



PURCHASING MICHIGAN PRODUCTS

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE



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Section I. Purchasing Michigan Products: A Step-by-Step Guide

Welcome to “Purchasing Michigan Products: A Step-by-Step Guide”. Follow these steps to incorporate Michigan foods into your school meals program. Communication, flexibility and understanding the risks and benefits are keys to success!

The Farm to School Roadmap

Step 1: Get Started

- Determine your interest in and ability to purchase locally grown products directly from farmers for your school meals program.



Tool: [Local Purchasing Assessment](#)

- Decide which Michigan products you would like to buy. It’s okay to start out slowly in the first year by substituting one or two products you typically use with locally grown items. You can build your local food purchasing program over time.



Tools: [Michigan Products and Seasonal Availability Charts](#)

- Locally grown foods also may be available through your food distributors. Explore ways to work with food distributors to link to local food.



Tool: [Food Distributors Linking Farms with Schools](#)

Step 2: Build Community Connections

- Use state or regional resources to find farmers in your area.



Tool: [Resources to Link with Local Farmers](#)

- Organize a Farm to School meeting to share your ideas, gather support and build enthusiasm from your school community. Build a Farm to School team by inviting farmers, food distributors, members of community organizations, teachers, school staff members and others who could be allies and contribute people-power to your program.
- Incorporate local school food procurement into your school wellness policy or action items for your coordinated school health team.



Tool: [Sample Farm to School Language for School Wellness Policies](#)

Step 3: Prepare and Distribute Bid Documents

- Determine the criteria for selecting vendors. Create a plan to evaluate farmers' bids based on categories such as price, food quality, taste test results, dependability, delivery plans, flexibility, promotion or education programs, insurance requirements, growing practices and food safety and/or sanitation standards.



Tool: [Sample Criteria for Selecting Vendors](#)

- Prepare a vendor information questionnaire. Questionnaire results will help you identify how closely a farmer meets your criteria for selecting vendors.



Tool: [Sample Vendor Questionnaire](#)

- Prepare a product availability and pricing form. Ask for information that is most important to your decision making process, depending on your use of the product. For example, uniform color and fruit size may be important if you are going to serve whole fresh apples. If so, indicate this on the product availability and pricing form (Form A) under condition/description. However, if uniform color and size are not as important to you, use a simple, more open-ended product availability and pricing form (Form B). Being flexible may increase the likelihood that a farmer will be able to meet your needs.



Tools: [Sample Product Availability and Pricing Form A](#)
[Sample Product Availability and Pricing Form B](#)

- Talk with local farmers to identify a mutually beneficial timeline for the bid process. Some farmers would like to begin this process early in the spring so they can plan their crops and plantings accordingly, but others may not want to submit bids until the end of the summer when they are more certain of market prices and product availability.
- Prepare a letter or notice of intent to purchase fruits and vegetables. If you can purchase your local products under the small purchase threshold through informal bid procedures, this letter or notice can be included with your other bid documents for local farmers to complete. Be sure to include your school's or district's payment requirements and preferred payment method in this letter or notice.



Tool: [Sample Letter/Notice of Intent to Purchase Fruits and Vegetables](#)

- Spread the word. Increase the likelihood that farmers will respond to your request for bids by posting your notice in the local newspaper, school newsletter or other outlets where it will draw their attention. Visit your local farmers market to talk with farmers about this opportunity. Include information about how farmers should get in touch with you and learn more about the program.



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- Mail bid documents to interested farmers. Include your letter or notice of intent to purchase, vendor information questionnaire and product availability and pricing forms, as well as instructions for completing and returning the forms to you.

Step 4: Evaluate and Award Bids

- Compare bids. You may use a point system based on a 100-point scale to evaluate bids. While lower pricing may earn the majority of points, other bid categories such as local source, variety available, product freshness and delivery schedule may be nearly as important to you. Identify bids that meet your selection criteria and from there determine which products to purchase from local farmers.
- Notify selected farmers of decisions.
- Visit the farms and/or meet in person with the farmers to determine your mutual needs. Be sure to discuss with the farmer your school's or district's payment requirements and preferred payment method.
- Develop a written contract with the farmers from whom you will purchase local products. Be sure the contract clearly states the requirements for order quantity, acceptable quality standards, product specifications and packaging, delivery method, unit price, terms of payment, insurance and liability requirements and a credit or policy.
- Have farmers read and sign the agreements or contracts before placing any orders.

Step 5: Begin Purchasing Local Products!



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Step 1: Get Started

Local Food Purchasing Assessment¹ Tool

The following questions are designed to help you determine your interest and ability to purchase food from local farmers. This information will be helpful when you begin talking with farmers and distributors about supplying your school or school district with local food.

1. Food service type and volume

- a. How would you describe your food service operation?
 - Scratch cooking
 - Heat-and-serve
 - Semi-prepared
 - Combination of _____ and _____.
 - Other (specify) _____.
- b. Numbers served:
 - Breakfasts served per day: _____.
 - Lunches served per day: _____.
 - Snacks served per day: _____.
 - Suppers served per day: _____.
 - Number of schools or feeding sites: _____.
 - Number of sites where cooking occurs: _____.
 - Number of lunches served per day in summer food service: _____.
 - Number of snacks served in afterschool program: _____.

