Northeast

FOOD FOR SCHOOLS

REPORT



NORTHEAST FOOD FOR SCHOOLS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report was compiled by Massachusetts Farm to School in collaboration with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to highlight the impact of Local Food for Schools federal funding on the local food system in Massachusetts.

Federal regulations limited the use of Local Food for Schools funding to food purchases. In order to support the administration of this $3.5 million dollar federal investment, the Massachusetts Legislature appropriated $150,000 to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to contract with Massachusetts Farm to School. This report is a comprehensive summary of how funds were spent within the Commonwealth and the impact on farmers, distributors, and school meal programs.

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dese MASSACHUSETTS Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Office for Food and Nutrition Programs

MASSACHUSETTS FARM TO SCHOOL

NORTHEAST FOOD FOR SCHOOLS

INTRODUCTION

In December 2021, the US Department of Agriculture announced the new Local Food for Schools program. This program, branded Northeast Food for Schools in Massachusetts, emerged as a transformative effort to enrich school meals while supporting regional agriculture. Backed by $200 million nationwide, the program encouraged schools in the National School Lunch Program to partner with small and underserved producers within a 400-mile radius.

Massachusetts received $3.5 million for local purchasing which was primarily administered from September 2023 to December 2024. The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) allocated funds to districts who opted into the program, and then equitably distributed funds to 243 participating districts based on student enrollment, meal participation, and requested amounts.

Massachusetts Farm to School provided technical assistance and procurement support, including vendor showcases for school nutrition professionals, in part funded by a USDA Farm to School Formula grant. With Northeast Food for Schools funds, cafeterias integrated significantly more locally grown produce, dairy, meat, and seafood into student meals. This initiative strengthened children's connection to the food system while creating critical markets for regional farmers, fishers and food processors. DESE's Terrific Tray initiative highlighted exceptional school lunch trays featuring local foods monthly, fostering new procurement relationships with adventurous items like mushrooms and seafood. Many schools have sourced local foods for years, but this funding presented opportunities for districts to do more with their school food budgets, and took away the financial risk from more reluctant districts who had not previously intentionally added local foods to their menus.

This report highlights the program's tremendous impact on local producers and schools, including program data, school snapshots, and perspectives from farmers, food hubs, and processors. The program's impact was significant, though it is no longer operational. In October 2024, the federal government announced a program extension with Massachusetts set to receive over $12 million, expanding Northeast Food for Schools from K-12 schools to include early education programs. However, the program was abruptly terminated in March 2025.

NORTHEAST FOOD FOR SCHOOLS

BY THE NUMBERS

$3.5M
to Massachusetts

59%
of MA School Food Authorities Participated

Percent of NFS Purchases by Vendor Type

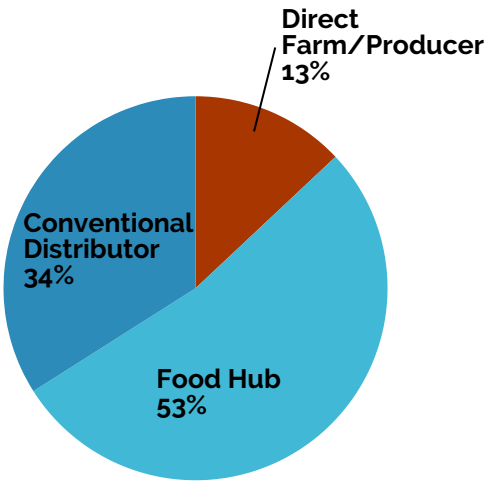
67% MA Vendors

53% From Food Hubs

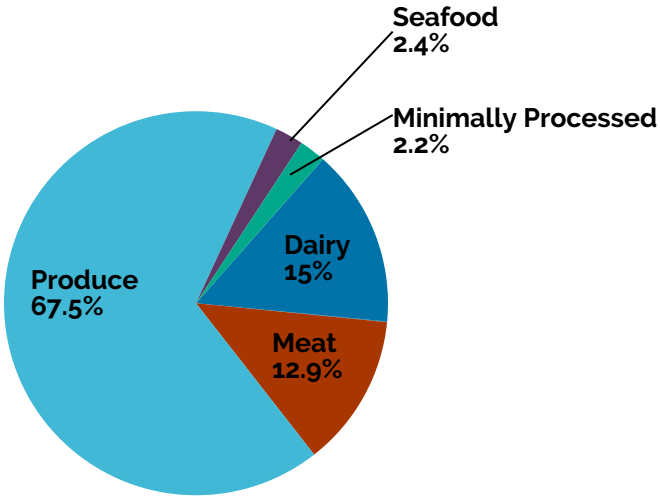
66% From Small Businesses

13% Direct Farm Purchases

PURCHASE METHOD



PRODUCT CATGORY



VENDOR HIGHLIGHTS

$1.86 Million
NFS sales with 86 unique small businesses

$225,654
direct sales with 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

WWW.MASSFARMTOSCHOOL.ORG

NORTHEAST FOOD FOR SCHOOLS

PRODUCT CATEGORY BREAKDOWN

Northeast Food for Schools allowed districts to purchase unprocessed or minimally processed foods produced within 400 miles of participating schools. Eligible items included sliced apples, carrot sticks, and ground beef, while baked goods or breaded, heat-and-serve products were not eligible.

As shown in the chart and graph, fruits and vegetables, represented in the Produce category, accounted for the vast majority of purchases made with these funds. The following pages provide breakdowns of the top products purchased overall, leading produce items, as well as vendor and farm-specific data.

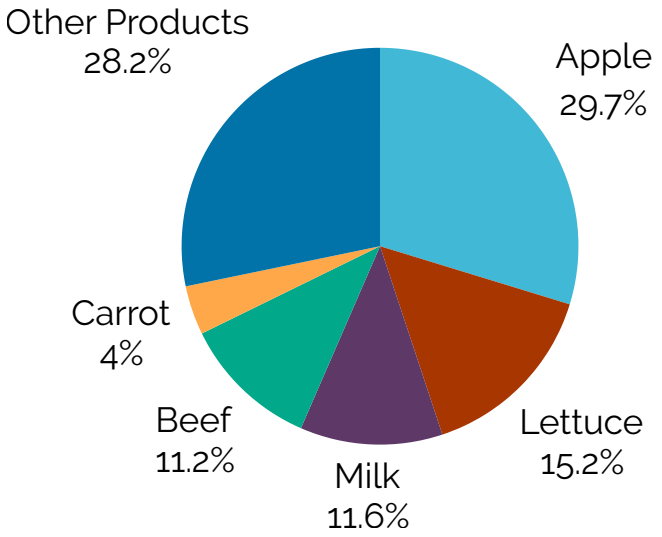
Massachusetts school nutrition departments embraced the spirit of the program, prioritizing local farms and vendors, with some districts emphasizing hyper-local purchases from their own towns or counties. This report compiles highlights from districts, distributors, and farms to illustrate purchasing decisions and the impact of this federal funding. The final section of this report provides participating district award amount and total spend.

