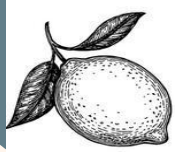




ASPHN FARM TO ECE WEBINARS



**State or Regional Landscape Assessments
- Understanding the Farm to ECE
Environment in your State or Region**

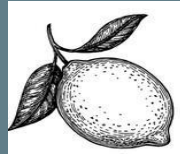
**Part I in the Farm to ECE Evaluation
Webinar Series**

February 10, 2026

Emia Oppenheim, ASPHN Consultant



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



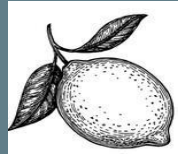
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

The Farm to ECE miniseries is supported by the Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity (DNPAO) in the National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (NCCDPHP) at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), HHS.

The presentation contents and remarks shared today are those of the speakers and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by CDC/HHS, or the U.S. Government.



TODAY'S SPEAKERS



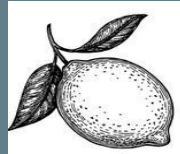
**Meagan Shedd, PhD, Director of
Evaluation, Food Insight Group**

**Sarah Blau, MPH, Public Health
Promotion Specialist and State Nutrition
Coordinator, Rhode Island's Department
of Health**

**Norah Shields-Cutler, MSW, MPH,
Community Food Systems team, Institute
for Agriculture and Trade Policy**



AGENDA



Understanding Landscape Assessments

Determining What to Include and How to Structure Your Assessment

Data Applications

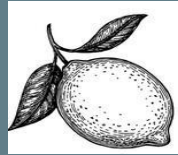
PANEL: National and State Experts

How to Learn More

Q & A



CONTEXT



Farm to ECE Considerations:

- Recognize their time - provide funds, GCs, resources, PD, trainings, etc.
- Trust - take time, be transparent, or trusted common partners
- Limit time - ask about time, make it short, be aware of season/timing
- Engagement - Why it matters, share results, and ask for feedback.