2. Current produce purchasing

- a. What is a typical order for fresh produce in September, in dollars or volume by month or week?
- b. Are there local products you would consider purchasing if you had a salad or fruit and vegetable bar?

¹ This document is adapted from “Evaluating a Potential Institutional Customer” developed by Kelly Irwin at the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources Farm to School Project. Accessed August 2013 at <http://www.massfarmtoschool.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/evaluating-institutional-customer.pdf>.



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3. Logistics: ordering, payment and delivery

- a. What are your procurement procedures?
- b. Does the school/district have contracted food distributors?
- c. What percentage of food must be purchased through contracts?
- d. Do you also use independent produce distributors?
- e. To how many locations is food delivered?
- f. How many food deliveries are made per week per location? At what times?
- g. Do you prefer to place orders by telephone, fax or email?
- h. Are food orders placed monthly, weekly or on a specific day of the week?
- i. What are your payment procedures? How long will it take for your payment to be received?

4. Purchasing local products

- a. Many reasons exist for buying locally grown and produced foods. What do you believe are the advantages of offering local foods in your school meals program? Check all that apply.
 - Access to fresher foods
 - Higher quality of food
 - Lower cost of food
 - Ability to purchase special varieties and types of food
 - Promoting greater consumption of fruits and vegetables
 - Increasing the participation rate in school meals
 - Knowing the product source
 - Supporting the local economy and local farms
 - Building partnerships between the school system and community
 - Lower transportation costs
 - Reduced use of pesticides, hormones, etc.
 - Positive public relations for the food service program
 - Fulfilling student, parent and/or teacher requests for local food
 - Other (specify) _____
 - None of these



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4. Purchasing local products, continued:

- b. Schools and school districts take different approaches to including local foods in their meal programs. Which approaches are of interest to you? Check all that apply.
- Asking your current vendor(s) to sell Michigan farm products
 - Trying to buy directly from local farmers
 - Planning menus around seasonal availability of local products
 - Buying and highlighting only one or two local products each month
 - Hosting one or two local food meals or events each school year (i.e. Fall Harvest Festival, etc.)
 - Beginning by serving local foods on a limited or pilot basis, such as serving at only one school
 - Educating students about local food and food systems with educational materials and events (i.e. food tastings, farmer visits) within the cafeteria
 - I'm not sure yet
 - Other (specify) _____
 - None of these
- c. What are your school's or district's requirements for purchasing from local farmers and vendors?
- Product liability insurance policy
 - Meeting identified food safety and sanitation standards
 - Packaging requirements
 - Specific delivery methods or times
- d. When would it be feasible for you to start purchasing and offering local products through your food service?
- _____



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Step 1: Get Started

Michigan Products Charts

A. The following charts list Michigan foods, including fruits and vegetables, beans and legumes, and meat and dairy products. Which of these foods do you currently purchase, whether processed or fresh, and/or prepare? Which would you consider purchasing locally?

Fruits	Processed (frozen, canned, etc.)	Unprocessed (fresh)	Purchase Locally
Apples	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Blackberries	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Blueberries	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cantaloupe	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cherries	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Grapes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Muskmelon	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pears	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Plums	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Raspberries	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rhubarb	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strawberries	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Watermelon	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Vegetables	Processed (frozen, canned, etc.)	Unprocessed (fresh)	Purchase Locally
Asparagus	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Beans, green	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Beets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Broccoli	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Brussels sprouts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cabbage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Carrots	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cauliflower	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Celery	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Corn	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cucumbers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Eggplant	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Greens (collards, kale, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Herbs (basil, oregano, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lettuce	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mushrooms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



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Onions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parsnips	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Peas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Peppers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Potatoes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pumpkins	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Radishes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rutabaga	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Salad greens	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Spinach	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Squash, summer (yellow, zucchini)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Squash, winter (butternut, acorn, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sweet potatoes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tomatoes, cherry or grape	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tomatoes, slicing			
Turnips	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Beans and Legumes	Dried	Canned	Purchase Locally
Adzuki	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Black	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cannellini/white kidney	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chickpea/garbanzo	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lentils	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lima	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Navy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pinto	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Red kidney	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Split pea	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



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Meat Products	Whole or whole muscle cuts	Ground or Formed	Purchase Locally
Beef	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chicken	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Turkey	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fish	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lamb	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pork	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Dairy Products	Currently Purchase	Purchase Locally
Milk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cheese	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Eggs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Yogurt	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ice Cream	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

B. The following charts were developed for *Putting Michigan Produce on Your Menu: How to Buy and Use Michigan Produce in Your Institution* (available at the websites listed in the footer of this page) to indicate the seasonal availability of locally grown products. Check the seasonality of the products you would like to purchase locally to see if they can be incorporated into your school meals program, even if for just a week or a month.

