



**FY27 Public Budget Hearing**  
**2/12/2026**

My name is Betsy Rosenbluth and I am the Farm to School Director at Shelburne Farms.

Please support the Governor's budget recommendation for FY27 to level fund the Farm to School & Early Childhood grants program at \$500,000 in the Agency of Agriculture budget and the Local Food Incentive Program for schools at \$500,000 in the Agency of Education budget.

The win-win of farm to school is that while we address food insecurity we are also helping our VT farmers, businesses and the agricultural economy. Over 150 Vermont farms now provide food to our youth across the state through early childhood and school nutrition programs. The grants help schools create the structures and partnerships needed to bring farm fresh food into our schools and offer it to our students on a daily basis, and connect students with where that food comes from.

Vermont schools spend about \$20 million each year on food and our schools now have an average of 14% of purchases coming from local farms and producers - a 10% increase from 10 years ago. That's \$3 million a year now staying in Vermont with our producers, and growing.

Local Food Incentive Grant requests this year exceeded the annual appropriation and there was a record increase in demand for the Farm to School and Early Childhood Grants. Both grant programs build more resiliency in our local food systems, ensure our youth are well nourished, and expand opportunities for our farmers. Please level fund both programs at \$500,000, each.

Thank You!