RESOURCE GUIDE – OCTOBER 2008

FARM TO CAFETERIA

A guide to building farm to school relationships in Massachusetts

Compiled by
Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture

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Support for this guide was provided by Northeast Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education, a program of USDA's Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES).

INTRODUCTION

This resource guide is designed for Food Service Directors, farmers, and interested third parties looking to get more locally grown food into schools. Farm to school initiatives have been underway in Massachusetts for several years, but as the movement has grown, demand has outstripped the support available to farmers and schools. In order to encourage the growth of farm to school relationships, we need more people trained to do this work across the state. Therefore, in 2007 the Massachusetts Farm to School Project, CISA (Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture), and SEMAP (Southeastern Massachusetts Agricultural Partnership), collaborated on a "Train the Trainers" workshop series to offer intensive, pragmatic training designed to prepare more community-based agricultural professionals and others to build farm to school relationships.

Farm to school sales present a host of unique issues, and the organizations working with farms and schools need to be prepared to respond to the inevitable questions and hurdles that arise. Questions regarding school bidding, insurance, delivery routes, product volume, seasonality, etc. can be challenging and complex. The group held three workshops, which focused on relationship-building; demand side issues such as state and municipal procurement policies and the federal School Lunch Program; and farm/supply-side issues such as packing, processing, GAP, HACCP, independent audits, and distribution issues. The information and resources from these workshops has been gathered in this booklet, which will hopefully be a lasting resource for Massachusetts farm to school initiatives.

HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE BOOK

The materials in this book are divided into three parts, each of which focuses on a key aspect of farm to cafeteria work. Each section contains a summary of key lessons and a variety of resources from multiple sources. We have also tried to include sources for additional information. Part I focuses on information relevant to understanding how school lunch procurement works, such as the policies that dictate municipal and state procurements, and also information of the National School Lunch Program. Part II focuses on supply-side issues, including food safety concerns and regulations. Part III is focused on relationship-building and includes resources based on the Massachusetts Farm to School Project's years of experience.

Farm to school initiatives have been underway in Massachusetts for several years, but as the movement has grown, demand has outstripped the support available to farmers and schools. In order to encourage the growth of farm to school relationships, we need more people trained to do this work across the state.

PART I: Procurement-Side Issues

MUNICIPAL PURCHASING POLICY

Chapter 30B of the General Laws of Massachusetts, the Uniform Procurement Act, establishes procurement procedures for local governments to use when contracting for supplies and services. This is the policy that regional school districts use for their procurements.

Chapter 30B establishes three sets of procedures that must be followed for awarding contracts and making purchases. They are based on the price of the contract, and the actual price, not the estimate, determines the procedures that apply.

For contracts under $5,000- Purchaser is required to use sound business practices. The law does not require formal competition for these small purchases.

Contracts between $5,000 and $24,999- Seek price quotes from at least three vendors and award the contract to the responsible vendor offering the supply or service need for the best price. Brochure and catalog prices can be used as quotes.

Contracts of $25,000 or more- Conduct a formal advertised competition using sealed bids or proposals. In a bid process, the contract is awarded to the qualified bidder who meets the specifications and offers the best price.

Other factors to note:

Bid-splitting is prohibited. This is when items are purchased separately to sidestep the requirements of the law. It is permissible to use one solicitation for a variety of items and specify that each item will be purchased from the vendor offering the lowest price for that

Local governmental bodies may use the statewide contracts awarded by the Operational Services Division (See page 9) without conducting a separate Chapter 30B procurement.

Purchase descriptions must be written in such a way that allows for genuine competition. Purchase descriptions that are written to favor a particular vendor are prohibited.

For complete information on Chapter 30B requirements, please see "Municipal, County, District, and Local Authority Procurement of Supplies, Services, and Real Property." This exhaustive manual is available through the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Office of the Inspector General and can be downloaded for free at www.mass.gov/ig/igch30b.htm.

The Inspector General's Office is available to answer questions about Chapter 30B procurement at 617-8838.

BUYING LOCAL FOOD FOR SCHOOLS:

CHAPTER 30B PROCUREMENT REQUIREMENTS

Question: As part of a Massachusetts municipal government or regional school district purchasing entity, do state laws allow me to purchase food directly from local farms?

Answer: Yes, purchases of less than $25,000 worth of Massachusetts-grown agricultural products from a Massachusetts farm operation ARE allowed WITHOUT having to seek quotations or bids.

Purchases of more than $25,000 worth of local agricultural products ARE also allowed, BUT must follow regular Chapter 30B bidding policies.

Municipal and regional school districts are aware of Massachusetts General Law Chapter 30B because it is the policy that establishes procurement procedures for them to use when contracting for supplies and services. The following wording from Chapter 30B explains what is required for procurement based on the dollar amount being purchased.

If less than $25,000:

> Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 30B Uniform Procurement Act
> Section 4: Submission of Quotations
>
> (d) A procurement officer may award a contract valued at less than $25,000 for the procurement of products of agriculture as defined in section 1A of chapter 128 including, but not limited to, fruits, vegetables, eggs, dairy products, meats, crops, horticultural products and products processed into value added products as part of a Massachusetts farm operation, that are grown or produced using products grown in the commonwealth as well as fish, seafood and other aquatic products, without seeking quotations as required under subsection (a), and the officer shall follow generally accepted business practices.

If $25,000 or more:

> A procurement in the amount of $25,000 or more shall be awarded utilizing competitive sealed proposals, except for in the case of an emergency procurement, in accordance with the provisions of Sections 5, 6 and 8 of Massachusetts General Law Chapter 30B.

Source:
http://www.mass.gov/legis/laws/mgl/30b-4.htm
http://www.mass.gov/ig/igch30b.htm (then click on Ch30B)

While schools in Massachusetts primarily use municipal purchasing policies as outlined in Chapter 30B, there are alternative procurement channels such as the statewide contracts as administered through the Operational Services Division (OSD). This information is included here because of the possibility that Massachusetts farms could benefit from becoming designated state vendors, and because of the relevance of the Agricultural Preference Law to farm to school work. However, the state-wide contracts do not currently shape the purchases being made for school lunches.

Statewide contracts

Statewide contracts are administered through the Operational Services Division (www.mass.gov/osd). OSD may put an item or service out for bid, such as printing services, or desks, or a food product. The company that offers the lowest bid receives the contract with the state, and then various departments (including schools) can purchase items or services through the resulting contracts. For small procurements (equal to or less than $50,000), the guidelines require seeking three quotes. For larger procurements (greater than $50,000), it must go up for bid.

Chapter 123 of the Acts of 2006

The Local Agricultural Preference law was passed by the Massachusetts as part of the 2006 economic stimulus package and is referred to as Chapter 123 of the Acts of 2006. Through a letter released in January of 2007, State Purchasing Agent Ellen Bickelman reminded MA's Executive Departments that procurement officers must "(1) make reasonable efforts to facilitate the purchase of products of agriculture grown or produced using products grown in the Commonwealth and (2) purchase these products, unless the price of the goods exceeds the price of products of agriculture from outside the Commonwealth by more than 10%."

Public schools are not state agencies subject to Chapter 123, so public school purchases are regulated under a different law known as Chapter 30B. However, Chapter 123 didn't ignore public schools altogether. Although Chapter 123 does not require schools to favor locally grown products, as it does for state agencies, the law does authorize Chapter 30 B school procurement officers to award contracts valued at less than $25,000 for the procurement of locally grown or produced agricultural products without seeking quotes as typically required.

In other words, if the contract is for less than $25,000, procurement officers can purchase locally grown food or products without going through the normal bidding process. Furthermore, under Chapter 123, school leaders and decision makers, with community support, can establish policies that encourage the purchase of local food, so long as the price does not exceed the price of non-local food by more than 10%.

This law could shift school food sourcing in Massachusetts, but it is not guaranteed to do so. As it stands right now, if the purchaser at any given school or school district is personally interested in purchasing locally grown food, or if

a purchaser is encouraged by their community or school administration to buy local, they have some legislative support to do so on a small scale. This could open up the window for local purchasing across the state, but without the work of local food advocates, this window could be no more then a crack.

Further Resources

The complete language of Chapter 123 is available here: http://www.mass.gov/legis/laws/seslaw06/sl060123.htm

The letter from Ellen Bickelman, State Purchasing Agent is available here: http://www.mass.gov/Aosd/docs/policy/agric_pref.doc

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office for Administration and Finance
Operational Services Division
One Ashburton Place, Boston, MA 02108-1552

http://www.comm-pass.com

Deval L. Patrick
Governor

Timothy P. Murray
Lieutenant Governor

Leslie A. Kirwan
Secretary

Ellen M. Bickelman
State Purchasing Agent

To: Department Heads, Chief Fiscal Officers, and General Counsels

From: Ellen Bickelman
State Purchasing Agent

Date: January 11, 2007

Re: Massachusetts Agricultural Products

I am writing to inform you of a recently enacted law that establishes a preference for purchasing Massachusetts agricultural products. Chapter 123 of the Acts of 2006 directs the State Purchasing Agent to grant a preference to products of agriculture that are grown or produced using locally grown products. Specifically, Chapter 123 directs those responsible for procuring products on behalf of a state agency or authority (1) to make reasonable efforts to facilitate the purchase of products of agriculture grown or produced using products grown in the Commonwealth and (2) to purchase these products, unless the price of the goods exceeds the price of products of agriculture from outside the Commonwealth by more than 10%.

