



State of Arizona
Department of Education
Office of Diane M. Douglas
Superintendent of Public Instruction

To: Sponsors of the National School Lunch Program, Child and Adult Care Food Program and Summer Food Service Program

From: Diane Douglas, Superintendent of Public Instruction
Arizona Department of Education

Mary Szafranski, Associate Superintendent
Arizona Department of Education, Health & Nutrition Services Division

Date: October 24, 2016

Subject: Locally Grown, Fresh, Raw, Whole Fruits and Vegetables

This memo is issued in response to any public or private school(s) interested in purchasing locally grown fresh, whole, raw fruits and vegetables and/or accepts donations of such products. Public or private schools are permitted to purchase locally grown fresh, whole, raw fruits and vegetables and/or accept donations of such items.

Sources of locally grown fresh, whole and raw produce items include farms, farmers' markets, community supported agriculture programs, produce auctions, community gardens, produce distributors or any other source for locally grown fresh fruits and vegetables. In reference, specifically, to school gardens please review HNS-11-2016.

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) defines prepared or processed produce items as the following: For fruits and vegetables, preparing would include peeling, cutting, dicing, or cooking. Farms and other establishments that supply prepared or processed products are required to have licenses. Licensing is also required for the manufacture or preparation of food for sale through the process of canning, extracting, fermenting, distilling, pickling, freezing, baking, drying, smoking, grinding, cutting,



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mixing, coating, stuffing, packing, bottling or packaging, or through any other treatment or preservation process.

School agencies participating in the Federal Child Nutrition Programs, such as National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, Child and Adult Care Food Program and Summer Food Service Program, must comply with all sanitation and health standards as required and applicable via state agency and/or local laws and codes.

Arizona Administrative Code Title 9, Chapter 8, Article 1, entitled *FOOD AND DRINK* is the official version of the Arizona State Food Safety Rules and is available from the Arizona Secretary of State. The rules incorporate most of the 1999 U.S. Food and Drug Administration Model Food Code by reference. The rules also contain licensing and compliance provisions. Each county may adopt a newer version of the Food Code as deemed necessary by the local authority. A map of each county and its adopted version of the Food Code can be found at the link to follow:

<http://www.azdhs.gov/preparedness/epidemiology-disease-control/food-safety-environmental-services/index.php#az-food-safety-regulations>.

An example of the technical requirements for food safety rules regarding all food items brought into a certified food service establishment, per the 1999 Arizona Food Code that specifically addresses the definition of approved sourcing of food is as follows:

1-201.10 (4) “Approved” means acceptable to the REGULATORY AUTHORITY or to the FOOD REGULATORY AGENCY that has jurisdiction based on determination of conformity with principals, practices, and generally recognized standards that protect public health.

Food service establishments who are interested in purchasing from new vendors and are also concerned about food safety practices and/or certifications verifying said food safety practices are encouraged to discuss such concerns with each new food vendor. It is best practice to use one or more of the following opportunities listed below as discussion topics regarding food safety practices and/or certification.

- Reviewing Food Safety Plans and Food Safety Checklists. A good example of a Food Safety Checklist comes from the Yavapai County Department of Public Health referenced in the attachment to this memo.
- Reviewing and/or requiring a USDA Good Agriculture Practice/Good Handling Practice (GAP/GHP) food safety plan and/or certification.
- Industry Lead Third Party Audit of food safety practiced on a farm and/or processing house and distributor warehouse. Examples of these include:
 - Arizona’s Leafy Greens Marketing Agreement
 - Primus Labs
 - Markon Five Star Program



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Produce Safety University is a course jointly developed by USDA’s Food and Nutrition Service and USDA’s Agricultural Marketing Service. This course was developed for food service professionals interested in or already engaged in farm to school program development. Topics addressed in this course include:

- Understanding Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) and Good Handling Practices (GHPs).
- Writing specifications for fresh and fresh-cut produce.
- Assessing produce upon receipt to ensure that it meets bid specifications.
- Storing fresh produce properly.
- Handling fresh produce during food preparation and service.

Additional resources for safe food handling of various produce items and information on this course can be found at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/food-safety/produce-safety-university>.



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