs also promoted local foods to students and offered some kind of food or agriculture education. SFAs reported many positive outcomes from farm to school participation, including increased consumption of fruits and vegetables in school meals and access to better quality foods.

How do SFAs define “local?”

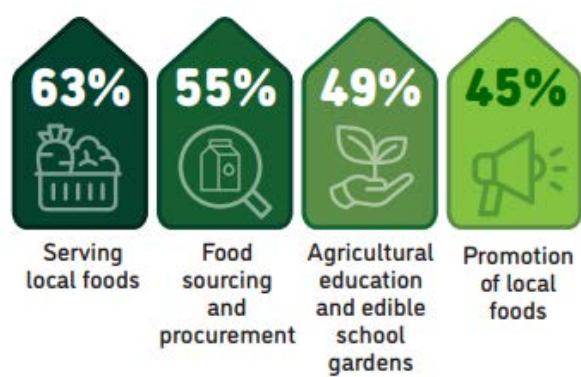
FNS does not define “local” for the purposes of farm to school, so the definition of local varies by SFA (Table 9).

- SFAs most commonly defined local as being produced within the State (28 percent).
- Other SFAs defined local as being produced within a particular radius, such as a 50- or 100-mile radius (8 percent and 9 percent, respectively).
- Many SFAs (20 percent) did not have a set definition of local.

Farm to school can take many forms, from serving local foods to student taste tests to gardening

SFAs most frequently participated in farm to school by serving local foods to students—63 percent of all SFAs reported serving local foods in some form in SY 2022-23. Many SFAs also engaged in at least one agricultural educational activity (49 percent) or local food promotion activity (45 percent; Table 8; Figure 6).

Figure 6. Percent of all SFAs participating in farm to school activity categories



Source: Appendix B, Table 8

Among farm to school participants, participation in activities to promote local foods increased or stayed the same between SY 2018-19 and SY 2022-23 (Table 10). However, their participation in certain farm to school education-related activities decreased between those two time periods: holding taste tests or cooking demonstrations (from 34 percent to 25 percent); conducting student field trips to farms (from 31 percent to 25 percent); having farmers visit the classroom (from 15 percent to 13 percent); and using USDA Team Nutrition materials (from 12 percent to 9 percent; Table 11). These types of in-person activities may have been especially impacted by COVID-19 social distancing policies and other ripple effects from the pandemic.

Seventeen percent of all SFAs had some kind of edible school garden in SY 2022-23 (Table 8). SFAs that responded to the Census reported that there were 6,539 schools operating edible school gardens, which was over 500 more school gardens than responding SFAs reported in SY 2018-19 (Table 12).

Most schools served some kind of local food in SY 2022-23, with a total of \$1.8 billion spent on local purchases

Seventy-four percent of schools in responding SFAs served local food at some point in SY 2022-23 (Table 2). SFAs that purchased local food spent almost \$1.8 billion on local food in SY 2022-23, which represented about 16 percent of their total food spending (Table 13). Fluid milk made up about half of this spending at

Examples of farm to school activities in each category*

Serving local foods

- Used local foods in any form in meals served as part of FNS Child Nutrition Programs (e.g., NSLP, SBP, CACFP)
- Served local foods that are culturally relevant to students

Food sourcing and procurement

- Sourced local foods from USDA DoD Fresh
- Searched for local vendors, farmers, food hubs, or cooperatives to procure local foods
- Forecasted budgetary needs for local purchases

Agricultural education and edible school gardens

- Exposed students to agriculture-related careers
- Integrated farm to school activities in curriculum

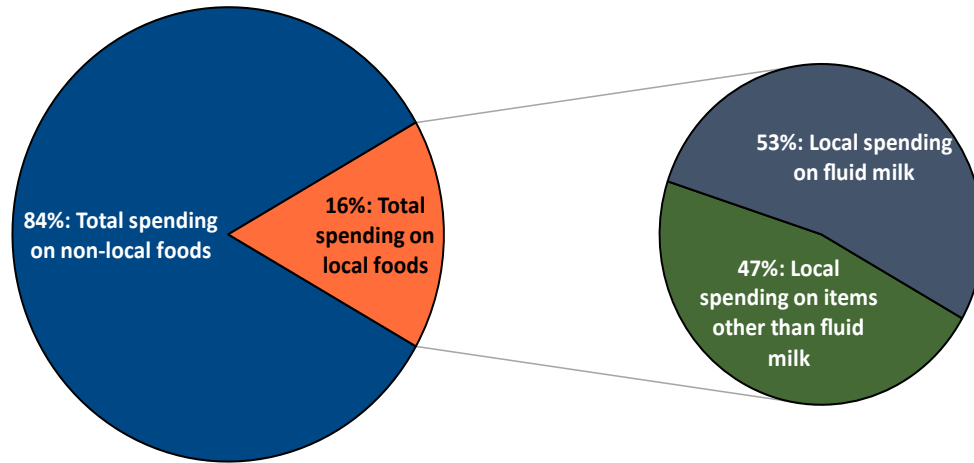
Promotion of local foods

- Implemented strategies to encourage students to consume local foods
- Hosted local food or farm to school-related events

*A complete list of activities can be found in Appendix B, Table 8.

\$955 million (Table 13; Figure 7). This percentage of spending on local purchases in the 2022-23 school year was similar to what was reported for SY 2018-19.

Figure 7. Total local food spending among F2S participants that purchased local food



Source: Appendix B, Table 13

SFAs increased the types of local foods they buy and serve

Top 10 local items purchased by F2S participants, by spending

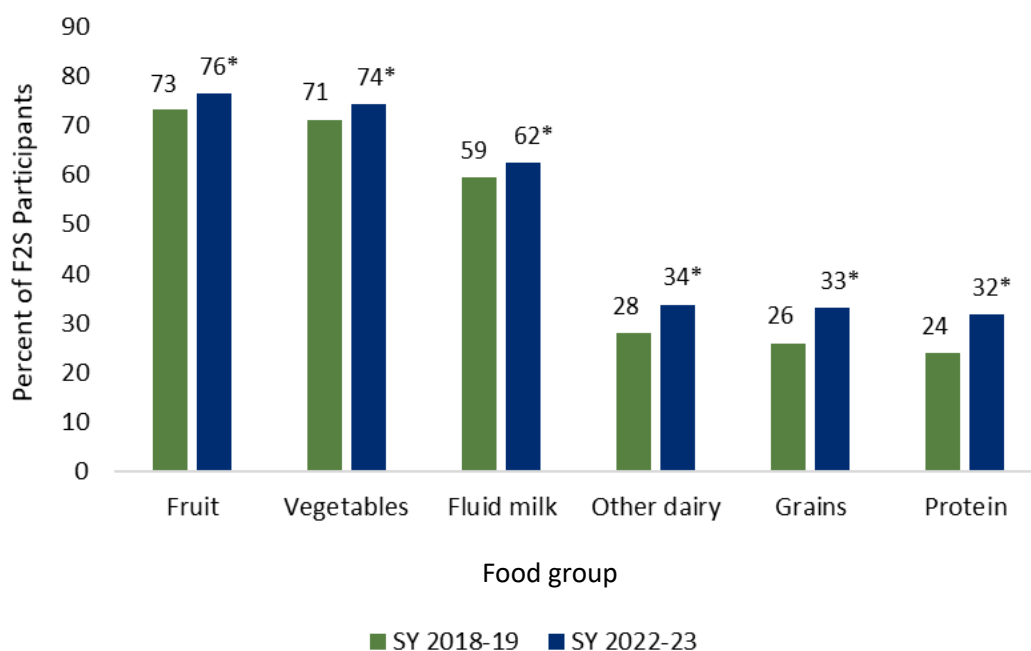
1. Fluid Milk
2. Apples
3. Beef
4. Poultry
5. Lettuce
6. Baked Goods
7. Salad Mix
8. Watermelon
9. Oranges
10. Strawberries

Source: Appendix B, Table 16

Compared to SY 2018-19, more SFAs participating in farm to school in SY 2022-23 reported buying local items in each food group. While SFAs most commonly purchased local fruits and vegetables in both school years, there was a sizable increase from the 2019 to 2023 Census in the proportion of SFAs that purchased local proteins, grains, and other dairy items (Table 14; Figure 8). Almost all SFAs participating in farm to school bought more than one type of local item; only 3 percent of participants reported fluid milk as their only local purchase, and only 2 percent reported fruit as their only local purchase (Table 15).

In SY 2022-23, SFAs most frequently reported fluid milk as the local item they spent the most on, followed by apples and beef (Table 16).

Figure 8. Percent of F2S participants purchasing local foods in each food group over time



*Difference between SY 2018-19 and SY 2022-23 is significantly different from zero at the 0.05 level.
 Source: Appendix B, Table 14

SFAs regularly served local foods, and more frequently than in the past

Almost two-thirds (65 percent) of SFAs participating in farm to school in SY 2022-23 reported serving local foods in school meals or snacks on a daily basis, which was similar to the frequency reported by participants in the 2019 Census (Table 17). Over one-third (35 percent) served local foods in meals or snacks a few times a week, which was a 7-percentage point increase from SY 2018-19 (28 percent; Table 17). There was also a sizable increase in the proportion of SFAs serving local foods weekly (from 22 percent to 27 percent; Table 17).

Over half of SFAs served local foods in programs other than the NSLP, that is, as part of the School Breakfast Program (SBP), Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP), Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), and summer meals (Summer Food Service Program or Seamless Summer Option) (Table 8).

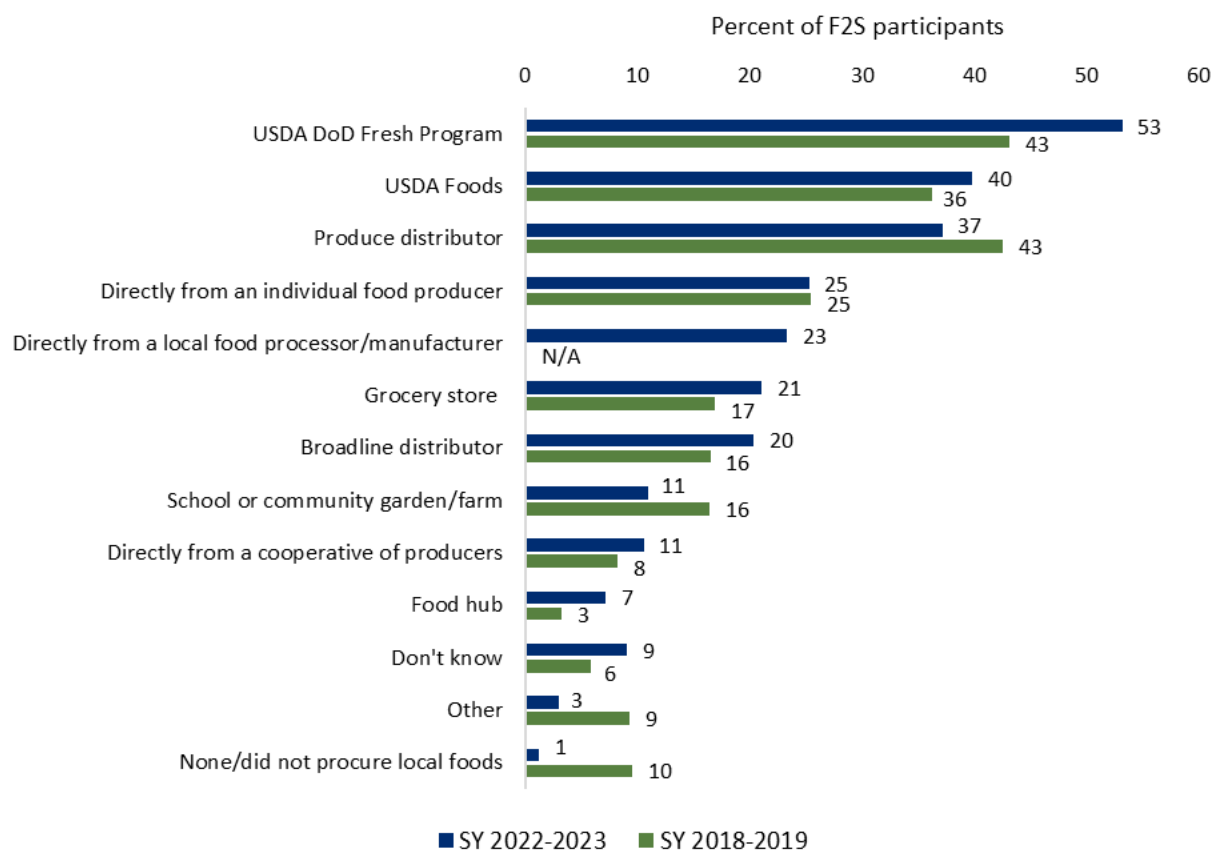
SFAs bought local foods from a variety of channels

SFAs procured local foods directly from farmers and producers as well as from intermediaries such as produce distributors and food hubs. Over half (53 percent) of SFAs participating in farm to school reported procuring local foods from the USDA DoD Fresh Program⁴ (Table 18). About 25 percent of farm to school participants procured local foods directly from farmers, and 23 percent procured directly from a processor or manufacturer (Table 18).

⁴ The USDA DoD Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program helps increase schools' ability to access produce to serve to children. Through the program, schools participating in the NSLP can spend a portion of their USDA Foods entitlement on produce.

In the 2023 Census, more SFAs participating in farm to school reported purchasing local foods from USDA DoD Fresh (from 43 percent in SY 2018-19 to 53 percent in SY 2022-23), broadline distributors (from 16 percent to 20 percent), grocery stores (from 17 percent to 21 percent), and food hubs (from 3 percent to 7 percent; Table 19; Figure 9).

Figure 9. Percent of F2S participants sourcing local food from each source over time



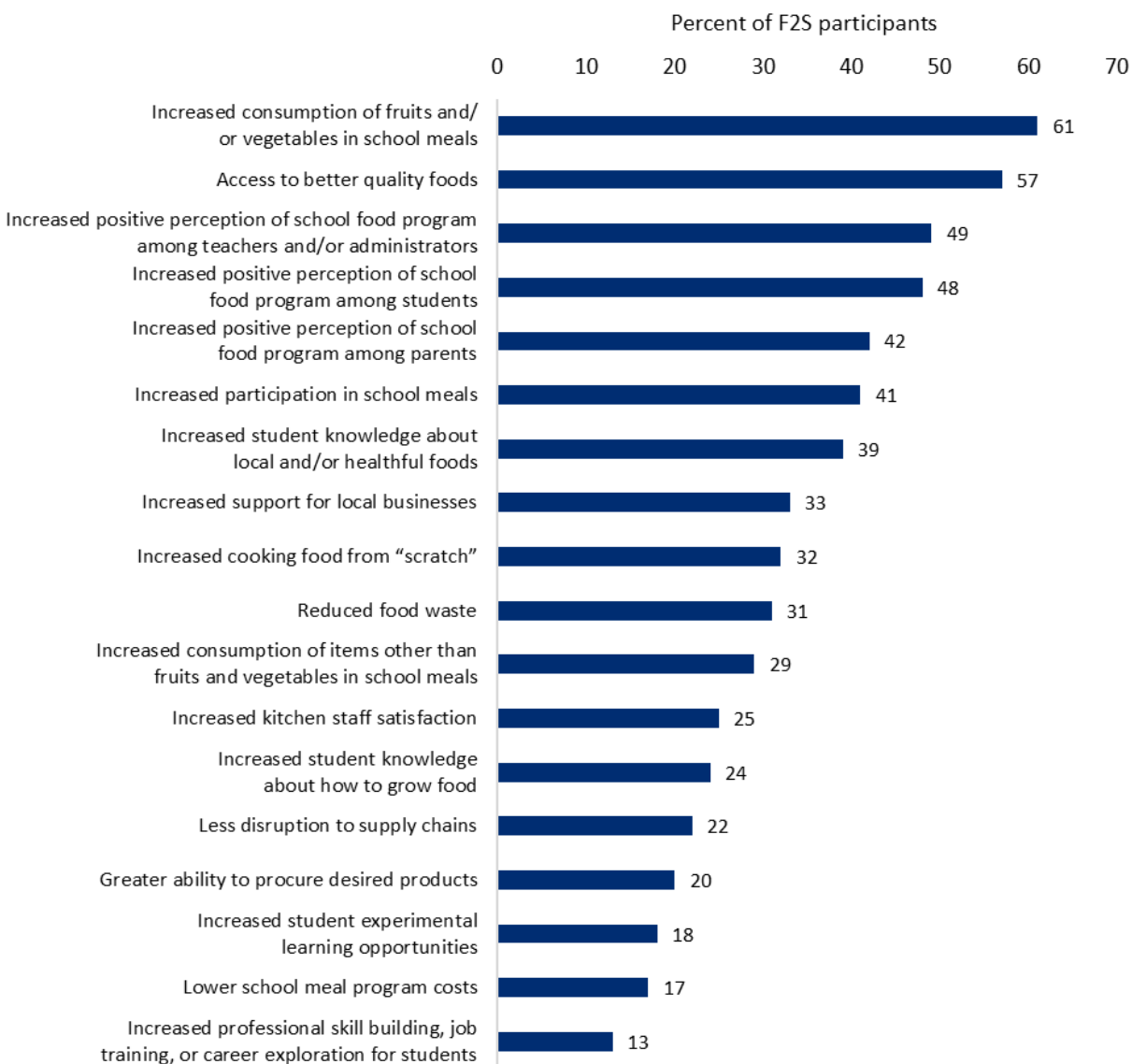
Note: The option to source local foods “Directly from a local food processor/manufacturer” was not a response option in the 2019 Census, thus it is not available for SY 2018-19.

Source: Appendix B, Table 19

Most SFAs reported positive outcomes from farm to school, especially after longer participation in farm to school

The majority of SFAs participating in farm to school reported at least one positive outcome for students, food service, or the broader community. They most frequently reported an increase in consumption of fruits and vegetables in school meals (61 percent), access to better quality foods (57 percent), and an increased positive perception of the school food program among teachers and/or administrators (49 percent; Table 20; Figure 10).

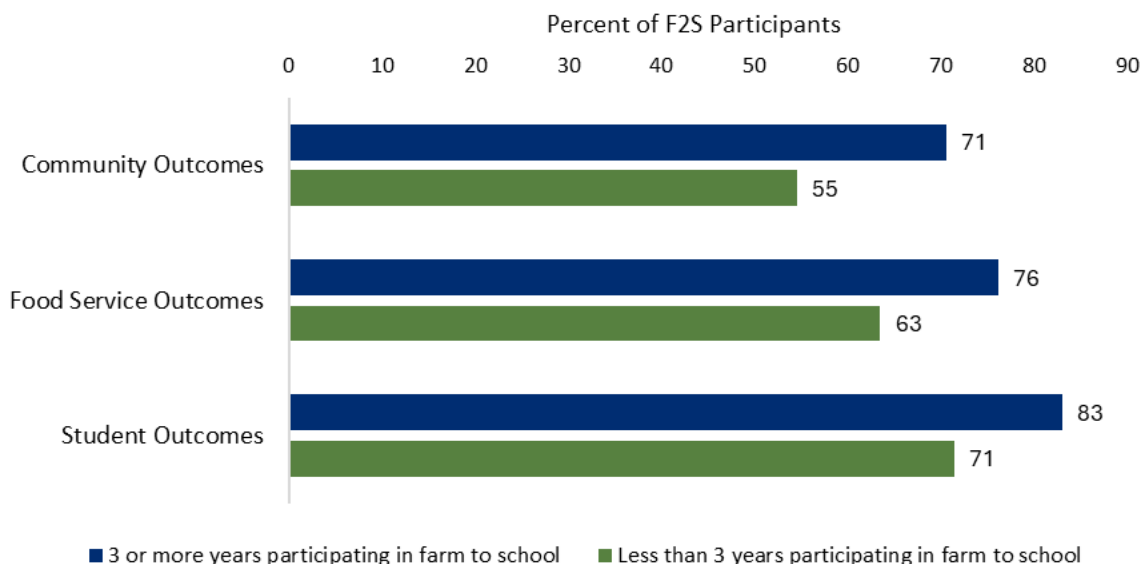
Figure 10. Percent of F2S participants reporting positive outcomes of farm to school participation



Source: Appendix B, Table 20

SFAs with a longer tenure in farm to school tended to report positive outcomes at a higher rate than SFAs who began farm to school more recently. SFAs that participated in farm to school for three or more years reported higher rates of all student-related outcome measures than SFAs who participated in farm to school for less than three years (Table 20; Figure 11).

Figure 11. Percent of F2S participants reporting each type of outcome, by length of participation in farm to school activities



Source: Appendix B, Table 20

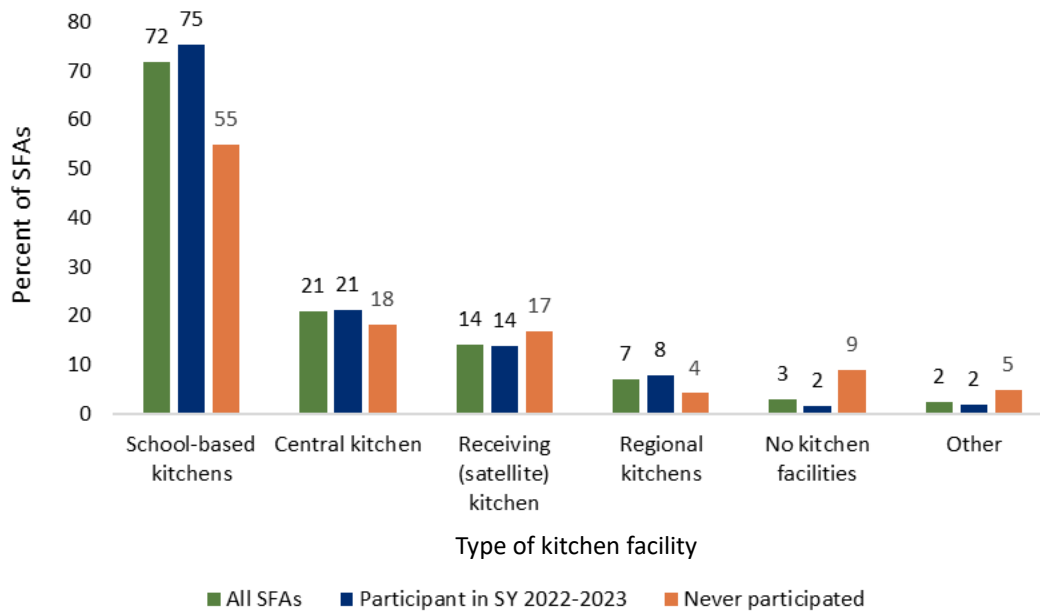
Farm to School Environment

Elements of an SFA’s physical, financial, and policy environment can affect its farm to school participation. For example, having access to onsite cooking may increase an SFA’s flexibility to incorporate local foods into daily menus, whereas it may be more difficult for SFAs serving vended meals (i.e., those that do not have onsite cooking) to use local products. Some SFAs may be able to use more staff time or take advantage of external funding for farm to school, while others may not have access to those resources. Results of the 2023 Census suggested that no matter the environment, SFAs found ways to engage in farm to school practices.