Category	Amount
Produce	$2,407,073
Dairy	$535,934
Meat	$459,541
Seafood	$84,633
Minimally Processed	$74,839
Grain	$2,006



NORTHEAST FOOD FOR SCHOOLS

TOP PRODUCTS



Product	Amount
Apple	$1,063,490
Lettuce	$542,890
Milk	$415,351
Beef	$401,484
Carrot	$143,316

The products schools purchased with Northeast Food for Schools spanned every meal component: fruits, vegetables, protein, dairy, and grains. Schools were encouraged to use funds for new local purchases or with new vendor relationships.

Massachusetts and northeast-grown apples were the top product, representing nearly one third of all purchases. Lettuce, especially hydroponic, ranked second, while milk, beef, and carrots rounded out the top five. Recognizing schools are already consistently purchasing regionally sourced milk, schools were instructed to utilize funds for other products beginning in the fall of 2024.

Schools also reported increased participation in meals featuring local foods, especially when they promoted the local foods to their students and school communities. Importantly, the program allowed schools to try new local foods without financial risk, some of which are highlighted in the box on the right.

Other Products Include:

Cheese

Corn Tortillas

Chicken

Pork

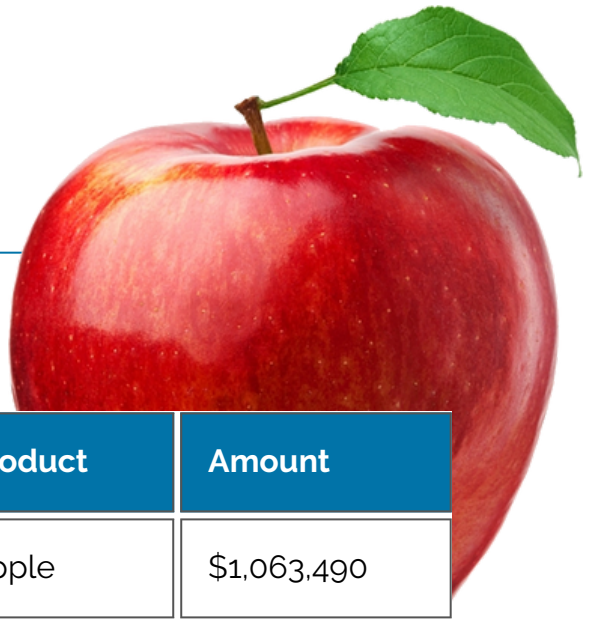
Seafood

Yogurt



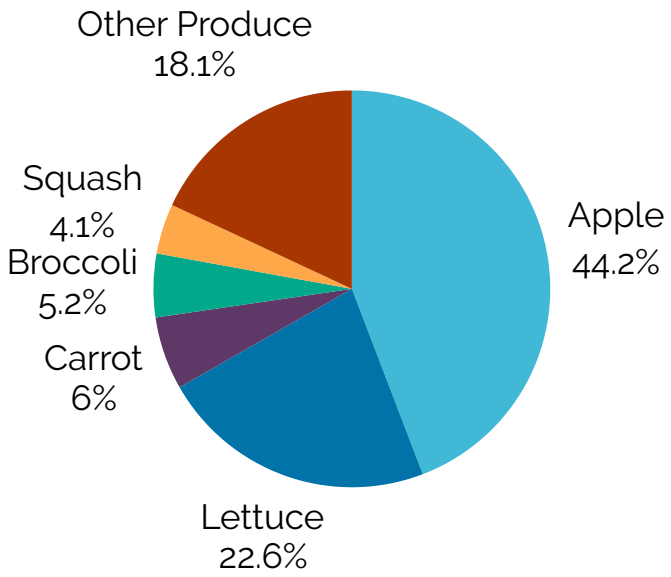
NORTHEAST FOOD FOR SCHOOLS

TOP PRODUCE



The top produce items reflect both storage crops that keep well and the investment and innovation in the northeast food system. Apples—whole or sliced—were by far the most purchased item. After apples and lettuce (majority hydroponically grown), other leading items were minimally processed vegetables: carrots (pre-cut coins or sticks), broccoli (flash-frozen florets), and squash (peeled and cut). These purchases highlight schools' clear demand for minimally processed produce that requires little preparation to incorporate into meals.

Product	Amount
Apple	$1,063,490
Lettuce	$542,890
Carrot	$143,316
Broccoli	$124,530
Squash	$98,271



Other Produce Includes:

Mushrooms

Bok Choy

Pea Shoots

Microgreens



NORTHEAST FOOD FOR SCHOOLS

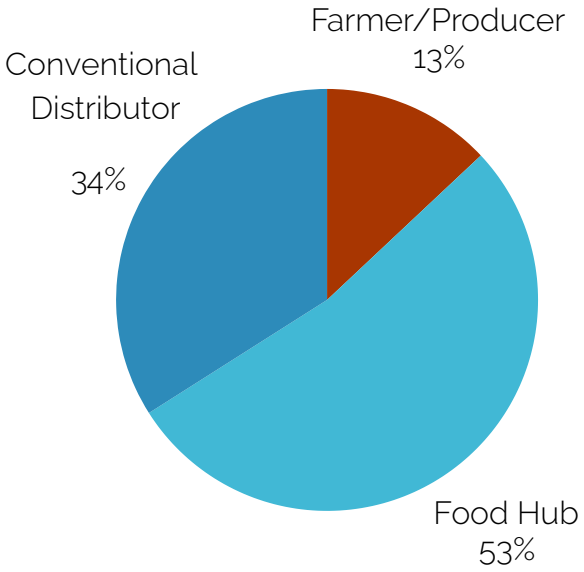
VENDOR SELECTION

School nutrition staff chose to source local products through both new and existing vendor relationships.

The procurement assistance Mass. Farm to School provided was highly influential in vendor selection. This assistance focused on introducing schools to regional food hubs, which aggregate product from multiple farms, by coordinating a collaborative solicitation to remove the procurement burden from schools, a vendor showcase and matchmaking event hosted by DESE, multiple procurement trainings, and district specific technical assistance.

Over 50% of Northeast Food for Schools sales ultimately flowed through these food hubs which are uniquely positioned to provide full traceability of their products back to the farm of origin.