MICHIGAN PRODUCE AVAILABILITY*

*Availability may vary by variety and with weather conditions

CROP	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
	FIELD FRESH											
	EXTENDED SEASON											
	STORAGE											
Apples												
Apricots												
Blackberries												
Blueberries												
Cantaloupe, Honeydew												
Cherries, Tart												
Cherries, Sweet												
Cranberries												
Grapes												
Nectarines												
Peaches												
Pears												
Plums												
Raspberries												
Rhubarb												
Strawberries												
Watermelon												

MICHIGAN PRODUCE AVAILABILITY*

*Availability may vary by variety and with weather conditions.

CROP	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec												
	FIELD FRESH						EXTENDED SEASON						STORAGE											
Arugula																								
Asian Greens (Mizuna, Pac Choi, Tatsoi, etc.)																								
Asparagus																								
Beans, Fresh (Green, Wax, etc.)																								
Beets																								
Broccoli																								
Brussels Sprouts																								
Cabbage																								
Carrots																								
Cauliflower (inc. Romanesco)																								
Celery																								
Chard																								
Corn																								
Cucumbers																								
Edamame (Green Soybeans)																								
Eggplant																								
Garlic																								
Greens (Beet, Collard, Mustard, Turnip, etc.)																								
Kale																								
Kohlrabi																								
Leeks																								
Lettuce (Leaf, Iceberg, Romaine, Bibb, etc.)																								
Mushrooms, Fresh																								
Onions, Mature																								
Onions, Spring/Green/Scallions																								

MICHIGAN PRODUCE AVAILABILITY*

*Availability may vary by variety and with weather conditions.

CROP	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
	FIELD FRESH					EXTENDED SEASON			STORAGE			
Parsnips												
Peas, Peapods & Shelling												
Peppers, Hot & Sweet												
Potatoes												
Pumpkins												
Radishes												
Rutabaga												
Salad Greens (Mesclun, Baby Greens, etc.)												
Spinach												
Sprouts (Alfalfa, Bean, etc.)												
Squash, Summer												
Squash, Winter (Butternut, Acorn, etc.)												
Sweet Potatoes												
Tomatoes												
Turnips												
Basil												
Chives												
Cilantro												
Dill												
Mint & Oregano												
Parsley												
Rosemary												
Sage & Thyme												

Putting Michigan Produce ON YOUR MENU



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Step 1: Get Started

Food Distributors Linking Farms with Schools

Many food distributors, especially those that are locally owned and operated, already buy food directly from nearby farms, farmer cooperatives and food vendors. Buying food from local sources helps food distributors take advantage of cost savings, including reduced transportation costs, and improved product quality and freshness. Listed below are some ways in which you can work with your food distributors to link to local farms.

1. Involve your food distributor(s) on your Farm to School team. Let them know that you are interested in buying locally grown products.
2. Gather baseline information from your food distributor. Which local food products does your distributor already carry? Ask your food distributors to send weekly updates of local food product availability. Food distributors that work directly with farmers will have the most up-to-date information about in-season products and how long they will be available.
3. Buying local foods through your distributor does not have to mean losing the connection to the farmer. Ask your food distributor to link you with their suppliers so that you can develop relationships with the farmers and, in turn, link them with school staff members and students. Ask your distributor to provide you with profiles of their suppliers. Profiles could include information about farmers that will help you make a decision about whether or not to buy the product. What information is important to you? If the farmer's growing practices are important, the profiles should include how the food was grown (i.e. organic, integrated pest management, conventional).
4. As much as possible, build flexibility into your menu so you can take advantage of the local, seasonal food supply. If farmers need to sell their products quickly, distributors may pass on the savings to you if you are able to make last minute changes to your menu.



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Step 2: Build Community Connections

Resources to Link with Local Farmers

Statewide Resources

Local Harvest

Locate farmers markets, family farms, community supported agriculture (CSA) and other sources of sustainably produced food.

<http://www.localharvest.org/>

Michigan MarketMaker

This interactive mapping system links producers and consumers in Michigan.

<http://mimarketmaker.msu.edu/>

Michigan State University Extension

Locate the MSU Extension office in your county.

http://www.msue.msu.edu/portal/default.cfm?pageset_id=25744&page_id=25770&msue_portal_id=25643

Natural Resources Conservation Service

This site provides a listing of county and state service offices.

<http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app?agency=nrcs>

Michigan Agritourism Association

This site provides a directory of farm markets and other agri-tourism operations located in Michigan.

<http://www.michiganfarmfun.com/>

Michigan Farm Bureau

Locate the local Michigan Farm Bureau office in your county.

<http://www.michfb.com/counties/>

Michigan Agricultural and Commodity Organizations

The Michigan Agricultural Commodity Directory lists the locations of and contacts for the agricultural commodity organizations in Michigan (updated December 2012).

http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdard/April_2012_Commodity_Directory_382456_7.pdf

Michigan Farmer's Market Association (MIFMA)

Find the location of farmers markets across Michigan.

<http://mifma.s434.sureserver.com/find-a-farmers-market/>

Michigan Organic Food and Farming Alliance (MOFFA)

Visit this site to download the "Eating Organically Guide".

