

# Farm-to-Cafeteria Connections

By Kelli Sanger and Leslie Zenz



Marketing Opportunities for Small Farms in Washington State

Cover artwork by Vickie Daniels, graphic designer, Washington Fruit Commission.

Photos: *Fresh vegetable farm*–Leslie Zenz

*The Evergreen State College Food Services*–Leslie Zenz

*Lincoln Elementary Students*–Vanessa Ruddy



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# **Farm-to-Cafeteria Connections: Marketing Opportunities for Small Farms in Washington State**

By Kelli Sanger and Leslie Zenz

A Publication of the Washington State Department of Agriculture  
Small Farm and Direct Marketing Program  
Valoria Loveland, Director

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## ***How to use this handbook***

This handbook is designed to be a resource for farmers, food service professionals and community members in developing Farm-to-Cafeteria programs in Washington. It provides locally relevant information and an overall look at Farm-to-Cafeteria programs from all across the country. Much of the information provided in this handbook can be applied to serving locally produced foods at workplace cafeterias and private restaurants as well.

For information on national and state rules and policies affecting Farm-to-Cafeteria programs, read Section I.

For general information on what Farm-to-Cafeteria programs look like across the U. S. and different types of Farm-to-Cafeteria programs, read Section II.

For specific information relevant to each groups perspective on farm to cafeteria, read the following sections:

- **Farmers, Section III;**
- **Food service professionals, Section IV,**
- **Community members and organizers, Section V.**

## ***About the WSDA Small Farm and Direct Marketing Program***

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The mission of the WSDA Small Farm and Direct Marketing Program is to increase the economic viability of small farms, build community vitality, and improve the environmental quality of the region by facilitating direct marketing opportunities and addressing market barriers for small farms in Washington.

The SFDM program targets four goals:

- Support small farms in complying with federal, state, and local regulations and policies as they apply to direct marketing of farm products;
- Facilitate direct marketing opportunities and promote localized food systems;
- Assist in developing infrastructure such as processing facilities, commercial kitchens, and distribution models to support market access for small farms; and
- Actively involve stakeholders in program development and increase customer awareness of SFDM activities.

## ***About USDA Risk Management Agency***

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The USDA Risk Management Agency (RMA) provides agricultural producers with the opportunity to achieve financial stability through effective risk management tools. The primary goal of RMA is to foster, at reasonable cost, an environment of financial stability, safety, and confidence, enabling the American agricultural producer to manage the perils associated with nature and markets.

RMA works with private and public organizations to provide producers with an effective farm safety net. The crop insurance industry markets, delivers, and services many USDA risk management products. RMA provides education and outreach opportunities to help producers choose appropriate risk management tools.

For more information on crop insurance products offered to Washington producers for conventional and organic crops, contact a local crop insurance agent. Lists of agents are available at <http://www.rma.usda.gov/tools/agents> or by contacting the office below.

RMA's Spokane Regional Office (serves Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington),  
Dave Paul, Director  
Jo Lynne Seufer, Outreach Coordinator  
(509) 353-2147  
<http://www.rma.usda.gov>

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# Terms

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The following terms are used throughout this handbook. They have been provided here with definition for a clearer understanding of each.

Community Supported Agriculture: A marketing system where customers buy “shares” in a farm’s harvest. Customers pay a sum at the beginning of the season, providing the farm with up-front capital. In return, each customer receives a weekly allotment of produce. The produce is either delivered to the customer’s door or a drop-off site, or it can be picked up at the farm. Recently, this concept has been extended to restaurants (Restaurant Supported Agriculture Shares) and other institutional customers (Institutional Supported Agriculture).

Farm-to-Cafeteria- A program to serve locally produced foods from area farmers in institutional cafeterias and educate children, students, adults and communities about local food and farming.

Direct Marketing: Marketing strategies in which the farmer or producer sells their products directly. Farmers are engaged in personally selling their products and avoiding the use of a broker or a wholesaler.

Institution: Any large facility where food is prepared in a central kitchen and/or served in a cafeteria setting for a large group of people. This includes K-12 schools, colleges, universities, hospitals, nursing homes, state prisons, state-operated social institutions and group homes. Institutions operated by county, city and port governments, private and corporate companies that prepare food for employees or residents are included in this definition.

Small Farm: USDA defines a small farm as a farm with less than \$250,000 gross annual sales, on which the day-to-day labor and management are provided by the farmer and/or the farm family that owns, or leases the productive assets of the farm.

Limited-resource farm: Any small farm with gross sales less than \$100,000, total farm assets less than \$150,000, and total operator household income less than \$20,000. Limited-resource farmers may report farming, a non-farm occupation, or retirement as their major occupation (Hoppe, 1).

Vendor: Any business that sells products to institutional food services. Often times, food service vendors that supply large variety and quantities of foods, supplying everything from fresh and canned tomatoes to frozen meats etc. Some vendors specialize in specific types of foods, such as fresh produce. Farms are considered a food service vendor if they market and sell their products directly to institutional food services.



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# I. Introduction



Photo: Leslie Zenz

# *What is Farm to Cafeteria?*

**F**arm-to-Cafeteria is the name we use in this handbook to describe programs that promote and serve locally produced foods in cafeterias of K-12 schools, colleges, universities, hospitals, nursing homes, businesses and other institutions.

Farm-to-Cafeteria programs take many forms. In addition to providing local markets for farms, they can involve a variety of activities. Farm-to-Cafeteria programs often integrate education about local food and farming issues with the food served in the cafeteria. They may distinguish locally produced foods in the cafeteria, host special event meals with local farm organizations, develop nutrition curriculum around school gardens and cafeteria meals, and coordinate field trips or class visits to farms in the area.

## **Goals of Farm-to-Cafeteria Programs**

The goals of a Farm-to-Cafeteria program are determined by the individuals who create it. Farm-to-Cafeteria programs often have goals to:

- Increase marketing opportunities for small farms
- Support local farmers and the local economy.
- Educate eaters about local farming and food systems.
- Improve the quality of foods served in the cafeteria.
- Improve nutrition and prevent obesity and obesity-related diseases.
- Improve institution-community relationships.

For farmers, food service professionals and community organizers, Farm-to-Cafeteria programs are an opportunity to work together to achieve the goals of many, while providing access to fresh nutritious foods where many people eat in their daily lives—*THE CAFETERIA*.

# ***Benefits of Farm-to-Cafeteria Projects***

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## **Improve Nutrition of Washington Children and Adults**

Serving local fruits and vegetables in cafeterias increases opportunities for healthy eating. The percentage of people in Washington who are overweight doubled between 1990 and 2000 according to the Washington State Department of Health (DOH), mirroring a national trend. High-calorie diets and sedentary lifestyles are putting more people at risk of the many health complications that are triggered by being overweight. (WA State Dept. of Health, 1)

The US Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that more than 60% of young people eat too much fat, and less than 20% eat the recommended five or more servings of fruits and vegetables each day; only about one-fourth of US adults eat the recommended servings of fruits and vegetables each day.

DOH is working with the CDC and others to find ways to address the causes of obesity, including the “environmental” causes, such as the type of foods offered in a cafeteria. DOH notes that it is difficult for employees and students to eat a well-balanced meal when workplace and school cafeterias don’t offer healthy choices.

When fresh, ripe fruits and vegetables are served in the cafeteria, students and adults have been found to increase their fruit and vegetable consumption. At the Olympia School District, elementary students and staff in two schools have increased their fruit and vegetable servings by 25% and 29% since the introduction of an “organic choices salad bar” that features locally grown and organic foods (Flock et al, 8).

## **Increase Access to Fresh, Healthy Foods**

Serving local fruits and vegetables in cafeterias increases access to fresh foods that are hard to obtain when eating away from home. Likewise, fresh foods are even harder for low-income families to obtain. Farm-to-Cafeteria programs can increase the amount of fresh foods served in school lunch and breakfast programs. As increasing numbers of students and adults eat meals away from home, cafeterias can play an important role in increasing community access to fresh, flavorful foods.

## **Increase Marketing Opportunities For Local Farms**

Farm-to-Cafeteria programs can provide a steady, reliable marketing outlet for farms. This local marketing can be an effective way for small-to-medium scale farms to diversify their marketing and ensure their economic viability in the marketplace.

Farm-to-Cafeteria programs offer farmers the opportunity to sell large quantities to a few local customers, reducing labor and transportation costs. Institutional markets offer lower prices than retail outlets like farmers markets, but allow farmers who sell directly to an institution to capture a higher percentage of the food dollar than when selling to wholesale distributors.

## **Strengthen Local Economies**

Buying locally produced food supports local farms and increases local economic activity. Money that is spent at a local business or farm circulates within that community between six and fifteen times, supporting local farms, businesses, people and communities over and over again. When individuals or institutions

purchase goods and services from a local business, each dollar spent creates \$5 to \$14 in value for the local community (Tim Mitchell, in Glickman, 2). Funds spent locally generate additional tax revenue for local governments, allowing them to provide needed community services.

### **Increase Community Awareness of Local Farming and Food Systems**

There is an increasing number of consumers who desire locally grown, fresh, and distinctive products. Likewise, there is a growing consumer awareness of the economic, social and environmental contributions of local farms and food production to their communities. These trends are illustrated by the rising popularity of

farmers markets, Community Supported Agriculture (harvest share) programs, and by increasing numbers of restaurants buying local foods.

When foods that are grown locally are processed and consumed by local people, this is called a local food system. Like farmers markets, and local restaurants that source local foods, Farm-to-Cafeteria programs are another link in the local food system. When local food systems are enhanced, farms are more economically viable, farmland is more likely to be preserved for agricultural purposes, and less energy is required to transport food over great distances, and people from all economic classes have greater access to healthy foods.

# ***State and Federal Policy Support Farm-to-Cafeteria Programs***

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The value of purchasing and serving local food products has received increased recognition from both the state and federal government.

## **State of Washington Support**

The state of Washington has put its support for Farm-to-Cafeteria programs in state law. Under legislation enacted in 2002, the Department of General Administration (GA), through its Office of State Procurement, is to encourage state and local agencies doing business with the department to purchase Washington fruit, vegetables, and agricultural products when available.

The legislation directed GA to work with the Washington State Department of Agriculture and others to increase the amount of Washington-grown products purchased by state agencies, institutions and schools. (RCW 43.19.706)

In response to the legislation, GA conducted an assessment of the current rate of utilization of Washington products in the state master contracts. GA has also met with contract suppliers to gauge the interest among these private parties in sourcing locally produced products and to encourage them to consider this practice. Additionally, GA's Office of State Procurement (OSP) will be showcasing local products in its contract lists by using the logo of the in-state promotional campaign, *From the Heart of Washington*. OSP staff collaborates with WSDA staff in educational outreach efforts, promoting the buying and selling of Washington products at state institutions. For information on OSP master contracts. Please see **Farm-to-Cafeteria from a Farm Perspective**.

WSDA's Small Farm and Direct Marketing Program has addressed the 2002 law by continuing to foster Farm-to-Cafeteria programs throughout the state. WSDA assists food services in locating local sources of food, assists small farms in becoming prepared to sell to institutions, provides technical assistance in developing programs, and provides resources for nutrition education and agricultural/gardening curriculum development. WSDA has also provided funding to develop a model distribution network, hosted buyer/supplier forums, and has conducted a survey of all K-12 food services in the state to determine the needs and trends of this market.

## **National Support**

In the past, federal policy regarding the procurement of foods for school lunch programs focused on sourcing foods at the lowest cost and without discrimination in sourcing. Federal reimbursable monies could not be used to favor one state's products over another state's product. This policy has changed.

The 2002 Farm Bill added language to the National School Lunch Act that encourages schools to purchase locally produced foods for school meal programs to the maximum extent practicable and appropriate. It also created a program to provide startup grants to 200 institutions to defray the initial costs of equipment, materials, and storage facilities needed to be able to process fresh locally produced foods, with a total of \$400,000 to be awarded annually over five years (2003- 2007). Congress has yet to appropriate funds for the program.



# II. Models of Farm-to-Cafeteria Programs

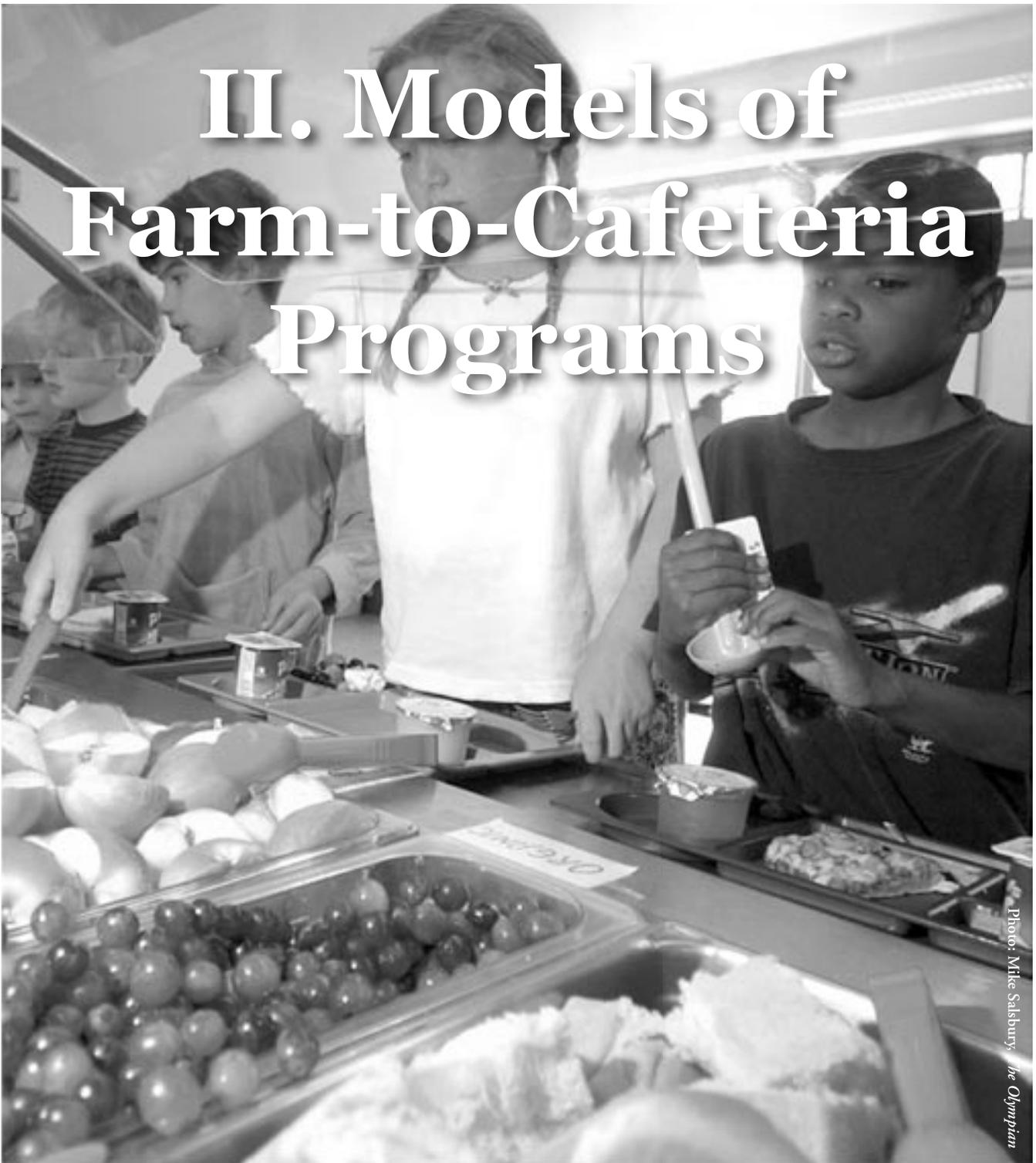


Photo: Mike Salisbury, *the Olympian*

**F**arm-to-Cafeteria programs take shape in many ways. They find different methods to purchase locally produced foods, deliver food to cafeterias, and integrate education about food, nutrition and farming into their programs. **The common connection in all Farm-to-Cafeteria programs is that food services purchase and serve locally produced foods, including meats, dairy, fruits and vegetables.**

There are four main Farm-to-Cafeteria models used to showcase locally produced foods and educate communities about local food and farming: Salad bar programs, local foods incorporated into main meals, catering projects, and special events.

# 1. Salad Bar Programs

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Salad bar programs provide a meal option that cafeteria customers (i.e. students, employees) can choose instead of, or in addition to, a main dish. Salad bar programs source local, fresh fruits and vegetables direct from individual farms, cooperatives, and wholesale vendors, utilizing regional in-season foods. The salad bars can include other foods such as breads, cheeses, vegetarian and meat protein sources, and dressings to make a balanced meal.

These programs have been very successful in the K-12 school environment. In some locations, such as in

the Olympia School District, salad bar programs have increased children's fruit and vegetable consumption. These programs can be set up to qualify as a reimbursable meal from USDA, and can also be organized at any other institution, such as hospitals or colleges that have an interest in the benefits of eating fresh fruits and vegetables. Salad bar programs can be added to existing food service programs without extensive change in current practices.

## Examples of Salad Bar Programs

### *Farmers Market Salad Bar, California*

The "Farmers Market Salad Bar" at the Santa Monica Malibu Unified School District showcases locally produced foods year round. This program began as a pilot program at one school in 1997, and is now available daily at all 15 elementary, middle and high schools in the district. Locally produced fruits and vegetables are picked up at local farmers markets, then distributed and prepared at each individual school. Over the school year, the district will purchase approximately \$100,000 of seasonal fruits and vegetables directly from about 20 local farms, including lettuces, beets, zucchini, and oranges. In the winter the district serves a baked potato bar comprised of local products, which is met with rave reviews by students (Kalb, 1).

### *Organic Choices Salad Bar, Olympia, Washington*



In Olympia, Washington, the "organic choices" salad bar features local and organic produce purchased from local farms and regional distributors. The salad bar can be chosen as a complete meal or in combination with hot items for lunch. In the first year of operation, the Olympia food service director saw an increase in children's fruit and vegetable consumption by approximately 25 percent, and purchased foods from two individual farms to supplement the foods purchased from a local produce vendor (Flock et al, 8). Read more about Olympia in the Case Studies section of the Appendix.

## 2. Local Foods Incorporated into Main Meals

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Institutions can utilize local foods by incorporating them into their main menu options. This model may be the most simple to implement, and requires minimal up-front planning on the institution's part. Most food service directors who utilize locally produced foods in their main meals comment on the quality difference as a main reason to serve local foods.

These programs work well with food service programs that are already willing to source locally

produced foods, and with farms that have sufficient quantity and/or variety of products to provide for an entire growing season or year-round.

