Farm to School Evaluation Overview

- Definition: “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, 2018 Webinar

- A formal evaluation is required by the Federal legislation that authorized the Farm to School Program.

- However, you are able to design your own evaluation plan and approach.

Key Components

- Baseline Report: one time
  To record the beginning conditions for future comparison.

- Progress Report: semi-annual
  To track and report on your progress

- Final Report: one time
  To show your final impact

Types of Evaluation

- Process Evaluation
  Is the project being executed according to the plan?

- Outcome Evaluation
  Is the project achieving desired results such as behavior change, knowledge increase, skill development or other?

Benefits of a Good Evaluation

- Data helps you tell your story.
- Tracks your progress; are your strategies working?
- Accurate data helps inform and influence local policies.
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Potential Stakeholders of a Farm to School Program that could be part of your evaluation

- School Administrators
- Food Producers
- Community
- Parents
- Students
- Kitchen Staff

Potential Evaluators

In-house
- Staff or other program partners

Outsource
- Hire a consultant, professor, etc
- Involve Students

Common Methods Used to Evaluate

- Surveys
- Focus Groups
- Pre/post-test evaluations
- Tracking
- Observation

How could COVID-19 strengthen the Farm to School Program in your community?

- Would your community benefit by having more local food producers to increase your resilience?
- Would your community benefit by improving the status of your community health through improved diets and nutrition?