



Program Overview: By the Numbers

District & Food Hub Highlights

- Boston Public Schools
- Harvesting Good
- Red's Best
- Acton-Boxborough Regional School District
- Boston Food Hub
- Littleton Public Schools
- New Bedford Public Schools

"Northeast Food for Schools" is Massachusetts' branded USDA Local Food for School Cooperative Agreement Program established by the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service through funding made available through USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation. The program is designed to strengthen the food system for schools by helping to build a fair, competitive, and resilient local food chain, and expand local and regional markets with an emphasis on purchasing from historically underserved producers and processors.

Report prepared by

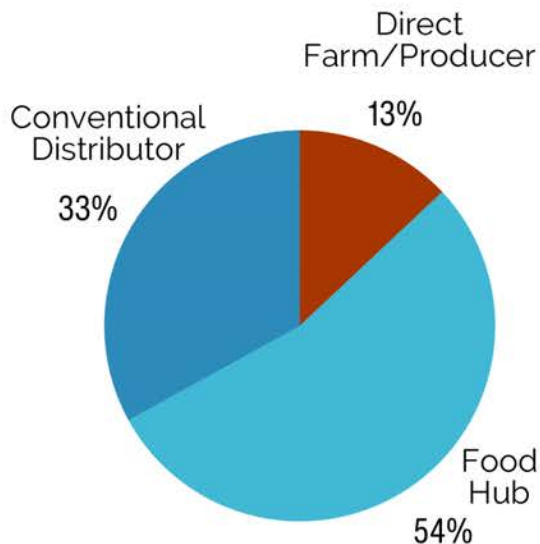


NORTHEAST FOOD FOR SCHOOLS BY THE NUMBERS

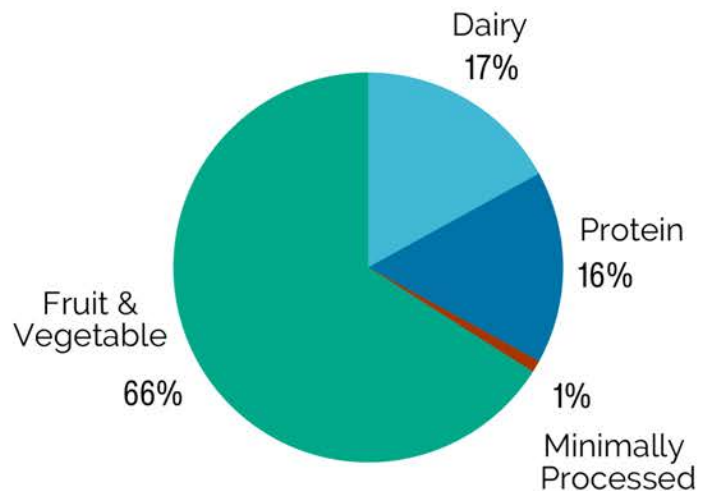
\$3.5M to Massachusetts
59% of MA School Food Authorities
Participated
13% Direct Farm Purchases

76% purchases from MA producers
55% purchases from food hubs
66% purchases from small businesses

Purchase Method



Product Category



UNDERSERVED FARMER HIGHLIGHTS

\$359,930 direct sales

21 individual farms with
indirect sales

19% of all NFS vendors are
underserved farmers

MA FOOD HUBS HIGHLIGHTS

School Customers

2022-23: 35

2023-24: 175

400%
Increase

Sales (\$)

2022-23: \$416,100

2023-24: \$1,378,800

231%
Increase

NORTHEAST FOOD FOR SCHOOLS PARTICIPATING DISTRICT STATS

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

of Schools **8** Enrollment **5,099**

Ave. Student Daily Participation
across Breakfast and Lunch **3,798**

NFS Award per Regularly
Participating Student **\$8.28**

BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

of Schools **109** Enrollment **45,742**

Ave. Student Daily Participation
across Breakfast and Lunch **44,229**

NFS Award per Regularly
Participating Student **\$2.26**

EDGARTOWN SCHOOL COMMITTEE

of Schools **1** Enrollment **386**

Ave. Student Daily Participation
across Breakfast and Lunch **378**

NFS Award per Regularly
Participating Student **\$8.26**

LITTLETON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

of Schools **4** Enrollment **1,674**

Ave. Student Daily Participation
across Breakfast and Lunch **1,397**

NFS Award per Regularly
Participating Student **\$7.16**

NAUSET REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

of Schools **2** Enrollment **1,236**

Ave. Student Daily Participation
across Breakfast and Lunch **984**

NFS Award per Regularly
Participating Student **\$8.26**

NEW BEDFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

of Schools **24** Enrollment **12,488**

Ave. Student Daily Participation
across Breakfast and Lunch **14,467**

NFS Award per Regularly
Participating Student **\$6.91**

NORTHEAST FOOD FOR SCHOOLS BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