<http://www.moffa.net/>

Certified Naturally Grown

This site provides a current list of certified small-scale, direct-to-market farmers and beekeepers who use natural growing and harvesting methods in Michigan.

<http://www.naturallygrown.org/farms/list/227/MI>



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Regional Michigan Resources

Michigan Food Hub Learning and Innovation Network

Food hubs are centrally located facilities with a business management structure facilitating the aggregation, storage, processing, distribution and/or marketing of locally or regionally produced food products.

<http://foodsystems.msu.edu/activities/food-hub-network>

UP Food Exchange

This group connects local food activity within three regions (eastern, central, western) of the Upper Peninsula and coordinates local food efforts between the regions.

<http://upfoodexchange.com/>

Taste the Local Difference

The Michigan Land Use Institute's guide is made up of six individual maps representing specific geographic areas of northwest Lower Michigan. Each map contains information on finding local food on farms, in restaurants, at retailers and breweries, and more.

<http://www.localdifference.org>

Food System Economic Partnership (FSEP)

The FSEP Farm to School Program works collaboratively to bring together school officials, food service directors, contracted food service providers, parents, distributors, processors, and producers to establish mutually beneficial relationships that result in locally produced food being consumed by students in our schools.

<http://fsepmichigan.org/index.php/farm-to-school/>

Greater Grand Rapids Food Systems Council

This site offers the West Michigan FRESH Guide to Local Food in Southwestern Michigan.

<http://www.foodshed.net/>



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Step 2: Build Community Connections

Sample Farm to School Language for School Wellness Policies

As part of the Child Nutrition and WIC Authorization Act of 2004, schools participating in the National School Lunch Program were required to establish school wellness policies by July 2006 to help create healthy school environments, reduce childhood obesity and prevent diet-related chronic diseases. According to Section 204 of Public Law 108-265, school wellness policies, at minimum, must:

1. include goals for nutrition education, physical activity and other school-based activities designed to promote student wellness;
2. include nutrition guidelines for all foods available on the school campus with the objectives of promoting student health and reducing childhood obesity;
3. provide an assurance that guidelines for reimbursable school meals shall not be less restrictive than regulations and guidance issued by the Secretary of Agriculture regarding the Child Nutrition Act and the National School Lunch Act;
4. establish a plan for measuring implementation of a school wellness policy; and
5. involve parents, students and representatives of the school food authority, the school board, school administrators and the public in developing a school wellness policy.

The following suggestions are a sample of model language for incorporating Farm to School into school wellness policies developed primarily by the **Community Food Security Coalition**² and **The Center for Ecoliteracy**³.

Wellness Policy Requirement I: *Include goals for nutrition education, physical activity and other school-based activities that promote student wellness*

- Staff members are encouraged to utilize food from school gardens and local farms in kitchen classrooms and cafeterias based upon availability and acceptability.
- School food service, in partnership with other school departments and community organizations, will work to creatively market and promote locally produced food to students through activities such as:
 - featuring food grown in the school garden in the cafeteria through sampling and including it in school meals based upon availability and acceptability.
 - developing cafeteria themes and activities relating to local farmers and products grown in the region.
 - developing school fundraisers based on healthy food items, integrating locally grown produce where appropriate.
- Staff members are encouraged to establish relationships with local farms so that farmers and farm workers will visit school classrooms and, in turn, students will visit farms.
- Conducting sampling and tasting sessions in school gardens and kitchen classrooms shall be encouraged as part of nutrition education.
- Staff members shall integrate experiential education activities, such as gardening, cooking demonstrations, and farm and farmers market tours, into existing curricula at all grade levels.

² Community Food Security Coalition. "Tools for Promoting Local Purchasing and Farm to School Activities: Model Wellness Policy Language for Schools." Accessed August 2013 at <http://www.cias.wisc.edu/foodservtools/8-Build-sustainability/model-wellness-policy-language.pdf>.

³ The Center for Ecoliteracy. "Model Wellness Policy Guide." Accessed August 2013 at http://www.ecoliteracy.org/sites/default/files/uploads/cel_model_wellness_policy_guide.pdf.



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- Nutrition education messages from the classroom will be modeled in the cafeteria and across campus by offering locally grown food whenever possible within the reimbursable federal meal program, as well as a la carte sales, including in vending machines.

Wellness Policy Requirement II: *Include nutrition guidelines for all foods available on the school campus (enhance broader nutrition guidelines to increase children's consumption of fruits and vegetables)*

- Meals served within the meal program will be designed to feature fruits and vegetables and other healthy foods from local sources to the greatest extent possible.
- Schools are encouraged to offer locally grown food at every location on the school campus where food is sold and at all school-sponsored events and activities.

Wellness Policy Requirement III: *Provide assurance that guidelines for school meals are not less restrictive than those set at the federal level by the Secretary of Agriculture regarding the Child Nutrition Act and National School Lunch Act*

- The School Food Service Authority ensures that the policies set here are not less restrictive than those set by the Secretary of Agriculture.