VENDOR TYPE



CONVENTIONAL DISTRIBUTORS



FOOD HUBS

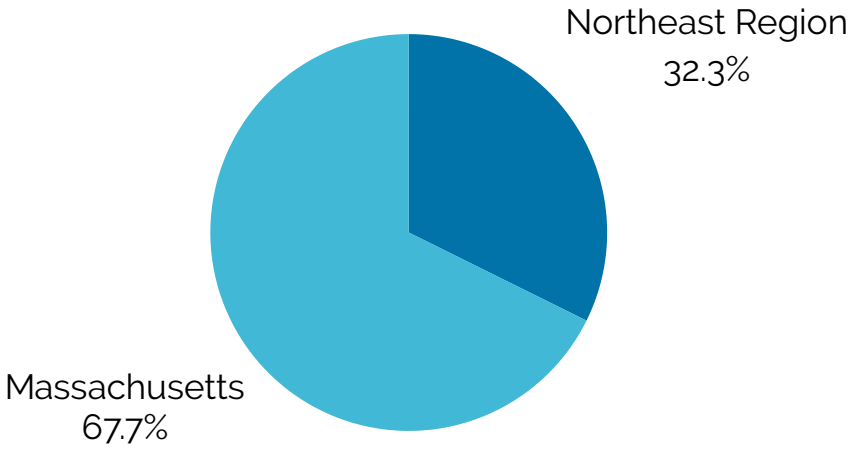


NORTHEAST FOOD FOR SCHOOLS

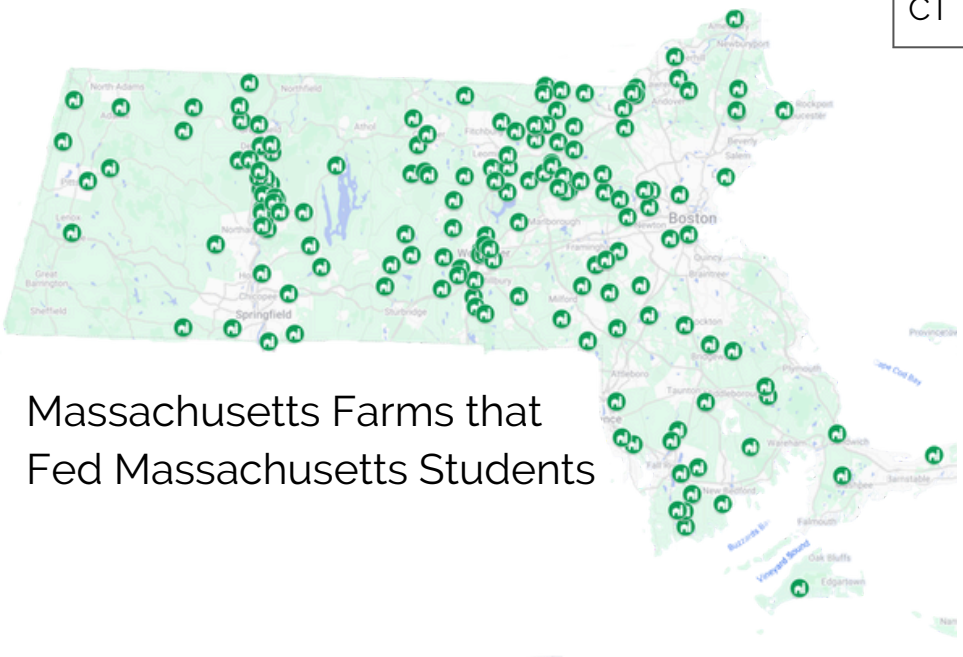
FARM DATA

School nutrition professionals embraced their role in the local food system, as demonstrated by their clear preference for purchasing products from Massachusetts farmers. Schools preferred working with in-state vendors when possible, some even prioritizing hyper-local relationships with farms in their town or county. At the same time, they recognize that farms and businesses from neighboring states in New England as critical partners, demonstrating the interconnectedness of the Massachusetts food system. As noted on the previous page, over half of all Northeast Food for Schools purchases came through food hubs, local distributors focused on supply chain transparency and aggregation for farmers.

FARM LOCATION



State	# of Farms	Amount
MA	209	$2,420,077
NH	16	$367,462
NY	41	$225,144
ME	9	$186,839
RI	31	$138,363
VT	29	$119,188
CT	23	$102,884



Massachusetts Farms that Fed Massachusetts Students

INTERACTIVE MAP

massfarmtoschool.org /nfs-map/

NORTHEAST FOOD FOR SCHOOLS

FEATURED DISTRICTS & VENDORS

SCHOOL FOOD AUTHORITIES

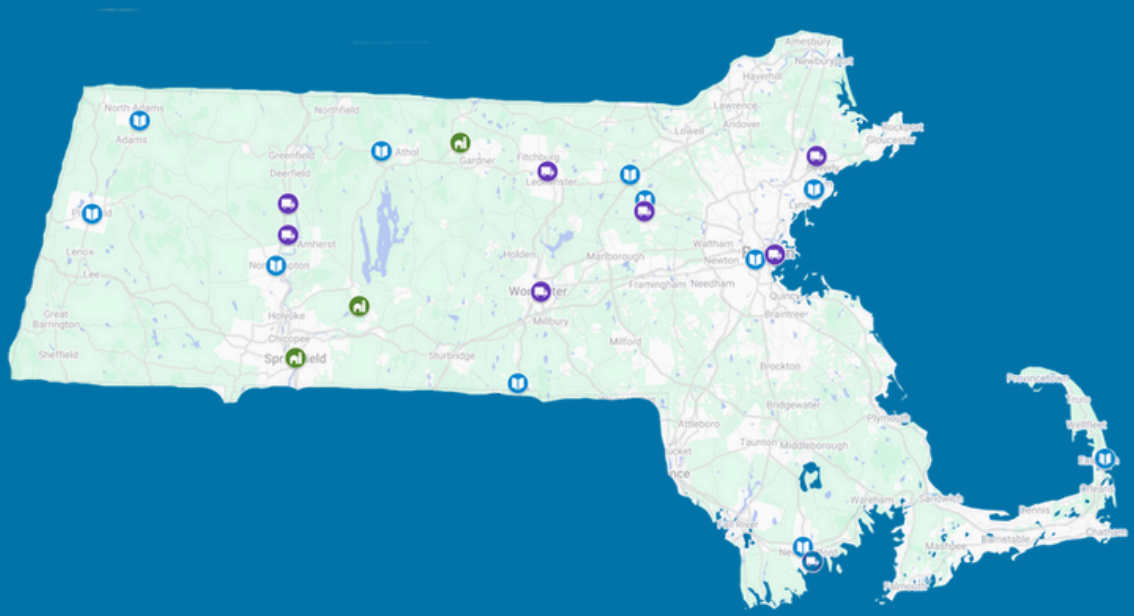
- Acton-Boxborough Public Schools
- Boston Public Schools
- Littleton Public Schools
- Nauset Regional School District
- New Bedford Public Schools
- Northampton Public Schools
- Orange Public Schools
- Pittsfield Public Schools
- Webster Public Schools