Farm to school participation was possible no matter an SFA’s kitchen facilities or food service operation type, but SFAs with greater kitchen capacity were more likely to participate in farm to school

SFAs were able to participate in farm to school regardless of their type of food preparation facility or food service methods. For example, the percentage of farm to school participants using school-based kitchens, the most common type of food preparation facility, was similar to the percentage of all SFAs with this type of facility (75 percent of farm to school SFAs compared to 72 percent of all SFAs; Table 21; Figure 12). There was a similar pattern for central kitchens, satellite kitchens, regional kitchens, or having no kitchen facilities (Table 21).

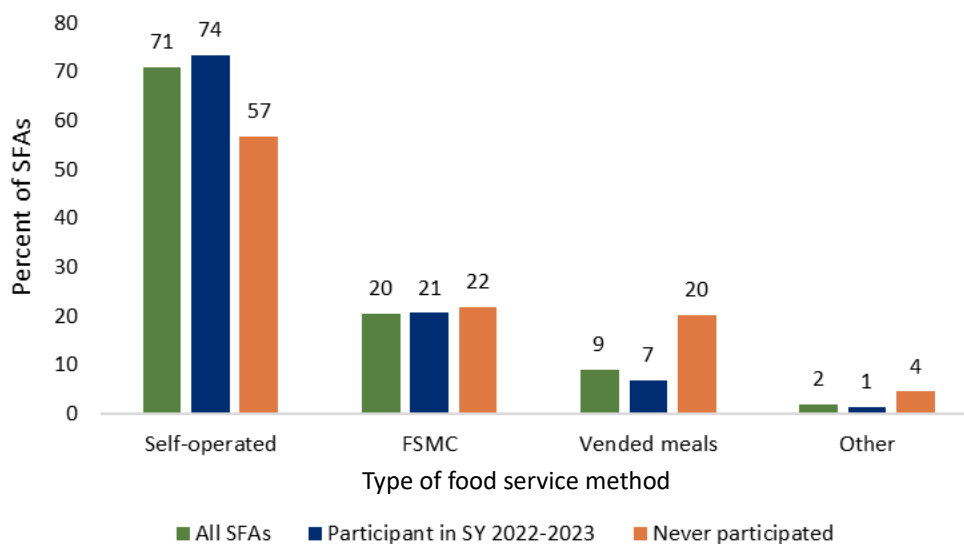
Figure 12. Percent of SFAs with each type of kitchen facility, among all SFAs, F2S participants in SY 2022-23, and SFAs who have never participated in F2S



Source: Appendix B, Table 21

Farm to school participants also reflected the general SFA population in their use of food service methods. Notably, SFAs that used food service management companies (FSMCs)—approximately 20 percent of all SFAs—were as likely to be participating in farm to school in SY 2022-23 (21 percent) as they were to not be participating (22 percent; Table 22; Figure 13).

Figure 13. Percent of SFAs with each type of food service method, among all SFAs, F2S participants in SY 2022-23, and SFAs who have never participated in F2S



Source: Appendix B, Table 22

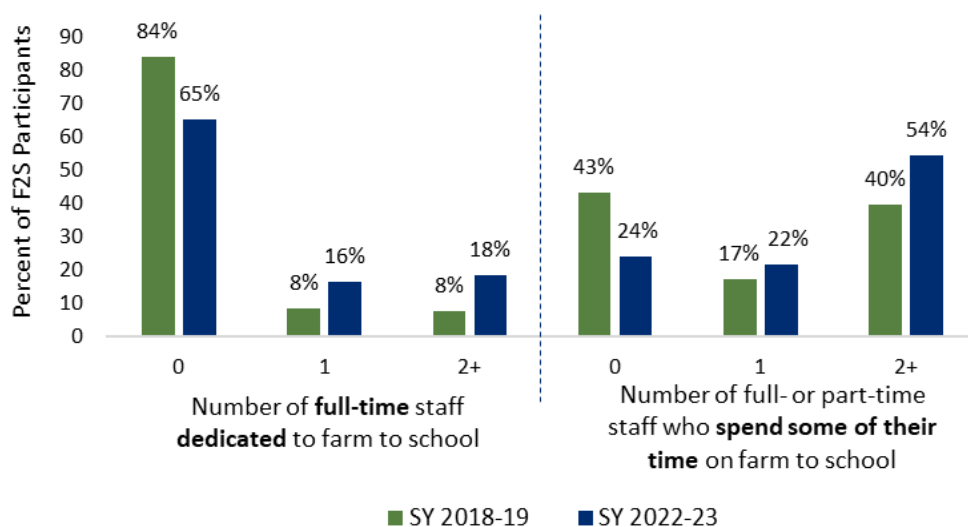
However, some food service facilities or food service methods were associated with less participation in farm to school activities. SFAs that never participated in farm to school were more likely to report having no kitchen facilities available to them (9 percent, compared to 3 percent of all SFAs), and they were less likely to report having school-based kitchens (55 percent, compared to 72 percent of all SFAs; Table 21; Figure 12).

Additionally, SFAs that never participated in farm to school were also more likely to serve vended meals (20 percent, compared to 9 percent of all SFAs) and less likely to be self-operated (57 percent, compared to 71 percent of all SFAs; Table 22; Figure 13).

Many staff in schools and SFAs were involved in farm to school as part of their job

Over three-quarters (76 percent) of SFAs participating in farm to school in SY 2022-23 reported having at least one staff member devote some portion of their work time to farm to school activities, up from 57 percent in 2019 (Table 23; Figure 14). The proportion of SFAs with at least one full-time staff member dedicated to farm to school more than doubled between SY 2018-19 and 2022-23 (from 16 percent to 35 percent; Table 23; Figure 14). However, as discussed later in this report, staffing challenges remained a concern for many SFAs.

Figure 14. Percent of F2S participants with different numbers of staff dedicated full-time to or spending some time on farm to school activities over time



Source: Appendix B, Table 23

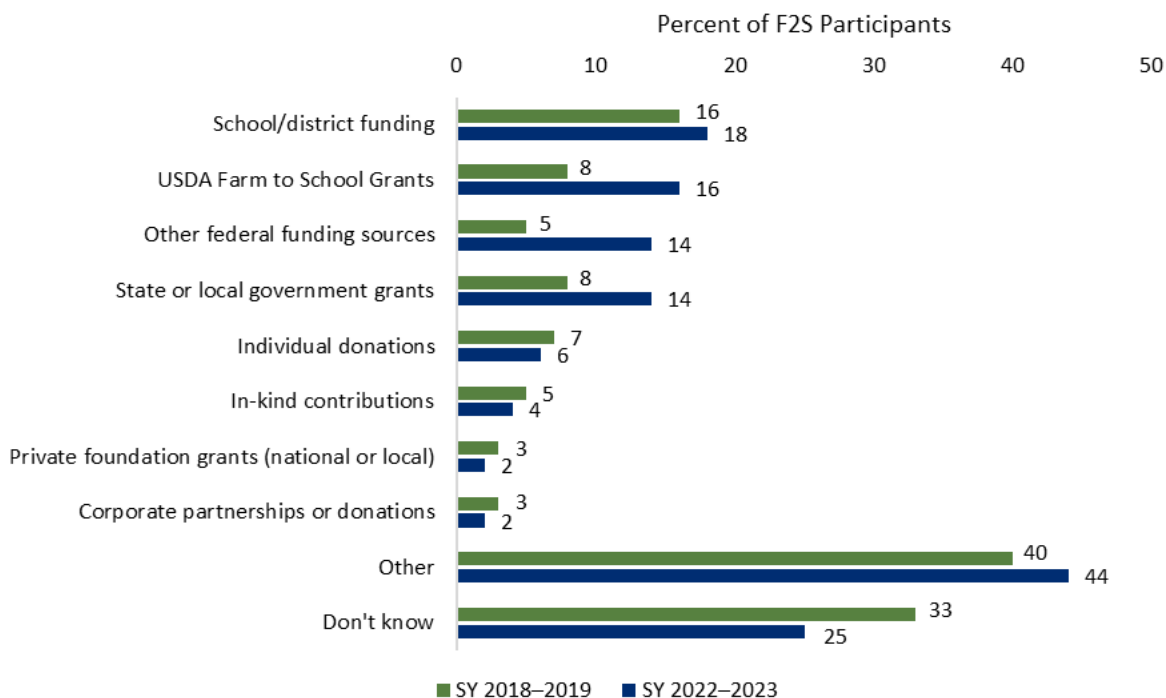
SFAs reported using more government funding for farm to school activities, but many did not have supplementary funds for farm to school

Between the 2019 and 2023 Census, the most common source of funds for farm to school activities remained school or district funding (Table 24; Figure 15). In SY 2022-23, a higher proportion of SFAs indicated they used USDA Farm to School Grants (from 8 percent in 2019 to 16 percent in 2023), other Federal funding sources (from 5 percent to 14 percent), and State or local government grants (from 8 percent to 14 percent; Table 24).

This may reflect the funds available as part of COVID-19 pandemic relief efforts at Federal and State levels, notably the Local Food for Schools Cooperative Agreement Program and Supply Chain Assistance Funds.⁵

However, not all SFAs used additional funding. Nearly one-quarter (23 percent) of SFAs participating in farm to school in SY 2022-23 reported that they do not receive any supplemental funding for these activities (Table 25).

Figure 15. Percent of F2S participants using different funding sources over time



Note: The “other” category is an aggregate value of SFAs that chose the “other” response option and SFAs that chose a response option that was not offered in both Census years. In the SY 2018-19 row, the “other” option includes SFAs who chose “from the nonprofit food-service account” as a funding source, which was not a source listed in the 2023 Census. In the SY 2022-23 row, the “other” option includes SFAs that selected “local or state program that offers monetary incentives for serving local foods,” “school or district fundraising,” “non-profit organizations or institutes,” and/or “food service management company.”

Source: Appendix B, Table 24

Policies supporting farm to school programs were more common since SY 2018-19

Forty-two percent of SY 2022-23 farm to school participants reported having wellness policies that support farm to school, an increase of nine percentage points from SY 2018-19 (Table 26). More than one-third of farm

⁵ USDA’s Food Systems Transformation initiative invested more than \$4 billion in developing fair, competitive, distributed, and resilient food systems. At the State level, at least five States used Federal pandemic-era investments to develop or support farm to school, and many States use other State-designated funds to support farm to school. For more on the Local Food for Schools program, visit [Local Food for Schools Cooperative Agreement Program](#).

to school participants (36 percent) had procurement policies that support purchasing local foods, a 6-percentage point increase from 2019 (Table 26).

The Road Ahead for Farm to School

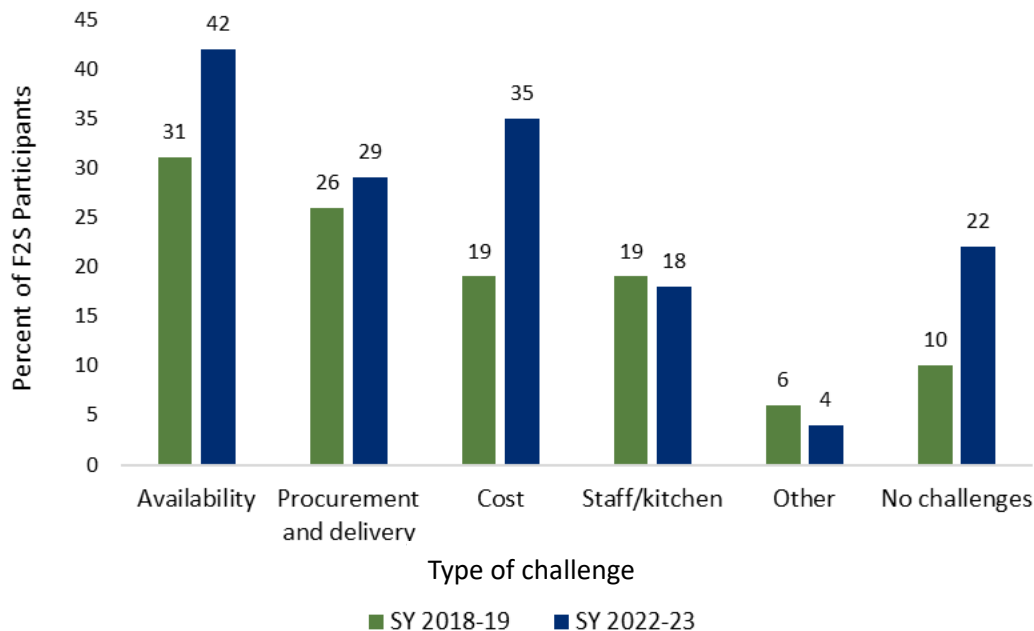
While there is broad and robust participation in farm to school by SFAs, there are still many opportunities for farm to school programs to grow and evolve. A main priority driving farm to school’s continued expansion will be addressing the challenges SFAs have identified related to procuring and serving local foods, including value-based purchasing.

Availability of local foods presented the greatest challenge for SFAs participating in farm to school

Forty-two percent of SFAs participating in farm to school in SY 2022-23 reported experiencing a challenge with the availability of local foods (Table 27; Figure 16). The second most commonly reported challenge—cited by 35 percent of SFAs participating in farm to school—was the cost of local foods (Table 27).

A higher proportion of SFAs in SY 2022-23 reported experiencing challenges of almost all types compared to SY 2018-19 participants. However, the proportion of SFAs reporting no procurement challenges more than doubled from SY 2018-19 to SY 2022-23 (from 10 percent to 22 percent; Table 27⁶).

Figure 16. Percent of F2S participants experiencing local foods procurement challenges over time



Source: Appendix B, Table 27

⁶ The Census asks specifically about challenges related to procurement only; other types of challenges are not captured. See Appendix C for question wording in the 2023 Farm to School Census.

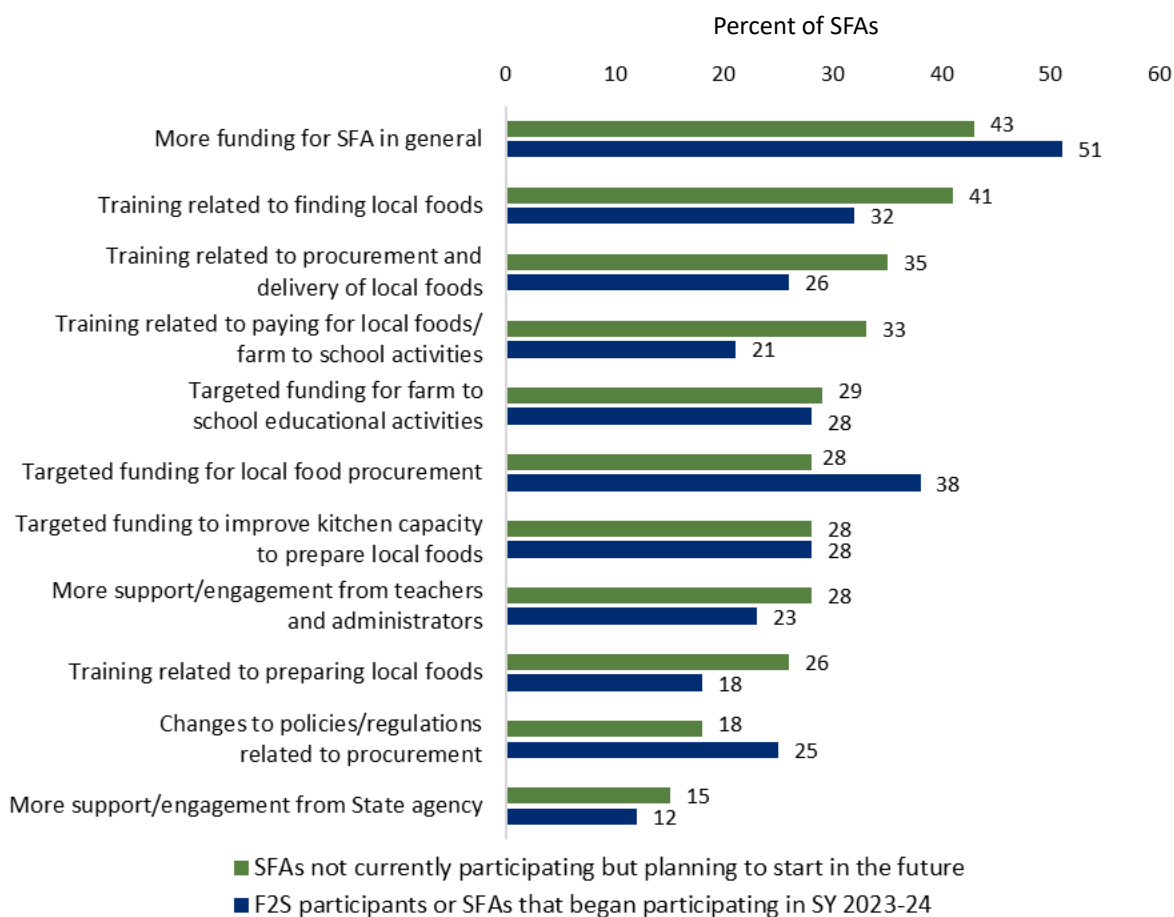
Staffing was a major challenge for SFAs not participating in farm to school

SFAs no longer participating in farm to school and SFAs who have never participated in farm to school reported similar reasons for not participating, which were primarily related to staffing. In both groups, the top reason cited for their nonparticipation was having no staff available to lead or conduct activities (42 percent and 43 percent, respectively; Tables 28 and 29).

SFAs said more funding and assistance finding local foods would help encourage farm to school participation

Among SFAs not currently participating in farm to school activities but planning to start in the future, nearly half (43 percent) reported that more funding for the SFA would help them start, and almost as many (41 percent) reported that training and technical assistance related to finding local foods would help (Table 30; Figure 17). Current farm to school participants had similar responses when asked what would make it easier for them to engage in farm to school activities, suggesting more funding in general (51 percent), targeted funding for local food procurement (38 percent), and training or technical assistance related to finding local foods (32 percent; Table 30; Figure 17).

Figure 17. Percent of SFAs reporting strategies to encourage participation in farm to school activities



Source: Appendix B, Table 30

SFAs were interested in expanding their value-based local purchases

Over half of SFAs participating in farm to school reported a desire to purchase local items that are from women- or minority-owned businesses; are certified organic or have other environmental, labor, animal-welfare certifications; or with the farm identity (that is, name of the business or farmer) preserved (Table 31; Figure 18). However, most farm to school participants were not currently purchasing these types of items (Table 31).

Figure 18. Percent of F2S participants currently purchasing or interested in purchasing local foods with value-based characteristics



Source: Appendix B, Table 31

Conclusion

The 2023 Census findings demonstrate that SFAs are interested in the benefits that farm to school can offer. Not only are more SFAs participating in farm to school since SY 2018-19, SFAs are continuing and expanding their farm to school programs. Both the proportion of farm to school participants with three or more years of program experience and the proportion of SFAs that are conducting five or more activities increased from SY 2018-19 to SY 2022-23, indicating an increase in the maturation and scope of farm to school programs. Expanding programs increases the chance that students can experience farm to school and creates more opportunities to strengthen the farm to school ecosystem across SFAs and their communities.

It is a testament to SFAs’ commitment to farm to school that they persisted with their programs in the face of unprecedented challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic in procuring foods, serving school meals, and educating students in a vastly changed environment. Many farm to school activities are more compatible with in-person learning, such as having field trips or holding taste tests, which is likely partially responsible for the decrease in participation in educational activities between 2019 and 2023, as schools increased use of hybrid

or virtual education in between years. While many of the immediate challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic have been mitigated, SFAs still face ongoing effects, through disruptions to the supply chain, workforce, and classroom-based education that could inhibit farm to school participation.

Among SFAs that are no longer participating or have no plans to participate in farm to school, it is generally not a lack of interest driving their nonparticipation. More commonly, SFAs reported that staffing, cost, and local food availability were barriers to conducting activities. To further increase participation in farm to school, it is imperative to address the challenges that SFAs experience when considering starting or ending a farm to school activity. SFAs report that additional funding, and in particular, funding targeted for farm to school, as well as technical assistance in finding and procuring local foods would be the most helpful strategies for encouraging their farm to school participation.

The Census assesses many of the key metrics for understanding the scope of farm to school in the U.S. and where gaps exist. However, each individual program will have unique successes and needs that cannot be captured fully in the Census. SFAs are encouraged to define their own measures of success and evaluate their progress towards those goals. States, regions, and the Federal government all have a role to play in supporting and encouraging schools to participate in farm to school by using and building upon the findings presented in this report.

Acknowledgments

This report was prepared by Decision Information Resources (DIR) and Mathematica for the U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service. Many people within and beyond these organizations assisted us. At FNS, Amy Rosenthal monitored project tasks and provided helpful guidance throughout the study period. Ashley Chaifetz also provided key subject matter support and expertise.

The analytics team at DIR meticulously prepared the data and developed detailed analytic tables that are the basis for the information presented in this report. The team consisted of Sarah Bowers, Joseph Calvert, Stephen Hile, and Huicong (Abigail) Zhang, and was led by Joy Kang. Amanda Abramson, Jillian Helmick, and Derek Schneider assisted with editing and formatting the tables. Carol Pistorino provided general support and guidance for the report.

At Mathematica, the programming team produced comprehensive and complex analytic tables with great care and attention to detail. This team included Jacqueline Agufa, Nima Rahimi, and Evan Christo. Barbara Carlson provided support in the development of national and State non-response weights. Dallas Dotter and Matt Jacobus advised on statistical procedures and analytic matters. Maria Hassett, Chichi Nwankwo, and Natalie Reid assisted with writing, analysis, and general support for the report. The report was formatted by Alex Benavides and Jess Coldren.

This report would not have been possible without the cooperation of staff at State Child Nutrition Agencies who provided contact information for School Food Authority staff and encouraged Census participation, and especially the SFA staff who completed the 2023 Census. We are deeply appreciative of the time and effort taken to provide the study team with detailed information on farm to school activities, expenditures, outcomes, and challenges.

Appendix A: Methods

This section provides a brief overview of the 2023 Farm to School Census data collection and analysis methodology.