Wellness Policy Requirement IV: *Establish a plan for measuring implementation of the school wellness policy*

Evaluation of Farm to School programs may include indicators or methods such as:

- the percentage of food purchased from local sources;
- the budgetary impact of increasing local purchases;
- the impact of local purchasing on participation in the school meal programs; and
- before and after (pre- and post-) studies on what students have learned about healthy eating and local fruits and vegetables, or their willingness to try new local foods.

Wellness Policy Requirement V: *Involve parents, students, representatives of the school authority, the school board, school administrators and the public in developing the local wellness policy*

- For the purposes of developing a school wellness policy, the wellness committee will involve parents, students, representatives of the school authority, the school board, school administrators, and representatives from the local agricultural community and food and nutrition professionals, such as farmers, representatives from agricultural organizations, farmers market managers, local public health professionals, chefs, and nutritionists or health educators.
- A team of district and community representatives will be established to support the food service director and teachers in implementing local purchasing and other Farm to School activities on an ongoing basis.



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Step 3: Prepare and Distribute Bid Documents

Sample Criteria for Selecting Vendors

School District: _____

Vendor: _____ Date: _____

- Price
- Local source
- Food quality
- Taste test results
- Dependability of vendor
- Service after sale
- Delivery schedule
- Payment method and schedule
- Flexibility
- Promotion/education programs
- Insurance requirement
- Food safety and sanitation standards

Write justification for award below.

School Food Authority Signature

Date



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Sample Vendor Questionnaire

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone and/or email: _____

Are you willing to deliver to more than one location?

Yes No

Amount of product liability insurance coverage (provide copy of policy): _____

Current local customers and their contact information: _____

Payment terms and expectations (receipt must be left at each delivery, one statement to be paid to vendor, etc.): _____

List U.S.D.A, state and/or local inspections your facility receives and their frequency (i.e. annual, bi-annual, etc.). Attach copies of the most recent inspection report(s):

Please describe your food safety practices: _____

Please explain your credit/return policy for unacceptable quality:

Are you available to visit school(s) to talk with students about how your product is grown?

Yes No

Is your farm available for student field trips?

Yes No

Vendor's Signature

Date

Step 3: Prepare and Distribute Bid Documents – Sample Product Availability and Pricing Form A

Vendor Name and Contact Information: _____

Vendor's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please fill in the columns below for count, packaging, unit price, the project quantity available, minimum delivery amounts and the months the product will be available. List additional available products and varieties you would like us to consider purchasing on the back of this form.

Product	Count	Variety	Quality	Packed	Condition/Description	Unit Price	Projected Quantity Available	Minimum Delivery Amount	Months available
Apples		Gala/Royal Gala	U.S. Fancy or U.S. No. 1	Tray packed	Ripe, firm, crisp, juicy, smooth skin free of blemishes, bruises & scars. Color typical of variety. Washed.				
Asparagus		Spears	U.S. No. 1		Spears to be bright green, free from woody stalks and discoloration. Straight stalks free from decay and wilt. Washed.				
Potatoes		Russet or Round White	U.S. No. 1		Firm and smooth (not wrinkled); free of soft and/or dark spots, cut surfaces and greenish color. Loose dirt removed. Washed.				
Winter Squash		Butternut	U.S. No. 1		Firm and smooth (not wrinkled); free of soft and/or dark spots and cuts. Caramel-color skin with orange/yellow flesh. Washed.				

After careful review and evaluation, this bid has been awarded by the School Food Authority to (insert vendor's name).

School Food Authority Signature: _____ Date: _____



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Step 3: Prepare and Distribute Bid Documents

Sample Product Availability and Pricing Form B

Vendor Name and Contact Information: _____

Vendor's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please fill in the columns for projected availability and unit pricing for the listed products. If there are products not listed below that you would like considered for use in the school meals program, please add them to this form in the space provided below.

Product	Projected Quantity	Months Available	Unit Price
Pears	10 cases/month		
Apples	10 cases/month		
Pre-washed red potatoes – Size B	30 lbs/month		
Grape/cherry tomatoes	50 flats/month		

After careful review and evaluation, this bid has been awarded by the School Food Authority to (insert vendor's name).

School Food Authority Signature: _____ Date: _____



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Step 3: Prepare and Distribute Bid Documents

Sample Letter/Notice of Intent to Purchase Local Food

Dear Produce Vendor:

Great Lakes Public Schools is now accepting bids for fruits and vegetables for delivery to all Great Lakes Public Schools for the 2013/2014 school year. Your contact information was provided by [e.g. Michigan State University Extension] as a potential supplier.

If awarded a contract by Great Lakes Public Schools, vendor(s) may be asked to host school field trips and/or visit the school district to offer hands-on educational presentations introducing their local produce to students and staff members. All successful vendor(s) will be asked to meet with the Great Lakes Public Schools Food Service Department and/or Administration individually or collectively to review a vendor contract/agreement prior to delivering produce and/or giving school presentations. All contract arrangements between the Great Lakes Public Schools and any successful vendor(s) regarding delivery schedules, ordering, payment, availability/pricing of produce and/or other pertinent items will be made during that meeting. Great Lakes Public Schools reserves the right to award contracts to multiple vendors, and it does not guarantee any specific ordering volumes.

