

February 2025

SUPPORTING STATEMENT - PART A for

OMB Control Number 0584-0646:

2027 Farm to School Census

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A1. Circumstances that make the collection of information necessary.

Identify any legal or administrative requirements that necessitate the collection. Attach a copy of the appropriate section of each statute and regulation mandating or authorizing the collection of information.

The intended purpose of this information collection is to administer the 2027 Farm to School Census (Census), previously titled 2023 Farm to School Census. This information collection request is for a revision and extension for three years to the currently approved Farm to School Census and Comprehensive Review (OMB Number 0584-0646, expiration date 5/31/2025).

Section 18 of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (NSLA) authorized and funded the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to establish a farm to school program to assist eligible entities, through grants and technical assistance, in implementing farm to school programs that improve food and agriculture education as well as access to local foods in schools (Appendix A.1). This work is housed within the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Community Food Systems Division (CFSD). As part of the Farm to School Program's authorization, CFSD collects and disseminates information on farm to school activities throughout the country.

CFSD conducted a nationwide Farm to School Census in 2013 (OMB Control No. 0536-0069, led by the USDA Economic Research Service), 2015 (OMB Control No. 0584-0593), 2019 (OMB Control No. 0584-0646), and 2023 (OMB Control No. 0584-0646). The Census provides the only nationally representative data available on farm to school participation and activities in the United States. It also compiles detailed information about State- and school food authority (SFA)-level farm to school engagement. The 2027 Census will collect and synthesize data from a national census of SFAs to fulfill the following study objectives:

- 1) establish the scope of SFA participation in farm to school activities and the characteristics of participating SFAs;
- 2) describe details of SFA participation in certain farm to school activities (especially procurement of local foods);
- 3) assess sources of support for farm to school activities and identify areas for additional assistance; and
- 4) compare findings across different types of SFAs (i.e., based on characteristics such as size, urbanicity, and eligibility for free and reduced-price meals) and to findings from the 2023 and 2019 Census.

A2. Purpose and Use of the Information.

Indicate how, by whom, and for what purpose the information is to be used. Except for a new collection, indicate how the agency has actually used the information received from the current collection.

How the information is to be used

The results of this study will be used to assess farm to school program engagement and to set priorities for USDA outreach and technical support, as mandated by the NSLA. This fifth iteration of the Census will also allow FNS to make comparisons of farm to school activities and trends nationally across time. CFSD regional staff will share the data with State agencies to inform State and local priorities and activities.

CFSD has used Census data to direct training, technical assistance, and outreach efforts in the areas of local food procurement and school gardens. For example, CFSD has used Census data to enhance local procurement trainings to target underutilized products and vendors, incorporate garden-grown produce, and address barriers reported by SFAs. Additionally, CFSD has been able to identify low-performing states and provide direct customer service to those who were interested in expanding farm to school efforts.

Once the Census data have been analyzed, FNS will publish a report to share the findings. As with each previous iteration of the Census, CFSD will create a dedicated website with national-, State- and SFA-level Census results so that these can be disseminated to and used

by States, SFAs, and other stakeholders in the general public. (See the 2023 Farm to School Census findings at <https://farmentoschoolcensus.fns.usda.gov/>.)

From whom the information will be collected

Information will be collected from State, Local, and Tribal governments (directors of public SFAs participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and state Child Nutrition (CN) staff); businesses or other for-profit organizations (directors of private SFAs participating in the NSLP); and not for profit organizations (directors of not for profit SFAs participating in the NSLP). The Census will be distributed to all public and private SFAs (including residential child care institutions) participating in the NSLP in the 50 states, American Samoa, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Washington, D.C. State Child Nutrition staff will provide contact information for the SFAs in their respective state or territory.

How the information will be collected

Information will be collected using an online survey that will take 5 to 30 minutes to complete (Appendices B.1 and B.1a). (Note that we are including the full survey instrument in Word format in Appendix B.1 while B.1a includes screenshots of the anticipated style of the web survey, taken from the 2023 Census survey administration. We have not yet hired a contractor or programmed the 2027 Census survey instrument.) SFAs that do not participate in farm to school activities will receive only a few questions while SFAs that engage in farm to school will receive the full survey. Recruitment and follow-up to enhance response rates will use multiple methods (i.e., phone, mail, and email) (Appendices C.1-C.9).