Products of agriculture are defined to include any agricultural, aquacultural, floricultural or horticultural commodities, the growing and harvesting of forest products, the raising of livestock, including horses, the raising of domesticated animals, bees or fur-bearing animals, and any forestry or lumbering operations. OSD will incorporate this new requirement into statewide procurements for agricultural products and departments must also be in compliance with this new law when conducting procurements for products not on statewide contract that fall within the definition of agricultural products. OSD is in the process of updating the Procurement Information Center (PIC) and will include new language in the Required Specifications document to reflect the requirements of the new law. In the interim, the following language can be referenced in department procurements for agricultural products to ensure compliance with the new preference law:

Required Specifications for Purchase of Agricultural Products - Chapter 123 of the Acts of 2006 directs the State Purchasing Agent to grant a preference to products of agriculture grown or produced using locally grown products. Such locally grown or produced products shall be purchased unless the price of the goods exceeds the price of products of agriculture from outside the Commonwealth by more than 10%. For purposes of this preference, products of agriculture are defined to include any agricultural, aquacultural, floricultural or horticultural commodities, the growing and harvesting of forest products, the raising of livestock, including horses, raising of domesticated animals, bees, fur-bearing animals and any forestry or lumbering operations.

If you have any questions, please contact Bill McAvoy, OSD's General Counsel at 617-720-3327 or William.mcavoy@state.ma.us

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Tel: (617) 720-3300 **TDD: (617) 727-2716** **Fax: (617) 727-4527**

NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM

The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) is a federally administered program that gives cash subsidies and commodity foods to schools participating in the program for each meal they serve. Schools must meet federal nutrition requirements and provide reduced or free meals to eligible children. These programs are facilitated through the Massachusetts Department of Education.

Reimbursements:

As of December 2007, for each lunch served to a child eligible for a free lunch, schools are reimbursed $2.47. For each reduced-price lunch served, the school receives $2.07. For each full-price lunch, the school receives $.23. At most schools, these reimbursements form the backbone of the school lunch budget. If more than 60% of the students qualify for free and reduced lunches, the school is required to offer breakfast.

Commodities:

Schools receive commodity foods ("entitlement foods") at a value of 16.75 cents for each meal served, plus "bonus" commodities as they are available. The bonus commodities are free to the schools and are available in addition to the 16.75 cents of entitlement foods.

Transportation and storage of commodity offerings is paid for by the school our of their school lunch budget. It is not included in the 16.75 cents.

MA received 20 millions dollars in commodity foods last year.

Further Resources:

For more information on the School Lunch Program, visit the USDA Food and Nutrition Services website: www.fns.usda.gov

For more information on the Commodity program, visit the Nutrition, Health and Safety section of the Mass Department of Education website at: www.doe.mass.edu/cnp/

USDA United States Department of Agriculture
Food and Nutrition Service

National School Lunch Program

1. What is the National School Lunch Program?

The National School Lunch Program is a federally assisted meal program operating in over 101,000 public and non-profit private schools and residential child care institutions. It provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free lunches to more than 30 million children each school day in 2006. In 1998, Congress expanded the National School Lunch Program to include reimbursement for snacks served to children in afterschool educational and enrichment programs to include children through 18 years of age.

The Food and Nutrition Service administers the program at the Federal level. At the State level, the National School Lunch Program is usually administered by State education agencies, which operate the program through agreements with school food authorities.

2. How does the National School Lunch Program work?

Generally, public or nonprofit private schools of high school grade or under and public or nonprofit private residential child care institutions may participate in the school lunch program. School districts and independent schools that choose to take part in the lunch program get cash subsidies and donated commodities from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) for each meal they serve. In return, they must serve lunches that meet Federal requirements, and they must offer free or reduced price lunches to eligible children. School food authorities can also be reimbursed for snacks served to children through age 18 in afterschool educational or enrichment programs.

3. What are the nutritional requirements for school lunches?

School lunches must meet the applicable recommendations of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, which recommend that no more than 30 percent of an individual's calories come from fat, and less than 10 percent from saturated fat. Regulations also establish a standard for school lunches to provide one-third of the Recommended Dietary Allowances of protein, Vitamin A, Vitamin C, iron, calcium, and calories.

School lunches must meet Federal nutrition requirements, but decisions about what specific foods to serve and how they are prepared are made by local school food authorities.

4. How do children qualify for free and reduced-price meals?

Any child at a participating school may purchase a meal through the National School Lunch Program. Children from families with incomes at or below 130 percent of the poverty level are eligible for free meals. Those with incomes between 130 percent and 185 percent of the poverty level are eligible for reduced-price meals, for which students can be charged no more than 40 cents. (For the period July 1, 2007, through June 30, 2008, 130 percent of the poverty level is $26,845 for a family of four; 185 percent is $38,203.)

Children from families with incomes over 185 percent of poverty pay a full price, though their meals are still subsidized to some extent. Local school food authorities set their own prices for full-price (paid) meals, but must operate their meal services as non-profit programs.

Afterschool snacks are provided to children on the same income eligibility basis as school meals. However, programs that operate in areas where at least 50 percent of students are eligible for free or reduced-price meals may serve all their snacks for free.

5. How much reimbursement do schools get?

Most of the support USDA provides to schools in the National School Lunch Program comes in the form of a cash reimbursement for each meal served. The current (July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2008) basic cash reimbursement rates if school food authorities served less than 60% free and reduced price lunches during the second preceding school year are:

Free lunches:	**$2.47**	**Free snacks:**	**$0.68**
Reduced-price lunches:	**$2.07**	**Reduced-price snacks:**	**$0.34**
Paid lunches:	**$0.23**	**Paid snacks:**	**$0.06**

Higher reimbursement rates are in effect for Alaska and Hawaii, and for schools with high percentages of low-income students. For the latest reimbursement rates visit FNS website at http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Governance/notices/naps/NAPs.htm

6. What other support do schools get from USDA?

In addition to cash reimbursements, schools are entitled by law to receive commodity foods, called "entitlement" foods, at a value of 16.75 cents for each meal served in Fiscal Year 2006-2007. Schools can also get "bonus" commodities as they are available from surplus agricultural stocks.

Through Team Nutrition USDA provides schools with technical training and assistance to help school food service staffs prepare healthful meals, and with nutrition education to help children understand the link between diet and health.

7. What types of foods do schools get from USDA?

States select entitlement foods for their schools from a list of various foods purchased by USDA and offered through the school lunch program. Bonus foods are offered only as they become available through agricultural surplus. The variety of both entitlement and bonus commodities schools can get from USDA depends on quantities available and market prices.

A very successful project between USDA and the Department of Defense (DoD) has helped provide schools with fresh produce purchased through DoD. USDA has also worked with schools to help promote connections with local small farmers who may be able to provide fresh produce.

8. How many children have been served over the years?

The National School Lunch Act in 1946 created the modern school lunch program, though USDA had provided funds and food to schools for many years prior to that. About 7.1 million children were participating in the National School Lunch Program by the end of its first year, 1946-47. By 1970, 22 million children were participating, and by 1980 the figure was nearly 27 million. In 1990, over 24 million children ate school lunch every day. In Fiscal Year 2006, more than 30.1 million children each day got their lunch through the National School Lunch Program.

9. How much does the program cost?

The National School Lunch Program cost $8.2 billion in FY 2006. By comparison, the lunch program's total cost in 1947 was $70 million; in 1950, $119.7 million; in 1960, $225.8 million; in 1970, $565.5 million; in 1980, $3.2 billion; in 1990, $3.7 billion; and in 2000, 6.1 billion.

For more information:

For information on the operation of the National School Lunch Program and all the Child Nutrition Programs, contact the State agency in your state that is responsible for the administration of the programs. A listing of all our State agencies may be found on our web site at www.fns.usda.gov/cnd, select "Contact Us", then select "Child Nutrition Programs"

You may also contact us through the office of USDA, Food and Nutrition Service, Public Information Staff at 703-305-2286, or by mail at 3101 Park Center Drive, Room 914, Alexandria, Virginia 22302.

July 2007

Schools/Child Nutrition Commodity Programs

1. How does USDA support meal service in Schools/Child Nutrition Programs (CNP)?

The USDA's Schools/Child Nutrition Commodity Programs support American agricultural producers by providing cash reimbursements for meals served in schools, but also by providing nutritious, USDA-purchased food to the following nutrition programs:

- National School Lunch Program;
- Child and Adult Care Food Program; and the
- Summer Food Service Program

Donated commodities must be of domestic origin, and nearly 60 percent of the foods purchased for the Schools/ Child Nutrition Programs must be determined by the Department to be in surplus at the time of purchase.