To submit a bid for consideration, complete and return the enclosed product availability and pricing forms and written questionnaire. If there is a product not listed on the forms that you would like us to consider for our school meals program, please add it to the produce pricing/availability form. Submit the completed forms to the Food Service Department, Great Lakes Public Schools, street address, city, state, zip code. All bids are to be delivered in a sealed envelope with **Produce Service** clearly printed on the outside of the envelope. The bids must be received by **noon on August 15, 2013**, and be addressed to the attention of [name]. Bids will not be accepted by fax or email.

Direct all responses, questions and inquiries to: Jane Doe, 123 Avenue, City, MI 12345, or call 123-456-7890.

Sincerely,

[Name]



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Section II: Michigan Farm to School Regulatory Environment

Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (Child Nutrition Reauthorization)

Public Law 111-296 (12-13-10)

<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PLAW-111publ296/pdf/PLAW-111publ296.pdf>

S. 3307

Title II – Reducing Childhood Obesity and Improving the Diets of Children

Subtitle D – Miscellaneous

Sec. 243. Access to Local Foods: Farm to School Program

Grants

(3)(a)-(3)(c) – “The Secretary shall award competitive grants under this subsection to be used for— training; supporting operations; planning; purchasing equipment; developing school gardens; developing partnerships; and implementing farm to school programs...In making awards under this subsection, the Secretary shall, to the maximum extent practicable, ensure— geographical diversity; and equitable treatment of urban, rural, and tribal communities...The total amount provided to a grant recipient under this subsection shall not exceed \$100,000.”

Nutrition Standards in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs

Federal Register Vol. 77, No. 17 (1-26-2012)

Part III

7 CFR Parts 210 and 220

<https://federalregister.gov/a/2012-1010>

“This final rule updates the meal pattern and nutrition standards for the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs to align them with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. This rule requires most schools to increase the availability of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free and low-fat fluid milk in school meals; reduce the levels of sodium, saturated fat and *trans* fat in meals; and meet the nutrition needs of school children within their calorie requirements. These improvements to the school meals programs, largely based on recommendations, made by the Institute of Medicine of the National Academies, are expected to enhance the diet and health of school children, and help mitigate the childhood obesity trend.”

Executive Summary

“...the six-cent per lunch performance-based reimbursement increase included in the HHFKA [Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act] will provide additional revenue beginning October 1, 2012. The Congressional Budget Office estimated about \$1.5 billion over five years will be provided in performance-based funding.”

Meal Requirements for Lunches and Requirements for Afterschool Snacks

Section 210.10

“(a) *General requirements.* (1) *General nutrition requirements.* Schools must offer nutritious, well-balanced and age-appropriate meals to all the children they serve to improve their diets and safeguard their health.

(i) *Requirements for lunch...* Schools must follow a food-based menu planning approach and produce enough food to offer each child the quantities specified in the meal pattern...for each age/grade group served in the school.



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(c)(2) *Food components.*

(i) *Meats/meat alternates component.*

Schools must offer meats/meat alternates daily as part of the lunch meal pattern...

(E) *Beans and Peas (legumes).* Cooked dry beans and peas (legumes) may be used to meet all or part of the meats/meat alternates component. Beans and peas (legumes)...include foods such as black beans, garbanzo beans, lentils, kidney beans, mature lima beans, navy beans, pinto beans and split peas.

(ii) *Fruits component.*

Schools must offer fruits daily as part of the lunch menu. Fruits that are fresh; frozen without added sugar; canned in light syrup, water or fruit juice; or dried may be offered to meet the requirements...

(iii) *Vegetables component.*

Schools must offer vegetables daily as part of the lunch menu. Fresh, frozen or canned vegetables and dry beans and peas may be offered to meet this requirement....Cooked dry beans and peas (legumes) may be counted as either a vegetable or as a meat alternate but not as both in the same meal. Vegetable offerings at lunch over the course of the week must include the following vegetable subgroups...:

(A) *Dark green vegetables.* This subgroup includes vegetables such as bok choy, broccoli, collard greens, dark green leafy lettuce, mesclun, mustard greens, romaine lettuce, spinach, turnip greens and watercress;

(B) *Red-orange vegetables.* This subgroup includes vegetables such as acorn squash, butternut squash, carrots, pumpkin, tomatoes, tomato juice and sweet potatoes;

(C) *Beans and peas (legumes).* This subgroup includes vegetables such as black beans, black-eyed peas (mature, dry), garbanzo beans (chickpeas), kidney beans, lentils, navy beans, pinto beans, soy beans, split peas and white beans;

(D) *Starchy vegetables.* This subgroup includes vegetables such as black-eyed peas (not dry) corn, cassava, green bananas, green peas, green lima beans, plantains, taro, water chestnuts and white potatoes; and

(E) *Other vegetables.* This subgroup includes all other fresh, frozen and canned vegetables, cooked or raw, such as artichokes, asparagus, avocado, bean sprouts, beets, Brussel sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, celery, cucumbers, eggplant, green beans, green peppers, iceberg lettuce, mushrooms, okra, onions, parsnips, turnips, wax beans and zucchini.”

