

APPENDIX C.8

REMINDER LETTER TO SCHOOL FOOD AUTHORITIES

SFA Director Name

Address Line 1

Address Line 2

Address Line 3

Dear [SFA Director Name]:

You have likely received several emails from us about the 2027 Farm to School Census, but in case you have not, we would like to ask you to **complete the Census as soon as possible** to make sure your SFA is represented.

The Census is set to close on [date]. If you have already completed the Census, thank you, and please ignore this letter. If you are not sure whether the Census has been completed for your SFA, please reach out to us for assistance toll-free at [study team phone] or [study team email].

The Census is a brief web survey that asks for information related to your SFA's participation in farm to school activities. The Census is for **all SFAs**, not just those that receive Farm to School grant funds or participate in Farm to School activities. In accordance with the National School Lunch Act, SFAs are required to participate in the Farm to School Census.

To complete the 2027 Census for your SFA, please visit this link [insert web survey link] or scan the QR code to the right with your smart phone camera and enter your unique PIN: [PIN]



You are encouraged to collaborate with other district staff, partners, or vendors to obtain the requested information. Please share this link with anyone who can respond to some or all of the questions.

all

Please find a list of frequently asked questions on the back side of this letter. If you have other questions or need additional information about the Census, please contact the project team toll-free at [study team phone number] from 9 AM to 9 PM ET, or e-mail [study team email].

Thank you for your participation in the 2027 Farm to School Census!

Sincerely,

[Project Director signature]

This information is being collected to assist the Food and Nutrition Service in understanding and tracking farm to school engagement. This is a mandatory collection and FNS will use the information to set priorities for USDA outreach and technical support. This collection does not request any personally identifiable information under the Privacy Act of 1974. According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0584-0646. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 0.0334 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Office of Policy Support, 1320 Braddock Place, 5th Floor, Alexandria, VA 22306 ATTN: PRA (0584-0646). Do not return the completed form to this address.

The schools in my district don't do any farm to school activities – do I still need to fill out the Census?

Yes! All public and private school food authorities (SFAs) that participate in the National School Lunch

Program (NSLP) in all 50 States, as well as Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, and Washington, D.C. should complete the 2027 Census. This effort will help us understand which SFAs and schools do or do not do farm to school activities and will help the USDA provide support for farm to school activities in the future.

FAQs



What if I don't know the answers to the Census questions?

You may need to consult with your farm to school partners, such as vendors, school garden coordinators, foodservice staff, or teachers. To help you gather the necessary information for the Census, we prepared an optional worksheet that is available on the Census webpage. It will walk you through the information that will be helpful to collect ahead of completing the Census.

You can directly share the Census survey with others using the unique survey link in this letter or emailed to the SFA director. Anyone can access the survey using this link, and when they exit the survey, their responses will automatically be saved.

We ask that you please try to answer as many questions as possible, but it's OK if you aren't able to answer them all or need to provide estimates for some.

I don't think I am the correct person to complete the Census. I don't know anything about Farm to school in my SFA.

If you don't know about farm to school in your SFA and don't know who else in your SFA should complete the survey, or if you are no longer associated with the SFA, please let the study team know by phone at [study team phone number] or by email at [study team email].

Do I need to complete all the Census questions at one time?

No, you do not need to complete the Census all at once. Your responses will be saved automatically upon closing out of the Census, and you can return to complete it later.

How long will it take me to complete the Census?

We anticipate that the Census will take at minimum 5 minutes and on average 30 minutes, including time to gather the requested information. The total time will depend on your level of participation in farm to school activities.

Where can I find the final Census Report and data?

When posted, the report and findings will be available on this site: <https://farmtoschoolcensus.fns.usda.gov>. Your personal data (e.g., name and contact information) will not be linked to your Census responses, but all the responses for your SFA will be made publicly available, as they were in the past.