The 2027 Census survey instrument is based on the previously cleared survey instrument used in 2023. The Census questionnaire asks all SFAs a limited set of questions about meal programs offered, their food service operations, and whether they have participated in or plan

to participate in any of 35 farm to school activities. An SFA that participated in any of the defined activities in school year (SY) 2026-27 will receive further questions about: the SFA's definition of "local," perceived benefits and challenges of farm to school activities, food purchases and costs, staffing and funding for farm to school activities, and policies related to farm to school. SFAs that did not participate in any of the defined activities will receive a limited set of questions about why the SFA does not participate in farm to school, and whether and when the SFA plans to conduct farm to school activities in the future.

State CN staff will be asked to provide contact information for the SFAs in their state or territory. Data collected for the contact list will include SFA contact name, title, telephone number, email address, and mailing address. For the contact list, State CN staff will be contacted via email and asked to provide data files via email.

This is a mandatory collection. Section 305 of the NSLA mandates programs under its authorization to cooperate with USDA program research and evaluation activities (Appendix A.2). The participants will be notified of this language requiring their cooperation in studies of CN programs. However, participation or non-participation in this information collection will not affect an SFA's eligibility for program benefits or other funding.

Frequency of data collection

The Census will be administered once in Spring 2027. Data collection will span approximately three months, from mid-April through mid-June. The contact list will be developed in winter 2027.

Information shared with any other organizations inside or outside USDA or the government

Results will be presented in aggregated form in a final report made available in the research section of the USDA Food and Nutrition Service web site

(<http://www.fns.usda.gov/ops/research-and-analysis>). Consistent with previous Census data, SFA, State and national data will also be made publicly available.

Changes in this revision

FNS is requesting a three-year extension to the approved collection through 05/31/2025 and an accompanying upward revision in burden hours and responses to support the 2027 administration of the Farm to School Census.

This revision makes changes to the information collection and burden table as originally approved through 5/31/2025. The major change is the request for an addition year of burden to accommodate administration of the 2027 Census.

Minimal changes have been made to the survey instrument. These changes are mostly for purposes of clarity and to respond to current research needs. They are based on revised research questions developed for this Census administration and feedback from the previous iteration of the study. Six questions have been removed; these were related to COVID-19 or collected detailed information about benefits and challenges experienced by SFAs, local spending, and sources of local purchases. Some survey language has been slightly reworded to match current USDA definitions. One new question and seven new response options were added to collect more detail about charter school representation (in response to GAO-25-106846 *School Meal Programs: Additional Data and Outreach Could Help Charter School Participation*), farm to school funding, cost-related challenges of farm to school, use of micropurchases, and use of farm to school materials. All changes have been designed to ensure comparability between the 2027 and 2023 Census.

For the Census collection, the type of information to be collected, the methods of collection, and the frequency of collection will largely remain the same. Minor updates to sample sizes reflect the most recent estimates of the number of SFAs in the United States.

To accommodate the 2027 Census, we are requesting an addition of 18,226 total burden hours and 268,003 responses.

A3. Use of information technology and burden reduction.

Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology, e.g., permitting electronic submission of responses, and the basis for the decision for adopting this means of collection. Also describe any consideration of using information technology to reduce burden.

FNS is committed to complying with the E-Government Act, 2002 to promote the use of technology. Online surveys enable efficient, secure survey participation and minimize burden. Surveys can be started and returned when convenient for the respondents, and embedded skip logic ensures respondents see only relevant questions. Also, programming checks improve data quality by validating responses and constraining response ranges. We will use a survey platform such as Qualtrics, and provide each participant with a customized URL to respond to the survey for their SFA, such as www.farmtoschoolcensussurvey.com/DCPublicSchools.

Using e-mail for outreach to participants also minimizes burden, given that it is easy to use and respondents can read and respond at a time convenient for them. Administering the survey online and communicating by email also lets us more easily target reminder emails to only those who have not yet completed the survey.

100% of survey responses will be collected electronically. All of the responses to the request to State CN staff for SFA contact information (56 responses) will be collected electronically.

Burden Reduction Efforts

We have made every effort to minimize burden on survey respondents. We have streamlined the survey as much as possible to only ask essential questions. As noted above,

six questions were removed from the 2023 survey instrument to reduce burden. We also use skip logic to ensure that respondents only see questions relevant to them and receive the minimum number of essential questions, based on their initial responses. The survey intentionally instructs respondents to estimate where appropriate and does not require them to keep or provide any records for the purposes of this data collection.