The National School Lunch Act

Geographic Preference Option for the Procurement of Unprocessed Agricultural Products in Child Nutrition Programs

Federal Register Vol. 76, No. 78 (4-22-11)

7 CFR Parts 210, 215, 220, 225, and 226

<https://federalregister.gov/a/2010-8850>

“*Background.* Section 4302 of Public Law 110–246, the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008, amended section 9(j) of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1758(j)) to require the Secretary of Agriculture to encourage institutions operating Child Nutrition Programs to purchase unprocessed locally grown and locally raised agricultural products.”

Part 210 - National School Lunch Program

Subpart E - State Agency and School Food Authority Responsibilities

Section 210.21 Procurement

“(g) Geographic preference.



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(1) A school food authority participating in the Program, as well as State agencies making purchases on behalf of such school food authorities, may apply a geographic preference when procuring unprocessed locally grown or locally raised agricultural products. When utilizing the geographic preference to procure such products, the school food authority making the purchase or the State agency making purchases on behalf of such school food authorities have the discretion to determine the local area to which the geographic preference option will be applied.

(2) For the purpose of applying the optional geographic procurement preference... 'unprocessed locally grown or locally raised agricultural products' means only those agricultural products that retain their inherent character. The effects of the following food handling and preservation techniques shall not be considered as changing an agricultural product into a product of a different kind or character: cooling; refrigerating; freezing; size adjustment made by peeling, slicing, dicing, cutting, chopping, shucking and grinding; forming ground products into patties without any additives or fillers; drying/ dehydration; washing; packaging (such as placing eggs in cartons), vacuum packing and bagging (such as placing vegetables in bags or combining two or more types of vegetables or fruits in a single package); the addition of ascorbic acid or other preservatives to prevent oxidation of produce; butchering livestock and poultry; cleaning fish; and the pasteurization of milk."

Procurement

7 CFR Chapter II (1-1-07)

Part 210 – National School Lunch Program

Subpart E – State Agency and School Food Authority Responsibilities

Section 210.21 Procurement.

<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2011-title7-vol4/pdf/CFR-2011-title7-vol4-part210.pdf>

"(a) *General.* State agencies and school food authorities shall comply with the requirements of 7 CFR part 3016 [Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments] or 7 CFR part 3019 [Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-Profit Organizations], as applicable concerning the procurement of supplies, food, equipment and other services with Program funds. These requirements ensure that such materials and services are obtained for the Program efficiently and economically and in compliance with applicable laws and executive orders."

Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments

7 CFR Chapter XXX Part 3016

Section 3016.36 Procurement.

http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/cfr_2001/janqtr/pdf/7cfr3016.36.pdf

7 CFR 3016.36(c)(2)

"Grantees and subgrantees will conduct procurements in a manner that prohibits the use of statutorily or administratively imposed in-State or **local geographical preferences** in the evaluation of bids or proposals, except in those cases where applicable Federal statutes expressly mandate or encourage geographic preference. Nothing in this section preempts State licensing laws...."



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Procurement by Small Purchase Procedures (Informal Bids)

7 CFR 3016.36(d)(1)

“Small purchase procedures are those relatively simple and informal procurement methods for securing services, supplies, or other property that do not cost more than the simplified acquisition threshold fixed at 41 U.S.C. 403(11) [currently set at \$100,000]. If small purchase procedures are used, price or rate quotations shall be obtained from an adequate number of qualified sources.”

Procurement by Sealed Bids (Formal Advertising)

7 CFR 3016.36(d)(2)

“Bids are publicly solicited and firm-fixed-price contract (lump sum or unit price) is awarded to the responsible bidder whose bid, conforming with all the material terms and conditions of the invitation for bids, is the lowest in price...”

Conditions of sealed bids:

1. “A complete, adequate and realistic” description.
2. Two or more responsible bidders.
3. “The procurement lends itself to a firm fixed-price contract and the selection of the successful bidder can be made principally on the basis of price.”

Requirements:

1. Public advertising of an invitation for sealed bids with sufficient time prior to opening bids.
2. The bid invitation includes specifications, pertinent attachments, and defines items or services for procurement so that the bidder can properly respond.
3. All bids will be publicly opened at the place and time set out in the bid invitation.
4. “A firm fixed-price contract award will be made in writing to the lowest responsive and responsible bidder.” Discounts, transportation costs and life cycle costs may be considered in determining the lowest bid, but discounts will only be taken into account to determine the lowest bid “when prior experience indicates that such discounts are actually taken advantage of.”
5. “Any or all bids may be rejected if there is a sound documented reason.”

Designation of October as “National Farm to School Month”

House Resolution 1655 (9-23-10)

<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/BILLS-111hres1655ih/pdf/BILLS-111hres1655ih.pdf>

“...Now, therefore, be it *resolved* that...

(2) the House of Representatives –

- (A) expresses support for designation of “National Farm to School Month”;
- (B) encourages schools and local education agencies to use local produce in meals; and
- (C) encourages schools, farmers and farm groups, local businesses, nonprofit institutions, churches, cities, State governments, and other local groups to raise awareness of Farm to School in their communities.”



