

NEBRASKA

2017 EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION SURVEY



Farm to Preschool
NEBRASKA



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Farm to School Surveys: Early Care Education
November 2020

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Farm to Early Care Education in Nebraska Survey

In October 2017, 332 early care educators opened a survey link sent to them over email. After removing respondents who did not answer any questions, 309 responses remained. These responses were analyzed for overall descriptive statistics, as well as the following breakdowns:

- Family based provider (n=225) vs. childcare center (n=80)
- Locations with more than 10 attendees (n=127) vs. smaller (n=177)
- Urban (n=155) vs. rural (n=147) (using site location and county RUCC code)
- Locations who have mostly full-time (75%+) (n=201) vs. more part-time attendees (n=105)
- Locations that have mostly infants and toddlers (n=138) vs. older attendees (n=142)
- Those that have gardens (n=112) vs. those that don't (n=136)

Only statistically significant group breakdowns are displayed.

Descriptive statistics

Respondents were asked to choose from a list of 9 (+ other, specify) descriptions of their program model (Table 1). Ten percent of respondents chose more than one description. Almost three-quarters of respondents said they were licensed family programs, distantly followed by single site childcare centers. For the purposes of comparison, licensed and exempt daycare home programs were grouped together as “family” (74%) and the rest were coded as “center” (26%). The other categories included adult care programs, and after school programs.

Table 1: Type of program (check all that apply) (n=306)

Licensed family daycare home program	73%
Childcare center – single site	16%
Non-profit Center	6%
Childcare center – multiple-sites	5%
Head Start and/or Early Head Start Center	3%
Faith-based Center	3%
Private	2%
Preschool or childcare through a K-12 school district	2%
Other (please specify)	2%
Exempt family daycare home program	1%

As expected, family home programs were smaller than centers, overall, with a median of 9 attendees, versus the median of 74 for centers. Altogether, the respondents represented at least 54,780 students across the state. Most of these were school-aged children in part-time programs (Table 2).

Table 2: Enrollment numbers (n=298)

	Full-time (1)	Part-time (2)
Infants (1-12 mos)	1,027	144
Toddlers (13-35 mos)	1,975	871
Preschoolers (3-5 yrs)	2,934	2,387
School-aged	4,157	41,285
Totals	10,093	44,687

For comparison purposes, the United States Department of Agriculture Rural-Urban Continuum Codes (RUCC) ¹ codes for counties were used to define urban versus rural respondents, with metro codes coded as urban (51%), and the rest as rural (49%). Compared to self-report service demographics (Table 3), which asked “How would you BEST describe the demographics of the area your program provides services to?” the most common was rural. Comparing the two codings, 16% of respondents did not match (eight chose more than one option). In some cases, there was a straightforward misclassification (such as a town of about 25,000 people entered as urban), but other cases were more complicated because of proximity to urban or tribal areas.

Table 3: Service demographics (n=308)

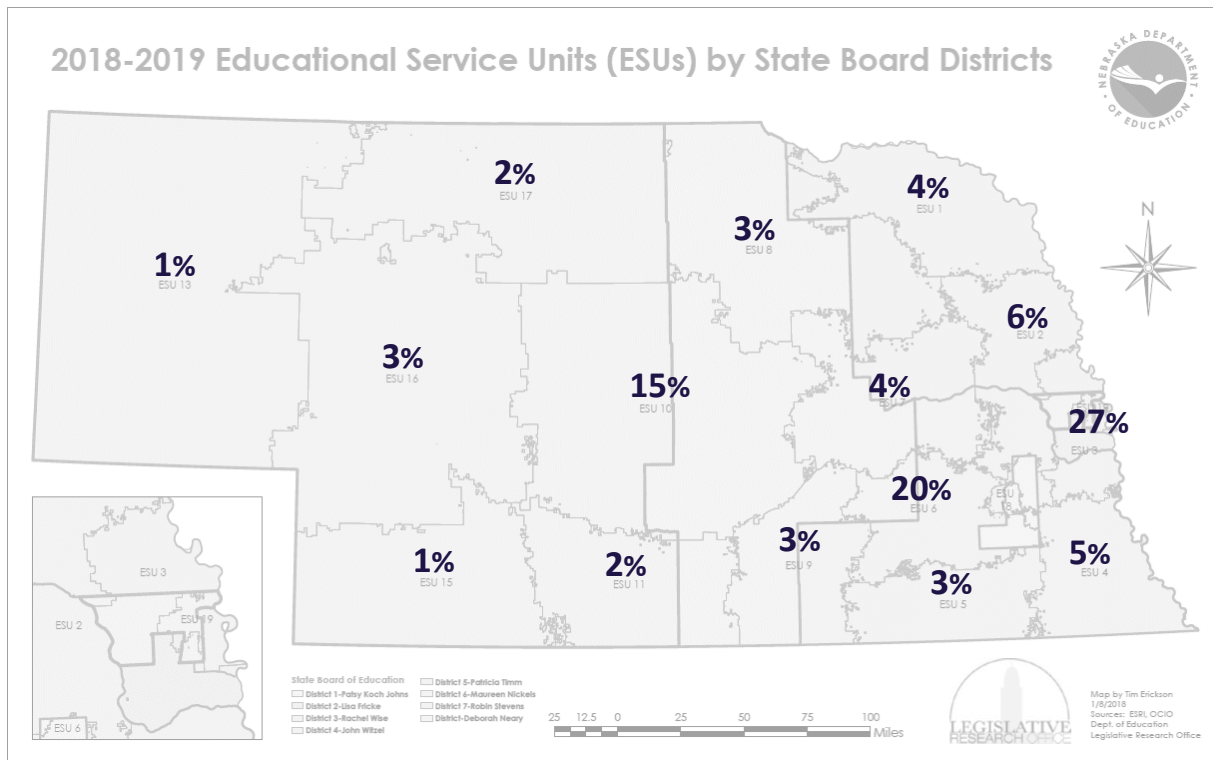
Urban	42%
Suburban	20%
Rural	57%
Tribal	1%
I don't know	8%

Table 4: RUCC vs. self-report (n=300)

County	Rural Urban	Service demo	
		Rural + Tribal	Urban + Suburban
		42%	6%
		10%	41%

To assess the representation of respondents across the state, but reduce identifiability, locations were matched to their Education Service Units (ESUs). Due to limited information and time, ESU 3 (outer Omaha area) includes respondents that are likely in ESU 19, and ESU 6 includes respondents likely in ESU 18 (Lincoln Public Schools). More than a quarter of respondents were located in the Omaha metro area, and one in five were located in ESUs 6 and 18 (Lincoln and areas west). The lowest representation was from ESUs 13 (Scottsbluff and Panhandle) and 15 (Trenton, including McCook).

Figure 1: Respondents across Nebraska by Educational Service Unit



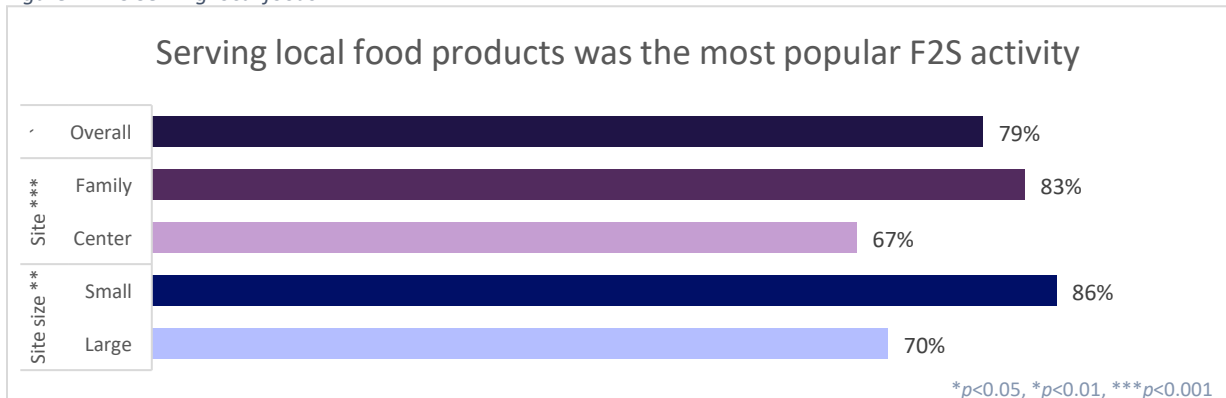
¹ RUCC code explanation: <https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/rural-urban-continuum-codes/documentation/>

Almost all respondents received Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) funding for meals (98%), and over two-thirds prepared snacks or meals from scratch (68%). A quarter said they seldom prepare food from scratch, and 4% said seldom or never. Seven sites (2%) said their food was prepared off-site.

Farm to School

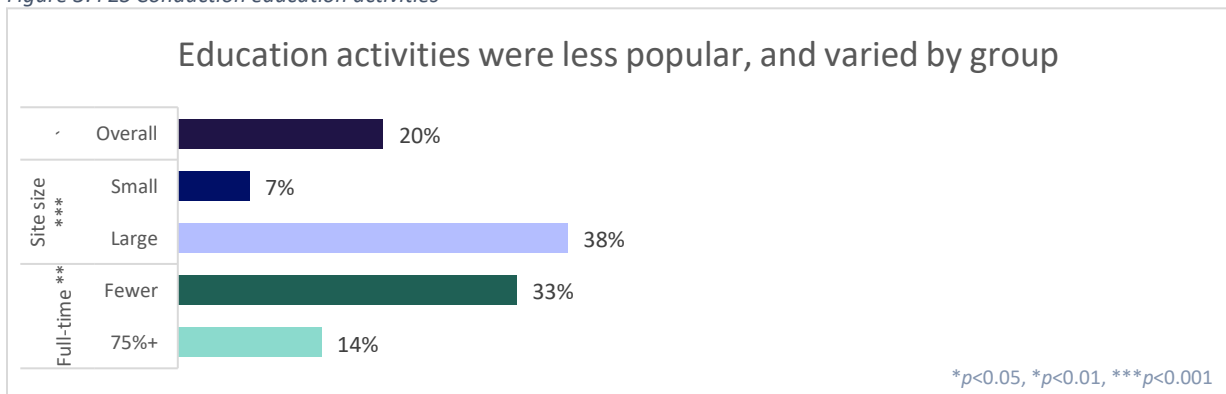
Respondents were asked whether they did any farm to school activities. About a third of the respondents (n=101) did not select any of the activities. Of the three activities listed, serving local food products was the most popular, with about four out of five sites doing F2S activities serving local food (Figure 2). This percentage goes up to 94% when later questions about purchased local food were taken into account (this is not included in Figure 2). Based on the original question only, there were significant differences between site types, and also site size, with family sites and smaller locations serving local food more often. (While there is overlap between these two characteristics, there are places where they differ.)