Often, these programs do not involve the unveiling of a "new program" in the food services, and so they may catch less attention by the local media and community, and may not create noticeable increases in cafeteria sales or in improved community awareness from the start. Food Services incorporating local foods into their main meals should market

### Examples of Local Food Programs

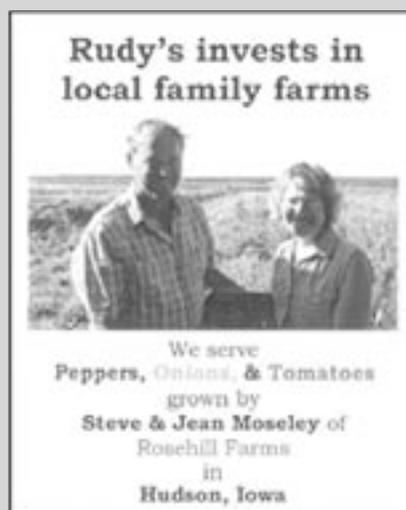
#### *The New North Florida Cooperative, Florida*

In Florida, Georgia, and Alabama, 15 school districts are serving locally grown foods to 300,000 students year round, either as a side dish or for dessert. These school districts purchase fresh fruits and vegetables directly from the New North Florida Cooperative including fresh chopped collard greens, leafy greens, field peas, muscadine grapes, strawberries, and blackberries. The cooperative began by selling farm fresh produce to 13 schools in Gladsen County, Florida, and grew to its current size of supplying 15 school districts in three states over a period of six years (Kalb, 1).

#### *Local Food Project, University of Northern Iowa*

In Northern Iowa, ten institutions, including hospitals, nursing homes, colleges and restaurants are incorporating locally grown foods into their menus. Through the Local Food Project conducted by the University of Northern Iowa, institutions are able to purchase fruits, vegetables and meat for their food service operations. From 1998 to 2001, participating farmers received \$585,190 from institutional customers, and customers and food services alike are very satisfied with the quality and freshness of the foods. Participating institutions serve local fruits and vegetables primarily from May through October and are able to serve meats year round.

The Local Food Project places interns from the University of Northern Iowa in each institution to coordinate the ordering and delivery with local farms, and set up purchasing relationships between local farmers and participating institutions. Once the relationships are established, farmers and Food Service Directors work with one another directly, and institutions pay each farm individually.



*A table-tent promoting local products at Rudy's Tacos. In 2001, this restaurant purchased more than \$142,000 worth of foods from local farms as a participant in the University of Northern Iowa Local Food Project.*

and promote their efforts in some way, to gain the attention of cafeteria customers and the local community, and enhance the benefits of purchasing locally. Cafeteria customers will notice a difference in quality,

and incorporating local foods into main cafeteria options can be used as a way to improve quality of food service for existing customers and increase sales at the cafeteria.

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### 3. Catering Projects

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Most colleges and large convention center venues offer catering services, and some have started offering “all-local” meals as an option for conference organizers to choose for their event. These meals serve locally produced foods to conference attendees, and provide an opportunity to educate conference attendees about food and agriculture.

These projects utilize foods on a more erratic schedule, and, in the beginning, do not require constant supply from producers. Catering projects allow food service employees and farms the opportunity to interact,

begin developing relationships, and time to work with local foods in a creative way, while allowing a high degree of flexibility for all participants involved.

Conference organizers who are interested in sourcing local foods for their own conference may wish to read the brochure [A Sense of Place: Serving Local Food at Your Meeting](#) (listed in the Resource Section) for more ideas about incorporating local foods into conference agendas.

#### Example of a Catering Program

##### *All-Iowa Meals, Iowa*

Practical Farmers of Iowa, a non-profit organization, hosted the first “all-Iowa meal” in cooperation with the catering division at the University of Iowa in 1997. Since then, the project has grown in popularity each consecutive year. In 2000, Practical Farmers of Iowa worked with a network of 46 farmers to serve “all-Iowa meals” at 47 events. In 2000, these meals served over 5,000 meals to conference attendees, and generated a total of \$16,581 in revenue for participating Iowa farmers (Huber, 3).



Photo: Kelli Sanger

The educational impact of the project is the greatest benefit, according to Practical Farmers of Iowa. The “all-Iowa meals” program has given farmers the experience needed to successfully market their products to other institutions, increased chefs’ familiarity with local products, and established relationships between chefs, food service directors, and farmers. The meals are providing conference attendees the chance to experience the quality, taste, freshness, and variety of locally produced foods in an educational setting. Conference attendees learn about local and global farming issues and the effect that food choices have on our landscapes, thus influencing their ideas and decisions about food in the future (Practical Farmers of Iowa, 13).

Additional institutions and organizations have begun creating programs modeled after the “all-Iowa meals” program to showcase local and regional foods. Read more about “all-Iowa meals” in the Case Studies section of the Appendix.

## 4. Special Events

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Showcasing locally produced foods at special events, such as a “locally grown dinner” in the cafeteria, is a way to introduce Farm-to-Cafeteria programs to food service employees, customers and farmers. This strategy also attracts attention from cafeteria customers and the surrounding community. Special event meals can be a starting point in cultivating relationships between local farms and institutional food services, and is also a great way to gauge customer opinion on locally produced foods.

Many colleges and K-12 schools, in partnership with community organizations, utilize this strategy as a way to begin incorporating local foods into their menus. These programs are usually created in partnership with local community organizations and/or students, parents or customers who would like to see a change in their food services. These participants help to organize initial events, publicize them to the larger community, and often help to provide the educational component to the events.

### Examples of Special Events

#### *University of Wisconsin- Madison, Wisconsin*

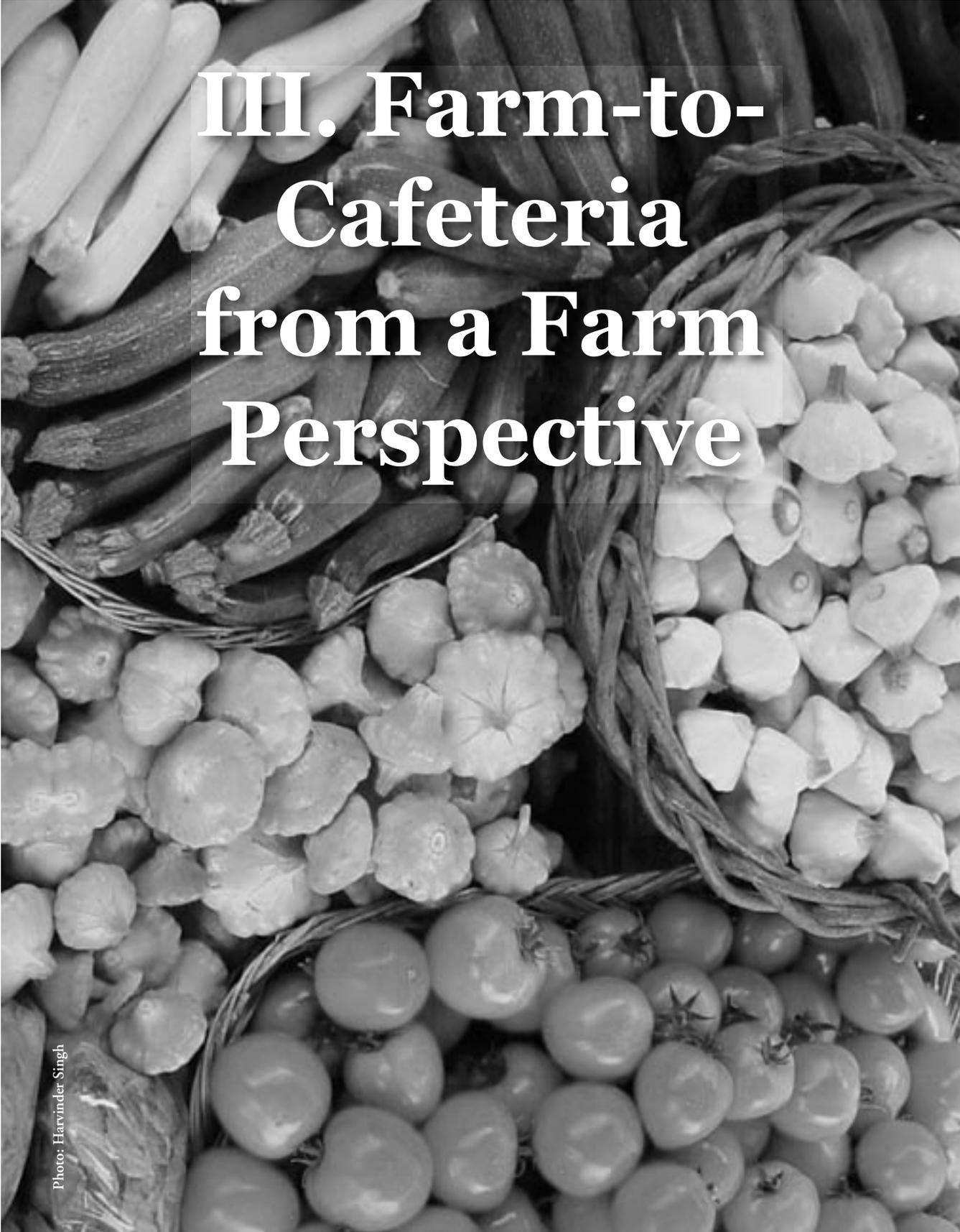
In 1997, the University of Wisconsin-Madison began hosting “Home Grown Wisconsin Organic Meals” in response to student requests to serve more organic options in the dining halls. These meals feature local and organic foods that are in season, and are built around what is available from local producers at that time. At a “Home Grown Wisconsin Meal” served in the fall of 2001, featured local items included organic meat, dairy, carrots, potatoes, celery, apples, watermelon, cabbage and onions.

Based on the success of these meals, food services began to purchase more locally produced foods from local farms on a continuing basis. The University became the first major public university in the United States to commit to putting locally grown foods on its dining hall menus, including locally grown and produced blue corn tortilla chips, apples and organic potatoes (CIAS, 2). Read more about University of Wisconsin-Madison in the Case Studies section of the Appendix.

#### *The Evergreen State College, Olympia, Washington*

Beginning in 2002, The Evergreen State College (TESC) food services, managed by Bon Appetit Management Company, showcased locally produced foods from local farms at “Local Grower Dinners” in their cafeteria. “Local Grower Dinners” were scheduled three times a quarter, showcasing three different farms for the 2002-03 year.

At these events, students could select one dinner entree featuring locally produced vegetables and meats from each farm. These events were beneficial in educating students about locally produced foods and developing a relationship between farms and food services. Students and staff had the ability to learn about local farms, and see how local products can be integrated into great tasting meals. Read more about TESC in the Case Studies section of the Appendix.



# III. Farm-to-Cafeteria from a Farm Perspective

Photo: Harvinder Singh

Selling farm products to institutions is different than other marketing strategies. Understanding the unique dynamics of this market can better position farmers to succeed. Selling to institutions offers the opportunity to sell large quantities to a few customers, reducing labor and transportation costs, but takes time and effort to establish and maintain business relationships with food services.

Institutional markets offer lower prices than retail outlets like farmers markets, but allow farmers to capture a higher percentage of the food dollar than when selling to wholesale distributors. The quality demand of these institutions depends on the population served, but all institutional food services expect to work with dependable vendors with whom they can establish a long term purchasing relationship.

Selling to institutions can fit well into a marketing plan that mixes wholesale and retail marketing, and may increase the total amount of products sold. Sales to institutions may also increase participation in other marketing outlets, such as grocery stores, farmers markets, or CSA shares, through increased community exposure. Many farmers are motivated to engage in institutional marketing for both economic and social reasons.

## ***Strategies to sell to Institutions***

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Farms may wish to explore different marketing strategies, depending on their volume of production, current marketing approaches and target institutions. When approaching institutions that have control over their individual purchases, such as private and public colleges, universities, culinary schools, K-12 schools, hospitals, businesses and nursing homes, farms can utilize direct marketing, cooperative marketing or wholesale strategies directly with the institution.

To supply Washington State agencies, prisons, and other state institutions, farms should understand the specific ways that these institutions purchase goods, and the strategies that can be used to supply them with locally produced foods.

### **Marketing Directly to Institutions**

Selling farm products directly is one way to have farm products served and showcased in institutions. This strategy involves establishing a business relationship

directly with the Food Service Manager, and handling all ordering, invoicing and delivery of foods to the institution. Farms should understand that food services command a different level of attention than farmers market customers or wholesale brokers. Sales calls, deliveries, billing, and developing specific items for an institution can be a part of the relationship.

This strategy can be used to approach institutions that have authority to make their own purchasing decisions, such as K-12 schools, colleges, hospitals, and nursing homes.

Farmers can develop strong business relationships with food services and, with time, have the opportunity to attain guaranteed food service accounts for specific products. With a successful relationship, farmers can meet with food services to determine what products can be supplied at specific volume expectations before the season starts, creating

### **Example of a successful cooperative marketing to institutions**

#### ***GROWN Locally, Iowa.***

GROWN Locally is a 12-member cooperative that markets fresh, seasonal vegetables and fruits to institutions, including nursing homes, hospitals, colleges, and schools, in Iowa. Incorporated in 1999, the cooperative first began marketing to 14 institutions through a simple phone and fax ordering system. In following years they established additional institutional contacts and moved all ordering to an on-line system, where institutional customers are able to place their orders over the Internet (<http://www.grownlocally.com>). The cooperative has plans to provide fresh cut and prepped products to its customers in the future.

The GROWN Locally cooperative is an example of how farmers can supply local institutions together that they would not be able to access alone. As a group, they have been able to invest in the infrastructure and marketing mechanisms to serve the institutional market successfully. Find more information on Grown Locally in the **Case Studies** section in the **Appendix**. (Adapted from Expanding Local Food Systems by marketing to Institutions, Practical Farmers of Iowa, May 2002).

a secure market for their products and providing a valuable resource for food services.

Farmers marketing directly to institutions will need adequate insurance including a minimum of \$1 million general liability insurance coverage. Farmers are also responsible for delivering and invoicing their products.

The first step to marketing any products to institutions is to schedule an appointment with the Food Service Manager and begin developing a successful relationship. Farms scheduling an appointment should bring information about their products (i.e. product and price lists, samples if available) and their farm (i.e. production methods, family operation, etc.).

While individual farms may find marketing directly as a highly effective way to begin selling to institutions, some farms and institutions have found it easier in the long run to work with a group of farms through a cooperative, marketing association, or wholesale distributor. Supplying institutions as a cooperative or marketing association allows farms to supply larger volumes and a wider variety of products, coordinate billing and product delivery, and reduce the time and effort necessary to develop individual relationships for each farmer.

### **Cooperative Marketing to Institutions**

Many farms successfully selling to institutions are marketing their products cooperatively.

Government programs and funds are available to assist in developing cooperative business ventures for farmers in Washington. Farmers interested in developing a cooperative business or finding out more information on cooperative development should contact the organizations listed under Cooperative Marketing Assistance, in the **Resources** section.

### **Wholesale Marketing**

Farmers may wish to sell to institutions through a wholesale food distributor. In this marketing approach, products are sold to a vendor that handles ordering, delivery and billing to institutional customers. More and more wholesale vendors are showcasing and seeking out Washington grown products for their customers. This arrangement may work for farms that do not have the transportation, storage capacity or desire to maintain a strict delivery schedule for their institutional customers.

However, maintaining a relationship with Food Service Managers has benefits for farmers even if they choose to distribute and sell to them through a wholesale approach. By maintaining a relationship with food services managers, farms may be able to distinguish their product to their customers and develop a long-term business customer, which may lead to increased sales to institutions.

# Washington State Institutions

Washington State institutions, for the purpose of this handbook, include state agencies with cafeterias (i.e. Department of Transportation, Department of Ecology), prisons operated by the Department of Corrections, and hospitals and other institutions operated by the Department of Social and Human Services.

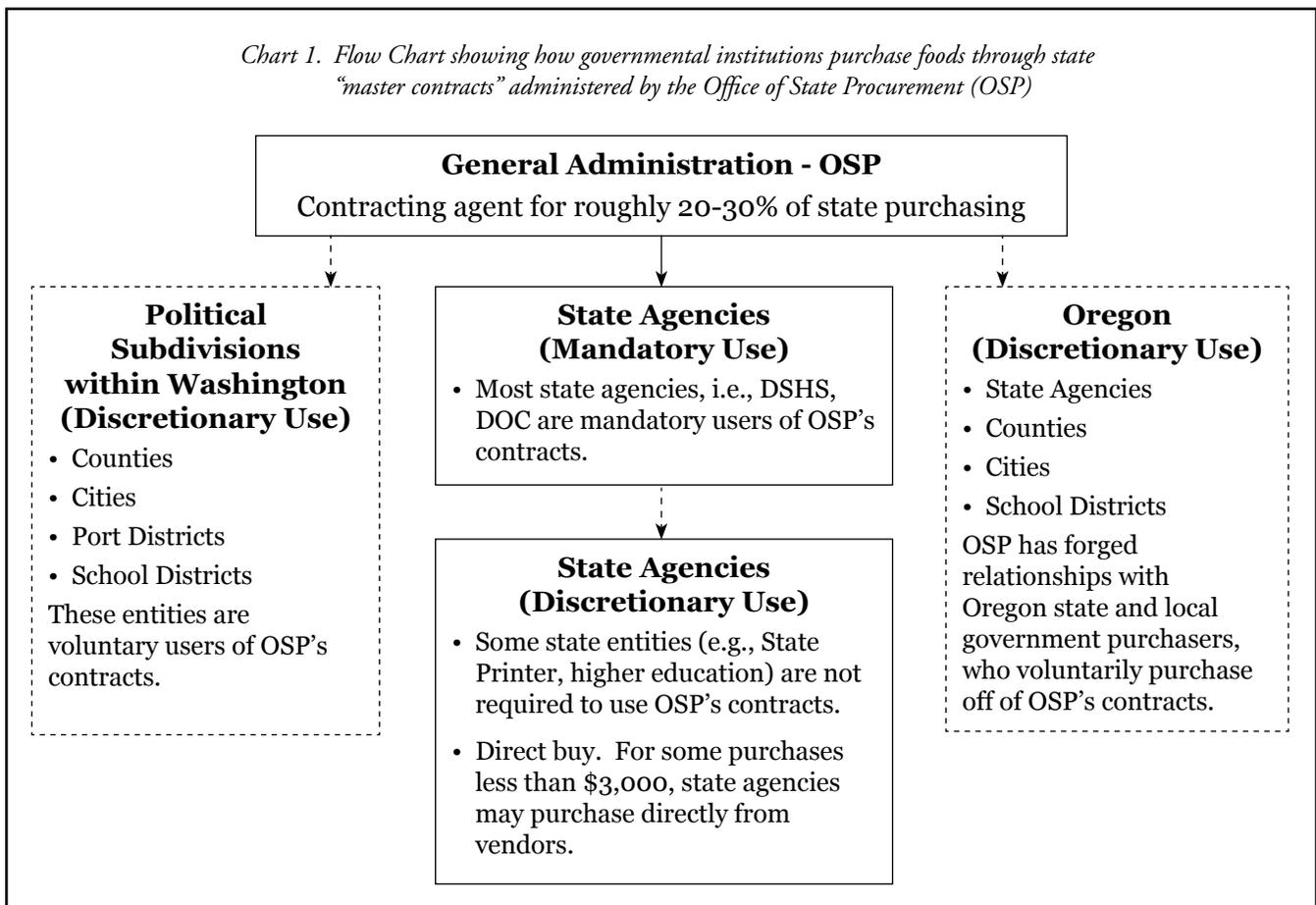
These institutions purchase their food in two ways: independent purchasing at each institution and through “state master contracts”, administered by the Office of State Procurement (see Chart 1). As a note, county and city governments, school districts, agencies, and port districts may participate in state master contracts if they choose. These local political

subdivisions follow similar purchasing guidelines as state institutions, but are not required by law to use state master contracts. Farmers interested in approaching state or local governments can use the following information as a guide for all levels of government purchasing.

