



FARM TO SUMMER

Incorporating local foods in summer food service programs

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MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

Center for
Regional Food Systems



WHAT'S ON THE MENU

- 1) Overview of Farm to Summer
- 2) Benefits of Local Purchasing in the Summer
- 3) “How to”
- 4) Farm to Summer in Action
- 5) Questions

SUMMER FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM



**Healthy food
to fuel your
summer.**



The Summer Meals Programs is a federal nutrition program through USDA that provides free, nutritious meals and snacks to children in low-income areas.

MEET UP and EAT UP summer meal sites are located all across Michigan!

WHY IS THE SUMMER FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM IMPORTANT?



UNITED WAY FOR SOUTHEASTERN MICHIGAN

WHAT IS FARM TO SUMMER?



FOOD CORPS

- Connect summer meals providers to local food producers
- Provide kids with healthy, local foods and educational opportunities
- Increases participation in summer meals programs

LOCAL LOOKS DELICIOUS



KALISPELL PUBLIC SCHOOLS, MONTANA

USDA FARM TO SUMMER WEBPAGE



USDA United States Department of Agriculture
Food and Nutrition Service

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Farm To School

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Farm to Summer

Local Foods in the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)



Summer is a fantastic time of year to add variety to keep meals tasting great. In many regions across the United States, USDA's [Summer Food Service Program \(SFSP\)](#) aligns well with the peak growing season, allowing schools and nonprofit organizations to serve products in their freshest state. There are numerous benefits to "bringing the farm" to summer feeding sites. Sponsors can increase participation by improving the quality of meals and keeping kids engaged through hands-on activities. Schools can develop continuous, year-round farm to school programming, and test out cooking techniques and recipes using local foods. Regional producers benefit from a reliable outlet for their products during the summer months. And kids and teens get fresh, healthy meals and participate in activities at meals sites, staying nourished and engaged while school is out.

FNS Resources

- [Farm to Summer Fact Sheet](#) (pdf) - Use this fact sheet for summer meal program tips on incorporating

www.fns.usda.gov/farmentoschool/farm-summer

FARM TO SUMMER FACT SHEET



United States Department of Agriculture

FARM TO SUMMER: Why Summer Meal Programs are Ripe for Local Foods and Agriculture-Based Activities



SUMMER IS A TIME of agricultural abundance: plump stone fruits hang heavy on trees, juicy melons and tomatoes explode from their vines, beans begin to dry in their pods, and livestock fed on the most nutritious spring grasses produce delicious meat and dairy products. In most areas of the United States, local harvests peak in the warmest months, just as the school year draws to a close. Luckily for local farmers and kids that participate in school meal programs, an increasing number of sites operating USDA's Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) are capitalizing on the many opportunities that summer brings to offer fresh, local foods and outdoor activities that help children develop healthy habits.

Farm to summer benefits everyone

There are numerous benefits to "bringing the farm" to summer feeding sites:

- Sponsors can increase participation by improving the quality and appeal of meals and keeping kids engaged through fun, hands-on activities.
- Schools can get started with efforts to source locally during the summer months, testing out recipes using local foods and creating menus that kids will love.
- Food service operators that already source locally during the school year can build upon existing programming and contribute to a continuous, year-round farm to school program.
- Regional producers benefit from a reliable outlet for their products during the summer months.
- Kids and teens access fresh, nutritious meals and experiential learning activities at meal sites, staying nourished and active while school is out.

What is the Summer Food Service Program?

The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) is a federally-funded, state-administered program. The SFSP reimburses providers who serve healthy meals to children and teens in low-income areas at no charge primarily during the summer months when school is not in session.

Sourcing summer's harvest

Summer meal sponsors can boost participation by improving the quality of meals with fresh products. Local foods span the entire meal tray, from fruits and vegetables to dairy, grains, meat, eggs, and beans. Sponsors can find seasonal products in their freshest state in the summertime through the same sources that schools use to source locally during the school year: direct from farmers, through food hubs, or through distributors, or food service management companies. But summertime may make the following sources even more accessible and may be worth specifically seeking out to supply your summer meals program.



United States Department of Agriculture

Farmer's markets and community supported

agriculture (CSA) programs: Because of the lower volume of product often needed to fulfill summer meals, farmers markets and CSAs that may not provide enough product for school year programs can be an excellent provider of local foods for summer meals. Visit www.usdaloocalfooddirectories.com to find farmers markets and CSAs.