Figure 2: F2S Serving local foods



Creating and tending edible gardens was the second most popular F2S activity, with half of sites (51%) reporting this activity. As one might expect, sites that had gardens were more likely to do this (84% vs. 15%, $p<0.001$). Conducting education activities (such as farmers visiting the classroom, farm visits, cooking/food education focused on local foods, or educational sessions for parents about these activities) was the least popular activity, with one in five sites doing them (Figure 3). Large sites were more than five times more likely than smaller sites to have these activities, and sites with more part-time attendees were twice as likely than sites with more full-time attendees.

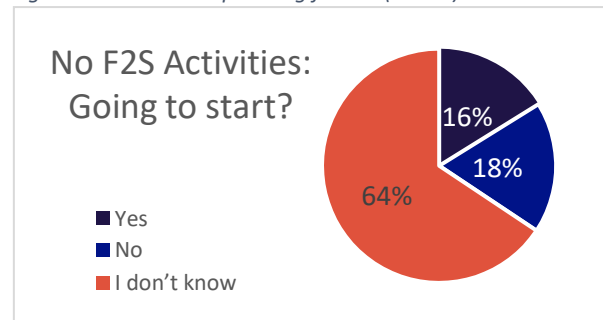
Figure 3: F2S Conduction education activities



These sites were asked how long they had engaged in F2S activities – from less than a year to more than 3 years. About a third (35%) had done them for more than 3 years, with 22% between 1-3 years, and 20% less than a year. About a quarter (24%) did not know when their activities started. Excluding those sites who did not know when they started F2S, there were significant differences based on site size. More than half (57%) of small sites (with ten or fewer attendees) did F2S activities for more than three years, compared to a third of larger sites ($p<0.001$). Sites without gardens were almost twice as likely than those with gardens to have started F2S activities in the previous year (35% vs. 18%, $p<0.001$).

Sites that did not do any of the three activities were asked about whether they intended to increase or introduce F2S activities in the following year. Nearly two-thirds of respondents did not know if they would, with the remaining sites almost evenly split between yes and no (Figure 4). Small sites were less likely than larger sites to intend to increase or introduce F2S activities in the next year (25% vs 65%, $p<0.05$).

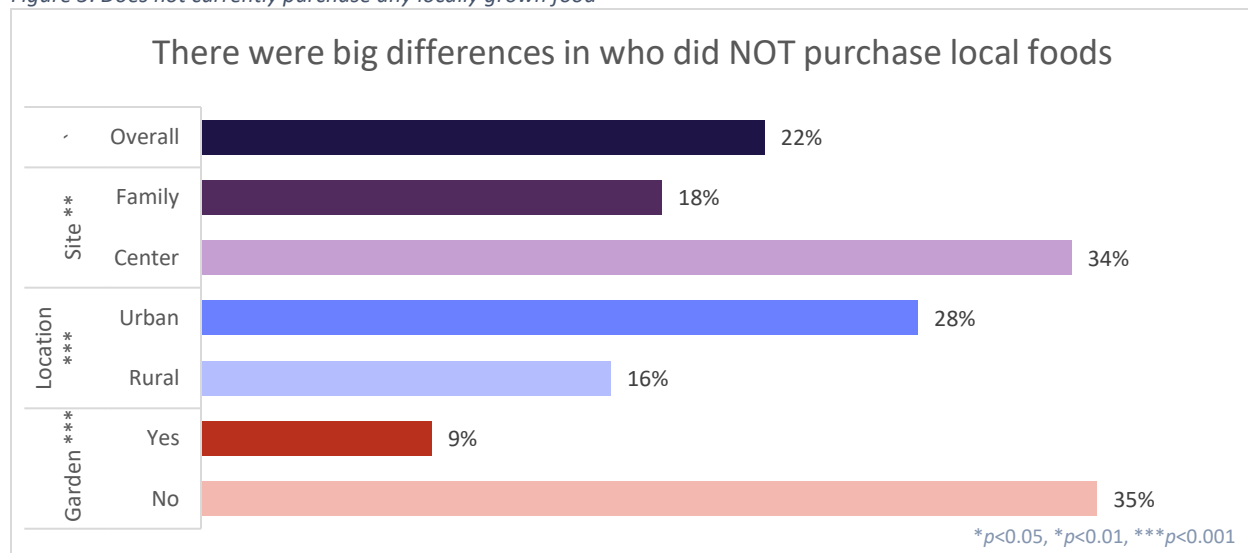
Figure 4: No F2S sites planning for F2S (n=101)



Access to Local Food

Providers were asked about the sources of locally grown food purchased for their program. More than one out of five (22%) did not purchase locally grown food, but there were several significant differences between groups (Figure 5). Centers, urban locations, and sites that did not have gardens were less likely to purchase locally grown food for their program.

Figure 5: Does not currently purchase any locally grown food

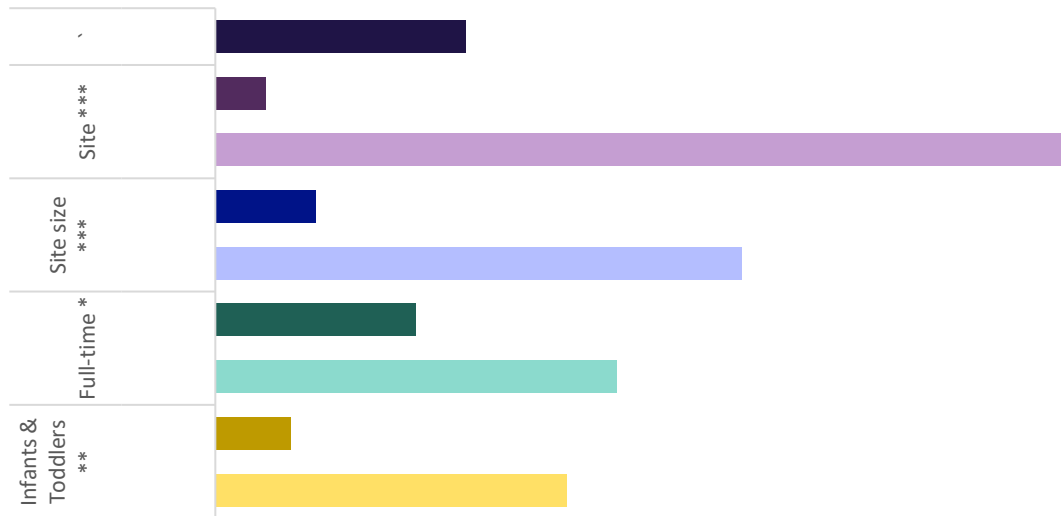


Almost half (46%) of sites purchased locally grown from farmers' markets, with differences by groups. Over half (55%) of small sites purchased from farmers' markets, compared to 36% of larger sites that did not ($p<0.001$). Donated garden produce from parents or community members was the second most common source of local food for sites (43%). Donated produce was more common in larger programs (50% vs. 39%, $p<0.05$), rural locations (55% vs. 32%, $p<0.001$), and those with their own gardens (53% vs. 39%, $p<0.05$). Overall, about a third (34%) of sites got produce from their own garden, and not

surprisingly, sites with gardens were also more likely to get produce from their own garden (74% vs. 5%, $p < 0.001$).

Only one in ten sites received locally grown food from food distributors (like Thompson or Sysco), but there were many group differences (Figure 6). The biggest difference was by site type, with a third of centers getting local food from distributors versus 2% of family programs. The other differences were large, but not as great. Sites that had fewer infants and toddlers, had more full-time attendees, and were larger were all at least twice as likely to get their local goods from a food distributor than their counterparts.

Figure 6: Food distributors as source of local food



Nine percent of sites got local food directly from farms, with a similar number getting it from USDA foods (8%). Only 2% used community supported agriculture programs, and only sites with at least half infants and toddlers used these programs (3% vs. 0% of those with more older attendees, $p < 0.05$). Only two sites (1%) said they used food hubs (like the Nebraska Food Cooperative or Lone Tree Foods).

When asked about their top three barriers to procuring local products (out of a list of 16 issues), cost was selected by more than half (56%) of respondents. (It was also the biggest barrier for one out of four sites.) Seasonality of fruits and vegetables was also selected by more than half (53%) of sites (21% chose as biggest barrier). About a third (34%) said availability of local foods, and about a quarter said knowledge of how to order local items (26%) and storage (24%).

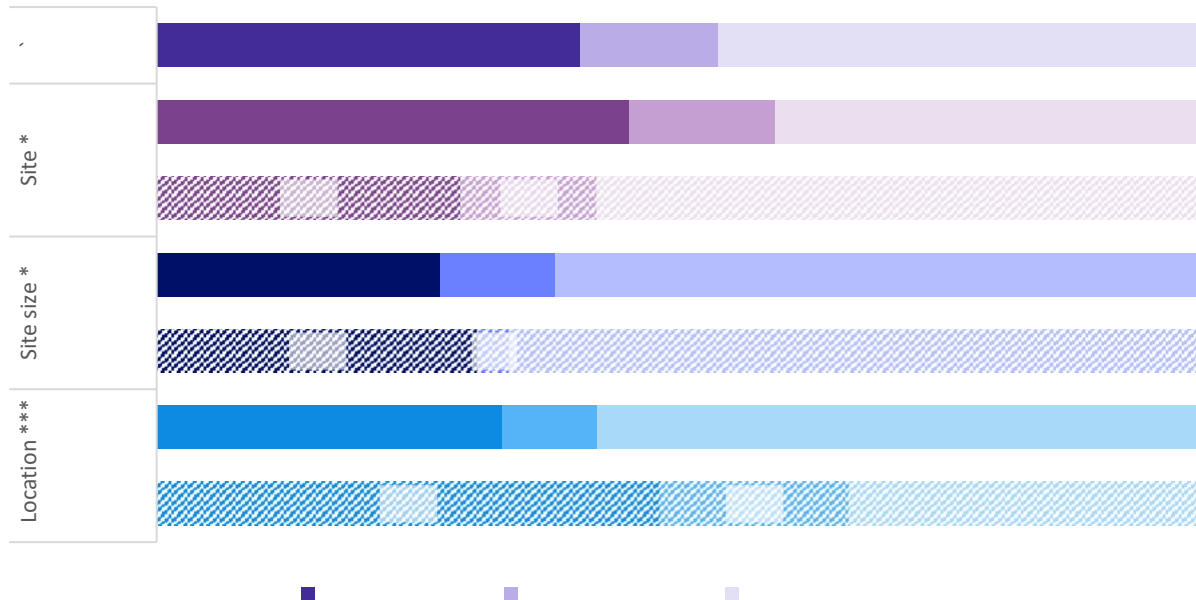
The frequency of serving local foods varied greatly by the kind of food (Table 5), and also group characteristics for six of the ten categories listed. While local milk was served most frequently (daily by more than a third of sites), almost half of sites said they never served local milk. Only plant based proteins, grains, and other dairy were used less frequently from local sources. Local fruits and vegetables were served daily by more than a quarter of sites, and were overall, used the most frequently. Meat/poultry was also a more common local food item.

