

10 CENTS A MEAL PILOT: 2018–2019 EVALUATION RESULTS



Reported Educational Activities Supporting 10 Cents

In addition to promotional activities, each monthly survey asked participating school food service directors (FSDs) about the type, number, and success of educational activities conducted in support of 10 Cents. FSDs were asked “In the past month, have you conducted any educational activities in your food service program focusing on the local produce and/or legumes purchased through the 10 Cents Pilot?” If they responded yes, they were asked a follow up question about which types of activities were conducted from a provided list with an “other” response option to describe additional activities. Again, it is important to note that 10 Cents grants do not support direct costs for FSDs to conduct either promotional or educational activities.

Reported Educational Activities

TYPE OF EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY	NUMBER OF TIMES ACTIVITY WAS REPORTED (N = 506)	REPORTS OF ACTIVITY BEING MOST SUCCESSFUL (N = 207)
Tasting/taste testing activities	166	149
Nutrition education in the classroom	72	13
Nutrition education in the cafeteria	96	16
School garden activities	35	9
Other classroom activities	17	2
Other cafeteria activities	20	8
Other district activities	7	4
Other	48	19
Total	461	-

*Note: September 2018-May 2019

Nine FSDs reported no educational activities, and one reported the maximum of 34. The average was just over eight (8.09), the median was six, and the most frequent number (mode) of educational activities conducted was three. FSDs reported a total of 166 instances of conducting tasting/taste testing activities for educational purposes. Tasting/taste testing activities were included as a type of educational activity as well as a type of promotional activity because they can serve either or both purposes, depending on how and why they are conducted. Given that, though, we cannot know if there are duplicate responses of tasting activities among reports of promotional and educational activities. In future years, we recommend revising the design and reducing the frequency of these activities questions to minimize the tendency for duplicate responses within a single month or over multiple months.

There were more than double the number of reports of tasting/taste testing activities than the next most frequently reported type of activity, nutrition education in the cafeteria. Other educational activities in the cafeteria described by FSDs included both a pop-up and traveling farmers market as well as a farmers market display; taste testing including a Harvest of the Month feature, Michigan plums, and Try It Tuesday; a survey activity on locally grown foods; cooking classes; both a challenge and March Madness tournament around fruits and vegetables; and education about new salad bar items. Other classroom activities included providing information about different apple varieties, making applesauce, and learning division with apples; graphing taste test results; cooking classes and food preparation; and activities provided by partner organizations. Other district-level activities included education about fruit and vegetable waste reduction and a smoothie blender bike during breakfast.

Educational activities in cafeterias included:

- Pop-up and traveling farmers markets
- Farmers market display
- Taste testing, including Harvest of the Month features and Try It Tuesdays
- Locally grown foods survey
- Cooking classes
- Fruit and vegetables challenge and March Madness tournament
- Education about new salad bar items

Reported Educational Activities by Month

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES	SEPT. (N = 55)	OCT. (N = 57)	NOV. (N = 57)	DEC. (N = 55)	JAN. (N = 57)	FEB. (N = 57)	MAR. (N = 56)	APR. (N = 56)	MAY (N = 56)	TOTAL
Number (and percent) of grantees reporting activities	21 (38%)	32 (56%)	25 (44%)	29 (53%)	20 (35%)	25 (44%)	23 (41%)	27 (48%)	18 (32%)	220
Number (and average) of different types of activities reported*	42 (2)	61 (1.9)	44 (1.8)	51 (1.8)	30 (1.5)	44 (1.8)	49 (2.1)	58 (2.1)	38 (2.1)	461

*There were two instances (both in January) of FSDs reporting they had conducted educational activities without providing more detail on the types of activities they conducted, so their activities were not included in the total count of different activity types.

Overall, FSDs less frequently reported instances of conducting educational activities than promotional activities (207 compared to 288) and reported conducting fewer different types of educational activities (461) than promotional activities (682) throughout the year. The months in which FSDs reported educational activities did not seem to follow a similar seasonal pattern as promotional activities. Nine FSDs reported no educational activities throughout the school year, and four FSDs reported educational activities in each of the nine survey months.

Again, FSDs were asked to provide the number of new adults, including teachers, parents, farmers, and other community members, involved in educational activities supporting 10 Cents. These data seem more conservative and may be more reliable than those reported for promotional activities, but their overall reliability is difficult to assess. Together, FSDs reported 594 new adults who were involved in these activities. Unsurprisingly given the educational nature of these activities, the majority of new adults reported were teachers (354). Additionally, 131 parents, 44 farmers, and 65 other adults (primarily community members) were reported. Again, descriptive responses were not counted here so these may be low estimates of adults engaged in educational activities.