2. What type of commodity support does USDA give the school lunch program?

In school year 2009, schools participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) will receive commodity foods, called "entitlement" foods, at a value of 20.75 cents for each lunch served. Schools can also get "bonus" commodities, as they are available through USDA's price support and surplus removal programs.

USDA does not provide an entitlement for commodity foods through the School Breakfast Program. However NSLP commodities maybe served in school breakfast.

The Food Distribution Division of USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) coordinates the distribution of commodities to many of the more than 94,000 public and private nonprofit schools that provide meals to students.

While schools receive 20.75 cents worth of commodity foods per meal for school year 2009, the entitlement amount varies from year to year based on an annual adjustment to reflect changes in the Price Index of Foods Used in Schools and Institutions. Benefits delivered in past years are listed below:

Entitlement and Commodity Benefits:

Year	Cents per meal	$ Value (millions)	Pounds (millions)
SY 08*	18.75	$1,138	1,210
SY 07	17.00	$1,031	1,183
SY 06	17.50	$913	1,054
SY 05	17.25	$935	1,025

* Preliminary

3. What type of commodity support does USDA give to Other Child Nutrition Programs?

- Child and Adult Care Food Program:

FNS's Food Distribution Division distributes commodities to ensure that children and adults in approved day care centers receive nutritious meals and snacks. Institutions have the option of receiving cash in lieu of commodities for the CACFP, and most now do so. Less than 20 percent of childcare centers now request commodities.

The level of assistance for lunches and suppers served by CACFP is the same as the rate for school lunches—i.e., 20.75 cents per meal.

CACFP Commodity Benefits:		
Year	$ Value (millions)	Pounds (millions)
SY 08*	$2.1	1.7
SY 07	$3.5	3.4
SY 06	$1.9	2.0
SY 05	$2.8	2.7
*Preliminary		

- Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). FNS distributes commodities to SFSP sites serving needy children during summer vacations from school.

These sites include schools, colleges and universities participating in the National Youth Sports Program, nonprofit summer camps for migrant children, and centers for homeless children.

For meals prepared on-site, providers receive 1.5 cents per meal in commodity entitlement.

SFSP Commodity Benefits		
Year	$ Value (millions)	Pounds (millions)
FY 08*	$0.9	1.5
FY 07	$1.4	2.2
FY 06	$1.6	2.7
FY 05	$1.2	1.6
*Preliminary		

4. What types of food are available to States for Schools/ Child Nutrition Commodity Programs?

States select a wide variety of entitlement foods for their schools, child and adult care centers, family day care centers, and summer program sites from a list of more than 180 different kinds of products.

Foods Available in SY 2009 for the Schools/ Child Nutrition Commodity Programs include fruits and vegetables; meats; cheese or dry and canned beans; fruit juices; vegetable shortening and vegetable oils; peanut products; rice, cheese, pasta product, flour and other grain products.

5. How are bonus commodities distributed to these programs?

Bonus foods are considered those over and above entitlement foods. They are offered periodically, but only as they become available through agricultural surpluses. They are then offered to States on a fair-share basis, and do not count against a State's regular entitlement dollars.

The type and quantity of bonus commodities distributed by USDA in a given year is dictated by agricultural surpluses and market conditions. Bonus products donated in previous years include:

- Dehydrated Potatoes
- Canned Sweet Potatoes
- Frozen Freestone Peaches
- Dried Fruit & Nut Mix
- Dried Beans
- Frozen Cherries
- Apple Products

6. Who should I contact for more information about Schools/Child Nutrition Commodity Programs?

Since this program is administered at the State level, we suggest that you contact your State distributing agency for more information about the commodities distributed to schools and institutions participating in this program in your state. A list of the State Contacts may be found on our website at www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/contacts/sdacontacts.htm

You may also visit our Food Distribution Program web site at: www.fns.usda.gov/fdd, or E-mail us at: fdd-psb@fns.usda.gov. You may email your commodity complaints to us at: CommodityComplaints@fns.usda.gov or visit our Commodity Complaint website at: www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/complaints/

During SY 2008, USDA purchased over $1137 million worth of commodities for Schools/Child Nutrition Programs. These commodities totaled over 1.2 billion pounds.

Visit us at *www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/*

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USDA FOODS ORDERED FOR SCHOOL YEAR 2007

Following is a listing of foods expected to be available to schools in Massachusetts during school year 2007

Code	Commodity/Pack Size	# of Cases Offered to MA	USDA Estimated Shipping Period From Vendor To Mass. Warehouses	Approx. Servings per case
A061	Beans, Green, 6/#10	4,560	Sept., Jan.	271
A070	Beans, Green, Frozen 30#	7,920	Sept., Dec.	348
A089	Garbanzo Beans, 6/10#	864	November	252
A091	Vegetarian Beans, 6/10#	1,728	November	293
A099	Carrots, Frz. 30#	2,760	September	315
A110	Corn, Liquid 10 6/#10	10,032	Aug., Oct., Dec., Jan., Feb.	278
A130	Corn, Frozen 30#	15,840	Aug., Oct., Dec., Jan., Mar	330
A174	Potato Wedges, 6/5#	18,480	Oct., Dec., Jan., Feb., Mar., April	318
A196*	Potatoes, Dehydrated 12/1#	-	Available most months	**50.5 ¼ cup**
A204	Potato Rounds 6/5#	18,480	Sept., Nov., Dec., Jan., Feb., **Mar.**	381
A210	Potato, Oven Fry 6/5#	19,800	Aug., Oct., Jan., Feb, April	411
A214	Potatoes, Russet 50#	1,600	March	100-110
A220	Sweet Potatoes 6/#10	1,824	November	272
A237	Salsa, 6/5#	2,736	November	288
A239	Tomato Sauce 6/#10	6,384	Nov., Jan., Mar.	300
A241	Tomatoes, Diced 6/#10	4,560	Dec., Jan.	273
A288*	Cranberry Sauce 6/10#	-	Available	288
A299	Orange Juice 4 oz. Frozen	11,520	Jan., Mar	70/4oz.
A343	Apples 37-40#	3,696	November	96-150
A345	Apple Slices 6/#10	1,824	Oct.	302
A350	Apple Sauce 6/#10	10,032	Nov., Dec., Jan., Feb., Mar.	285
A380	Strawberry SL. 30#	5,280	August	213
A382	Apricots, Diced 6/#10	2,736	August	144
A408	Peaches, Cling, Sliced 6/#10	12,768	Sept., Nov., Jan., Feb., Mar.	285
A409	Peaches, Diced 6/#10	10,032	Oct., Dec., Feb., Mar.	292
A416	Peaches, Frozen Cup 96/4.4 oz	4,200	October	96
A433	Pears, Sliced 6/#10	5,472	Oct., Dec.	312
A434	Pears, Diced 6/#10	4,560	Sept., Nov.	285
A443	Pineapple Tidbits 6/#10	7,296	Aug., Dec., Feb.	300
A470	Fruit Mix 6/#10	10,032	Oct., Dec., Jan., Feb., Mar.	281
A504	Raisins 144/1.33	11,856	Sept., Oct.	144
A515	Chicken, Fr. Cup-Up 40#	6,000	Nov., Jan.	73-96
A517	Chicken, Diced 40#	11,000	Aug., Nov., Dec., Feb., Mar.	320
A526	Chicken, Breaded 7pc	14,300	Sept., Nov., Jan., Feb.	66/ 2oz.
A537	Turkey Roasts, Fr 4/8-12#	8,000	Oct., Jan., Mar.	210
A549	Turkey Breast Deli 40#	9,000	Jan., - April	360
A563	Chicken Fajita Meat	14,300	Oct., Dec., Jan., Feb., Mar.	137
A565	Turkey Taco Filling #30	-	Available	128

A568	Eggs, Whole	6,670	Sept., Dec.	270
A608	Beef, Fr. Ground 40#	15,000	Aug., Oct., Dec., Jan., Feb., Mar	213
A626	Beef Patties, 40#	13,300	Sept., Nov., Jan., Feb., Mar.	213
A672	Pork Roast	1,000	September	384-480
A693	Ham, Water, Cooked 40#	6,000	Nov., Jan., Feb.	228
A707	Pork Patty Cooked 2.7 oz./40#	2,850	Dec	492/1oz.
A712	Pork Sloppy Joe CKD.	5,000	Dec.	160
A714	Beef Taco 4/10# bags	-	Available	168
A717	Beef Crumbles 4/10# bags	4,000	Dec., Jan.	290
A719	Pork Patty Link Cooked 1oz./40#	3,000	December	440-520
A745	Tuna Pouch	12,046	Nov., Dec., Feb., Mar.	168
B037	Mozzarella, Shredded	18,816	Aug., Oct., Dec., Jan., Mar.	480
B042	Mozzarella Frozen 8/6#	9,660	Available Most Months	768/1oz.
B066	Cheese, Process, Sliced 6/5#	25,080	Available Most Months	960/ 1/2oz.
B087	Cheddar 10-W	10,340	Available Most Months	640/1oz.
B183	Flour, AP 4/10#	4,284	Available Most Months	
B233	Flour, Bread 5/10#	3,213	Available Most Months	
B430	Macaroni 20#	10,000	Available Most Months	
B435	Rotini 20#	8,400	Available Most Months	
B473	Peanut Butter, Smooth 6/5#	2,464	Available Most Months	
B505	Rice, Milled 25#	3,360	Available Most Months	
B545	Rice, Brown 25#	1,680	October	
B670	Oil, Vegetable 6/1 Gallons	2,400	Available Most Months	
B720	Shortening, Vegetable 12/3	-	Available Most Months	
B840	Spaghetti, Enriched 20#	3,000	Available Most Months	

***= Bonus Commodities are not charged to your entitlement. Some bonus commodities are allocated based on availability.**

Please refer to the USDA web site at www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/facts/schfacts/cats.