BY THE NUMBERS

NFS Dollars Spent: **\$100,000**

CIRCLE B FARM

HARVESTING GOOD
Processor

BOSTON FOOD HUB
Distributor

BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS



“

LFS funds helped us to purchase local broccoli [from **Harvesting Good**] for the first time, served in entrees and as side dishes year round - over 1.5 million servings of local broccoli!

*-Anneliese Tanner, Executive Director,
Food and Nutrition Services,
Boston Public Schools*

IMPACT ON PROCUREMENT

Boston Public Schools' success utilizing Harvesting Good to source frozen broccoli florets demonstrated "proof of concept" for other, smaller districts looking to work with Harvesting Good too. Harvesting Good is now carried through large, conventional distributors making the product more accessible to school districts.

PROCUREMENT DECISION-MAKING

The high quality, frozen broccoli florets allow Boston Public Schools to serve local broccoli year round instead of only from September to November when fresh broccoli is generally available in the Northeast.

BROCCOLI MENU HIGHLIGHTS

Broccoli is used in chicken & rice dishes, pasta dishes, and as a side dish.

WRAP-AROUND SUPPORT

Boston Public Schools is committed to local procurement and participates in the Good Food Purchasing Program. This is possible through efficient management and City of Boston support of values based procurement.

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NORTHEAST FOOD FOR SCHOOLS HARVESTING GOOD

Maine-based Processor & Aggregator

BY THE NUMBERS

MA Direct sales: **\$110,288.20**

Lbs. Distributed: **48,000**

of MA Districts Served: **6**

SALES TO SCHOOLS

SY23-24 **45%**
Increase over
last year

DISTRICTS SERVED

- Ayer Shirley Regional School District,
- Boston Public Schools
- Hingham Public Schools
- Medford Public Schools
- New Bedford Public Schools
- Waltham Public Schools.

Circle B Farms, a woman/minority owned farm in Maine, was paid \$193,327.00 for their broccoli sold through Harvesting Good across all consumers over SY 23-24.

INCREASED VOLUME

The Local Food for Schools program had a significant sales impact on Harvesting Good. In 2023, they sold just over 1,200 units directly to two Massachusetts school districts. By 2024, they nearly doubled the number of direct units sold and expanded their reach by adding four new Massachusetts school districts. Five new distributors who focus on K-12 and institutional purchasers, including the Boston Food Hub, added Harvesting Good to their sales lists, making Maine grown broccoli more widely available to a number of purchasers.

“

The added volume that has been distributed to Boston schools has allowed our farm to expand and be more resilient in the fresh and frozen marketplace. We have funded more sustainable practices and provided a better working environment for our employees through the partnership.