Farmers, producers, and vendors can sell their goods and services to Washington state institutions and agencies in three ways:

- 1) Supply products directly to the institution.
- 2) Supply products to vendors that hold Master Contracts. These vendors then deliver and supply desired products to participating state agencies and institutions.

*Chart 1. Flow Chart showing how governmental institutions purchase foods through state “master contracts” administered by the Office of State Procurement (OSP)*



- 3) Supply all state institutions by entering into Master Contracts with the Office of State Procurement and becoming a vendor that provides desired products to participating state agencies and institutions.

Because master contracts are given out to supply foods on a year round basis to institutions state-wide or region-wide, farms will most likely wish to either sell directly to governmental institutions or sell to distributors who hold master contracts.

In this section, we will cover the first two strategies. Find more information on entering into master contracts with the state by contacting the Office of State Procurement, listed in the **Resources** section of this handbook.

### **Market Directly to Institutions**

Institutions may purchase foods directly from farms (direct buy) without comparing vendor prices when their purchases total less than \$3,000 per year. If their purchase is over \$3,000 per year, they must collect bids from three individual vendors, or enter into a formal contract before purchasing foods.

Overall, government entities (including colleges, schools, and state institutions) purchase the majority of their food purchases individually, either through direct buy purchases, informal bidding processes, or individual contracts. However, institutions that are operated by the Department of Corrections (DOC) and Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) receive the majority of their foods from master contracts with the state, and are not able to purchase from farms foods that they have already contracted for. In other words, these institutions cannot buy dairy products from a farmer directly if they already contract with the state for their dairy products. These same institutions, however, may purchase potatoes or other products that have not been previously contracted for.

### **Master Contracts**

State agencies, DOC prisons, and DSHS social institutions are mandated to purchase their foods from master contracts operated by the state. In addition, some K-12 school districts, counties, cities, and port districts and non-profit organizations choose to purchase some or all of their food through Master Contracts. By purchasing large quantities of food together, these institutions receive food at lower prices and reduce contract administration at each institution site. These contracts are solicited and awarded by the Office of State Procurement (OSP), located in Olympia. OSP manages three master food contracts for use by state institutions: dairy products, fresh fruits and vegetables, and general commodities for all processed foods and food service supplies.

In 2002, state agencies and institutions purchased \$2,200,000 of fresh fruit and vegetables and \$1,166,000 of fresh dairy products (fluid milk, cheese, etc.) through master contracts. Of these purchases, more than half of the fresh fruits, vegetables and dairy products (\$2,469,700) were produced in Washington.

All master contracts are awarded using a competitive process. When vendors bid on a contract, they agree to provide the foods specified in the bid and agree to sell those goods and services at a price favorable to the state. The lowest responsive, responsible bidder is awarded the contract.

### **Sell Products to Vendors that Hold Master Contracts**

Farmers are able to sell their products to the state by supplying wholesale vendors that, in turn, deliver products to individual institutions. Companies that are currently supplying the state can be found by contacting the Office of State Procurement at (360) 902-7400, or visiting <http://www.ga.wa.gov/index.html>.

Wholesale companies that hold Master Contracts may already purchase food from local farms for a number of reasons: shipping charges can be substantially less, and more and more local markets and restaurants are requesting locally grown produce.

Farmers that wish to sell to wholesale companies should keep the following in mind before approaching wholesalers with their products:

- Wholesalers are looking for farms that can provide a dependable amount of product over time.
- Farmers need to be able to meet minimum delivery requirements.
- Farmers need to be able to harvest, cool, wash, and pack for shipment the produce they sell.
- Farms must meet all food handling, sanitation, environmental, and safety requirements as outlined in USDA's Good Agricultural Practices (GAP). Find more information on USDA's GAP in Food Safety Begins on the Farm: A Grower's Guide, listed in the **Resources** section of this handbook.

Farmers interested in approaching wholesale companies with their product may wish to ask companies the following questions when discussing a potential business relationship with them:

- Who is the contact for farmers?
- What services are required from the farmer? (i.e. packing, delivery, etc.)
- What business infrastructure (i.e. fax and/or Internet capability, refrigerated storage etc.) does the wholesale company require of farms?
- How will products need to be packaged?
- What inspection operations and certifications are required, if any?
- What prices can be expected for farm products?

# Characteristics of Institutional Food Services

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Institutions typically purchase large volumes of product at one time and usually purchase from only a handful of distributors. They receive most of their fresh fruits and vegetables from one vendor and are used to receiving deliveries of fresh foods at least once a week. Institutions that serve larger populations may receive food deliveries daily, depending on the size of their storage facilities and number of people served.

Institutional food services purchase foods at wholesale prices, 30-40% lower than retail, and pay for product by check after receipt of goods. Farms who begin delivering product to institutions should be prepared to leave an invoice (with the farm name and products delivered) with delivery of goods. The institution will pay each vendor by check at a later date, often 30 to 90 days after receipt of goods. Farmers should not expect to be paid on delivery. Institutional food services prefer to receive goods in labeled boxes that include farm name and type of product. Find more information on packing specifications in the **Rules and Regulations** section of this handbook.

## Who to Contact

When selling products directly to an institution, farms should contact the Director or Manager of Food Services, and approach them personally about purchasing their products. Titles used by the Food Service Manager of an institution may include: General Manager, Food Service Manager, Food Service Director, or other related titles.

When meeting with the manager, farmers should bring information about their products, (such as price lists, samples if available), and information about their farm and farming practices. Farmers should know when and how much product they will have available, and should be professional in appearance. *Purchasing directly from farmers may be a new idea to Food Service Managers*, and farmers should be prepared to “sell” their products and

present reasons why food services should purchase directly from local farms.

Food Service Managers command a different level of care than farmers market customers or wholesale buyers. Managers expect farmers to conduct sales calls, deliver products to the institution and may ask that farms accept returns. In addition, they may be interested in contract growing for specific items tailored to their institution.

## Food Service Management Varies Between Institutions

The organizational structure of the food service operation will influence what purchasing rules food services must follow, how food services choose their food vendors, and types of purchasing arrangements they make with vendors. Food services can be self-operated by the institution or privately managed by a food service company for the hosting institution.

Both self-operated and privately managed food services are able to purchase locally produced foods across the nation. Factors that determine how easy it will be to market locally produced foods to food services include:

- Flexibility of the Food Service Manager to make purchasing decisions.
- Personal interest and willingness of the Food Service Manager to create a new program.
- Willingness of Food Service Manager to develop relationships with the local food and farming community.
- Support received from customers and administration to make changes in the food service operation.
- Overall goals of the institution and food services.

## **Types of Food Services**

### ***Self-Operated Food Services***

Food services that are operated by the institution itself are called “self-operated.” These food services follow the purchasing policies of the institution, and the Food Service Manager has the independent authority to enter into purchasing contracts themselves. Because these institutions have independent authority over purchasing decisions, they may be easier to approach than privately managed food services.

Self-operated food services often enter into yearly or multi-year purchasing contracts with vendors to supply foods. Many institutions choose to purchase the majority of their foods from one or two major vendors, often referred to as their “prime vendor”, to reduce contract and billing load on the institution. Private institutions that are self-operated are not required to follow these rules, however, they may have prime vendors themselves.

When first approached about purchasing food from local farmers, Food Service Managers from self-operated food services may state that they are unable to purchase directly from farms because of a “prime vendor contract.” While that is true to a certain extent, most contracts allow for a certain percentage of purchases to be “off-contract,” or allow for trial periods for different types of foods from different vendors. Find more information in the section [Prime Vendor Contracts](#) on page 17.

### ***Privately Managed Food Services***

Privately managed food services are often operated by large corporate companies that provide contracted food services for hospitals, schools, colleges and other institutions nationwide or on a global scale (i.e. Sodexo, Chartwells, Aramark). Their food service operations are often bound to national buying contracts and individual Food Service Managers at each institution are restricted in how much local food purchasing they can do. Depending on corporate purchasing policies, privately managed food service operations may be able purchase locally produced foods to some degree, although overall they may be harder to establish a relationship with than self-operated food services.

Privately managed food services are able to purchase from local farms, given that the Food Service Manager is interested in working with them, and/or if the institution that contracted with the food service requires the company to do so. Corporately managed food services sign a contract with the institution to provide food services according to the institution’s specification. Institutions can request that food services purchase a percentage of all their food from local businesses.

Farms that are interested in selling to corporately managed food services may need to become an “approved vendor” for that company, which includes verification of insurance policy and meeting food safety standards. For specific information, ask the Food Service Manager how to be qualified to sell to their company.

## **Prime Vendor Contracts**

Many self-operated and privately managed food services receive most or all of their produce, meats, staples, and kitchen supplies from a single vendor that they enter into a contractual agreement with. These contracts limit a Food Service Manager's ability to buy from another vendor or producer during the effective time of the contract.

There are, however, ways for farms to sell to institutions that have single vendor contracts without bidding for the contract. Food services that have entered into single vendor contracts can buy products "off contract" if an item the Manager wants is not available through the prime vendor. This can be more flexible than it first appears. For example, a K-12 school Food Service Director in Washington would be able to purchase different *varieties* of apples from local producers if those varieties are not listed in the contract with the prime vendor.

Many institutions with vendor contracts are able to purchase a certain amount of products off-contract. This is a great way for them to sample new products and begin purchasing from local farms. In addition, producers can approach food services when the term of the contract ends, or when contracts are renewed (usually annually). This time period can give producers time to plan and be ready to approach the food service operation at the end of their current contract term.

Before approaching a Food Service Manager for a sales appointment, it may be important to ask them what they are buying currently and what contract specifications they have with vendors. Farms may also access contract information and product lists for public institutions (i.e. state universities, K-12 schools) from the purchasing office of the institution. This information will assist in deciding what specific foods to approach managers with that will not be turned down because of current prime vendor contracts.

## **One-Stop Shopping is Important**

Food Service Managers are very busy, and they have limited opportunity to interact with vendors. Their ability to interact with multiple farmers on a personal level is rare. Managers appreciate one-stop shopping that allows them to purchase as many items from one place as possible. According to studies done to determine the best ways to approach the institutional market, farmers are "wise to collaborate, cooperate, or develop strategic partnerships to limit demands on the institutional buyer's time and enhance marketing prospects for these products" (Johnson et al, 13).

Farmers can make purchasing from local farms easier for food services by working with marketing cooperatives, associations, or local non-profits to consolidate ordering and delivery logistics. This kind of relationship can lead to more purchases of local products from Food Service Managers in the long term. Find an example of collaborative sales to institutions in the **University of Washington Case Study** section in the **Appendix**.

## **Food Safety is a Big Concern**

Food Service Managers are very concerned about microbial contamination of foods and the sources of their foods, because of their liability and the reputation of their establishment. In a survey of Washington K-12 Food Service Directors, 67% were concerned about the safety of local foods (Sanger, 19). Some Food Service Managers may have the perception that foods purchased directly from small farms may have higher risk of microbial or pesticide contamination, or may not meet food safety regulations. It is the responsibility of the farmer to prove otherwise.

Farms should be prepared to educate Food Service Managers about the safety of their product. A good way to assure food services of a farm products' safety would be to follow the recommendations in [Food Safety Begins on the Farm: A Grower's Guide](#),

listed in the **Resources** section of this handbook. Farms should also be prepared to show Food Service Managers a documented plan of farming, packing, and delivery practices.

### **Insurance Requirements**

Farms wishing to sell to institutions should understand their liability insurance requirements and should be prepared to show proof of their policy before attempting to become a regular vendor. Most institutions require that any vendor, including farms, carry a general liability insurance policy. State institutions, including colleges, require that all vendors carry a general liability policy of at least \$1 million per occurrence. The University of Washington food services requires that all vendors, including farms, carry liability insurance of \$1 million per occurrence and \$2 million in aggregate. Some corporate food service companies that manage food service operations in colleges, schools and hospitals in Washington require that all vendors carry a general liability policy of \$5 million per occurrence. In some cases, these liability insurance requirements may be prohibitive for individual farms to meet.

In order to meet higher insurance requirements, some farms form cooperatives or marketing

associations to provide liability insurance coverage to a group, cutting the costs of the policy to individual producers. For examples of cooperatives selling to institutions, contact GROWN Locally, an Iowa farmers cooperative that markets directly to institutions, or read about the College Food Project at University of Wisconsin (see Case Studies in Appendix).

For information and technical assistance for developing cooperatives in Washington, contact USDA Rural Business Cooperative Service, listed in the **Resources** section of this handbook.

Farms should keep in mind the following advice when thinking about insurance policies and institutional sales:

- 1) Find out the amount of insurance institutional customers require.
- 2) Determine the insurance burden that each farming operation can bear, and spread this cost across the projected business costs and profits. This requirement should be used to help determine pricing structure, and whether institutional sales can be a profitable part of farm marketing (Luedeman and Hamilton, 11).

# ***K-12 School Characteristics***

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Washington K-12 school food services are interested in purchasing locally produced foods to as a way to provide children access to fresh, high quality foods and provide positive public relations with the local community.

In 2002, WSDA published the results of its survey of K-12 school Food Service Directors titled: Washington Schools Purchasing Washington Grown Products: Where is the Connection?” The following information from that survey will help producers understand the characteristics of K-12 schools in Washington State.

Seventy-eight percent of Washington K-12 schools indicated that they would purchase foods directly from local producers if price and quality were competitive. Additionally, schools all over the state are interested in connecting their food services with local producers, with northeastern, northwestern and southeastern Washington showing the highest rates of interested Food Service Directors and staff.

A strong majority of Food Service Directors and staff (78 percent) are interested in purchasing from local producers in the future, and many schools (43 percent) already purchase locally produced foods, either through traditional distribution channels or directly from local farmers. A higher rate of eastern Washington Food Service Directors stated that they purchase from local producers and would be willing to pay more for locally produced foods. For specific information on one Washington school that is purchasing direct from local farms, read about the Olympia School District in the **Appendix**.

When thinking about selling products to K-12 schools and local school districts, there are specific aspects of the K-12 cafeteria that will better help farmers understand how to successfully market their products.

## **K-12 Food Services Serve Breakfast and Lunch**

School food services prepare breakfast and lunch each weekday from September to June. Some schools prepare summer lunches and may be interested in utilizing local products in the summer months. While at first glance this schedule may appear to make Farm-to-Cafeteria connections with schools difficult, it is possible to sell products to local schools.

From September to June, Washington farmers are selling products that can be produced year round (i.e. lettuce, salad greens, carrots, and kale in temperate areas) and products that can be stored for extended periods of time, including apples, potatoes, and squash. Food Service Directors will be able to inform local farmers about their specific food programs and what times of the year they operate.

## **K-12 Food Services are Interested in Providing Healthy Meals**

Public school food services create meals that meet USDA dietary requirements, and many schools are working to increase the amount of fruits and vegetables actually eaten by kids in school lunch. Locally produced fruits and vegetables can be a great fit for schools that are working to provide healthier meals, and can provide foods that kids really enjoy eating. Smaller-scale farms often product varieties based on flavor and harvest when the produce is ripe. For these reasons, incorporating locally produced foods in schools can increase the amount of fresh fruits and vegetables consumed by children.

## **K-12 Food Services Have Purchasing Guidelines**

K-12 schools must follow state and federal purchasing guidelines as directed in the Revised Code of Washington (RCW) **28A.235**. Schools that

purchase more than \$50,000/year of a type of food (i.e. fruits and vegetables) are required to contract with a vendor that meets their qualifications, at the lowest cost. Schools that do not purchase more than \$50,000 of a type of food per year often request bids on a weekly basis. Food Service Directors can choose to order foods based on flavor and quality, in addition to price. Purchasing decisions are not purely made on price, however, it does play a major part in their purchasing decisions. Promoting the flavor and quality of locally produced foods is a strong way to show the difference between local products and products shipped from great distances.

### **K-12 Food Services Purchase Food from Private Food Vendors and USDA Commodity Programs**

While some foods in school are obtained for a low cost through the USDA commodity program, most schools also purchase foods from private vendors to supplement their supply from the commodity program. Schools receive the equivalent of \$0.16 in USDA commodities for each lunch served, and most purchase fresh fruits, vegetables, and some meat products from private vendors. Farms interested in selling products to schools may first want to inquire what products the school district currently purchases from private vendors to see what opportunities may exist.

### **Food Safety is a Big Concern**

While all food services are concerned about food safety, K-12 food services have strong concerns about food safety. They are very sensitive about possible microbial contamination of the foods they serve, and are required to create plans to minimize and reduce risk in their kitchens, and work to minimize risk from their food vendors as well. In this light, some food services currently purchase fruits and vegetables that have been washed in a bleach solution, or only purchase foods that they feel come from a reliable

vendor that ensures safe handling practices of their products. Some K-12 school food services purchase fully cooked meat items to limit the school districts liability for serving contaminated foods to their children (Tropp, 13).

Producers may find that some Food Service Directors are initially not interested in locally produced meats because of the high risk in purchasing raw meats. However, it may be possible to discuss the food safety of local products with them. It is uncertain exactly how many school districts in Washington are buying only fully cooked meat products, however, it is a trend that producers may want to keep in mind when deciding who to approach and what product to approach buyers with.

Farms should be prepared to educate Food Service Managers about the safety of their product. A good way to assure Food Service Directors of a products' safety would be to follow the recommendations in [Food Safety Begins on the Farm: A Grower's Guide](#), listed in the **Resources** section of this handbook, and show Food Service Directors a documented plan of farming, packing, and delivery practices.

### **Labor is the Limiting Factor**

Approximately 80 percent of Washington school districts and private schools have the necessary equipment needed to process fresh fruits and vegetables and store them. However, labor costs appear to be the most limiting factor in Washington schools regarding processing and preparation of fresh foods in K-12 schools. When approaching schools with fresh products, keep in mind that they have limited labor resources. A product that requires minimal preparation may be easier to market to food services, especially when they are just beginning to develop relationships with local farms.

### **Food Service Directors Don't Know Local Producers**

In the survey, K-12 Food Service Directors also cited that one of the main reasons they hadn't purchased locally produced foods was because of a lack of producers in their area (Sanger, 4). This suggests that most food services are not aware of the agricultural production in their area. Farmers who are interested in selling to institutions should approach the Food Service Director, either as a member of a local community organization or as a farmer, and let them know there are local farmers in the area that are interested in making connections.

### **K-12 Food Services Operate with Limited Budgets**

School food services receive income from students who pay for their own meals, as well as USDA and state government support. The main goal for most schools is to provide healthy meal options for children at the lowest price possible. In the 2002-2003 school year, USDA reimbursed local school districts \$2.14/meal for each student that receive free lunch, \$1.74 for each student that received reduced price lunch, and \$.20/meal for each student that paid for their lunch. In combination with paid lunch income, food services must pay for all labor, equipment and food purchases for the facility with this income (Bergeson, 1).

Farms should keep this in mind when deciding to approach schools, and what kind of prices they should expect. While prices offered at schools are traditionally lower than other institutions and restaurants, there are other benefits to selling to schools, such as increased community exposure, educating children about local foods, and working with food services to show students how good fresh foods can taste. Even though K-12 schools may provide a lower price than other markets, Washington farms are finding it economically and socially worthwhile to sell to local schools.