Data Collection

School food authorities (SFAs) in all 50 States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands, the Northern Mariana Islands, and American Samoa that participated in the NSLP in school year (SY) 2022-23 were invited to participate in the 2023 Farm to School Census, regardless of their participation in farm to school activities. Data collection began on October 2, 2023, and concluded on January 7, 2024. State agencies provided contact information for SFAs in their State, and each contact received an email invitation providing a personalized link to access the web survey for their SFA. Throughout data collection, the study team sent reminder emails approximately every seven days to SFAs that had not completed the survey. In December 2023, SFAs were prompted by telephone to complete the Census, and a subset of SFAs were also mailed a reminder letter in late November or early December of 2023. In addition, State agencies contacted SFAs to encourage their participation. Census data collection concluded with a final national response rate of 67 percent. The 2023 Farm to School Census survey is included in Appendix C.

Data Analysis

Data Cleaning

Upon completion of the data collection period, the study team cleaned and processed the raw survey data to generate an analytic data file. This process included reviewing frequencies and survey responses to identify any potential errors or issues and addressing them as needed. During this process, the study team reviewed data for completeness, such as the presence of missing variables or missing responses; the presence of truncated data (particularly in open-text fields); and potential errors in the expected range of responses, programming logic, and consistency across responses. The study team reviewed all “other, specify” open-text fields to see if the response fit within any of the standard response options for that question. If so, the study team back-coded the “other” response to the standard response option. This resulted in a decrease in the percent of “other” responses across questions.

The study team also examined the survey data for implausibly high or low values as well as responses that were illogical, such as cases where the SFA reported greater local food expenditures than total food expenditures. The study team collaborated with FNS to determine outlier values for questions on staffing and food spending and set cases that met these criteria to missing for relevant analyses.

Linking Survey Responses to Administrative Data

Once the clean analytic data file was created, the study team merged in data from other sources to obtain information on SFA characteristics for the construction of non-response weights and to examine outcomes by SFA characteristics. To obtain SFA characteristics, the study team used a data file that combined data elements from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Common Core of Data (CCD) database (from SY 2021-22, the most recent data available at the time) and the FNS-742 SFA Verification Report Data (from SY 2022-23). The study team linked the CCD/FNS-742 dataset to the 2023 Farm to School Census data to add SFA

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characteristics including urbanicity (from the NCES CCD) and free and reduced-price lunch certification (from the FNS-742) to the analyses. The total number of schools and students in the SFA was also obtained from the FNS-742 and pre-loaded into the Census. SFAs had the opportunity to correct the total number of schools in the Census (Q3a), if needed.

The CCD contains detailed information on urbanicity and distinguishes 12 categories. For analysis purposes, the study team condensed these into 3 broader categories of urban, suburban, and rural:

| Urbanicity Category | Original CCD Classifications |
|---------------------|---|
| Urban | Large city, midsize city, or small city |
| Suburban | Large suburban area, midsize suburban area, small suburban area, or fringe town |
| Rural | Distant town, remote town, fringe rural area, distant rural area, and remote rural area |

The publicly available CCD data only contains urbanicity information for public SFAs. To reduce the number of missing values in the CCD/FNS-742 dataset, which includes private SFAs, the study team imputed the urbanicity values of a missing SFA from another SFA with non-missing urbanicity data in the same city and State, and, if there were multiple urbanicity values within a city, within the same zip code. If no SFAs were available in the same city and State, the study team did a manual review of the location of the SFA and assigned an urbanicity value with a nearby, similar geographic setting. Using this method for the 2023 analyses, the study team was able to identify an urbanicity value for every SFA listed in that dataset.

The 2019 dataset appears to have only the urbanicity data available from the CCD and did not include any imputation of urbanicity values. As a result, of all Census-eligible SFAs in 2019 (that is, SFAs that were still operating and participating in the NSLP as of the 2019 Census fielding), 23 percent of SFAs were missing an urbanicity value, whereas 4 percent were missing in 2023. The SFAs missing an urbanicity value in the final 2023 Census dataset are SFAs that were not included in the CCD/FNS-742 dataset due to being new SFAs, or SFAs that did not have any data available for or appear at all in the CCD and/or FNS-742 data.

Missing Data and Weighting for Non-response

The study team considered the effects of two types of missingness in the survey: item-level non-response and unit-level non-response. Item-level non-response refers to when a respondent had missing responses across questions in the survey, and unit-level non-response refers to when an eligible SFA did not respond to the survey.

To address the issue of item-level non-response, the analytic tables include information on the number of missing values across outcomes to inform the interpretation of the associated estimates. In addition, the study team set criteria for inclusion in the analytic data as a respondent. All respondents had to complete at least one component of Q7, then, depending on SFAs' farm to school status, different thresholds were applied for inclusion. SFAs that were farm to school participants in school year 2022-23 (F2S=1) had to complete through Q28 to be included in the respondent sample; SFAs that started farm to school in school year 2023-24 (F2S=2) had to complete through Q13; SFAs that planned to start farm to school in the future (F2S=3) had to complete through Q15; SFAs who were not participating in farm to school and had no plans for participating in the future (F2S=4) had to complete through Q17; and SFAs that participated previously but were no longer

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participating in farm to school (F2S=5) had to complete through Q10. These thresholds were determined in collaboration with FNS considering the thresholds applied in the 2019 Census.

To address the issue of unit-level non-response, the study team investigated whether response rates differed by SFA characteristics. The results revealed that respondents systematically differed from non-respondents on several measures. The study team calculated non-response weights to compensate for the potential bias associated with this observed variation by estimating a series of binary logistic regression models predicting survey response, removing non-significant covariates as the sequence progressed.

The first model included the following nine variables: geographic region, SFA size category, percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price meals (F/RP), school status, private organization status, the interaction between school and private organization status, residential child care institution (RCCI) status, the interaction between RCCI and private organization status, and urbanicity. The final model included five covariates: geographic region, SFA size category, percentage of students eligible for FRPL, private organization status, and urbanicity.

The team used coefficients derived from the final regression model to estimate the conditional probability of response for each SFA and to generate non-response weights based on the inverse of this probability (that is, an inverse propensity weight). This analytic method assigns weights to responding SFAs that adjust their responses such that they are more representative of the target population.

Statistical Testing

Analyses described in this report incorporate non-response weights unless otherwise specified. The study team conducted *t*-tests to compare differences in weighted estimates between various sub-groups of SFAs. Many of the tables summarizing such differences are large, with many pairwise comparisons. Therefore, the study team employed a Bonferroni adjustment to account for the increased familywise error rate associated with multiple comparisons. This approach computes an adjusted *p*-value that is the product of the original *p*-value and the total number of tests conducted for a given table. Differences were noted as significant if they were associated with an adjusted *p*-value ≤ 0.05 (two-tailed test).

Study Sample

A total of 18,833 SFAs were invited to participate in the 2023 Census.⁷ While 12,559 SFAs submitted the 2023 Census, not all of them met the study team's criteria for classification as a respondent and were therefore excluded from analysis, as described above in the section on Missing Data and Weighting for Non-response. In addition, there were 541 SFAs that did not officially submit the survey, but they otherwise met the study team's criteria for classification as a respondent and were therefore included for analytic purposes. In total, 11,803 respondents were included in the analyses in this report.

The 2023 Census asked SFAs a series of questions about the types of farm to school activities in which they participated. SFAs who participated in at least one of the over 30 possible farm to school activities during SY 2022-23 (the most recently completed full school year at the time of the survey) are referred to throughout this report as farm to school "participants in SY 2022-23," or simply "participants." The remaining SFAs were

⁷ Out of 18,833 SFAs invited to participate in the 2023 Census, 44 were deemed to be ineligible for one of the following reasons: no longer operating as an SFA, not operating the National School Lunch Program, or operating the Special Milk Program only. One new SFA was added.

categorized into one of three other farm to school participation statuses. SFAs that had no prior experience in farm to school but began participating in at least one activity in SY 2023-24 (the current school year at the time of the survey) were described as “began in SY 2023-24.” SFAs that had prior experience in at least one farm to school activity but were not participating in any activities during SY 2022-23 nor SY 2023-24 were defined as “past participants.” SFAs that had no prior or current participation in farm to school activities were described as having “never participated.” Past participants and those who had never participated could also indicate on the Census whether they planned to start any activities in the future. The participant categories and the number of respondents in each category for the 2023 Census are displayed in Exhibit A.1 below.

Exhibit A.1. Categories of farm to school participation

| Participation category | Definition | Number of 2023 Census Respondents |
|---------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
| Participant in SY 2022-23 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participated in at least one activity in SY 2022-23 | 8,822 |
| Began in SY 2023-24 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participated in at least one activity in SY 2023-24 Did not participate in any activities in SY 2022-23 | 847 |
| Past participant | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participated in at least one activity <i>prior to</i> SY 2022-23 Did not participate in any activities in SY 2022-23 or SY 2023-24 | 732 |
| Never participated | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Never participated in any activity | 1,402 |

The study team used the same criteria for classification as a respondent in the 2023 Census as were used for the 2019 Census. Among 18,832 SFA records from the 2019 Census, a total of 12,634 respondents were included in the longitudinal analyses presented in this report. The 2019 data also include information on SFAs’ urbanicity (from the CCD), F/RP meal certification (from the FNS-742), and SFA size (from the Census itself, measured by total number of students). These data were used in the longitudinal analyses for comparing 2019 and 2023.

Longitudinal Comparisons

The study team used the restricted-use 2019 Census data file and associated documentation to analyze relevant variables comparable to 2023 for the purposes of conducting longitudinal analyses. The study team converted the original file, available as a SAS file, to a STATA file, which was the program used for conducting the longitudinal analyses. The team used the non-response weight variable created by the authors of the 2019 data file in all longitudinal analyses where applicable to allow for the closest comparison to the 2023 analyses that are similarly weighted for non-response. Additional information about matching individual questions and responses between 2019 and 2023 can be found in the Limitations section of this Appendix.

Limitations

There are several limitations of the study design. First, the Farm to School Census relies on self-reported data, and the person at the SFA level designated to respond to the Census may not have all the information needed to answer a question. For example, they may not be aware of all farm to school activities conducted across all

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schools within the SFA. Also, many questions included prompts for the respondent to enter in their best guess, as it would be highly burdensome for SFAs to find exact counts for certain metrics. The Census included logic checks to prevent illogical values from being entered (including if they report higher expenditures on local foods than total food expenditures); however, there were still outliers that the study team removed if they were implausibly high or low given other characteristics of the SFA. As a result, the data on metrics, such as the number of schools with school gardens or food expenditures, should be considered approximations.

Additionally, most Census questions had some item-level non-response. It is possible that SFAs who skipped a certain question were different than SFAs who did not skip that question, which could bias the results. The study team addressed item-level non-response by excluding missing values from the denominator of point estimates, so estimates represent the proportion of SFAs that indicated a certain value among SFAs who were eligible for and responded to the question.

Respondent fatigue could have also affected the study results. Respondents with a larger portfolio of farm to school activities would generally be asked more questions compared to respondents who indicated they were not currently participating in any activities. Therefore, it is possible that responses towards the end of the survey for farm to school participants could have less accuracy or more missing values than responses at the beginning of their survey or compared to respondents who had fewer questions presented to them.

Regarding the longitudinal analyses, there were differences between the 2019 Census survey questions and the 2023 survey questions that required alignment of response options to compare similar metrics. For this reason, the longitudinal comparisons should be interpreted with caution, as the differences in questions may be partially responsible for changes in the proportion of SFAs reporting a certain outcome, rather than a true difference in the experiences of SFAs.

Examples of differences between 2019 and 2023 include:

- New response options in 2023
- Response options removed in 2023 that were present in 2019
- Response options that were combined or divided into two options in between 2019 and 2023
- Changes in wording of questions that could affect SFA interpretation
- Differences in the format or presentation of questions that could affect SFA interpretation
- Differences in skip logic (where answers to a previous question inform the subsequent questions that respondent saw) across years

The study team addressed these differences in response options across years in various ways. When response options were not comparable between years (that is, there were new or removed responses), the study team grouped these options into the “other” response category for that year where applicable. When there was a question that was preceded with skip logic in 2019 but not in 2023, the study team restricted the 2023 sample to only the types of respondents that saw the question in 2019. The study team did not manipulate the sample in any way when there were differences in wording; longitudinal analyses only included questions determined to be sufficiently similar.

Appendix B: Data Analysis Tables

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Table 30. Strategies to encourage participation in farm to school

Table 31. Local food purchases by values-based characteristics

Data Analysis Table Glossary

CACFP = Child and Adult Care Food Program

CSA = Community supported agriculture

DoD Fresh = USDA Department of Defense Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program

F2S = Farm to school

F2S SFA = School Food Authority that participated in at least one farm to school activity in SY 2022-23 (for the 2023 Census year) or SY 2018-19 (for the 2019 Census year)

FFVP = Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program

NSLP = National School Lunch Program

SFA = School Food Authority

SFSP = Summer Food Service Program

SSO = Seamless Summer Option

SY = School year

USDA = United States Department of Agriculture

Table 1. Farm to school participation, by SFA size

| Farm to school participation status | Percent of SFAs | | | | |
|---|-----------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| | All SFAs | Small (S) | Medium (M) | Large (L) | Very large (VL) |
| Participant in SY 2022-23 | 74.1 | 68.1 ^{M, L, VL} | 81.8 ^{S, L, VL} | 88.9 ^{S, M} | 93.4 ^{S, M} |
| Began in SY 2023-24 | 7.2 | 8.2 ^{M, L, VL} | 6.2 ^S | 4.2 ^S | 2.6 ^S |
| Past participant | 6.3 | 7.3 ^{M, L} | 5.2 ^S | 3.4 ^S | 2.7 |
| Participated before SY 2022-23 and plan to start again in the future | 2.2 | 2.4 | 1.9 | 1.4 | 1.8 |
| Participated before SY 2022-23 and do not plan to start again in the future | 4.1 | 4.9 ^{M, L, VL} | 3.4 ^S | 2.0 ^S | 0.8 ^S |
| Never participated | 12.4 | 16.4 ^{M, L, VL} | 6.7 ^{S, L} | 3.5 ^{S, M} | 1.3 ^S |
| Plan to begin in the future | 4.0 | 5.0 ^{M, L, VL} | 2.8 ^S | 1.3 ^S | 0.9 ^S |
| Do not plan to begin in the future | 8.4 | 11.4 ^{M, L, VL} | 3.9 ^S | 2.2 ^S | 0.5 ^S |

Source: 2023 Farm to School Census questions Q7a-ah (Please indicate if your SFA or schools in your SFA have never done the listed activity, did the activity before SY 2022-23, did the activity last year (SY 2022-23), are doing the activity this year (SY 2023-24), and/or plan to do the activity in the future).

Note: Statistical tests in this table were adjusted for multiple comparisons using the Bonferroni method.

All SFAs: n = 11,803, missing = 0, weighted N = 18,358

Small SFAs (1-999 students): n = 6,272, missing = 0, weighted N = 10,752

Medium SFAs (1,000-4,999 students): n = 3,750, missing = 0, weighted N = 5,359

Large SFAs (5,000-24,999 students): n = 1,237, missing = 0, weighted N = 1,649

Very large SFAs (25,000 or more students): n = 229, missing = 0, weighted N = 283

S, M, L, VL superscripts indicate a significant difference between the noted categories at the 0.05 level.

Table 2. School-level participation in farm to school activities

| Type of activity | Percent of schools participating | Total number of schools participating |
|---|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Participated in any farm to school activity | 76.6 | 56,044 |
| Served local food in any form | 74.4 | 54,447 |
| Provided food, nutrition, or agricultural education | 54.8 | 40,086 |

Source: 2023 Farm to School Census question Q20 (To the best of your knowledge, approximately how many schools within the SFA participated in the following activities during SY 2022-23?).

Note: Estimates are not weighted to be nationally representative and only reflect responding SFAs. Responses are limited to SFAs participating in farm to school in SY 2022-23 and those that are not missing a value for the total number of schools in the SFA.

N = 8,822, missing = 54

Table 3. Farm to school participation over time

| Participation status | Percent of SFAs | | Change |
|---|------------------|------------------|--------|
| | Census Year 2019 | Census Year 2023 | |
| Participant in farm to school during the study year | 65.4 | 74.1 | 8.7* |
| New participant in farm to school | 13.3 | 7.2 | -6.1* |
| Past participant in farm to school | 3.1 | 6.3 | 3.2* |
| Participated before the study year and plan to start again in the future | 0.7 | 2.2 | 1.5* |
| Participated before the study year and do not plan to start again in the future | 2.4 | 4.1 | 1.7* |
| Never participated in farm to school | 18.2 | 12.4 | -5.8* |
| Plan to begin farm to school in the future | 3.7 | 4.0 | 0.3 |
| Do not plan to begin farm to school in the future | 14.4 | 8.4 | -6.1* |

Source: 2023 Farm to School Census question Q7a to Q7ah; 2019 Farm to School Census question Q4_1 to Q4_30. Please indicate if your SFA or schools in your SFA have never done the listed activity, did the activity before [study year], did the activity last year, are doing the activity this year, and/or plan to do the activity in the future).

Note: The 'study year' refers to the school year that was the primary focus for conducting farm to school activities during each Census year (SY 2018-19 for the 2019 Census year, and SY 2022-23 for the 2023 Census year). New participants were defined as respondents who selected they began farm to school activities for the first time in SY 2019-20 (for the 2019 Census year) or in SY 2023-24 (for the 2023 Census year). Statistical tests in this table were adjusted for multiple comparisons using the Bonferroni method.

2019: n = 12,632, missing = 0, weighted N = 18,829

2023: n = 11,803, missing = 0, weighted N = 18,358

*Difference between 2019 and 2023 SFAs is significantly different from zero at the 0.05 level.

Table 4. Length of farm to school participation over time

| Participation length | Percent of F2S SFAs | | Change |
|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|--------|
| | Census Year 2019 | Census Year 2023 | |
| Less than 3 years | 56.8 | 50.0 | -6.8 |
| 3-5 years | 24.7 | 23.5 | -1.3 |
| 6-10 years | 11.2 | 14.2 | 3.0 |
| More than 10 years | 7.2 | 12.3 | 5.1 |

Source: 2023 Farm to School Census question Q18; 2019 Farm to School Census question Q19 (How long has your SFA been conducting farm to school activities?).

Note: Responses are limited to SFAs participating in farm to school in SY 2018-19 (for the 2019 Census year) or in SY 2022-23 (for the 2023 Census year).

2019: n = 8,377, missing = 16, weighted N = 12,290

2023: n = 8,781, missing = 41, weighted N = 13,530

Table 5. Number of farm to school activities conducted by farm to school participants over time

| Number of farm to school activities | Percent of F2S SFAs | | Change |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------|------------------|--------|
| | Census Year 2019 | Census Year 2023 | |
| 1 | 12.6 | 9.4 | -3.1* |
| 2-4 | 27.2 | 22.6 | -4.6* |
| 5-9 | 29.4 | 31.5 | 2.1* |
| 10-14 | 16.8 | 19.6 | 2.8* |
| 15 or more | 14.1 | 16.9 | 2.8* |

Source: 2023 Farm to School Census questions Q7a to Q7ah; 2019 Farm to School Census questions Q4_1 to Q4_30. Please indicate if your SFA or schools in your SFA have never done the listed activity, did the activity before [study year], did the activity last year, are doing the activity this year, and/or plan to do the activity in the future).

Note: Responses are limited to SFAs participating in farm to school in SY 2018-19 (for the 2019 Census year) or in SY 2022-23 (for the 2023 Census year). Statistical tests in this table were adjusted for multiple comparisons using the Bonferroni method.

2019: n = 8,393, missing = 0, weighted N = 12,315

2023: n = 8,822, missing = 0, weighted N = 13,598

*Difference between 2019 and 2023 SFAs is significantly different from zero at the 0.05 level.

Table 6. Farm to school participation, by free and reduced-price meal certification

| Farm to school participation status | Percent of SFAs | | | |
|---|-----------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| | All SFAs | Tercile 1 | Tercile 2 | Tercile 3 |
| Participant in SY 2022-23 | 74.1 | 75.1 | 74.7 | 73.4 |
| Began in SY 2023-24 | 7.2 | 7.4 | 7.1 | 7.0 |
| Past participant | 6.3 | 6.5 | 5.9 | 6.6 |
| Participated before SY 2022-23 and plan to start again in the future | 2.2 | 2.1 | 1.7 | 2.7 |
| Participated before SY 2022-23 and do not plan to start again in the future | 4.1 | 4.4 | 4.1 | 3.9 |
| Never participated | 12.4 | 11.0 | 12.4 | 13.0 |
| Plan to begin in the future | 4.0 | 3.5 | 3.7 | 4.8 |
| Do not plan to begin in the future | 8.4 | 7.6 | 8.7 | 8.2 |

Source: 2023 Farm to School Census questions Q7a-ah (Please indicate if your SFA or schools in your SFA have never done the listed activity, did the activity before SY 2022-23, did the activity last year (SY 2022-23), are doing the activity this year (SY 2023-24), and/or plan to do the activity in the future)

Note: Statistical tests in this table were adjusted for multiple comparisons using the Bonferroni method. No comparisons in this table were statistically significant.

All SFAs: n = 11,803, missing = 0, weighted N = 18,358

Tercile 1 (35% or fewer students certified): n = 3,799, missing = 0, weighted N = 5,893

Tercile 2 (more than 35% and up to 80% students certified): n = 3,883, missing = 0, weighted N = 5,843

Tercile 3 (more than 80% students certified): n = 3,509, missing = 0, weighted N = 5,840

Table 7. Grades participating in farm to school activities

| Grades | Percent of F2S SFAs |
|---|---------------------|
| Pre-Kindergarten and younger | 52.7 |
| Elementary schools (K-5th grades) | 82.2 |
| Middle schools/junior high (6th-8th grades) | 80.2 |
| High schools (9th-12th grades) | 74.6 |
| Other (e.g., K-8th grade) | 26.2 |

Source: 2023 Farm to School Census question Q19 (To the best of your knowledge, which grade levels within the SFA participated in these farm to school activities during SY 2022-23?).

Note: Sample is restricted to SFAs participating in at least one farm to school activity in SY 2022-23. Responses may not sum to 100% because multiple responses were permitted.