FOOD HUBS

- Boston Food Hub
- Coastal Foodshed
- Growing Places: Local Food Works
- Marty's Local
- Myers Produce
- New Entry
- Red's Best
- Worcester Food Hub

FARMS & PRODUCERS

- Austin Ridge Acres
- Mi Tierra Tortillas



NORTHEAST FOOD FOR SCHOOLS

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

BY THE NUMBERS

of Schools: **8**

NFS Dollars Spent: **$47,375.11**

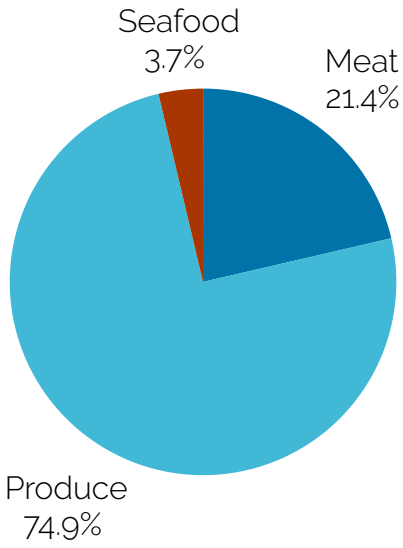
Enrollment: **5,055**

Number of Farms Supported by Sales: **15**

FOOD HUBS STREAMLINE OPERATIONS

By working with local food hubs, Acton-Boxborough simplified their delivery logistics rather than working directly with over a dozen farms. This arrangement 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 made their procurement process more manageable. During the 2023 MA 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 DESE. Acton-Boxborough was pleased to learn that the Boston Food Hub was located just a few miles from their schools. They have enjoyed a successful partnership ever since. This serves as just one of many examples in which additional administrative investment worked to elevate and amplify the impacts of the Northeast Food for Schools program for districts and the local food system.

TOP PRODUCTS



> 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 PUBLIC SCHOOLS

BY THE NUMBERS

of Schools: **108**

Enrollment: **46,094**

NFS Dollars Spent: **$196,167.25**

Number of Farms Supported by Sales: **9**

IMPACT ON PROCUREMENT

Boston Public Schools' utilized funds on Northeast grown apples, Maine grown broccoli, and Massachusetts grown carrots, dried beans and squash, primarily coming through conventional distributors. Boston's size and sourcing strategies have influenced distributors, including large conventional K-12 distributors, which makes local products more accessible to schools of varying sizes throughout the region.

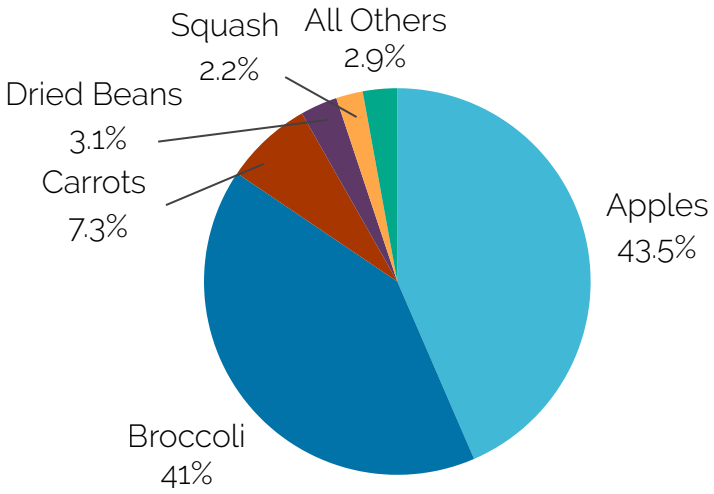
MENU HIGHLIGHTS

Broccoli is used in chicken & rice dishes, pasta dishes, and as a vegetable side. Apples and carrots are widely used in a variety of recipes or as standalone options on the menu, while black beans are used for empanadas, nachos, black bean and corn salads, and more.

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.

TOP PRODUCTS



> NFS 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, Former Executive Director, Food and Nutrition Services, Boston Public Schools*

NORTHEAST FOOD FOR SCHOOLS

LITTLETON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

BY THE NUMBERS

of Schools: **4**

Enrollment: **1655**

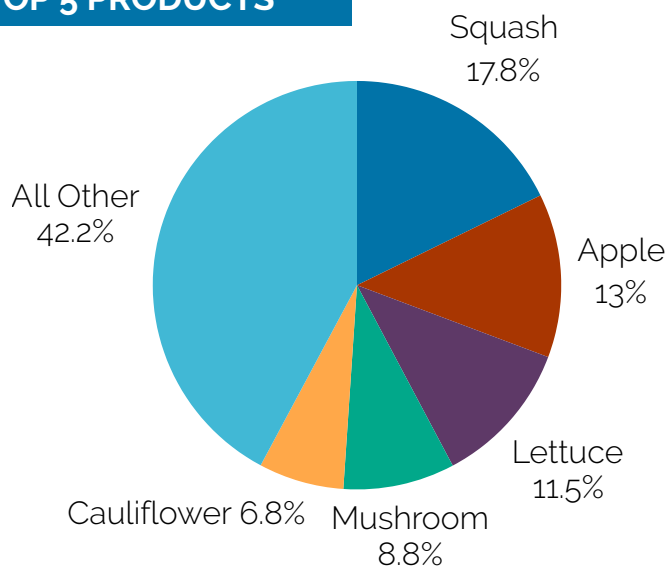
NFS Dollars spent: **$14,908.05**

Number of Farms Supported by Sales: **27**

STUDENT AGENCY, STAFF INVESTMENT

Littleton's main focus was creating self-serve produce stations where students can pick from a vibrant assortment of locally sourced fruits and vegetables. The school nutrition department found it rewarding when students and staff noticed their culinary efforts, including roasting potatoes, sautéing mushrooms, adding fresh local cucumbers and tomatoes into pasta salads, and grilling the peppers and onions. The photo below was selected as the 2023 "Terrific Tray," and eventually earned the distinction of the first "Terrific Tray of the Year" in May 2024.

