



# Nutrition Program Production Assessment Tool

The following questions are designed to help you determine your interest and ability to purchase food from local farmers. This information will be helpful when you begin talking with farmers and distributors about supplying your school or school district with local food.

## 1. Food service type and volume

a. How would you describe your food service operation?

- Scratch cooking
- Heat-and-serve
- Semi-prepared
- Combination of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_
- Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

b. Numbers served:

Breakfasts served per day: \_\_\_\_\_

Lunches served per day: \_\_\_\_\_

Snacks served per day: \_\_\_\_\_

Suppers served per day: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of schools or feeding sites: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of sites where cooking occurs: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of lunches served per day in summer food service: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of snacks served in afterschool program: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2. Current produce purchasing

- a. What is a typical order for fresh produce in September, in dollars or volume by month or week?
- b. Are there local products you would consider purchasing if you had a salad or fruit and vegetable bar?

### 3. Logistics: ordering, payment and delivery

- a. What are your procurement procedures?
- b. Does the school/district have contracted food distributors?
- c. What percentage of food must be purchased through contracts?
- d. Do you also use independent produce distributors?
- e. To how many locations is food delivered?
- f. How many food deliveries are made per week per location? At what times?
- g. Do you prefer to place orders by telephone, fax, or email?
- h. Are food orders placed monthly, weekly or on a specific day of the week?
- i. What are your payment procedures? How long will it take for your payment to be received?

### 4. Purchasing local products

- a. Many reasons exist for buying locally grown and produced foods. What do you believe are the advantages of offering local foods in your school meal programs? Check all that apply.
  - Access to fresher foods
  - Higher quality of food
  - Lower cost of food
  - Ability to purchase special varieties and types of food
  - Promoting greater consumption of fruits and vegetables
  - Increasing the participation rate in school meals
  - Knowing the product source
  - Supporting the local economy and local farms
  - Building partnerships between the school system and community
  - Lower transportation costs
  - Reduced use of pesticides, hormones, etc.

- Positive public relations for the food service program
- Fulfilling student, parent and/or teacher requests for local food
- Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- None of these

b. Schools and school districts take different approaches to including local foods in their meal programs. Which approaches are of interest to you? Check all that apply.

- Asking your current vendor(s) to sell local, Iowa farm products
- Trying to buy direct from local farmers
- Planning menus around seasonal availability of local products
- Buying and highlighting only one or two local products each month
- Hosting one or two local food meals or events each school year (i.e. Iowa Local Food Day, etc.)
- Beginning by serving local foods on a limited or pilot basis, such as serving at only one school
- Educating students about local food and food systems with educational materials and events (i.e. food tastings, farmer visits) within the cafeteria
- I'm not sure yet
- Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_
- None of these

c. What are your school's or district's requirements for purchasing from local farmers and vendors?

- Product liability insurance policy
- Meeting identified food safety and sanitation standards
- Packaging requirements
- Specific delivery methods or times

d. When would it be feasible for you to start purchasing and offering local foods through your food service?

\_\_\_\_\_