



# Evaluation for Transformation: Sectoral Brief

## Public Health

### Public Health and Farm to School

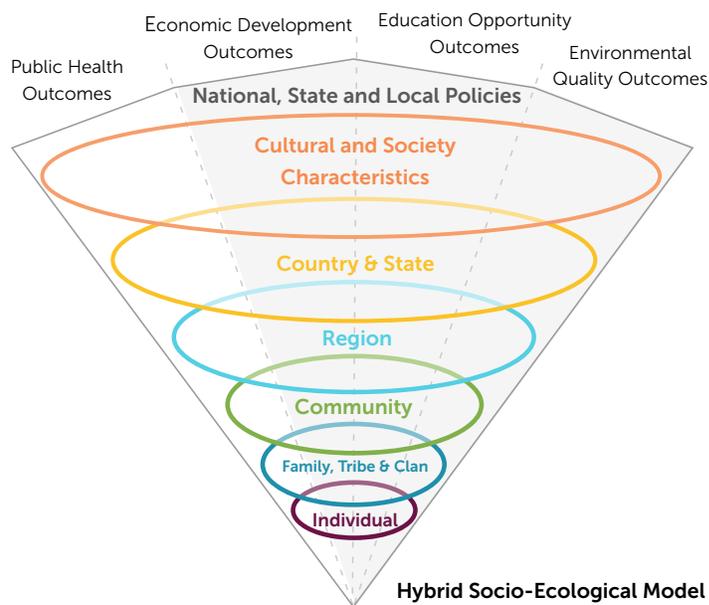
This sectoral brief accompanies *Evaluation for Transformation: A Cross Sectoral Evaluation Framework for Farm to School*, focusing on the public health linkages with farm to school / farm to preschool. Farm to school activities provide all children in schools and preschools and their families equitable access to healthy, local food and food education that empowers them to maintain and improve their health and well-being. Farm to school activities can influence the following public health outcomes:

- Increase access to healthy and local foods in schools. School meals are a critical point of access to healthy food for most children in the United States.
- Promote health and wellness through skill building related to handling and using local food.
- Support children’s development of healthy eating habits, such as preferences for and consumption of fruits and vegetables.
- Bolster a school nutrition program’s efforts to address child and family food insecurity by increasing interest in school meal programs and encouraging families to grow, safely prepare and cook healthy foods.

### CORE ELEMENTS OF FARM to SCHOOL



The core elements of farm to school and farm to preschool include: procurement of local and regional food products, gardening and education (food and farm related).



Farm to school activities can support public health outcomes at multiple levels of the socio-ecological model.

- **National, State and Local Policies:** Legislation supports farm to school, such as state policies that encourage gardening in schools.
- **Cultural and Society Characteristics:** Preference for local and healthy foods becomes the social norm.
- **Region, Country and State:** Land-use laws support development of gardens and agriculture to produce foods for communities.
- **Community:** Families visit local farmers’ markets and connect with farmers that produce the foods their children consume in school and purchase products for home use.
- **Family, Tribe and Clan:** Children bring home samples and recipes of local, seasonally available foods served in schools to try at home.
- **Individual:** Children are aware of and have positive attitudes toward healthy, local fruits and vegetables in their school lunches and demonstrate new eating behaviors.

## What the Evaluation Framework Offers

The evaluation framework is intended to be a resource for farm to school planning, evaluation, research, reporting. The framework categorizes priority outcomes for public health by program, research and policy levels. Example priority outcomes, indicators and measures for each level are provided (refer to document for full listing).

The evaluation framework also provides:

- Common language on farm to school core and supplemental elements, touch points and actors.
- A comprehensive literature review of farm to school and farm to preschool outcomes in four sectors (public health, community economic development, education and environmental quality).
- Guidance on program articulation and tools to track implementation.
- Lists of implementation and evaluation tools.



**Evaluation for Transformation: A Cross Sectoral Evaluation Framework for Farm to School** was developed as a collaborative project led by the National Farm to School Network, funded in part by the Aetna Foundation.

To download the evaluation framework or to provide feedback, visit [www.farmtoschool.org/resources-main/evaluation-framework](http://www.farmtoschool.org/resources-main/evaluation-framework)

The **National Farm to School Network** is an information, advocacy and networking hub for communities working to bring local food sourcing and food and agriculture education into schools and preschools.



<p><b>Program Outcome 1: Students and their families access locally produced, healthy food through schools</b></p> <p><b>Indicator 1: Student access to local, healthy foods in schools</b></p> <p>Measure 1.1: Number of students participating in, or exposed to, farm to school activities such as school gardening, cooking, nutrition and food-based lessons.</p> <p>Measure 1.2: Food preparation strategies used to increase local food availability, accessibility or appeal of local, healthy foods, including use of culturally appropriate foods in schools.</p> <p>Measure 1.3: Food-serving strategies used to increase time or sight, accessibility and appeal of healthy, local foods.</p> <p>Measure 1.4: The number of ways procuring local foods at the school.</p>	<p><b>Research Outcome 1: Family access to local, healthy foods in the community</b></p> <p><b>Indicator: Farm to school activities increase awareness of local food availability in the community.</b></p> <p>Measure 1.1: Number of people who received local, healthy food through participation in farm to school program activities, for example, garden harvest baskets.</p> <p>Measure 1.2: Number of people who receive resources about accessing local, healthy foods in farm to school family outreach events.</p> <p>Measure 1.3: Number of families that begin gardening at home or in a community garden after participation in farm to school activities for farmers' markets, farm stands or</p>
<p><b>Policy Outcome 1: Students and their families access locally produced, healthy food through schools</b></p> <p><b>Indicator 1: School district and school policy environment supports student access to local, healthy foods in school meals</b></p> <p>Measure 1.1: Increase in number of local school district wellness policies that include language on farm to school activities as part of addressing nutrition and wellness efforts.</p> <p>Measure 1.2: Increase in the number of school-level wellness policies that include language on farm to school activities as part of addressing nutrition and wellness efforts.</p> <p>Measure 1.3: Increase in number of schools with policies that schedule recess before school lunch.</p> <p>Measure 1.4: Increase in number of schools with policies that support adequate time for student meals.</p>	

### Program outcome example

- Outcome: Students and their families access locally produced, healthy food through schools.
- Indicator: Student access to local healthy foods in schools.
- Measure: Number of students participating in, or exposed to, farm to school activities such as school gardening, cooking, nutrition and food-based lessons.

### Research outcome example

- Outcome: Family access to local, healthy foods in the community.
- Indicator: Farm to school activities increase awareness of local food availability in the community.
- Measure: Number of people who received local, healthy food through participation in farm to school program activities; for example, garden harvest baskets.

### Policy outcome example

- Outcome: Students and their families access locally produced, healthy food through schools.
- Indicator: School district and school policy environment supports student access to local, healthy foods in school meals.
- Measure: Increase in number of local school district wellness policies that include language on farm to school activities as part of addressing nutrition and wellness efforts.