MASTERING STRATEGIES TO ACCELERATE NATIVE FARM TO SCHOOL EFFORTS: EVALUATIONS AND GRANTS
OUR MISSION

First Nations Development Institute invests in and creates innovative institutions and models that strengthen asset control and support economic development for American Indian people and their communities.
All attendees will be **muted** throughout this webinar. **If you have questions**, please use the **Q&A button** and enter your question(s) in the box.

**Audio Settings**: Change your audio settings. You can also click the upward arrow (^
) next to change your speaker.  
**Chat**: Send a message to the panelists or everyone (All Panelists and Attendees) in the webinar.  
**Q&A**: Ask questions to the host and panelists or request technical help.
INTRODUCTIONS

John Hendrix
Director of Economic Development
Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians

Andrea Alma
Farm to School Regional Lead
USDA Food & Nutrition Service Mountain Plains Regions

Mary Adelzadeh
Consultant
First Nations Development Institute
POLL 1

How is your Native Farm to school program/activities funded?

A. State grants
B. Federal grants
C. Grants from private foundations/non-profits
D. PTA
E. School budget
F. All volunteer based/there is no designated funds
G. None of the above
Andrea Alma is the USDA Farm to School Regional Lead for the Mountain Plains Region based in Denver, Colorado. She works with schools, farms, and partners to get fresh, local food to school children, and she particularly enjoys serving the many Native Farm to School programs around the region. Prior to joining the USDA, Andrea was the Farm to School Coordinator for Minneapolis Public Schools. Her career began in Washington, DC, where Andrea founded and directed the DC Farm to School Network. Andrea earned a BS in Environmental Engineering from Tufts University.
TOPICS

• What is the USDA Farm to School Grant Program?

• How can this grant support Native farm to school efforts?

• What does evaluation look like for this grant program?
Congress created a farm to school program at USDA to conduct:

- Grant Program
- Training & Technical Assistance
- Research & Evaluation
Healthy Foods for Navajo Schools

Discoveries of
Navajo Farm to School Program

November 2014

Certified
Farm to School Teacher

This project was implemented by the Navajo Development Authority and the Farm to School Program.
USDA FARM TO SCHOOL GRANTS

- Designed to increase the availability of local foods in schools
- Can help new farm to school programs get started or expand existing efforts
- Funds support a wide range of activities from training, planning, and developing partnerships, to creating new menu items, establishing supply chains, offering taste tests, purchasing equipment, planting school gardens, and organizing field trips.
WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO APPLY AS LEAD APPLICANT?

❖ Eligible schools
❖ State agencies
❖ Local agencies
❖ Indian tribal organizations (ITO’s)
❖ Agricultural producers or groups of agricultural producers
❖ Non-profit organizations

Other types of organizations can be partners!
FY 2021 PRIORITIES

- Applications from agricultural producers or groups of agricultural producers
- Applications that serve a high proportion of children (at least 40 percent or more) eligible for free or reduced-price meals
- Applications from Indian Tribal Organizations (ITOs) and entities serving tribal communities
- Projects located in or targeting Opportunity Zones
IMPLEMENTATION TRACK

❖ Funding range: $50,000 - $100,000
❖ Timeline: 12 or 24 months
❖ Example activities: producer training, edible gardens, kitchen infrastructure, promotional campaigns, solving distribution bottlenecks, testing new menu items, conducting trainings
TURNKEY TRACK

❖ Shorter and simpler application
❖ Applicants choose from pre-defined projects
❖ All activities are pre-determined
## TURNKEY PROJECTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Turnkey Project</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Funding Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Action Planning</td>
<td>12 months</td>
<td>Up to $50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural Education</td>
<td>12 or 24 months</td>
<td>Up to $50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edible Garden</td>
<td>12 months</td>
<td>Up to $50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Producer Training</td>
<td>12 or 24 months</td>
<td>Up to $25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(only for State agencies)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
USDA FARM TO SCHOOL GRANT PROCESS