School and community gardens: Edible gardens can contribute fresh herbs or produce to meals, and provide a source of entertainment and engagement for children, and even family members, at meal sites.

Keeping Kids Engaged

Sponsors can help children and teens stay healthy during summer months not only with the nutritious meals they provide, but also with hands-on activities that create positive learning environments while school is out.

Grow or visit edible gardens: Kids can get their hands dirty and learn more about where their food comes from by building or maintaining gardens. Gardens are also a great way to involve parents and guardians, who can volunteer to do garden maintenance or participate in educational events in the garden. Schools that have gardens operating during the school year can plan ahead to maintain them during the summer months, and align gardening activities with their summer feeding program.

Take a farm field trip or host a farmer: Trips to the farm, farmers market, or garden can strengthen sponsors' relationships with their producers, teach kids about where their food comes from, and introduce them to

the field of agricultural production. If transportation is a barrier, producers may be able to come to meal sites!

Conduct taste tests or cooking demonstrations:

Engaging kids in the process of preparing meals with fresh products gives them a significant role in the meal program and encourages them to try new foods. Sponsors can gauge kids' feedback, and use results of taste tests for their benefit. Many food service directors take advantage of the summer months to try out new products or update recipes to ensure they are kid-approved before serving during the school year.

Choose an "edible" summer feeding site: Sponsors of summer meal programs can set up open feeding sites in income eligible areas, and may factor in locations that include or are in close proximity to a garden or other outdoor spaces that can contribute to agriculture-based programming. Consider starting a feeding site at a farmers market (http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/sfap/SMT-Farmers_Markets.pdf), and take advantage of the proximity to local producers and range of activities already occurring on-site.

Learn More

Visit the Farm to Summer section of USDA's Farm to School website (www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool/farm-summer/) to find more guidance and resources on bringing the farm to your summer meal program.


Our Procuring Local Foods for Child Nutrition Program Guide (www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/F25_Procuring_Local_Foods_Child_Nutrition_Prog_Guide.pdf) showcases the many ways summer meal sponsors can purchase local foods.

For more information, and to sign up to receive USDA's bi-weekly Farm to School E-letter, please visit www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool. Questions? Email us at farmtoschool@fns.usda.gov.

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LOCAL FOODS POLICY MEMO

 United States Department of Agriculture

Food and Nutrition Service
Park Office Center
3101 Park Center Drive
Alexandria VA 22302

DATE: November 12, 2015

MEMO CODE: SP 07-2016, SFSP 07-2016

SUBJECT: Local Foods and Related Activities in Summer Meal Programs, with Questions and Answers


TO: Regional Directors
Special Nutrition Programs
All Regions

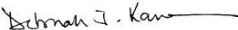
State Directors
Child Nutrition Programs
All States

The purpose of this memorandum and attached questions and answers is to provide guidance on the incorporation of local foods and nutrition and agriculture-based activities in the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and the Seamless Summer Option (SSO), collectively referred to as Summer Meal Programs.

Local foods can play an important role in creating and promoting a healthy environment for children. A growing body of research demonstrates several positive impacts of serving local foods and providing food education through Child Nutrition Programs, including increased participation and engagement in meal programs, consumption of healthier options, and support of local economies. There is also a well-established public interest in supporting local and regional food systems, and a growing interest in aligning local foods sources with Summer Meal Programs. Program sponsors, administrators, and partners are therefore encouraged to use local foods as a means to enhance Summer Meal operations.

State agencies are reminded to distribute this information to Program operators immediately. Program operators should direct any questions regarding this memorandum to the appropriate State agency. State agency contact information is available at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Contacts/StateDirectory.htm>. State agencies should direct questions to the appropriate FNS Regional Office.


For
Angela Kline
Director
Policy and Program Development Division
Child Nutrition Programs


Deborah Kane
Director
Office of Community Food Systems
Child Nutrition Programs

Attachment

USDA is an Equal Opportunity Provider, Employer and Lender

- Local food CAN be purchased with reimbursement dollars
- Reimbursement dollars CAN be used for garden inputs.
 - Food grown in the garden can be used in the food service. Check state/local health requirements.
 - For accounting purposes, sponsors should document weight or volume of produce.