Price and market conditions may influence food availability. Types, quantities and shipping periods are estimated and subject to change. Foods are not offered until received at the warehouse. If foods are received during the month indicated, the item would then appear on the next month's offer.

PART II: Supply-Side Issues

Evaluating a Potential School Customer
(for farmer's initial interview of food service director)

For assistance, contact the Mass. Farm to School Project, kelerwin@localnet.com or 413-253-3844

Name of School or School District

Name of Food Service Director

Address
Phone **Fax** **Email**

Name(s) of others who might be involved in ordering, menu plans, promotion, etc.

# of Lunches served per day **# of Breakfasts served per day**

# of Schools or feeding sites **# of sites where cooking occurs**

Is there a Summer Feeding program? **If so, how many lunches per day?**

1. **There are many reasons why a school district or a food service manager decides to buy locally grown foods.** These include improving color/taste/variety of food, increasing consumption of fruits and vegetables; improving freshness or nutritional value of foods; increasing overall meal participation rate; supporting local farms or economy; gaining positive p.r. for the food service; building partnerships within the school system or the community. **What might be your school's main reason or reasons for offering locally grown foods?**

2. **Here are some ways that schools approach including local foods in the meals program. Which of these might be of interest to you?**
   - buy all locally grown foods whenever available
   - highlight all locally grown foods on your printed menus
   - buy and highlight only one or two local products each month
   - educate students about what's local
   - incorporate seasonal availability of local foods into your menu planning
   - ask teachers or other school personnel to support your efforts
   - find or create educational materials for use within the cafeteria
   - promote your use of locally grown foods to increase # of lunches purchased
   - try to buy directly from local farmers
   - consider asking your current vendor to sell identified local farm products
   - first serve locally grown foods on a limited basis, such as at only one school
   - don't really know yet

3. **What would be a typical order for fresh produce in mid-September?**
(Not trying to find out what they pay for individual items, just a sense of "size")
Please express either in overall dollar amount or volume:

Is that monthly or weekly?

Major items:

4. **What fruits or vegetables do you purchase unprocessed and prepare?**

What fruits or vegetables do you purchase partially processed?

5. **Do you currently have a salad bar, pasta bar, taco bar, etc. where raw products are used?**

6. **Are there other processed or unprocessed local products in which you would be interested, if they could be found** (such as pears, plums, cranberries, cranraisins, apples, peeled butternut squash, whole or diced onions, green peppers, leeks, zucchini, broccoli, chard, spinach, cauliflower, green beans, carrot coins or sticks, cabbage, coleslaw mix, potatoes, lettuce, apple cider, milk, cream, butter, cheese, ice cream, eggs, maple syrup, honey, applesauce, jams, mushrooms, potato chips)?

7. **How many locations do you have produce delivered to? How many times per week and at what times?**

8. **How do you prefer to place orders? How often do you order (specific day)?**
   - ❑ Telephone
   - ❑ Fax
   - ❑ E-mail
   - ❑ Other

9. **When would you like to start buying local products?**

10. **What are your procurement procedures and how long will it take for your payment to be received?**

11. **Would you like help finding promotional or educational materials related to providing local foods?** Posters? Menu blurbs? Recipes? Info about farm tours?

FOOD SAFETY

Based on a workshop presentation by Diane Wright Hirsch, UConn Cooperative Extension Service food safety educator.

Food-borne illness is not only caused by meat or dairy, but also by produce, usually as a result of cross-contamination. There are 76 million cases of food-borne illness per year. As our food system is jarred by more frequent and wide-spread food safety scares, some buyers are turning to local farms because of the smaller scale of production, opportunities for transparency, and personal relationships they offer. Concurrently, there is more talk about regulation and requirements than ever before, and some of those plans could pose significant challenges for smaller farms without the infrastructure in place to meet them.

What follows is some general information about the agencies involved in food safety guidelines and frameworks that are currently in place. Don't overlook the "What does this mean for small farmers" section at the end!

Regulators:

FDA (Food and Drug Administration): Regulates all food sold through interstate commerce except meat and poultry. Has produced safety guidelines- Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP), HACCP, and the Good Food Code.

USDA/ FSIS (US Department of Agriculture/Food Safety Inspection Service): Regulates meat, poultry, and processed egg products. Conducts food testing, seeks voluntary recalls of contaminated product but doesn't have the power to order involuntary recalls.

CDC (Centers for Disease Control): Record-keeping, research. Investigates outbreaks.

EPA (Environmental Protection Agency): Regulates drinking water, toxic substances, and pesticide safety.

State Cooperative Extension offices: Conduct research, education, and outreach.

Food Safety Audits and Certification Programs

GAPs (Good Agricultural Practices):

This is a voluntary program that mostly focuses on water safety, manure management, worker health and hygiene, sanitation, and traceability. The FDA and the USDA have partnered on promoting this program and developing guidelines for it. Farms in states with GAP Programs can contract for an audit of their practices through their Departments of Agriculture. Farms located in states without such programs, such as Massachusetts, can work with third-party auditors for a fee. The Rhode Island GAP Program guidelines are on page 35 of this resource guide.

Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs)- similar set-up, but they address issues inthe packing house and during food preparation. For a copy of the guidelines, contact Claire at CISA, (413)665-7100 or claire@buylocalfood.com.

The Guide at a Glance

The *Guide to Minimize Microbial Food Safety Hazards for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables* In Brief

This *Guide* provides general, broad-based voluntary guidance that may be applied, as appropriate, to individual operations

The *Guide*

- Is intended to assist domestic and foreign growers, packers, and shippers of unprocessed or minimally processed (raw) fresh fruits and vegetables by increasing awareness of potential hazards and providing suggestions for practices to minimize these hazards
- Covers agricultural and postharvest water uses, manure and biosolids, worker health and hygiene, field and facility sanitation, transportation, and traceback.
- Does not impose any new requirements or supercede existing laws or regulations
- Will be most effective when used to evaluate individual operations and to institute good agricultural and good manufacturing practices (GAPs and GMPs) appropriate to the individual operations

Basic Principles include

- Prevention of microbial contamination of fresh produce is favored over reliance on corrective actions once contamination has occurred
- Accountability at all levels of the agricultural and packing environments is important to a successful food safety program

Water

Wherever water comes into contact with fresh produce, its quality dictates the potential for pathogen contamination

Agricultural Water

- Identify source and distribution of water used.
- Be aware of current and historical use of land
- Review existing practices and conditions to identify potential sources of contamination. Consider practices that will protect water quality
- Maintain wells in good working condition
- Consider practices to minimize contact of the edible portion of fresh produce with contaminated irrigation water. Where water quality is good, risk is low regardless of irrigation method

Processing Water

- Follow GMPs to ensure water quality is adequate at the start of and throughout all processes
- Maintain water quality, such as by periodic testing for microbial contamination, changing water regularly, and cleaning and sanitizing water contact surfaces
- Antimicrobial chemicals may help minimize the potential for microbial contamination to be spread by processing water; levels of antimicrobial chemicals should be routinely monitored and recorded to ensure they are maintained at appropriate levels
- As organic material and microbial load increase, the effectiveness of many antimicrobial chemicals will decrease. Filtering recirculating water or scooping organic material from tanks may help reduce the build-up of organic materials

Cooling Operations

- Maintain temperatures that promote optimum produce quality and minimize pathogen growth
- Keep air cooling and chilling equipment clean and sanitary
- Keep water and ice clean and sanitary
- Manufacture, transport, and store ice under sanitary conditions

Manure and Municipal Biosolids

Properly treated manure or biosolids can be an effective and safe fertilizer.

- If manure is used as a fertilizer, it should be managed to minimize microbial hazards
- Federal regulations address the requirements for use of biosolids in the U.S.. Some states also have specific requirements for the use of biosolids. Foreign growers should follow these or similar requirements

Manure

- Use treatments to reduce pathogens in manure and other organic materials. Treatments may be active (e.g., composting) or passive (e.g., aging)
- Manure treatment and storage sites close to fresh produce fields increase the risk of contamination
- Consider factors such as slope and rainfall and the likelihood of runoff into fresh produce production areas
- Use barriers or physical containment to secure storage and treatment sites
- Protect treated manure from being re-contaminated
- When purchasing treated manure, get information about the method of treatment
- Maximize the time between application of manure to production areas and harvest
- Use of raw manure on produce during the growing season is not recommended

Animal Feces

While not possible to exclude all animal life from fresh produce production areas, many field programs include elements to protect crops from animal damage.