TOP 5 PRODUCTS



> 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,*
> *Former School. Nutrition Director,*
> *Littleton Public Schools*



NORTHEAST FOOD FOR SCHOOLS

NAUSET REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

BY THE NUMBERS

of Schools: **2**

Enrollment: **1,236**

NFS Dollars Spent: **$7,017.35**

Number of Farms Supported by Sales: **1**

HYPER-LOCAL SOURCING

Sue Murray, Nauset Regional School District's Food Service Director, strategically chose to keep their Northeast Food for Schools funding within the Cape Cod economy. She worked with Drew Perry of Hillside Poultry, a multi-generational Cape farmer, for months to raise chickens for all of the school districts Sue works with. Initial conversations focused on what cuts would be mutually beneficial, those that would work best for Hillside Poultry's retail sales, as well as her menu and kitchens. The Cape economy is all-too-often forgotten by traditional distribution networks, and Sue sees the value of sourcing directly from Cape farmers who are well known in the community.

> If we didn't have Northeast Food for Schools funding, we may not have been as motivated to find a local farm. This funding pushed us to make a connection with a local poultry farmer in Truro and we were able to purchase extremely local chicken we used in many menu items, such as, Thai Chicken, BBQ chicken, and chicken broccoli alfredo.
>
> *- Susan Murray, Food Service Director, Nauset Regional School District*





NORTHEAST FOOD FOR SCHOOLS

NEW BEDFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

BY THE NUMBERS

#of Schools: **24**

Enrollment: **12,505**

NFS Dollars Spent: **$127,690.78**

Number of Farmers Supported by Sales: **13**

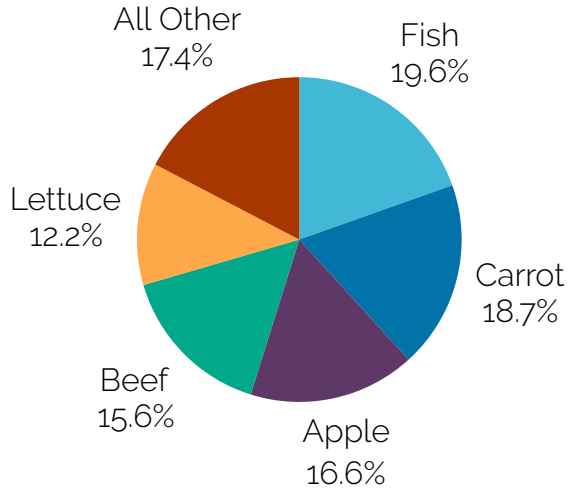
NEW VENDOR RELATIONSHIPS

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

CULTURALLY RELEVANT MEALS

New Bedford has a large population of Portuguese-speaking and Portuguese. American students. As part of the food service department's student engagement efforts, new menu items, including a Portuguese kale soup utilizing local kale, were added to the menu (shown below).

TOP 5 PRODUCTS



> 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,*
> *Former School Nutrition Director,*
> *New Bedford Public Schools*



NORTHEAST FOOD FOR SCHOOLS

NORTHAMPTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

BY THE NUMBERS

of Schools: **6**

Enrollment: **2,496**

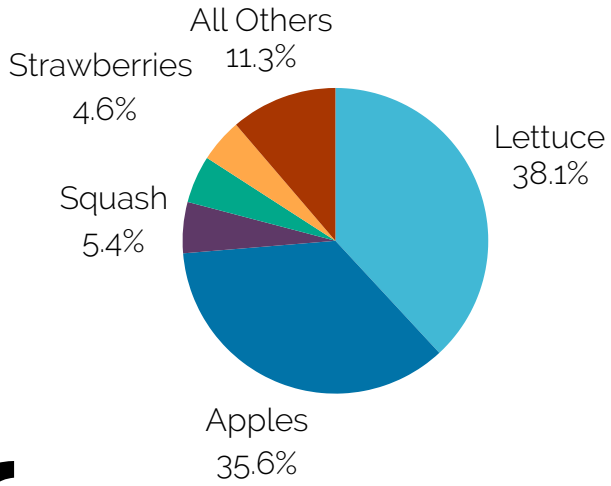
NFS Dollars Spent: **$17,308.94**

Number of Farmers Supported by Sales: **13**

PROMINENT PRODUCE

Northampton, Massachusetts sits in the heart of the Connecticut River Valley, known as the breadbasket of the Commonwealth. The Northampton Food Service Department, known as "Freshampton," prioritized sourcing produce direct from farms and local distributors aggregating local produce and showcasing them in their monthly taste tests around the district. Northampton's student population has been engaged with Freshampton, requesting more plant-forward menus, salads, and entrees, which led the nutrition department to prioritize fresh fruits and vegetables with their NFS funds.

TOP 5 PRODUCTS



> With NFS funding, we were able to support local agriculture and our community while making menu choices that benefit our students' health and nutritional intake without the [financial] burden and worry of limited reimbursement.
>
> *-Mistelle Hannah,*
> *School Nutrition Director,*
> *Northampton Public Schools*



NORTHEAST FOOD FOR SCHOOLS

ORANGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

BY THE NUMBERS

of Schools: **3**

Enrollment: **494**

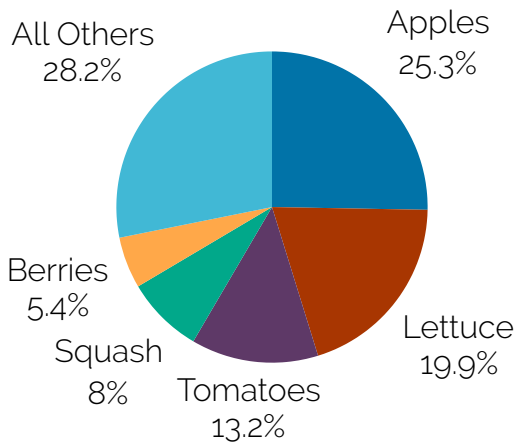
NFS Dollars Spent: **$10,216.50**

Number of Farmers Supported by Sales: **33**

SOURCING WITHIN THE NORTH QUABBIN

Katrina Bressani was hired as the new Food Service Director in the 2024-25 school year and was familiar with the Northeast Food for Schools funding from her previous district. Orange Public Schools spent over 25% of their NFS funds on apples sourced from New Salem Preserves, a small orchard located in the neighboring town. As with other small, rural districts, Orange has difficulties sourcing from broadline distributors because of their minimum order requirements or infrequent delivery to the area. By working with new farm and food hub partnerships, she added more local produce, including winter squash, tomatoes and basil and was selected by DESE as a "Terrific Tray" of the month in October 2024.