Table 5: Frequency of serving local foods at site (n=284)

	Daily	1+ times a week	1+ times a month	A few times a year	Almost never	Never
Milk	35%	3%	1%	4%	10%	48%
Vegetables	27%	27%	15%	16%	6%	9%
Fruits	27%	21%	16%	18%	8%	10%
Meat/poultry	24%	16%	7%	6%	12%	34%
Grains and flour	20%	9%	4%	3%	13%	52%
Other Dairy	11%	21%	2%	3%	13%	51%
Herbs or spices	10%	13%	11%	6%	15%	45%
Other	8%	2%	4%	0%	10%	76%
Bakery items	7%	18%	19%	13%	14%	29%
Eggs	6%	26%	15%	12%	12%	30%
Plant-based proteins	4%	15%	12%	6%	13%	49%

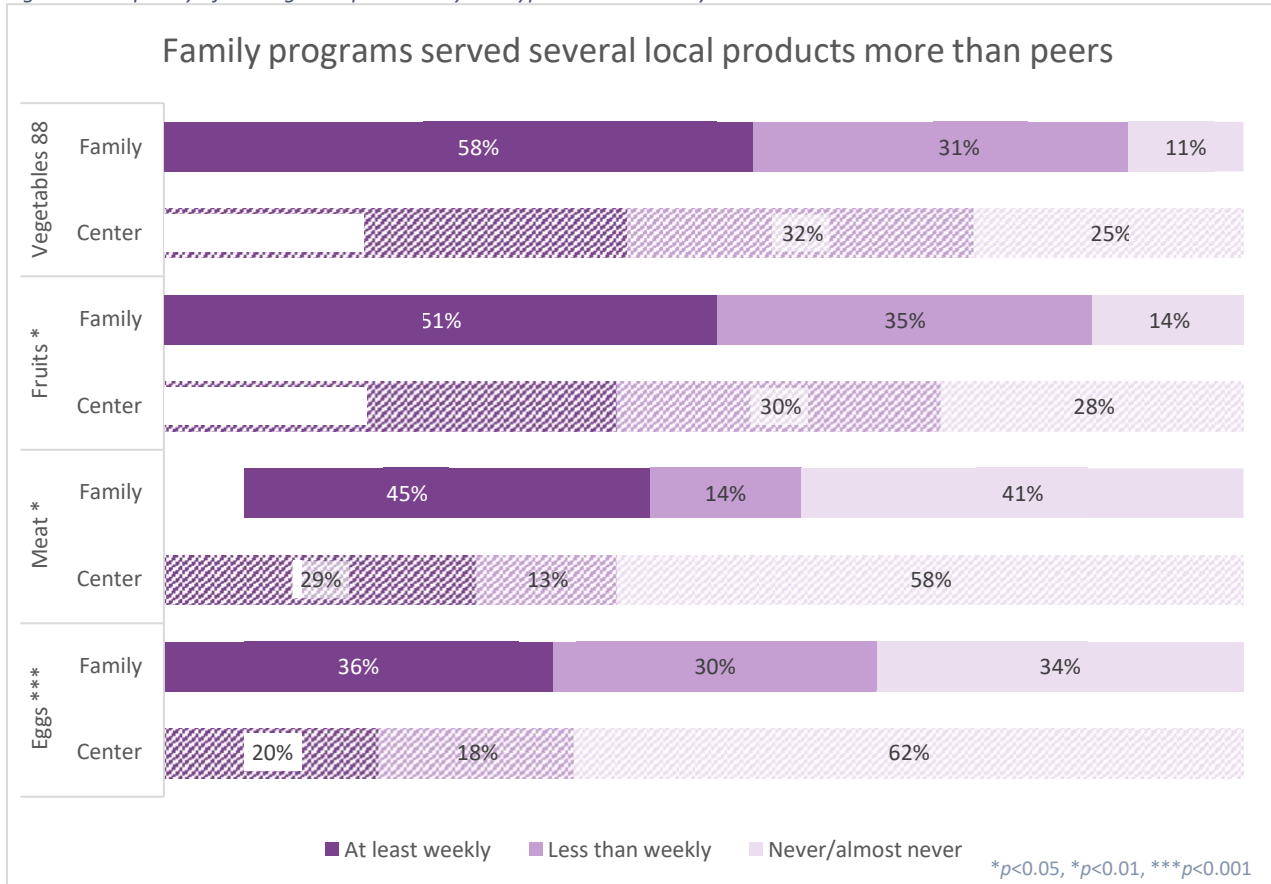
For the purposes of group comparisons, the six response categories shown in Table 5 were collapsed into three: at least weekly, less than weekly, and never/almost never. While there were significant group differences in 6 of the 10 items, only meat serving was common to three groups (Figure 7). Family based and rural programs were more likely than centers and urban programs to serve local meat and poultry daily. The differences by site size were smaller, with the biggest difference in the middle category of less frequent serving of local meat/poultry.

Figure 7: Frequency of serving local meat/poultry



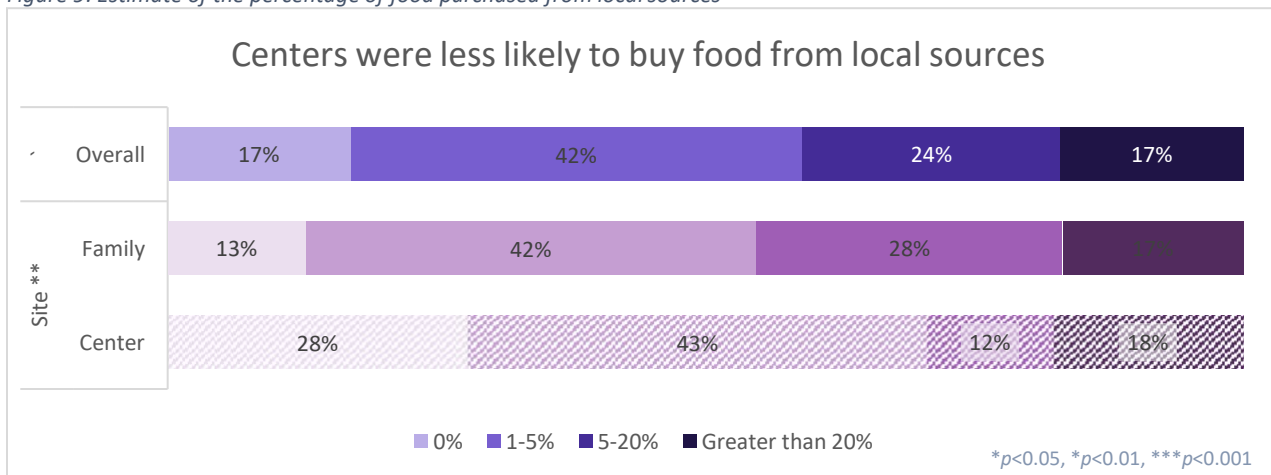
Most of the other group differences were limited to type of site (Figure 8). For vegetables, fruit, meat, and eggs, family based programs were more likely than centers to serve local item at least weekly. Sites with gardens were more likely to serve local vegetables (64% vs. 45% for those without), and eggs (41% vs. 23%) at least weekly ($p < 0.01$).

Figure 8: Frequency of serving local products by site type and F2S activity



Respondents answered their estimated percentage of food purchased from local sources. Overall, the same percentage of respondents said never and more than 20% (Figure 9). By site, a similar percentage of both family and center programs chose the highest category, but family programs were more likely to purchase local food.

Figure 9: Estimate of the percentage of food purchased from local sources



The sites were asked to list up to five specific local food items purchased in the previous year, based on estimated dollars spent. A total of 691 items were listed by 162 respondents, which broke down to 62

different items. Overall, vegetables were the most commonly entered item (45%), followed by fruit (33%), meat (12%), dairy (6%), and bread (3%). Apples were the entered by about half of respondents (52%), representing 12% of the total items listed. Cucumbers were a close second (49%), followed by tomatoes (43%), beef (27%), and watermelons (23%).

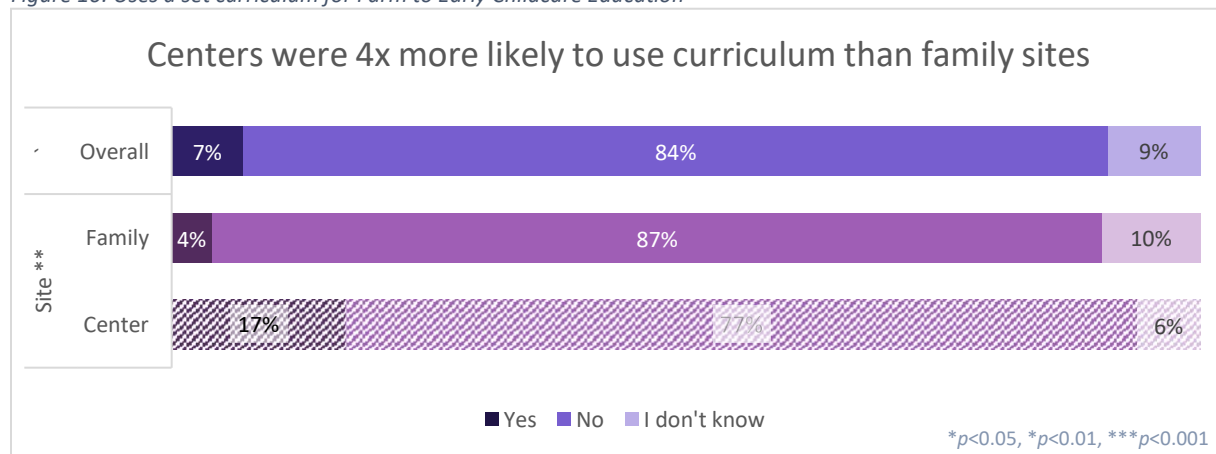
Seventy three respondents answered the follow-up question about local products their program was unable to purchase due to barriers such as lack of supply or costs. Out of 209 total items listed, there were 76 different items. Meats (generally) was the most common item listed (by 23% of sites), but beef (14%) and chicken (12%) were third and fourth, respectively. Fruit (generally) was the second most common (16%), and milk (12%) was fifth. While meat items were the most common specific items, they came in second overall (23%), behind fruit (31%). A number of items listed were unlikely to be found locally, like oranges, pineapple, avocados, or seafood. Some people specified “out of season” items, struggling with the concept of local food sourcing.