N = 8,406, missing = 416, weighted N = 12,955

Table 8. Farm to school activity participation among all SFAs, by SFA size

| Activity | Percent of SFAs | | | | |
|--|-----------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| | All SFAs | Small (S) | Medium (M) | Large (L) | Very Large (VL) |
| Serving local foods | 63.0 | 56.3 ^{M, L, VL} | 70.8 ^{S, L, VL} | 80.9 ^{S, M, VL} | 90.0 ^{S, M, L} |
| Use local foods in any form in CACFP At-Risk Afterschool (snacks and/or supper) | 58.4 | 45.9 ^{M, L, VL} | 60.9 ^{S, VL} | 61.8 ^S | 76.7 ^{S, M} |
| Use local foods in any form (fresh, frozen, dried) in the NSLP | 57.5 | 49.9 ^{M, L, VL} | 66.6 ^{S, L, VL} | 77.1 ^{S, M, VL} | 88.7 ^{S, M, L} |
| Use local foods in any form as part of the FFVP | 57.4 | 53.4 ^{M, VL} | 61.3 ^S | 62.9 | 72.9 ^S |
| Use local foods in any form in CACFP meals | 57.2 | 48.4 ^{M, L, VL} | 61.7 ^S | 64.3 ^S | 73.0 ^S |
| Use local foods in any form in summer meals (i.e., SFSP or SSO) | 56.2 | 46.6 ^{M, L, VL} | 59.3 ^{S, L, VL} | 68.5 ^{S, M, VL} | 82.0 ^{S, M, L} |
| Use local foods in any form in the SBP | 52.2 | 43.9 ^{M, L, VL} | 59.1 ^{S, L, VL} | 71.1 ^{S, M, VL} | 82.4 ^{S, M, L} |
| Serve local foods in any form in the NSLP After School Snack Service | 40.0 | 36.2 ^L | 41.3 | 49.0 ^S | 48.5 |
| Serve local foods in a school salad bar | 29.8 | 23.8 ^{M, L, VL} | 38.1 ^S | 42.4 ^S | 41.0 ^S |
| Serve local food in any other way | 21.9 | 17.8 ^{M, L, VL} | 27.0 ^S | 31.6 ^S | 38.7 ^S |
| Grow or serve local foods that are culturally relevant to students | 16.0 | 13.4 ^{M, L, VL} | 18.1 ^{S, VL} | 22.5 ^{S, VL} | 42.1 ^{S, M, L} |
| Promotion of local foods | 45.4 | 37.4 ^{M, L, VL} | 55.5 ^{S, L, VL} | 62.4 ^{S, M, VL} | 79.2 ^{S, M, L} |
| Implement strategies to encourage student selection and consumption of local foods | 30.4 | 24.0 ^{M, L, VL} | 38.3 ^{S, VL} | 44.2 ^S | 56.8 ^{S, M} |
| Promote local foods at school (e.g., via cafeteria signs, posters, newsletters) | 29.3 | 22.3 ^{M, L, VL} | 38.2 ^{S, VL} | 42.8 ^{S, VL} | 62.7 ^{S, M, L} |
| Promote local foods through themed or branded promotions | 23.4 | 15.8 ^{M, L, VL} | 32.2 ^{S, L, VL} | 40.0 ^{S, M, VL} | 63.0 ^{S, M, L} |
| Use cafeteria food coaches to promote the consumption of local foods | 14.9 | 13.4 ^{M, L} | 16.9 ^S | 18.5 ^S | 23.5 |
| Celebrate National Farm to School Month (October) | 14.8 | 9.7 ^{M, L, VL} | 20.5 ^{S, L, VL} | 25.8 ^{S, M, VL} | 45.1 ^{S, M, L} |
| Generate media coverage of local foods being used in schools | 9.7 | 6.3 ^{M, L, VL} | 12.4 ^{S, L, VL} | 18.9 ^{S, M, VL} | 38.4 ^{S, M, L} |
| Host special local food events in summer meals (i.e., SFSP or SSO) | 9.2 | 6.7 ^L | 9.8 | 13.0 ^S | 15.9 |
| Host farm to school related family and community events | 7.8 | 6.4 ^{M, L, VL} | 8.6 ^{S, L, VL} | 13.1 ^{S, M} | 21.8 ^{S, M} |

Appendix B: Data Analysis Tables

| Activity | Percent of SFAs | | | | |
|--|-----------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| | All SFAs | Small (S) | Medium (M) | Large (L) | Very Large (VL) |
| Host special local foods events in CACFP | 2.8 | 1.9 | 4.2 | 2.4 | 2.8 |
| Agriculture education and edible school gardens | 48.5 | 43.6 ^{M, L, VL} | 55.0 ^{S, VL} | 57.9 ^{S, VL} | 77.5 ^{S, M, L} |
| Expose students to agriculture-related careers | 28.6 | 25.5 ^{M, L, VL} | 33.8 ^S | 32.1 ^S | 44.8 ^S |
| Integrate farm to school activities in curriculum | 21.0 | 18.8 ^{M, L, VL} | 23.3 ^{S, VL} | 25.2 ^{S, VL} | 43.8 ^{S, M, L} |
| Conduct student field trips to farms, farmers' markets, producers, or processors | 17.3 | 16.9 | 18.0 | 17.2 | 23.1 |
| Hold taste tests or cooking demonstrations of local or edible school garden-grown foods | 17.2 | 12.9 ^{M, L, VL} | 20.7 ^{S, L, VL} | 28.7 ^{S, M, VL} | 53.0 ^{S, M, L} |
| Have any type of edible school garden | 16.6 | 14.2 ^{M, L, VL} | 17.5 ^{S, L, VL} | 25.6 ^{S, M, VL} | 48.0 ^{S, M, L} |
| Have farmer(s) visit the cafeteria, classroom, or other school-related setting | 8.7 | 7.0 ^{M, L, VL} | 9.9 ^{S, VL} | 13.6 ^S | 22.7 ^{S, M} |
| Use USDA Team Nutrition materials as part of taste testing or other educational activities | 6.4 | 4.9 ^{M, L, VL} | 8.2 ^{S, VL} | 9.107 ^{S, VL} | 19.3 ^{S, M, L} |
| Food sourcing and procurement | 54.9 | 43.9 ^{M, L, VL} | 69.1 ^{S, L, VL} | 78.8 ^{S, M} | 87.8 ^{S, M} |
| Source local foods from USDA DoD Fresh | 41.7 | 30.2 ^{M, L, VL} | 57.6 ^{S, L} | 65.4 ^{S, M} | 67.4 ^S |
| Search for local vendors, farmers, food hubs, or cooperatives to procure local foods | 25.0 | 19.0 ^{M, L, VL} | 31.8 ^{S, L, VL} | 38.3 ^{S, M, VL} | 55.5 ^{S, M, L} |
| Forecast budgetary needs for local purchases | 16.6 | 11.5 ^{M, L, VL} | 21.6 ^{S, L, VL} | 30.5 ^{S, M} | 40.7 ^{S, M} |
| Includes values statements in procurement documents | 13.6 | 10.5 ^{M, L, VL} | 16.3 ^{S, L, VL} | 21.7 ^{S, M, VL} | 39.4 ^{S, M, L} |
| Indicates a geographic preference in procurement documents | 12.1 | 7.8 ^{M, L, VL} | 15.3 ^{S, L, VL} | 25.2 ^{S, M, VL} | 44.7 ^{S, M, L} |
| Work with local food producers to develop specific food products using local foods | 10.6 | 7.5 ^{M, L, VL} | 13.5 ^{S, L, VL} | 18.9 ^{S, M} | 30.6 ^{S, M} |
| Other | 25.0 | 19.9 ^{M, L, VL} | 30.5 ^{S, L, VL} | 36.7 ^{S, M, VL} | 55.3 ^{S, M, L} |
| Provide training to school food service staff related to farm to school activities | 16.5 | 12.0 ^{M, L, VL} | 21.5 ^{S, VL} | 26.4 ^{S, VL} | 42.4 ^{S, M, L} |

Appendix B: Data Analysis Tables

| Activity | Percent of SFAs | | | | |
|--|-----------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| | All SFAs | Small (S) | Medium (M) | Large (L) | Very Large (VL) |
| Collect food waste for composting | 10.7 | 9.2 ^{L, VL} | 11.3 ^{L, VL} | 15.8 ^{S, M} | 26.1 ^{S, M} |
| Evaluate the impact of farm to school activities | 7.9 | 6.1 ^{M, L, VL} | 10.2 ^S | 12.2 ^S | 15.7 ^S |

Source: 2023 Farm to School Census questions Q7a-ah (Please indicate if your SFA or schools in your SFA have never done the listed activity, did the activity before SY 2022-23, did the activity last year (SY 2022-23), are doing the activity this year (SY 2023-24), and/or plan to do the activity in the future).

Note: Responses may not sum to 100% because multiple responses were permitted. Statistical tests in this table were adjusted for multiple comparisons using the Bonferroni method.

All SFAs: n = 11,746, missing = 57, weighted N = 18,266

Small (1-999 students) n = 6,238, missing = 34, weighted N = 10,692

Medium (1,000-4,999 students) n = 3,733, missing = 17, weighted N = 5,334

Large (5,000-24,999 students) n = 1,233, missing = 4, weighted N = 1,644

Very large (over 25,000 students) n = 229, missing = 0, weighted N = 283

S, M, L, VL superscripts indicate a significant difference between the noted categories at the 0.05 level.

Table 9. Definition of “local” for school food procurement

| Definition of “local” selected | Percent of F2S SFAs |
|--|---------------------|
| Produced within a 20 mile radius | 4.8 |
| Produced within a 50 mile radius | 8.3 |
| Produced within a 100 mile radius | 9.2 |
| Produced within a 200 mile radius | 4.5 |
| Produced within a 400 mile radius | 4.7 |
| Produced within the county | 2.8 |
| Produced within the State | 28.2 |
| Produced within the region | 4.9 |
| Other | 0.6 |
| We don’t have a set definition for local | 20.4 |
| Don’t know | 11.6 |

Source: 2023 Farm to School Census question Q26 (How does your SFA define “local” for the majority of its school food procurement?)

Note: Responses limited to SFAs participating in farm to school in SY 2022-23.

n = 8,822, missing = 0, weighted N = 13,598

Table 10. Participation in farm to school promotion activities over time

| Promotion activity | Percent of F2S SFAs | | Change |
|---|---------------------|------------------|--------|
| | Census Year 2019 | Census Year 2023 | |
| Promote local foods in general | 42.3 | 43.0 | 0.8 |
| Encourage student selection and consumption | 39.8 | 44.9 | 5.1 |
| Themed or branded promotions | 30.7 | 34.1 | 3.4 |
| Use food coaches | 21.5 | 21.6 | 0.1 |
| Celebrate National Farm to School Month | 21.2 | 22.1 | 0.9 |
| Generate media coverage of local foods | 14.8 | 14.0 | -0.8 |
| Farm to school family and community events | 12.0 | 11.4 | -0.6 |
| Local foods events in CACFP and/or SFSP | 4.7 | 3.8 | -0.9 |

Source: 2023 Farm to School Census questions Q7n, Q7o, Q7u, Q7v, Q7w, Q7x, Q7y, and Q7z; 2019 Farm to School Census questions Q4i, Q4j, Q4q, Q4r, Q4s, Q4t, Q4u, and Q4v (Please indicate if your SFA or schools in your SFA have never done the listed activity, did the activity before SY 2022-23, did the activity last year, are doing the activity this year, and/or plan to do the activity in the future).

Note: Responses are limited to SFAs participating in farm to school in SY 2018-19 (for the 2019 Census year) or in SY 2022-23 (for the 2023 Census year).

2019: n = 8,393, missing = 0, weighted N = 12,315

2023: n = 8,068, missing = 754, weighted N = 12,436

Table 11. Participation in farm to school education activities over time

| Education activity | Percent of F2S SFAs | | Change |
|--|---------------------|------------------|--------|
| | Census Year 2019 | Census Year 2023 | |
| Hold taste tests or cooking demonstrations | 33.5 | 25.3 | -8.3 |
| Student field trips to farms etc. | 30.7 | 25.2 | -5.5 |
| Have farmers visit | 15.3 | 12.8 | -2.5 |
| Use USDA Team Nutrition materials | 11.8 | 9.4 | -2.4 |

Source: 2023 Farm to School Census questions Q7k, Q7p, Q7q, and Q7r; 2019 Farm to School Census questions Q4g, Q4k, Q4m, and Q4n. (Please indicate if your SFA or schools in your SFA have never done the listed activity, did the activity before SY 2022-23, did the activity last year, are doing the activity this year, and/or plan to do the activity in the future).

Note: Responses are limited to SFAs participating in farm to school in SY 2018-19 (for the 2019 Census year) or in SY 2022-23 (for the 2023 Census year).

2019: n = 8,393, missing = 0, weighted N = 12,315

2023: n = 8,684, missing = 138, weighted N = 13,383

Appendix B: Data Analysis Tables

Table 12. Edible school gardens over time

| Census year | Total schools with edible gardens |
|-------------|-----------------------------------|
| 2019 | 5,966 |
| 2023 | 6,539 |

Source: 2023 Farm to School Census question Q24; 2019 Farm to School Census question Q29 (To the best of your knowledge, approximately how many schools in the SFA had edible school gardens during [study year]?).

Note: Estimates are not weighted to be nationally representative and only reflect responding SFAs. Responses are limited to SFAs participating in farm to school in SY 2018-19 (for the 2019 Census year) or in SY 2022-23 (for the 2023 Census year).

2019: n = 8,393, missing = 149

2023: n = 8,822, missing = 891

Table 13. Food spending by expenditure type

| Expenditure type | Mean | Std dev | Min | Max | Median | Total |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------|------------------|--------------|---------------------|
| Including USDA Foods and USDA DoD Fresh | | | | | | |
| Total spending on foods ^a | \$1,011,549.88 | \$4,351,889.47 | \$500.00 | \$193,519,844.00 | \$246,000.00 | \$10,960,782,762.42 |
| Total spending on USDA Foods ^a | \$96,138.76 | \$471,583.28 | \$0.00 | \$23,500,000.00 | \$15,399.00 | \$1,041,724,292.05 |
| Total spending on USDA DoD Fresh ^a | \$39,702.03 | \$537,161.50 | \$0.00 | \$44,500,000.00 | \$3,500.00 | \$430,196,620.67 |
| Total spending on local foods including fluid milk ^a | \$165,889.07 | \$831,548.76 | \$0.00 | \$44,624,907.00 | \$30,000.00 | \$1,797,512,969.08 |
| Spending on local foods through USDA Foods ^a | \$10,783.76 | \$73,277.62 | \$0.00 | \$2,506,788.00 | \$0.00 | \$116,848,855.63 |
| Spending on local foods through USDA DoD Fresh ^a | \$10,417.74 | \$160,914.49 | \$0.00 | \$13,141,124.00 | \$0.00 | \$112,882,779.11 |
| Spending on local fluid milk ^b | \$84,160.97 | \$434,919.03 | \$0.00 | \$21,063,920.00 | \$10,000.00 | \$955,547,204.23 |
| Excluding USDA Foods and USDA DoD Fresh | | | | | | |
| Total spending on foods ^b | \$846,301.70 | \$3,643,801.74 | \$0.00 | \$152,187,010.00 | \$200,000.00 | \$9,608,743,631.66 |
| Total spending on local foods including fluid milk ^b | \$139,317.82 | \$695,161.37 | \$0.00 | \$31,483,783.00 | \$22,000.00 | \$1,581,787,175.75 |
| Spending on local fluid milk ^b | \$84,160.97 | \$434,919.03 | \$0.00 | \$21,063,920.00 | \$10,000.00 | \$955,547,204.23 |

Source: 2023 Farm to School Census questions Q35-Q41 (what were your SFA’s approximate costs of [CATEGORY] (in dollars)?).

Note: Responses limited to SFAs participating in farm to school in SY 2022-23 that procured local foods. With select exceptions, SFAs were set to missing in this table if they reported total spending of less than \$1,000 or more than \$50,000,000; if they reported total spending less than \$10 or more than \$20,000 per student; or if they reported spending on USDA Foods of \$1,000 or more per student.

^a n = 7,071, missing = 1,650, weighted N = 10,836

^b n = 7,400, missing = 1,321, weighted N = 11,354

Table 14. Local food purchases by food group over time

| Local food purchases | Percent of F2S SFAs | | Change |
|--|---------------------|------------------|--------|
| | Census Year 2019 | Census Year 2023 | |
| Fruit ^a | 73.4 | 76.4 | 3.0* |
| Vegetables ^b | 71.3 | 74.3 | 3.0* |
| Fluid milk ^c | 59.5 | 62.5 | 3.0* |
| Other dairy ^d | 28.0 | 33.7 | 5.7* |
| Grains, including baked goods ^e | 25.9 | 33.1 | 7.2* |
| Protein ^f | 23.9 | 31.7 | 7.8* |
| Other product type ^g | 8.0 | 4.6 | -3.4* |

Source: 2023 Farm to School Census question Q30; 2019 Farm to School Census question Q34 (Please indicate if your SFA or any schools in your SFA purchased local foods in any form from any of the following food groups during [school year] or would like to in the future.).

Note: Responses are limited to SFAs participating in farm to school in SY 2018-19 (for the 2019 Census year) or in SY 2022-23 (for the 2023 Census year) and procured local foods. Responses may not sum to 100% because multiple responses were permitted. The sample sizes for each food group differ due to varying numbers of missing records within groups. Statistical tests in this table were adjusted for multiple comparisons using the Bonferroni method.

^a 2019, n = 8,256, missing = 137, weighted N = 12,103

^b 2019, n = 8,246, missing = 147, weighted N = 12,090

^c 2019, n = 8,135, missing = 258, weighted N = 11,935

^d 2019, n = 7,949, missing = 444, weighted N = 11,653

^e 2019, n = 7,972, missing = 421, weighted N = 11,686

^f 2019, n = 7,984, missing = 409, weighted N = 11,702

^g 2019, n = 5,316, missing = 3,077, weighted N = 7,808

^{a-f} 2023, n = 8,697, missing = 24, weighted N = 13,395

^g 2023, n = 5,609, missing = 3,112, weighted N = 8,630

*Difference between 2019 and 2023 SFAs is significantly different from zero at the 0.05 level.

Appendix B: Data Analysis Tables

Table 15. SFAs purchasing local food from a single food group

| Food group | Percent of F2S SFAs |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|
| Fluid milk | 3.1 |
| Fruit | 1.8 |
| Protein | 1.2 |
| Vegetables | 1.0 |
| Grains, including baked goods | 0.2 |
| Other dairy | 0.1 |
| Other product type | 0.1 |

Source: 2023 Farm to School Census question Q30 (Please indicate if your SFA or any schools in your SFA purchased local foods in any form from any of the following food groups during SY 2022-23 or would like to in the future).

Note: Responses limited to SFAs indicating participation in farm to school in SY 2022-23 that procured local foods.

n = 8,697, missing = 24, weighted N = 13,395

Appendix B: Data Analysis Tables

Table 16. Top local food items by spending

| Local Food | Percent of F2S SFAs |
|--------------|---------------------|
| Fluid Milk | 34.6 |
| Apples | 17.8 |
| Beef | 9.6 |
| Poultry | 7.7 |
| Lettuce | 2.4 |
| Baked Goods | 1.8 |
| Salad Mix | 1.4 |
| Watermelon | 1.3 |
| Oranges | 1.3 |
| Strawberries | 1.3 |

Source: 2023 Farm to School Census question Q42 (In SY 2022-23, what local item, of any type and in any form, did your SFA spend the most on?)

Note: Responses limited to SFAs indicating participation in farm to school in SY 2022-23 that procured local foods. Percentages were calculated by summing the non-response weights of SFAs who selected each food item, then divided by the sum of non-response weights for all SFAs who reported purchasing any local food item. The top ten items are reported in the table. Responses may not sum to 100% as only top 10 items are shown.

n = 8,721, missing = 0, weighted N = 13,435

Table 17. Frequency of serving local foods in school meals or snacks over time

| Frequency | Percent of F2S SFAs | | Change |
|-------------------------|---------------------|------------------|--------|
| | Census Year 2019 | Census Year 2023 | |
| Daily | 65.6 | 64.8 | -0.8 |
| A few times per week | 27.8 | 34.7 | 6.9* |
| Weekly | 21.9 | 26.8 | 4.9* |
| A few times per month | 18.1 | 22.3 | 4.2* |
| Monthly | 7.8 | 8.4 | 0.6 |
| Seasonally/occasionally | 26.8 | 23.8 | -2.9* |
| Never | 6.1 | 4.6 | -1.4* |

Source: 2023 Farm to School Census question Q31; 2019 Farm to School Census question Q36 (In general, in [study year], about how frequently did your SFA's meals or snacks include at least one local food in any form from the categories below?).

Note: Responses are limited to SFAs participating in farm to school in SY 2018-19 (for the 2019 Census year) or in SY 2022-23 (for the 2023 Census year) and procured local foods. Statistical tests in this table were adjusted for multiple comparisons using the Bonferroni method.

2019: n = 7,181, missing = 0, weighted N = 10,475

2023: n = 7,612, missing = 1,109, weighted N = 11,693

*Difference between 2019 and 2023 SFAs is significantly different from zero at the 0.05 level.

Table 18. Local food sources

| Sources of local foods | Percent of F2S SFAs ^a | Percent of all SFAs ^b |
|--|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| USDA DoD Fresh Program | 53.1 | 39.4 |
| USDA Foods | 39.8 | 29.5 |
| Produce distributor | 37.1 | 27.5 |
| Directly from an individual food producer, including but not limited to a farmer's market or CSA model | 25.3 | 18.7 |
| Directly from a local food processor or manufacturer | 23.3 | 17.2 |
| Grocery store | 21.0 | 15.6 |
| Broadline distributor | 20.4 | 15.1 |
| School or community garden/farm | 10.9 | 8.1 |
| Directly from a cooperative of producers | 10.5 | 7.8 |
| Food hub | 7.1 | 5.3 |
| Other | 3.0 | 2.2 |
| Don't know | 8.6 | 6.4 |
| Did not procure local foods in SY 2022-23 | 1.2 | 0.9 |

Source: 2023 Farm to School Census question Q27 (Please indicate if your SFA procured local foods from any of the following sources).

Note: Responses may not sum to 100% because multiple responses were permitted.

^a Responses limited to SFAs participating in farm to school in SY 2022-23: n = 8,822, missing = 0, weighted N = 13,598

^b Includes all SFAs in the denominator of the calculation: n = 11,803, missing = 0, weighted N = 18,358

Table 19. Local food sources over time

| Local food source | Percent of F2S SFAs | | Change |
|--|---------------------|------------------|--------|
| | Census Year 2019 | Census Year 2023 | |
| USDA DoD Fresh Program | 43.1 | 53.1 | 10.0* |
| Produce distributor | 42.5 | 37.1 | -5.4* |
| USDA Foods | 36.3 | 39.8 | 3.5* |
| Individual food producer (i.e., farmer, rancher, fisher) | 25.4 | 25.3 | -0.2 |
| Grocery store | 16.9 | 21.0 | 4.1* |
| Broadline distributor | 16.5 | 20.4 | 3.9* |
| School or community garden/farm | 16.4 | 10.9 | -5.5* |
| Cooperative of farmers, ranchers, or fishers | 8.2 | 10.5 | 2.4* |
| Food hub | 3.2 | 7.1 | 4.0* |
| Other | 9.3 | 26.0 | 16.7* |
| Don't know | 5.8 | 8.6 | 2.8* |
| None of these/did not procure local foods | 9.5 | 1.2 | -8.3* |

Source: 2023 Farm to School Census question Q27; 2019 Farm to School Census question Q32 (For [study year], please indicate if your SFA procured local foods from any of the following sources.).