- Winter: Apply to Request for Applications
- Late Winter: Applications are Reviewed and Scored
- Spring: Selected Applicants are Notified
- Summer: Grant Projects Begin
“(5) CRITERIA FOR SELECTION.—To the maximum extent practicable, in providing assistance under this subsection, the Secretary shall give the highest priority to funding projects that, as determined by the Secretary—

“(A) make local food products available on the menu of the eligible school;

“(B) serve a high proportion of children who are eligible for free or reduced price lunches;

“(C) incorporate experiential nutrition education activities in curriculum planning that encourage the participation of school children in farm and garden-based agricultural education activities;

“(D) demonstrate collaboration between eligible schools, nongovernmental and community-based organizations, agricultural producer groups, and other community partners;

“(E) include adequate and participatory evaluation plans;

“(F) demonstrate the potential for long-term program sustainability; and

“(G) meet any other criteria that the Secretary determines appropriate.

“(6) EVALUATION.—As a condition of receiving a grant under this subsection, each grant recipient shall agree to cooperate in an evaluation by the Secretary of the program carried out using grant funds.
EVALUATION FOR USDA FARM TO SCHOOL GRANTS

1. USDA wants to know some information about your project activities, management tasks, expenditures & outcomes
   - Baseline & final report
   - Semi-annual progress reports
   - Quarterly financial reports

2. YOUR evaluation plan tracks your internal metrics, grant progress and outcomes, depending on your project
   - You (or a partner) design the evaluation!
Required Objective: Improve access to local foods in eligible schools through comprehensive farm to school programming that includes local procurement and agricultural education efforts.
### Baseline & Final Report Information

- Most important partners
- Partner organization types
- Total schools & students served
- School food budget spent on local food
- Activities (checkboxes)
- School gardens
- Funding for farm to school
- Farm to school policies in place
## SEMI-ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Activity Category</th>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Anticipated Start Date (Month, Year)</th>
<th>Anticipated Completion Date (Month, Year)</th>
<th>Target Audience</th>
<th>Responsible Party (Name, Title, Organization)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Project management – any changes?**

- Activities
- Personnel
- Timeline
- Budget
• **Evaluation Plan (300 words or less):** Briefly describe your organization’s ability to monitor project activities and how the overall impact will be evaluated. Detail any relevant experience your organization or partner has conducting evaluations.

Describe the evaluation activities you will conduct to measure your program against the required objective. Identify the indicator(s) that will be used for each activity. Indicate the date and frequency of the proposed activities. Lastly, identify a person or organization responsible for overseeing the evaluation plan. Depending on whether an activity addresses local procurement, agricultural education, or both, the Evaluation Plan section should reflect evaluation activities that measure related outcomes.

Please note that awardees will be required to report data indicating progress towards completing their proposed activities. For more information on evaluation resources, please see the [Farm to School Applicant Resource page](#).

**REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS:**

Evaluation plan is part of the required Project Narrative section. You define your evaluation plan to cover the data USDA needs and the data YOU need.
YOUR EVALUATION MIGHT INCLUDE...

❖ Stakeholder surveys
❖ Menu audits
❖ Pre-post training surveys
❖ Needs assessments
❖ Partner mapping
❖ And more!

IN ORDER TO...

❖ Ensure community feedback/buy-in
❖ Make sure project is rooted in community needs
❖ Evaluate the project activities & partnerships
❖ Evaluate the project impact
❖ And more!
FY 2019 USDA Farm to School Grantee
Tribal Nations Research Group
(Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa)
National FARM to INSTITUTION METRICS COLLABORATIVE

Good Food, Good Data, Big Impact

https://ftimetrics.localfoodeconomics.com
ANDREA ALMA

Farm to School Regional Lead
Mountain Plains Region
Andrea.Alma@usda.gov
303-844-4417
www.fns.usda.gov/cfs/farm-school-grant-program
POLL 2

Have you evaluated your Native Farm to School program or activities?