### **Agricultural Education is Possible with K-12 Schools**

In addition to selling fresh foods to the school cafeteria, many schools are interested in creating more educational connections with local farms, either through farm field trips, school gardens, or farmer visits to the classroom. Washington farms are making connections with schools to talk about their farming with students, and providing assistance to build school gardens, providing students with a better understanding of food and local farming. Educating children early about their food choices increases the likelihood of better health in their adult life, and educating children about local agriculture increases the likelihood of community support for local farms now and in the future.

# Colleges and Universities

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When thinking about selling to colleges and universities, there is specific information that will help farmers better understand how to successfully market products to college and university Food Service Managers and their customers, including college staff, faculty and students.

## **College Food Services Operate Year Round**

Campus food services serve meals daily in college cafeterias during the school year (August through June). Many colleges operate cafeterias at a lower volume in the summer to accommodate summer school students, and staff and faculty that work year round. In addition, many college food services have catering operations that serve foods for visiting conferences year-round.

## **Local and Sustainably-Grown Foods are a Growing Trend**

Serving local and organic foods is a national trend in colleges and universities. Many major industry journals, such as *Nation's Restaurant News*, *Foodservice Director*, and *Campus Dining Today*, point to these trends, and most Food Service Directors are aware of them. The Evergreen State College in Olympia, the University of Washington, and Bastyr University in Seattle are examples of Washington campuses that have begun showcasing local and/or organic foods in their food services.

## **Food Services are Willing to Supply Local and Sustainably-Grown Foods to Meet Demand**

Of all institutions, colleges and universities across the country tend to be more receptive to showcasing locally and sustainably grown foods, and are able to buy higher priced items, when local and sustainable food issues are important to their student body. Colleges and universities that recognize the

environmental or social benefits of buying locally produced items, and that place a high value on social equality or environmental stewardship may be more likely to buy sustainably produced/local foods.

Many college student groups are working to improve the food served at their schools, and farmers can help play a part in that effort. Approaching student groups that are interested in changing food service may create a great relationship for both the student group and farmers, and may help students make change in their school. Farmers may wish to reference this trend when meeting with Food Service Managers, who may or may not be aware of it.

## **State-Operated Food Services Must Follow Washington State Purchasing Rules**

State-operated food services must follow state purchasing guidelines. It should be noted that private universities and food service management companies are not required to follow these rules, and may have their own individual purchasing guidelines.

- **Direct Buy Purchases**

If the campus food service does not purchase more than \$3,000\* worth of product throughout the year, local Food Service Managers are not legally obligated to seek out other vendors, and they can specifically choose whom they would like to buy from without comparing prices with other vendors.

- **Informal Bidding Purchases**

If food services purchase between \$3,000-\$42,300\*, Food Service Managers are legally

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\* Purchasing limits for direct buy, informal bids, and formal contract purchases are established by the Office of Financial Management and are adjusted annually. Dollar amounts for these categories are not static, but figures for 2003 have been provided to give farmers an idea of where they might fit into the current purchasing framework of public institutions, including colleges.

obligated to request bids from at least three vendors before purchasing products.

- **Formal Contract Purchases**

If the campus food service purchases more than \$42,300\*, they are required to solicit a formal contract to supply those goods for a specified amount of time, such as one year.

Farms competing for formal contracts will be expected to supply the total amount of food requested by the college in the contract. Farmers will either need sufficient product quantity to supply the college themselves, or

work cooperatively to supply the college with a variety of products in sufficient volume. Keep in mind that food contracts are awarded on food price and quality. A college may legally grant the contract to the bidder with the better quality product, even if the price is higher.

Farms beginning to market products to a college may want to deliver products on a trial basis at first, approaching contract bids after a relationship has been established with food services.

# Hospitals, Nursing Homes and Senior Meal Programs

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When thinking about selling to hospitals, nursing homes and senior meal programs, there is specific information that will better help farmers understand how to successfully market products to fit the needs of their customers.

## Hospitals, Nursing Homes, and Senior Meal Programs Operate Year Round

These institutional food services serve a steady population year round, and have the ability to utilize large quantities of fresh foods during the peak of the growing season. Unlike colleges, universities and schools, the customer base is not reduced in the summer months. Farmers interested in developing relationships with institutions to purchase foods in the summer months should consider approaching these institutions before the growing season begins to develop a relationship with the Food Service Manager.

## Hospitals

Hospital food services prepare meals for hospital staff, nurses, doctors, patients and visitors. These institutions serve a large number of individuals and may have an emphasis on serving healthy and low-fat meal options. Many hospitals offer low-fat meal options, and provide a variety of fresh fruit and vegetable options for their customers in addition to traditional main dish items. Farmers should keep this in mind when deciding what products to approach hospital Food Service Managers with.

## Nursing Homes

Nursing homes prepare meals for a predominantly senior population year round. The majority of food service operations are “self-operated,” and meals are prepared on site with the aid of a registered dietitian. Find nursing homes in Washington from the Washington State Department of Health and Social Services at <http://www.adsa.dshs.wa.gov/resources/default.htm>.

## Adult Family Homes

Adult family homes are privately operated facilities that house up to six individuals at a time. These facilities serve a primarily senior population, and meals are prepared on site. Farms may want to consider selling products to these institutions through CSA subscriptions and/or delivery. Find lists of adult family homes in Washington at the Adult Family Home Locator operated by the State Department of Social and Health Services at <http://www.adsa.dshs.wa.gov/resources/default.htm>.

## Boarding Homes

Boarding homes are privately operated facilities that care for seven or more residents in a community setting. These facilities may provide general nursing assistance for residents, or may provide specialized assistance for individuals with mental health problems, developmental disabilities, or Alzheimer’s

disease. Boarding homes often prepare meals on site for residents, and may be interested in purchasing



*Cabbage, a traditional food enjoyed by many seniors, growing in the field.*

Photo: Leslie Zenz

from local farms to meet the needs of their resident population. Find listings of licensed boarding homes in Washington at the Boarding Home Locator operated by the Department of Social and Health Services at <http://www.adsa.dshs.wa.gov/resources/default.htm>.

### **Senior Nutrition Providers**

Senior nutrition providers are independent organizations that receive private, state and federal funds to prepare meals for seniors that are eaten at local senior centers (congregate meals) or delivered

to their homes. Senior nutrition providers often prepare congregate meals themselves, while home delivered meals may be purchased from large catering companies or private contractors. Senior nutrition providers also coordinate the distribution of fresh fruits and vegetables through the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program in Washington. Farmers should approach these nutrition providers about supplying locally produced foods for congregate meals, or local Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Programs.

# ***Marketing Recommendations for Farms***

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The following are recommendations for farms to use when approaching institutions as potential customers. These recommendations are based on the institutional characteristics explained in the proceeding section.

## **Use Local Farm Advantages**

Local farms looking to sell to institutions should keep in mind that Washington farms have specific advantages when selling to institutions:

- They can supply the freshest product possible.
- Washington farms can supply institutions with foods that do not travel well, or that are cost prohibitive to purchase through traditional distribution networks.
- Washington farms have specific knowledge of food trends and the local and cultural food preferences of Washington citizens that distant suppliers may not be aware of.
- Additionally, local farmers are the only ones who can produce “locally grown products”, a value that is appreciated by Washington residents (TRD Frameworks, 2).
- Local farms provide the surrounding community with other benefits in addition to providing fresh food. Local farms improve the environmental quality of the region, contribute to the local economy, provide important greenspace, and contribute to the quality of life in the region.

Farmers would do well to keep these advantages in mind when approaching institutions as potential customers, and use this information to market products.

## **Be Familiar with USDA Quality, Grading and Packing Standards**

Become familiar with quality and packing standards. Managers will expect the standard quality and sizes for all products and cases. Most managers use these

standards to order their products as a way to describe the size and quality of products they want to serve. While not all Food Service Managers will demand that farmers provide products within specific grades and sizes, it is the language they use to talk about the quality and size of foods they normally work with. Find sources for grading and sizing standards in the **Rules and Regulations** section of this handbook.

## **Supply Products for an Extended Period of Time**

Food Service Managers are more likely to develop relationships with producers or producer groups that can deliver products over an extended period of time, through an entire growing season or entire year. The longer farms can provide products the easier it will be to establish a relationship with institutional food services. For example, farms can work with an institution to supply the necessary amount of carrots and potatoes summer through winter, or supply a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables spring through fall.

Producers wishing to maintain product supply over a period of time may want to consider diversifying crops, planning staggered plantings or harvests for farm products, and/or acquiring long-term storage or processing facilities for their products.

## **Work with Non-Profit Organizations or “Buy Local” Campaigns**

Local agricultural non-profit organizations may be able to provide farms with information about local institutions and help network with interested Food Service Managers in the area. They may also be interested in working with institutions to showcase locally produced foods. For a list of agricultural organizations in Washington, see the WSDA List of Washington Agricultural Organizations web page in the **Resources** section of this handbook.

In addition, farms may wish to partner with “Buy Local” campaigns to showcase their products in institutions. “Buy Local” campaigns have promotional resources available for farms selling to institutions, and may serve as a networking conduit for farms and institutions. These campaigns often provide point-of-sale materials, and may be able to arrange showcasing of locally produced foods in area institutions. Find a listing of “Buy Local” campaigns in Washington in the **Resources** section of this handbook.

### **Approach Institutions of Similar Size and Scale**

Farms that approach institutions that have product demand that is equal in size to farm production may have more success in establishing business relationships that work. Institutional food services do not wish to purchase from many different vendors for their food needs. Focusing on institutions of appropriate size and scale for each farming operation will make the best use of food services’ and farmers’ limited time.

Farms that produce product volumes that are smaller than institutional demands may also want to consider working together in a group to supply larger institutions with larger volumes and/or a variety of products.

### **Be Aware of Health Regulations and Food Safety Issues**

Food sold to institutions must adhere to basic safety practices as outlined by the federal, state and local health authorities. A good way to assure Food Service Managers of a farm products’ safety would be to follow the USDA’s “Good Agricultural Practices” (GAP’s) and show the Manager a documented plan of farming practices. Find more information on GAP’s, read the Cornell guide to GAP’s, Food Safety

Begins on the Farm: A Grower’s Guide listed in the **Resources** section of this handbook.

At a minimum, fruit and vegetable producers will need to follow basic guidelines. Producers may need to assure buyers that:

- Manures used to fertilize soils were aged, and did not come in contact with produce.
- Soils used to produce fruits and vegetables are not toxic.
- Any pesticides used are approved for use.
- Pesticides (organic or synthetic) are only used at prescribed times for prescribed purposes and in accordance with the instructions on the manufacturer’s label. (Delius in Tropp, 12)

Farms that produce meats, poultry, eggs, or dairy products for wholesale will become familiar with safe handling practices through obtaining regulatory licenses.

### **Market Foods Currently Unavailable**

Some farms focus their marketing efforts on supplying products currently unavailable in the wholesale and institutional market, such as highly perishable foods or regionally significant foods. For example, the New North Florida cooperative markets fresh cut collard greens and fresh fruits that are unattainable through competing food suppliers. Locally, Washington farm-based companies are selling whole and pre-sliced apples to schools that are unavailable through traditional suppliers.

### **Sell Products Cooperatively**

Farmers who sell products together, through an association, cooperative, or through a distributor, may have an edge over individual farmers. In Kentucky, K-12 school Food Service Managers indicated that they would be more inclined to

purchase from local producer groups than from several individual farmers. Food Service Managers felt that by purchasing products from an association, they would have a greater confidence that their orders would be delivered on time and in full, and that the merchandise would meet their desired quality expectations (Tropp, 11).

In addition, dealing with many vendors costs an institution more. University of Wisconsin-Whitewater's Food Service Manager Mark Kraner states that, "buying from a single vendor is much cheaper. Just cutting a check costs \$75 when you figure in all the levels of bureaucracy and the UW audits. Each time a truck delivers to a loading dock, the stop costs \$150 in labor on both sides, so larger shipments are more cost-effective." (quoted in Parker, 18)

All these factors point to the fact that working cooperatively can be an effective avenue for farms that would like to market their products to institutions.

### **Establish Relationships with Buyers**

Establishing relationships with buyers and end customers helps develop customer loyalty for locally produced foods and specific farms products. In addition, developing relationships with students and customers allows farmers to educate the community about the benefits of local foods. This also includes education about farm production and how to support local foods in other venues such as farmers markets. Establishing a relationship with buyers also allows farms to gain feedback about their products and learn what buyers are looking for in the future.

Farmers can connect with end customers and food service buyers by providing pamphlets or flyers about their farm and farm products at the cafeteria, hosting farm visits, visiting the cafeteria to talk about their operation, and/or talking with the students and customers at the institution where their food is served.

### **Market Products that Require Minimal Preparation**

Food Service Managers and staff have limited time in the kitchen to prepare foods for meals served. Schools and institutions often have high labor costs, and they stress that food preparation is very expensive. To minimize labor costs, some institutions are looking for food items that require little, if any, additional preparation before use.

However, there are institutions that are willing to incur additional labor costs in their operation to prepare and serve fresh, unprocessed foods that require preparation. Some K-12 schools have brought in parents and volunteers to set up salad bars, promote the project, and assist students in getting through the lunch line. Food Service Managers will be able to inform interested farmers about their strategies for handling fresh products.

To address limited labor issues, farmers should consider marketing products that require minimal preparation for food services, such as small fruits and vegetables that can be eaten whole and fresh, or to minimally process their products for the institution.

The New North Florida Cooperative is addressing this need by producing fresh, cut and bagged collard greens, ready to cook and serve in schools. They also market fruits that require no processing to be served, such as strawberries and grapes. These products are well received by food services and students because of the quality of the foods and ease of preparation.

Processing fresh foods into ready-to-eat products requires that farmers attain a food processors license from the Washington State Department of Agriculture. Find more information on food processors licensing in the **Rules and Regulations** section of this handbook.

# ***Rules and Regulations***

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The following section has been adapted from the WSDA publication The Handbook of Regulations for Direct Farm Marketing (“The Green Book”), 2001. It is provided to inform farmers of rules for selling agricultural products to institutions. The following information is to serve as a road map only, and farmers seeking to market to institutions should contact the appropriate agency/program for specific information on licensing/inspection requirements.

## **Fruits and Vegetables**

Some fruits and vegetables are subject to inspection by the Washington State Department of Agriculture before they can be sold to institutional buyers. These products are: apples, apricots, sweet cherries, pears, peaches, Italian prunes, asparagus, and potatoes. Inspection ensures products conform to federal and state standards for grades and packs, and ensures that products are free from pests.

Farmers wishing to sell fresh fruits and vegetables not listed above may do so without any inspection of their products. However, institutions are accustomed to ordering specific grades and packs. For more information on grading and packing your product, see **Quality Standards on page 27**.

Fresh salad mix, dependant on production and preparation methods, is considered a processed food and must meet requirements for such. See “The Green Book” for more information.

## **Meat**

All meat (beef, pork, lamb, goat, ostrich, etc.) sold to institutions must be processed under federal inspection by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). There are a limited number of USDA-inspected facilities operating in Washington. Many require a minimum head count or operate by contract only. Producers wishing to obtain a list of USDA-

inspected processors in Washington may contact the Small Farm and Direct Marketing Program, listed in the **Resources** section of this handbook.

## **Poultry**

All producers who wish to sell poultry (turkey, chicken, game hen, etc.) to an institution, school, or restaurant in Washington must have their birds processed in a WSDA-licensed facility or under federal (USDA) inspection. USDA inspection is required for processing more than 20,000 birds a year.

## **Eggs**

Farmers wishing to sell eggs to institutions must obtain an egg handler/dealer license through the Washington State Department of Licensing before selling to any institutions. Eggs are subject to inspection by the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) for adherence to grading standards, sanitary facility conditions, and labeling.

## **Dairy**

Farms wishing to sell dairy products from sheep, goats, or cows must apply for a Grade A Dairy License and pass inspection by WSDA. Licenses are granted to facilities that meet regulations regarding construction of facilities, cleanliness, sanitation, etc. Additionally, a separate Grade A license is required for bottling and processing facilities, requiring a mechanical bottling apparatus for milk, among other things.

Farms/dairies wishing to produce cheese products or butter must also have a WSDA food processors license. Find more information, see “The Green Book”, listed in the **Resources** section of this handbook.

## Quality standards

Quality standards have been established by the USDA to facilitate the orderly and efficient marketing of products among buyers and sellers. Standards allow buyers and sellers to specify the level of quality required or expected for a product without having to see or examine products in advance. Buyers often refer to U.S. standards in their specifications and contracts (e.g., “Product must meet U.S Grade A requirements”). These product quality and packing standards are available at no cost from the USDA on their website: [www.ams.usda.gov/standards](http://www.ams.usda.gov/standards), or by contacting USDA Agricultural Marketing Service. Contact the AMS branches listed in the box below for information regarding your products.

## Processed Foods

All processed foods, such as mixed salad greens, jams, sauces, dried fruit, teas, cheese, baked goods, poultry, and rabbits must be processed under a WSDA Food Processors License. This license does not apply to fresh produce that is merely washed and trimmed prior to sale. For complete details on regulations for direct marketing your products, consult “The Green Book” listed in the **Resources** section.

### USDA–AMS Quality Standards Branches

#### *Dairy:*

Standardization Branch  
Dairy Programs  
1400 Independence Ave. S.W., MS 0230  
Washington, D.C. 20250-0230  
Telephone: 202-720-7473  
Fax: 202-720-2643

#### *Fresh Fruits and Vegetables:*

Fresh Products Branch  
Standardization Section  
Fruit and Vegetable Programs  
1400 Independence Ave, SW  
Room 2065-S, Stop Code 0240  
Washington, D.C. 20250-0240  
Phone: (202) 720-2185

#### *Meats:*

Livestock and Meat  
Standardization Branch  
Stop 0254, Room 2628-South  
1400 Independence Ave., SW  
Washington, DC 20250-0254  
Phone (202) 720-4486  
FAX (202) 720-1112

#### *Poultry, Egg and Rabbits:*

USDA-AMS-Poultry Programs  
Standardization Branch  
STOP 0259, Room 3944-South  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250  
Telephone: (202) 720-3506

## Tools for Farmers

### *Food Safety Begins on the Farm: A Grower's Guide*

Cornell University  
(607) 254-5383

[eab38@cornell.edu](mailto:eab38@cornell.edu)  
<http://www.gaps.cornell.edu/>.

### *GROWN Locally Cooperative: A Case Study*

Gary Huber and Katherine Parker  
Practical Farmers of Iowa

[gary@practicalfarmers.org](mailto:gary@practicalfarmers.org)  
<http://www.pfi.iastate.edu/PFIhomenew.htm>

This is an in-depth look at the GROWN Locally cooperative from a farmer perspective, covering history of the cooperative, as well as ordering, distribution and delivery strategies, and marketing techniques.

