

# Facts About the Upcoming USDA 2019 Farm to School Census

## What is the Farm to School Census?

- The Farm to School Census captures information about the level to which farm to school efforts are underway or increasing across the nation.
- In 2013, the USDA conducted the first nationwide Farm to School Census. In 2015, USDA conducted a second Census to measure progress.

## Who are the participants in the next Farm to School Census?

- Participants will be from all 50 states, Guam, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, American Samoa and Washington, DC.

## Why participate in the Farm to School Census?

- The Farm to School Census measures the scope, reach, and overall impact of farm to school efforts across the nation. It's the only national survey that examines SFAs' activities in regard to local food purchasing, school gardens, and agricultural education.
- The Farm to School Census demonstrates the innovative efforts of NSLP programs to provide healthy food and nutrition education to children, while supporting American agriculture and strengthening local communities, by reinforcing local control in production and purchasing.
- The Census allows for SFAs to report on the challenges and benefits regarding their farm to school programs.
- USDA uses Census data to inform decisions regarding the Farm to School Grant Program, training and technical assistance strategies, and resource development. The Census data also helps USDA and States have a better understanding of the level of farm to school activities, best practices and challenges across the country.

## How and when will SFAs receive the 2019 Census Survey?

- FNS has contracted with the research firm, Abt Associates, to administer the 2019 Farm to School Census. SFA directors will receive information by email from Abt Associates beginning in late summer 2019.

## How should SFAs prepare for the Census?

- The 2019 Census will assess SFAs participation in farm to school activities during the 2018 – 2019 school year. Similar to previous versions, the 2019 Census will ask questions regarding:
  - ✓ the SFA's definition of local;
  - ✓ the amount of money spent on local purchases;
  - ✓ the most common products purchased locally;
  - ✓ the sources of local products;
  - ✓ benefits and challenges of participating in farm to school;

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- ✓ the number and use of edible school gardens within the SFA; and,
- ✓ the number of salad bars within an SFA.

### **Will answers be publicly available?**

- Yes. USDA will post SFA-level data on the public Farm to School Census website and include findings in subsequent reports and communications, which are expected to be released in 2020. Previous Farm to School Census data can be found at: [www.farmtoschoolcensus.fns.usda.gov](http://www.farmtoschoolcensus.fns.usda.gov). Visit the website to see how future data may be displayed.

### **Who can I contact for more information?**

- For more information about the Census and farm to school in general, contact a [USDA Farm to School Regional Lead](#) or email [farmtoschool@fns.usda.gov](mailto:farmtoschool@fns.usda.gov).