- Domestic animals should be excluded from fields and orchards during the growing and harvesting season
- Follow GAPs to ensure animal waste from adjacent fields, pastures, or waste storage facilities does not contaminate fresh produce production areas. Where necessary, consider physical barriers such as ditches, mounds, grass/sod waterways, diversion berms, and vegetative buffer areas
- Control of wild animal populations may be difficult or restricted by animal protection requirements. However, to the extent feasible, where high concentrations of wildlife are a concern, consider practices to deter or redirect wildlife to areas where crops are not destined for fresh produce markets

Worker Health and Hygiene

Infected employees who work with fresh produce increase the risk of transmitting foodborne illness.

- Train employees to follow good hygienic practices
- Establish a training program directed towards health and hygiene – include basics such as proper handwashing techniques and the importance of using toilet facilities
- Become familiar with typical signs and symptoms of infectious diseases

- Offer protection to workers with cuts or lesions on parts of the body that may make contact with fresh produce
- If employees wear gloves, be sure the gloves are used properly and do not become a vehicle for spreading pathogens
- Customer-pick and road-side produce operations should promote good hygienic practices with customers – encourage handwashing, provide toilets that are well equipped, clean, and sanitary and encourage washing fresh produce before consumption

Sanitary Facilities

- Poor management of human and other wastes in the field or packing facility increases the risk of contaminating fresh produce.
- Be familiar with laws and regulations that apply to field and facility sanitation practices
- Toilet facilities should be accessible to workers, properly located, and well supplied
- Keep toilets, handwashing stations, and water containers clean and sanitary
- Use caution when servicing portable toilets to prevent leakage into a field
- Have a plan for containment in the event of waste spillage

Field Sanitation

Fresh produce may become contaminated during pre-harvest and harvest activities from contact with soil, fertilizers, water, workers, and harvesting equipment.

- Clean harvest storage facilities and containers or bins prior to use
- Take care not to contaminate fresh produce that is washed, cooled, or packaged
- Use harvesting and packing equipment appropriately and keep as clean as practicable
- Assign responsibility for equipment to the person in charge

Packing Facility

Maintain packing facilities in good condition to reduce the potential for microbial contamination.

- Remove as much dirt as practicable outside of packing facility
- Clean pallets, containers, or bins before use; discard damaged containers
- Keep packing equipment, packing areas, and storage areas clean
- Store empty containers in a way that protects them from contamination

Pest Control

- Establish and maintain a pest control program
- Block access of pests into enclosed facilities
- Maintain a pest control log

Transportation

Proper transport of fresh produce will help reduce the potential for microbial contamination.

- Good hygienic and sanitation practices should be used when loading, unloading, and inspecting fresh produce
- Inspect transportation vehicles for cleanliness, odors, obvious dirt and debris before loading
- Maintain proper transport temperatures
- Load produce to minimize physical damage

Traceback

> **The ability to identify the source of a product can serve as an important complement to good agricultural and management practices.**

- Develop procedures to track produce containers from the farm, to the packer, distributor, and retailer
- Documentation should indicate the source of the product and other information, such as date of harvest, farm identification, and who handled the produce
- Growers, packers and shippers should partner with transporters, distributors and retailers to develop technologies to facilitate the traceback process

> **Once good agricultural and management practices are in place, ensure that the process is working correctly. Without accountability, the best efforts to minimize microbial contamination are subject to failure.**

Copies of the *Guide to Minimize Microbial Food Safety Hazards for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables*, October 1998, are available from:

Food Safety Initiative Staff (HFS-32)
U.S. Food and Drug Administration
Center for Food safety and Applied Nutrition
200 C Street SW
Washington, DC 20204

(Tel) 202-260-8920

Or on the Internet at:
http://www.fda.gov

RHODE ISLAND GAP PROGRAM GUIDELINES

INTRODUCTION

At the suggestion of health professionals, Americans have increased their consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables by 24% in the past 20 years. However, there has also been a documented increase in foodborne illness outbreaks directly linked to fresh and minimally processed fruits and vegetables. In an effort to respond to this issue and as well as maintain the viability of agriculture in New England, the six land grant universities in the region have developed a research and outreach education program which is funded by USDA. The goal of this program is to use Good Agricultural Practice (GAP) guidelines developed by USDA and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to integrate food safety principles into production of fresh and minimally processed fruits and vegetables.

The glossary of terms includes a listing and definition for agricultural and food safety related terms used throughout the project's educational materials.

The program guidelines are based on the October 1998 document- *The Guidance for Industry: Guide to Minimize Microbial Food Safety Hazards for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables* published by the Food and Drug Administration and USDA. The guidance document addresses common good agricultural practices associated with the production of fruits and vegetables-manure/bio-solids, water, worker hygiene and sanitation-from harvesting to packing. The Rhode Island Program Guidelines and the Farm GAP Audit Form are based on those developed for the New England GAP Project. These Guidelines and the Farm Audit Forman were reviewed by the program advisory committees in the six New England states. The state advisory committees were comprised of state and federal agricultural agencies, university cooperative extension professionals and farmers.

The guidelines as well as the Rhode Island GAP Program Farm Audit Form have been revised periodically to address new issues of concern.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Air Gap is an unobstructed open vertical distance through air that separates an outlet of the potable water supply from a potentially contaminated source like a drain.

Agricultural water refers to water used in the growing environment including water used for irrigation, cooling, frost protection, or as a carrier for fertilizers and pesticides. Typical sources of agricultural water are rivers, streams, irrigation ditches, ponds, reservoirs, lakes, wells, and municipal supplies**.**

Approved Sanitizer is a sanitizer that has been approved by the FDA for use on food and food contact surfaces.

Backflow is flow of contaminated water into the potable water supply caused by backpressure.

Biosolids are the by-product of human waste treatment by local government that may be used as fertilizer or as a soil amendment**.** EPA regulations control their use as a soil conditioner because it may contain possible pathogens and heavy metals.

This fact sheet was developed as part of a New England GAP Project by Cooperative Extension at the Universities of Rhode Island, Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Vermont. This project was funded in part by USDACREES Project Number 2000-95389. RI Cooperative Extension provides equal program opportunities

Clean means that produce and-contact surfaces are washed and rinsed and are visually free of dust, dirt, food residues, and other debris**.**

Compost is organic residue, or a mixture of organic residues and soil that have been piled, moistened and allowed to undergo biological decomposition. Mineral fertilizers are sometimes added.

Contamination is the unintended presence of harmful substances or conditions in food that can cause illness or injury to people who eat the food.

Cross Connection is any physical link through which contaminants from drains, sewers or waste pipes can enter a potable water supply.

Foodborne Illness is an illness transmitted to people through food.

Food-Contact Surfaces are those surfaces that may come in contact with fresh produce. They include equipment, such as containers and conveyor belts which may be used in harvesting, post harvesting, and packing operations.

EPA Drinking Water Standards are standards for drinking water established by the EPA. These standards indicate that the water meets specific microbial standards.

Good Personal Hygiene Practices are good health habits including bathing, washing hair, wearing clean clothing and shoes and proper hand washing. Also, not working with fresh produce when ill with symptoms including coughing, sneezing, diarrhea or uncovered wounds, lesions and boils.

Good Management Practices refer to general practices to reduce microbial food safety hazards. The term may include both "good agricultural practices" used in growing, harvesting, sorting, packing, and storage operations and "good manufacturing practices" used in sorting, packing, storage, and transportation operations.

Manure is animal fecces not composted or incompletely composted. May contain pathogens like Salmonella and E. coli 015:H7.

Manure Slurry is a mixture of manure and water.

Microorganisms include yeasts, molds, bacteria, protozoa, helminths (worms), and viruses. Occasionally, the term "microbe" or "microbial" is used instead of the term "microorganism."

Microbial Hazard means occurrence of a microorganism that has the potential to cause illness or injury**.**

Pathogen means a microorganism capable of causing disease in humans.

Pest refers to any animal or insect of public health importance including, but not limited to, birds, rodents, cockroaches, flies, and larvae, that may carry pathogens that can contaminate food**.**

Potable Water refers to water that meets the EPA drinking water standards.

Processing Water means water used for post-harvest treatment of produce, such as washing, cooling, waxing, and product transport.

Trace-back is the ability to track fresh produce items back to their source including growers, packers and transporters. This may be helpful in identifying and eliminating a potential hazard in the farm to table pathway.

Sanitary means the food contact surface is clean and free of harmful microorganisms and other contaminants.

Sanitizing means to adequately treat clean food-contact surfaces by a process that is effective in destroying or reducing the numbers of harmful microorganisms without affecting the quality of the food or its safety for the consumer.

Sanitizer is a chemical compound designed to kill microorganisms.