### *Innovative Marketing Opportunities for Small Farmers: Local Schools as Customers*

Dan Schofer  
USDA Agricultural Marketing Service  
202-690-1170

[Dan.Schofer@usda.gov](mailto:Dan.Schofer@usda.gov)  
[http://www.ams.usda.gov/tmd/MSB/msb\\_publications.htm](http://www.ams.usda.gov/tmd/MSB/msb_publications.htm)

### *Selling to Institutions: An Iowa Farmer's Guide*

Robert Ludeman and Neil D. Hamilton. 2003.  
Drake University Agricultural Law Center: Iowa  
515-271-2065

[Neil.Hamilton@drake.edu](mailto:Neil.Hamilton@drake.edu)

### *The Packer's produce availability and merchandising guide.*

The Packer (\$35)  
1-800-255-5113, ext. 781

[subscription@thepacker.com](mailto:subscription@thepacker.com)

This guide provides industry standards for packing vegetables and fruits for wholesale market.

# IV. Farm-to-Cafeteria from a Food Service Perspective

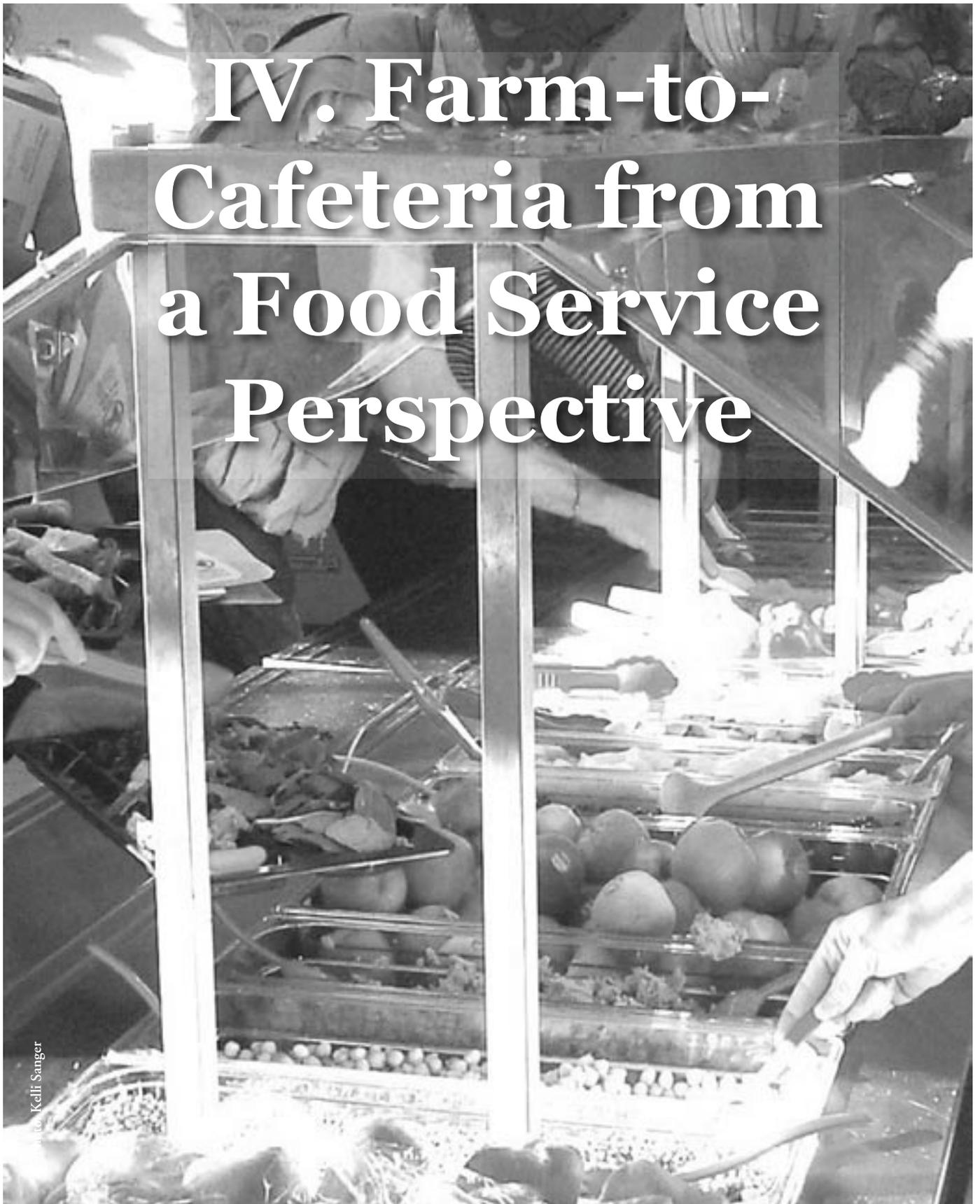


Photo: Kelli Sanger

## ***Why Incorporate Farm-to-Cafeteria Programs into Food Services?***

**F**ood services across the nation incorporate Farm-to-Cafeteria programs into their operations as a way to meet the demand for high quality foods, provide increased access to fresh foods away from home, and improve public health, including the prevention or control of obesity and obesity-related diseases. Farm-to-Cafeteria programs are also beneficial because they can increase food service participation and sales, increase positive public relations, and support the local community.

Showcasing locally produced foods enables food services to serve high quality foods at their peak in flavor. Many foods purchased through traditional wholesale vendors come from distant states and countries, and may have been stored for as long as seven to fourteen days before arriving at food service loading docks. Farms that produce foods for local markets often grow and harvest varieties based on flavor, and harvest when the produce is fully ripe. Locally grown products are the freshest products possible, often harvested only 24 hours before delivery.

Serving foods at their peak of ripeness can generate increased interest and participation in food service operations, and increase customer satisfaction with food services. Food services that showcase a variety of local, fresh foods throughout the season are able to utilize it as a marketing tool for their operation throughout the year.

Food Services that incorporate Farm-to-Cafeteria programs often receive increased community recognition for their positive contributions to community health and economy. They receive community support and recognition for their role in supporting local and limited resource farms.

## Cost of Serving Locally Produced Foods

Locally produced foods are being utilized at many different institutions to meet a variety of price ranges, and the cost of purchasing locally produced foods is often comparable to conventional sources. Chefs and Food Service Directors can find local producers that produce specialty high-end items, or more traditional products at appropriate costs.

K-12 schools are able to purchase locally produced foods and incorporate them into meals that cost less than traditional meals, and that fit under the USDA meal reimbursement rates. In the 1998-99 school year, a “Farmers Market Salad Bar” meal served at the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School Districts cost \$.77, in comparison to the \$.88 for the hot meal options (Mascarenhas and Gottlieb, 15).

In studies looking at foods purchased by hospitals, colleges, nursing homes and restaurants, Iowa researchers found that local foods purchased directly from producers were comparable in price to wholesale vendors, and that purchasing from local farmers did not result in significant increases in institutional food budgets (Practical Farmers of Iowa, 15). In Wisconsin, food services purchasing local and sustainably produced foods found that some locally produced items cost less than comparable items from conventional vendors (CIAS, Internet).

Many food services are able to purchase foods from local producers that cost more and still stay within their operating budget by instituting cost-saving measures in other parts of their operation. For example, some institutions are reducing their solid waste costs by composting all fruit and vegetable wastes. Often local farms that supply food services with fresh produce will be interested in receiving fruit and vegetable wastes for composting. Food services are also reducing customer food waste by providing appropriate portion sizes and/or

encouraging customers to take only what they can eat. Some K-12 schools are working to eliminate dessert offerings at elementary schools and use those funds to purchase additional fruits and vegetables from local sources.

In short, Food Services can source from local farmers to meet a variety of price points and stay within their operating budget, while supporting local farms and communities.

When purchasing foods, Food Service Managers need to be sure that they are receiving a safe product. To sell products to an institution, farms must first have the appropriate licensing for the particular product. This licensing requires that foods are grown, processed, or packed to meet food safety requirements. Food services concerned about food safety should become familiar with the rules and regulations governing farms to ensure food safety.



*Rainbow chard, a leafy green grown in many areas of Washington, including the Olympic Peninsula.*

Photo: Harvinder Singh

### Safety of locally produced foods

Food safety is practiced on small-scale farms as well as large-scale farms. Farmers take food safety very seriously. Their business and reputation depend on it, especially when farms are selling direct to their customers. Farmers with appropriate licensing follow state and federal guidelines to handle and process food products in a safe environment. Food Service Managers can ensure food safety of products by verifying that farmers possess appropriate licensing for products sold. In addition, Food Services that purchase directly from farmers are able to ask them about their growing and harvesting practices, ensuring that the food has been handled in a safe manner.

It is a common misperception that smaller-scale farms are not knowledgeable of safe food handling practices, however, this is not the case. There is no documented difference in the rates of food borne illness from small-scale or large-scale farms. Farmers

who sell locally handle and often process their own products. They know where the product has been from the field to the food service loading dock and understand their responsibility for the product's safety.

In order to ensure that foods are as safe as possible, food services must understand all of the legal

requirements for purchasing from farms or farm organizations. On the next page is a breakout of these requirements for each product. For a more detailed explanation of these requirements, consult the *Handbook of Regulations for Direct Farm Marketing (The Greenbook)* listed in the **Resource** section of this handbook.

## How to Find Locally Produced Foods

- **Connect with local Food Advocate Organizations.** Organizations such as *Chef's Collaborative, Farms Oceans Ranches Kitchens Stewards (FORKS), and Slow Food Seattle* are great places to learn about what other culinary and food service professionals are doing with locally produced foods. Members of these organizations know which farms are selling to restaurants and institutions currently. They are familiar with local products and know how to utilize them in food service menus. Find contact information for these organizations in the **Resources** section of this handbook.
- **Connect with institutions that purchase locally produced foods.** Food Service Managers that are currently purchasing from local farmers are good resources for others interested in making connections. These individuals may be able to help make connections with farmers and/or distributors that supply high quality locally produced foods, and may also be able to provide ideas for ways to best incorporate the foods into existing food service operations. Find contact information for institutional food services currently purchasing locally produced foods in the **Case Study** section of this handbook.
- **Visit local Farmers Markets** and talk with the market manager. Market managers may be able to assist food service professionals in finding farms that can supply desired quantity and quality of desired products. For a list of farmers markets in Washington State, contact the Washington Farmers Market Association, listed in the **Resources** section of this handbook.
- **Connect with a "Buy Local" campaign.** Organizations that promote locally produced foods are knowledgeable about local farms in the area and may be able to connect food service managers with interested producers. These campaigns are run by local and state government organizations. Find a listing of Washington "Buy Local" campaigns in the **Resources** section of this handbook.
- **Connect with local agricultural organizations** and express interest in developing relationships with local farmers. WSDA maintains a list of agricultural organizations in Washington, which can be accessed through the department's webpage at <http://www.agr.wa.gov/Links/default.htm>. While this list is not exhaustive, it may provide a starting point for organizations in local areas.
- **Make connections with local community food cooperatives.** Local food cooperatives often have established relationships with local producers and may be able to connect food service professionals with their farmer suppliers.
- **Connect with local distributors** and ask them to source foods from local farms. The more demand that local wholesale distributors have for local foods, the greater effort they will make in sourcing this product. In addition, food services can ask local distributors to provide sourcing information about the grower/producer of local foods at the time of purchase/delivery.

## Legal Requirements for Purchasing Food from Farms

### *Fresh Fruits and Vegetables:*

**Licensing:** Farms that sell fresh, whole fruits and vegetables directly can do so without the need of licensing or permit. These farms are approved sources for fruits and vegetables that they produce on their own farm.

**Reselling Products:** If a farm or vendor is selling product from another farm, they must have one of three types of broker licenses: a cash buyer license; a commission merchant license; or a producer dealer license. Farmer cooperatives incorporated under RCW 23.86 are exempt from this licensing requirement.

**Inspection:** Inspection by Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA) is required for certain fruits and vegetables in Washington State. These products are: pears, peaches, apricots, apples, Italian prunes, sweet cherries, potatoes, and asparagus. Inspection ensures products are free from pests, and conform to standards for grades and packs.

**Pesticides:** Many farmers who apply pesticides must be licensed by WSDA as pesticide applicators. To obtain this license, applicators must follow guidelines that ensure the safe use of pesticides.

**Prepared Fresh Foods:** Fresh produce that has been cut or prepared in any manner before purchase by food services must be processed in a WSDA licensed food-processing facility. Examples of these products include: sliced apples, chopped broccoli, salad mix, dried fruit, etc. Products that have been merely washed and trimmed do not need to be prepared in a licensed facility.

### *Poultry and Rabbits:*

Institutional food services may purchase locally produced poultry (chicken, turkey, and other fowl) that has been processed in a WSDA-licensed processing facility or a USDA processing facility. Both state licensed and federally inspected processing facilities are considered approved sources of poultry for use in institutions.

Poultry that has been processed in one of these facilities must either bear a USDA inspection seal or state that it has been processed in a WSDA-licensed food processing facility.

Rabbit meat must be processed in a state-licensed facility. Rabbit is not covered under federal inspection.

### *Meats:*

Institutional food services must purchase meat (beef, lamb, pork, goat, buffalo, etc.) that has been processed in a USDA-inspected processing facility. These facilities have been approved for safe and clean processing of meat as well as pre-and post-mortem inspection of the animals by the United States Department of Agriculture. Farmers marketing meats to institutions must have their meats processed under inspection, and meat packages must bear a USDA inspection seal.

## Legal Requirements for Purchasing Food from Farms (continued)

### Processed Foods:

In order to sell processed foods to institutional food buyers, producers must have a food processors license from WSDA. Processed foods include: jam/jelly, sauces, dried fruits and vegetables, chopped/sliced products, or any prepared food such as pies or baked goods. Farmer/processors must comply with food safety requirements in both handling and facilities in order to be licensed.

### Dairy Products:

Institutions wishing to purchase fluid milk must purchase from a farm or dairy that is licensed as a Grade A dairy by WSDA. This license requires the farmer to meet sanitation requirement for both facilities and handling.

Farmers who sell cheese, butter, and other dairy products must be licensed as a Food Processor by WSDA.

### Eggs:

Farmers selling eggs to institutions are required to be licensed as Egg Handlers/Dealers by WSDA. This license requires farmers to properly wash and grade eggs as well as practice safe handling and storage techniques.

### Organic Foods:

Any food product that is marketed as “organic” must be certified by a USDA accredited certifier.

Foods that are certified organic are produced without synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, growth promotion hormones, or antibiotics. Organic food production standards have been developed to maximize the safe production and handling of food, and do not create a higher risk of microbial contamination than foods grown conventionally. For example, applications of raw manure (potential carrier for E. coli bacteria) are strictly regulated to avoid potential contamination of food crops. Each certified organic farmer and food processor is inspected annually to ensure their production meets organic standards.

# ***Strategies to Incorporate Farm-to-Cafeteria Programs***

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The following are potential ways to incorporate locally produced foods into different institutional settings.

## **K-12 schools**

### **1. Salad Bar**

Incorporate a local foods salad bar as an alternative or in combination with hot lunch option. Find examples of salad bar models in the **Models** section of this handbook.

### **2. Teacher Nutrition Education**

Serve local foods in the cafeteria that are featured in nutrition education curriculum in the classroom or school garden.

### **3. Main Dish Item**

Incorporate local foods in the main hot lunch item on the menu. Find more information on local foods incorporated into main meals in the **Models** section of this handbook.

### **4. Side Fruit/Vegetable**

Serve locally produced fruits or vegetables as a side dish for lunch. Locally produced fruits, such as apples, pears, berries or melons, can be served with cereal as a breakfast option.

### **5. Special Events**

Host a “Harvest Festival” in the cafeteria, showcasing many different locally produced foods at one event, or showcase one locally grown product each month to introduce different foods to students and educate them about what foods are produced locally. Find more information on hosting special events in the school cafeteria in the **Models** section of this handbook.

## **Colleges/ Hospitals/ Workplace Cafeterias**

### **1. Salad Bar**

Incorporate a local foods salad bar as an alternative or in combination with hot lunch option. Find examples of salad bar models in the **Models** section of this handbook.

### **2. Special Events**

Promote fresh and seasonal foods to employees and students at “Locally Grown” lunches or dinners, featuring locally produced foods. These meals can be used to introduce chefs, food service employees and farms to each other, and provide an educational event for customers. Local community organizations can be brought into these programs to coordinate purchases from local farms if desired. Find more information on Special Events in the **Models** section of this handbook.

### **3. Catering Events**

Showcase local foods at catering events or offer an “all-local” meal as a catering option for visiting conferences/groups. Find more information about catering events with locally produced foods in the **Models** section, or read about “all-Iowa meals” in the **Case Study** section of this handbook.

### **4. Locally Produced Foods in Main Cafeteria Options**

Offer main dishes prepared with locally grown foods, or fresh fruits and vegetables from local producers. Institutions can offer healthy “seasonal smoothies” made to order utilizing fresh and frozen fruits. Find more information about local foods incorporated in main cafeteria options in the **Models** section,

or read about the University of Wisconsin, The Evergreen State College, and The University of Washington programs in the **Case Study** section of this handbook.

## Nursing homes

### 1. Soup and Salad

Serve a soup and salad combination featuring locally produced foods. This can be a simple meal option that customers can choose as a complete meal, and that can be easily added into existing food service operations.

### 2. Feature Traditional Foods

Feature culturally appropriate foods enjoyed by seniors that are not frequently offered from main distributors. Examples include vegetables such as parsnips, rutabagas, cabbage, winter squash, steamed greens, etc. Many local farmers produce traditional and ethnic foods that are appropriate for a senior population. Find recipes and ideas for preparing locally produced foods for a senior population from the Pike Place Market Senior Market Basket CSA program, listed in the **Resources** section of this handbook.

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## Strategies for Success

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Experienced Food Service Directors Paul Flock (Olympia School District) and Jennifer Hall (Bon Appetite) suggest the following keys to success to make Farm-to-Cafeteria programs work successfully for food services.

Keys to success:

- Start small and build on successes.
- Gauge success by what students and customers are consuming, and build off that. Don't focus *solely* on controlling additional costs or increasing participation.
- Take time to educate food service staff about locally produced foods, and involve them in the changes in food services.
- Arrange progress meetings as needed with interested stakeholders, community organizations, parents, food service staff, and customers.
- Contact a local agricultural organization or WSDA to establish links with local farmers.
- Involve students/customers in all phases of the process.
- Be patient with changes, and celebrate success!

## ***In-Season Sheet***

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Some products are available year round, such as mushrooms, sprouts, beef, chicken, eggs, milk and dairy products, and some seafood. These products can be showcased at any time of the year if desired. In general, fresh fruits and vegetables are available in spring, summer and fall, by availability may differ regionally within the state due to varied climates.

This guide will provide food services with an idea of what may be available in each season. To find out specific information about regional products and seasons, check with local agricultural organizations or wholesale vendors.

### **What About the Winter?**

There are a variety of different locally produced fruits and vegetables that can be used in the winter. Food services can showcase locally produced fruits and vegetables that store well, such as apples, pears, potatoes, and other products that are produced year round, such sprouts and mushrooms. Also, processed foods, such as frozen berries and fruits can be utilized. In areas that have mild winter temperatures, products such as salad greens, leafy green vegetables and root crops (i.e. beets, carrots, parsnips etc) are available late into the season, or year round.

Seafood, meat, eggs and dairy products can also be showcased in the winter, as they are available year round from some sources.



