

Quick Start Guide to Increasing Procurement of NY Grown Fruits and Vegetables



K-12 schools that purchase **30%** of their lunch ingredients from New York farms will be eligible to receive an increased reimbursement rate of **\$0.25** per meal.

Many local produce distributors and vendors can provide foods grown and raised in NY state. Your distributors are likely already providing you with some NY state products, and you might not even know it. Being proactive about communicating with distributors is key to increasing the NY state purchases you are making.

Ask your distributor:

What NY state produce do you have available?

Ask to see their NY state product availability list or chart.

What NY state produce am I already getting?

Your distributor will be able to tell you this.

What NY state produce could I get?

This one is key. If you have a standard order sheet, go through it with your distributor and have their product availability chart on hand. Ask:

Do you have other NY varieties available year round?

For example, maybe you have cherry tomatoes on your menu all year, but NY grown cherry tomatoes are only available July-October. Your distributor would be able to tell you that varieties of NY hydroponic tomatoes are available year round. Be open to using other varieties.

Do you have other varieties available at a lower rate?

Maybe you've been using red potatoes, but creamer potatoes are less expensive. The way a product is processed counts too: some methods are more expensive than others. Choosing different varieties at a lower rate will make available funds you can use to purchase other NY products.

What you can do to make purchasing NY grown and processed products easier:

Plan seasonal menus.

See the back of this sheet for a regional produce guide.

Focus on filling your menu with NY grown produce available that month. September, October, and June boast the most local produce. Feature local produce frequently, and use more of your cash reimbursement dollars during these months.

January through May, incorporate new menu items featuring cold-weather crops and frozen or canned NY State produce. This a good strategy for featuring locally-grown foods year-round, and it also offers the added benefit of introducing students and their families to seasonal eating. Consider using more of your USDA Commodity Dollars during these months.

Pilot Project: If your district is participating, talk to your approved vendor to make sure they clearly indicate NY produce on their product lists, and that they know NY produce is a priority. When planning your menu, use the Pilot Project more heavily to order NY-grown produce during the months your vendor indicates these products will be available, likely September, October, and June.

Note: Pilot Project entitlement funds will not count towards the 30% procurement rate for increased reimbursement set by NY State. Unfortunately, districts working toward that goal may need to consider using Pilot Project funds for products not available locally. Districts should weigh this decision carefully.

Be flexible.

Be open to using new varieties of produce that are less expensive or available throughout the year.

NY Grown Produce Availability

Available year-round:

Apples ▪ Potatoes ▪ Onions ▪ Dried beans ▪ Frozen produce ▪ Dairy ▪ Honey ▪ Maple syrup ▪ Herbs

September

Fruit
Apples
Peaches
Pears
Raspberries
Blackberries
Blueberries
Cantaloupes
Plums
Prunes
Watermelon
Vegetables
Beets
Bell peppers
Broccoli
Brussels sprouts
Cabbage
Carrots
Cauliflower
Corn
Cucumbers
Eggplant
Green beans
Kale
Lettuce
Onions
Potatoes
Pumpkin
Summer squash
Tomatoes
Winter squash
Beet greens
Celery
Collard greens
Garlic
Leeks
Mustard greens
Peas
Radishes
Snap beans
Swiss chard
Turnips

October

Fruit
Apples
Pears
Watermelon
Vegetables
Beets
Bell peppers
Broccoli

October con't
Brussels sprouts
Cabbage
Carrots
Cauliflower
Green beans
Kale
Lettuce
Onions
Potatoes
Pumpkin
Tomatoes
Winter squash
Celery
Collard greens
Cucumbers
Eggplant
Garlic
Leeks
Mustard greens
Parsnips
Peas
Snap beans
Swiss chard
Turnips

November

Fruit
Apples
Pears
Vegetables
Beets
Broccoli
Brussels sprouts
Cabbage
Carrots
Cauliflower
Kale
Lettuce
Onions
Potatoes
Pumpkin
Tomatoes
Winter squash
Collard greens
Garlic
Leeks
Mustard greens
Parsnips
Turnips

December

Fruit
Apples
December
Vegetables
Brussels sprouts
Cabbage
Carrots
Kale
Potatoes
Onions
Tomatoes
Winter squash
Collard greens
Leeks
Parsnips
Turnips

January

Fruit
Apples
Pears
Vegetables
Cabbage
Carrots
Onions
Potatoes
Tomatoes
Winter squash
Parsnips
Turnips

February

Fruit
Apples
Pears
Vegetables
Cabbage
Carrots
Onions
Potatoes
Tomatoes
Parsnips
Turnips

March

Fruit
Apples
Vegetables
Cabbage
Carrots
Onions
Potatoes
Tomatoes
Parsnips
Turnips

April

Fruit
Apples
Vegetables
Cabbage
Onions
Potatoes
Tomatoes
Parsnips

May

Fruit
Apples
Vegetables
Asparagus (late May)
Cabbage
Lettuce
Onions
Potatoes
Spinach
Tomatoes
Beet greens
Parsnips
Radishes
Rhubarb
Turnip greens

June

Fruit
Apples
Strawberries
Vegetables
Asparagus
Beets
Broccoli
Cabbage (late)
Carrots
Kale
Lettuce
Onions
Peas
Potatoes
Spinach
Summer squash (late June)
Swiss chard
Tomatoes
Beet greens
Mustard greens
Peas
Radishes
Rhubarb
Swiss chard
Turnip greens

Developed under the guidance of produce distributors serving the WNY area. Non-italicized items should be available from area distributors during the months indicated (dependent on processing needs), and may also be available for purchase directly from farms.

Italicized items may not be available from distributors, but may be available for purchase directly from NY farms.

Call your Cornell Cooperative Extension office to find out more about farms in your area that are interested in selling to schools.