TOP 5 PRODUCTS



> Sourcing from farms students knew added another level of interest and excitement to our program, and students have responded to the new, local foods on the menu. With the support of universal free meals, I plan to continue sourcing local foods.
>
> *-Katrina Bressani*
> *Food Service Director, Orange, Petersham, and Mahar Regional School District*



NORTHEAST FOOD FOR SCHOOLS

PITTSFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

BY THE NUMBERS

of Schools: **14**

Enrollment: **4,873**

NFS Dollars Spent: **$38,562.18**

Number of Farmers Supported by Sales: **9**

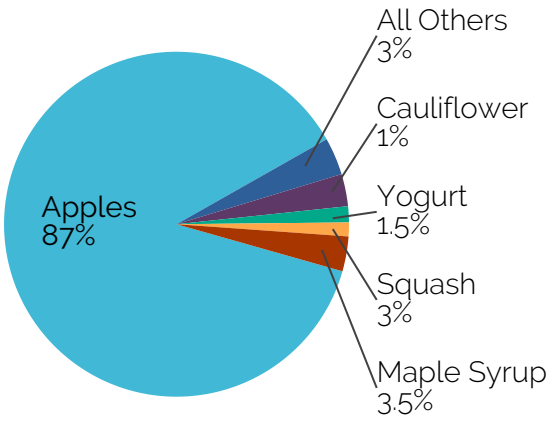
INVESTING IN EQUIPMENT

Northeast Food for Schools funding provided Pittsfield Public Schools with, not only the opportunity to purchase more local produce, but also with the ability to invest in new kitchen equipment to enable more scratch cooking. This new equipment made it easier for kitchen staff to incorporate fresh, local ingredients. Local produce is typically delivered unprocessed and can be time consuming to prepare. Having a steady source of funding through Universal Free School Meals as well as grant opportunities to purchase kitchen equipment improves the prep time of unprocessed foods, making for a more efficient kitchen.

NEW MENU ITEMS

- Granola with Maple Syrup
- Roasted Buffalo Cauliflower
- Spinach & Strawberry Salad
- Turkey Pesto Sandwich

TOP 5 PRODUCTS



> Northeast Food for Schools has been so beneficial for us, allowing us to boost the local economy by purchasing local products and to expand our local vendor list, enabling us to build relationships with local farms, and provide fresh produce to our students.
>
> *- Jeremy Wells, Food Service Director, Pittsfield Public Schools*



NORTHEAST FOOD FOR SCHOOLS

SALEM PUBLIC SCHOOLS

BY THE NUMBERS

of Schools: **11**

Enrollment: **3,831**

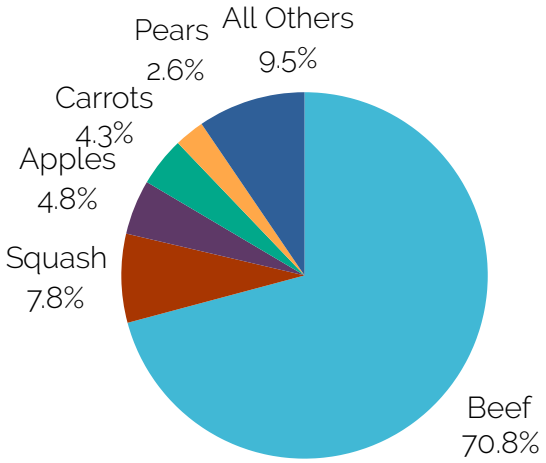
NFS Dollars Spent: **$44,061.50**

Number of Farmers Supported by Sales: **20**

INCREASE IN PARTICIPATION

Salem Public Schools has seen a rise in meal participation due directly to items purchased via NFS funds. The introduction of local, fresh beef patties has sparked a surge in meal program participation, with up to 200 burgers served daily—a dramatic increase as compared with non-local burger day participation. Students are equally enthusiastic about local fruits like Macintosh and Honeycrisp apples, as well as creative additions like arugula and rainbow carrots. The locally sourced fish that are paired with educational posters about their origins, have been a major hit, with students excited to connect their meals to the fishermen who catch them.

TOP 5 PRODUCTS



> Northeast Food for Schools has been huge for district & family buy-in. Families love to hear about how we are supporting our local community, especially when they hear, for example, that apples are purchased from a farm in our own zip code!
>
> *- Michaela Short*
>
> *Director of Food and Nutrition Services, Salem Public Schools*



NORTHEAST FOOD FOR SCHOOLS

WEBSTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

BY THE NUMBERS

of Schools: **3**

NFS Dollars Spent: **$25,032.89**

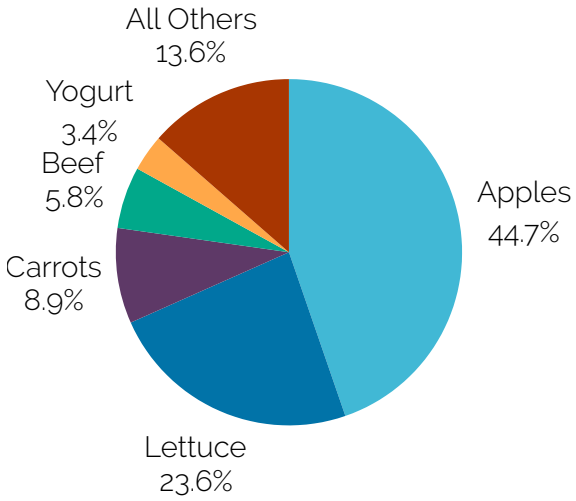
Enrollment: **1,712**

Number of Farmers Supported by Sales: **20**

BUILDING LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS

Webster strengthened its meal program by forging strong relationships with local food hubs and farms, such as Worcester Food Hub and Whittier Farms, more than doubling local purchases and introducing fresh produce and meats into school meals. These partnerships have provided students with high-quality, locally sourced ingredients while fostering connections between the schools and their agricultural community.

TOP 5 PRODUCTS



"Northeast Food for Schools allowed us the flexibility to try some more expensive items, such as, local beef. We were blown away by the participation rates that day, and it proved to us that we can make a profit despite using pricier ingredients. The students were thrilled with the burgers, far beyond a "normal," burger day."

- Kelsey Sanders,
School Nutrition Director,
Webster Public Schools



NORTHEAST FOOD FOR SCHOOLS

VENDOR PROFILES

Northeast Food for Schools was designed to encourage schools to initiate new procurement relationships and required schools to confirm that food purchases were unprocessed or minimally processed, and from farms, fisheries and producers within 400 miles of their location. This required vendors to provide clear traceability of foods sold to schools. While some districts were able to receive this information from their conventional distributors, many food service directors utilized the NFS opportunity to initiate new relationships with farmers, fishers, and food hubs that were able to easily and reliably confirm the origin of products sold.

In the spring of 2023, Massachusetts Farm to School supported the development of new vendor relationships by engaging the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) to issue a Request for Proposals for vendors with the demonstrated ability to sell northeast-grown produce, traceable to the farm of origin. The solicitation was issued in partnership with the Massachusetts Association of Regional Planning Agencies, and was therefore conducted on behalf of all school districts within the state. This collaborative solicitation significantly reduced the primary procurement barrier districts historically face when attempting to add new local vendors, and lessened the administrative burden for the vendors. The awarded vendors under MAPC's Northeast Produce Request for Proposals saw significant increases in sales due to their award status. This solicitation supported schools that received NFS funding as well as those not participating in the program.