## Fall (September-November)

### Vegetables

Beets	Salad Greens:	Pumpkins
Broccoli	Mixed Leaf	Radishes
Brussels Sprouts	Lettuce, Mizuna, Tat Soi, Arugula	Rutabaga
Cabbage	Turnips	Shallots <sup>1</sup>
Carrots <sup>1</sup>	Kohlrabi	Spinach
Cauliflower	Leeks	Summer Squash <sup>2</sup>
Celeriac	Lettuce	Tomatoes <sup>2</sup>
Corn, Sweet <sup>2</sup>	Mushrooms	Turnips
Garlic <sup>1</sup>	Onions	Winter Squash <sup>1</sup>
Hearty Greens: Bok Choy, Chard, Collard Greens, Kale, Mustard Greens	Parsnips Peppers, Sweet and Hot <sup>2</sup> Potatoes <sup>1</sup>	

### Fruits

Apples <sup>1</sup>	Blueberries	Grapes
Apple Cider <sup>1</sup>	Cranberries	Pears <sup>1</sup>
Asian Pears	Currants	Raspberries
Blackberries	Gooseberries	

### Nuts

Hazelnuts	Walnuts
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### Seafood

Oysters	Geoduck	Fresh Coho Salmon
Clams	Mussels	Fresh Keta Salmon



## Spring (April-June)

### Vegetables

Asparagus	Radishes	Spinach
Broccoli	Salad Greens:	
Cauliflower	Mixed Lettuce	
Leaf lettuce	Leaf, Mizuna, Tat Soi, Arugula	
Peas (June)	Mushrooms	

### Fruits

Apples	Rhubarb	Strawberries (beginning mid- June)
Winter pears		

### Seafood

Scallops	Clams
Oysters	Shrimp



## Winter (December-March)

### Vegetables

Carrots	Mushrooms	Winter Squash
Garlic	Onions	
Hearty Greens*: Bok Choy, Chard, Collard Greens, Kale, Mustard Greens	Potatoes	Salad Greens*: Mixed Leaf Lettuce, Mizuna, Tat Soi, Arugula

### Fruits

Apples	Hothouse Rhubarb	Frozen, Canned or Dried Fruits
Pears	Frozen Berries	

### Seafood

Oysters	Clams	Mussels
Scallops	Geoduck	



## Summer (June-August)

### Vegetables

Beets	Eggplant	Peppers, Sweet and Hot
Broccoli	Green beans	Potatoes, New
Cabbage	Hearty Greens: Bok Choy, Chard, Collard Greens, Kale, Mustard Greens	Salad Greens: Mixed Leaf Lettuce, Mizuna, Tat Soi, Arugula
Carrots		
Cauliflower		
Celery		
Chard	Lettuce, Head and Leaf	Spinach
Collard greens		Squash, summer
Cucumbers	Onions, Sweet	Tomatoes
Corn, Sweet	Peas (June-July)	

### Fruits

Apples	Currants	Plums
Apricots	Gooseberries	Raspberries
Blackberries	Melon	Strawberries
Blueberries	Nectarines	
Cherries	Peaches	

### Seafood

Fresh Sockeye Salmon	Fresh Chinook Salmon
Fresh Pink Salmon	Prawns

\* available in temperate regions only, in the beginning of the season

<sup>1</sup> Peak harvest season for this product. However, this product is stored and available in other seasons from local sources.

<sup>2</sup> Until first local frost.

## Food Service Planning Tools

### *From Asparagus to Zucchini: A Guide to Farm-Fresh, Seasonal Produce Madison Area Community Supported Agriculture Coalition (MADSAC)*

c/o Wisconsin Rural Development Center

(\$19)

Phone 608-226-0300

This resource provides 135 pages of vegetable information and seasonal recipes for northern climates. This is a very practical guide and important resource for farm-to-school programs.

### *The Crunch Lunch Manual: A case study of the Davis Joint Unified School District Farmers Market Salad Bar Pilot Program.*

Page 39-40

Find complete sourcing information for this document in the **Resources** section of this handbook.

- **Profit/Loss Analysis for Salad Bar Programs**

This worksheet was developed by the Davis “Crunch Lunch” Farmers Market Salad Bar, and provides an example worksheet to display financial information for a salad bar model for a school operating a national school lunch program, to determine and evaluate financial status.

- **Break Even Point worksheet**

This worksheet was developed for the Davis “Crunch Lunch” Farmers Market Salad Bar. It can be used to figure out the minimum number of school lunches (or salad bar lunches) that must be sold per day to cover costs. This can provide staff and farm-to-cafeteria organizers with a measurable goal for the program, which can help to measure fiscal performance.



# V. Farm-to-Cafeteria from a Community Organizer Perspective



Photo: Vanessa Ruddy

Community organizers play a *very important* role in creating successful Farm-to-Cafeteria programs. Often, institutional food services and farmers are very busy working on their own activities, and do not come together without encouragement, assistance and facilitation by community organizations. Community organizers help to “put the pieces together”, if only at the beginning of the program. They play an important part in obtaining funding and/or organizing Farm-to-Cafeteria programs so that they will run smoothly in the future. Community organizers create demand for Farm-to-Cafeteria programs, and coordinate and organize with farmers and food services to create successful relationships between farmers, food services, customers and the local community.

# ***How to start Farm-to-Cafeteria in local communities***

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## **Speak with Food Service Directors and Managers**

The first step to creating connections between farmers and food services is to request that food service operations purchase from local farmers. Speak directly with food service director/manager, or provide comments in comment boxes provided at most cafeterias in schools, hospitals, nursing homes etc. Extolling the benefits of purchasing locally provides Food Service Managers with reasons why customers and/or community members desire locally produced foods and allows them to consider the benefits of such purchases for their own operation.

A good time to approach Food Service Managers with a new program idea is when they are experiencing a “slow time”, such as late spring/summer for K-12 and during seasonal breaks at colleges and universities. It may be a good idea to approach food service managers with the idea, and inquire about their interest and time availability to plan a new program.

Organizers should remember that interested farmers will most likely plan their season and planting schedules in the winter. Keep this in mind when talking with food service directors, and realize that a program may not begin until the following year after planning begins.

## **Work with an Established Organization/Community Group**

Working with an established community group shows institutions that starting Farm-to-Cafeteria programs have a broad base of community support. Working with organizations has the benefit of sharing information among a larger group of individuals. Groups that have been successful in starting Farm-to-Cafeteria programs in the past include PTA's, community development organizations or non-profits, local agriculture organizations, university-related groups, including student organizations. The

larger group can also be made up of individuals from a multitude of organizations, such as a task force or advisory board (National Farm to School, 1).

## **Conduct a Readiness Assessment for Targeted Institution(s)**

When organizers are beginning to talk with Food Service Managers it may be a good time to assess if the institution and food services are ready to initiate a new program. Organizers from the Davis, California “Crunch Lunch” project have identified the following important factors to consider when approaching institutional food services:

### **History and current orientation of food services in the institution**

- Is food services a contracted company or part of the institution?
- Do they have good community relations?
- Are they focused on promoting healthy foods already?

### **Philosophical or practical values of administration and students, residents, or employees who eat at the institution**

- What is important for the customers at the institution?
- Is Food Services providing what students/customers want?

### **Financial standing of the food services operation**

- Are they under extreme financial stress? If so, they may not be interested/willing to take chances with a brand new program.

### **Current operations of food services**

- How are they operating currently?
- Do they make all the food on site, or purchase pre-cooked meals and heat them on site before serving?

### **What type of a Farm-to-Cafeteria program would fit with their current operating system?**

Find more information on readiness assessment from the Davis “Crunch Lunch” project in The Crunch Lunch Manual, listed in the **Resources** section of this handbook.

### **Involve Stakeholders Early to Help Create the Project**

Once food services have indicated a willingness to explore the idea, the next step is to involve other stakeholders of Farm-to-Cafeteria programs. It is important to talk with as many stakeholders as possible early on in the process to determine their interest, and find key partners to plan and carry

out a Farm-to-Cafeteria project. *Key stakeholders include: farmers/ farm organizations, institutional administration, food service customers and/or parents, and economic, environmental, social, or agricultural community organizations.* The box on page 42 contains a list of stakeholder groups that should be included in the planning process when thinking about starting a Farm-to-Cafeteria program.

### **Host a Meeting with all Stakeholders Present**

Hosting a meeting with key stakeholders is the best way to create momentum towards creating a Farm-to-Cafeteria project. Be sure to invite as many stakeholders listed above as possible. They will each

## **Farm-to-Cafeteria Stakeholder Groups**

### **Institutions**

Food service staff  
Nutritionists  
Principals/Administration Employees  
Teachers/Faculty/ Professionals  
Students  
Parents, PTA  
Nurses  
Board members

### **Community Organizations**

Environmental organizations  
Sustainable agriculture groups  
Anti-hunger, food security organizations  
County health and nutrition staff

### **Farmers and Places to Find Them**

Farmers Markets  
Local “Farm Maps”  
Local Farm Organizations  
Local grocery stores  
Food cooperatives/ Natural Food stores  
Roadside Stands/U-Pick/CSA’s  
Washington Farm Bureau  
WSU Cooperative Extension  
Agricultural Cooperatives  
Washington State Department of Agriculture

### **Government Agencies**

U.S. and State Departments of Agriculture  
County Agriculture Commissioner  
City Council members  
Representatives from local congressional and state representative offices

(Adapted from the National Farm to School Program)

bring valuable resources and support for the project, providing a well-rounded coalition. Find a sample meeting agenda in **Organizing Tools**, later in this section.

After everyone is introduced at the meeting, organizers should give a brief introduction about why they would like to create a Farm-to-Cafeteria program, and allow each party to share the benefits they see, and what they envision for the program. Next, it is a good idea to present information about other Farm-to-Cafeteria programs of interest. Organizers may wish to briefly explain models and specific case studies outlined in this handbook as a way to start the conversation about what a Farm-to-Cafeteria program could look like. In subsequent meetings, it may be a good idea to discuss the topics below. Keep in mind that a successful project will most likely take a series of meetings to get started, and organizers should plan accordingly.

### **Develop a Goal Statement and Pick a Strategy**

Eventually, perhaps after a few meetings have taken place, the group should develop a goal statement for the project that all parties agree with, including food services. This goal statement will serve to keep the group together. It will also aid every stakeholder in talking about the project and understanding what ideas could fit in the future.

After the group creates a goal statement, a strategy should be developed. Examples of strategies that could be used include creating a “farmers market” salad bar, or hosting a “local food dinner” once a quarter. The creation of a Farm-to-Cafeteria advisory board could be a strategy to keep interested students, employees and/or farmers involved in the project.

### **Assess the Necessary Fundraising Need**

After the goals and strategies have been determined, organizers and stakeholder groups will need to

determine what funds need to be raised to create Farm-to-Cafeteria programs. Organizers of current Farm-to-School programs have found that funding may be needed for: purchasing new equipment for food services, such as choppers and shredders for fresh produce, creating school gardens, developing ordering and delivery systems with local farms, and/or coordinating and administering the project. Some Farm-to-Cafeteria programs operate with no additional funds, including the Olympia School District “Organic Choices Salad Bar”, however, many efforts start with some outside funding.

Funding can serve as a motivator for all parties involved to carry out the desired goals of the program. Obtaining outside funds is a good task for community and non-profit organizations that would like to partner with food services and farmers to administer and organize a Farm-to-Cafeteria project. Organizers may wish to apply for grants, or raise funds from community contributions. Potential funding sources for Farm-to-Cafeteria programs can be found on the Community Food Security Coalition website at [http://www.foodsecurity.org/farm\\_to\\_school.html](http://www.foodsecurity.org/farm_to_school.html).

### **Start Small and Expand Slowly**

Starting a small project and expanding over time provides many benefits. It gives all stakeholders a chance to participate in a new project without too much risk. It allows farmers, food services, and customers a chance to get to know one another and establish relationships between all parties involved. These relationships take time. Additionally, starting small and growing slowly allows for more time to evaluate the project in the early stages to learn what works best. This allows food services, farmers and administrators to change any aspects of the project if desired.

## ***Conclusion***

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With encouragement and facilitation by community groups, Farm-to-Cafeteria programs can be a success story for farms, institutions and local communities. There are many resources available to assist local individuals and organizations interested in getting foods into local cafeterias, many of which are listed in the **Tools for Organizers** section as well as the **Resources** section of this handbook.

The rewards to starting Farm-to-Cafeteria programs are multi-faceted, from improving the quality of foods served in local institutions, to enhancing relationships with local farmers and community members. Organizers are to be thanked and rewarded for their efforts. In many cases, it was local organizers that started the successful Farm-to-Cafeteria programs listed in this handbook.

## Organizing tools

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The following tools have been provided to help community organizers create Farm-to-Cafeteria programs, work with institutional food services, inform community members about reasons to change institutional food choices, and determine community, organizers and institutional readiness for a program.

### Community Organizing/ Informational Materials

#### Price Tags/Cost Tags

<http://www.foodroutes.org/blcsheets.jsp#cost>

Leaflets to educate community members about the price and cost of our current food system and how to get involved in purchasing foods from local farms. Developed by the Center for Integrated Agricultural Sciences at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

#### Farm-to-College Resources Page FoodRoutes Network

<http://www.foodroutes.org/farmtocollege.jsp>

This page contains useful information and materials developed for farm-to-college programs, with specific information for college students interested in developing a Farm-to-Cafeteria project at their school. Resources include a series of handouts that discuss reasons why to create a Farm-to-College project, and how to get involved in creating a local food system.

#### Break Even Point

Found in: The Crunch Lunch Manual: A case study of the Davis Joint Unified School District Farmers Market Salad Bar Pilot Program (see resources section), Page 40.

UC Davis developed this worksheet for the Davis Farmers Market Salad Bar. Community organizations and food services that are administering Farm-to-Cafeteria programs, such as an ongoing farmers market salad bar, may find the break-even point model useful to determine the amount of meals needed to be served to reach the financial “break-even” point. This formula can also be used for one-time events, such as “harvest meals” created as start up projects to create longer Farm-to-Cafeteria relationships in the future.

### Sample Meeting Agenda

*Reprinted from the National Farm to School Program, Occidental College*

- 1) Introductions
- 2) Why a Farm-to-School Project – Goals and Justification
- 3) Examples of existing Farm-to-School Programs
- 4) Determine interest: would group like to create something?
- 5) Assess the Current Situation
  - a) Farmer Issues – crops, seasonality, marketing channels, value-added processing, transportation and delivery, ability to meet demand
  - b) School Issues – present buying practices, kitchens, storage and prep areas, labor, equipment, food budget
  - c) Partnering with others – are there joint projects happening now (e.g., school gardens, cooking classes, nutrition education).
- 6) Envisioning a Local Farm-to-School Project
  - a) Given local resources, what can be done?
  - b) What barriers exist to starting a project?
  - c) How can they be overcome?
  - d) What other potential partners should be part of the process?
- 7) Form a Working Group and/or Assign Tasks
- 8) Set Next Meeting Date



# Appendix



# Appendix A- Case Studies

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## Case Study #1:

### “Organic Choices Salad Bar” Olympia School District

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*Adapted from A Salad Bar Featuring Organic Choices: Revitalizing the School Lunch Program. Paul Flock, Cheryl Petra, Vanessa Ruddy and Joseph Peterangelo. 2003. Olympia School District, Washington.*

#### **How did the program get started?**

The Olympia School District in Washington piloted an Organic Choices salad bar in October 2002 at Lincoln Elementary. The pilot program was started after Vanessa Ruddy, a concerned parent from Lincoln Elementary, approached Child Nutrition Supervisor Paul Flock about the quality of school lunches. This parent arranged meetings with Lincoln parents, teachers, community members and Lincoln’s principal at Paul Flock’s office. The group created the following start up goals for the pilot program:

- \*To provide fresh organic produce
- \*To provide alternative protein choices
- \*To reduce sugar intake
- \*To purchase locally grown foods
- \*To do what was necessary to sustain the program.

The “Organic Choices Salad Bar” was agreed to be a way to begin fulfilling these goals, and it was opened in October 2002.

#### **Description and Highlights:**

The “Organic Choices Salad Bar” features organic fruit and vegetable choices, whole grain breads, alternative protein choices, eggs, and organic soymilk. Organic fruit and vegetable choices include romaine lettuce and mixed salad greens, apples, grapes, cherry tomatoes, green peppers, potatoes, squash and cucumbers. Alternate protein choices agreed upon were hard boiled eggs, cottage cheese, sunflower seeds, salmon, tuna, garbanzo beans, organic soy beans, and kidney beans, and would be rotated to provide students with variety. It should be noted, that soymilk does not replace fluid milk as a required school lunch meal component. Cow’s milk and juice are still served.

The initial goal for the fruit and vegetable offerings was to have at least 50% of these items be organic, which was met in the first year of the program. In the first year of the program, five other local elementary schools added organic salad bars and locally grown produce to their menus, and additional schools are signed up to introduce salad bars into their school in the 2003-04 school year.

The introduction of the salad bar increased the amount of fruit and vegetable servings taken by students and staff. At the first two schools where the salad bar was introduced, fruit and vegetable servings increased an average of 27 percent, and participation rates increased by 16 percent.

## **Costs and Funding:**

While local and organic fruits and vegetables are more expensive, the program has proved to be a viable option for the school district. By encouraging children to take only what they will eat, eliminating desserts from the elementary menu (by request of teachers and parents), and reducing waste costs by composting and recycling, the program has been financially sustainable.

In addition, the school district utilizes the “Department of Defense Fresh” program to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables with commodity entitlement funds, thus increasing its budget to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables for the district.

The program has not received any outside funding to date, and has been implemented and expanded under the current food services operating budget. The program started as a pilot at one school, and grew slowly in order to monitor costs and build on successes slowly.

The bottom line is that the Organic Choices Salad Bar is a viable option for the school district. Financially it is not a burden on the school lunch program and its extra costs are manageable.

## **What local foods are served?**

Local farmers supplied winter squash, potatoes and organic salad greens for the salad bar in its first year. These foods were served in the salad bar and/or in the main hot lunch line with great success. Paul Flock, the food service director, hopes to increase the volume and types of foods purchased from local farms in the coming years.

In the first year of the program, two farmers supplied foods for the salad bar. The food service department reached an agreement with one local farm and is currently purchasing the organic potatoes and squash it grows. The food service department also made an agreement with another local farmer, who began providing organic salad greens for the school lunch program in the spring of 2003.

Farmers and wholesale distributors deliver foods to the central kitchen at the district. These foods are then distributed to each participating school with their regular deliveries in district owned trucks.

In addition to purchasing direct from farms, the Olympia School District works with a local produce distributor to source local organic salad greens, fruits and vegetables when in season and available.

## **Sustainability:**

The “Organic Choices Salad Bar” is growing from five schools in 2002-03 to include additional schools in the coming years. It has proven to be economically sustainable, and has encouraged the district to begin looking and institutionalizing the program, and developing policy at the school district level to improve child nutrition through school food services in the entire district.

**Contact:** Paul Flock  
Food Service Supervisor  
Olympia School District  
(360)-596-7007  
[pflock@osd.wednet.edu](mailto:pflock@osd.wednet.edu)

## **Case Study #2:**

### **“Farm-to-College” University of Washington and Cascade Harvest Coalition**

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#### **How did the program get started?**

The program to source locally produced foods directly from producers began in 2002, when local community food advocate Wendy McClure approached Jean Michel Boulot, executive chef of the University of Washington (UW) Food Services. At the time Wendy approached him, Boulot was executing a comprehensive renovation of the dining hall facilities and menus to attract students to eat their meals on campus and increase sales revenue of on-campus dining services. Chef Boulot was very interested in incorporating locally grown foods into the new food service menus because of the value and quality of the fresh produce available and his personal concern for the viability of local farms in Washington.