The survey platform, such as Qualtrics, will be mobile-friendly and designed using web survey best practices (see Appendix B.1a). Respondents will be able to enter and exit the survey as they choose, saving their answers if they need to return. There will be a navigation page to allow respondents to easily see which sections of the survey they have completed and navigate to those in progress.

The study team will offer technical support via email and phone, at least eight hours each workday, in order to make the survey experience smoother. SFAs will be notified in advance of the survey by State agency staff and provided with a list of frequently asked questions (Appendix B.2) and a worksheet (Appendix B.3) to help them prepare to complete the survey. Support will be available by telephone and email.

As noted below, we administer this survey every four years in order to minimize how often we ask for responses. However, it is the only data collection of its kind nationally and thus important for both the Government and external entities.

A4. Efforts to identify duplication.

Describe efforts to identify duplication. Show specifically why any similar information already available cannot be used or modified for use for the purposes described in Question 2.

Every effort has been made to avoid duplication. The data requirements for the study have been carefully reviewed, and no similar data collection is available. The information required for this study is not currently reported to FNS on a regular basis in a standardized

form, nor is the information available from any other previous or contemporary study. This study represents the only source of national data about farm to school activities in the United States.

A5. Impacts on small businesses or other small entities.

If the collection of information impacts small businesses or other small entities (Item 5 of OMB Form 83-I), describe any methods used to minimize burden.

FNS estimates approximately 13,066 respondents (approximately 70%) will be “small entities” as defined by OMB Form 83-I. Although there are small SFAs in this data collection effort, they deliver the same program benefits and perform the same function as any other SFA. Collecting the requested information will not have a significant economic impact on these small entities.

Information being requested has been held to the minimum required for the intended use.

We plan to minimize respondent burden by:

- streamlining the survey instrument short;
- allowing respondents to exit the survey while saving survey responses;
- providing advance notification of the survey and the information it will request of respondents;
- employing a user-friendly, mobile-friendly web interface;
- and providing technical support in various modalities (i.e., email and phone).

A6. Consequences of collecting the information less frequently.

Describe the consequence to Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted, or is conducted less frequently, as well as any technical or legal obstacles to reducing burden.

The data collection for the proposed study will be conducted one time only during Spring 2027, and these data are only collected every four years. These data are essential to track farm to school efforts nationwide. Without this information, FNS will not be able to fully assess

participation in farm to school activities and the associated challenges and benefits.

Specifically, in an effort to measure progress towards increasing the availability of local foods in schools, CFSD conducted a nationwide Farm to School Census in 2013, 2015, 2019, and 2023. The 2027 Census instrument is based on these previous iterations of the Census, allowing the study team to look at trends over time and consider longer-term implications of the findings. Data collected from the 2027 Census will provide needed information on farm to school programming (e.g., gardens, nutrition and agriculture education) and local foods purchases (e.g., sourcing, spending, variety of items) and will help FNS to address challenges with the program and inform FNS farm to school technical assistance activities provided to states.

A7. Special circumstances relating to the Guidelines of 5 CFR 1320.5.

Explain any special circumstances that would cause an information collection to be conducted in a manner:

- **Requiring respondents to report information to the agency more often than quarterly;**
- **Requiring respondents to prepare a written response to a collection of information in fewer than 30 days after receipt of it;**
- **Requiring respondents to submit more than an original and two copies of any document;**
- **Requiring respondents to retain records, other than health, medical, government contract, grant-in-aid, or tax records for more than three years;**
- **In connection with a statistical survey, that is not designed to produce valid and reliable results that can be generalized to the universe of study;**
- **Requiring the use of a statistical data classification that has not been reviewed and approved by OMB;**
- **That includes a pledge of confidentiality that is not supported by authority established in statute or regulation, that is not supported by disclosure and data security policies that are consistent with the pledge, or which unnecessarily impedes sharing of data with other agencies for compatible confidential use; or**
- **Requiring respondents to submit proprietary trade secret, or other confidential information unless the agency can demonstrate that it has instituted procedures to protect the information's confidentiality to the extent permitted by law.**

There are no special circumstances. The collection of information is conducted in a manner consistent with the guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.5.