Note: Responses are limited to SFAs participating in farm to school in SY 2018-19 (for the 2019 Census year) or in SY 2022-23 (for the 2023 Census year). Response options differed across Census years; any response options selected in 2019 that were not present in 2023 were recategorized as an 'other' source in 2019, and vice versa in 2023. Statistical tests in this table were adjusted for multiple comparisons using the Bonferroni method.

2019: n = 8,393, missing = 0, weighted N = 12,315

2023: n = 8,822, missing = 0, weighted N = 13,598

*Difference between 2019 and 2023 SFAs is significantly different from zero at the 0.05 level.

Table 20. Outcomes from participating in farm to school, by length of farm to school participation

| Description | Percent of F2S SFAs | | |
|---|---------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| | All SFAs | Participated less than 3 years | Participated 3 or more years |
| Student Outcomes | 77.1 | 71.3 | 82.9 |
| Increased consumption of fruits and/or vegetables in school meals | 61.0 | 55.6 | 66.5 |
| Increased positive perception of school food program among students | 47.7 | 40.2 | 55.2 |
| Increased participation in school meals | 41.0 | 38.4 | 43.7 |
| Increased student knowledge about local and/or healthful foods | 38.6 | 28.6 | 48.7 |
| Reduced food waste | 30.8 | 29.0 | 32.7 |
| Increased consumption of items other than fruits and vegetables in school meals | 29.4 | 26.0 | 32.7 |
| Increased student knowledge about how to grow food | 23.5 | 16.0 | 31.1 |
| Increased student experimental learning opportunities | 18.1 | 11.3 | 24.9 |
| Increased professional skill building, job training, or career exploration for students | 12.7 | 9.1 | 16.3 |
| Other | 1.8 | 2.2 | 1.4 |
| None of the above | 10.5 | 14.4 | 6.6 |
| Don't know | 12.4 | 14.3 | 10.5 |
| Food Service Outcomes | 69.7 | 63.4 | 76.1 |
| Access to better quality foods | 56.8 | 49.2 | 64.5 |
| Increased cooking food from "scratch" | 32.4 | 29.6 | 35.1 |
| Increased kitchen staff satisfaction | 25.3 | 22.7 | 28.0 |
| Less disruption to supply chains | 21.8 | 17.7 | 25.9 |
| Greater ability to procure desired products | 20.1 | 16.3 | 23.9 |
| Lower school meal program costs | 16.6 | 15.3 | 17.9 |
| Other | 2.0 | 2.1 | 1.8 |

Appendix B: Data Analysis Tables

| Description | Percent of F2S SFAs | | |
|---|---------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| | All SFAs | Participated less than 3 years | Participated 3 or more years |
| None of the above | 16.7 | 20.6 | 12.8 |
| Don't know | 13.6 | 16.0 | 11.1 |
| Community Outcomes | 62.5 | 54.5 | 70.5 |
| Increased positive perception of school food program among teachers and/or administrators | 48.6 | 40.7 | 56.5 |
| Increased positive perception of school fund program among parents | 42.2 | 34.4 | 49.9 |
| Increased support for local businesses | 32.8 | 25.7 | 39.9 |
| Other | 1.2 | 1.3 | 1.1 |
| None of the above | 19.1 | 24.8 | 13.5 |
| Don't know | 18.3 | 20.7 | 15.9 |

Source: 2023 Farm to School Census questions Q11a – Q11c (Which of the following student/food service/community outcomes have resulted from your SFA's participation in farm to school activities?).

Note: Responses are limited to SFAs participating in SY 2022-23. Responses may not sum to 100% because multiple responses were permitted.

All SFAs: n = 8,786, missing = 36, weighted N = 13,540

Less than 3 years: n = 4,302, missing = 3, weighted N = 6,760

3 or more years: n = 4,473, missing = 3, weighted N = 6,761

Table 21. Food preparation facilities, by farm to school participation status

| Food preparation facility | Percent of SFAs | | | | |
|---|-----------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| | All SFAs | Participant in F2S in SY 2022-23 (A) | Began F2S in SY 2023-24 (B) | Past participant in F2S (C) | Never participated in F2S (D) |
| School-based kitchens (i.e., for a single school) | 71.7 | 75.3 ^{B, C, D} | 68.0 ^{A, D} | 67.5 ^{A, D} | 54.9 ^{A, B, C} |
| Central kitchen (i.e., for entire SFA or multiple schools in the SFA) | 20.9 | 21.3 ^D | 21.8 | 20.0 | 18.2 ^A |
| Receiving (satellite) kitchen (i.e., on site preparation limited to activities such as reheating) | 14.1 | 13.8 ^D | 11.7 ^D | 14.4 | 16.9 ^{A, B} |
| Regional kitchens (i.e., meals are prepared at one school and distributed to other schools) | 7.1 | 7.9 ^{C, D} | 5.5 | 4.8 ^A | 4.2 ^A |
| No kitchen facilities | 2.9 | 1.7 ^{B, C, D} | 3.6 ^{A, D} | 4.1 ^{A, D} | 9.0 ^{A, B, C} |
| Other | 2.3 | 1.8 ^D | 3.1 | 2.9 ^A | 5.0 ^{A, C} |

Source: 2023 Farm to School Census question Q5 (In SY 2022-23, how did your SFA handle food preparation for the NSLP?).

Note: Responses may not sum to 100% because multiple responses were permitted. Statistical tests in this table were adjusted for multiple comparisons using the Bonferroni method. Respondents were designated as participants in farm to school in SY 2022-23 if they conducted at least one farm to school activity during that school year. Respondents were designated as new participants if they planned to conduct at least one farm to school activity in SY 2023-24 and had never participated in any farm to school activity previously. Respondents were designated as past participants if they conducted at least one farm to school activity before SY 2022-23 but indicated not participating in any activities in SY 2022-23 or SY 2023-24.

All SFAs: n = 11,803, missing = 0, weighted N = 18,358

Participant in F2S in 2022-23: n = 8,822, missing = 0, weighted N = 13,598

Began F2S in 2023-24: n = 847, missing = 0, weighted N = 1,327

Past participant in F2S: n = 732, missing = 0, weighted N = 1,162

Never participated in F2S: n = 1,402, missing = 0, weighted N = 2,271

A, B, C, D superscripts indicate a significant difference between the noted categories at the 0.05 level.

Table 22. Food service methods, by farm to school participation status

| Food service method | Percent of SFAs | | | | |
|--|-----------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| | All SFAs | Participant in F2S in 2022-23 | Began F2S in 2023-24 | Past participant in F2S | Never participated in F2S |
| Self-operated | 71.0 | 73.5 | 69.3 | 71.8 | 56.7 |
| Food service management company (FSMC) | 20.3 | 20.6 | 17.8 | 17.3 | 21.8 |
| Vended meals | 9.1 | 6.7 | 13.3 | 10.6 | 20.1 |
| Other | 1.8 | 1.3 | 2.1 | 2.4 | 4.5 |

Source: 2023 Farm to School Census question Q4 (In SY 2022-23, how did your SFA handle food service for the NSLP?).

Note: Responses may not sum to 100% because multiple responses were permitted. Respondents were designated as participants in farm to school in SY 2022-23 if they conducted at least one farm to school activity during that school year. Respondents were designated as new participants if they planned to conduct at least one farm to school activity in SY 2023-24 and had never participated in any farm to school activity previously. Respondents were designated as past participants if they conducted at least one farm to school activity before SY 2022-23 but indicated not participating in any activities in SY 2022-23 or SY 2023-24.

All SFAs: n = 11,803, missing = 0, weighted N = 18,358

Participant in F2S in 2022-23: n = 8,822, missing = 0, weighted N = 13,598

Began F2S in 2023-24: n = 847, missing = 0, weighted N = 1,327

Past participant in F2S: n = 732, missing = 0, weighted N = 1,162

Never participated in F2S: n = 1,402, missing = 0, weighted N = 2,271

Table 23. Staff working on farm to school activities over time

| Number of staff members | Percent of F2S SFAs | | | |
|-------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| | Census Year 2019 | | Census Year 2023 | |
| | Full-time staff dedicated to farm to school | Full or part-time staff who use some portion of their time for farm to school | Full-time staff dedicated to farm to school | Full or part-time staff who use some portion of their time for farm to school |
| 0 | 84.1 | 43.1 | 65.2 | 24.1 |
| 1 | 8.4 | 17.3 | 16.3 | 21.6 |
| 2-9 | 6.3 | 29.1 | 15.5 | 39.0 |
| 10 + | 1.3 | 10.5 | 3.0 | 15.4 |

Source: 2023 Farm to School Census question Q21; 2019 Farm to School Census question Q46 (To the best of your knowledge, in [school year], how many staff in your SFA, schools, and district (e.g., food service staff, garden educators, AmeriCorps members, teachers) spent time on farm to school activities? Please only include paid staff, including any contracted and grant-funded staff).

Note: Responses are limited to SFAs participating in farm to school in SY 2018-19 (for the 2019 Census year) or in SY 2022-23 (for the 2023 Census year). SFAs were set to missing in this table if they reported 100 or more full time staff; if they reported 10 or more full time staff per school in the SFA; or if they reported 100 or more full or part-time staff spending a portion of their time on farm to school per school in the SFA.

2019: n = 7,516, missing = 877, weighted N = 10,969

2023: n = 8,689, missing = 133, weighted N = 13,390

Table 24. Farm to school funding sources over time

| Type of funding source | Percent of F2S SFAs | | Change |
|---|---------------------|------------------|--------|
| | Census Year 2019 | Census Year 2023 | |
| School/district funding | 16.0 | 18.4 | 2.3 |
| State or local government grant(s) | 8.4 | 14.2 | 5.8 |
| USDA Farm to School Grant(s) | 7.7 | 15.9 | 8.2 |
| Individual donation(s) | 6.7 | 5.7 | -1.0 |
| Other federal funding sources | 5.0 | 14.4 | 9.4 |
| In-kind contribution(s) | 4.9 | 3.8 | -1.2 |
| Private foundation grant(s) (national or local) | 3.2 | 2.1 | -1.1 |
| Corporate partnership(s) or donation(s) | 3.0 | 1.8 | -1.2 |
| Other | 40.0 | 44.4 | 4.4 |
| Don't know | 33.4 | 25.0 | -8.3 |

Source: 2023 Farm to School Census question Q22 (To the best of your knowledge, in [study year], how did your SFA fund participation in farm to school activities (e.g., purchasing local foods, paying staff, organizing promotional events?); 2019 Farm to School Census question Q47 (How are the above positions and farm to school activities funded?).

Note: Responses are limited to SFAs participating in farm to school in SY 2018-19 (for the 2019 Census year) or in SY 2022-23 (for the 2023 Census year). Response options differed across Census years; any response options selected in 2019 that were not present in 2023 were recategorized as an 'other' source in 2019, and vice versa in 2023. The 2019 and 2023 questions are not entirely comparable. Q47 in 2019 was restricted to respondents who indicated at least one full or part-time staff person working on farm to school, whereas Q22 in 2023 was not restricted in this way. The 2023 sample size is larger than 2019, and the number of missing responses larger in 2019, for this reason.

2019: n = 4,788, missing = 3,605, weighted N = 6,993

2023: n = 8,730, missing = 92, weighted N = 13,453

Table 25. Farm to school funding sources

| Funding source | Percent of F2S SFAs |
|--|---------------------|
| School/district funding | 18.4 |
| USDA Farm to School Grant(s) | 15.9 |
| Other federal funding sources | 14.4 |
| State government grant(s) | 12.9 |
| Food service management company | 9.9 |
| Individual donation(s) | 5.7 |
| Non-profit organization(s) or institute(s) | 4.9 |
| Local government grant(s) | 4.2 |
| In-kind contribution(s) | 3.8 |
| Local or State program that offers monetary incentives for serving local foods | 3.7 |
| School or district fundraising | 3.6 |
| Private foundation grant(s) (national or local) | 2.1 |
| Corporate partnership(s) or donation(s) | 1.8 |
| There is no supplemental funding for farm to school | 23.3 |
| Other | 2.3 |
| Don't know | 25.0 |

Source: 2023 Farm to School Census question Q22 (To the best of your knowledge, in SY 2022-23, how did your SFA fund participation in farm to school activities (e.g., purchasing local foods, paying staff, organizing promotional events)?).

Note: Responses limited to SFAs participating in farm to school in SY 2022-23. Responses may not sum to 100% because multiple responses were permitted.

All SFAs: n = 8,730, missing = 92, weighted N = 13,453

Table 26. SFA policies to support farm to school over time

| Type of policy | Percent of F2S SFAs | | Change |
|--|---------------------|------------------|--------|
| | Census Year 2019 | Census Year 2023 | |
| Wellness policies that support farm to school | 33.6 | 42.3 | 8.7* |
| Procurement policies that support purchasing local foods | 31.0 | 36.6 | 5.6* |
| Budget allocations dedicated to farm to school activities | 7.7 | 10.8 | 3.1* |
| Policies that support fundraising for farm to school activities | 3.8 | 5.2 | 1.5* |
| None of the above were in place to support farm to school activities | 30.3 | 21.2 | -9.0* |
| Other | 1.8 | 8.1 | 6.4* |
| Don't know | 23.7 | 22.9 | -0.8 |

Source: 2023 Farm to School Census question Q23; 2019 Farm to School Census question Q49 (To the best of your knowledge, which, if any, of the following were in place in your SFA in [school year]?).

Note: Responses are limited to SFAs participating in farm to school in SY 2018-19 (for the 2019 Census year) or in SY 2022-23 (for the 2023 Census year). 2023 responses were recoded as other if they did not match to a 2019 response. Statistical tests in this table were adjusted for multiple comparisons using the Bonferroni method.

2019: n = 7,898, missing = 495, weighted N = 11,544

2023: n = 8,730, missing = 92, weighted N = 13,453

*Difference between 2019 and 2023 SFAs is significantly different from zero at the 0.05 level.

Table 27. Local foods procurement challenges over time

| Challenges | Percent of F2S SFAs | | Change |
|---|---------------------|------------------|--------------|
| | Census Year 2019 | Census Year 2023 | |
| Availability | 30.9 | 42.1 | 11.2* |
| Limited availability of local foods | 23.1 | 30.8 | 7.7* |
| Local foods unavailable from primary vendors | 13.3 | 16.9 | 3.6* |
| Local food vendors do not offer a broad range of products | 10.2 | 14.0 | 3.8* |
| Difficult to find local producers, suppliers, and distributors | 13.9 | 15.9 | 2.0* |
| Lack of availability of precut/processed local foods | 11.6 | 14.1 | 2.5* |
| Too difficult to get local products that meet quality requirements and other specifications | 7.2 | 9.6 | 2.3* |
| Producers unable to meet food safety requirements (e.g., Good Agricultural Practices) | 4.3 | 3.6 | -0.7 |
| Procurement and delivery processes | 26.1 | 28.6 | 2.4* |
| Local foods are not identified or marked as local by distributor/vendor | 11.8 | 9.2 | -2.6* |
| Delivery challenges | 11.5 | 17.1 | 5.6* |
| Too difficult to coordinate procurement of local foods and non-local foods | 9.2 | 9.2 | 0.0 |
| Local producers do not bid on Invitations for Bids (IFBs) or Requests for Proposals (RFPs) | 7.3 | 7.0 | -0.3 |
| Lack information to write specifications targeting local foods | 6.0 | 4.0 | -2.0* |
| School/district payment procedures do not align with farmers' needs | 4.7 | 3.9 | -0.8 |
| Unclear on how to apply the geographic preference option | 4.6 | 3.0 | -1.6* |
| Don't always receive ordered items | 4.2 | 7.2 | 3.0* |
| Cost | 19.0 | 34.9 | 15.9* |
| Local foods are more expensive than conventional products | 17.0 | 27.3 | 10.4* |
| Unstable product prices | 6.8 | 13.0 | 6.2* |
| Staff/Kitchen | 18.7 | 18.3 | -0.3 |
| Lack of staff time to prepare local foods | 15.7 | 14.5 | -1.3 |

Appendix B: Data Analysis Tables

| Challenges | Percent of F2S SFAs | | Change |
|--|---------------------|------------------|--------------|
| | Census Year 2019 | Census Year 2023 | |
| Lack of kitchen equipment to process/prepare local foods | 6.4 | 5.2 | -1.2* |
| Lack of trained staff to prepare local foods | 5.8 | 9.3 | 3.6* |
| Lack of interest in preparing local foods | 3.1 | 5.6 | 2.6* |
| Other | 6.1 | 4.1 | -1.9* |
| No challenges | 9.9 | 22.3 | 12.4* |

Source: 2023 Farm to School Census questions Q12a to Q12d; 2019 Farm to School Census question Q14 (Which, if any, of the following challenges have you experienced in procuring local products?).

Note: Responses are limited to SFAs participating in farm to school in SY 2018-19 (for the 2019 Census year) or in SY 2022-23 (for the 2023 Census year). Statistical tests in this table were adjusted for multiple comparisons using the Bonferroni method.

2019: n = 8,392, missing = 0, weighted N = 12,312

2023: n = 8,778, missing = 44, weighted N = 13,528

*Difference between 2019 and 2023 SFAs is significantly different from zero at the 0.05 level.

Table 28. Reasons provided for no longer participating in farm to school

| Reason for no longer participating | Percent of SFAs |
|--|-----------------|
| No staff available to lead or conduct farm to school activities | 42.0 |
| Unable to find vendors that provide local foods | 21.5 |
| Lack funds to conduct farm to school activities | 18.5 |
| The cost of purchasing local foods is too high | 16.9 |
| Farmers/producers near me unable to provide what we need | 15.9 |
| Not enough interest in farm to school activities from school-level teachers and administrators | 13.5 |
| Not enough interest in farm to school activities from students | 11.8 |
| No longer prepare our own meals | 9.5 |
| Ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic | 6.1 |
| Don't have buy-in from district management | 4.5 |
| Don't see the benefits of farm to school activities | 2.1 |
| Other reason | 10.0 |
| Don't know | 26.0 |

Source: 2023 Farm to School Census question Q8 (Why is your SFA no longer participating in farm to school activities?).

Note: Responses are limited to SFAs that are no longer participating in farm to school. Responses may not sum to 100% because multiple responses were permitted.

n = 473, missing = 0, weighted N = 756

Table 29. Reasons provided for not participating in farm to school

| Reason for not participating | Percent of SFAs |
|---|-----------------|
| No staff available to lead or conduct farm to school activities | 43.2 |
| Do not prepare our own meals | 27.4 |
| Lack of kitchen capacity to prepare/process local foods | 24.4 |
| Not enough interest in farm to school activities | 20.5 |
| Lack funds to conduct farm to school activities | 18.3 |
| Unable to find vendors that provide local foods | 17.7 |
| The cost of purchasing local foods is too high | 13.8 |
| I don't know how to start | 11.8 |
| Farmers/producers near me unable to provide what we need | 9.7 |
| Lack of support from school/district administration | 3.5 |
| Don't see the benefits of farm to school activities | 3.0 |
| Other reason | 6.3 |
| Don't know | 13.6 |

Source: 2023 Farm to School Census question Q16 (Why does your SFA choose not to participate in and have no plans to participate in farm to school activities?).

Note: Responses limited to SFAs that never participated in in farm to school and have no plans to in the future. Responses may not sum to 100% because multiple responses were permitted.

n = 945, missing = 0, weighted N = 1,534

Table 30. Strategies to encourage participation in farm to school

| Strategies that would encourage participation | Percent of SFAs participating in farm to school in SY 2022-23 or starting in SY 2023-24 ^a | Percent of SFAs no longer participating in farm to school ^b | Percent of SFAs not participating with plans to start in future ^c | Percent of SFAs not participating with no plans to start ^d |
|--|--|--|--|---|
| More funding for SFA in general | 50.6 | 34.9 | 43.0 | 16.8 |
| Targeted funding for farm to school educational activities | 27.5 | 19.1 | 29.4 | 16.3 |
| Targeted funding for local food procurement | 37.8 | 23.9 | 28.3 | 14.5 |
| Targeted funding to improve kitchen capacity (e.g., equipment, space) to prepare local foods | 27.5 | 18.9 | 28.4 | 21.9 |
| More support and/or engagement from teachers and administrators | 23.0 | 15.6 | 27.9 | 7.4 |
| More support and/or engagement from State agency | 12.3 | 11.3 | 14.9 | 4.5 |
| Changes to policies/regulations related to procurement and/or local procurement | 25.1 | 17.7 | 17.6 | 4.8 |
| Training/technical assistance related to finding local foods | 31.7 | 22.3 | 41.5 | 14.8 |
| Training/technical assistance related to procurement and delivery processes for local foods | 26.2 | 20.6 | 35.5 | 11.8 |
| Training/technical assistance related to paying for local foods and/or farm to school activities | 20.8 | 17.4 | 32.8 | 10.3 |
| Training/technical assistance related to preparing local foods (e.g., training staff) | 17.6 | 12.8 | 26.5 | 10.2 |
| Other | 6.9 | 9.8 | 6.2 | 2.9 |
| None of the above | 13.0 | 27.7 | 15.6 | 52.6 |

Source: 2023 Farm to School Census question Q13 (What would make it easier for your SFA/schools to participate in farm to school activities?); Q10 (Which, if any, of the following would make it more likely for your SFA/schools to participate in farm to school activities?); Q15 (What would help your SFA/schools to start participating in farm to school activities?); and Q17 (Which, if any, of the following would encourage your SFA/schools to participate in farm to school activities?).

Note: Responses may not sum to 100% because multiple responses were permitted.

Appendix B: Data Analysis Tables

^a SFAs participating in farm to school in SY 2022-23 or starting in SY 2023-24: n = 9,624, missing = 45, weighted N = 14,853

^b SFAs no longer participating in farm to school: n = 473, missing = 0, weighted N = 756

^c SFAs planning to start farm to school in future: n = 716, missing = 0, weighted N = 1,143

^d SFAs not participating in farm to school and not planning to in future: n = 945, missing = 0, weighted N = 1,534

Table 31. Local food purchases by values-based characteristics

| Characteristics | Percent of SFAs | | |
|--|---------------------------------|--|---|
| | Purchased locally in SY 2022-23 | Have not purchased and have no plans to purchase locally | Have not purchased but would like to purchase locally in the future |
| With the farm identity preserved (i.e., the identity of the producer/farm is known and explicitly communicated with the final product) | 15.2 | 30.5 | 54.3 |
| Certified USDA Organic | 10.2 | 37.8 | 52.0 |
| From a woman-owned business | 9.7 | 27.9 | 62.5 |
| From a minority-owned business | 8.2 | 27.6 | 64.3 |
| With other environmental certifications or indications (e.g., low-spray, integrated pest management, organic transition) | 5.1 | 38.0 | 56.9 |
| With labor-related certifications or indications (e.g., fair trade) | 4.3 | 39.1 | 56.7 |
| With animal welfare certifications or indications (e.g., Certified Humane, Animal Welfare Approved) | 3.4 | 40.5 | 56.1 |

Source: 2023 Farm to School Census question Q29 (Please indicate if your SFA or any schools in your SFA purchased local foods with any of the following characteristics during SY 2022-23 or would like to in the future).