Wendy began working with the local agricultural organization, Cascade Harvest Coalition (CHC), to supply the UW Food Services with local products direct from area farmers. This idea grew into the current “Farm-to-College Pilot Project, which has been funded with a grant provided by WSDA.

#### **Description and Highlights:**

CHC’s “Farm-to-College” project involves supplying locally produced foods from farmers directly to UW Food Services. Chefs use these foods in their featured main menus, salad bars in dormitory dining halls, and in student union building dining facilities.

Like most large institutions, UW Food Services have time and delivery restraints that limit them from purchasing from many individual farms. To create a system that works under those restraints, Cascade Harvest Coalition is creating a collaborative ordering, delivery and invoicing system to supply the UW Food Services with a variety of products from local farmers. The CHC “Farm-to-College” project is intended to serve as a model ordering and delivery system that can be replicated by other farmer groups interested in selling local products to other major institutions.

To begin the project, CHC recruited interested producers in February 2003 and developed an advisory group of six farms to supply products to the UW and develop the collaborative ordering and delivery system.

In August 2003, CHC and participating farmers began supplying local products to UW Food Services for summer meals and visiting conference groups and began serving foods for the fall quarter in September 2003. A complete description of the project and listing of farmer advisory group and partners can be viewed at the CHC website at <http://www.cascadeharvest.org/FarmtoCollege.htm>.

#### **Other components:**

To educate chefs and farmers about one another, CHC will organize tours of participating farms for food service chefs and employees. Participating farmers will tour kitchens and dining halls to become familiar with the UW food service operations, and the college dining experience. UW chefs and food service employees will be taken on farm tours to gain a better understanding of local farm operations and crop production, as well as to form personal connections between the two groups.

### **Costs and Funding:**

CHC received a \$27,050 grant from the Washington State Department of Agriculture Small Farm and Direct Marketing Program to pilot the “Farm-to-College” project with UW and develop a collaborative ordering, delivery and invoicing system for producer groups that wish to collaboratively sell their products to wholesale customers.

### **How are farmers involved?**

Farmers make up the advisory committee for the group, assisting CHC develop the ordering delivery and invoicing system for UW, and provide products to the UW. In addition, farms participate in farm and food service tours to develop relationships with food service chefs and employees.

### **What local foods are served?**

Local and organic fruits and vegetables are provided to UW chefs, who showcase them fresh in the salad bars and incorporate them into main meal offerings. Foods served include organic salad greens, mixed vegetables, herbs, apples, peaches and plums. All products ordered by UW chefs are delivered by truck, twice a week, to UW Food Services.

### **Sustainability:**

The UW-CHC “Farm-to-College” project is in the beginning stages of operation, and will be evaluated at the end of 2003. At that time, CHC, participating chefs and farms will evaluate the project’s success and future sustainability. Interested farmers will continue the project into the next growing season. The ordering, delivery and invoicing system will be made available for other producer groups interested in selling local products in institutions.

**Contact:** Cascade Harvest Coalition  
Seattle, Washington  
(206) 205-6372 or toll-free (877) 728-9453  
[mary@oz.net](mailto:mary@oz.net)  
[www.cascadeharvest.org/](http://www.cascadeharvest.org/)

## Case Study #3

### “All-Iowa Meals”

#### Iowa State University and Practical Farmers of Iowa

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*Adapted from Practical Farmers of Iowa, Expanding Local Food Systems by marketing to Institutions, May 2002.*

#### **How did the program get started?**

This project began in 1997 when Practical Farmers of Iowa (PFI) helped locate local sources of foods for several events at the Scheman Building at Iowa State University, a conference facility that serves over 900 meals each year to organizations holding meetings and events at the facility.

#### **Description and Highlights:**

The “all-Iowa Meals” program is a project of PFI’s Local Food Brokering Project to help growers market their foods. For the project, PFI brokers locally produced foods, develops seasonal menus, and provides educational information for conference attendees regarding local and global agricultural issues.

All-Iowa Meals began at the Scheman Building at Iowa State University, and has since branched out to serve other hotels, conference centers, and restaurants, with the primary focus on serving agricultural and environmental organizations.

In the first year, Practical Farmers of Iowa organized 11 all-Iowa meals at several locations, serving over 1,000 individuals, with food products purchased from 26 farms across Iowa. In 2000, Practical Farmers of Iowa served 54 meals, generating \$16,581 in revenue for participating Iowa farmers.

To start the program, a menu was developed using products available from PFI’s growers network to sell all-Iowa meals to clients of the Scheman Building. The menu has three seasons (early summer, mid-to-late summer, fall-to-early winter) based on the availability of different fruits and vegetables. The entrees (meats, fish, and poultry) are listed separately because they are available year round.

#### **Costs and Funding:**

The project received initial funding from the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture, to develop all-Iowa meals and create an ordering, delivery and purchasing system for institutional sales.

To test whether revenues could be generated in exchange for the brokering services, the project established a fee system for the 2000 season with three sources of revenues - farmers, conference facilities, and clients being served all-Iowa meals. Farmers paid a \$10 annual fee and remitted 5% of total sales to PFI at the end of the year. The ISU Scheman Building paid a \$100 annual fee, and clients had a surcharge of 60¢ added to the cost of each meal, which was to be paid to PFI by Scheman at the end of the season. While this test found that generating revenue was possible, the project learned that paying for the brokering service with fees tied to sales would require larger volumes than are likely possible with all-Iowa meals.

## **How are farmers involved?**

At the center of the project is a growers network. This network started in 1998 with eight farmers who helped plan the project. These farmers identified when products would be available and set prices so institutions could calculate how much to charge clients for local food meals. Policies were set for selecting growers to use for different meals, with the basic principle being that the business would be spread among the growers. The number of farmers in the network grew from eight in 1999 to 27 in 2001. The network includes farmers with fruits, vegetables, poultry, pork, beef, fish, and dairy products.

## **What local foods are served?**

These growers supply different foods to make a complete meal including seasonal fruits, vegetables, poultry, beef, pork, fish and dairy products.

## **Delivery Structure:**

PFI establishes the relationship with food services, sends out seasonal menu choices to food services, and serves as the single point of contact for food services to place orders for the meals. Once food service buyers place orders, requests for products are sent to members of the growers network by email. Growers respond and choices are made from those with products, with delivery and billing done directly by farmers, though occasionally PFI staff help move product from farms to institutions.

## **Sustainability:**

The impact of the project has spread far and wide among farmers, food services and consumers. Farmers have used their experience to market their products confidently and successfully to other institutional markets. Chefs are becoming familiar with local seasonal products, and they are building relationships with farmers in their communities. And consumers, through experiences so tangible they immediately recognize the importance of knowing where their food is coming from, are awakening to the freshness, taste and variety of local foods. The rippling effect is also clear. Groups from across Iowa had been calling for help with all-Iowa meals, but now these meals are happening all over Iowa on their own.

**Contact:** Practical Farmers of Iowa  
PO Box 349  
Ames, Iowa, 50010  
515-232-5649  
[gary@practicalfarmers.org](mailto:gary@practicalfarmers.org)  
[www.pfi.iastate.edu](http://www.pfi.iastate.edu)

## Case Study #4

### “Local and Organic Connections” The Evergreen State College

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#### **How did the program get started?**

In 2001, Bon Appetite (BA) began managing the campus food services at The Evergreen State College (TESC), an interdisciplinary liberal arts college in Olympia, WA. The company was chosen to operate food services at the college because of student, staff and faculty requests to have a food services company that would serve fresh, high quality meal options, incorporating locally grown and organic foods. To answer these requests, BA developed a relationship with the TESC Organic Farm to supply fresh vegetables. The TESC Organic Farm, owned by TESC, is maintained and operated by students learning to operate and manage a small scale, mixed vegetable and flower production farm. In addition to purchasing fresh vegetables from the TESC Organic Farm, Bon Appetite began making direct connections with area farms to supply additional produce and meats for the college.

#### **Description and Highlights:**

Bon Appetite (BA) is the food service management company that operates TESC’s dining services. The company’s main expertise is serving fresh, high quality food prepared from scratch. BA serves food at the college dining hall, the grab and go deli, and at on-campus catered events.

BA serves fresh foods with a focus of organic and local products when possible. They purchase fresh vegetables from the TESC Organic Farm and local distributors to supply their large salad bar with about 75 percent organic offerings, and for their main dish offerings. They work with local farms and distributors to source local when possible and provide the freshest products at their food service operation.

To develop relationships with area farms, BA began hosting “Local Grower Dinners” in 2002-2003 school year. “Local Grower Dinners” showcased foods produced on area farms three times a quarter, to educate students about local farms and to promote the company’s efforts to make connections with local farms. Three farms were showcased in 2002-03, serving locally grown vegetables and locally produced meats in fresh innovative menus, with positive reactions from students, staff and community members.

In the 2003-04 school year, the company plans to host “All-Organic” dinners and lunches for students and staff, incorporating local products into the menus as well. These events provide a focus point for interested customers to see BA’s commitment to serve organic and locally grown foods and source from local producers.

#### **Other components:**

As a part of their relationship with the TESC Organic Farm, the farm takes all the pre-and post consumer vegetable waste to make compost. In 2002-03, BA provided 40 tons of compostable materials, reducing their waste by 33 percent (by volume). In addition, they use 100 percent biodegradable plates, bowls and cups that can be composted, instead of plastic or Styrofoam.



BA's General Manager, Rick Stromire, is currently working with the TESC Organic Farm manager to grow specific volumes of products specifically for BA, and he would like to work with additional farms in this manner. Planning crop varieties and desired volumes with farmers at the beginning of the growing season allows Rick and BA chefs to plan menus and other produce orders around what local farms are providing. It also allows BA to choose specific varieties of products, and gives BA and local farms the opportunity to develop a lasting relationship they can depend on in the future.

**Sustainability:**

Students and staff at TESC are very satisfied with BA's effort to source local and organic foods and encourage them to do more. BA plans to continue to promote local and organic foods in the 2003-04 school year with "All Organic" lunch and dinner options. These options will increase customer awareness of their commitment to organic and local products at the college food services in the future.

**Contact:**

Rick Stromire  
General Manager  
Bon Appetite - The Evergreen State College  
Olympia, WA  
(360) 867-6282  
[cafegm@evergreen.edu](mailto:cafegm@evergreen.edu)  
<http://evergreencollege.cafebonappetit.com/default.asp>

The Evergreen State College Organic Farm  
<http://www.evergreen.edu/organicfarm/home.htm>

## Case Study #5

### “The College Food Project” University of Wisconsin-Madison

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*Adapted from The Center for Integrated Agricultural Systems, University of Wisconsin-Madison, The College Food Project. <http://www.wisc.edu/cias/research/institut.html>*

#### **How did the program get started?**

Farmer-direct buying got started at Housing Food Service in the mid-1990s. In contrast to other colleges, where students led the push for local, organic foods, UW-Madison’s faculty and staff initiated local buying. The Center for Integrated Agricultural Systems (CIAS) took the lead by requesting local, sustainable catering in 1996 and has continued this work with help from a USDA Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) grant.

#### **Description and Highlights:**

There are two separate food service operations at UW-Madison, and both are involved in buying farmer-direct and organic foods. The [UW-Madison Housing Food Service](#) has brought local and organic foods to their dining centers, carryout operations, and convenience stores on campus. The [UW-Madison Memorial Union](#) has made local and organic food part of several catered events, and is now planning to create a special menu option for customers who want to order locally grown and organic meals.

The UW-Madison Housing Food Service serves about 15,000 meals a day, mostly to students who live in the residence halls on campus. In December 2000, UW-Madison became the first major public university in the U.S. to commit to putting foods grown on local farms on the regular menu at their dorm dining centers.

As of April 2001, the UW-Madison Housing Food Service served Wisconsin-grown apples, organic blue corn chips, and organic potatoes every week. They also have many organic foods from outside of Wisconsin on the regular menu. Several times a year, Housing Food Service organizes special events in the dorm dining centers that feature locally-grown and organic foods.

#### **Other components:**

In April 2001, farmers staffed an educational display table where the cafeteria line formed at a feature dinner. This worked well, since each student who came in saw the big, colorful display. Students could talk with the farmers and each other about sustainable and organic agriculture while they waited in line. In 2001, student interns and CIAS staff offered samples of organic vegetables grown in the student garden on campus, and talked with students while they waited in line. Many students came from families where they had eaten organic food, many others were from farm backgrounds, and almost all wanted to learn more about local, sustainable eating.

The meals also serve as opportunities to educate and inform dining center administrators and staff. Bob Fessenden, food service director sees education of his staff as a vital step in the process of bringing local food to campus dining centers:

“The key is getting your staff turned on to it. People at first said, “Urgh, I have to deal with that?” But then they saw the quality of the products. Also, bringing in local talent-- chefs from local restaurants to come in and help prepare these products--really helped.”

During the summer of 2001, administrators from UW Housing Food Service joined chefs from Chicago and Madison on a bus tour of four local organic farms.

### **Costs and Funding:**

In September 2000, UW Housing Food Service Director Bob Fessenden estimated that Housing Food Service spent about \$40,000 a year on organic products, including soy milk, rice milk, salad mixes, and frozen dinners. In 2001, UW-Madison added about 20 new farm-direct items on the regular menu, increasing this amount.

Many campus food service personnel assume that local, sustainable food costs more than food purchased through conventional channels. But this is not always true. CIAS looked at the prices of some of the new farm-direct and organic items being sold on campus at UW-Madison to see how they compared to similar items sold by the food service. Here's what they learned:

- **The natural burgers are more expensive ...**  
Natural 100% beef burger, made from Wisconsin pasture-fed cattle that were fed no animal byproducts, growth hormones, or antibiotics:  
Meat cost per burger—\$.75  
versus Empak frozen burger, with many additives including hydrogenated oils:  
Meat cost per burger—\$.43
- **The low-spray apples are cheaper ...**  
Environmentally-friendly apples, grown in an orchard in Dane County (where Madison is located) using low-spray, IPM practices:  
40# case, 100 count—\$18.00 (Cortland variety)  
versus Sysco apples—varieties range from \$18.48 to \$34.63 per 40# case (Cortland cost \$22.62 per case)
- **The organic corn chips are cheaper than Doritos ...**  
At the campus convenience stores, the retail cost of Blue Farm organic blue corn chips, grown one county away from the University, is \$1.91 for 10 ounces—\$.19 per ounce  
versus the retail cost of Doritos, which cost \$3.04 for a 13 and 1/2 ounce bag—\$.23 per ounce

The USDA Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program provided funding for CIAS to conduct the College Food Project to assess the potential for local food purchasing in all colleges and universities in Wisconsin. After investigating the opportunities and barriers at all institutions, they worked with schools to develop local food purchasing programs by networking with local, sustainable growers and conducting educational programs with students to increase demand for local food.

### **Farmers involved:**

Individual farmers have supplied UW-Madison, however, farmer cooperatives and other alternative distributors got much more involved in supplying food to UW-Madison beginning 2000-2001. These cooperatives include Home Grown Wisconsin, Wisconsin Pasturelands, Organic Valley, and North Farm Cooperative. Food service purchasers found that ordering from these brokers saved them time compared to working with individual farmers.

### **What local foods are served?**

To provide an example of the local foods served, a menu for one of the special event dinners, held in the dining halls at the UW-Madison is reprinted here.

**Seasonal Regional Organic Dinner**  
**Chad Eatery, October 9, 2001**

- Meats:*           **Organic Roast Turkey Breast**  
                          Organic Valley Family of Farms
- Natural 100% Beef Hamburgers**  
                          Wisconsin Pasturelands
- Vegetables:*   **Organic Vegetable Stew**  
                          Featuring locally produced Celery, Potatoes, Carrots, Cabbage, Onions
- Organic Grilled Red Potatoes and Onions**  
                          Meadow Brook Farm, Avoca
- Organic Lettuce Salad**
- Bread/Pasta:*   **Organic Pasta with Natural Meat Sauce**
- Organic Brown Rice Casserole**
- Organic Herb Biscuits and LaBrea Wheat Bread**
- Fruits:*           **Organic Watermelon**  
                          Tipi Produce, Fitchburg
- Low-Spray Cortland Apples**  
                          Carandale Orchard, Oregon
- Dessert:*         **Organic Creampuffs**  
                          Organic Valley Family of Farms
- Organic Blueberry Cheesecake**  
                          Organic Valley Family of Farms
- Apple Pie**  
                          Ski-Hi Orchard, Baraboo

**Delivery Structure:**

UW-Madison orders from farmer cooperatives and individual farms. These farms, cooperatives and local distributors deliver to Food Services individually as needed.

**Contact:**       Sara Tedeschi  
                          Center for Integrated Agricultural Sciences  
                          University of Wisconsin-Madison  
                          (608) 263-6064  
                          [smtedeschi@facstaff.wisc.edu](mailto:smtedeschi@facstaff.wisc.edu)  
                          [www.wisc.edu/cias/research/institut.html](http://www.wisc.edu/cias/research/institut.html)

## Case Study #6

### Locally Produced Foods at Iowa Hospitals, Nursing Homes, Colleges and Restaurants

#### University of Northern Iowa

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*Adapted from Expanding Local Food Systems by Marketing to Institutions, Practical Farmers of Iowa, May 2002 and the “Local Food Project”, Kamar Enshayan, University of Northern Iowa. <http://www.uni.edu/ceel/foodproject/>*

#### **How did the program get started?**

The University of Northern Iowa Local Food Project started in 1997 with a grant from the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture. At first the project worked to develop new markets for local farmers at the University of Northern Iowa, Allen Hospital, and Rudy’s Tacos, a local restaurant. Over time the project has expanded to ten institutions in northeast Iowa, including health care facilities, nursing homes, and restaurants.

#### **Description and Highlights:**

The Local Food Project assists farmers to sell locally produced foods to institutions year round, including two hospitals, four health care facilities, two colleges, two restaurants and one retail grocery store. **The total amount of funds received by local farmers participating in the project from 1998 through 2002 was \$783,951.**

Participating institutions connect with local farmers initially through college interns, who are **supported by grant funding. Initially, interns set up meetings for institutional food services, farmers and processors where prices, ordering methods, and delivery procedures are discussed.**

During the growing season, interns call farmers on order days to find out what is available, with institutional buyers using this information to place orders through the interns. Farmers deliver and are paid individually by the institutions. Prices are set individually by farmers involved, and price has not been an issue for buyers, in part because the product is very good quality. Once relationships are established, buyers and farmers begin working directly.

Farmers and institutional food services have been satisfied with the results of the project, and farmers have reported an increase of 5-15% in gross income as a result of this project.

#### **Costs and Funding:**

The project started with funding from the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture, and also received support from The USDA Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program. It is housed in the University of Northern Iowa Center for Energy and Environmental Education.

Prices of locally produced foods have not been a barrier for participating food service buyers, and the purchase of locally produced foods has not created a significant increase in food-related expenses for buyers.