Landscape Assessment

Mapping the Path for Farm to ECE

Meagan K. Shedd, PhD

Director of Evaluation

Food Insight Group



Mapping out our time

Creating a shared definition of Landscape Assessment

Value of Landscape Assessment

Thinking through strategies for implementation of Landscape Assessment

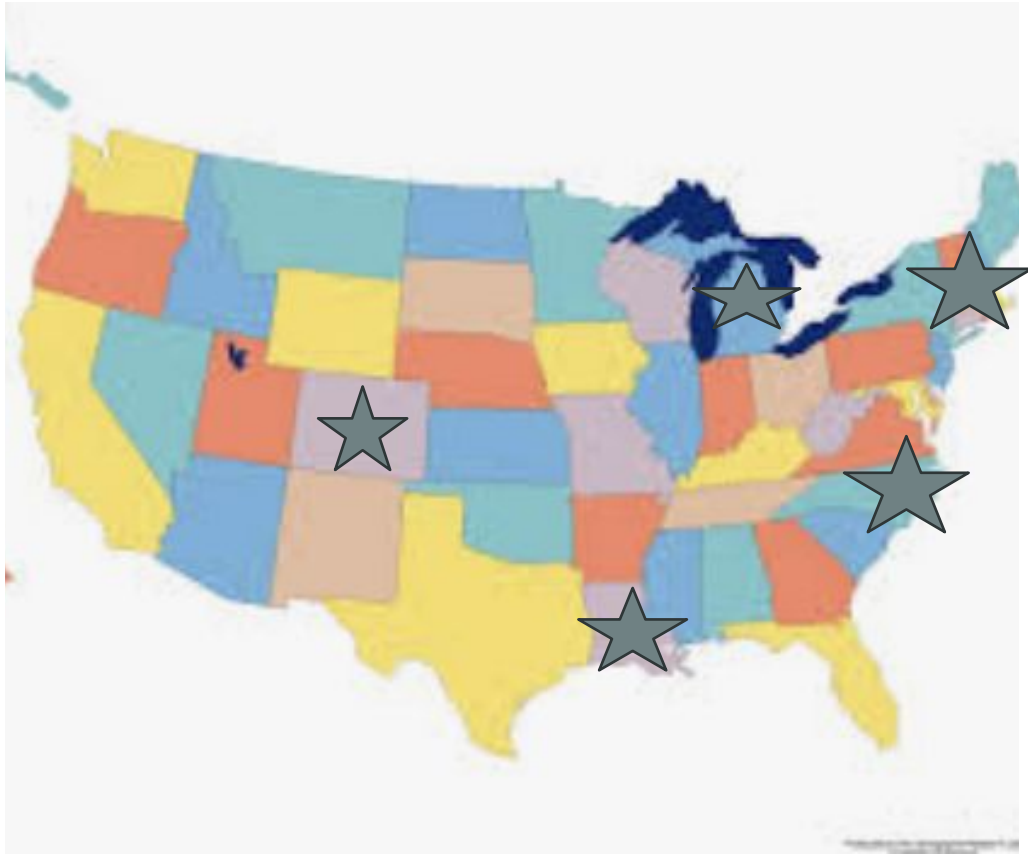
Process and development

Using information to inform action

Landscape Assessment Case Study: 2021 National Farm to ECE Provider Survey

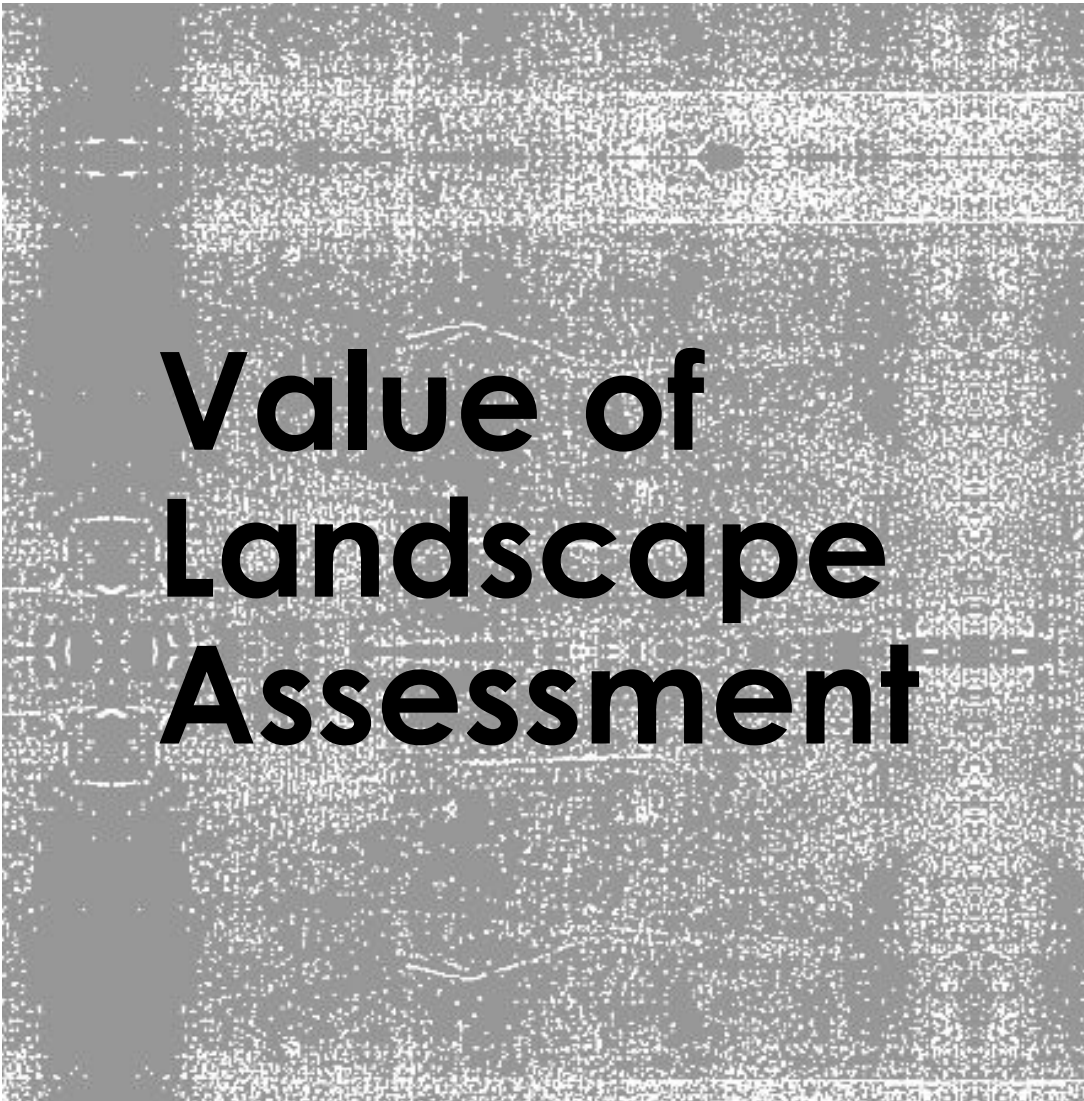


Defining Landscape Assessment



- A structured process for gathering and analyzing the social, economic, and practical realities of a community or sector.
- Goal is to move beyond "hypotheses" and understand actual needs, assets, and gaps.





Value of Landscape Assessment

- Identifies assets and gaps
- Enables tailoring of program implementation and/or resource allocation according to geography, demographics, or other identified factors
- Builds and strengthens networks
- Informs policy and helps secure grants



Strategy for Landscape Assessment

What do you want to know?