A. Yes
B. No
C. Not sure
Evaluating Farm to School Programs

ASSESSMENT TOOLS AND STRATEGIES

JANUARY 14, 2021
Relevant Experience

- Mississippi Choctaws – Director of Economic Development
- 20+ years of Tribal Economic Development Experience
- Technical Assistance for 20+ tribes related to Business & Strategic Planning
- Project management experience includes development and start-up of many tribally-owned companies representing an >$500 million investment
- Secured Grant Funds from: EDA, BIA, ANA, USDA-CFP, USDA-VAPG, USDA-Farm to School, NCAT, WK Kellogg, First Nations Development Institute
- Participated in a wide range of project financing methods including traditional loans, loan guarantees, and New Markets Tax Credit financing.
- Founder of the Tribe’s certified organic vegetable farming business
- Manage the Tribe’s 800,000 square foot commercial real estate portfolio
- B.B.A. from Millsaps College & M.B.A. from Duke University
- Project Management Professional (PMP)
Learning Objectives

• Understand **why** we do evaluations
• Understand **what** to evaluate
• Understand **who** can conduct evaluations
• Understand **how** to conduct evaluations
• Identify **additional resources**
Agenda

- Farm to School Case Study: Mississippi Choctaw
- Why do evaluations?
- What to Evaluate
- How to Evaluate
- Additional Resources
Case Study

PART 1 – MISSISSIPPI CHOCTAW
Mississippi Choctaw

Federal Recognition in 1945
11,000 enrolled members
35,000 acres of Trust Land
8 Communities in East Central Mississippi
Democratically-elected Government
5,000 employees
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Established Choctaw Fresh Produce</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Received F2S Planning Grant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>△</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Received F2S Planning Grant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Received F2S Implementation Grant</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2016</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We are able to produce high quality and large volumes.
Choctaw High School
Careers in Agriculture Professional Program (CAPPS)
THANKSGIVING
MOBILE MARKET

- TUESDAY
- NOV 21
- 9AM - 2PM
- TRIBAL OFFICE

FARM FRESH PRODUCE JUST IN TIME FOR THANKSGIVING

COME EARLY! WHILE SUPPLIES LAST!

ALL ITEMS ARE GROWN ON TRIBAL LANDS TO USDA CERTIFIED ORGANIC STANDARDS

555 INDUSTRIAL RD / CHOCTAW, OK 73715 / 405.639.1152 / CHOCTAWPRODUCE.COM
Processing and freezing fresh produce for later use
EVALUATION

- Criteria
- Analysis
- Performance
- Approach

- Improvement
- Results
- Feedback
- Assessment
• Sales from Choctaw Fresh Produce to Choctaw Tribal School

• Sales of further processed vegetables to CTS

• Sales of produce procured off-Reservation to CTS

• Number of schools where offer a new “veggie of the month”

• Number of students making a visit to a local farm

• Amount of produce frozen for later use in season where fresh is unavailable

• Sales to off-Reservation schools
Dr. Steve Murray
Ag Economist (retired)
How?

Collecting *data* and issuing a *monthly report*
Evaluation 101

PART 2
“A structured process of assessing the success of a project in meeting its goals and to reflect on the lessons learned.”

- USDA Farm to School Program, FY 2018 USDA Farm to School Training Webinar
(D) demonstrate collaboration between eligible schools, nongovernmental and community-based organizations, agricultural producer groups, and other community partners;
(E) include adequate and participatory evaluation plans;
(F) demonstrate the potential for long-term program sustainability; and
(C) meet any other criteria that the Secretary determines appropriate.

(6) EVALUATION.—As a condition of receiving a grant under this subsection, each grant recipient shall agree to cooperate in an evaluation by the Secretary of the program carried out using grant funds.

(7) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Secretary shall provide technical assistance and information to assist eligible schools, State and local agencies, Indian tribal organizations, and non-profit entities—

(A) to facilitate the coordination and sharing of information and resources in the Department that may be applicable to the farm to school program;
(B) to collect and share information on best practices; and
(C) to disseminate research and data on existing farm to school programs and the potential for programs in underserved areas.
Baseline Reports

1. Existing partnerships and network
2. Procurement
3. Food prep and serving
4. Farm to school activities
5. Policy
Benefits of good evaluation

Data helps you tell your story

Tracks your progress; are your strategies working?

