



What evidence is there to buying local?

- Based on national research, schools report a 3 to 16 percent increase in school meal participation when farm-fresh food is served through Farm to School Programs¹.
- Fresh, flavorful local food means increased consumption of fruits and vegetables. Based on national research, this increase is 0.99 to 1.3 servings per day, including consumption at home¹.

How do I buy fresh fruits and vegetables?

- Utilize the Department of Defense Fresh Produce Program (available only to Seamless Summer Feeding Service Program sites).
- Buy local produce through Farmers' Markets or directly from the farm.

How do I prevent added cost?

- Buy seasonally.
- Use reasonable competitive bidding to determine the highest quality product at the lowest price.
- Review general procurement procedures. Those purchases that fall under the small purchase threshold (>\$5,000.00) are eligible for the informal procurement procedure.

General Procurement Procedures
1. For purchases less than \$5,000: Bidding is not required, but LEAs should utilize procedures that provide adequate and reasonable competition.
2. For purchases between \$5,000 and \$25,000: The LEA must obtain at least three verbal quotes.
3. For purchases between \$25,000 and \$50,000 (\$150,000 for exempt *Charter schools): The LEA must obtain at least three written quotes.
4. For total annual purchases over \$50,000 (\$150,000 for exempt*Charter schools): The LEA must solicit sealed bids or proposals through competitive process.

- Buying direct from a farm can cut distributor fees out of the price. You must ensure a safe delivery method is used.

¹ Anupama Joshi and Andrea Misako Azuma. Bearing Fruit: Farm to School Program Evaluation Resources and Recommendations. National Farm to School Network

What can I do to promote Arizona Grown?

1. **Ask for it.** Distributors will buy local if they have enough demand for it. Making an Arizona Grown preference will let distributors know that locally grown produce is something their customers want.
2. **Start small.** Determine what your summer feeding site can budget for and make goals to try new products from your local vendors. Buying in bulk drives prices down. Find a product that you menu frequently and try to incorporate that item from locally grown sources. Try buying local products for one site first before implementing that product at several sites.
3. **Look within your community.**
 - a. For Farms: <http://fillyourplate.org/>
 - b. For Farmers' Markets: [rmers_markets/locator.asp](http://www.azda.gov/cdp/farmersinfo.htm)
<http://www.azda.gov/cdp/farmersinfo.htm>
<http://www.azfb.org/programs/farmers-markets.html>
 - c. For Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) pick-ups: www.localharvest.org or ask around at your local farmers' markets for vendors who provide a CSA. Not all CSA's are listed on a website.
4. **Learn from your neighbor.** Look to summer feeding sites who have purchased locally in the past and ask about what has worked well, where the barriers might be, and how they overcame those obstacles.

How do I connect with local farmers?

1. Contact your local Cooperative Extension Office, local Farm Bureau, or the Arizona Department of Agriculture to connect with local producers.
2. Visit local farmers markets. USDA has a National Farmers' Market Directory: <http://apps.ams.usda.gov/FarmersMarkets/>.
3. Visit Arizona Department of Agriculture's Specialty Crop Guide for information on fresh products produced locally: http://www.azda.gov/Main/AZSpecCropGuide_2011forweb.pdf.
4. USDA's Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food Website can also help connect school districts and local and/or regional farmers: www.usda.gov/knowyourfarmer.
5. When purchasing smaller amounts of fresh produce look to local grocery stores, farmers' markets, and Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) groups and ask where the produce was grown and make a connection.



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