Focus on justifying educator time.

- Example: "Are educators actually interested in gardening, or is the barrier purely financial?"



Strategy for Landscape Assessment

Why do you want it?

- Will the answer change your strategy?
- If you find out 80% of sites lack outdoor space, you pivot from "outdoor gardens" to "indoor classroom container gardens."



Who will you ask?

- Don't just ask directors
- Ask the educators "in the weeds" and the families who may be receiving food or participating in education.



**Strategy for
Landscape
Assessment**



Strategy for Landscape Assessment

- How will you ask?
- Determine who is best positioned to send an email with a survey link or conduct interviews to gather information.
- Is there an option to preview questions?
- Think about incentives and any identifying information you are requesting for a participant to receive an incentive.



Process and Development



Desk Review

Quantitative (The "What")

Qualitative (The "Why")

Mapping

Preview the Assessment

Turning Information into Action



FOR DECISION MAKERS/FUNDERS: USE HIGH-LEVEL INFOGRAPHICS AND "THE BIG GAP" (E.G., "WE HAVE THE WILL, BUT LACK THE \$500 PER SITE FOR SEEDS").



FOR EDUCATORS: PROVIDE A "STATE OF THE SECTOR" REPORT THAT VALIDATES THEIR CHALLENGES AND SHOWS THEY AREN'T ALONE.