Rinsing means removing residues, soil, grease, soap and detergents from surfaces by flushing with potable water.

Washing means removing all soil or food residues from surfaces by scrubbing and using potable water and soap.

Worker Training Program includes training and information sharing sessions for all workers. The training focuses on good personal hygiene practices in the field and packinghouse. Also practices in relation to reducing the risk of foodborne illness through good agricultural practices.

REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

- ***Guide to Minimize Microbial Food Safety Hazards for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables*** http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/prodguid.html
  US Department of Health and Human Services, Food and Drug Administration
  Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (CFSAN), October, 1998
  Food Safety Initiative Staff, HFS-32
  U.S. Food and Drug Administration,Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition
  200 C Street S.W. Washington, D. C. 20204

- **Food Safety Begins on the Farm: A Grower's Guide**
  Good Agricultural Practices for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables
  Anusuya Rangarajan, Elizabeth A. Bihn, Robert B. Gravani, Donna L. Scott, and Marvin P. Pritts. Cornell University Good Agricultural Practices Program
  (607) 254-5383, eab38@cornell.edu

- **Kansas Food *A* Syst- A Food Safety Risk Management Guide for the Producers**
  Karen P Penner, Judy Willingham, Department of Animal Sciences and Industry, Kansas State Unviversity-http://www.oznet.ksu.edu

- McSwane, D., Rue, N., Linton, R., Essentials of Food Safety and Sanitation, Upper Saddle River, NJ, Prentice Hall,

RHODE ISLAND GAP PROGRAM GUILDELINES

I. Water Sources for Irrigation and Drinkable Water (potable water)

A. Wells are protected from outside contamination.

B. Drinkable water supply and/or wells are tested at least once a year.

C. Water source(s) used for washing produce are located the distance required by local/state regulations from the manure storage facility, livestock areas, pesticide storage area and septic system drainage field.

D. Water used to clean and/or sanitize produce and for human consumption meets current EPA drinking water standards.

E. Records of all water tests on file.

F. Backflow devices and air gaps are installed at appropriate locations.

G. Good management practices are in place to protect the quality of irrigation water.

H. Farm livestock access to ponds and streams used for irrigation is limited.

II. Good Manure/Bio-solids Management Practices

A. Storage and treatment facilities located as far as practical and possible from growing and handling areas.

B. Storage and treatment facilities include physical barriers that prevent leakage, run-off or wind spread.

C. There is a manure management plan in place that meets current USDA standards and includes:

1. A fly control program
2. Manure is incorporated into the soil immediately after application
3. Measures are in place to minimize recontamination of composted manure
4. Fresh manure in any form is kept away from edible plant parts during the growing season.

D. Use of manure in any form during the growing season should be in accordance with USDA and/or state regulations.

E. Equipment that comes in contact with manure/bio-solids in any form is cleaned prior to and during harvest and/or transportation of fresh produce.

F. Biosolids are applied in accordance with local regulations/processor instructions.

III. In the Fields

A. Worker Health and Hygiene
1. Worker food safety training is in place.

2. Workers and supervisors practice good personal hygiene which includes:
    a. Clean clothing, shoes/boots
    b. No smoking or eating in work area
    c. Hair is covered
    d. Wash hands as required
    e. Limited bare hand contact with fresh produce.
    f. Open would are covered with clean bandage and a single-use glove is worn over the bandage.

3. Field workers have easy access to toilet and hand washing facilities.

4. Supervisors are aware of the symptoms of foodborne illnesses.

5. Sick employees and those with open wounds are reassigned to duties where there is no direct contact with produce.

B. Sanitary Facilities
1. Toilet facilities and hand washing stations are clean and regularly serviced (soap, water, single use paper towels).

2. Portable toilets are maintained and transported in a manner that prevents wastewater from contaminating fields.

C. Sanitation
1. Harvest storage containers are cleaned prior to use.

2. Clean containers are kept covered until used in the field.

3. Harvesting equipment is kept clean and in good working-order.

4. Harvested produce does not come in contact with manure/biosolids, nonpotable water, workers with poor hygiene and/or dirty boots and clothing, dirty packaging or storage containers.

5. Farm livestock, including poultry and/or pets, are restricted from fields or orchards where crops are grown and harvested.

IV. In the Packing/ Processing Facility (check with the local regulatory authority to determine if the facility must be licensed and meet regulatory standards).

A. Worker Health and Hygiene
1. Worker food safety training in place.

2. Workers practice good personal hygiene
    a. Clean clothing and shoes/boots
    b. No smoking or eating in work area
    c. Hair covered
    d. Wash hands as required.
    e. Limit bare-hand contact with fresh produce.
    f. Open wounds covered with a clean bandage and single- use glove

3. Sick employees and those with uncovered open wounds, sores, etc are assigned to other duties having is no direct contact with fresh produce.

B. Sanitary Facilities
1. Restrooms are accessible and well serviced (cleaned regularly and well supplied with water, soap and paper towels)

C. Sanitation
1. Approved sanitizers used to sanitize food contact surfaces.

2. Area and equipment cleaned and sanitized at least once a day.

3. Unused and new packing containers protected from contamination during storage.

4. Pest control system in place.

5. Produce waste is removed daily.

6. Grounds maintained in good condition.

D. Temperature Control
1. Refrigeration storage units are maintained at the correct temperature

2. Refrigeration units not loaded beyond capacity.

3. Ice used for cooling is made of potable water**.**

D. Storage of Harvested Crops
1. Storage areas are clean and free of contamination.

2. Storage areas are used exclusively for food crops.

3. Depending on the nature of the crop, produce is stored at least six inches off the floor.

F. Washing Operations
1. Sanitizer leveled monitored.

2. Wash water is changed when dirty or after several hours.

3. Wash water changed when dirty or after several hours and maintained at temperature no more than 10 degrees cooler than the produce.

4. Packing lines, conveyer belts and all other food contact surfaces are washed, rinsed and sanitized at the end of the day.

V. Transportation-Farm to Market

A. Workers loading and transporting produce practice good personal hygiene.

B. Harvested produce loaded and stored in a manner to minimize physical damage and reduce risk of contamination during transport and to allow for air circulation.

C. Vehicles used to transport fresh produce to market are clean and well maintained.

D. Vehicles used to transport produce are not used to transport animals or animal products.

VI. Traceback Systems

A. Records are maintained for all produce leaving the farm.

VII. Pick Your Own Operations-Field Sanitation (could also apply to those who give farm tours)

A. Pets and farm livestock are not allowed in "pick your own" area

B. Toilet facilities and handwashing stations are clean, regularly serviced and maintained in good working order (soap, water and single-use paper towels) and available for customer use.

C. Clean containers available are for customer purchase and use.

D. Produce picked by customers not accepted for sale.

E. Facilities are available for customers to wash hands after coming in contact with farm animals (petting zoo) prior to entering "pick your own" area.

VIII Retail Operations

A. The facility is clean and maintained in an orderly manner.

B. The farmstand's walls, ceilings, and floors are maintained and free of major cracks and crevices.

C. The ambient air temperature in refrigeration units is monitored on a regular basis and temperature logs are maintained.

D. The area in and around the retail operation is free of debris and litter.

E. Only foodgrade containers are used to hold produce that is for sale.

F. The area around the retail operation is free of standing water.

G. Outside garbage receptacles/dumpsters are closed and located away from the retail operation entrances and the area around them free of debris.

H. Pets and animals are not allowed in the retail area.

I. Produce that is normally displayed in water that is clean and changed often.

J. All sliced fruits are wrapped and displayed on ice or in a refrigerated display case.

K. There is a pest control program in place

Guidelines 2/26/02, Revised 2/02/04, 3/08

This fact sheet was developed as part of the New England Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) Project by Cooperative Extension at the Universities of Rhode Island, Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Vermont. This project was funded in part by USDA CREES (agency number 00511109723), Project Number 2000-95389. Rhode Island Cooperative Extension provides equal program opportunities

PART III: Relationship Building

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN FARMS AND SCHOOLS

Based on a workshop led by Kelly Erwin, Managing Consultant of the Massachusetts Farm to School Project, and Ann Pitzen, Food Service Director of the Auburn and Leicester Public Schools.

There are many complex forces shaping the current state of school lunches, and it's important to understand the challenges and limitations that schools and farmers face when beginning to work together. The Massachusetts Farm to School Project has been linking farms and school cafeteria for years, and worked with many the of the 160 public schools that are currently buying directly from 60 Massachusetts farms. Kelly Erwin shared some of her resources and her tips for building strong, sustainable farm to school relationships.

Massachusetts Farm to School Project Background

A few years ago, there were fewer than 12 farms in MA selling to schools, and only a handful of colleges buying local food.

The Farm to School Project worked with Project Bread (an anti-hunger organization based in Boston, www.projectbread.org) to bring local food into the summer feeding programs in Westfield, Chicopee, Lawrence and Lowell. New sites this year include Greenfield, Pittsfield, Quincy, Gloucester, Plymouth.