Note: Responses limited to SFAs participating in farm to school in SY 2022-23 that procured local foods. n = 8,708, missing = 13, weighted N = 13,413

Appendix C: 2023 Farm to School Census Survey Instrument

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the 2023 Farm to School Census!

The Farm to School Census is the main source for national information about school and school food authority (SFA) participation in farm to school activities such as purchasing locally produced food for school meal programs, teaching students about food and agriculture, and cultivating edible school gardens. Your responses help ensure we get meaningful results that accurately reflect the state of farm to school across the United States. We can't do this without you!

The 2023 Farm to School Census is being conducted for the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) by Decision Information Resources (DIR), a private research company.

The Census is estimated to take 30 minutes or less to complete. Before you begin, a few important reminders:

- **Please complete the Census even if you think your SFA and schools do not participate in farm to school.** Broadly, “farm to school” refers to purchasing local or regional foods to serve in schools or providing educational activities involving food, agriculture, or nutrition, including edible school gardens. Many different types of activities can be considered farm to school, and there is no set definition for “local” or “regional.” We are interested in your opinions **even if you do not participate in any activities that would be considered farm to school.** SFA participation in this survey is required under Section 28c of the National School Lunch Act [<https://www.fns.usda.gov/nsla-amended-pl-116-94>]
- Please review the pre-survey worksheet [*INSERT LINK TO DOWNLOAD WORKSHEET*] before you begin.
- Some questions may require that you coordinate with other school staff or partners, and/or food service operators.
 - Multiple individuals can open and respond to the survey using your unique survey link (sent to you by email from Farm2SchoolCensus@dir-online.com), although only one person can be in the survey at a time.
 - Feel free to share the link and ask others to answer relevant questions. As noted below, the survey will save anyone's changes when they close the page.
- For all Census survey questions, if you don't know an exact value, **please give us your best estimate.**
- Some questions ask for your SFA's spending on food during school year **(SY) 2022-23** and how much (in dollars) of those purchases were for local foods. For this reason, we recommend you review the pre-survey worksheet and obtain your purchase or procurement records before starting the Census survey. If you cannot obtain or do not have the relevant records, please give us your best estimate.

Appendix C: Farm to School Census Survey

- If you are responsible for more than one SFA, please complete a separate Census survey for each SFA. You do not need to complete a separate Census survey for each school, just for each SFA. If you have multiple schools in your SFA, you only need to complete ONE Census survey for the entire SFA.
- Your place in the Census survey will be saved if you close the page. When you are ready to return, please use the same unique link you received by email. When you click the link to start again, you will be able to continue where you left off.
- Words that appear in green (HOVER OVER/HYPERLINK: Like this!) are defined. To access the definition, simply hover your mouse over the word or click the link on your phone.

The Census does not ask for any personal information. FNS complies with the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 USC §552a). All information gathered is for research purposes only. Just as prior Farm to School Census results are available for each SFA [<https://farmtoschoolcensus.fns.usda.gov/>], USDA intends to make the results of the current Census available in support and recognition of farm to school activities nationwide. Responses for each SFA will be shared on a public website, but no information about individuals (i.e., SFA respondent name or contact information) will be made public.

Participation in this study will not affect any reimbursements, credits, participation in or foods received through USDA programs. However, cooperation by states, local education agencies, and schools in research and evaluation is required under the National School Lunch Act.

Thank you for your time and attention in filling out this survey!

This information is being collected to assist the Food and Nutrition Service in understanding and tracking farm to school engagement. This is a mandatory collection and FNS will use the information to set priorities for USDA outreach and technical support. This collection does not request any personally identifiable information under the Privacy Act of 1974. According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0584-0646. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 0.5 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Office of Policy Support, 1320 Braddock Place, 5th Floor, Alexandria, VA 22306 ATTN: PRA (0584-0646). Do not return the completed form to this address.

SFA INFORMATION

Please review the information below to ensure it is correct and complete.

SFA name (Please use complete name without abbreviations.):

Appendix C: Farm to School Census Survey

School food authority (SFA) (HOVER OVER/HYPERLINK: The school food authority (SFA) is the entity legally responsible for the operations and administration of the local school nutrition programs (e.g., the school district food and nutrition department that operates the National School Lunch Program). An SFA will be associated with one or more local education agency (LEA), which is the entity with authority to control and direct educational services in a jurisdiction (e.g., a school district).)

contact email address:

State or territory (abbreviation):

5 digit zip code for SFA mailing address:

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|

ID number assigned to your SFA by your State Agency (if known):

| | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|

Q1. Is all of this information complete and correct?

- Yes, all information is complete and correct. (GO TO Q1g)
- No, corrections or completions are needed.

Q1a. What information needs to be updated? (Please choose all that apply.)

- SFA email address
- SFA Name
- SFA state or territory
- SFA zip code
- State Agency ID number
- Nothing (MUTUALLY EXCLUSIVE, GO TO Q2)

(PROGRAMMER: ASK Q1B if Q1A = 1 "Email address")

Q1b. What is the correct email address?

(PROGRAMMER: ASK Q1C if Q1A = 2 "SFA Name")

Q1c. What is the correct SFA name? Please include complete name without abbreviations

(PROGRAMMER: ASK Q1D if Q1A = 3 "State or territory")

Q1d. What is the correct state or territory? (DROP DOWN BOX WITH STATES LISTED BY ABBREVIATION)

(PROGRAMMER: ASK Q1E if Q1A = 4 "SFA Zip code")

Q1e. What is the correct zip code for your SFA's mailing address? Please enter the 5 digit zip code.

(PROGRAMMER: ASK Q1F if Q1A = 5 "State agency ID number" AND ALLOW SPACE FOR RESPONDENTS TO ENTER UP TO ELEVEN CHARACTERS BOTH LETTERS AND NUMBERS)

Q1f. What is the correct State agency ID number (SFAID) number?

Q1g. Please list the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) District ID Number for the district that your SFA provides meals for. Click here to look up an NCES ID number [<https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/districtsearch/>].

| | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|

My SFA provides meals for more than one district (*PROGRAMMER: IF SELECTED PLEASE DISPLAY 4 ADDITIONAL ROWS OF BOXS TO NCES ID NUMBER*)

| | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|

My SFA does not have an NCES ID number. [EXCLUSIVE]

Q2. In addition to the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), which USDA Child Nutrition programs did your SFA participate in during school year (SY) 2022-23? (Please choose all that apply.)

- School Breakfast Program (SBP)
- Summer meals (i.e., meals in the [Summer Food Service Program](#) (HOVER OVER/HYPERLINK: The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) reimburses providers who serve free healthy meals to children and teens in low-income areas during the summer months when school is not in session. Sponsors can include SFAs, local government agencies, private non-profit organizations, universities or colleges, or faith-based organizations.) or the [Seamless Summer Option](#). (HOVER OVER/HYPERLINK: The Seamless Summer Option (SSO) allows SFAs participating in the NSLP or SBP to feed students year-round under the NSLP and/or SBP rules.)
- [Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program \(FFVP\)](#) (HOVER OVER/HYPERLINK: The Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) is a federally assisted program providing free fresh fruits and vegetables to children at eligible elementary schools during the school day.)
- [Child and Adult Food Program \(CACFP\)](#) (HOVER OVER/HYPERLINK: The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) is a federal program that provides reimbursements for nutritious meals and snacks to eligible children who are enrolled for care at participating child care centers and day care homes.) (e.g., in a pre-kindergarten setting)

Appendix C: Farm to School Census Survey

- Child and Adult Food Program (CACFP) At-Risk Afterschool** (HOVER OVER/HYPERLINK: Child and Adult Care (CACFP) At-Risk Afterschool provides reimbursements for meals served to children and youth participating in afterschool care programs.) (snacks and/or supper)
- NSLP Afterschool Snack Service** (HOVER OVER/HYPERLINK: The NSLP Afterschool Snack Service offers cash reimbursement to participating SFAs for each reimbursable snack they serve.)
- None of these [EXCLUSIVE]

Q3. According to our records, there were [insert number of schools from contact list] schools in your SFA during SY 2022-23. Is this correct? (IF SAMPLE HAS NUMBER OF SCHOOLS =1, ASK “According to our records, there was [insert number of schools from contact list] school in your SFA during SY 2022-23. Is this correct?)

- Yes (GO TO Q4)
- No (GO TO Q3a)

Q3a. How many schools were there in your SFA during SY 2022-23?

_____ (RANGE 1-9997)

- Don't know

Q4. In SY 2022-23, how did your SFA handle food service for the NSLP? (Please choose all that apply.)

- Self-operated
- Food service management company (FSMC)
- Vended meals
- Other (please specify) _____

Q5. In SY 2022-23, how did your SFA handle food preparation for the NSLP? (Please choose all that apply.)

- Central kitchen (i.e., for entire SFA or multiple schools in the SFA)
- Regional kitchens (i.e., meals are prepared at one school and distributed to other schools)
- School-based kitchens (i.e., for a single school)
- Receiving (satellite) kitchen (i.e., on site preparation limited to activities such as reheating)
- No kitchen facilities [EXCLUSIVE]
- Other (please specify) _____

Q6. During SY 2022-23, approximately what percent of the items you served were made from “**scratch?**” (HOVER OVER/HYPERLINK: Scratch preparation refers to activities such as peeling and cutting up fruits and vegetables, measuring out raw ingredients, or adding seasonings.)

- 0-25%
- 26-50%
- 51-75%
- 76-100%
- I don't know [EXCLUSIVE]

Q26. How does your SFA define "local" for the majority of its school food procurement? (Please choose one. If your definition of local varies by product, please select the most commonly used definition.)

- Produced within a 20 mile radius
- Produced within a 50 mile radius
- Produced within a 100 mile radius
- Produced within a 200 mile radius
- Produced within a 400 mile radius
- Produced within the county
- Produced within the State
- Produced within the region (please specify what you mean by "region")
- Other (please specify) _____
- We don't have a set definition for local.
- I don't know

FARM TO SCHOOL PARTICIPATION

This section asks about activities that take place in your SFA and schools. We are interested in **any** of these activities that occur in your SFA, including at the SFA-level, at one school, or at many schools.

Q7. For each activity below, please indicate if your SFA or schools in your SFA have never done the listed activity, did the activity before SY 2022-23, did the activity last year (SY 2022-23), are doing the activity this year (SY 2023-24), and/or plan to do the activity in the future. For each row, please choose all that apply. If you're taking the Census on a mobile phone, please rotate your phone horizontally for landscape mode to scroll through the grid. Remember, we are counting it as participation even if only one school in your SFA does or has done an activity.

Appendix C: Farm to School Census Survey

| | CHOOSE ALL THAT APPLY: My SFA/schools in my SFA ... | | | | |
|---|---|-----------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| | Have never done | Did before SY 2022-23 | Did in SY 2022-23 (last year) | Doing in SY 2023-24 (this year) | Plan to do in the future |
| <p><i>(PROGRAMMER: Please include a note reminding the respondent of their answer to Q26/definition of local) 7a. Use local (HOVER OVER/HYPERLINK: The USDA Child Nutrition Programs do not define local. Please use your SFA's understanding or definition of the term (e.g., within a 100-mile radius, within the State). For the Census, we are interested in foods that are produced locally, for example, farmed, raised, fished, or manufactured in the area considered to be "local" by your SFA. This does not include foods that are produced elsewhere but procured through a local distributor) foods of any type (HOVER OVER/HYPERLINK: For example, fruits, vegetables, milk, cheese, other dairy, meat, fish, chicken, baked goods, or grains) and in any form (HOVER OVER/HYPERLINK: For example, fresh, pre-processed, frozen, dried, pre-cooked, or manufactured items.) in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP)</i></p> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <p><i>(PROGRAMMER: ASK 7b if Q2 = 1 "School Breakfast Program") 7b. Use local foods of any type and in any form in the School Breakfast Program (SBP)</i></p> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Appendix C: Farm to School Census Survey

| | CHOOSE ALL THAT APPLY: My SFA/schools in my SFA ... | | | | |
|--|---|-----------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| | Have never done | Did before SY 2022-23 | Did in SY 2022-23 (last year) | Doing in SY 2023-24 (this year) | Plan to do in the future |
| <i>(PROGRAMMER: ASK 7c if Q2 = 2 "Summer Meals")</i> 7c. Use local foods of any type and in any form in summer meals (i.e., meals in the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) or through the Seamless Summer Option (SSO), when operated during the summer) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <i>(PROGRAMMER: ASK 7d if Q2 = 6 "NSLP Afterschool Snack Service")</i> 7d. Serve local foods of any type and in any form through the NSLP After School Snack Service | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <i>(PROGRAMMER: ASK 7e if Q2 = 3 "Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP)")</i> 7e. Use local foods of any type and in any form in the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <i>(PROGRAMMER: ASK 7f if Q2 = 4 "Child and Adult Food Program (CACFP)")</i> 7f. Use local foods of any type and in any form in Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) meals (e.g., in a pre-kindergarten setting) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| <i>(PROGRAMMER: ASK 7g if Q2 = 5 "Child and Adult Food Program (CACFP) At-Risk Afterschool")</i> 7g. Use local foods of any type and in any form in CACFP At-Risk Afterschool (snacks and/or supper) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Appendix C: Farm to School Census Survey

| | CHOOSE ALL THAT APPLY: My SFA/schools in my SFA ... | | | | |
|---|---|-----------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| | Have never done | Did before SY 2022-23 | Did in SY 2022-23 (last year) | Doing in SY 2023-24 (this year) | Plan to do in the future |
| 7h. Serve local food in any other way (e.g., in the classroom, sold a la carte, as fundraisers) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7i. Source local foods from USDA DoD Fresh (HOVER OVER/HYPERLINK: The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Department of Defense (DoD) Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program allows schools to use entitlement dollars to buy fresh produce.) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7j. Have any type of edible school garden (HOVER OVER/HYPERLINK: An edible school garden can be any indoor or outdoor space where students or other school or community members tend to edible plants. This can include raised beds, hydroponic systems, and tower or container gardens.) | | | | | |
| 7k. Hold taste tests/cooking demonstrations of local or edible school garden-grown foods in the cafeteria, classroom, or other school-related setting | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Appendix C: Farm to School Census Survey

| | CHOOSE ALL THAT APPLY: My SFA/schools in my SFA ... | | | | |
|--|---|-----------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| | Have never done | Did before SY 2022-23 | Did in SY 2022-23 (last year) | Doing in SY 2023-24 (this year) | Plan to do in the future |
| 7l. Work with local producers/processors (HOVER OVER/HYPERLINK: Local producers/processors refers to individuals or businesses, including farmers, processors and manufacturers, who meet the SFA’s criteria for buying local) to develop specific food products using local foods | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7m. Serve local foods in a school salad bar. | | | | | |
| 7n. Implement strategies to encourage student selection and consumption of local foods (e.g., product placement, food prompts, creative signage) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7o. Use cafeteria food coaches to promote the consumption of local foods (i.e., adults or students in the cafeteria encouraging kids to eat local foods) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7p. Use USDA Team Nutrition materials (such as <i>The Great Garden Detective Adventure</i> or <i>Dig In!</i>) as part of taste testing or educational activities | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7q. Conduct student field trips to farms, farmers’ markets, producers, and/or processors | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7r. Have farmer(s) visit the cafeteria, classroom or other school-related setting | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Appendix C: Farm to School Census Survey

| | CHOOSE ALL THAT APPLY: My SFA/schools in my SFA ... | | | | |
|---|---|-----------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| | Have never done | Did before SY 2022-23 | Did in SY 2022-23 (last year) | Doing in SY 2023-24 (this year) | Plan to do in the future |
| 7s. Integrate farm to school activities (such as gardening and local foods education) into curriculum | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7t. Expose students to agriculture-related careers (e.g., through a class/curriculum or clubs like 4-H or Future Farmers of America) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7u. Promote local foods through themed or branded promotions (e.g., Harvest of the Month, Local Day, Taste Washington Day, Apple Crunch) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7v. Promote local foods at school (e.g., via cafeteria signs, posters, newsletters) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7w. Generate media coverage of local foods being used in schools (e.g., in newspaper, blogs, radio, TV) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7x. Host farm to school related family and community events (e.g., invite parents to lunch, corn shucking contests, farmers markets at schools) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7y. Celebrate National Farm to School Month (October) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| (PROGRAMMER: ASK 7z if Q2 = 4 "Child and Adult Food Program (CACFP)") 7z. Host special local foods events in CACFP | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Appendix C: Farm to School Census Survey

| | CHOOSE ALL THAT APPLY: My SFA/schools in my SFA ... | | | | |
|---|---|-----------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| | Have never done | Did before SY 2022-23 | Did in SY 2022-23 (last year) | Doing in SY 2023-24 (this year) | Plan to do in the future |
| <p><i>(PROGRAMMER: ASK 7zz if Q2 = 2 "Summer Meals")</i> 7zz. Host special local food events in summer meals (i.e., SFSP or SSO, when operated in the summer)</p> | | | | | |
| 7aa. Grow or serve local foods that are culturally relevant (HOVER OVER/HYPERLINK: Culturally-relevant foods are items that are unique or relevant to specific cultural groups, e.g., kosher foods, halal foods, traditional foods) to students | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7ab. Collect food waste for composting | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7ac. Provide training to school food service staff related to farm to school activities (e.g., on holding taste tests, purchasing or preparing local foods) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7ad. Search for local vendors, farmers, food hubs, or cooperatives (HOVER OVER/HYPERLINK: A cooperative, or co-op, is a business that is owned by its members or employees. In a farmer cooperative, several farmers may work together to market their products and/or purchase supplies.) to procure local foods | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7ae. Forecast budgetary needs for local purchases | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Appendix C: Farm to School Census Survey

| | CHOOSE ALL THAT APPLY: My SFA/schools in my SFA ... | | | | |
|---|---|-----------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| | Have never done | Did before SY 2022-23 | Did in SY 2022-23 (last year) | Doing in SY 2023-24 (this year) | Plan to do in the future |
| 7af. Include values statements (HOVER OVER/HYPERLINK: A values statement expresses an SFA's desire to purchase foods and use vendors that align with particular values, such as purchasing items from women- or minority-owned farms or with certain environmental standards) in procurement documents (HOVER OVER/HYPERLINK: Procurement documents are written materials used to procure food for Child Nutrition programs, such as procurement policies, Invitations for Bids, or other solicitations.) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Appendix C: Farm to School Census Survey

| | CHOOSE ALL THAT APPLY: My SFA/schools in my SFA ... | | | | |
|---|---|-----------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| | Have never done | Did before SY 2022-23 | Did in SY 2022-23 (last year) | Doing in SY 2023-24 (this year) | Plan to do in the future |
| 7ag. Indicate a geographic preference (HOVER OVER/HYPERLINK: In their procurement process, SFAs can indicate preference for unprocessed agricultural products that are locally grown or raised. A geographic preference in a procurement solicitation provides bidders located in a specified geographic area additional points or credit during the evaluation of the proposals or bids received.) in procurement documents (HOVER OVER/HYPERLINK: Procurement documents are written materials used to procure food for Child Nutrition programs, such as procurement policies, Invitations for Bids, or other solicitations.) | | | | | |
| 7ah. Evaluate the impact of farm to school activities (e.g., measuring changes in food waste, student acceptance of local items, changes in participation rates) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

(PROGRAMMER: FOR Q7, DON'T ALLOW 1 TO BE SELECTED WITH 2 OR 3 OR 4. 1 MAY BE SELECTED WITH 5.)

(PROGRAMMER: SET FARM TO SCHOOL STATUS BASED ON Q7 ANSWERS.)

NOTE THAT F2S IS SET FOR QUESTIONNAIRE SKIP PURPOSES ONLY AND NOT FOR ANALYSIS

If Q7 includes 1 for any attribute, then set Q7_1 = YES, else Q7_1 = NO (have never done)

If Q7 includes 2 for any attribute, then set Q7_2 = YES, else Q7_2 = NO (used to do)

Appendix C: Farm to School Census Survey

If Q7 includes 3 for any attribute, then set Q7_3 = YES, else Q7_3 = NO (did in 2022-23)

If Q7 includes 4 for any attribute, then set Q7_4 = YES, else Q7_4 = NO (currently do in 2023-2024)

If Q7 includes 5 for any attribute, then set Q7_5 = YES, else Q7_5 = NO (plan to do)

IF Q7_1 = YES, and Q7_2, Q7_3, Q7_4, AND Q7_5 = NO, THEN GO TO Q7ag:

Q7ai. Based on your responses, your SFA does not participate in and has no plans to participate in farm to school activities. Is that correct?

- Yes (CONTINUE TO ASSIGNING F2S VALUE BELOW)
- No (GO BACK TO GRID AND REVIEW/UPDATE ANSWERS)

Assign value of F2S based on the table below: (once assigned, skip out; F2S is Single Punch)

Hierarchy:

If Q7_3 = YES, SET F2S = 1 (participating in F2S in 2022-23); skip out

IF Q7_4 = YES, SET F2S = 2 (started F2S in SY 2023-2024); skip out

IF Q7_5 = YES, SET F2S = 3 (plan to start F2S in the future); skip out

IF Q7_2 = YES, SET F2S = 5 (no longer participating and no plans for the future); skip out

IF Q7_1 = YES, SET F2S = 4 (no F2S and no plans for the future)

| Q7_1 | Q7_2 | Q7_3 | Q7_4 | Q7_5 | F2S | TITLE OF SKIP SECTION |
|------|------|------|------|------|---------|---|
| any | any | YES | any | any | F2S = 1 | Participating in farm to school, SY 2022-23 |
| any | YES | NO | NO | NO | F2S = 5 | No longer participating in farm to school |
| any | any | NO | YES | any | F2S = 2 | Started farm to school in SY 2023-2024 |
| any | any | NO | NO | YES | F2S = 3 | Plan to start farm to school in the future |
| YES | NO | NO | NO | NO | F2S = 4 | No farm to school and no plans for the future |

IF F2S = 1 OR 2, GO TO SECTION E; IF F2S = 3, GO TO SECTION F; IF F2S = 4, GO TO SECTION G; IF F2S = 5 GO TO SECTION D

NO LONGER PARTICIPATING IN FARM TO SCHOOL

Q8. Why is your SFA no longer participating in farm to school activities? (Please choose all that apply.)