- Gina Ayer,
Owner, Circle B Farm

NORTHEAST FOOD FOR SCHOOLS ACTON-BOXBOROUGH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

BY THE NUMBERS

NFS Dollars Spent: **\$31, 446.00**

Number of Farmers Supported: **15**

NEW MENU ITEMS

- Local Beef Burgers
- Fish Tacos
- Baked Fish
- Local Vegetable Sides

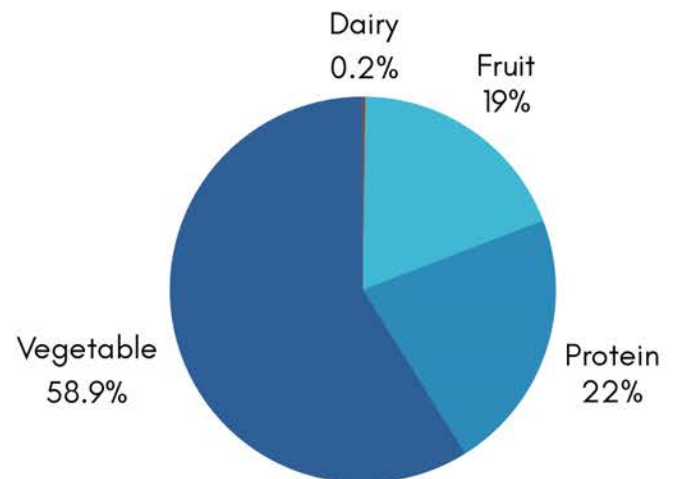
FOOD HUBS USED

- Boston Food Hub
- Worcester Food Hub

FOOD HUBS STREAMLINE OPERATIONS

By working with local food hubs, Acton-Boxborough benefits from simplified logistics. This arrangement has helped their district meet minimum delivery requirements and reduce the administrative burden of managing invoices and contracts. Overall, the "one stop shop" experience provided by local food hubs has made their procurement process more manageable. During the MA 2023 Healthy Kids, Healthy Programs Summit, Acton-Boxborough connected with the Boston Food Hub, at a local vendor showcase organized by Massachusetts Farm to School and funded by a USDA Farm to School Formula grant. Acton-Boxborough was pleased to learn that the Boston Food Hub was located just a few miles from their school district. They have enjoyed a successful partnership ever since. This serves as just one of many examples in which additional administrative investment has worked to elevate and amplify the impacts of the Northeast Food for School program for districts.

Purchases by Product Category



Utilizing the Northeast Food for Schools funding has enhanced our ability to provide nutritious meals to students and allowed us to expand our programs and create a more supportive learning environment. The investment in our school meals program is an investment in our students' future.

-Kirsten Nelson, School Nutrition Director, Acton-Boxborough

NORTHEAST FOOD FOR SCHOOLS BOSTON FOOD HUB

BY THE NUMBERS

Total sales: **\$149,965**

Cases Sold: **3,788**

Lbs. Distributed: **105,000**

of Districts Served: **28**

Farms & Producers: **35**

SCHOOL CUSTOMERS

2022-23: **1**

2023-24: **28**

SCHOOL SALES (\$)

2022-23: **\$500**

2023-24: **\$149,965**

TOP FIVE PRODUCTS SOLD

Apples
Greens
Butternut Squash
Carrots
Tomatoes

TOP 5 FARMS SUPPORTED

- Bolton Orchards
- Plainville Farm
- Bardwell Farm
- Tougas Farm
- Westward Orchards



Overall this was an incredible experience and helped us overcome many of the barriers to working with schools and institutions in general. We hope this or some form of funding can continue in the future.

-Annie Broad,
Senior Food Hub Manager,
Boston Food Hub



NORTHEAST FOOD FOR SCHOOLS LITTLETON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

BY THE NUMBERS

NFS Dollars Spent: **\$10,000**

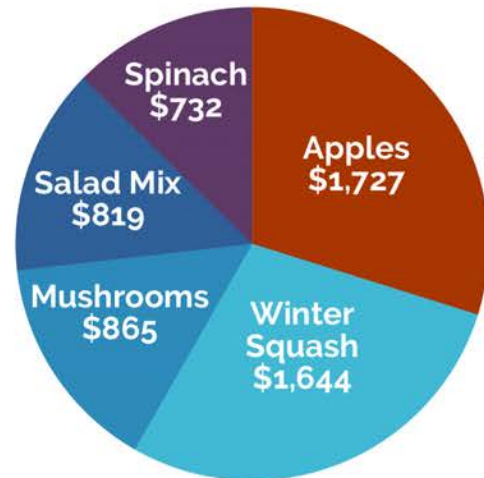
Number of Farmers Supported: **20**

VENDOR SPEND

Boston Food Hub: **\$9,440**

Fairview Orchards: **\$560.00**

TOP FIVE ITEMS PURCHASED



STUDENT AGENCY, STAFF INVESTMENT

Littleton's main focus has been creating self-serve produce stations where students can pick from a vibrant assortment of locally sourced fruits and vegetables. The school nutrition department has found it rewarding when students and staff have been noticing the efforts of the kitchen staff. Rather than offering frozen or canned products, they have been roasting potatoes, sautéing mushrooms, adding fresh local cucumbers and tomatoes into pasta salads, and grilling the peppers and onions.



Not only are we serving more students and staff at our schools, but the feedback we have received is incredibly positive. The process [of integrating local foods] has allowed us to get fresh fruits, veggies, and meats from local sources, sample them with our students on Friday Try Days, and make permanent updates to our daily menu. Meal participation is impressive - students and staff are eating at a record pace.