LOCAL PROCUREMENT GUIDE



Procuring Local Foods
for Child Nutrition Programs

The Summer Food Service Program and the Seamless Summer Option

Summer can be a season of joy and relaxation, but for many children who rely on free and reduced-price meals during the school year, it can also represent a time of great need. USDA strives to ensure that children have access to the nutrition they need to return to school healthy and ready to learn through our Summer Food Service Program (SFSFP) and Seamless Summer Option (SSO), which allows schools to continue meeting children's nutritional needs when school is out. Local foods and agriculture-based activities can improve the quality and appeal of summer meals, engage children in building healthy habits, bolster farm to school efforts with continuous programming, and support local and regional food systems all year long. Schools and sponsoring organizations across the country are serving local foods in their summer meals programs and taking advantage of summer's bountiful harvest. Some schools in areas with short growing seasons are even preserving summer's bounty, by freezing products to use later in the school year.

WHAT'S UNIQUE ABOUT BUYING LOCAL FOR SFSFP?

All the same procurement regulations apply; sponsors can use the same tactics to purchase local products that a school district uses during

the school year. The procurement method used by schools and sponsoring organizations in the summer months will vary depending on sponsor type, size, and the number of children it serves. An SFSFP or SSO sponsor may write their needs for summer foods into their school year contract, or they may create a solicitation that is unique to their summer program. Sponsors who serve children during the school year will want to re-evaluate seasonality and product availability in their menu planning phase for summer, since many new and exciting items may be within their reach. Summer participation numbers may also impact what sources of local foods are viable for you; be sure to review average participation and know what options might be the best fit for your program. Remember, summer is a great time to try new products, serve many fruits and vegetables at their peak freshness, and develop new recipes that showcase your region's harvest.

Example: Dallas, Texas

Dallas Independent School District's (DISD) Food and Child Nutrition Services, in conjunction with the Texas Department of Agriculture, runs SFSFP from June through August at over 180 schools and over 20 community locations, serving children and adolescents at colleges, parks, and youth activity centers. Last year, DISD incorporated a preference



FARM TO SCHOOL GRANT

September 2016: Release FY2017 request for Farm to School Grant applications

November 2016: FY2017 Farm to School Grant applications due

May 2017: Announce awards

FY 2016 Priority area: School-Based Summer Sites

- 25 projects
- 31.3% of projects
 - 10 Support Service
 - 7 Implementation
 - 2 Planning
 - 6 Training

www.fns.usda.gov/farmentoschool/farm-school-grant-program

FARM TO SCHOOL CENSUS



of districts surveyed by USDA say they participate in farm to school activities.



That's
5,254
districts



and
42,587
schools bringing
the farm to school



for the benefit of an estimated
23.6 million
children.

 The United States Department of Agriculture
Food and Nutrition Service

<https://farmtoschoolcensus.fns.usda.gov>

[www.farmtoschoolcensus.fns.usda.gov/](https://farmtoschoolcensus.fns.usda.gov/)

SUMMER FOOD, SUMMER MOVES



www.teamnutrition.usda.gov



FIND SUMMER SITES!

The screenshot shows the USDA Food and Nutrition Service website. The main heading is "Find Summer Meals in Your Community". Below the heading, there is a paragraph of text: "Nutritious free meals are available for children and teens 18 and younger at many locations throughout the nation throughout the summer while school is out of session. Use the mapping tool below to find a site near you. **New sites will be added as the school year ends and throughout the summer. Please check back often for updated information.**"

Below the text, there are four numbered steps for finding sites:

- 1 Click find sites on map below
- 2 Enter address, city, state and zip code
- 3 Click locate
- 4 Click on any blue dot

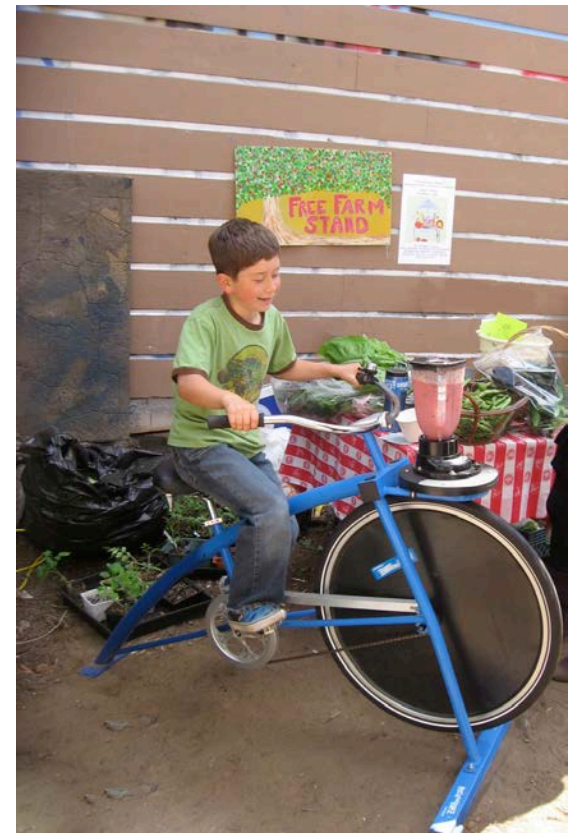
The main content area is titled "Summer Meal Site Finder" and features a map of the United States. The map includes labels for major cities like Vancouver, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Chicago, Toronto, and New York, as well as geographical features like the Gulf of Alaska, Hudson Bay, and the Atlantic Ocean. There are controls for zooming in/out, a search bar, and a "Find Sites" dropdown menu.