Collection of Race/Ethnicity Data

This collection of information does not include any data related to race or ethnicity.

A8. Comments to the Federal Register Notice and efforts for consultation.

If applicable, provide a copy and identify the date and page number of publication in the Federal Register of the agency's notice, required by 5 CFR 1320.8 (d), soliciting comments on the information collection prior to submission to OMB. Summarize public comments received in response to that notice and describe actions taken by the agency in response to these comments. Specifically address comments received on cost and hour burden.

Describe efforts to consult with persons outside the agency to obtain their views on the availability of data, frequency of collection, the clarity of instructions and recordkeeping, disclosure, or reporting format (if any), and on the data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported.

Consultation with representatives of those from whom information is to be obtained or those who must compile records should occur at least once every 3 years even if the collection of information activity is the same as in prior years. There may be circumstances that may preclude consultation in a specific situation. These circumstances should be explained.

The 60-day Federal Register Notice was published in the *Federal Register* on July 16, 2024, Volume 89, Number 130, pages 57845-57850. The public comment period ended on September 16, 2024, and FNS received no comments.

The 30-day Federal Register Notice was published in the *Federal Register* on March 26, 2025, Volume 90, Number 57, page 13727. The public comment period ended on April 25, 2025 and FNS received 48 comments. FNS determined that seven comments were not germane to the information collection as it did not relate to the necessity or the practical utility of the information collection nor did it address burden for completing the collection, the frequency of the collection, or the method of the collection. Almost all of the comments highlighted that the burden on SFAs is worth the effort, given the importance of the Census as the only national data source on farm to school programming and the utility of the Census to farm to school practioners; farmers and other food producers; policymakers; advocates;

researchers; and state and local governments. They mentioned the role of the Census in identifying farm to school successes and impact, determining training and technical assistance needs, and supporting policymaking and advocacy. Relevant suggestions are summarized below:

- FNS should streamline data collection to minimize burden on SFAs.

As noted above, FNS has made every effort to minimize burden on survey respondents.

See Section A.3 for more details.

- FNS should give SFAs advance notice of data collection.

FNS will provide a copy of the survey instrument and worksheet by summer 2026, so that school food authorities have ample time to collect data that will be requested on the 2027 Farm to School Census.

- Respondents should be made aware of the relevance of the survey and how the data collection will benefit them.

Communications to respondents will highlight why it is important for them to complete the survey.

Efforts to consult with persons outside the agency

FNS is in regular conversation with external partners who respond to the survey or work with those who do as well as entities that use the data collected (see Table A.1 for those able to approve their inclusion in this request). A major change made to this iteration of the survey administration was to move the timing of data collection from the fall to the spring, to collect data about the school year as it ended instead of at the beginning of the next year. FNS had heard from several school-based respondents and State agency staff that the school-based respondents tend to be more busy during in the fall and felt less certain of their ability to

provide high-quality information about the previous school year. (Note that one State agency that gave extensive feedback on the project design did not want to be named in this request.)

FNS consulted with Jeffrey Hunt from National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) on the study design and methodology. NASS comments and the response to NASS comments appear in Appendix F.

FNS will also conduct a pretest with no more than 9 SFA directors in Fall 2026. We will ask specifically about the overall burden and the revised survey content. The pretest will focus on new or changed content and is expected to result in only minor changes to survey question wording and response options. A non-substantive change request memorandum will be submitted to OMB if more significant changes are required. We will update the survey instrument (Appendix B.1) as well as associated materials (i.e., the worksheet (Appendix B.3)) according to their feedback.

Table A.1 Individuals Consulted With

Name	Title	Affiliation	Year of Consultation
Dana M.	VP of Data, Evaluation, and Systems	FoodCorps	2025
Ashley S.	Agricultural Economist	USDA Economic Research Service	2024-2025
Jeffrey H.	Mathematical Statistician	USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service	2025

A9. Explain any decisions to provide any payment or gift to respondents.

Explain any decision to provide any payment or gift to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.

Respondents will not receive any incentive payments or gifts.

A10. Assurances of confidentiality provided to respondents.

Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for the

assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy.

FNS published a system of record notice (SORN) titled FNS-8 USDA/FNS Studies and Reports in the *Federal Register* on April 25, 1991, volume 56, pages 19078-19080, that discusses the terms of protections that will be provided to respondents. FNS and the contractors will comply with the requirements of the Privacy Act of 1974. No confidential information is associated with this collection of information, and no such assurances of confidentiality are provided. The contractor hired to administer the survey will handle IRB clearance.

