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This data is an essential resource being used by state agencies, farmers, school food authorities, and other organizations to support local farms and businesses, and create healthier children and school communities. It is essential that this program continues.

It is important to understand what Farm to School activities are happening because:

(1) It can provide farmers, ranchers and fishermen with important insight into schools that are interested in local purchasing, and what they may want to buy. This kind of local market information is a useful resource to help producers reach appropriately scaled market opportunities;

(2) It can help state and federal policymakers understand the type, reach, and scale of innovative farm to school programs taking place, and how policies can best support this work;

(3) Child nutrition programs have the opportunity to maximize the impact of government funds by including farm to school activities, and this data helps understand how child nutrition program operators are doing so.

Please ensure that the USDA Farm to School Census continues so we have robust data for supporting Americas farmers and children