Education

Overall, only 7% of respondents had set curriculum/resources – fewer than did not know (9%). Of the 16 respondents who specified their curriculum/resources, the same number (3) mentioned CACFP, Nutrition and Physical Activity Self-Assessment for Child Care (NAP SACC), or MyPlate resources. Farm to School for Early Childhood, Cooking Matters, Creative Curriculum, GeeWhiz, and Mother Goose were all mentioned as well.

While family sites were more likely to do F2S activities than centers, centers were more likely to have a set curriculum or resources for their Farm to Early Childcare and Education activities (Figure 10).

Figure 10: Uses a set curriculum for Farm to Early Childcare Education



Twelve specific F2S activities were listed to assess what was already being done, planned to be done in the 2018-19 school year, or not planned to start (Table 6). Educating children about locally grown food was the most common activity, reported by 42% of respondents. In terms of planned activities, celebrating National Farm to School Month was planned to start by a third of sites. The least common activities were hosting F2S community events, working with local farmers, or having a chef visit the site.

Table 6: Activities in action, planning, or neither (n=247)

	Already doing	Yes, we plan to start this activity	No, we do not plan to start this activity
Educating children about locally grown food, how food grows, where it comes from	42%	32%	26%
Planting or working with children in an edible garden at your site	39%	21%	40%
Holding taste tests/cooking demonstrations of locally produced foods	16%	16%	68%
Holding taste tests/cooking demonstrations of school-based gardens	16%	13%	71%
Conducting field trips to farms, gardens, or farmers markets	15%	19%	66%
Promoting locally produced foods in general at the site	9%	20%	70%
Having farmers visit the site	8%	14%	78%
Celebrating National Farm to School Month	6%	33%	61%
Hosting a special event or day related to food and farms	5%	19%	76%
Working with local farmers/producers to develop a specific food product using local foods	5%	10%	85%
Hosting farm to school related community events	4%	10%	86%
Having a chef visit the site	4%	12%	84%

There were a great many differences by group in activity adoption. Table 7 summarizes the significant group differences for the data in Table 6 – limited to the activities already happening (for the sake of space). Overall, centers were at least twice as likely as family programs to be doing four activities: field trips, farmer’s visits, National F2S Month, and promoting locally produced foods on site. Larger sites (more than 10 attendees) were more likely than smaller sites to already be doing 6 of the 12 listed activities. While the differences in what was already happening were dramatic for other group characteristics, by site size, the differences were more obvious in what they were planning to start. For example, a quarter of large sized sites planned to have farmers visit, versus 6% of smaller sites, and 24% of larger sites planned to start taste tests, versus 10% of smaller sites. Sites with fewer infants and toddlers were more likely to work with children in the garden, and promote local food on site, while sites with more part time attendees were more likely to work with farmers. Sites with gardens followed a very similar (but not identical) pattern, with a greater likelihood for 10 of the 12 listed activities.

Table 7: Group differences in activities already happening (n=247)

	Site		Size		FT		Inf & Todd		Garden	
	Fam	Gen	Sm	Lrg	Fewer	75%+	More	Less	Yes	No
Planting or working with children in an edible garden at your site							31%	49%	79%	5%
Conducting field trips to farms, gardens, or farmers markets	11%	28%	10%	22%					23%	9%
Having farmers visit the site	5%	15%	7%	9%	15%	3%				
Holding taste tests/cooking demonstrations of locally produced foods			15%	16%					28%	6%
Holding taste tests/cooking demonstrations of (pre)school-based gardens			10%	22%					30%	5%
Celebrating National Farm to School Month (October)	3%	13%	4%	9%					11%	2%
Hosting farm to school related community events									9%	0%
Educating children about locally grown food, how food grows, where it comes from			39%	48%					58%	29%
Working with local producers to develop a specific food product using local foods					6%	4%			10%	1%
Promoting locally produced foods in general at the site	6%	19%					5%	13%	16%	4%
Hosting a special event or day related to food and farms									11%	1%

p<0.05, *p*<0.01, *p*<0.001

Gardens

Just over half (55%) of respondents had a garden the previous year. For sites with a garden, the most common caretaker was the provider/center administrator (87%), distantly followed by teaching staff (24%). The next most common caretakers were the site children (13%), from the other write-ins. There were significant differences in management by providers, teachers, and parent volunteers (Table 8).

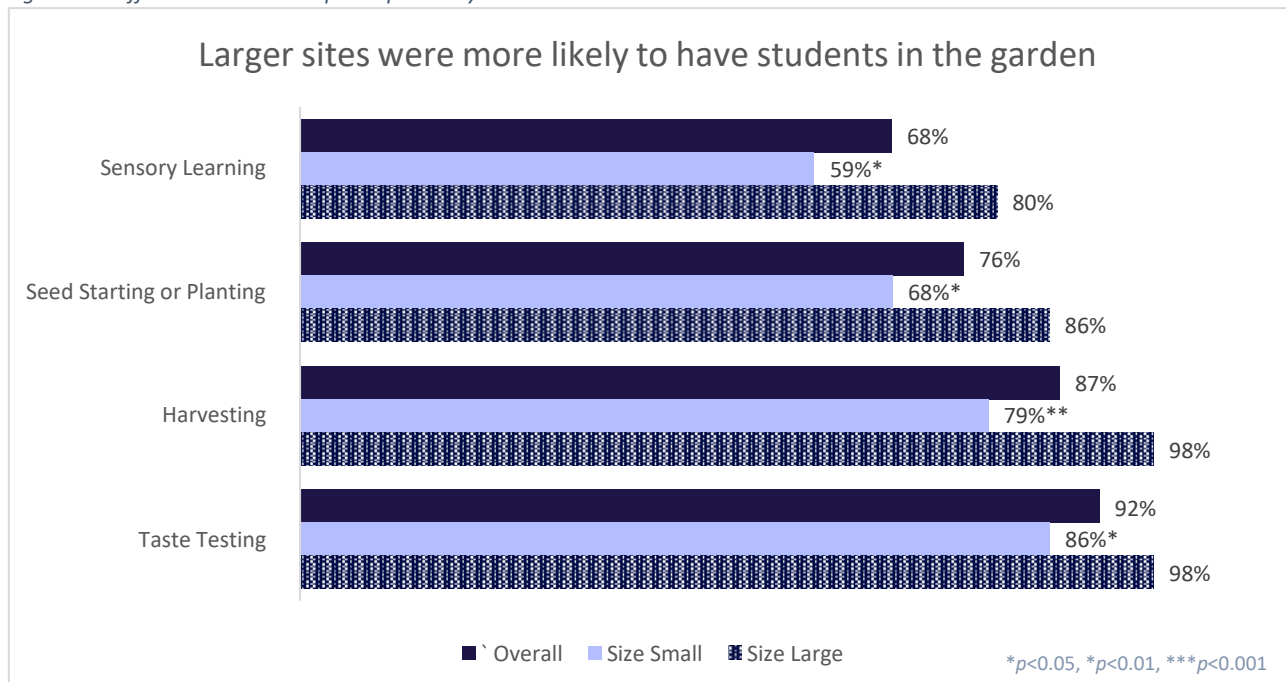
Table 8: Who manages the garden (n=112)

	All	Site		Size		FT		Inf & Todd	
		Fam	Cen	Sm	Lrg	Fewer	75%+	More	Less
Provider/Center Administrator	87%	98%	52%	99%	69%				
Custodial Staff	3%								
Teaching Staff	24%	2%	93%	6%	51%	36%	18%	10%	32%
Parent Volunteers	4%							8%	0%
Community Volunteers	6%								
Other	19%								
Other: Children	13%								

p<0.05, *p*<0.01, *p*<0.001

Students participated in their gardens in a variety of ways. At least half of sites had taste testing (92%), harvesting (87%), seed starting/planting (76%), sensory learning (68%), and food preparation (50%). Rural sites (94%) were more likely to have students help with harvesting than urban sites (80%, *p*<0.05). The greatest number of differences were by site size, where larger sites were more likely to have students in the garden (Figure 11).

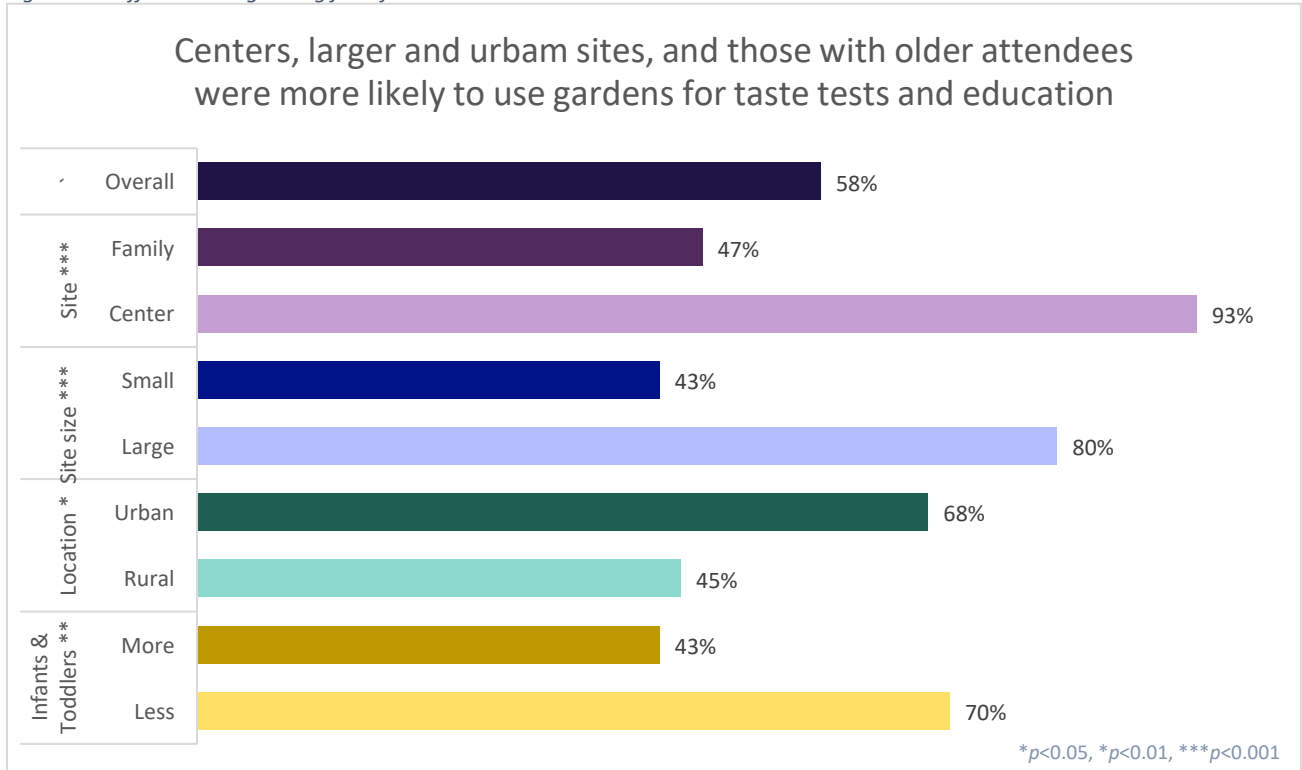
Figure 11: Differences in student participation by site size



Sites with a garden were most likely to use it for growing food (93%), but many used the food they grew for taste tests and education (Figure 12). There were several significant differences by group characteristics: site type, location, the number of infants and toddlers, and site size. All small sites with

gardens (100%) and nearly all family sites (99%) grew food for meals and snacks, versus 82% of larger sites (74%) and three-quarters of centers ($p<0.001$).