No personally identifiable information (PII) is requested directly from survey respondents. All personal contact information gathered from State CN staff will be for research purposes only and kept private to the full extent allowed by law. When invited to participate in a survey, respondents will be assured that their personal information (i.e., name, phone number, and email) will remain private. Responses will be grouped with those of other study participants, and no individual respondents will be identified in any study report. Being part of this study will not affect any USDA benefits received by the participating programs. Consent language will be included in the introduction to the Census instrument.

Only those designated on the contractor study team as well as FNS research staff will have access to files containing respondent contact information. The Census will use a secure software administration platform to collect survey responses. HTTPS will be enforced for transmission of all credentials as well as for all connections for the study team associates at the user level. The SQL server databases that store respondent and response data will only be accessed by named users. All electronic data will be transferred using a secure portal website and will be stored on secure drives with access restricted to staff associated with the project.

The study team will prepare a restricted-use version of the data for internal FNS use and a public-use version for the broader research community. The public use files will remove (or mask, when removal is not possible) all personally identifiable information and be ready for copying and dissemination to the public.

The Census instrument does not require a Privacy Act Statement. Deea Coleman, USDA FNS Privacy Officer, reviewed this submission and indicated on February 4, 2025 that there were no privacy-related concerns.

A11. Justification for any questions of a sensitive nature.

Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior or attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private. This justification should include the reasons why the agency considers the questions necessary, the specific uses to be made of the information, the explanation to be given to persons from whom the information is requested, and any steps to be taken to obtain their consent.

This information collection does not include any questions of a sensitive nature. Deea Coleman, USDA FNS Privacy Officer, reviewed this submission and indicated on February 4, 2025 that there were no privacy-related concerns.

A12. Estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information.

Provide estimates of the hour burden of the collection of information. Indicate the number of respondents, frequency of response, annual hour burden, and an explanation of how the burden was estimated.

A. Indicate the number of respondents, frequency of response, annual hour burden, and an explanation of how the burden was estimated. If this request for approval covers more than one form, provide separate hour burden estimates for each form and aggregate the hour burdens in Item 13 of OMB Form 83-I.

This is a revision and extension of a currently approved collection. With this submission, there are 18,665 respondents (12,527 responsive and 6,138 non-responsive), 268,003 responses (97,467 responsive and 170,536 non-responsive), and approximately 18,226 burden hours (14,607 responsive and 3,619 non-responsive). The average number of

responses per respondent is 14.36. The Estimated Annualized Burden (Appendix G) shows the estimates of the annual respondent burden for the proposed data collection, including the number of annual respondents, frequency of response, average time to respond, and annual hour burden. These estimates reflect administrative data, findings from the 2023 Census and experience administering the 2023 Census.

B. Provide estimates of annualized cost to respondents for the hour burdens for collections of information, identifying and using appropriate wage rate categories.

Table A.2 provides estimates of the annual costs to each of type of respondent. The total costs are \$618,815.67, and the fully loaded amount is \$823,024.84.

Table A.2 Annualized Cost to Respondents

Respondent Type	Total Annual Burden Hours	Hourly Wage	Respondent Cost
State government	88	\$46.94	\$4,118.55
Local government	15,222	\$33.30	\$506,892.60*
Business	1,944	\$36.97	\$71,869.68*
Not for Profit	972	\$36.97	\$35,934.84*
Total	18,326		\$618,815.67*

*Slight differences from cost estimates presented in Appendix G are due to rounding.

The estimate of annualized cost to State and local government agencies is based on the burden estimates and mean hourly wage data for the NAICS Code 999200 State Government, Occupational Group 11-9000 (Other Management Positions) for CN directors and Occupational Group 11-9051 (Food Service Managers) for SFA directors. The hourly mean wage for 11-9000 is \$46.94 per staff hour, and the hourly mean wage 11-9051 is \$33.30 per staff hour (U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, May 2023 National Industry-Specific Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates: NAICS 999200 – State Government, excluding schools and hospitals, https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/naics4_999200.htm).