*-Leah Botko, School Nutrition Director,
Littleton Public Schools*



NORTHEAST FOOD FOR SCHOOLS WORCESTER REGIONAL FOOD HUB

BY THE NUMBERS

Total sales: **\$1,060,987**

Cases Items Sold: **41,573**

of Districts Served: **90**

Farms/Producers: **58**

SCHOOL CUSTOMERS

2022-23: **20**

2023-24: **90**

350%
Increase

SCHOOL SALES (\$)

2022-23: **\$300,000**

2023-24: **\$1,060,987**

233%
Increase

TOP FIVE PRODUCTS SOLD

Apples

Lettuce

Fish

Cheese Sticks

Tomatoes



“

The increase in sales allowed the Food Hub to hire one additional full-time employee plus two part-time employees to assist with aggregation and distribution. We brought on multiple new farms throughout New England. At the suggestion of food service directors, we partnered with value-added producers from Massachusetts that produce larger food-service quantities of value-added products that may not have been covered by grant funds but were desired by food service staff including pickles, hot sauce, bagels, and pizza crust. Farmers have been able to provide additional shifts to workers for harvesting and packing while receiving their desired prices for their products.

*-Shon Rainford,
Director, Worcester Regional Food Hub*

NORTHEAST FOOD FOR SCHOOLS NEW BEDFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

BY THE NUMBERS

NFS Dollars Spent: **\$100,000**

Number of Farmers Supported: **13**

TOP VENDORS:

FreshPoint Sysco: **\$45,067**

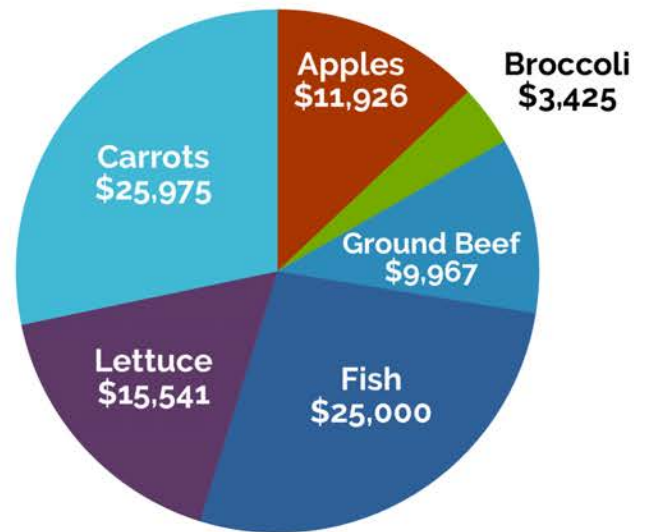
Red's Best: **\$25,000**

Thomsen: **\$15,542**

Meatworks: **\$9,967**

Harvesting Good: **\$3,425**

TOP 6 ITEMS PURCHASED



NEW VENDOR RELATIONSHIPS

The New Bedford Food and Nutrition programs utilized Local Food for Schools funding to establish new vendor relationships procuring healthy, local, and fresh products. New Bedford partnered with Little Leaf Lettuce, Red's Best, Harvesting Good, and Meatworks. Students enjoyed eating the food items and the staff were excited about using fresh local products when preparing the meals.



Having these fresh menu items, such as broccoli, fish nuggets, and taco salad, available has been beneficial to having healthy meal options and doing business with local vendors. Sourcing has been challenging over the past four years, due to supply chain interruptions, and the Northeast Food for Schools funding has allowed us to have more options when selecting local vendors.

*-Robert Shaheen,
School Nutrition Director,
New Bedford Public Schools*



NORTHEAST FOOD FOR SCHOOLS RED'S BEST

BY THE NUMBERS

Northeast Food for Schools Highlights

Direct School Sales: **\$58,166**

2.4% of all NFS Purchases

Districts Served: **28**

Lbs Sold: 60,000

Total School Sales Highlights

SCHOOL CUSTOMERS

2022-23: 25

2023-24: 60

140%
Increase

SALES (\$)

2022-23: 132,000

2023-24: 365,000

90%
Increase



Fish Tacos (w. Red's Best Fish)
served at Belmont Public Schools



Fish Preparation



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