Data helps inform and influence local policies
What to Evaluate

PART 3
1. Existing partnerships and network
2. Procurement
3. Food prep and serving
4. Farm to school activities
5. Policy
Who are Potential Stakeholders of Farm to School?

√ Students
√ Kitchen Staff
√ Food Producers
√ School Administrators
√ Community
√ Parents
2 Types of Evaluation

**PROCESS EVALUATION**

Is the program being **executed** according to the plan?

**Example:**
- # of participants reached by mid-term
- Plan = conduct 5 taste tests by June. In June, determine how many taste tests were conducted.

**OUTCOME EVALUATION**

Is program achieving **desired results** such as behavior change, knowledge increase, skill development or other?

**Example:**
1) Students are consuming more local fruits and vegetables.
2) More of the school food budget is used to procure local foods.
What are examples of metrics?

- Change in purchases from local farmers
- # of students that participate in a farm tour
- # of taste tests conducted
- % increase in school meals satisfaction
- Other examples?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Impact Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sales from Choctaw Fresh Produce to Choctaw Tribal School (CTS)</td>
<td>Procurement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales of further processed vegetables to CTS</td>
<td>Food prep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales of produce procured off-Reservation to CTS</td>
<td>Partnerships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of schools where offer a new “veggie of the month”</td>
<td>Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of students making a visit to a local farm</td>
<td>Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amount of produce frozen for later use in season where fresh is unavailable</td>
<td>Food prep</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales to off-Reservation schools</td>
<td>Partnerships</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How to Evaluate

PART 4
What are common methods used to evaluate?

- Surveys
- Focus Groups
- Pre/post-test evaluations
- Tracking
- Observation
- Other?
What about things that are hard to measure?

- Cultural preservation
- Increase knowledge/awareness
- Other examples?
Who

PART 5
Who can conduct evaluations?

• In-house: staff or other program partners
• Outsource: hire a consultant, professor, etc.
• Involve students
• Other?
Impact of COVID-19

PART 7
Negative Impacts on the Farm

• Mississippi Choctaw has been negatively impacted by COVID-19. The Tribe declared a State of Emergency and Shelter-in-Place order in March 2020.

• We planted several crops in January in preparation for the School Menu. The schools closed in March so we were unable to harvest those crops for the school.

• We had planned a Health Fair for April that was going to be run by students. This event was canceled.

• We had planned a student-run Farmers’ Market for Memorial Day Weekend. This event was canceled.

• We had planned to provide fresh produce to the school in June that would be processed and frozen for use in the Fall. The school campus was closed and we were not able to supply produce to the school for processing.
We were also very saddened by the loss of one of our key employees due to the coronavirus, Mike Jackson, Sr., (middle in photo below). He had worked with Choctaw Fresh Produce for 2 years. He was a very dedicated worker and had previously been recognized as the Employee of the Year.
Potential Positive Impacts on the Farm

RESILIENT FOOD SUPPLY

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the need to have a strong, local food system in order to feed our community and be more resilient. This has increased the support to expand the production capabilities of Choctaw Fresh Produce.

IMPROVE COMMUNITY HEALTH

The coronavirus has more severe health effects on individuals with weak immune systems or pre-existing medical conditions such as diabetes, obesity, or hypertension. We want to use this situation to encourage and motivate our community to improve their health which is heavily influenced by eating a healthy diet.
Additional Resources

PART 6
Evaluation Guides

Farm to School Planning Toolkit
(Module 10)

Colorado Farm to School Task Force Evaluation Toolkit

Wisconsin Farm to School: Toolkit for School Nutrition Programs

www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool

http://coloradofarmtoschool.org/evaluation-toolkit

www.cias.wisc.edu/toolkits
Evaluation for Transformation

- Lays out a set of comprehensive measures in four areas farm to school programs are thought to impact.
  - Community economic development
  - Public health
  - Education
  - Environmental quality

- Measures span program, policy and research areas.

