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The Farm to School Census is a powerful tool for Utah because it helps connect the dots between our local food producers and school meal programs. By identifying which schools are interested in buying locally and what products they're looking for, the Census gives farmers, ranchers, and food producers valuable insights into real market opportunities that are scaled to fit their operations.

It also informs state and federal decision-makers about the scope and impact of farm to school programs happening across Utah. With this data, policymakers can better craft support systems and policies that expand access to local food in schools and strengthen our local food economy.

For school nutrition programs, the Census helps highlight how farm to school efforts can stretch public dollars further—improving student health, enriching education, and supporting Utah producers. While we understand the importance of limiting the burden of data collection, this information is gathered from schools already participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), and it plays a direct role in making that program stronger and more aligned with its goals: nourishing kids and supporting American agriculture.