www.fns.usda.gov/summerfoodrocks

BENEFITS OF FARM TO SUMMER



MARION, OHIO SCHOOL GARDEN



ROCK THE BIKE

BENEFITS OF FARM TO SUMMER

Food Access

- Provides healthy food options
- Increase in fruit and vegetable consumption
- Expose children to a variety of products that may not be available during the school year
- Incorporate quality culturally relevant foods

Increased Participation

- Develop consistent, year-round farm to school programming





BENEFITS OF FARM TO SUMMER

Economic Development

- New, reliable markets for local farmers
- Keeps dollars in the community

Community Engagement

- Encourage parents and community members to participate

On-site garden maintenance

- Can provide up keep for gardens established during school year



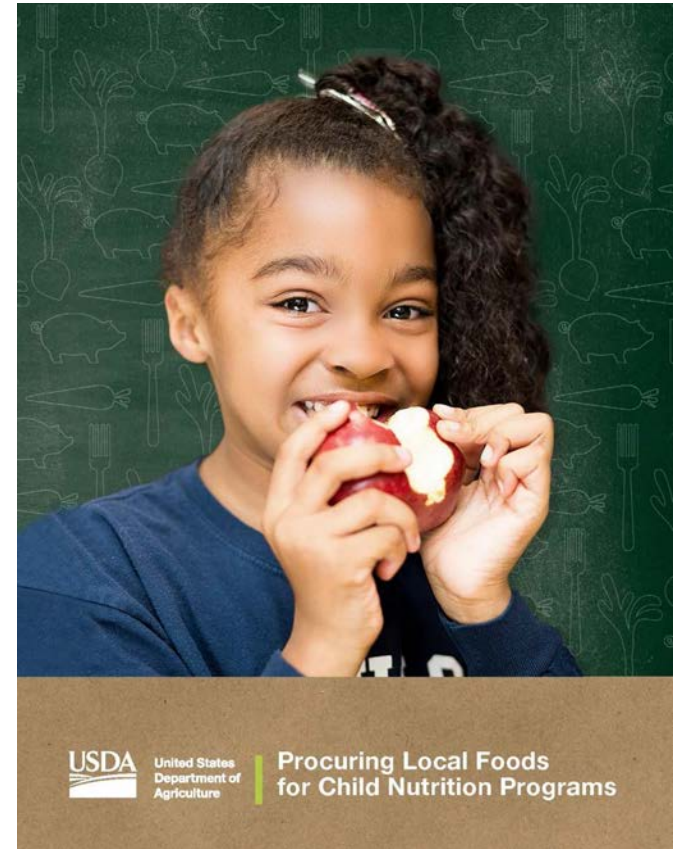
HOW TO FARM TO SUMMER

PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS

Applicable Regulations:

- 7 CFR 225.15 and 225.17
- 2 CFR Part 200.317-326

Sponsors are required to have written procedures for the procurement process to include a code of conduct for employees that addresses areas such as conflicts of interest



INFORMAL PROCUREMENT – SMALL PURCHASES

Michigan Small Purchase Threshold - \$100,000

- Relatively simple process
- Competition must still occur
- Request the same information from all prospective vendors
- Obtain three sources that are eligible, able and willing
- Award contract to lowest bidder that is both responsive and responsible
- Documentation

OPTIONS FOR PURCHASING SFSP MEALS

- From a local School Food Authority (SFA) of a school district
- From a Food Service Management Company (FSMC)
 - Not like a FSMC seen in the School Meals Programs
 - For SFSP FSMC is equivalent to a Vended Meal Provider



MICRO-PURCHASING

- **\$3,500 threshold**
- **Does not require competitive bids**
- **Intended to minimize the burden for very small purchases**
- **Distribute purchases equitably among qualified suppliers**

LOVE
FOOD
hate waste

HOW TO INCORPORATE

What is already local?

