



Dear SFA Director:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service (USDA/FNS) is gearing up for the 2019 Farm to School Census (2019 Census)!

FNS has contracted with Abt Associates Inc. to conduct the Census with all public, charter, and private school food authorities (SFAs) that participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) nationwide. We request your full support and participation to ensure that the Census data is representative of all SFAs in your state.

It is important that **all** SFAs participate, regardless of their participation in farm to school activities. Whether you purchase one carrot or a whole salad bar of produce from local farmers and ranchers, we want to hear from you! Only one Census has to be completed for each SFA. Additional information about the study is described in this [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\) document](#).

In the second week of September, Abt will e-mail you a link to the Census and instructions. When completing the Census, you will provide information related to local sourcing and farm to school activities for school year 2018 - 2019.

Participation in the Farm to School Census allows you to:

- Track your progress of farm to school activities over time;
- Compare your progress to other SFAs across the country; and,
- Gain insight into farm to school initiatives taking place in your schools.

If you are curious about how your results will be used, feel free to check out the results of the 2015 Farm to School Census at <https://farmtoschoolcensus.fns.usda.gov/>! You can explore data at the SFA, State, or national level!

If you have any questions, please contact the Abt project team from 9 AM to 9 PM ET toll-free at 855-452-5794 or e-mail [farmtoschool@abtassoc.com](mailto:farmtoschool@abtassoc.com). Thank you in advance for your support in maximizing participation in the 2019 Census.

Sincerely,

Ellen Bobronnikov

Project Director

Farm to School Census and Comprehensive Review

Abt Associates Inc.

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 OMB approval expiration date is 03/31/2022. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 4 minutes 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 Services, Office of Policy Support, 3101 Park Center Drive, Room 1014, Alexandria, VA 22302, ATTN: PRA (0584-0646). Do not return the completed form to this address.

# THE FARM *to* SCHOOL CENSUS | FAQs

## ***What is the purpose of the Farm to School Census?***

The 2019 Farm to School Census (2019 Census) of School Food Authorities (SFAs) will collect data on local food purchasing for school meals, school food gardens, other farm to school activities and policies, and evidence of the economic and nutritional impacts of farm to school activities, among approximately 20,000 SFAs across the country. The final report will comprehensively examine farm to school efforts and its evolution since the passage of the 2010 Child Nutrition Reauthorization through 2020.

## ***Where can I find the final Census Report and data?***

When posted, the report will be available on this site:

<https://farmtoschoolcensus.fns.usda.gov>. Your personal data will not be linked to your Census responses, but all Census data will be made publicly available, as they were in the past. Click here to see the public data set from the 2015 Census: <https://farmtoschoolcensus.fns.usda.gov/data-explorer>

## ***Who was selected to participate?***

All public (including charter schools) and private SFAs that participate in the National School Lunch Program are being asked to complete the Census. SFA names, the names of SFA Directors, and contact information were provided by State Child Nutrition offices.

## ***I am an SFA Director. What do you need me to do for this study?***

We need you to complete the Census. SFA Directors will be emailed a link to the Census. Please follow the link, where you will find instructions, an [optional worksheet](#), and the Census questions.

## ***The schools in my district don't do any farm to school activities – do I still need to fill out the Census?***

Yes! All public and private school food authorities (SFAs) that participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) in all 50 States, as well as Guam, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, and Washington, D.C. should complete the 2019 Census. This effort will help us understand why and why not SFAs and schools do farm to school activities and will help the USDA provide support to farm to school activities in the future.

## ***What if I don't know the answers to the Census questions?***

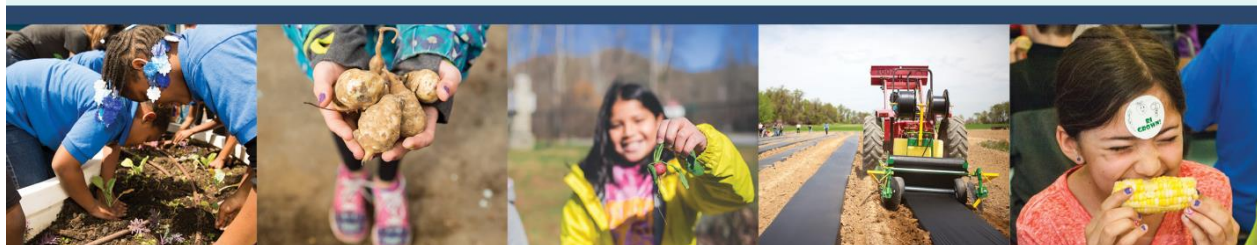
You may need to consult with your farm to school partners, such as vendors, school garden coordinators, foodservice staff, or teachers. To help you gather the necessary information for the Census, we prepared an [optional worksheet](#) that is available on the Census webpage. It will walk you through the information that will be helpful to collect ahead of completing the Census.

## ***Do I need to complete all the Census questions at one time?***

No, you do not need to complete the Census all at once. You will be able to answer questions, save your responses, close out of the Census, and return to complete it at a later time.

## ***How long will the Census take me to complete?***

The Census could take up to 30 minutes to complete for some SFAs. Most will take between 5 and 30 minutes to complete.



# THE FARM *to* SCHOOL CENSUS

# FAQs

## ***Why should I complete the Census?***

Participation by all SFAs will ensure that we have an accurate representation of farm to school activities, including which farm to school activities SFAs administer, what has changed since the 2015 Census, how SFAs and the community benefit from farm to school, and the challenges of participating in farm to school.

## ***When will the Census be conducted?***

The 2019 Farm to School Census will be distributed in September 2019.

## ***I don't think I am the correct person to complete the Census. I don't know anything about Farm to school in my SFA.***

If you are not at all knowledgeable about farm to school in your SFA or are no longer the SFA Director, please let the study team know by contacting Ellen Bobronnikov at the email or phone number listed below.

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

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