## What local foods are served?

Approximately 25 farmers have sold to local institutional markets through the work of this project. A large majority of the locally produced foods purchased through the project are fruits and vegetables, including those listed below. In addition, some meat has been purchased from a local meat locker.

Below is a list of different fruits & vegetables Allen Memorial Hospital (Waterloo, IA) purchased locally in 2000.

May	June	July	August	September	October
Asparagus	Asparagus	Asparagus	Apples	Apples	Apples
Green Onions	Broccoli	Beets	Beets	Beets	Beets
Radishes	Cabbage	Broccoli	Broccoli	Broccoli	Melons
Rhubarb	Carrots	Cabbage	Cabbage	Cabbage	Onions
	Cauliflower	Carrots	Carrots	Carrots	Potatoes
	Green Beans	Cucumbers	Cauliflower	Cauliflower	Winter Squash
	Lettuce	Cantaloupe	Cantaloupe	Tomatoes	
	Green Onions	Yellow Beans	Cucumbers	Cucumbers (Hot house)	
	Peas	Lettuce	Green Beans	Green Beans	
	Radishes	Green Onions	Yellow Beans	Yellow Beans	
	Rhubarb	Peas	Lettuce	Lettuce	
	Strawberries	Peppers	Green Onions	Green Onions	
	Tomatoes (Hot house)	Potatoes	Dry Onions	Dry Onions	
		Radishes	Peppers	Peppers	
		Strawberries	Potatoes	Potatoes	
		Sweet Corn	Radishes	Radishes	
		Tomatoes	Winter Squash	Winter Squash	
		Zucchini	Sweet Corn	Sweet Corn	
			Tomatoes	Tomatoes	
			Watermelon	Watermelon	
			Zucchini	Zucchini	

## Delivery Structure:

To date, the project has not attempted to facilitate cooperation and coordination among the farmers involved, although this is an idea that continues to surface among the project organizers.

**Contact:** Dr. Kamyar Enshayan  
 University of Northern Iowa  
 Center for Energy & Environmental Education  
 Cedar Falls, IA 50614-0293  
 Phone (319) 273-7575  
[kamyar.enshayan@uni.edu](mailto:kamyar.enshayan@uni.edu)  
[www.uni.edu/ceee/foodproject](http://www.uni.edu/ceee/foodproject)

## Case Study #7

### “GROWN Locally”

### A Farmer Cooperative Marketing to Institutions

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*Adapted from Expanding Local Food Systems by Marketing to Institutions, Practical Farmers of Iowa, May 2002.*

#### **How did the program get started?**

Incorporated in 1999, GROWN Locally is a 12-member cooperative in Iowa that sells foods from its members to local institutions. The word GROWN in its name stands for “Goods Raised Only With Nature.”

#### **Description and Highlights:**

GROWN Locally members believe that if farmers can organize themselves, both farmers and the institutions they serve will be helped. The group’s focuses have been on expanding institutional markets for local foods, educating co-op members and local food buyers, and being a model that can be replicated in other places.

Each member’s initial investment was \$100. Buyers are included in their monthly meetings and decision-making when possible. They have from 14 to 20 people at these meetings. Food services they sell to have mainly been hospitals, nursing homes and health care facilities. During its first year (2000), they worked with 14 buyers. In 2001, they started to work with additional food service establishments, including Luther College and a couple of restaurants, one which worked to build their menu around what GROWN Locally had available.

GROWN Locally offers a wide variety of mixed vegetables to institutional customers and began offering apples in 2001. In the winter, farmer members plan how much of the different crops to grow by each farm.

Institutional sales calls are split between farmer members - each handles institutions near their farms. There isn’t a standard process for farmers to use when making these calls, but they have an information packet for buyers that includes 1) a summary of what GROWN Locally will do, 2) a listing of product, quantities, times available, and prices, and 3) some articles on GROWN Locally.

They want to deepen their current markets, and they recently received grant funding to purchase equipment to process their products. This processing should generate more sales by preserving harvests for later deliveries and by processing foods into forms that are more easily used by institutional food service workers.

#### **Costs and Funding:**

GROWN Locally started without grant support and has received only minimal financial assistance since its inception.

GROWN Locally sets its prices as a group at the start of the year for the entire year by evaluating what the competition charges. They then add 10% to these prices in bills to clients, and when payments come the cooperative keeps 20%, which means that half of the cooperative’s income comes from farmers and half comes from institutions.

**Delivery Structure:**

One of their members serves as a delivery and ordering coordinator. Orders are split between members with products available, and the coordinator works to spread the business among the farmers. Prior to 2002, the ordering system started with farmers sending emails each Sunday of available products to the coordinator for product lists with prices that were faxed to buyers. Buyers placed orders by 5 pm Tuesday, and email orders were sent to co-op members who delivered to one member's farm by 8 am Thursday. The foods were then washed and packed for delivery that day. Payments then came to GROWN Locally, which in turn paid its members. The system allowed clients to make one order, get one delivery, and get one bill per month.

Beginning in 2002, GROWN Locally offers on-line ordering for their institutional customers at [www.grownlocally.com](http://www.grownlocally.com). This site also has information about the cooperative and its members. This website was made possible by a producer grant from the USDA NCR-SARE program.

**Contact:** Michael Nash  
Sunflower Farms  
776 Old Stage Road  
Postville, Iowa 52162  
Phone: 563-864-3847  
Fax: 563-864-3837  
[sunspot@netins.net](mailto:sunspot@netins.net)  
[www.grownlocally.com](http://www.grownlocally.com)

# Appendix B - Resources

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## Organizations

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### Government Agencies

#### USDA Rural Business-Cooperative Service

John Brugger, Agriculture Marketing Specialist

Spokane, WA 99212

(509) 924-7350, ext. 114

[john.brugger@wa.usda.gov](mailto:john.brugger@wa.usda.gov)

USDA provides cooperative development assistance to agriculture producers, other groups and existing cooperatives on request of the board of directors.

#### WSDA Small Farm and Direct Marketing Program

Leslie Zenz and Kelli Sanger

PO Box 42560

Olympia, WA 98504-2560

(360) 902-1884 or (360) 902-2057

[smallfarms@agr.wa.gov](mailto:smallfarms@agr.wa.gov)

<http://agr.wa.gov/Marketing/SmallFarm/default.htm>

The Small Farm and Direct Marketing Program increases the economic viability of small farms, builds community vitality, and improves the environmental quality of the region by facilitating direct marketing opportunities and addressing market barriers for small farms in Washington. As a part of that mission, the Small Farm and Direct Marketing program offers technical assistance to farmers and institutional buyers in farm-to-cafeteria projects.

#### Washington State Office of State Procurement

General Administration

Jay Field

210 11th Ave SW Room 201

PO Box 41017

Olympia, WA 98504-1017

(360) 902-7419

[jfield@ga.wa.gov](mailto:jfield@ga.wa.gov)

<http://www.ga.wa.gov/PCA/pcacust.htm>

The Department of General Administration develops and administers contracts for goods and services on behalf of state agencies, colleges and universities, select non-profit organizations, and local governments.

## **Washington Organizations**

### **Cascade Harvest Coalition**

Mary Embleton, Director  
300 19<sup>th</sup> Ave.  
Seattle, WA 98122  
(206) 205-6372  
[www.cascadeharvest.org](http://www.cascadeharvest.org)

The Cascade Harvest Coalition (CHC) builds healthy food and farm systems by cultivating common ground among farming and non-farming communities. CHC works with local farmers to market and deliver local product to the University of Washington Food Services through the Farm to College pilot project.

### **Farms Oceans Ranches Kitchens Stewards (FORKS)/ Chef's Collaborative Affiliate**

Kären Jurgensen, President  
3629 Bagley Ave. N.  
Seattle, WA 98103  
[forkscontact@hotmail.com](mailto:forkscontact@hotmail.com)  
[www.forksproject.org](http://www.forksproject.org)

A local affiliate of Chefs Collaborative.

### **Northwest Cooperative Development Center**

1050 Capitol Way, South, Suite B  
Olympia, Washington 98501  
(360) 943-4241  
[nwcdc@qwest.net](mailto:nwcdc@qwest.net)

The Northwest Cooperative Development Center offers cooperative development and technical assistance through its financial programs, funded in part through a USDA Cooperative Development Grant.

### **Pike Place Market Senior Market Basket Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)**

Michele Catalano  
85 Pike Street, Room 500  
Seattle, WA 98101  
206-774-5250  
[michele@pikeplacemarket.org](mailto:michele@pikeplacemarket.org)

The Pike Place Market Senior Market Basked CSA distributes locally produced fruits and vegetables to low-income seniors in Seattle.

**Slow Food Seattle Convivia**

[www.slowfoodseattle.org](http://www.slowfoodseattle.org)

Slow Food is an educational organization dedicated to stewardship of the land and ecologically sound food production; to the revival of the kitchen and the table as centers of pleasure, culture, and community; to the invigoration and proliferation of regional, seasonal culinary traditions; and to living a slower and more harmonious rhythm of life.

**Washington State Farmers Market Association**

Zachary Lyons

P.O. Box 30727

Seattle, WA 98113-0727

(206) 706-5198

[zach@wafarmersmarkets.com](mailto:zach@wafarmersmarkets.com)

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

Go to the WSFMA Website for the most up to date information on Farmers Markets in Washington State, or contact WSFMA for printed Farmers Market directories.

## **Organizations Outside Washington**

### **Chefs Collaborative**

262 Beacon Street  
Boston, Massachusetts 02116  
(617) 236-5200  
[www.chefscollaborative.org](http://www.chefscollaborative.org)

A national network of more than 1,000 culinary professionals who promote sustainable cuisine by celebrating the joys of local, seasonal, and artisanal cooking.

### **The Food Alliance**

1829 NE Alberta, # 5  
Portland, OR 97211  
(503) 49311066  
[info@thefoodalliance.org](mailto:info@thefoodalliance.org)  
<http://www.thefoodalliance.org/index.html>

Based in Portland, Oregon, The Food Alliance operates an extensive market development program to connect TFA Certified farmers and ranchers with consumers and buyers, including independent grocery chains, national food service companies, leading wholesalers, food cooperatives and specialty stores.

### **GROWN Locally**

Michael Nash  
Sunflower Farms  
776 Old Stage Road  
Postville, Iowa 52162  
(563) 864-3847  
[sunspot@netins.net](mailto:sunspot@netins.net)  
[www.grownlocally.com](http://www.grownlocally.com)

Cooperative in Iowa comprised of 11 farmers growing vegetable crops alongside their corn and soybeans. The cooperative sells products to retirement/nursing homes, hospitals and schools in a variety of ways, including an Internet ordering system.

### **New North Florida Cooperative**

Glyen Holmes or Vonda Richardson  
215 Perry Paite Bldg. South  
Tallahassee, FL 32307  
850-352-2400 or 850-599-3546  
[nafc@digitalexp.com](mailto:nafc@digitalexp.com)

A farmer cooperative selling chopped and bagged collard greens and fruits to Public Schools in the Southeastern U.S.

**Organic Valley Family of Farms**

507 West Main Street

LaFarge, WI 54639

1-888-444-6455

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

The largest organic farmer-owned cooperative in America distributing dairy, meat and produce nationwide.

## **National Farm-to-Cafeteria Support Organizations**

### **National Farm to School Program**

Mark Wall

Center for Food & Justice

Occidental College - UEPI

1600 Campus Road

Los Angeles, CA 90041

(323) 341-5098

[mwall@oxy.edu](mailto:mwall@oxy.edu)

[www.farmentoschool.org](http://www.farmentoschool.org)

The National Farm to School Program provides technical assistance, gathers and shares information, and acts as a clearinghouse for information on Farm to Cafeteria sales that connect local farmers with local schools for mutual benefit.

### **Community Food Security Coalition**

Marion Kalb

Farm to School Program

530-756-8518, ext. 32

[marion@foodsecurity.org](mailto:marion@foodsecurity.org)

[www.foodsecurity.org](http://www.foodsecurity.org)

Offers technical assistance in selling to K-12 schools, and offers resources for getting schools to buy from local farmers.

# Publications

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## **Buy Local Food and Farm Toolkit: A Guide for Student Organizers**

Oxfam America

<http://www.oxfamamerica.org>

## **The Crunch Lunch Manual: A case study of the Davis Joint Unified School District Farmers Market Salad Bar Pilot Program**

University of California Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program

Gail Feenstra

(530) 752-8408

[gwfeenstra@ucdavis.edu](mailto:gwfeenstra@ucdavis.edu)

[www.sarep.ucdavis.edu](http://www.sarep.ucdavis.edu)

This manual provides a case study of the farmers market salad bar in the Davis Unified School District, and includes a fiscal analysis model that can be used by other food services to determine fiscal feasibility of farm-to-school programs. Includes useful resources for community organizers and schools interested in creating farm-to-cafeteria programs in K-12 schools.

## **From Asparagus to Zucchini: A Guide to Farm-Fresh, Seasonal Produce**

Madison Area Community Supported Agriculture Coalition (MADSAC)

c/o/ Wisconsin Rural Development Center

(\$19)

Phone 608-226-0300

Fax 608-226-0301

This resource provides 135 pages of vegetable information and seasonal recipes for northern climates. This is a very practical guide and important resource for farm-to-school projects.

## **Growing a Community Food System**

Publication # WREP0135

Steven Garrett and Gail Feenstra

University of California

Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program

(\$2.50)

530-752-7556

[sarep@ucdavis.edu](mailto:sarep@ucdavis.edu)

<http://www.sarep.ucdavis.edu>

**Handbook of Regulations for Direct Farm Marketing: “The Green Book”**

Publication 056 (R/8/01)

Available at no cost

Leslie Zenz and Tamera Flores

Washington State Department of Agriculture

Small Farm and Direct Marketing Program

(360) 902-1884

[smallfarms@agr.wa.gov](mailto:smallfarms@agr.wa.gov)

Information in this handbook includes regulations regarding doing business in Washington State, direct marketing strategies, regulations for selling specific products, and labeling requirements.

**Healthy Farms, Healthy Kids, Evaluating the Barriers and Opportunities for Farm-To-School Programs**

Community Food Security Coalition.

(\$12 + \$4 shipping)

(310) 822-5410

<http://www.foodsecurity.org>

**How Local Farmers and School Food Service Buyers are Building Alliances: Lessons Learned from the USDA Small Farm/School Meals Workshop, May 1, 2000.**

USDA Agricultural Marketing Service

Debra Tropp and Dr. Suarajudeen Olowolayemo

(202) 690-1303

[Debra.Tropp@usda.gov](mailto:Debra.Tropp@usda.gov).

<http://www.ams.usda.gov/tmd/mta/publications.htm>

**Legal Guide for Direct Farm Marketing** (1999)

Neil D. Hamilton

Drake University Law School, Agricultural Law Center

515-271-2065

[Neil.Hamilton@drake.edu](mailto:Neil.Hamilton@drake.edu)

**Local Food Connections: From Farms to Schools**

Publication # PM1853a

Iowa State University Coop Extension

(515) 294-5247

[pubdist@iastate.edu](mailto:pubdist@iastate.edu)

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/Pages/families/hrim/publications.htm>

This publication from Iowa provides information about K-12 school food services useful in all states. Also provides recommendations for farmers interested in selling to schools.

**A Salad Bar Featuring Organic Choices: Revitalizing the School Lunch Program**

Flock, Paul, Cheryl Petra, Vanessa Ruddy and Joseph Peterangelo.

Washington State Department of Agriculture

Small Farm and Direct Marketing Program

(360) 902-1884 or (360) 902-2057

[smallfarms@agr.wa.gov](mailto:smallfarms@agr.wa.gov)

<http://agr.wa.gov/Marketing/SmallFarm/default.htm>

**A Sense of Place: Serving Local Food at Your Meeting (Brochure)**

Steven Garret, WSU Cooperative Extension, Pierce County

Washington State University Food and Farming Connections Team

(253) 798-3262

[sgarrett@wsu.edu](mailto:sgarrett@wsu.edu)

<http://smallfarms.wsu.edu/foodsheds/farmTable.html#Pubs>

**Something to Cheer About: National Trends and Prospects for Sustainable Agriculture Products in Food Service Operations of Colleges and Universities.**

D.B Johnson and G.W. Stevenson.

Center for Integrated Agricultural Systems

U of Wisconsin-Madison

<http://www.wisc.edu/cias/pubs/index.html#institutional>

**Washington Schools Purchasing Washington Grown Products: Where is the Connection?**

Kelli Sanger

Washington State Department of Agriculture

Small Farm and Direct Marketing Program

(360) 902-1884 or (360) 902-2057

[smallfarms@agr.wa.gov](mailto:smallfarms@agr.wa.gov)

**The Farmers' Market Salad Bar: Assessing the First Three Years of the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District Program.**

Bob Gottlieb and M. Mascarenhas

October 2000.

Occidental College National Farm to School Program

323-341-5095

[ajoshi@oxy.edu](mailto:ajoshi@oxy.edu)

<http://www.farmtoschool.org/california/publications.htm>

# Websites

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## Food Routes Farm to College Resources

<http://www.foodroutes.org/farmtocollege.jsp>

## The College Food Project, Center for Integrated Agricultural Systems.

<http://www.wisc.edu/cias/research/institut.html#cfp>

## Cornell University Farm to School Program

<http://www.cce.cornell.edu/farmtoschool/>

## Practical Farmers of Iowa Local Food Systems Homepage

[http://www.pfi.iastate.edu/Local\\_Food\\_Syst/local\\_food\\_systems.htm](http://www.pfi.iastate.edu/Local_Food_Syst/local_food_systems.htm)

This site has links to publications

## WSDA List of Washington Agricultural Organizations

<http://agr.wa.gov/Links/default.htm>

WSDA maintains a list of agricultural organizations for interested persons on its Links and Resources page. This list may be useful for farmers, food services or community organizers trying to connect with agricultural organizations in their area.

# “Buy Local” Campaigns in Washington

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## **From the Heart of Washington**

Shannon Hitchcock

(866) 376-6469

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

From the Heart of Washington offers posters and point of sale materials that showcase Washington grown products, available for local businesses, farmers, food services and farmers markets wishing to promote Washington grown products.

## **Puget Sound Fresh**

Steve Evans

206-296-7824

<http://www.pugetsoundfresh.org>

Puget Sound Fresh identifies and promotes farm products grown and harvested in one of the 12 counties that touch the Puget Sound. Visit the website, or pick up a Puget Sound Farm Fresh Guide for more information on local farms and crops, farmers markets, and “What’s Fresh Now,” in the Puget Sound area!

## **Whatcom Fresh**

Nancy VanDeHey

(360) 201-1491

<http://www.whatcomfresh.org/index.html>

Whatcom Fresh is a program designed to promote local farms and products in Whatcom County. Whatcom Fresh promotes locally produced foods that can be purchased direct from farmers, in grocery stores or restaurants. They produce a regional farm guide for a listing of all farms that market their products directly in the area.

## **Skagit’s Own**

Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland

(360)-336-3974

<http://www.skagitonians.org/home.html>

A label promoting farms in Skagit County that sell direct to consumers and restaurants.

## **Methow “Buy Local”**

Susan Koptonak

Partnership for A Sustainable Methow

(509) 997-1050

Promoting locally produced foods in the Methow Valley of Eastern Washington.

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