



SECTION 21

# Present Needs to Support Purchasing and Serving Michigan-Grown Foods

10 Cents a Meal for Michigan's Kids and Farms (10 Cents), administered by the Michigan Department of Education, matches what participating schools, districts, and early care and education centers spend on Michigan-grown fruits, vegetables, and dry beans with grants of up to 10 cents per meal.

This brief is part of *10 Cents a Meal 2020–2021 Evaluation Results: Expanded Eligibility Increased Impacts*.

## Key Takeaways

The most prominent theme (28 grantees) for current grantee needs was the **negative impact of the pandemic** on participation in 10 Cents, including its impact on the capacity of their food program and supply chain issues.



## Other commonly mentioned current grantee needs:



In the February and April evaluation surveys, food program managers (FPMs) participating in 10 Cents a Meal for Michigan’s Kids and Farms (10 Cents) were asked, **“What else do you need to support your efforts to purchase and serve Michigan foods (of any kind) this year?”** Of 143 grantees, 104 grantees provided feedback to this question at least once during both surveys. In February, 98 FPMs out of the 118 who took the survey provided responses (83% response rate), and in April, 80 out of 130 FPMs responded (62% response rate). The open-text responses from grantees were categorized into themes related to needs to support purchasing and serving Michigan foods in the current year. A single grantee’s response could have multiple themes within it, so the number of mentions to themes is often higher than the actual number of responses.

**The most prominent theme for current grantee needs was the negative impact of the pandemic on participation in 10 Cents.**

**The most prominent theme for current grantee needs was the negative impact of the pandemic on participation in 10 Cents.** Some grantees mentioned a desire for school operations to return to normal so that their food service program could operate at full capacity again, and others indicated the negative impact of supply chain issues.

Other common responses included the need for increased local food availability (desire for year-round supply), for more suppliers and farmers from which to purchase, for lists of products and vendors to find local food, and for more local food options from their current vendors and distributors. Many grantees stated the need for more promotional materials and more minimally processed fruits, vegetables, and dry beans.

The top themes, the number of times a theme was mentioned, and the number of different grantees who mentioned that theme are listed in Table 21.1 below.

**Table 21.1. Top Present Needs Reported by 10 Cents Grantees 2020–2021**

Top Themes	Number of mentions (154 total)	Number of grantees
Impact of the pandemic	28 (18.2%)	28
Increased local food availability	17 (11.0%)	16
Increased suppliers and distributors	16 (10.4%)	15
Lists of products	14 (9.1%)	14
Increased local food options with current vendors	12 (7.8%)	12
List of suppliers and farmers	11 (7.1%)	11
Promotional materials	10 (6.5%)	9
Minimally processed fruits, vegetables, and dry beans	9 (5.8%)	9

Note:  $n = 104$

Less commonly (5% or less of mentions), grantees mentioned needs related to improved administrative processes (including 10 Cents paperwork and training), the ability to use 10 Cents funds with more flexibility (such as purchasing coolers to store produce), increased food service staff capacity, and more resources on local food procurement, recipe ideas, and activities. Grantees also mentioned (5% or less of mentions) needs from vendors regarding improved delivery options, better pricing, and more information about where they source their products.

## Response Highlights

### IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC



With the pandemic and short[age] of workers, it's been hard to implement everything. It seems like time is more of a factor.



[We are] still virtual since last year and waiting for spring and new items to be available. [We need to] go back to in-person learning.

### DEMAND FOR YEAR-ROUND PRODUCT AVAILABILITY AND ADDITIONAL SUPPLIERS



I wish that we had more fresh items to choose from throughout the school year. After October, we are limited to very few fresh items. It would be nice to see more variety in fresh items that maybe could be grown locally in hoop- or greenhouses. It seems like only fresh apples and root vegetables are offered year-round. If we want local in other items, we have to move to frozen items.

### DEMAND FOR PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS



It would be really nice if we could get more promotional materials that describe what fresh Michigan produce is available during what months. In the past, MSU CRFS put out the pocket Michigan guide for what's in season now. That would be nice in a poster form, or to have electronic art available to add to menus, flyers, etc.

## DEMAND FOR MORE MINIMALLY PROCESSED FRUITS, VEGETABLES, AND DRY BEANS



Michigan produce that is cleaned, portioned and ready to serve, with minimal preparation is the key.



Our issue this year is time to get everything done and a lot less time between lunch groups. Packaged items or easy to put out items would be awesome.

## DEMAND FOR MORE DELIVERY OPTIONS FROM SUPPLIERS



My problem is delivery. I have to go 20 miles away to get local foods delivered to a different facility and transport it with my vehicle.



It would be nice to have more flexibility with delivery schedules other than once a week and only will deliver to one location, then we need to load it and drop it throughout district buildings. We would order more frequently for this flexibility as we have with other distributors.



Evaluation of 10 Cents is led by the Michigan State University Center for Regional Food Systems (CRFS). The work presented here is part of *10 Cents a Meal 2020–2021 Evaluation Results: Expanded Eligibility Increased Impacts* by Colleen Matts and Megan McManus of CRFS and was generously funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and 10 Cents administrative funds for partner organizations.

To learn more, visit [tencentsmichigan.org](https://tencentsmichigan.org), [foodsystems.msu.edu/10-cents-a-meal](https://foodsystems.msu.edu/10-cents-a-meal), and [mifarmtoschool.msu.edu](https://mifarmtoschool.msu.edu).