- Ask vendors where food is coming from

What could be local?

- Find out what products are seasonal and available in your area

Communicate a preference

- Target local foods in future solicitations by specifying local varieties or including a preference for products that meet your definition of local



DEFINE LOCAL



LOCAL PRODUCT AVAILABILITY

MICHIGAN PRODUCE AVAILABILITY*

*Availability may vary by variety and with weather conditions.

CROP: Vegetables	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
	FIELD FRESH			EXTENDED SEASON				STORAGE				
Arugula												
Asian Greens (Mizuna, Pac Choi, Tatsoi, etc.)												
Asparagus												
Beans, Fresh (Green or Wax)												
Edamame (Green Soybeans)												
Beets												
Broccoli												
Brussel Sprouts												
Cabbage												
Carrots												
Cauliflower (inc. Romanesco)												
Celery												
Chard and Beet Greens												
Corn												
Cucumbers												
Eggplant												
Garlic												

MENU DEVELOPMENT

- What products are you already using that could be sourced locally?
- What products could be swapped in with different local ingredients?
- What local products are readily available that you could incorporate into your menus?



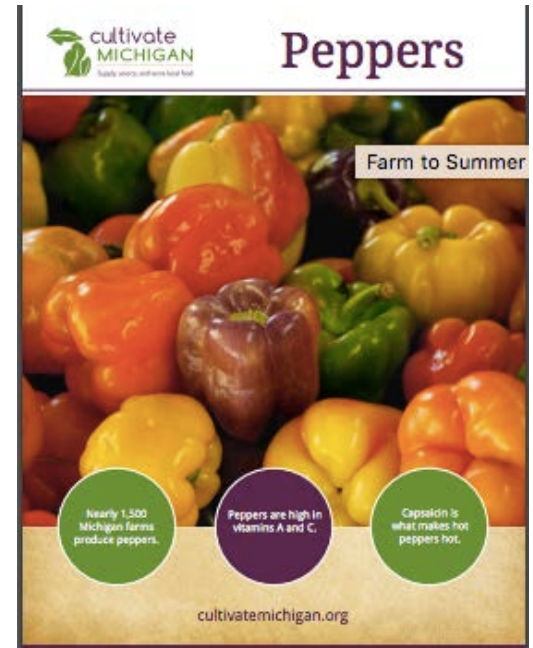
FIND LOCAL

- **Local farmers/ cooperatives**
 - Farmers markets
 - MSU Extension
 - Hoophouses for Health
 - Advertise in local papers
- **Distributor/Food Service Management Company**
 - What current products are local
 - Are there other local products they could get
 - Include local specifications
- **Grow your own!**
 - [Garden to Cafeteria](#)



CULTIVATE MICHIGAN

- Four featured seasonal foods
- Information on where to find local
- Tips on storage and utilization of local products
- Institutional sized recipes
- Opportunities to track and collect data



Sign up at www.cultivatemichigan.org



SUPPORTING ACTIVITIES



- Nutrition and agriculture education
- On-site gardens
- Field trips/farmer visits
- Community harvest events
- Cooking demonstrations
- Junior Iron Chef
- Taste Tests



FARM TO SUMMER IN ACTION

KALEVA NORMAN DICKSON SCHOOL DISTRICT

- Served local strawberries in June
- Health department would bring in fruits and vegetables that children would be able to purchase locally once in season
- Taste testing
- Educational activities



SOUTH HAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- F.A.R.M. Bus
- Combines mobile library and summer feeding site
- Local Farmers: Dutchman Orchards, Paul road Farms, DeGrandchamp Blueberry Farm, True Blue Farms



WATERFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT



WATERFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT



WATERFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- **MI Farm to School, MSU CRFS**
<http://mifarmtoschool.msu.edu>
- **USDA Farm to Summer Resources**
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool/farm-summer>
- **Fresh from the Farm, Food Research and Action Center**
<http://www.frac.org/pubs/produceguide.pdf>
- **Farm to Summer Site, Texas Department of Agriculture**
<http://www.squaremeals.org/FandNResources/TexasFarmFresh/FarmtoSummerSite.aspx>

QUESTIONS?

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