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Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (The Farm Bill)⁴

HR 2419

http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=110_cong_bills&docid=f:h2419enr.txt.pdf

Local Food and Farm Support Act

Purchases of Locally Produced Foods

Section 4302. “Section 9(j) of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1758(j)) is amended to read as follows:

- (j) Purchases of Locally Produced Foods – The Secretary shall –
- (1) encourage institutions receiving funds under this Act and the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1771 et seq.) to purchase unprocessed agricultural products, both locally grown and locally raised, to the maximum extent practicable and appropriate;
 - (2) advise institution participating in a program described in paragraph (1) of the policy described in that paragraph and paragraph (3) and post information concerning the policy on the website maintained by the Secretary; and
 - (3) allow institutions receiving funds under this Act and the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1771 et seq.), including the Department of Defense Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, to use a geographic preference for the procurement of unprocessed agricultural products, both locally grown and locally raised.”

The Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (The Farm Bill)

<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PLAW-107publ171/pdf/PLAW-107publ171.pdf>

As noted in the ‘2002 Farm Bill: Section by Section Summary of Provisions Affecting Special Nutrition Programs’ by the Food and Nutrition Service of the USDA, effective October 10, 2002, Section 4303 of The Farm Bill of 2002 “requires the Secretary [of Agriculture] to encourage institutions participating in the school lunch and breakfast programs to purchase locally produced foods, to the maximum extent practicable; advise institutions of the locally produced food policy; and provide startup grants to up to 200 institutions to defray initial costs of equipment, materials, storage facilities and similar costs. It authorizes \$400,000 a year for each of fiscal years 2003-2007.”

Purchases of Locally Produced Foods

Subtitle C – Child Nutrition and Related Programs
Section 4303

“Section 9 of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C.1758) is amended by adding at the end of the following:

(j)(1) In general, The Secretary shall—

⁴ At the time of this update, the reauthorization of the full farm bill, known as the Food and Farm Bill, has been stalled. The 2008 Farm Bill expired on September 30, 2012.



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- A. encourage institutions participating in the school lunch program under this chapter and the school breakfast program established by section 4 of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1773) to purchase, in addition to other food purchases, locally produced foods for school meal programs, to the maximum extent practicable and appropriate;
- B. advise institutions participating in a program described in subparagraph (A) of the policy described in that subparagraph and post information concerning the policy on the website maintained by the Secretary; and
- C. in accordance with requirements established by the Secretary, provide startup grants to not more than 200 institutions to defray the initial costs of equipment, materials, and storage facilities, and similar costs, incurred in carrying out the policy described in subparagraph (A)."

Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 Conference Report (Report 107-424)

Title IV – Nutrition

Subtitle C – Miscellaneous Provisions

http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=107_cong_reports&docid=f:hr424.pdf

(52) Purchase of Locally Produced Foods

"The Senate amendment requires the Secretary to: encourage institutions participating in the School Lunch and Breakfast programs to purchase locally produced foods, to the maximum extent practicable and appropriate and in addition to other food purchases; advise these institutions of the locally produced food policy; and provide startup grants to up to 200 institutions to defray initial costs of equipment, materials, storage facilities and similar costs incurred in carrying out the locally produced food policy. Also it authorizes appropriations of \$400,000 a year for FY2002-FY2006. (Section 458)...

The Conference substitute adopts the Senate provision....

The intent of the Managers is to authorize the Secretary to award modest startup grants for equipment, materials, and similar costs associated with purchasing locally produced foods. It is not the intent to create a geographical preference for purchases of locally produced foods or purchases made with grant funds. All purchases are to be made competitively, consistent with federal procurement laws and regulations....

The Managers want to make clear that school food authorities are still required to follow federal procurement rules calling for free and open competition and limit local product purchases to those that are practicable...."

State of Michigan Rules and Regulations

Michigan Farm to School Bill Package

Public Act 315

<http://www.legislature.mi.gov/documents/2007-2008/publicact/pdf/2008-PA-0315.pdf>

"An act to provide for the coordination and development of certain farm-to-school procurement processes and procedures; to provide for procedures and recommendations for certain farm product producers to access school-related food programs; to provide for certain powers and duties for the departments of education and agriculture; and to provide for the dissemination of certain information to schools and farm product producers.

Sec. 3. (1) The MDE (Michigan Department of Education) and the MDA (Michigan Department of Agriculture)⁵ shall collaborate and cooperate by means of a memorandum of understanding executed between the departments in order to implement the provisions of this act."

⁵ This state agency is now known as the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD).



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Public Act 343

<http://www.legislature.mi.gov/documents/2007-2008/publicact/pdf/2008-PA-0343.pdf>

“(4) A school district or public school academy is not required to obtain competitive bids for purchasing food unless the food is purchased in a single transaction costing \$100,000.00 or more.”

Public Act 344

<http://www.legislature.mi.gov/documents/2007-2008/publicact/pdf/2008-PA-0344.pdf>

“(4) An intermediate school district is not required to obtain competitive bids for purchasing food unless the food is purchased in a single transaction costing \$100,000.00 or more.”