- Lack funds to conduct farm to school activities

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- No staff available to lead or conduct farm to school activities
- Don't have buy-in from district management
- Not enough interest in farm to school activities from school-level teachers and administrators
- Not enough interest in farm to school activities from students
- Don't see the benefits of farm to school activities
- Unable to find vendors that provide local foods
- Farmers/producers near me unable to provide what we need
- The cost of purchasing local foods is too high
- No longer prepare our own meals (e.g., purchase vended meals from a company or another SFA)
- Ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic
- Other reason: (please specify) _____
- I don't know [EXCLUSIVE]

Q9. Did your SFA experience any of the following challenges in procuring local products when participating in farm to school activities? (Please choose all that apply.)

- Availability
- Procurement and/or delivery processes
- Cost
- Staff/Kitchen
- Other: (please specify) _____
- My SFA did not experience any challenges. [EXCLUSIVE]

[SHOW IF RESPONDENT SELECTED "availability" IN Q9]

Q9a. You mentioned your SFA experienced challenges related to availability. Which, if any, of the following availability challenges did your SFA experience? (Please choose all that apply.)

- Limited availability of local foods
- Limited availability of precut/processed local foods
- Local foods not available from primary vendors
- Local food vendors don't offer a broad range of products
- Difficult to find local producers, suppliers, and distributors
- Difficult to get local products that meet quality requirements & other specifications (e.g., size)
- Local producers unable to meet food safety requirements (e.g., Good Agricultural Practices)
- Other: (please specify) _____
- My SFA did not experience any challenges. [EXCLUSIVE]

[SHOW IF RESPONDENT SELECTED "procurement and delivery process" IN Q9]

Q9b. You mentioned your SFA experienced challenges related to procurement and/or delivery processes. Which, if any, of the following procurement and delivery challenges did your SFA experience? (Please choose all that apply.)

- Local foods are not identified or marked as local by distributor/vendor
- Delivery challenges
- Difficult to get local products in the right quantity (e.g., can't purchase in small amounts or can't find enough)
- Difficult to coordinate procurement of local foods with non-local foods

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- Local producers aren't bidding (e.g., lack of responses to invitations for bids (IFBs) or requests for proposals (RFPs))
- Don't always receive ordered items
- Payment processes do not align with farmers' needs
- Unclear which procurement mechanisms to use for local foods
- Unclear on how to apply the geographic preference option
- Unclear how to write specifications targeting local foods
- Other: (please specify) _____
- My SFA did not experience any challenges.

[SHOW IF RESPONDENT SELECTED "cost" IN Q9]

Q9c. You mentioned your SFA experienced challenges related to cost. Which, if any, of the following cost challenges did your SFA experience? (Please choose all that apply.)

- Local foods are more expensive than conventional products
- Unstable product prices
- Other: (please specify) _____
- My SFA did not experience any challenges. *[EXCLUSIVE]*

[SHOW IF RESPONDENT SELECTED "staff/kitchen" IN Q9]

Q9d. You mentioned your SFA experienced challenges related to staff/kitchen. Which, if any, of the following staff/kitchen challenges did your SFA experience? (Please choose all that apply.)

- Lack of kitchen equipment to process/prepare local foods
- Lack of kitchen space to process/prepare local foods
- Lack of skilled/trained staff to process/prepare local foods
- Lack of staff time to process/prepare local foods
- Lack of staff interest in preparing/processing local foods
- Other: (please specify) _____
- My SFA did not experience any challenges.

Q9aa. *[SHOW IF RESPONDENT INDICATED ANY CHALLENGE IN Q9a-Q9d OR IF RESPONDENT SELECTS "OTHER SPECIFY" AT Q9]* This question lists the challenges you said your SFA has experienced when procuring local foods. Please rank the **top three** that are the most challenging with the most challenging on top. *[PROGRAMMER: ALLOW RANKING UP TO THREE]*

[DISPLAY Challenge #1 selected from Q9a-Q9d, OR "other specify" at Q9].

- [DISPLAY Challenge #2 selected from Q9a-Q9d OR "other specify" at Q9].*

- [Etc., for all options selected in Q9a-Q9d OR "other specify" at Q9]*

Q9ab. *[SHOW IF RESPONDENT INDICATED ANY CHALLENGE IN Q9a-Q9d]* To what extent did the COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts (e.g., supply chain disruptions, staffing shortages) contribute to the challenges you specified?

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| | Not at all | A little | Somewhat | Extremely |
|---|------------|----------|----------|-----------|
| <i>[DISPLAY Challenge #1 selected from Q9a-Q9d]</i> | | | | |
| <i>[DISPLAY Challenge #2 selected from Q9a-Q9d]</i> | | | | |
| <i>[Etc., for all options selected in Q9a-Q9d]</i> | | | | |

Q10. Which, if any, of the following would make it more likely for your SFA/schools to participate in farm to school activities? (Please select all that apply)

- More funding for SFA in general
- Targeted funding for farm to school educational activities
- Targeted funding for local food procurement
- Targeted funding to improve kitchen capacity (e.g., equipment, space) to prepare local foods
- More support and/or engagement from teachers and administrators
- More support and/or engagement from State agency
- Changes to policies/regulations related to procurement and/or local procurement
- Training/technical assistance related to finding local foods
- Training/technical assistance related to procurement and delivery processes for local foods
- Training/technical assistance related to paying for local foods and/or farm to school activities
- Training/technical assistance related to preparing local foods (e.g., training staff)
- Other – Specify: _____
- Other – Specify: _____
- None of the above

GO TO CONCLUSION SECTION.

STARTED FARM TO SCHOOL IN 2023-2024 OR PARTICIPATING IN FARM TO SCHOOL IN 2022-23

PROGRAMMER: DISPLAY THE FOLLOWING TEXT WHEN F2S = 1: Please provide answers to the following questions with information for SY 2022-23.

Q11a. Which of the following **student** outcomes have resulted from your SFA’s participation in farm to school activities? (Please choose all that apply.)

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[PROGRAMMER: HYPERLINK LIST OF ACTIVITIES FROM Q7 IN WHICH SFA INDICATED PARTICIPATION IN SY 2022-23 OR SY 2023-24]

Click here for a list of activities you said your SFA participated in this year or last.

- Increased consumption of fruits and/or vegetables in school meals
- Increased consumption of items other than fruits and vegetables in school meals
- Reduced food waste
- Increased positive perception of school food program among students
- Increased participation in school meals
- Increased student knowledge about local and/or healthful foods
- Increased student knowledge about how to grow food
- Increased student experiential learning opportunities (HOVER OVER/HYPERLINK: Experiential learning opportunities gives students the chance to learn by doing. These may include but are not limited to classes in the garden, visits to a farm, cooking classes, and taste tests.)
- Increased professional skill building, job training, or career exploration for students
- Other: (please specify) _____
- None of the above [EXCLUSIVE]
- I don't know [EXCLUSIVE]

Q11b. Which of the following **food service** outcomes have resulted from your SFA's participation in farm to school activities? (Please choose all that apply.)

[PROGRAMMER: HYPERLINK LIST OF ACTIVITIES FROM Q7 IN WHICH SFA INDICATED PARTICIPATION IN SY 2022-23 OR SY 2023-24]

Click here for a list of activities you said your SFA participated in this year or last.

- Lower school meal program costs
- Access to better quality foods
- Less disruption to supply chains
- Greater ability to procure desired products
- Increased cooking food from "scratch"
- Increased kitchen staff satisfaction
- Other: (please specify) _____
- None of the above [EXCLUSIVE]
- I don't know [EXCLUSIVE]

Q11c. Which of the following **community** outcomes have resulted from your SFA's participation in farm to school activities? (Please choose all that apply.)

[PROGRAMMER: HYPERLINK LIST OF ACTIVITIES FROM Q7 IN WHICH SFA INDICATED PARTICIPATION IN SY 2022-23 OR SY 2023-24]

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Click here for a list of activities you said your SFA participated in this year or last.

- Increased support for local businesses
- Increased positive perception of school food program among teachers and/or administrators
- Increased positive perception of school food program among parents
- Other: (please specify) _____
- None of the above [EXCLUSIVE]
- I don't know [EXCLUSIVE]

Q11aa. [SHOW IF RESPONDENT INDICATED MORE THAN ONE OUTCOME IN Q11a-Q11c] This question lists the outcomes you said your SFA has experienced when procuring local foods. Please rank the **top three outcomes** that are the most valuable to your SFA, with the most valuable on top. [PROGRAMMER: ALLOW RANKING UP TO THREE]

- [DISPLAY Outcome #1 selected from Q11a-Q11c].
- [DISPLAY Outcome #2 selected from Q11a-Q11c].
- [Etc., for all options selected in Q11a-Q11c]

Q12. Did your SFA experience any of the following *challenges* in procuring local products when participating in farm to school activities? (Please choose all that apply.)

- Availability
- Procurement and/or delivery processes
- Cost
- Staff/Kitchen
- Other: (please specify) _____
- My SFA did not experience any challenges.
- My SFA has not tried to procure any local foods. [EXCLUSIVE]

[SHOW IF RESPONDENT SELECTED "availability" IN Q12]

Q12a. You mentioned your SFA experienced challenges related to availability of local foods. Which, if any, of the following types of availability challenges did your SFA experience? (Please choose all that apply.)

- Limited availability of local foods
- Limited availability of precut/processed local foods
- Local foods not available from primary vendors
- Local food vendors don't offer a broad range of products
- Difficult to find local producers, suppliers, and distributors
- Difficult to get local products that meet quality requirements & other specifications (e.g., size)
- Local producers unable to meet food safety requirements (e.g., Good Agricultural Practices)
- Other: (please specify) _____
- My SFA did not experience any challenges.

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[SHOW IF RESPONDENT SELECTED “procurement and/or delivery process” IN Q12]

Q12b. You mentioned your SFA experienced challenges related to the procurement and/or delivery processes. Which, if any, of the following procurement and delivery challenges did your SFA experience? (Please choose all that apply.)

- Local foods are not identified or marked as local by distributor/vendor
- Delivery challenges
- Difficult to coordinate procurement of local foods with non-local foods
- Local producers aren’t bidding (e.g., lack of responses to invitations for bids (IFBs) or requests for proposals (RFPs))
- Don’t always receive ordered items
- School/district payment procedures do not align with farmers' needs
- Unclear on how to apply the geographic preference (HOVER OVER/HYPERLINK: In their procurement process, SFAs can indicate preference for unprocessed agricultural products that are locally grown or raised. A geographic preference in a procurement solicitation provides bidders located in a specified geographic area additional points or credit during the evaluation of the proposals or bids received.) option
- Unclear how to write specifications (HOVER OVER/HYPERLINK: Specifications provide details on the products or services requested such as size or variety) targeting local foods
- Other: (please specify) _____
- My SFA did not experience any challenges.

[SHOW IF RESPONDENT SELECTED “cost” IN Q12]

Q12c. You mentioned your SFA experienced challenges related to cost of local foods. Which, if any, of the following cost challenges did your SFA experience? (Please choose all that apply.)

- Local foods are more expensive than conventional products
- Unstable product prices
- Other: (please specify) _____
- My SFA did not experience any challenges.

[SHOW IF RESPONDENT SELECTED “staff/kitchen” IN Q12]

Q12d. You mentioned your SFA experienced staff/kitchen challenges related to local foods. Which, if any, of the following staff/kitchen challenges did your SFA experience? (Please choose all that apply.)

- Lack of kitchen equipment to process/prepare local foods
- Lack of kitchen space to process/prepare local foods
- Lack of skilled/trained staff to process/prepare local foods
- Lack of staff time to process/prepare local foods
- Lack of staff interest in preparing/processing local foods
- Other: (please specify) _____
- My SFA did not experience any challenges.

Q12aa. *[SHOW IF RESPONDENT INDICATED MORE THAN ONE CHALLENGE IN Q12a-12d]* This question lists the challenges you said your SFA has experienced when procuring local foods. Please rank the **top**

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three that are the most challenging with the most challenging on top. [PROGRAMMER: ALLOW RANKING UP TO THREE]

- [DISPLAY Challenge #1 selected from Q12a-Q12d].
- [DISPLAY Challenge #2 selected from Q12a-Q12d].
- [Etc., for all options selected in Q12a-Q12d]

Q12ab. [SHOW IF RESPONDENT INDICATED ANY CHALLENGE IN Q12a-12d] To what extent did the COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts (e.g., supply chain disruptions, staffing shortages) contribute to the challenges you specified?

| | Not at all | A little | Somewhat | Extremely |
|---|------------|----------|----------|-----------|
| [DISPLAY Challenge #1 selected from Q12a-12d] | | | | |
| [DISPLAY Challenge #2 selected from Q12a-12d] | | | | |
| [Etc., for all options selected in Q12a-12d] | | | | |

Q13. What would make it easier for your SFA/schools to participate in farm to school activities? (Please select all that apply)

- More funding for SFA in general
- Targeted funding for farm to school educational activities
- Targeted funding for local food procurement
- Targeted funding to improve kitchen capacity (e.g., equipment, space) to prepare local foods
- More support and/or engagement from teachers and administrators
- More support and/or engagement from State agency
- Changes to policies/regulations related to procurement and/or local procurement
- Training/technical assistance related to finding local foods
- Training/technical assistance related to procurement and delivery processes for local foods
- Training/technical assistance related to paying for local foods and/or farm to school activities
- Training/technical assistance related to preparing local foods (e.g., training staff)
- Other – Specify: _____
- Other – Specify: _____
- None of the above

IF F2S = 1, GO TO SECTION H; If F2S = 2, GO TO CONCLUSION SECTION.

PLAN TO START FARM TO SCHOOL IN THE FUTURE

Q14. When does your SFA plan to start conducting farm to school activities?

- Next school year, 2024-2025
- The following school year, 2025-2026
- A few years from now, and not until after the 2025-2026 school year
- Not sure when we will start

Q15. What would help your SFA/schools to start participating in farm to school activities? (Please select all that apply)

- More funding for SFA in general
- Targeted funding for farm to school educational activities
- Targeted funding for local food procurement
- Targeted funding to improve kitchen capacity (e.g., equipment, space) to prepare local foods
- More support and/or engagement from teachers and administrators
- More support and/or engagement from State agency
- Changes to policies/regulations related to procurement and/or local procurement
- Training/technical assistance related to finding local foods
- Training/technical assistance related to procurement and delivery processes for local foods
- Training/technical assistance related to paying for local foods and/or farm to school activities
- Training/technical assistance related to preparing local foods (e.g., training staff)
- Other – Specify: _____
- Other – Specify: _____
- None of the above

GO TO CONCLUSION SECTION

NO FARM TO SCHOOL AND NO PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

Q16. Why does your SFA choose not to participate in and have no plans to participate in farm to school activities? (Please choose all that apply.)

- Lack funds to conduct farm to school activities
- No staff available to lead or conduct farm to school activities
- Not enough interest in farm to school activities
- Don't see the benefits of farm to school activities
- Lack of support from school/district administration
- Unable to find vendors that provide local foods
- Farmers/producers near me unable to provide what we need
- The cost of purchasing local foods is too high
- Lack of kitchen capacity (e.g., space, equipment) to prepare/process local foods
- I don't know how to start
- Do not prepare our own meals (e.g., purchase vended meals or from another SFA)
- Other reason (specify) _____
- I don't know [EXCLUSIVE]

Q17. Which, if any, of the following would encourage your SFA/schools to participate in farm to school activities? (Please select all that apply)

- Targeted funding for farm to school educational activities
- Targeted funding for local food procurement
- Targeted funding to improve kitchen capacity (e.g., equipment, space) to prepare local foods
- More funding for SFA in general
- More support and/or engagement from teachers and administrators
- More support and/or engagement from State agency
- Changes to policies/regulations related to procurement and/or local procurement
- Training/technical assistance related to finding local foods
- Training/technical assistance related to procurement and delivery processes for local foods
- Training/technical assistance related to paying for local foods and/or farm to school activities
- Training/technical assistance related to preparing local foods (e.g., training staff)
- Other – Specify: _____
- Other – Specify: _____
- None of the above [EXCLUSIVE]

GO TO CONCLUSION SECTION

F2S SFAS – OVERVIEW

This section asks for details about SFA and school participation in farm to school activities. Please remember that your best estimate is fine. You can also send this survey to others for their input using the unique survey link sent to you by Farm2SchoolCensus@dir-online.com

[PROGRAMMER: HYPERLINK LIST OF ACTIVITIES FROM Q7 IN WHICH SFA INDICATED PARTICIPATION IN SY 2022-23 OR SY 2023-24]

Click here for a list of activities you said your SFA participated in this year or last.

Q18. How long has your SFA been conducting farm to school activities?

- Less than 3 years
- 3-5 years
- 6-10 years
- More than 10 years

Q19. To the best of your knowledge, which grade levels within the SFA participated in these farm to school activities during SY 2022-23? (Please select all school levels that apply for each activity.)

[PROGRAMMER: DO NO PIPE IN Q7e, Q7i, Q7l, Q7ad, Q7ae, Q7af, Q7ag INTO GRID BELOW AS THEY ARE NOT GRADE RELATED]

| Activity | Pre-Kindergarten and younger | Elementary schools (K-5 th grades) | Middle schools/junior high (6 th -8 th grades) | High schools (9 th -12 th grades) | Other (e.g., K-8 th grade) |
|----------|------------------------------|---|--|---|---------------------------------------|
| | | | | | |

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| | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|--|
| [DISPLAY 1 ST ACTIVITY THEY INDICATED PARTICIPATION IN FOR SY 2022-23 FROM Q7, EXCLUDING GRADE RELATED ACTIVITIES] | | | | | |
| [DISPLAY 2 ND ACTIVITY THEY INDICATED PARTICIPATION IN FOR SY 2022-23 FROM Q7, EXCLUDING GRADE RELATED ACTIVITIES] | | | | | |
| [ETC., FOR ALL ACTIVITIES] | | | | | |

Q20. To the best of your knowledge, approximately how many schools within the SFA participated in the following activities during SY 2022-23? (Click here for a list of activities you said your SFA participated in this year or last.) [PROGRAMMER: HYPERLINK LIST OF ACTIVITIES FROM Q7 IN WHICH SFA INDICATED PARTICIPATION IN SY 2022-23 OR SY 2023-24]

Total schools in SFA: [DISPLAY [NUMBER OF SCHOOLS] or response to Q3a if Q3 = NO]

| | Number of schools |
|--|-------------------|
| 20a. Participated in any farm to school activity | |
| 20b. Served local food in any form | |
| 20c. Provided food, nutrition, or agricultural education | |

[PROGRAMMER: IF 20B > 20A “The number of schools serving local food cannot be greater than the total number of schools in your SFA participating in farm to school. Let’s review those questions again. GO TO Q20a]

[PROGRAMMER: IF 20C > 20A “The number of schools providing food, nutrition, or agricultural education cannot be greater than the total number of schools in your SFA participating in farm to school. Let’s review those questions again. GO TO Q20a]

IF 20A, > [NUMBER OF SCHOOLS] “The number of schools participating in farm to school cannot be greater than the total number of schools in your SFA. Let’s review those questions again. GO TO Q20a

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IF 20B > [NUMBER OF SCHOOLS] “The number of schools serving local food cannot be greater than the total number of schools in your SFA. Let’s review those questions again. GO TO Q20a

IF 20C > [NUMBER OF SCHOOLS] “The number of schools providing food, nutrition, or agricultural education cannot be greater than the total number of schools in your SFA. Let’s review those questions again. GO TO Q20a

IF 20A, =0 “The number of schools participating cannot be 0. Let’s review those questions again.”]

Q21. To the best of your knowledge, in SY 2022-23, how many staff in your SFA, schools, and district (e.g., food service staff, garden educators, AmeriCorps members, teachers) spent time on farm to school activities? Please only include paid staff, including any contracted and grant-funded staff.

| | |
|---|---------------|
| 21a. Number of full-time (HOVER OVER/HYPERLINK: Full time is defined as working at least 40 hours in one week) staff whose job is dedicated to farm to school activities. | RANGE 0-10000 |
| 21b. Number of staff (including full-time AND part-time (HOVER OVER/HYPERLINK: Part-time is defined as working fewer than 40 hours in a week) staff) who use some portion of their time for farm to school activities but whose job is not fully dedicated to farm to school activities. | RANGE 0-10000 |

[PROGRAMMER: DISPLAY LIST OF ACTIVITIES FROM Q7 IN WHICH SFA INDICATED PARTICIPATION IN SY 2022-23.]

Q22. To the best of your knowledge, in SY 2022-23, how did your SFA fund participation in farm to school activities (e.g., purchasing local foods, paying staff, organizing promotional events)? (Please choose all that apply. See the list below of farm to school activities you indicated that your SFA/schools participated in last year.)

- USDA Farm to School Grant(s)
- Other federal funding sources (including Local Foods for Schools, Local Food Promotion Program (LFPP), Local Food Purchase Assistance (LFPA), Regional Food Systems Partnership (RFSP))
- State government grant(s)
- Local government grants(s)
- Local or state program that offers monetary incentives for serving local foods (e.g., Michigan 10 Cents a Meal Program, 30% New York State Initiative)
- Private foundation grant(s) (national or local)
- Non-profit organization(s) or institute(s) (e.g., FoodCorps, No Kid Hungry)
- Corporate partnership(s) or donation(s)
- Food service management company
- School/district funding (e.g., district general fund, teachers doing farm to school activities as part of their teaching)
- School or district fundraising (e.g., PTA/PTO or school/district foundation)
- Individual donation(s)
- In-kind contribution(s) (e.g., a hardware store provides gardening supplies, or the donation of apples from a local farm for an activity or meal)

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- There is no supplemental funding for farm to school (e.g., cafeteria staff incorporate farm to school into their regular activities) [EXCLUSIVE]
- Other (please specify): _____
- I don't know

Q23. To the best of your knowledge, which, if any, of the following were in place in your SFA in SY 2022-23? (Please choose all that apply.)

- Wellness policies (HOVER OVER/HYPERLINK: A local school wellness policy is a written document that guides a school district's efforts to establish a school environment that promotes students' health, well-being, and ability to learn) that support farm to school
- Procurement policies that support purchasing local foods
- Policies that support fundraising for farm to school activities
- Budget allocations dedicated to farm to school activities
- Participation in a farm to school network, task force or advisory board that promotes or assists with farm to school activities
- None of the above were in place to support farm to school activities (CAN ONLY BE SELECTED IF ANOTHER RESPONSE IS NOT GIVEN)
- Other (please specify) _____
- I don't know

F2S SFAS – GARDENS

[IF Q7j = 3, GO TO Q24, ELSE GO TO Q27]

Q24_HOWMANY. To the best of your knowledge, approximately how many schools in the SFA had edible school gardens during SY 2022-23? Remember, if you're unsure of an answer and someone else might know it, you can share this survey using your unique survey link from Farm2SchoolCensus@dir-online.com.