Figure 12: Differences in growing food for taste tests



Planning and Resources

When asked about the importance of difference aspects of Farm to Early Care Education (ECE) activities (Table 9), 9 out of 10 respondents said improved health was very important, followed by lower meal costs (83%). While public relations (PR) and appeals to parents were the least important overall, sites with more infants and toddlers were more likely than their counterparts to say these issues were not at all important: 26% for PR (vs. 11% with older attendees, $p<0.05$), and 8% for appeal to parents (vs. 0% with older attendees, $p<0.05$).

Table 9: Importance in deciding to take part in Farm to ECE activities (n=234)

	Very	Slightly	Not at all
Improve health of children	89%	9%	2%
Lower meal costs	83%	15%	2%
Provide children w/ experiential & developmentally appropriate learning	79%	18%	3%
Teach children about where food comes from & how it is grown	78%	19%	2%
Access to fresher or higher-quality food	69%	28%	3%
Support of local farmers	61%	35%	4%
Support for local economy & community	56%	40%	3%
Appeals to parents	47%	48%	5%
Public relations & promotion	25%	56%	19%

When asked about tools and resources that would be most valuable for increasing participation in farm to school activities, two-thirds (67%) of respondents said early childcare curriculum for integrating farm to preschool activities into their program. Grants/fundraising was the second most commonly desired resource (58%). There were significant differences by site type (Figure 13) and site size (Figure 14). Centers and large sites were about 50% more likely to be interested in grants. Toolkit for developing goals, plans, and action steps were also desired by more than half of respondents (55%).

Figure 13: Site type differences in desired tools and resources

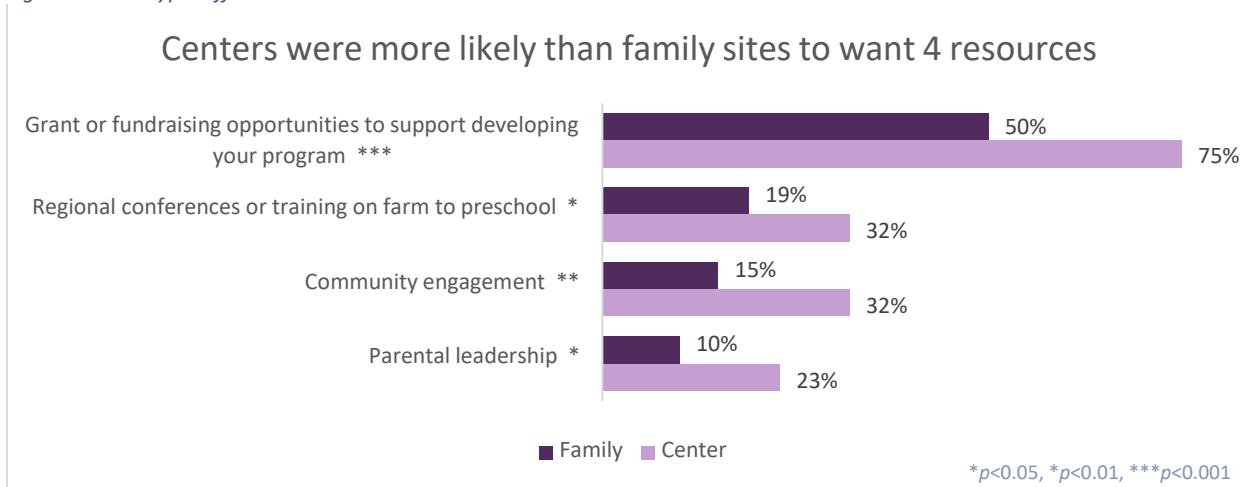
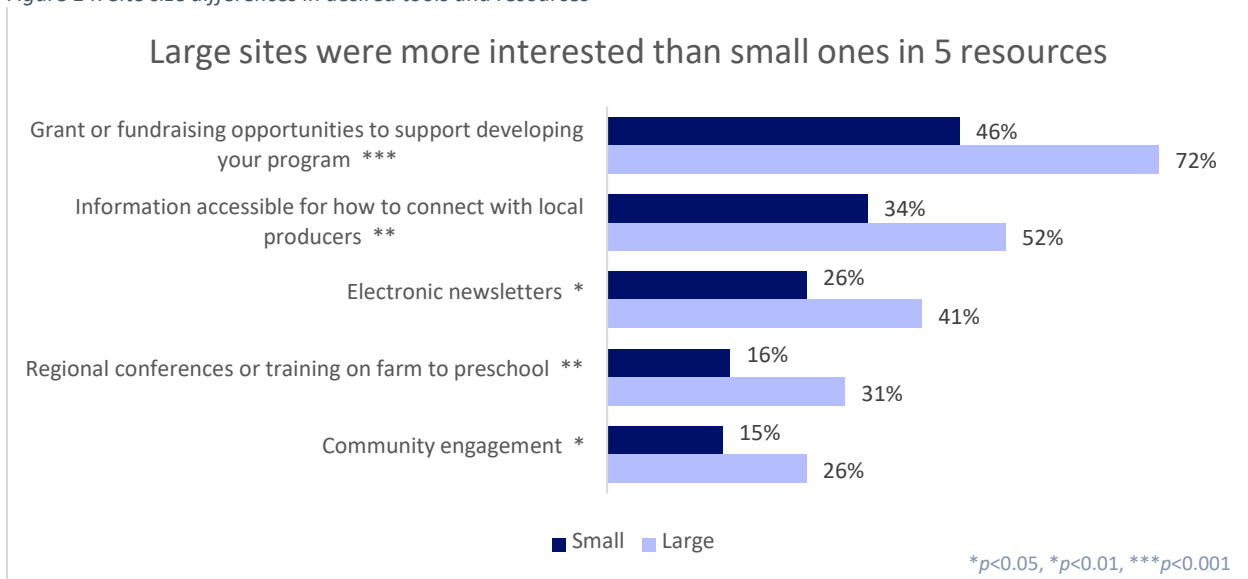


Figure 14: Site size differences in desired tools and resources



Less desired tools and resources were information accessible for how to connect with local producers (42%), electronic newsletters (33%), webinars highlighting success stories and ideas for increasing program activities (28%), regional conferences or training on farm to preschool (23%), and community engagement (20%). Connecting with local producers and electronic newsletters were more desired by large sites than small ones (Figure 14). Regional conferences and community engagement were desired more by centers and larger sites. Regional conferences were also more popular at sites with mostly older attendees (29% vs. 17% of sites with at least 50% infants and toddlers, $p<0.05$).

The least popular resources were technical assistance to incorporate farm to preschool principles into wellness policies (16%), parental leadership (14%), and conference calls with a network of early childcare providers who are interested in farm to preschool activities (10%). Centers were more interested in parental leadership than family based providers (Figure 13), as were sites without gardens (20% vs. 8%, $p < 0.05$).

Finally, respondents were asked about resources, equipment, or technical assistance not previously mentioned previously that would be helpful or necessary to move forward with Farm to ECE efforts at their early childcare center or family daycare home program. Out of 45 responses, 10 wanted help getting started: *“Information on how to get started. Information on how to plant and grow a garden. Seed packets with easy to grow plants and easy to understand directions.”* Nine respondents discussed needing financial support, with suggestions for higher rates, grants, help buying supplies, etc. Third most common was educational components for the provider, which varied from direction for seed selection (like this *“Teach how to plant a vegetable garden and/or herb garden, how to manage upkeep on it, and keep pests out of the garden”*), to cooking classes and recipes.

Other themes that emerged were greater access to local foods (how to find providers, partnerships), logistical barriers (usually related to lack of space), provided seed packets, and lack of time. Three comments were about regulations or legalities:

[I] thought we weren't allowed dairy & meat from local farms due to packaging and processing guidelines for CACFP

Laws regulate no home canned foods can be served to daycare children... which makes serving local food very seasonal at my in-home daycare.

This should only be encouraged as an option, but not mandatory ever. It is very expensive and time consuming to implement. Child Care providers already spend way too much time doing paperwork, meeting ever changing regulations and requirements, and basically working for government laws. We don't have enough time to just spend with the kids! Having this as an option is fine, but please don't implement more new regulations that take all the joy out of our jobs. It is exhausting and frustrating.

A couple of respondents also suggested their future plans. One said they were hiring an agronomist to help plan their garden. The other proposed a creative future partnership:

I would need to develop the ground and make boxes or use tires to plant different items with a fence so the animals wouldn't get in and eat it all to share. Then we could build a little mobile cart to sell produce, which is right across from [A SCHOOL] and ... my [SITE] could participate as having field trips to come and play in the dirt, sow the seed and watch it grow.

Other comments mentioned having a coach, education for the children, parental involvement, lack of interest, the importance of these activities, and positive feedback.

Overall

The barriers to farm to school (F2S) activities varied greatly, but the majority of sites that responded to the survey did use local food in some way. The most common methods of interacting with local food was through purchasing it to serve for their site, but many sites had gardens that were part of activities

for their attendees. However, while correlated ($r=0.33$, $p<0.001$), having a garden was not a requirement for doing F2S activities (as defined as serving local food, creating/tending gardens, and/or education activities). As Table 10 shows, while 38% of respondents had a garden and did F2S activities, 30% did F2S activities WITHOUT a garden, and 7% had a garden and reported no F2S activities.

