

SELLING TO SCHOOLS Q & A FOR FARMERS



Nebraska schools serve meals to over 230,000 students per day. Incorporating local foods into Child Nutrition Programs enriches the connection communities have to fresh and healthy local foods, and provides a stable and diversified market for producers and sources of local food.

WHAT ARE LOCAL FOODS?

Local foods can be from any food group (meats, eggs, grains, fruits, vegetables or dairy). Each school district sets its own definition for “locally grown or raised”. Examples: from within the county; a certain mile radius from the school; within the state; or within an hour drive from the school. The definition can range between products or even change with the season.

CAN LOCAL MEATS BE SERVED IN CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS?

Yes. Livestock and poultry must be processed under federal inspection. Additional guidance can be found at: www.education.ne.gov/ns/farm-to-school/resources

CAN FRESH CHICKEN EGGS BE USED IN CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS?

Yes. Eggs must meet requirements set by the Nebraska Department of Agriculture, more information is here: www.education.ne.gov/ns/farm-to-school/resources

CAN LOCAL FRUITS AND VEGETABLES BE SERVED IN CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS?

Yes. Local produce can be purchased or donated directly from a farmer, or through a distributor, food hub, farmers’ market, grocer, or school garden. Unprocessed fruits and vegetables that retain their inherent character are allowed. Minimal processing, such as freezing or cutting and bagging, is permitted.

DO PRODUCERS NEED TO BE GAP CERTIFIED TO SELL LOCAL PRODUCE TO CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS?

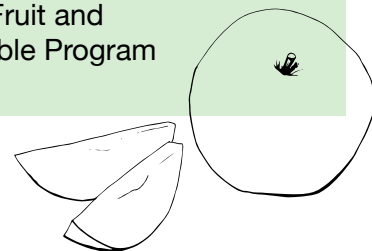
No. GAP (Good Agricultural Practices) certification is voluntary unless an individual school district requires it. Suppliers should follow these food safety practices and provide schools documentation of any farm food safety plans.

RESOURCES

All producer resources can be accessed online at: www.education.ne.gov/ns/farm-to-school/resources

USDA CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS:

- Child and Adult Care Food Program
- National School Lunch Program
- School Breakfast Program
- Summer Food Service Program
- Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program



WHAT PAPERWORK IS NECESSARY TO SELL TO CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM SPONSORS?

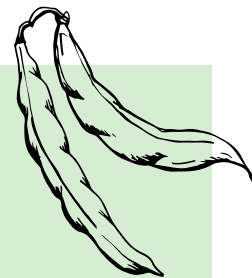
Information about traceability and price, along with food safety assurances and insurance coverage, are necessary when selling to schools.

WHAT ARE THE PURCHASING PROCESSES WHEN SELLING TO SCHOOLS?

- Schools can use three types of processes for purchasing food, depending on the amount they purchase:
 - » Micro-purchase: may be used for purchases under \$10,000 without obtaining multiple bids. Schools must distribute micro-purchases evenly amongst qualified vendors.
 - » Informal: may be used for purchases under \$250,000; 3 quotes must be documented and evaluated before selecting the winning quote and making the purchase.
 - » Formal: used for purchases over \$250,000. Buyers prepare a solicitation, advertise the solicitation, and evaluate and award contract to lowest responsible bidder.
 - » See how buyers target local foods, USDA Decision Tree: www.fns.usda.gov/cfs/fact-sheets
- Donations are allowed and may be used for tax purposes. See A Farmer's Guide to the Enhanced Federal Tax Deduction for Food Donation, available from the National Resource Defense Council at www.nrdc.org.

EXAMPLES OF LOCAL PRODUCTS THAT MIGHT BE ON A SCHOOL MENU:

- Dairy: milk, cheese and yogurt
- Grains: flour, tortillas, roll or pizza crust
- Condiments: BBQ sauce, salsa, and seasoning
- Meat/meat alternates: beef, pork, chicken, eggs, beans and nuts
- Produce: fruits and vegetables



For more information, contact:

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