_____ [ONLY ALLOW WHOLE NUMBERS; Range 1:32000]

- I don't know

[IF SAMPLE HAS NUMBER OF SCHOOLS =1 ASK Q24_DID]

Q24_DID. To the best of your knowledge, did your school have an edible garden during the 2022-2023 school year?

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

[PROGRAMMER: ANSWER AT Q24_HOWMANY MUST NOT BE GREATER THAN Q20A IF ANSWERED, THEN MUST NOT BE GREATER THAN Q3/Q3a. IF SO, DISPLAY: The number of schools with edible school gardens

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cannot be greater than the total number of schools in your SFA participating in farm to school. Let's review that question again. GO TO Q24]

Q25. How did schools use the **edible school garden(s)** in SY 2022-23? (Please choose all that apply.) Remember that you can share this survey using your unique survey link from Farm2SchoolCensus@dir-online.com.

- Used an **edible school garden** as part of a school, summer, or afterschool curriculum
- Served some or all of the harvest in the cafeteria as part of a taste test and/or cooking demonstration
- Donated or sold some or all of the harvest to the cafeteria for inclusion in school meals programs, including summer meals (i.e., SFSP and SSO) and CACFP
- Donated or sold some or all of the harvest to outside entities, like at a farmers' market or CSA [HOVER OVER/HYPERLINK: CSA stands for Community Supported Agriculture. In a traditional CSA, members buy a share of the farm's production before each growing season. In return, members receive regular distributions of the food grown at the farm.]
- Sent some or all of the harvest home with the students
- Served some or all of the harvest in the classrooms or gardens as part of classroom or garden-based educational activities
- Something else (please specify: _____)
- I don't know

F2S SFAS - PROCUREMENT

This section asks questions about your procurement practices and spending in SY 2022-23. We recommend you review the pre-survey worksheet [HYPERLINK WORKSHEET] and obtain your purchase or procurement records before you begin. If you cannot obtain or do not have the relevant records, please give us your best estimate. If you would like to request help from someone else, you can share the survey using the unique survey ID link from Farm2SchoolCensus@dir-online.com.

Q27. For SY 2022-23, please indicate if your SFA procured **local foods** from any of the following sources. (Please choose all that apply.)

- Directly from an individual food producer (i.e., farmer, rancher, fisher), including but not limited to a farmers' market or CSA model
- Directly from a **cooperative** of producers (i.e., farmers, ranchers or fishers)
- Directly from a **local food processor or manufacturer** (HOVER OVER/HYPERLINK: A local food processor or manufacturer refers to a business or organization that manufactures a food item or otherwise changes the physical characteristics of a food (e.g., by drying, cutting, freezing) and meets the SFA's definition for local)
- Food hub** (HOVER OVER/HYPERLINK: A food hub is a centrally located facility that aggregates, stores, processes, distributes, and/or markets locally/regionally produced food products.)
- Grocery store
- School or community garden/farm

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- Produce distributor (HOVER OVER/HYPERLINK: A produce distributor is a foodservice company specializing in sales of wholesale fruits and vegetables to schools and other foodservice operators)
- Broadline distributor (HOVER OVER/HYPERLINK: A broadline distributor is a foodservice company that sells a wide range of types of items for use in foodservice operations)
- USDA DoD Fresh Program
- USDA Foods (HOVER OVER/HYPERLINK: The USDA Foods in Schools Program provides American agricultural products for use in meals in the NSLP, CACFP and SFSP. School food authorities receive USDA Foods (also called “entitlement foods” or “commodity foods”) at an established per meal rate.)
- Other (please specify) _____
- I don't know

- We did not procure any local foods in SY 2022-23 [ONLY ALLOW IF NO OTHER OPTIONS ARE SELECTED; IF SELECTED, SKIP TO CONCLUSION]

Q27a. [SHOW IF 2 OR MORE LOCAL PURCHASING OPTIONS ARE SELECTED IN Q27]: In SY 2022-23, what percent of your local purchasing (based on the dollars spent) came from each of the sources you selected? Your best estimate is fine.

| Local Food Source | Percentage of local purchasing |
|---|--------------------------------|
| [DISPLAY FIRST LOCAL FOOD SOURCE INDICATED IN Q27] | |
| [DISPLAY SECOND LOCAL FOOD SOURCE INDICATED IN Q27] | |
| [ETC. FOR ALL LOCAL FOOD SOURCES INDICATED IN Q27] | |

[PROGRAMMER: ADD CHECK TO MAKE SURE ROWS SUM TO 100% AND INCLUDE NOTE “Please make sure your responses total to 100%”]

Q28. Which of the following approaches did your SFA use to procure local foods during SY 2022-23? (Please choose all that apply)

- Formal procurement, (HOVER OVER/HYPERLINK: Formal procurement is required when the amount of the purchase will be higher than a level designated by the Federal or State government) including Invitations for Bids and Requests for Proposal
- Informal procurement, (HOVER OVER/HYPERLINK: Informal procurement methods can be used when the amount of the purchase will be below a level set by the Federal or State government) including small purchases (3 bids and a buy) and micropurchases

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- Forward contracting (HOVER OVER/HYPERLINK: A forward contract is established in advance of when a product is delivered. This often refers to contracts with farmers in advance of the growing season.)
- Use of geographic preference (HOVER OVER/HYPERLINK: In their procurement process, SFAs can indicate preference for unprocessed agricultural products that are locally grown or raised. A geographic preference in a procurement solicitation provides bidders located in a specified geographic area additional points or credit during the evaluation of the proposals or bids received.) as part of solicitations (HOVER OVER/HYPERLINK: Solicitations are requests to companies to provide goods or services, such as Invitations for Bids and Requests for Proposals)
- Other _____
- I don't know

Q29. Please indicate if your SFA or any schools in your SFA purchased **local** foods with any of the following characteristics during SY 2022-23 or would like to in the future. (Please choose one answer per row.)

| | Yes, purchased in SY 2022-23 | No or don't know, and have no plans to purchase | No or don't know, but would like to purchase in the future |
|---|------------------------------|---|--|
| a. From a woman-owned business (HOVER OVER/HYPERLINK: A business that is third party certified as woman-owned, or self-identifies as such) | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| b. From a minority-owned business (HOVER OVER/HYPERLINK: A business that is third party certified as racial minority or Indigenous owned, or self-identifies as such) | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| c. With the farm identity preserved (i.e., the identity of the producer/farm is known and explicitly communicated with the final product) | 1 | 2 | 3 |

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| | Yes, purchased in SY 2022-23 | No or don't know, and have no plans to purchase | No or don't know, but would like to purchase in the future |
|--|------------------------------|---|--|
| d. Certified USDA Organic (HOVER OVER/HYPERLINK: Foods can be certified as "organic" by the USDA if they are grown and processed according to federal guidelines addressing, among many factors, including soil quality, animal raising practices, pest and weed control, and use of additives.) | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| e. With other environmental certifications or indications (e.g., low-spray, integrated pest management, organic transition) | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| f. With labor-related certifications or indications (e.g., fair trade) | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| g. With animal welfare certifications or indications (e.g., Certified Humane, Animal Welfare Approved) | 1 | 2 | 3 |

Q30. Please indicate if your SFA or any schools in your SFA purchased local foods in any form from any of the following food groups during SY 2022-23 or would like to in the future. (Please choose one answer per row.)

| | Yes, purchased locally in SY22-23 | No, and have no plans to purchase locally | No, but would like to purchase locally in the future |
|----------|-----------------------------------|---|--|
| a. Fruit | 1 | 2 | 3 |

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| | Yes, purchased locally in SY22-23 | No, and have no plans to purchase locally | No, but would like to purchase locally in the future |
|---|--|--|--|
| b. Vegetables | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| c. Fluid milk | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| d. Other dairy | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| e. Protein | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| f. Grains, including baked goods | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| g. Other product type (please specify) _____ | 1 | 2 | 3 |

[PROGRAMMER: IF 1 OR 3 IS CHOSEN FOR OTHER, SHOW THE SPECIFY BOX]

Q31. In general, in SY 2022-23, about how frequently did your SFA's meals or snacks include **at least one** local food in any form from the categories below?

| [PROGRAMMER: Restrict categories to those where Q30 = 1] | Daily | A few times per week | Weekl y | A few times per month | Monthly | Seasonally /occasiona lly | Never |
|--|-------|----------------------------|------------|-----------------------------|---------|---------------------------------|-------|
| a. Fruit | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| b. Vegetables | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| c. Fluid milk | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| d. Other dairy | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| e. Protein | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| f. Grains, including baked goods | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| g. [DISPLAY TEXT FROM OTHER PRODUCT TYPE IN 30g] | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

Q32. In general, in SY 2022-23, about how frequently did your SFA's meals or snacks include **at least one** local food of any type and in any form?

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| <i>[PROGRAMMER: IF RESPONDENT SELECTS "3" AT Q7a-Q7g PIPE IN PROGRAMS, ELSE SKIP TO Q33]</i> | Daily | A few times per week | Weekly | A few times per month | Monthly | Seasonally/ occasionally |
|--|-------|----------------------|--------|-----------------------|---------|--------------------------|
| <i>[Display first program for which SFA indicated using local foods in Q7, i.e. NSLP]</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| <i>[Display first program for which SFA indicated using local foods in Q7, i.e. SBP]</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| <i>[Etc. for all programs indicated in Q7]</i> | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

Q33. In SY 2022-23, which of the following did your SFA ask vendors or distributors to provide regarding the items it considered ordering and/or did order? (Please choose all that apply.)

- Local order/availability guide
- Origin of items procured
- Volume of all local foods procured for your SFA (e.g., velocity report)
- Price of all local foods procured for your SFA
- Information about the environmental practices of local producers/processors
- Information about whether local producers/processors are minority- or Indigenous-owned businesses
- Information about whether local producers/processors are woman-owned businesses
- Information on food safety certification/verification (e.g., GAP)
- Other 1 (please specify) _____
- Other 2 (please specify) _____
- I have not asked for any of these. [GO TO Q36]
- I don't know. [GO TO Q36]

Q34. How frequently are the vendors or distributors able to provide the requested information?

- Always or almost always
- Sometimes
- Rarely or never
- I don't know.

The following questions ask how much money your SFA spent on food and local food during SY 2022-23. Please give your best approximation and **do not include** the value of **USDA Foods or USDA DoD Fresh** (i.e., entitlement spending) until specifically requested.

Enter numbers only; do not use commas or dollar signs. Please round to the nearest dollar.

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| | Amount Spent |
|---|--------------|
| Q35. Total food spending (NOT including USDA Foods or DOD Fresh) | \$ |
| Q36. Spending on local food, including fluid milk (NOT including USDA Foods or DOD Fresh) | \$ |
| Q37. Spending on local fluid milk | \$ |

PROGRAMMER RUN CHECK

[PROGRAMMER: IF Q36>Q35, DISPLAY: “Your local food purchases cannot be greater than your total food purchases. Let’s review these questions again.” GO TO Q35])

Check 1.[PROGRAMMER: IF Q36 is 11% or more of Q35, display: “Your local food purchases are a large percent -- [DISPLAY PERCENT ROUNDED TO WHOLE PERCENT % IN PARENTHESES] -- of your total food purchases. Are your local food purchases [Q36 FORMATTED AS A DOLLAR AMOUNT] and your total food purchases [Q35 FORMATTED AS A DOLLAR AMOUNT]?

- Yes, both are okay
- No, one or both are wrong (GO TO Q35)

[PROGRAMMER: IF Q37>Q36, DISPLAY: “Your spending on local fluid milk cannot be greater than your total local food purchases. Let’s review these questions again.” GOTO Q36]

The following questions ask how much money your SFA spent on food and local food during SY 2022-23. Please give your best approximation.

Enter numbers only; do not use commas or dollar signs. Please round to the nearest dollar.

| | Amount Spent |
|--|--------------|
| Q38. Total spending on USDA Foods (NOT including USDA DoD Fresh) | \$ |
| Q39. Spending on local foods through USDA Foods (NOT including USDA DoD Fresh) | \$ |
| Q40. Total spending on USDA DoD Fresh (NOT including USDA Foods) | \$ |
| Q41. Spending on local foods through USDA DoD Fresh (NOT including USDA Foods) | \$ |

PROGRAMMER RUN CHECK

[PROGRAMMER: IF Q39>Q38, DISPLAY: “Your local food purchases cannot be greater than your total food purchases. Let’s review these questions again.” GO TO Q38])

Check 1.[PROGRAMMER: IF Q39 is 11% or more of Q38, display: “Your local food purchases are a large percent -- [DISPLAY PERCENT ROUNDED TO WHOLE PERCENT % IN PARENTHESES] -- of your total food

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purchases. Are your local food purchases [Q39 FORMATTED AS A DOLLAR AMOUNT] and your total food purchases [Q38 FORMATTED AS A DOLLAR AMOUNT]?

(PROGRAMMER: IF Q38 > (<total number of students> x 180 x 0.25), DISPLAY QUESTION BELOW. OTHERWISE)

Your USDA Foods amount is larger than expected: [Q38 FORMATTED AS A DOLLAR AMOUNT]. Is this amount correct?

- Yes
- No (GO TO Q38)

(PROGRAMMER: IF Q39 > Q38, DISPLAY: "Your local USDA Foods purchases cannot be greater than your TOTAL USDA Foods purchases. Let's review these questions again." GOTO Q38)

[PROGRAMMER: IF Q41 > Q40, DISPLAY: "Your local food purchases cannot be greater than your total food purchases. Let's review these questions again." GO TO Q40]

Check 1. [PROGRAMMER: IF Q41 is 11% or more of Q40, display: "Your local food purchases are a large percent -- [DISPLAY PERCENT ROUNDED TO WHOLE PERCENT % IN PARENTHESES] -- of your total food purchases. Are your local food purchases [Q41 FORMATTED AS A DOLLAR AMOUNT] and your total food purchases [Q40 FORMATTED AS A DOLLAR AMOUNT]?

[PROGRAMMER: IF Q41 > Q40, DISPLAY: "Your local USDA DoD Fresh purchases cannot be greater than your TOTAL USDA DoD Fresh purchases. Let's review these questions again." GO TO Q40]

[PROGRAMMER: IF Q40 > ([NUMBER OF STUDENTS] x 180 x 0.75 x 0.33), DISPLAY QUESTION BELOW.

Your USDA DoD Fresh amount is larger than expected: [Q40 FORMATTED AS A DOLLAR AMOUNT]. Is this amount correct?

- Yes
- No (GO TO Q40)

Does this information look correct?

| [PROGRAMMER: PLEASE INCLUDE COMMAS IN DOLLAR AMOUNTS] | Yes/no | If not, enter correct amount |
|---|--------|------------------------------|
| Total food spending (NOT including USDA Foods or DOD Fresh) : \${Q35} | | |

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| [PROGRAMMER: PLEASE INCLUDE COMMAS IN DOLLAR AMOUNTS] | Yes/no | If not, enter correct amount |
|--|--------|------------------------------|
| Spending on local food, including fluid milk (NOT including USDA Foods or DOD Fresh) : \$[Q36] | | |
| Spending on local fluid milk :\$[Q37] | | |
| Total spending on USDA Foods (NOT including USDA DoD Fresh.):\$[Q38] | | |
| Spending on local foods through USDA Foods (NOT including USDA DoD Fresh.) : \$[Q39] | | |
| Total spending on USDA DoD Fresh (NOT including USDA Foods.) : \$[Q40] | | |
| Spending on local foods through USDA DoD Fresh (NOT including USDA Foods.) : \$[Q41] | | |

The next set of questions is about the top five local items you spend the most on.

Q42. In SY 2022-2023, what local item, of any type and in any form, did your SFA spend the **most** on? Please include spending through entitlement funds (that is, through USDA Foods and/or DoD Fresh). Click the food group to see a list of items (you may need to scroll down the page).

(PROGRAMMER: ONLY DISPLAY THE FOOD GROUP CATEGORY; FULL LIST OF ITEMS SHOWN ON CLICK)

Fruit

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Apples | <input type="checkbox"/> Grapes | <input type="checkbox"/> Plums |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Apricots | <input type="checkbox"/> Kiwi | <input type="checkbox"/> Pluots |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bananas | <input type="checkbox"/> Melons | <input type="checkbox"/> Raspberries |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blackberries | <input type="checkbox"/> Nectarines | <input type="checkbox"/> Strawberries |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Blueberries | <input type="checkbox"/> Oranges | <input type="checkbox"/> Tomatoes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cantaloupe | <input type="checkbox"/> Papaya | <input type="checkbox"/> Watermelon |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cranberries | <input type="checkbox"/> Peaches | <input type="checkbox"/> Fruit juice |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dragon fruit | <input type="checkbox"/> Pears | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grapefruit | <input type="checkbox"/> Pineapple | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) |

Vegetable

- Asparagus
- Avocados
- Beans
- Beets
- Bell peppers
- Bok choy
- Broccoli
- Brussels sprouts
- Cabbage
- Carrots
- Cauliflower
- Celery
- Collard greens
- Corn
- Cucumber
- Eggplant
- Green beans
- Green chilies
- Kale
- Kohlrabi
- Leeks
- Lettuce
- Mushrooms
- Onions
- Parsnips
- Peas
- Potatoes (not sweet potatoes)
- Pumpkin
- Radishes
- Rutabaga
- Salad Mix
- Spinach
- Sprouts
- Sweet potatoes
- Swiss chard
- Turnips
- Turnip greens
- Winter squash
- Zucchini/Summer squash

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- Vegetable juice (such as tomato juice)
- Other (specify)

Dairy

- Fluid milk
- Cheese, including cottage cheese
- Sour cream
- Yogurt/Greek yogurt
- Other (specify)

Protein

- Beef
- Eggs
- Fish and seafood
- Nuts, seeds, or nut/seed butters
- Pork
- Poultry
- Tofu or other meat alternative
- Wild game
- Other (specify)

Grains, including baked goods

- Flour
- Grits
- Pasta
- Rice
- Baked goods (e.g., bread, cookies, tortillas)

- Other (specify)

Other

- Other (specify)

Q42aa. In SY 2022-23, from what source(s) did your SFA purchase your local [INSERT RESPONSE TO Q42]? Please select all that apply.

- Directly from an individual food producer (i.e., farmer, rancher, fisher), including but not limited to a farmers' market or CSA model
- Directly from a cooperative of producers (i.e., farmers, ranchers or fishers)
- Directly from a local food processor or manufacturer (HOVER OVER/HYPERLINK: A local food processor or manufacturer refers to a business or organization that manufactures a food item or otherwise changes the physical characteristics of a food (e.g., by drying, cutting, freezing) and meets the SFA's definition for local)

- Food hub (HOVER OVER/HYPERLINK: A food hub is a centrally located facility that aggregates, stores, processes, distributes, and/or markets locally/regionally produced food products.)
- Grocery store
- School or community garden/farm
- Produce distributor
- Broadline distributor
- USDA DoD Fresh Program
- USDA Foods
- Other (please specify) _____
- I don't know

Q42ab. [SHOW IF 2 OR MORE SOURCES ARE SELECTED IN Q42aa]: In SY 2022-23, what percent of your local [INSERT RESPONSE TO Q42] purchases (based on the dollars spent) came from each of the sources you selected? Your best estimate is fine.

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| Local Food Source | Percentage of local purchasing |
|--|--------------------------------|
| <i>[DISPLAY FIRST LOCAL FOOD SOURCE INDICATED IN Q42aa]</i> | |
| <i>[DISPLAY SECOND LOCAL FOOD SOURCE INDICATED IN Q42aa]</i> | |
| <i>[ETC. FOR ALL LOCAL FOOD SOURCES INDICATED IN Q42aa]</i> | |

[PROGRAMMER: ADD CHECK TO MAKE SURE ROWS SUM TO 100%]

Q42ac. In SY 2022-2023, what local item, of any type and in any form, did your SFA spend the **second** most on? Please include spending through entitlement funds (that is, through USDA Foods and/or DoD Fresh). Click the food group to see a list of items.

[USE CATEGORIES/ITEMS LISTED ABOVE WITH ADDITIONAL OPTION BELOW:]

- My SFA did not purchase any other local items in SY22-23. *[SKIP OUT OF SECTION]*

[REPEAT Q2AA-42AB]

Q42af. In SY 2022-2023, what local item, of any type and in any form, did your SFA spend the **third** most on? Please include spending through entitlement funds (that is, through USDA Foods and/or DoD Fresh). Click the food group to see a list of items.

[USE CATEGORIES/ITEMS LISTED ABOVE WITH ADDITIONAL OPTION BELOW:]

My SFA did not purchase any other local items in SY22-23. *[SKIP OUT OF SECTION]*

[REPEAT Q2AA-42AB]

Q42ai. In SY 2022-2023, what local item, of any type and in any form, did your SFA spend the **fourth** most on? Please include spending through entitlement funds (that is, through USDA Foods and/or DoD Fresh). Click the food group to see a list of items.

[USE CATEGORIES/ITEMS LISTED ABOVE WITH ADDITIONAL OPTION BELOW:]

My SFA did not purchase any other local items in SY22-23. *[SKIP OUT OF SECTION]*

[REPEAT Q2AA-42AB]

Q42al. In SY 2022-2023, what local item, of any type and in any form, did your SFA spend the **fifth** most on? Please include spending through entitlement funds (that is, through USDA Foods and/or DoD Fresh). Click the food group to see a list of items.

[USE CATEGORIES/ITEMS LISTED ABOVE WITH ADDITIONAL OPTION BELOW:]

My SFA did not purchase any other local items in SY22-23. [SKIP OUT OF SECTION]

[REPEAT Q2AA-42AB]

Q43. What source(s) did you use for your answers to the previous questions about your procurement spending? Please select all that apply.

- Financial records/receipts
- Budget
- Procurement records, including bid documents
- Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Order Receipt System (FFAVORS)
- Web Based Supply Chain Management system (WBSCM)
- I estimated.
- I did not look at any sources or records [EXCLUSIVE]
- Other (specify) _____

CONCLUSION

Q44. Who filled this survey out? (Please select all that apply.)

- SFA director
- SFA procurement specialist
- Other SFA-level staff member
- Farm to school or garden coordinator
- Cafeteria manager or cafeteria staff member
- Teacher or principal
- Other school-level staff member
- Partner organization
- Other (specify) _____

[PROGRAMMER: INSERT SUBMIT BUTTON.]

[NEW PAGE]

Thank you for completing the 2023 Farm to School Census! We very much appreciate your time to help us better understand farm to school in the U.S.

To download a signature badge showing that you completed the 2023 Farm to School Census, please visit: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/f2s/census-art-resources>

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For more information on starting or expanding farm to school activities, please visit the USDA Farm to School Program website at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool/farm-school>.

Please contact Decision Information Resources (DIR) at 866-986-2230 or Farm2SchoolCensus@dir-online.com if you have any questions or would like to update us with any additional information.

[PROGRAMMER: CLOSE BROWSER.]