Table 10: Garden * F2S Activity (n=248)

Has a garden	Does F2S	38%
	No F2S	7%
Doesn't have a garden	Does F2S	30%
	No F2S	25%

The greatest differences in F2S activities were by site type. Although not more likely than centers to be in rural areas, family based programs were more likely to buy local food and work with farmers. Centers were more likely to have curriculum and/or want resources than family based programs. Type of site and size of site (defined as number of attendees) was correlated ($r=-0.55$, $p<0.001$), and there were similarities based on these characteristics. However, significant differences for both was less common than for one or the other.

Based on specific feedback and planning data, some packaging of information would likely increase F2S activities across the state. For example, only 6% of sites said they were celebrating National Farm to School Month, and 61% did not plan to start this activity. Two-thirds of respondents wanted curriculum to integrate F2S activities into their program – National Farm to School Month could be a module. The interest in F2S is present for most of the sites involved, many just need some guidance to get started or take next steps.

Appendix A: Farm to ECE Survey

Farm to Early Care Education in Nebraska Survey Flow

Start of Block: Intro

Q1 Farm to Early Care Education in Nebraska

The Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) invites you to participate in this survey about Farm to Early Care and Education (ECE) activities. Farm to ECE increases availability of locally sourced foods, school gardens, and food and agriculture education.

[17]
[SEP] Please complete the survey even if you don't currently conduct Farm to Early Care and Education activities. You will be guided through a reduced number of questions to capture your information. Your involvement in this survey is voluntary and you may choose to start and stop the survey at any time. Your name and site name will not be shared with any individuals or organizations and your identity will not be associated with your responses in any published format. The survey should take about 15 minutes to complete. This information will be used to help NDE form priorities for next steps in Farm to ECE in Nebraska. We value your time and appreciate your assistance as we work to gain a better understanding of Farm to ECE efforts across the state. Again, thank you!

Sharon Davis Director, Nutrition Services
Nebraska Department of Education

End of Block: Intro

Start of Block: Main

Q2 1. To begin, please provide us with the following information about your center.

- County (1) _____
- Zip code (2) _____

Q3 2. Which of the following best describes your program model?

Please check the one that applies best to your site, but if you fall under multiple categories, you may check more than one answer.

- Licensed family daycare home program (1)
- Exempt family daycare home program (2)
- Child care center – single site (3)
- Child care center – multiple-sites (4)
- Private (5)
- Head Start and/or Early Head Start Center (6)
- Preschool or childcare through a K-12 school district (7)
- Non-profit Center (8)
- Faith-based Center (9)
- Other (please specify): (10) _____

Q4 3. What are your current enrollment numbers?

Infants (0-12 months of age) (1)
Toddlers (13-35 months of age) (2)
Preschoolers (3-5 yrs of age) (3)
School-aged (4)

Full-time (1)

Part-time (2)

Q5 4. How would you BEST describe the demographics of the area your program provides services to?
Please select all that apply.

- Urban (population > 50,000) (1)
- Suburban (2)
- Rural (population < 50,000) (3)
- Tribal (4)
- I don't know (5)

Page Break

Q6 5. Does your program receive Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) funding for meals?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- I don't know (3)

Q7 6. How often do you prepare snacks or meals from scratch (not pre-cooked or pre-packaged products)?

- Often (1)
- Sometimes (2)
- Seldom (3)
- Never (4)
- Preparation of foods is not done on-site (5)
- I don't know (6)

Q8 7. Select the Farm to School activities your early childcare center or family daycare home program participates in.

Please select all that apply. If none of the following are applicable, please click on the next (">>") button to proceed through the survey.

- Serving local food products at meals or snacks (1)
- Creating and tending edible gardens (2)
- Conducting education activities such as farmers visiting the classroom, farm visits, cooking/food education focused on local foods, or educational sessions for parents about these activities (3)

Page Break

Display This Question:

If 7. Select the Farm to School activities your early childcare center or family daycare home progra... != Serving local food products at meals or snacks

And 7. Select the Farm to School activities your early childcare center or family daycare home progra... != Creating and tending edible gardens

And 7. Select the Farm to School activities your early childcare center or family daycare home progra... != Conducting education activities such as farmers visiting the classroom, farm visits, cooking/food education focused on local foods, or educational sessions for parents about these activities

Q9 Does your early childcare center or family daycare home program plan to increase or introduce farm to preschool activities in the next year?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- I don't know (3)

Display This Question:

If 7. Select the Farm to School activities your early childcare center or family daycare home progra... = Serving local food products at meals or snacks

Or 7. Select the Farm to School activities your early childcare center or family daycare home progra... = Creating and tending edible gardens

Or 7. Select the Farm to School activities your early childcare center or family daycare home progra... = Conducting education activities such as farmers visiting the classroom, farm visits, cooking/food education focused on local foods, or educational sessions for parents about these activities

Q10 How long has your early childcare center or family daycare home program been engaged in Farm to Early Care Education activities?

- Less than 1 year (1)
- Between 1 and 3 years (2)
- More than 3 years (3)
- I don't know (4)

Page Break

Q11 8. If your early childcare center or family daycare home program currently purchases locally grown food, please indicate where it is purchased.

Please select all that apply.

- Directly from farms (1)
 - Farmers' markets (2)
 - Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Programs (3)
 - Food distributors (e.g., Thompson, Sysco) (4)
 - USDA foods (5)
 - Food Hubs (e.g., Nebraska Food Cooperative, Lone Tree Foods) (6)
 - Garden grown produce from your childcare garden (7)
 - Donated garden produce from parents or community members (8)
 - Other (please specify): (9) _____
 - Does not currently purchase any locally grown food (10)
-

Q12 9. What are the top three barriers you face when procuring local products?

Please only select three items from the list provided.

Drag and drop the top three items on the left into this box. Please arrange them in order, with "1" representing the biggest barrier.

____ Knowledge on how to order local items (1)

____ Payment arrangements (2)

____ Delivery considerations (3)

____ Seasonality of fruits and vegetables (4)

____ Cost/price of items (5)

____ Packaging of items (6)

____ Storage (7)

____ Quality (8)

____ Food safety (9)

____ Processing requirements (10)

____ Labor concerns (11)

____ Availability of local foods (12)

____ Availability of processed/precut products (13)

____ Finding new suppliers/farmers (14)

____ Access to kitchen equipment to prepare the local foods (15)

____ Obtaining information about product availability (16)

____ Other problematic concerns (please specify): (17)

Q13 10. How often does your early childcare center or family daycare home program serve each of these LOCAL foods in your programs?

	Daily (1)	One or more times a week (weekly) (2)	One or more times a month (monthly) (3)	A few times a year (4)	Almost never (5)	Never (6)
Vegetables (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fruits (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Milk (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other Dairy (cheese, yogurt) (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Bakery items (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Meat/poultry (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Eggs (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Herbs or spices (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Plant-based proteins (beans, seeds, nuts) (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Grains and flour (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please specify): (11)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Page Break

Q14 11. Please estimate the percentage of food purchased from local sources for your programs and select the response that best represents the percentage.

- 0% (1)
- 1-5% (2)
- 5-20% (3)
- 20-50% (4)
- Greater than 50% (5)

Q15 12. Based on value of the food items in dollars (\$), please list the top 5 specific LOCAL food items (e.g., apples, chicken drumsticks, salad mix, cucumbers) your early childcare center or family daycare home program has purchased over the past year.

- Item #1 (1) _____
- Item #2 (2) _____
- Item #3 (3) _____
- Item #4 (4) _____
- Item #5 (5) _____

Q16 13. Please list any LOCAL products your early childcare center or family daycare home program has been unable to purchase due to barriers such as lack of supply or costs.

- Item #1 (1) _____
- Item #2 (2) _____
- Item #3 (3) _____
- Item #4 (4) _____
- Item #5 (5) _____

Q17 14. Do you have a set curriculum or information resources for any of your Farm to Early Childcare and Education activities?

- Yes (please specify the names of the curriculum and/or resources): (1)

 - No (2)
 - I don't know (3)
-

Q18 15. By school year 2018-2019, does your facility plan on starting, or is your facility already doing, any of the following activities?

	Yes, we plan to start this activity by school year 2018-19 (1)	No, we do not plan to start this activity (2)	Already doing (3)
Planting or working with children in an edible garden at your site (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Conducting field trips to farms, gardens, or farmers markets (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Having farmers visit the site (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Having a chef visit the site (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Holding taste tests/cooking demonstrations of locally produced foods (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Holding taste tests/cooking demonstrations of (pre)school-based gardens (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Celebrating National Farm to School Month (October) (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hosting farm to school related community events (including parents) (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Educating children about locally grown food, how food grows, where it comes from (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Working with local farmers/producers to develop a specific food product using local foods (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Promoting locally produced foods in general at the site (e.g., via signs, posters) (11)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Hosting a special event or day related to food and farms (12)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other Farm to ECE activities (please specify): (13)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q19 16. Did your early childcare center or family daycare home program have a garden last year (June 2016-Present)?

Yes (1)

No (2)

Display This Question:

If 16. Did your early childcare center or family daycare home program have a garden last year (June... = Yes

Q20 Who manages the garden?

Please select all that apply.

- Provider/Center Administrator (1)
- Custodial Staff (2)
- Teaching Staff (3)
- Parent Volunteers (4)
- Community Volunteers (5)
- Other (please specify): (6) _____

Display This Question:

If 16. Did your early childcare center or family daycare home program have a garden last year (June... = Yes

Q21 How do enrolled students participate in the garden?

Please select all that apply.

- Sensory Learning (1)
- Seed Starting or Planting (2)
- Harvesting (3)
- Taste Testing (4)
- Food Preparation for Meals (5)
- Other (please specify): (6) _____

Display This Question:

If 16. Did your early childcare center or family daycare home program have a garden last year (June... = Yes

Q22 How is the garden used?

Please select all that apply.

- Growing food for taste tests and education (1)
- Growing food to use for meals and snacks (2)
- Growing food to donate to a food bank or shelter for families in need (3)
- Afterschool family engagement/community garden (4)
- Classes are taught by teaching staff (5)
- Classes are taught by a community partner (6)

Q23 17. What tools and resources would be most valuable to you for increasing your participation in farm to school activities (e.g., sourcing local foods for meals/snacks, school garden development, and experiential education opportunities and/or curriculum and classroom activity)?

Please select all that apply.