Opportunities in working with public schools:

Because nutrition in public schools is of interest to a broad spectrum of organizations, partnerships (such as the partnership with Project Bread) can help get things started.

This is a good time to be working with schools due to increased concern about obesity, diabetes, etc. Schools are looking for ways to show they're doing well by the kids.

Main challenges of working with public schools

School lunch budgets are independent of the rest of the school budget, so are therefore very, very tight.

The harvest season extends only into the first few months of the school year, which means that farmers cannot currently supply produce year-round.

Opportunities in working with colleges

Students are older and more engaged- a survey at Amherst College, Hampshire College, UMass & Mt. Holyoke revealed that of 1510 students, 79% said they would like to see more locally grown food served in their dining services.

College dining services are in competition with each other and therefore more willing to try a local food initiative.

Parents often pay for meal plans and are therefore interested in the quality of the meals offered.

Challenges of working with colleges

Most of the MA college market is run by food service management companies, such as Aramark, Sodexho, Chartwells, or Bon Appetit.

Many colleges have professional organizations as their primary affiliations: SNA (School Nutrition Association) and NACUFS (National Association of College and University Food Service.) Both are funded by food giants.

Getting Started and Best Practices

Starting questions:

What are their (either the farmer or the food service manager) needs? To find out, ask them!

Can you meet those needs?

Do you want to do business, now that you know what they need? Will you need additional resources to meet needs?

What are their objections to doing business with you?

Can you overcome these objections? Are they specific to the situation or are they indicative of larger system of community problems?

Best Practices:

Communicate and trouble-shoot. Good sales communication is crucial to success.

Do research, know about their trade associations etc.

Work to put public schools in clusters to make delivery more manageable. Linking groups of public schools w/ a hospital or college can help too.

The more time invested up front in building these relationships, the better.

Don't promise what you can't give. Our job is to facilitate, not to make the impossible happen.

Both sides need to see benefits, good communication, and to have a good relationship.

Purchasing on the Ground

Ann Pitzen is the Food Service Director of the Auburn and Leicester Public Schools. She is committed to purchasing local food for the districts she runs, and she shared some insights into local purchasing from the school perspective. Ann has seen lots of benefits to purchasing local food – serving locally-grown food has even increased lunch sales at her schools!

Purchasing practices for schools:

Collaborative bids- small school systems often collaborate for procurement.

Systems with central kitchens or central storage will place larger bulk orders to save money.

The state contracts are really driven by the prison system, so there isn't too much overlap with schools. A few years ago, there was a push for schools to use the state contracts, but the companies that were placing bids weren't accounting for selling to schools and the small orders and multiple deliveries that entails. So while the paperwork was not prohibitive, the customer service was not great. Plus, schools already have their own systems in place and often don't want to disrupt those to use the state contracts.

Ann reiterated that the main factors that limit farm sales to schools are: lack of information/training on the cafeteria side, limited time, space, and money, and logistical struggles such as delivery and storage.

Factors Related to Farm-to-School Sales Success

Contact Mass. Farm to School Project for assistance 413-253-3844, kelerwin@localnet.com

A. Successful sales relationships require farms and schools with complementary needs. Small schools and small farms should seek each other out; small schools are not usually a reasonable customer for a larger scale farm. Ask questions about size!

B. A farmer should evaluate a school upfront for sales potential. This includes a guess about how flexible it might become about delivery requirements and how much more product the school might buy later, after it begins to use local foods and develops a relationship with the farm. Don't be afraid to state your bottom line in terms of minimum order size or delivery limitations.

C. Most schools are able to pay a good price for local products and they are steady, if sometimes slow-paying customers. They are usually more profitable customers for farms if they have a summer feeding program, have adequate food preparation equipment and staff, and especially if they buy a lot of small fruit or tree fruit.

D. Schools are not set up to make quick decisions about purchasing, often create menus a month in advance, and need help understanding that a farm is not a warehouse, but rather that products come into season and go out of season.

E. Schools are accustomed to being served by salespeople, so farmers have to stay in touch - weekly faxes or phone calls are very useful.

F. Diversity of fresh products is an important component of keeping a school customer. Minimally processed products are popular, such as peeled potatoes, carrot sticks, etc. Over time, if there's good communication, school food purchasers can begin to buy a surprising volume and diversity of products.

G. Community awareness and support for the school's efforts helps!

Evaluating Schools as Possible Customers….

Number of Students in School or District/Number of Meals Eaten Per Day

Summer Feeding Programs?

Location of School(s) Relative to Existing Farm Delivery Routes

Number of Delivery Locations Required

Ability of School Kitchen(s) to Process Raw Products

Ability of School Food Service Director to Choose Vendors
(Food Service Management Company or Independent?)

Food Service Director's Motivation/Ability to Motivate Purchasing and Cooking Staff

Are the Consumers/Administrators Pressing for Locally Grown Foods?

Evaluating Farms as Possible Profitable Vendors to Schools….

Match Farms' Capacity to Sell and Deliver to Schools' Needs - Size, Value, and Type of Orders, Number of Locations, Time of Day for Deliveries

Have the Ability to Communicate Regularly with Schools and Keep Track of Orders

Have a Diversified Products List, or Can Easily Purchase Local Products from Other Farms- Extend Season in All Ways Possible

Value-Added Products

Set Profitable Prices and a Minimum Per Location Order, as Needed

MASSACHUSETTS SCHOOLS THAT PURCHASED LOCALLY GROWN FOODS

DURING '07-'08 SCHOOL YEAR

AN INFORMAL SURVEY BY THE MASSACHUSETTS FARM TO SCHOOL PROJECT

The 167 districts below reported they preferentially purchased local foods in 07-08. At least EIGHTY of these districts purchased some or all of their local foods directly from more than SIXTY Massachusetts farms.

There were about 411,600 students enrolled in the public schools listed below. This is about FORTY TWO PERCENT of the total statewide enrollment of about 963,000 pupils.

Public School Districts

Abington
Acushnet
Adams-Cheshire Reg
Agawam
Andover
Amherst
Amherst-Pelham Reg
Ashland
Athol-Royalston Reg
Attleboro
Auburn
Ayer
Barnes & Federick (BPS)
Baypath Regional Voc. Tech
Bedford
Belchertown
Bellingham
Belmont
Berkshire Hills Reg
Berlin- Boylston Reg
Bernardston
Beverly
Blackstone-Millville Reg
Blue Hills Reg
Boylston
Boxborough
Boxford
Bristol County Agricultural
Brookline
Cambridge
Canton
Carver
Central Berkshire Reg
Chesterfield-Goshen
Chicopee
Cohasset
Colrain
Community Day Charter
Concord
Concord-Carlisle
Conway
Danvers
Dartmouth
Dedham
Deerfield
Dover-Sherborn Reg
Douglas
Dracut
Dudley-Charlton Reg
Duxbury
Easthampton
Edgartown
East Longmeadow
Florida
Franklin County Tech
Frontier Reg
Gateway Reg
Georgetown
Gill/Montague Reg
Gloucester
Granby
Granville
Greenfield
Groton-Dunstable Reg
Hadley
Hamilton-Wenham Reg
Hampden-Wilbraham
Hampshire Reg
Harvard
Hatfield
Hawlemont
Heath
Hingham
Hudson
Ipswich
Kingston
Lakeville
Lanesboro
Lawrence
Lenox
Leominster
Leverett
Lexington
Lincoln
Littleton
Longmeadow
Lowell
Lunenburg
Mahar Reg
Marblehead Charter
Marlboro
Malden
Manchester-Essex
Mansfield
Masconomet Reg
Maynard
Medfield
Mendon-Upton Reg
Middleboro
Milford
Milton
Mohawk Trail Reg
Monson
Montachusett Reg
Mount Greylock Reg
Narragansett Reg
Nashoba Reg
New Salem-Wendell
Newton
Norfolk County Agric
North Brookfield
North Reading
North Shore Tech
Northboro-Southboro
Northbridge
Northampton
Norwood
Oxford
Orange
Palmer
Peabody
Pioneer Valley Reg
Pittsfield
Plainville
Plymouth
Quaboag Reg
Randolph
Richmond
Rockport
Rowe
Scituate
Saugus
Shawsheen Valley Voc
Sherborn
Shrewsbury
Smith Vocational
Somerville
South Middlesex Reg
South Shore Reg
Southampton
Southern Berkshire Reg
Southwick-Tolland Reg
Spencer-East Brookfield Reg
Stoneham
Stoughton
Sudbury
Sunderland
Swampscott
Tantasqua Reg
Tewksbury
Uxbridge
Wachusett Reg
Waltham
Ware
Warren
Wayland
Webster
West Boylston
Westfield
Westhampton
Westport
Weston
Whately
Wilmington
Williamsburg
Worcester
Wrentham

CONTACT: Kelly Erwin at **413-3844** or **kelerwin@localnet.com** - **Mass. Farm to School Project**

MASSACHUSETTS SCHOOLS THAT PURCHASED LOCALLY GROWN FOODS 07-08 continued

- At least 24 of these colleges and private schools preferentially purchased some or all of their locally grown foods directly from more than 20 Massachusetts farms.