The following profiles provide snapshots from the vendors' perspectives of the impact of NFS on their businesses. NFS clearly accelerated sales and many vendors experienced schools maintaining relationships after the NFS funding ended. NFS provided the opportunity for new farms and vendors to prove their ability to serve the school marketplace. Some schools that did not opt into the NFS program even began sourcing from more of these local vendors. Through events, trainings, the Terrific Tray competition, and word of mouth, schools learned more about new vendors, products, and recipes that could add more local flavor to their menus.



NORTHEAST FOOD FOR SCHOOLS

AUSTIN RIDGE ACRES

NFS SALES BY THE NUMBERS

Total Sales: **$60,132**

# of Districts Served: **3**

SCHOOL CUSTOMERS

Prior to NFS: **0**

During NFS: **3**

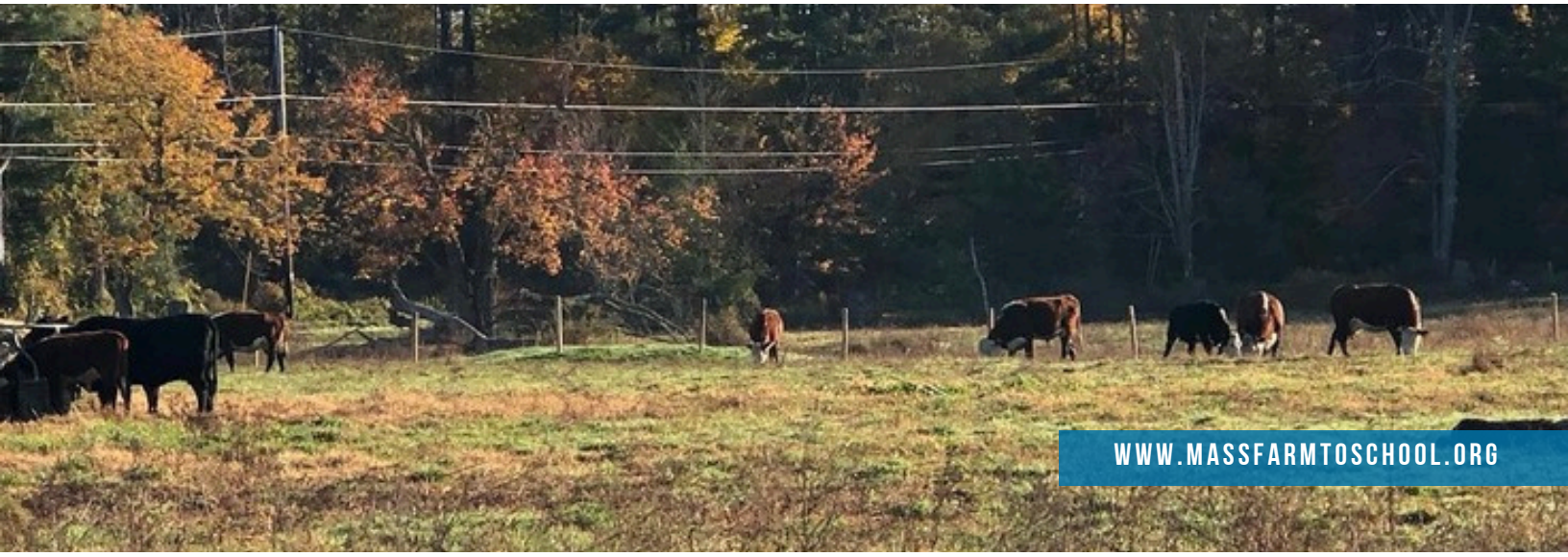
EXPANDING SCHOOL MARKETS

The "Terrific Tray" competition was founded to showcase exemplary school lunch trays featuring local ingredients. Austin Ridge Acres, a small family farm in Belchertown, was featured in Belchertown Public School's Terrific Tray of the Month in January 2024. After learning about a farmer that could supply schools with local beef, two other districts started buying from the farm, demonstrating the demand for local protein and the success of this competition among Massachusetts schools.

> This is such a great program and has been extremely helpful to our small, family farm.
>
> *-Loni Austin,*
> *Farmer,*
> *Austin Ridge Acres*

> We live in a rich agricultural area, and I wanted to showcase the excellent foods from family farms our students know (and some are from!). The aroma of local beef cooking in our school kitchens is more enticing, and we have noticed significant increases in meals when students know the beef is local.
>
> *-Barrett Grazioso,*
> *Former Nutrition Director,*
> *Belchertown Public Schools*





NORTHEAST FOOD FOR SCHOOLS

BOSTON FOOD HUB

NFS SALES BY THE NUMBERS

Total Sales: **$154,500**

# of Districts Served through NFS Funds: **21**

Farms & Producers Supported by Sales: **53**

SCHOOL CUSTOMERS

Prior to NFS: **1**

During NFS: **28***

TOP 5 PRODUCTS SOLD

- Apples
- Lettuce 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*

**As demonstrated in many of the food hub and producer profiles to follow, NFS funding and procurement resources had a multiplier effect, attracting school customers that did not participate in the NFS program to begin new purchasing relationships.*



NORTHEAST FOOD FOR SCHOOLS

COASTAL FOODSHED

NFS SALES BY THE NUMBERS

Total Sales: **$19,933**

# of Districts Served: **2**

Farms & Producers Supported by Sales: **13**

SCHOOL CUSTOMERS

Prior to NFS: **0**

During NFS: **3**

TOP 5 PRODUCTS SOLD

- Apples
- Pears
- Chicken
- Carrots
- Berries

TOP 5 FARMS SUPPORTED

- Copicut Farm
- Four Town Farm
- Ward's Berry Farm
- Yonder Farms
- Young Family Farm

> The Northeast Food for Schools Program helped us establish new purchasing relationships with three school districts, opening up new market channels for many of our farm partners. This program allowed us to sell more local food into the community, ultimately building a stronger, more resilient, and more equitable local food system.
>
> *-Stephanie Perks,*
> *Co-Founder & Co-Executive Director,*
> *Coastal Foodshed*



NORTHEAST FOOD FOR SCHOOLS

GROWING PLACES: LOCAL FOOD WORKS

NFS SALES BY THE NUMBERS

Total Sales: **$38,367**

# of Districts Served: **4**

Farms & Producers Supported by Sales: **29**

SCHOOL CUSTOMERS

Prior to NFS: **1**

During NFS: **8**

TOP 5 PRODUCTS SOLD

- Apples
- Broccoli
- Lettuce
- Potatoes
- Tomatoes

TOP 5 FARMS SUPPORTED

- Carlson Orchards
- Little Leaf Farms
- Local Food Works
- Pioneer Valley Growers Assoc.
- Ward's Berry Farm

"At Growing Places, we work to balance the needs of both schools and farmers through values-based purchasing. This means offering fair pricing, whole local produce, and lightly processed products that help extend the growing season and increase product variety—ensuring students have access to fresh, delicious food year-round while also supporting small and underserved farmers.

