



# VERMONT FARM TO SCHOOL & EARLY CHILDHOOD NETWORK

seeks your support of

## Vermont's Local Foods Incentive Grant Program

Please continue to support schools in purchasing more local foods by funding the Vermont Local Foods Incentive Grant Program at \$500,000 for FY 2023, as the Governor has recommended in his budget. This program ensures more of the dollars schools spend on food each year goes directly to Vermont farmers and producers.



In 2021, Vermont made a commitment to support our farmers and schools by enacting a Local Foods Incentive grant program into law providing \$500,000 in first-year funds. This program provides a direct financial incentive to school districts and supervisory unions that meet local purchasing targets in their school meal programs, supporting them in serving more fresh local food to more Vermont children.

School nutrition staff want to feed their kids more local foods but are challenged by costs. Providing supervisory unions this grant opportunity is essential for feeding more Vermont kids with fresh local food and directing more dollars to Vermont farmers.

Vermont schools are hungry for this opportunity. The Agency of Education and farm to school organizations are working hard to put systems in place now to support schools to succeed with the grant:

- Since September 2021, the Agency of Education has hired a new staff member to develop and implement the grant program
- Vermont FEED has developed supporting resources to help school nutrition programs navigate the grant
- Both entities continue to provide outreach and ongoing technical assistance related to the grant. This important support is funded in part by the Farm to School & Early Childhood Grant program.



Learn more at [vermontfarmtoschool.org](http://vermontfarmtoschool.org)  
Questions? Contact Betsy Rosenbluth  
at [brosenbluth@shelburnefarms.org](mailto:brosenbluth@shelburnefarms.org)  
or 802-985-0318

# Funding the Local Foods Incentive Means:

## 1 More money for Vermont's agricultural economy.

Every \$1.00 spent on local food for school meals contributes \$1.60 to Vermont's economy. Schools spend over \$15 million on food every year and we want more of those dollars going to Vermont farmers.



## 2 Increased access to high quality foods for Vermont school kids.

Every Vermonter should grow up with a connection to local food. Schools want to increase their local food purchasing, and need support navigating the grant program to do so.



## 3 Expanded markets for Vermont farmers and producers.

Over 100 Vermont farms sell food to Vermont schools and early childhood programs.



## 4 A more resilient local food system in Vermont.

I've enjoyed the opportunity to provide our students with fresh, local food, and our partnerships with farmers helped us continue offering that local food, even throughout the pandemic. As many products became harder to source, local foods remained fairly easy to source, such as Vermont beef, maple syrup, and dairy.

**-Scott Fay**

President, School Nutrition Assoc. of VT &  
Senior Manager, Child Nutrition program,  
Essex Westford School District