- Download guide: http://www.farmtoschool.org/resources-main/evaluation-framework

- USDA hosted 2015 webinar discussing how to use this resource: www.youtube.com/watch?v=_5KN92sjpas&feature=youtu.be
Bearing Fruit: Farm to School Program Evaluation Resources and Recommendations

- Excellent sample surveys and questionnaires for food service directors, students, farmers and teachers

http://www.farmtoschool.org/Resources/Bearing_Fruit.pdf
What is the FTS Toolkit?

**Step-by-Step Guide**
- Preparing for Evaluation
- Outcomes, Indicators & Measures
- Choosing & Adapting Tools
- Collecting & Analyzing Data
- Reporting Results

**Templates and Tools**

**Mini-Bite Interactive Online Trainings**

**Mini-Bite Trainings at a Glance**
1. FTS Evaluation Toolkit Overview
2. Welcome to the FTS Evaluation Toolkit
3. Examples of FTS Evaluations
4. Virtual Tour of the Online FTS Evaluation Toolkit

http://coloradofarmtoschool.org/fts-evaluation-toolkit-mini-bite-trainings
FTS Eval Data Collection Instruments (38)  » Downloads

Sort by: Title | Hits | Date

- A Survey of Consumer Behavior and Perceptions (526)
- An Assessment of Plate Waste within Milwaukee Public Schools' Universal Free Breakfast-in-the-Classroom (269)
- Analysis of School Food: Local Purchasing in Vermont Schools 2003-04 (441)
- Baseline Nutrition Services Questionnaire (475)
- Bearing Fruit: Farm to School Program Evaluation Resources and Recommendations (1033)
- Community Youth Organization Idea & Resource Kit (1210)
- Compendium of Surveys for Fruits and Vegetable Consumption and Physical Activity (1343)
- Cornell Garden Based Learning Post-test for Children and Youth (890)
- Food Preparation Skills, Nutrition & Portion Control survey (545)
- Food Safety Knowledge, Beliefs and Practices in Hispanic Families with Young Children (337)
- Garden-based Education in School Settings (789)
- Grower Perspectives on Farm to School (376)
- HACCP Manager Self-Inspection Checklist (335)
- Healthy Eating Active Living Youth Nutrition and Physical Activity Survey (3178)
- Implementation of Food Safety Programs Based on HACCP Principles in School Nutrition Programs (434)
- Increasing Food Consumer Awareness at UVic (379)
- Kitchen/Food Service Observation Checklist (289)
- Michigan’s Safe Food Risk Assessment: For small, direct-market fruit and vegetable producers (226)
- Mid-Atlantic Consumer Purchasing Behavior and Knowledge of Locally Grown and Seasonal Produce (290)
- NFSMI Financial Management Info System (270)
Yakoki!

Contact Information:

John Hendrix
Director of Economic Development
Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians
Email: jhendrix@choctaw.org
Phone: 601.416.0378
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR QUESTIONS IN THE Q&A BOX
SPEAKER CONTACT

Joh Hendrix
Economic Development
Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians
jhendrix@choctaw.org
601.416.0378

Andrea Alma
USDA Food & Nutrition Service
Mountain Plains Regions
Andrea.Alma@usda.gov
303-844-4417
CONTACT AND SOCIAL MEDIA

First Nations Development Institute
2432 Main Street, 2nd Floor
Longmont, Colorado 80501
www.firstnations.org
Tel: 303.774.7836
Email: info@firstnations.org

The recorded webinar can be accessed on our website under the First Nations Knowledge Center at https://www.firstnations.org/fnk
NEXT WEBINAR SERIES

Exploring Strategies and Best Practices: Lessons from the Southwest

Wednesday, January 20th at 12:00 pm (MST)

Webinar Series Questions?
Contact: Leiloni Begaye at lbegaye@firstnations.org
Contact: Richard Elm-Hill at relmhill@firstnations.org
AHE’HEE
YAW^KO
THANK YOU!