-Ayn Yeagle
Executive Director
Growing Places



NORTHEAST FOOD FOR SCHOOLS

MARTY'S LOCAL

NFS SALES BY THE NUMBERS

Total Sales: **$126,624**

# of Districts Served: **25**

Farms & Producers Supported by Sales: **59**

SCHOOL CUSTOMERS

Prior to NFS: **9**

During NFS: **79**

TOP 5 PRODUCTS SOLD

- Apples
- Cheese
- Lettuce
- Squash
- Yogurt

TOP 5 FARMS SUPPORTED

- Cabot Creamery Co-Op
- Little Leaf Farms
- Narragansett Creamery
- Pine Hill Orchards
- Sidehill Farm

> Thanks to NFS, we've expanded our work with schools, connecting them to local farms and food producers they might not otherwise have access to. Our partnerships have fueled innovative meals—like Springfield Public Schools' trailblazing all-New England pizza—backed by high quality products, easy online ordering, and friendly, reliable service.
>
> *-Sandra Thomas,*
> *Chief Marketing Officer*
> *Marty's Local*



NORTHEAST FOOD FOR SCHOOLS

MI TIERRA TORTILLAS

NFS SALES BY THE NUMBERS

Total Sales: **$4,9093**

# of Districts Served: 12

SCHOOL CUSTOMERS

School Customers: **16**

Mi Tierra Tortillas was the primary grain product that schools purchased using Northeast Food for Schools funds. These corn tortillas only have three ingredients; ground corn, lime, and water, and were available to schools through direct purchasing, conventional distributors and food hubs. NFS funds allowed new districts to try their product. Many Massachusetts districts have significant Hispanic/Latinx populations, and as school meal programs work to include culturally relevant items, sourcing corn tortillas has helped districts offer familiar flavors and textures.

> "The Local Food for Schools program has played a significant role in the growth of our farm based business. It has enabled us to get fresh organic corn tortillas to children in the Springfield, Worcester and Boston public school systems. Without the funding, the schools would likely not have bought our product and without Mass Farm to Schools' efforts on our behalf, the schools would likely never have even heard about us."
>
> *- Michael Docter,*
> *Co-Owner*
> *Mi Tierra Tortillas*



NORTHEAST FOOD FOR SCHOOLS

MYERS PRODUCE

NFS SALES BY THE NUMBERS

Total sales: **$51,946**

# of Districts Served: **8**

Farms & Producers Supported by Sales: **37**

SCHOOL CUSTOMERS

Prior to NFS: **0**

During NFS: **8**

TOP 5 PRODUCTS SOLD

- Apples
- Carrots
- Lettuce
- Pears
- Tomatoes

TOP 5 FARMS SUPPORTED

- Champlain Orchards
- Long Wind Farm
- Lyman Orchards
- Pete's Greens
- Wellspring Harvest

> The Northeast Food for Schools program has opened the door for school customers with different produce needs than our typical customer, which means that we now have a stable winter customer base as schools are excited to purchase apples, butternut squash, and potatoes.
>
> *-Annie Myers,*
> *Owner & Founder*
> *Myers Produce*



NORTHEAST FOOD FOR SCHOOLS

NEW ENTRY SUSTAINABLE FARMING PROJECT

NFS SALES BY THE NUMBERS

Total sales: **$29,775**

# of Districts Served: **4**

Farms & Producers Supported by Sales: **19**

SCHOOL CUSTOMERS

Prior to NFS: **3**

During NFS: **5**

TOP 5 PRODUCTS SOLD

- Apples
- Carrots
- Pears
- Potatoes
- Squash

TOP 5 FARMS SUPPORTED

- Boston Area Gleaners
- Farmer Dave's
- Iron Ox Farm
- Joe Czajkowski Farm
- Old Earth Orchards

"New Entry Food Hub has enjoyed partnering with local schools to supply cafeterias and educate students about where their food comes from. Schools are building a strong on-ramp for new and beginning farmers to scale their operations and access to larger and consistent market for their crops. It's a win-win for students and we support local farmer livelihoods – the next generation of farmers and eaters benefit.

-Jennifer Hashley,
Director
New Entry Sustainable Farming Project



NORTHEAST FOOD FOR SCHOOLS

RED'S BEST

NFS SALES BY THE NUMBERS

Total Sales: **$62,895**

Districts Served: **14**

SCHOOL CUSTOMERS

Prior to NFS: **25**

During NFS: **60**

TOP FISH SOLD

- Haddock
- Pollack

Red's Best "Catch of the Day" is a sustainable seafood program designed to move large amounts of abundant and seasonal fish for their network of small boat New England fishermen. Schools order the "Catch of the Day" at a set price and receive fresh fillets in 10 lbs. cases of one of the following catches, including Haddock and Pollock. Species for the Catch of the Day program are selected due to their abundance in the North Atlantic, and allow fishermen to select and sell their biggest catch at stable pricing. Red's Best provides full traceability of where the fish comes from with their proprietary technology, which allows schools to leveraging learning opportunities for students about our coastal food system while providing them transparency about their meal options.

> "Public school accounts allow us to move large volumes of local, sustainable fish, into our own communities, while returning living wages back to fishermen and the fishing communities. Local fish provides a nutritious, center of the plate, local protein. There is plenty of sustainable local seafood at a price point that meets the challenging public school lunch budget and can pay fishermen living wages. [NFS] provided schools the initial support to try local fish.
>
> *-Jamey Lionette,*
> *Director of Sustainable Seafood Program*
> *Red's Best*



NORTHEAST FOOD FOR SCHOOLS

WORCESTER REGIONAL FOOD HUB

NFS SALES BY THE NUMBERS

Total sales: **$927,402**

# of Districts Served: **76**

Farms & Producers Supported by Sales: **58**

SCHOOL CUSTOMERS

Prior to NFS: **20**

During NFS: **90**

TOP 5 PRODUCTS SOLD

- Apples
- Carrots
- Fish
- Lettuce
- Tomatoes

TOP 5 FARMS SUPPORTED

- Bright Farms
- Carlson Orchards
- Foppema's Farm
- Joe Czajkowski Farm
- Little Leaf Farms

"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 dough. 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

