

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**Please Contact: Jaime Horn****Jaime.Horn@gmail.com; 917-523-0705****Making the Kid's Table a National Priority***Case Studies Link Success for Local Farmers and Children to Investment in Early Education and Good Food*

St. Paul, Minnesota-pfc Social Impact Advisors, a nonprofit research and education firm, in partnership with the National Farm to School Network and the BUILD Initiative, released today *Six Recipes for a Better World*, a series of case studies that illustrate best practices by early childhood education providers to improve access to healthy foods for children living in poverty.

The research, part of the Good Food, Great Kids project supported by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, examines six innovative farm to early childhood education (ECE) programs impacting nearly 6,000 children and generating new revenue for local/regional farmers in Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN; Philadelphia, PA; Brooklyn, NY; Decorah, IA; Kansas City, MO and Washington, D.C.

"In the U.S. there are more than 13 million low-income children who are hungry and one in five children age two to five is obese. These are also children who often underperform in school. Research shows that making investments in early childhood education and food makes a long-term impact in the lives of all children," said Gayle Peterson, pfc Senior Managing Director. "Farmers are suffering economically and farm to school programs are an important source of income. An estimated \$700M has been generated for local economies in recent years. Connecting kids, educators and farmers with public programs helps everyone thrive."

The studies identify ways Headstart programs work with local farmers and food service providers, parents, and community members to promote childhood health and wellness, enhance the quality of educational experiences, and increase family engagement. In 2015, Headstart served nearly one million children in urban, suburban, and rural communities nationwide.

pfc's findings build on a growing body of U.S. and global research linking investments made in ECE and healthy food ensure long-term success in school and life. Research shows that the estimate rate of return on investing in ECE is 7-10 percent resulting in better outcomes for children in education, health, and economic productivity.

Key findings:

- The average yearly cost of full-time childcare for one child ranges from \$10,000 to \$16,000, which is unaffordable to low-income families. Early Headstart is critical for early child development.
- Linking healthy food and high quality early education matters. Forging partnerships is challenging but improves health and well-being of children and families and boosts local economies.
- Children exposed to healthy foods early in life develop and maintain their preferences for nutritious food. Across the sites, children began to ask for their school meals at home.

"Farm to early care and education is a common sense approach to supporting the health and wellbeing of our nation's youngest children," said Anupama Joshi, National Farm to School Network Executive Director and Co-Founder. "As these case studies demonstrate, farm to ECE

activities help expand healthy food access for vulnerable children, provide new and reliable market opportunities for local food producers, empower families to bring healthy habits home, and support vibrant and engaged communities. Sharing the stories and best practices of innovative farm to ECE programs like these will help continue to propel the growth of this movement, and ensure that all of our nation's children have access to a bright and healthy future."

In addition to the cases, pfc's is also releasing, *Policy Lessons and Levers for Promoting Early Childcare & Education*, a report to illustrate ways policy can overcome challenges faced by programs implementing ECE initiatives.

About pfc Social Impact Advisors and Good Food, Great Kids Partners

pfc is a mission-driven organization providing research and education, strategic learning and evaluation, and leadership development to foundations, corporations, impact investors, and governments.

About the W.K. Kellogg Foundation

The W.K. Kellogg Foundation (WKKF), is one of largest philanthropic foundations in the United States. Guided by the belief that all children should have an equal opportunity to thrive, WKKF works with communities to create conditions for vulnerable children so they can realize their full potential in school, work and life. Based in Battle Creek, Michigan, WKKF works in the US, internationally, and with sovereign tribes. Emphasis is paid to priority places—Michigan, Mississippi, New Mexico, and New Orleans—where there are high concentrations of poverty and where children face significant barriers to success.