The estimate of annualized cost to businesses and not for profits is based on the burden estimates and mean hourly wage data for the NAICS Code 722300 Special Food Services, Occupational Group 11-9051 (Food Service Managers). The hourly mean wage is \$36.97 per staff hour (U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, May 2023 National Industry-Specific Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates: NAICS 722300 - Special Food Services, https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/naics4_722300.htm#11-0000).

Including an additional \$204,209.17 to account for a fully loaded wage rate (\$618,815.67.x 0.33), the estimated annualized total cost to respondents associated with this collection is \$823,024.84.¹

A13. Estimates of other total annual cost burden.

Provide estimates of the total annual cost burden to respondents or recordkeepers resulting from the collection of information, (do not include the cost of any hour burden shown in questions 12 and 14). The cost estimates should be split into two components: (a) a total capital and start-up cost component annualized over its expected useful life; and (b) a total operation and maintenance and purchase of services component.

There are no capital/start-up or ongoing operation/maintenance costs associated with this information collection.

A14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal government.

Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal government. Provide a description of the method used to estimate cost and any other expense that would not have been incurred without this collection of information.

We estimate that Federal employees at the GS-13 level will spend on average approximately 300 hours per year overseeing the surveys and that Federal employees at the GS-14 level will spend approximately 20 hours per year overseeing the surveys. Most of these hours will be spent by employees in the National Office, with some spent by staff in Regional Offices. Using the Washington, DC-area 2024 wage rates of \$56.52 per hour for a GS-13,

¹ Slight differences from cost estimates presented in Appendix G are due to rounding.

Step 1 employee and \$73.47 per hour for a GS-14, Step 4 employee (Office of Personnel Management, Salary table 2024-DCB, https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/salaries-wages/salary-tables/pdf/2024/DCB_h.pdf), we estimate \$18,425.40 (\$16,956.00 for the GS-13 employees and \$1,469.40 for the GS-14 employees) in wages. Adding in \$6,080.38 to account for fully loaded wages (\$18,425.40 x 0.33), total Federal employee costs per year are estimated at \$25,505.78.

A15. Explanation of program changes or adjustments.

Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments reported in Items 13 or 14 of the OMB Form 83-I.

This is a request for a revision and extension of the currently approved collection for OMB Number 0584-0646, 2023 Farm to School Census. This information collection is currently approved with 18,690 burden hours and 272,016 responses, which was used for the 2023 Census. To accommodate administration of the 2027 Census, we are requesting 18,226 total burden hours and 268,003 responses. This represents 464 fewer burden hours and 4,013 fewer responses than the previously approved request. This reduction is due to adjustments to the anticipated respondent sample sizes reflecting fewer SFAs operating the NSLP, based on FNS certification data.

A16. Plans for tabulation, and publication and project time schedule.

For collections of information whose results are planned to be published, outline plans for tabulation and publication.

All contact information will be compiled in aggregated form in electronic spreadsheets. This information may be shared with relevant FNS employees and contractors who are involved in other studies involving the same respondents to reduce the burden of duplicate information collections. This information will not be shared with the general public.

Data file preparations and analysis of the data will begin immediately after the data collection period (Summer 2027). The study team will use standard quantitative methods to analyze data from the Census survey. Analyses will be conducted using a statistical software package, such as SAS or Stata. Principal analysis methods will be descriptive, including simple tabulations, as well as cross-tabulations by subgroup where appropriate. For relevant questions, we will perform basic statistical hypothesis testing (e.g., testing for differences across subgroups of SFAs). If the national response rate is less than 80%, a non-response bias analysis will be conducted and appropriate weights added to the data.

The contractor administering the survey will formally present study findings to FNS at an internal briefing. Following this briefing, the contractor will submit a final report to FNS, which will then be prepared for publication and public dissemination. Results for each respondent SFA as well as tabulations and estimations for national and state-level statistics will be made available on a custom-built website. (See the 2023 Farm to School Census findings at <https://farmtoschoolcensus.fns.usda.gov/>.) FNS will also prepare materials (e.g., template presentations) for use in sharing Census results with regional and State offices.

A17. Displaying the OMB Approval Expiration Date.

If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons that display would be inappropriate.

The agency plans to display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection on all instruments.

A18. Exceptions to the certification statement identified in Item 19.

Explain each exception to the certification statement identified in Item 19 of the OMB 83-I" Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act."

The agency is able to certify compliance with all provisions under Item 19 of OMB Form 83-I.