- Grant or fundraising opportunities to support developing your program (1)
- Toolkit for developing goals, plans, and action steps (2)
- Early childcare curriculum for integrating farm to preschool activities into your program (3)
- Webinars that highlight success stories and ideas for increasing program activities (4)
- Conference calls with a network of early child care providers who are interested in farm to preschool activities (5)
- Technical assistance to incorporate farm to preschool principles into your wellness policies (6)
- Information accessible for how to connect with local producers (7)
- Electronic newsletters (8)
- Regional conferences or training on farm to preschool (9)
- Community engagement (10)
- Parental leadership (11)
- Other (please specify): (12) _____

Page Break

Q24 18. How important are the following in your early childcare center or family daycare home program’s decision to take part in Farm to Early Care Education activities?

	Very important (1)	Slightly important (2)	Not at all important (3)
Access to fresher or higher-quality food (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Support for local economy and community (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Support of local farmers (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lower meal costs (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teach children about where food comes from and how it is grown (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Improve health of children (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Public relations and promotion (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Appeals to parents (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provide children with experiential and developmentally appropriate learning (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (please specify): (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q25 19. What resources, equipment, or technical assistance not mentioned previously in this survey would be helpful or necessary to move forward with Farm to ECE efforts at your early childcare center or family daycare home program? Please feel free to state any needs or additional information you would like to share in this space.

End of Block: Main

Start of Block: Final

Q26 Please fill out the information below if you’d like to receive a complementary package of farm to school materials (e.g., stickers, temporary tattoos, curriculum and cookbooks) for use at your center. Note that the information provided here will not

be associated with your survey responses.
Otherwise, please hit the "Submit" button below.

- Name: (1) _____
- Business name (if applicable): (2) _____
- Address 1: (3) _____
- Address 2 (if applicable): (4) _____
- City: (5) _____
- State: (6) _____
- Zip code: (7) _____
- Telephone number: (8) _____
- Email address: (9) _____

End of Block: Final

Appendix B: Farm to ECE Tables

Table 1: Type of program (check all that apply) (n=306)

Licensed family daycare home program	73%
Child care center – single site	16%
Non-profit Center	6%
Child care center – multiple-sites	5%
Head Start and/or Early Head Start Center	3%
Faith-based Center	3%
Private	2%
Preschool or childcare through a K-12 school district	2%
Other :	2%
Exempt family daycare home program	1%

Table 1a: Type of program: other write in

Adult Day Center	3
At Risk After School Sites	1
Dual License	1
Home school	1
Homeless shelter	1

Table 2: Enrollment numbers (totals)

	Full-time	Part-time
Infants	1027	144
Toddlers	1975	871
Preschoolers	2934	2387
School-aged	4157	41285
Totals	10093	44687

Table 3: Service demographics (n=308)

Urban	42%
Suburban	20%
Rural	57%
Tribal	1%
I don't know	8%

Table 4: Does your program receive Child and Adult Care Food Program funding for meals? (n=303)

Yes	98%
No	1%
I don't know	1%

Table 5: How often do you prepare snacks or meals from scratch? (n=306)

Often	68%
Sometimes	25%
Seldom	3%
Never	1%
Preparation of foods is not done on-site	2%
I don't know	1%

Table 6: Select the Farm to School activities your early childcare center or family daycare home program participates in.

	Overall	Among F2S sites
Serving local food products at meals or snacks	53%	79%
Creating and tending edible gardens	34%	51%
Conducting education activities such as farmers visiting the classroom, farm visits, cooking/food education focused on local foods, or educational sessions for parents about these activities	14%	20%

Table 7: Does your early childcare center or family daycare home program plan to increase or introduce farm to preschool activities in the next year? (n=101)

Yes	16%
No	18%
I don't know	64%

Table 8: How long has your early childcare center or family daycare home program been engaged in Farm to Early Care Education activities? (n=200)

Less than 1 year	20%
Between 1 and 3 years	22%
More than 3 years	35%
I don't know	24%

Table 9: If your early childcare center or family daycare home program currently purchases locally grown food, please indicate where it is purchased. (n=289)

Farmers' markets	46%
Donated garden produce from parents or community members	43%
Garden grown produce from your childcare garden	34%
Food distributors	10%
Directly from farms	9%
USDA foods	8%
Community Supported Agriculture Programs	2%
Food Hubs	1%
Other : _____	6%
Does not currently purchase any locally grown food	22%

Table 10: What are the top three barriers you face when procuring local products? Please only select three items from the list provided. (n=289)

	Selected at all	#1
Cost/price of items	56%	25%
Seasonality of fruits and vegetables	53%	21%
Availability of local foods	34%	9%
Knowledge on how to order local items	26%	10%
Storage	24%	6%
Food safety	18%	2%
Obtaining information about product availability	17%	6%
Quality	13%	2%
Delivery considerations	13%	3%
Processing requirements	9%	2%
Availability of processed/precut products	6%	1%
Finding new suppliers/farmers	6%	3%
Payment arrangements	4%	2%
Packaging of items	3%	1%
Labor concerns	2%	0%
Access to kitchen equipment to prepare the local foods	1%	0%
Other problematic concerns :	3%	2%

Table 11: Frequency of serving local foods at site

	Daily	One or more times a week	One or more times a month	A few times a year	Almost never	Never
Vegetables	27%	27%	15%	16%	6%	9%
Fruits	27%	21%	16%	18%	8%	10%
Milk	35%	3%	1%	4%	10%	48%
Other Dairy	11%	21%	2%	3%	13%	51%
Bakery items	7%	18%	19%	13%	14%	29%
Meat/poultry	24%	16%	7%	6%	12%	34%
Eggs	6%	26%	15%	12%	12%	30%
Herbs or spices	10%	13%	11%	6%	15%	45%
Plant-based proteins	4%	15%	12%	6%	13%	49%
Grains and flour	20%	9%	4%	3%	13%	52%
Other :	8%	2%	4%	0%	10%	76%

Table 12: Please estimate the percentage of food purchased from local sources for your programs and select the response that best represents the percentage (n=248)

0%	17%
1-5%	42%
5-20%	24%
20-50%	11%
Greater than 50%	6%

Table 13: Based on value of the food items in dollars, please list the top 5 specific LOCAL food items your early childcare center or family daycare home program has purchased over the past year. (n=162)

	n	Out of all	Out of Rs
Apples	85	12%	52%
Cucumbers	79	11%	49%
Tomatoes	69	10%	43%
Beef	44	6%	27%
Watermelon	38	5%	23%
Total listed	692		

Table 13a: Top 5 local items purchased in the last year

Apples	85
Cucumbers	79
Tomatoes	69
Beef	44
Watermelon	38
Corn	36
Chicken	28
Eggs	25
Vegetables	23
Cantaloupe	20
Fruit	20
Zucchini	15
Bread	14
Squash	14
Bananas	13
Peaches	13
Peppers	12
Green beans	10
Milk	10
Potatoes	10
salad mix	9
Lettuce	8
Meat	7
strawberries	7
Carrots	6
Onions	6
Oranges	6
grapes	5
Melons	5
pears	5
Pork	5
pumpkins	5
Green peppers	4
Cheese	3
Honey	3

Bakery	2
Eggplant	2
avocado	1
Bacon	1
basil	1
beans	1
beets	1
Bell peppers	1
Berries	1
blueberries	1
Cereal	1
cilantro	1
Dairy	1
Dinner Rolls	1
graham crackers	1
greens	1
Herbs	1
Kale	1
kiwi	1
Mango	1
Pasta	1
pineapple	1
Produce	1
raspberries	1
turkey	1
waffles	1
Yogurt	1

Table 14: Please list any LOCAL products your early childcare center or family daycare home program has been unable to purchase due to barriers such as lack of supply or costs. (n=73)

	n	Out of all	Out of Rs
Meats	17	8%	23%
Fruit	12	6%	16%
Beef	10	5%	14%
Chicken	9	4%	12%
Milk	9	4%	12%
Total listed	209		

Table 14a: Top 5 local items unable to purchase

Meats	17
Fruit	12
Beef	10
Chicken	9
Milk	9
Apples	8
Eggs	6
Oranges	6

Bread	5
Nuts	5
Peaches	5
Strawberries	5
Dairy	4
Grains	4
Potatoes	4
Tomatoes	4
Vegetables	4
Yogurt	4
Beans	3
Blueberries	3
Cheese	3
Fish	3
Grapes	3
Pears	3
Peas	3
Pork	3
Avocados	2
Broccoli	2
carrots	2
cherries	2
Flour	2
Green beans	2
Herbs	2
Lettuce	2
Melons	2
Pineapple	2
Produce	2
Turkey	2
Watermelon	2
Whole Grains	2
asparagus	1
Baked goods	1
Baking goods	1
bananas	1
Beef hot dogs	1
berries	1
black eyed peas	1
blackberries	1
Brussel sprouts	1
Cantaloupe	1
celery	1
Citrus fruit	1
Corn	1
cucumbers	1
green peppers	1
Kale	1

Nectarines	1
Oatmeal	1
Okra	1
Organic	1
Other Dairy	1
Out of season produce	1
pasteurized eggs	1
Peppers	1
Plant Protein	1
plums	1
poultry	1
raspberries	1
Seafood	1
seasonal veggies	1
Some certain fruits, like peaches	1
Variety of fruit	1
Vegetables cucumbers green beans	1
Veggies (out of season)	1
Winter vegetables	1
zucchini	1

Table 15: Do you have a set curriculum or information resources for any of your Farm to Early Childcare and Education activities? (n=244)

Yes : _____	7%
No	84%
I don't know	9%

Table 15a: Curriculum

CACFP	1
CACFP gives us some in each visit	1
cooking matters at the store/nutrition curriculum provided by the state	1
Creative curriculum	1
Creative Curriculum, NAP SACC	1
Farm to School for Early Childhood	1
Gee Whiz Kids	1
Grow it, Try it, Like it	2
Mother goose time has farm month	1
Nap Saac	1
Nap Sac	1
the basic Farm to Preschool Curriculum from NDE CACFP	1
USDA's My Plate curriculum	1
we grow lots of our items to use but not a set program	1
we plant our gardens	1

Table 16: Activities in action, planning, or neither

	Already doing	Yes, we plan to start this activity by school year 2018-19	No, we do not plan to start this activity
Educating children about locally grown food, how food grows, where it comes from	42%	32%	26%
Planting or working with children in an edible garden at your site	39%	21%	40%
Holding taste tests/cooking demonstrations of locally produced foods	16%	16%	68%
Holding taste tests/cooking demonstrations of school-based gardens	16%	13%	71%
Conducting field trips to farms, gardens, or farmers markets	15%	19%	66%
Promoting locally produced foods in general at the site	9%	20%	70%
Having farmers visit the site	8%	14%	78%
Other Farm to ECE activities :	6%	5%	89%
Celebrating National Farm to School Month	6%	33%	61%
Hosting a special event or day related to food and farms	5%	19%	76%
Working with local farmers/producers to develop a specific food product using local foods	5%	10%	85%
Hosting farm to school related community events	4%	10%	86%
Having a chef visit the site	4%	12%	84%

Table 16a: Other activities

4H healthy foods program
 I teach food groups, why fresh whole foods are healthy
 Never heard of this program
 Parents coming to pick from our garden
 We have a big garden and our church has a community garden and we help with this project.
 we plant our gardens

Table 17: Did your early childcare center or family daycare home program have a garden last year? (n=248)

Yes	46%
No	55%

Table 18: Who manages the garden? (n=248)

Provider/Center Administrator	87%
Custodial Staff	3%
Teaching Staff	24%
Parent Volunteers	4%
Community Volunteers	6%
Other :	19%
Other: children	13%

Table 18a: Management - other

children	8
Children helped too	2
Classes	1
Community Garden	1
kids	4
me	1
Me the home owner	1
My family	1
My husband and I	3

Table 19: How do enrolled students participate in the garden?

