

To: Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan, and the Joint Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs

From: Anna Korsen, Full Plates Full Potential

RE: LD 636/ Local Produce Fund survey results

Dated: March 31, 2021

Senator Rafferty, Representative Brennan, and the esteemed members of the Jointing Standing Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs. I wanted to provide more information ahead of the work session for LD 636. As I shared during my testimony, we learned that the Local Produce Fund was only being utilized by a few school districts and wanted to learn more. We surveyed school nutrition departments and the results of the survey are directly reflected in the proposed changes to the Local Produce Fund by way of LD 636. The survey was shared with all 216 school districts, and we received responses from 53 districts.

- 40% of respondents, or 21 districts, never used the Local Produce Fund
- Apples are the most common local product purchased using the Local Produce Fund
- Top barriers to using the Local Produce Fund:
 - Limited delivery options (33 respondents)
 - Challenges in sourcing local produce (29 respondents)
 - Cost of local produce (24 respondents)
 - Staff time and capacity (20 respondents)
- Top reasons to not use the Local Produce Fund:
 - Capacity to source local produce
 - Didn't know about the Local Produce Fund
 - Didn't know where to procure local produce
- 38 respondents would use more of the Local Produce Fund if the reimbursement cap was increased
- Top products to include in the Local Produce Fund
 - Value added dairy
 - Meat
 - Eggs
 - Seafood
- 68% of respondents would be more inclined to purchase local products if they were offered through their current food distributor

I'd be happy to answer any questions and to share more detailed data from the survey if there is interest.