

DATE: March 14, 2013
FROM: DESE School Food Services

We are writing to request your participation in an important national Census regarding farm to school activities.

The **Farm to School Census** is intended for all public school district, BIE-funded, and tribal School Food Authorities (SFAs). It will provide an important national baseline of how many SFAs are purchasing locally produced food for school meal programs or conducting other farm to school activities such as bringing students to farms and farmers into classrooms, teaching students how to cook locally produced food, and operating edible school gardens.

The questionnaire has been kept as short as possible, and should take about 20 minutes if you have a local foods procurement program and only 5 minutes if you do not have one.

- **Ready to complete the survey!?** Please click or cut-and-paste the following link and fill out the survey!
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/F2S>.
- **Prefer a hard copy?** If you would rather complete the Census on paper, please print out the attached copy of the survey, fill it out by hand and submit it via **fax to (609) 936-1462**.
- **Need help?** If you need assistance, **call the Farm to School Census Help Line at (888) 633-8345 or email farmtoschool@mathematica-mpr.com**.
- **Please complete the survey even if you are not currently purchasing any locally produced food.** This is essential to measuring the percentage of SFAs that ARE buying locally produced food.

A few questions ask about the total value of food purchases from 2011-12, and what percent of those purchases were locally produced. The questionnaire asks for an **estimate**; we do not expect you to spend hours compiling data. If you have already compiled information on your local purchases, it will be helpful to have that information on hand before you start the Census.

You don't need to complete the survey in one sitting—your responses will be saved if your browser is set to allow cookies, if you use the same computer each session, and if you clicked "Next" to store your data for that page. When you exit before completing the survey and re-enter later, you will land on the next page to be completed—keep going and be sure to click "Next" to store your responses.

If you prefer to disable your browser's cookies, you can still take the survey, but you won't be able to exit and re-enter the survey (if you exit without completing the survey, your responses won't be saved).

The ERS website does not collect, store, or share any information except that needed to facilitate the survey transaction. Please see the [Privacy Policy of the U.S. Department of Agriculture](#). To review the privacy policy of the SurveyMonkey survey instrument, or for more information about how cookies are used by SurveyMonkey (or how to remove or disable browser cookies), please click on the following links:

- SurveyMonkey's privacy policy < <http://www.surveymonkey.com/mp/policy/privacy-policy/>>
- How SurveyMonkey uses cookies < http://help.surveymonkey.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/5168/kw/cookie%20information?q=cookie+information>

This information collection is authorized under 7 U.S.C. 427 and approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB Control No. 0536-0069, expires 2/29/2016). Your participation is voluntary. The survey is being conducted by USDA's Farm to School Program, in collaboration with the Economic Research Service (ERS).

The questionnaire does not include any personal information. However, we must inform you that your responses are not confidential and are not covered by the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act of 2002. Your responses will be used to create a publicly accessible map showing purchases of local food by SFAs. USDA will treat all information gathered in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552).

Please also note that USDA has requested contact information for SFAs in each state in order to construct a list frame to identify which SFAs have responded to the Farm to School Census and to contact a sample of non-respondents to request completion of an abridged set of questions. The list frame will be retained after the Farm to School Census is completed for use in frame building and other statistical activities conducted by USDA or other federal statistical agencies.

If you have questions, you can call DESE School Food Services at 573-751-3526