Please select all that apply. (n=109)

Sensory Learning	68%
Seed Starting or Planting	76%
Harvesting	87%
Taste Testing	92%
Food Preparation for Meals	50%
Other:	6%

Table 19a: Student participation other

making art pro.
making sure it gets watered
only we prepare salad with the kids
watering
watering, weeding, observing growth
Weeding/watering

Table 20: How is the garden used? Please select all that apply. (n=112)

Growing food for taste tests and education	58%
Growing food to use for meals and snacks	93%
Growing food to donate to a food bank or shelter for families in need	9%
Afterschool family engagement/community garden	5%
Classes are taught by teaching staff	15%
Classes are taught by a community partner	2%

Table 21: What tools and resources would be most valuable to you for increasing your participation in farm to school activities? Please select all that apply. (n=211)

Early childcare curriculum for integrating farm to preschool activities into your program	67%
Grant or fundraising opportunities to support developing your program	58%
Toolkit for developing goals, plans, and action steps	55%
Information accessible for how to connect with local producers	42%
Electronic newsletters	33%
Webinars that highlight success stories and ideas for increasing program activities	28%
Regional conferences or training on farm to preschool	23%
Community engagement	20%
Technical assistance to incorporate farm to preschool principles into your wellness policies	16%
Parental leadership	14%
Conference calls with a network of early child care providers who are interested in farm to preschool activities	10%

Table 21a: Tools and resources other

- access to food
- any resources as providers that we can have access to is always helpful and valuable in implementing and carrying out program curriculum and enriching our kids development
- Are packaging of farm raised meats, cheese and eggs ok per CACFP?
- Easy fast recipes for foods kids are most likely to eat
- guidelines, rules & regulations, how to get started, training
- I am not interested. Kids simply need fed healthy food (which I already serve) and time to play!
- I have property and would like to use this for a larger garden so kids to set up for a farmers market in the community
- More program time
- None
- Retiring. Don't need anything anymore.
- Training for Staff (especially those without gardening Knowledge
- We do not have much of a meal program and no food preparation on site

Table 22: Importance in deciding to taking part in Farm to ECE activities (n=234)

	Very important	Slightly important	Not at all important
Improve health of children	89%	9%	2%
Lower meal costs	83%	15%	2%
Provide children with experiential and developmentally appropriate learning	79%	18%	3%
Teach children about where food comes from and how it is grown	78%	19%	2%
Access to fresher or higher-quality food	69%	28%	3%
Support of local farmers	61%	35%	4%
Support for local economy and community	56%	40%	3%

Appeals to parents	47%	48%	5%
Public relations and promotion	25%	56%	19%
Other :	30%	39%	30%

Table 23: What resources, equipment, or technical assistance not mentioned previously in this survey would be helpful or necessary to move forward with Farm to ECE efforts at your early childcare center or family daycare home program? Please feel free to state any needs or additional information you would like to share in this space.

A coach of some kind to help out in the beginning to help with bumps in the road.

As a home daycare provider, I work about 60 hours a week, with children, shopping, and paperwork, not to mention a bit of stress - some weeks more than others. I do cook almost everything from scratch, and having more conveniently located and affordably priced local products would be wonderful, but for me, the ideal would be to have them available at my local grocery store, so I don't have to make additional trips. I realize this would require a mark-up in price, perhaps out of my price range, so probably not feasible, but making additional shopping excursions is probably not in my plans right now, to be honest. I buy locally produced items when I can, but I'm either unaware of other avenues, or unwilling to spend additional time, when I feel my nutrition program is meeting the needs of the children, and even better than many others in my area. Educating the children is another matter, and one I take seriously, so additional resources are always welcome. Thanks for the opportunity to provide input. As an additional bit of info, I did have a membership in a CSA up until this year, but I was not able to use the vast amounts of kale and chard that I received each year, and decided to let the membership go. I still miss the melons, but seeing all that food go to waste bothered me. Hopefully someone else is using it...!

Better access to these local foods and parental involvement to help getting children to eat and like more of these foods.

Connecting providers to community resources such as farmers or having an awareness of where farmers markets in the Omaha area are located.

Cooking classes to educate providers

financial funding and parent involvement

Funding

Give us daycare homes and Centers enough money to buy good and healthy food for the children . Sometimes our money that we get is enough carry throw the whole month

Grants for raised garden beds! With back problems this would really help me to implement more farm to daycare activities and home grown fruits and veggies!

Guidelines of when to plant each fruit/vegetable. How they grow well and when they are ready to pick.

Hands on teaching of the teachers to develop skills in gardening. The director doesn't have the time to develop and support the needs of a continuing summer project. Teachers need to be interested and be able to lend their support and time in daily activities of gardening.

How to get started, who to contact, training for staff, hours/pay for staff to do this, examples, paperwork, rules & regs, guidelines, safety, storage. Being in a rural area, we cover [NUMBER] counties. We buy everything from either the local grocery stores or through [FOOD DISTRIBUTORS]. Our programs only run August through May, so trying to do a garden is pretty challenging. Setting up this program would take some "out of the box" thinking. I do not know if our budget would cover the costs to start a program like this, plus the extra hours our staff would need to do this. Or even extra staff to do this could be an extreme challenge. The fresh fruits and vegetables we get at the local stores does not last long, or it starts spoiling right away. We can't

afford to go to the store daily, only weekly, and fresh fruits and vegetables tend to go bad fast. So trying to come up with storage and ways to make the food last longer is something we are always working on. Time management is a big problem as well. I have two full time job duties now, so adding more responsibilities and time to what I already do is very intimidating, so extra budget money to hire extra help is almost a necessity.

I am in a [MULTIUSE] building and really do not have space to plant a garden on sight.

I am not interested in participating in this program. Thank you!

I AM SO HAPPY THAT IT IS FINALLY GOING TO BE INVOLVED IN THE EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS TO TEACH OUR CHILDREN HOW TO GROW AND HOW IMPORTANT IT IS FOR FARMERS WHAT THEY DO, TO MAKES US HEALTHY FOOD

i have used curriculum grow it try it like it. love the two bite club book . children love books:)

I only use fruits and vegetables for day care; thought we weren't allowed dairy & meat from local farms due to packaging and processing guidelines for CACFP

I think it's important for children to learn and see where are fresh vegetables come from. It's also important for children to have healthy meals three times a day.

I would like a starter kit with vegetable seeds so when I get a garden set up next spring the kids and I can be ready

I would love for some one to point me to the right direction on getting starting.

I would love to have a garden with my daycare children every year. I managed to grow a small garden for about three years. This was due to a couple of trees I had removed. I am not able to have a garden because I live in a very wooded area. So I don't have enough sun. We really enjoyed it and I miss it.

I would need to develop the ground and make boxes or use tires to plant different items with a fence so the animals wouldn't get in and eat it all to share. Then we could build a little mobile cart to sell produce, which is right across from [A SCHOOL] and [SITES] could participate as having field trips to come and play in the dirt, sow the seed and watch it grow.

Information on how to get started. Information on how to plant and grow a garden. Seed packets with easy to grow plants and easy to understand directions.

It is difficult for 3-5 year olds to really understand if vegetable or fruit grow on trees or in the ground, a curriculum really needs to be short ad to the point

Knowledge on where to purchase products, cost effectiveness

Laws regulate no home canned foods can be served to daycare children... which makes serving local food very seasonal at my in-home daycare.

Money set aside so that providers can afford to feed the children the different foods. Many time what is reimbursed for meals does not even cover what is cost if you have a great deal of high end income children in your facility.

Monthly/weekly support Seed packets

more information

More information about participating the program.

No comments

Partnerships with food programs such as ALDI and WholeFoods mentioned on their websites.

seed starter packages, child sized hand tools. some live plants like strawberries.

Seeds sent to childcare providers that would be appropriate for our climate

Teach how to plant a vegetable garden and/or herb garden, how to manage upkeep on it, and keep pests out of the garden.

The children I have are really too young to be doing much in the garden. Mostly I do the work and prepare the food

There was a question that I meant to check grant opportunities. I just wanted to state that, it was question 17 I think. My children here at [SITE NAME] have enjoyed helping with the small garden that we have. It has been a great experience for them in many ways. We will be providing a larger shared garden next year with the church.

This should only be encouraged as an option, but not mandatory ever. It is very expensive and time consuming to implement. Child Care providers already spend way too much time doing paperwork, meeting ever changing regulations and requirements, and basically working for government laws. We don't have enough time to just spend with the kids! Having this as an option is fine, but please don't implement more new regulations that take all the joy out of our jobs. It is exhausting and frustrating.

This survey is the first time I have ever heard of "Farm to ECE." It is too early for me to know what would be helpful because I don't know very much about the program.

Tier 2 rates are not enough. Every provider has to shop for the children in their care and they all equally need Quality Foods.

Time to get fresh local products and time and knowledge (recipes) of how to make meals that kids WILL eat.

We are going to contract with an agronomist to build our garden boxes and help us to plan the appropriate items for our area. I would like to know if the USDA would provide the materials for planting boxes and soil.

We have a lack of outdoor space for planting, We tried it before in the only grass available and it was not a good area, had too much drainage from roofs and grass stayed too moist, vegetables didn't grow just rotted in the ground.

We simply have a snack as it's a school age program.

We would certainly like to pursue more with the Farm to ECE. We are not really sure where/how to go from here, especially with all of our current Federal and State regulations. Also, since we have multiple sites and multiple partnerships with school districts it was difficult to answer the questions so that they reflected the whole program.