- About 115,000 students were enrolled in these Massachusetts colleges and private schools and so had access to local foods on campus.

Private Schools K-12

Bement
Buxton
Cambridge School of Weston
Dana Hall
Deerfield Academy
Eaglebrook
Fessenden
Governor Academy
Hartsbrook
Meadowbrook
Miss Hall's
Phillips Andover
Northfield Mt. Hermon
Stoneleigh Burnham
Williston
Worcester Academy

Colleges and Universities

Amherst College
Boston College
Clark University
Emmanuel College
Hampshire College
Harvard University
Holy Cross College
Mass. College of Liberal Arts
MIT
Mount Holyoke College
Smith College
Springfield College
Tufts University
University of Massachusetts at Amherst
Wellesley College
Williams College
Worcester Polytechnic Institute

Massachusetts Farm to School

Local Farms and Schools- A Perfect Match!

Utilizing ten percent of our land, 6,100 family-owned Massachusetts farms provide environmental stewardship of water and soil while also providing employment and much of our open space and woodlands.

Strengthening family-owned farms in Massachusetts by selling locally grown food is beneficial to the overall health of our children, state economy and environment.

Childhood obesity and associated illnesses, such as diabetes, are increasing amongst school age children at an alarming rate. Incorporating fresh, local foods into cafeteria menus is one way to encourage healthier diets.

Farm Fresh Food Is Served to Students Here!

- Over **160** public school districts across Mass. now preferentially purchase locally grown food.
- **30** colleges and universities in Mass. are buying local foods for dining services.
- **16** independent k-12 schools are also serving locally grown foods.
- At least **60** farms across the state are selling their fresh products directly to schools.

Looking for Assistance?

The non-profit Mass. Farm to School Project works with both food service directors and local farmers to help facilitate sales. Here is a brief list of what we can offer:

- **Technical Assistance**
  Working through the details to ensure a sustainable farm to school "match"!
- **Research**
  Surveying schools and farms across the state to get a sense of who is purchasing local foods and who is selling to schools.
- **Promotion**
  Organizing a vibrant statewide Mass. Harvest for Students Week.
- **Training and Policy**
  Presentations on farm to school issues, successes, and challenges.

We'd love to hear from you!

Massachusetts Farm to School Project
400 Amity Street, Suite 2
Amherst, MA 01002
(413) 253-3844
kelerwin@localnet.com

www.mass.gov/agr/markets/Farm_to_school

-SCHOOL DINING SERVICES-

LOCAL FOODS PROCUREMENT WORKSHEET

Here are some tips from the Mass. Farm to School Project. There are **three major components** to making your search more productive. First, **have detailed information** about your operation ready to share with a prospective farm products vendor. Second, be ready to **ask basic questions** of the farmer/vendor. Third, in order to fully utilize fresh fruits and vegetables which are seasonal, and to build a mutually advantageous relationship with a local farmer or distributor, **flexibility** is required.

STEP ONE: PREPARE INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR OPERATION

HAVE BASIC INFORMATION READY FOR FARMER OR DISTRIBUTOR CONVERSATIONS

1. Your name, and the name and location of your college or school

2. Best way to reach you, and best times to call or visit

3. Do you want as many types of food as you can get, or are only some items of interest (this can change over time but it's good to mention your priorities now)

4. Rough estimate of your weekly orders, either by dollar amount or by product volume (choose a month when seasonal foods are bountiful, and do not include items like bananas, which cannot be purchased from a local source)

5. Number of locations where you want deliveries, at what time, and on what day

6. Do you serve meals in the summer (if yes, tell the farmer the dates, delivery locations, and size of orders for summer vs. regular school year)

7. Name(s) and phone number(s) of other staff with whom farmer or distributor should interact

8. How does farmer become an official vendor for your operation - paperwork required - (can the packing slip serve as an invoice or must bills be sent to a separate location)

9. How and when do you prefer to place orders (fax, email, phone)

10. How long will it take farmer to get paid

STEP TWO: TALKING WITH A LOCAL FARMER

ASK THESE QUESTIONS, AND PREPARE OTHERS AS NEEDED

1. Is the farmer interested in, or already selling to, colleges or schools?

- OVER -

2. Might he/she be interested in your school, which is located in.....

3. Tell the farmer about your operation and then find out more about his/hers -
   GIVE THE FARMER THE BASIC INFORMATION WHICH YOU PREPARED ABOVE

4. What products does the farm sell

5. When does the farm have products available for sale

6. Would the farmer pick up products from other farms for sale to the college

7. Does the farmer have a delivery truck and the ability to deliver regularly

8. Does the farmer require a minimum purchase per delivery location, or per invoice

9. Other questions you want to remember to ask

_____

_____

STEP THREE: TALKING WITH A NON-FARM VENDOR ABOUT LOCAL ITEMS

ASK THESE QUESTIONS, AND PREPARE OTHERS AS NEEDED

1. Can the vendor give you a list of local farms from which products have been procured in the past, and a sense of how often local foods will be available

2. Can the vendor give you a list of the local items that were offered to customers in the past year

3. Does the vendor have a system in place to alert you to which products are in season and available each week

4. Will the vendor pick up local products at the farm gate and deliver them directly to you; if not, how are locally grown foods tracked or segregated in the warehouse

5. Are products delivered to the customer in boxes which note the farm of origin, or which identify in some way that the items were locally grown

6. Can the vendor provide you with promotional materials from the farms whose products they sell

7. Other questions you want to remember to ask

_____

_____

Massachusetts Organizations working on Farm to School and related issues

Berkshire Grown: Based in Great Barrington. Works with farmers and restaurants in and around Berkshire County to strengthen local markets for agricultural products. Contact: Barbara Zheutlin, (413) 528-0041 or Barbara@berkshiregrown.org. Online at: www.berkshiregrown.org

CISA (Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture): Based in South Deerfield, works throughout Franklin, Hampshire and Hampden Counties. Links farmers and communities to strengthen agriculture, and addresses farm to school issues through a quarterly e-newsletter and technical assistance offerings. Contact: Claire Morenon, (413)665-7100 or claire@buylocalfood.com. Online at: www.buylocalfood.com

Fertile Ground: Based in Williamsburg. Works with schools to build school garden programs and community partnerships. Contact: Catherine Sands, (413) 268-7334 or garlic@fertilegroundschools.org. Online at www.fertilegroundschools.org

The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts: Based in Hatfield, works throughout the Pioneer Valley and Berkshire County. Through the Target:Hunger Program, the Food Bank is working to build long-term solutions to hunger and food insecurity in the Mason Square neighborhood of Springfield and in the northern Berkshires. Contact: Andrew Morehouse, (413) 247-9738 or andrewm@foodbankwma.org. Online at: www.foodbankwma.org

The Food Project: Based in Boston. Creates fertile ground for new ideas about youth and adults partnering to create social change through sustainable agriculture. Their Real Food Challenge is especially focused on working with college students to address food issues on campus. Contact: Marissa Grossman at 617-442-1322 x 19 or marissa@realfoodchallenge.org. Online at: www.thefoodproject.org

Massachusetts Agriculture in the Classroom: Based in Seekonk, works statewide. Organizes trainings to help teachers bring agriculture into their classrooms. Contact: Debi Hogan, (508) 336-4426 or dchogan@sprynet.com. Online at: www.aginclassroom.org

Massachusetts Farm to School Project: Based in Amherst, works statewide. Provides technical assistance to farms and schools as they work to build farm to cafeteria relationships. Contact: Kelly Erwin, (413) 253-3844 or kelerwin@localnet.com . Online at: www.mass.gov/agr/markets/Farm_to_school/index.htm

Project Bread: Works to end hunger in Massachusetts, and with schools on increasing food access through breakfast programs and summer feeding programs. Contact: 617-723-5000 or info@projectbread.org. Online at: www.projectbread.org

School Sprouts: Develops and manages school garden programs, primarily in Holyoke MA. Contact: Hope Guardenier at (413) 657-000 or hopeguardenier@msn.com.

Massachusetts Organizations working on Farm to School and related issues (con't)

Seeds of Solidarity Education Center: Based in Orange. Provides people of all ages with the inspiration and practical tools to use renewable energy and grow food in their communities. Contact: Deb Habib, (978) 544-9023 or solidarity@seedsofsolidarity.org. Online at: www.seedsofsolidarity.org

SEMAP (Southeastern Massachusetts Agricultural Partnership): Based in East Wareham. Helps agricultural enterprises in southeastern Massachusetts achieve economic success through market development and business/technical assistance. Contact: Sarah Kelley, (508) 295-2212 x 50 or skelley@semaponline.org. Online at: www.umassd.edu/semap/

National Farm to School Network

Jointly managed by the Center for Food and Justice and the Community Food Security Coalition, the National Farm to School Network offers resources on wide variety of farm to school-related subjects. Visit www.farmtoschool.org to find farm to school projects around the country, learn about relevant policy, or sign up for their monthly enewsletter.