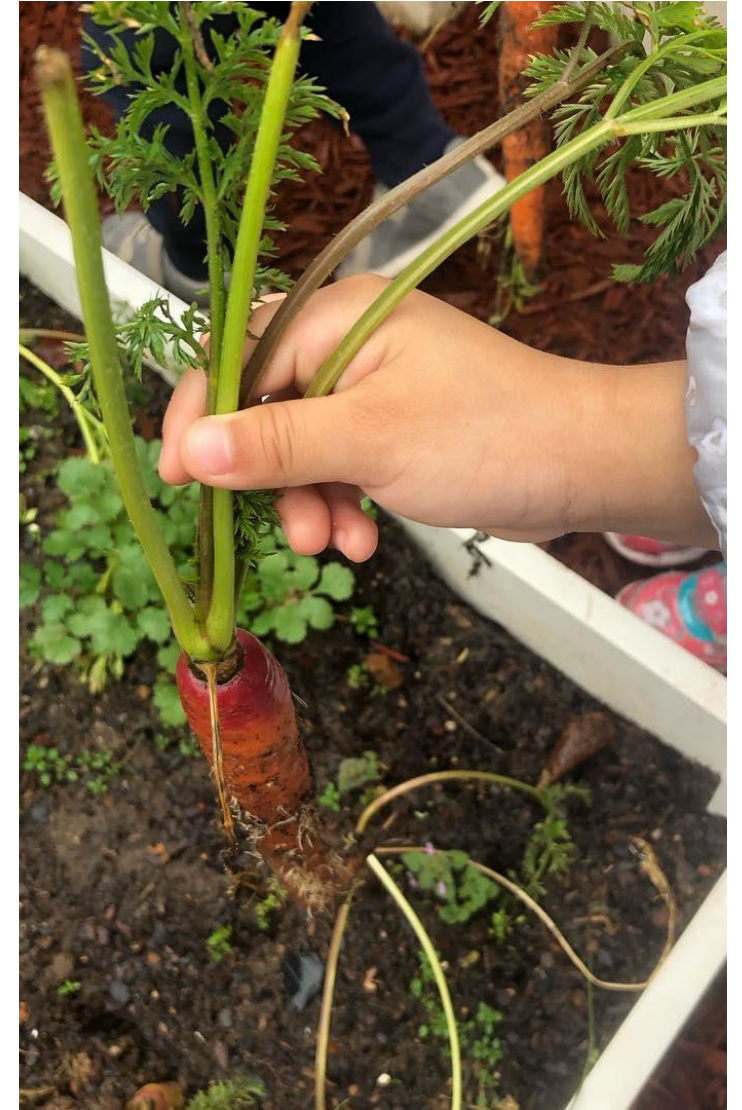


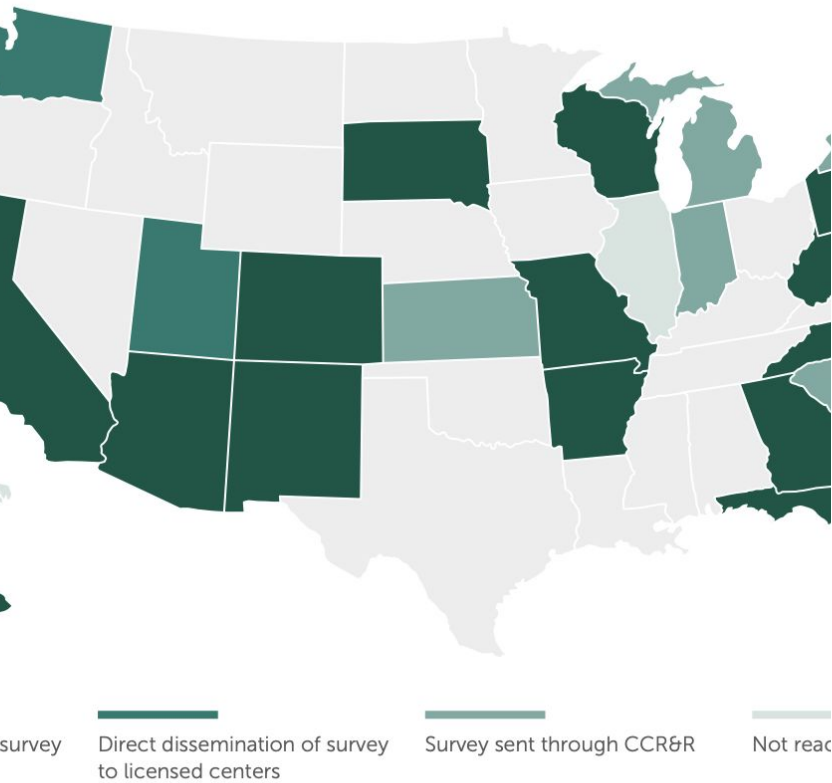
FOR POLICY MAKERS: USE THE DATA TO JUSTIFY LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES (E.G., INTEGRATING FARM TO ECE INTO STATE LICENSING).



Case Study: 2021 National Farm to ECE Provider Survey

- The "Who": 2,914 programs across 28 states.
- Key Findings (Examples): * The Win: 81% of sites participated in some form of Farm to ECE.
 - The Barrier: Funding for supplies was the #1 barrier to both starting (71%) and continuing (59%) programs.
- The Impact: This data shifted the national conversation toward "sustainable funding" rather than just "more training."





2021 NATIONAL FARM TO EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION SURVEY

Farm to Early Care and Education Continues to Foster Bright Futures for Children and Communities

BACKGROUND AND METHODS | AUGUST 2022

By National Farm to School Network and Michigan State University Center for Regional Food Systems

Early care and education (ECE) promotes child and well-being and increases access to healthy foods through a collection of strategies that include experiential learning and family and community engagement. Farm to ECE brings three elements — gardening, food and agriculture education, and local food purchasing — into every ECE setting. This includes family child care centers, child care centers, Head Start, and public schools in K-12 districts.

The National Farm to School Network (NFSN) with Michigan State University Center for Regional Food Systems (CRFS) to launch a

- **Implementation of activities**, including the where and what of activities;
- **Motivations** for implementing farm to ECE activities;
- **Existing barriers** to implementation of farm to ECE activities; and
- **Program and Policy** supports needed for growth of farm to ECE.

In the context of the pandemic, COVID-19 specific questions were added to this survey iteration to gain a better understanding of its effect on farm to ECE.



Digging Deeper



Inclusion Criteria

```
graph TD; A[State-Level Capacity: States were selected based on a balance of ECE infrastructure.] --> B[Sociodemographic Factors: Researchers sought to "balance" states based on sociodemographic factors]; B --> C[Diversity of Setting: Inclusion required a mix of Head Start, home-based providers, and center-based programs to ensure the "landscape" wasn't biased toward one model.]; C --> D[Geographic Representation: The selection aimed to include states from each of the USDA FNS regions (4 from each).];
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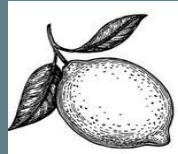
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Geographic Representation: The selection aimed to include states from each of the USDA FNS regions (4 from each).



PANEL TIME



**Sarah Blau, MPH, Public Health
Promotion Specialist and State Nutrition
Coordinator, Rhode Island's Department
of Health**

**Norah Shields-Cutler, MSW, MPH,
Community Food Systems team, Institute
for Agriculture and Trade Policy**

**Meagan Shedd, PhD, Director of
Evaluation, Food Insight Group**



UPCOMING FARM TO ECE EVENTS & OPPORTUNITIES



MARCH 26, 2026, 2-3:00PM ET

**ASPHN & CEFS FARM TO ECE -GETTING LOCAL FOOD TO
LITTLE EATERS IN FAMILY CHILD CARE**



APRIL 30, 2026, 2-3:00PM ET

**ASPHN'S FARM TO ECE EVALUATION WEBINAR SERIES -
PART II - ANALYZING IMPACT**



FARM TO ECE NEWSLETTER

**Stay on top of funding, resource and webinar
opportunities monthly!**



FARM TO ECE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

For support with coalitions, evaluation, or implementation,
reach out for CDC-funded TA -Emia@asphn.org

