WSDA Farm to School Surveys 2014

What we learned from

Schools

Farms

Processors

Top Benefits for Participating in Farm to School

School District Perspective

1. Support local economy - 60%
2. Quality, fresh produce - 81%
3. Build community relations - 89%
4. Know source - for promotion - 62%
5. Know source - for education - 67%

Farmers Perspective

1. Impacting childhood health and nutrition - 85%
2. Raising public awareness about food and farming - 63%
3. Strengthening community relationships - 78%
4. Increasing sales within a shorter delivery distance - 54%
5. Access to a predictable market - 53%
F2S Activities

- Nutrition education: 53% (27% Participate, 26% Interested)
- Educate about WA-grown foods: 45% (32% Participate, 13% Interested)
- Taste Washington Day: 42% (35% Participate, 7% Interested)
- Highlight WA-grown foods: 4% (37% Participate, 7% Interested)
- School garden: 40% (29% Participate, 11% Interested)
- Compost cafeteria waste: 39% (19% Participate, 20% Interested)
- Inform community: 37% (32% Participate, 5% Interested)
- Student cooking class: 35% (34% Participate, 1% Interested)
- Attend farm to school conference: 29% (27% Participate, 2% Interested)

Farm to School Start Year

- 80% of school districts serve WA-grown foods in school meals
Future Plans for Farm to School

Community wide support!

High Interest = Opportunity for Growth
Where Schools Purchase Food

How Schools Purchase Local Foods

- 49%: We request locally-grown produce through our contracted distributors
- 35%: We buy locally-grown produce through informal request for quotes
- 22%: Other
- 14%: We use geographic preference language in informal request for quotes
- 30%: We do not specifically request locally-grown produce when we purchase food
- 4%: We use geographic preference language in formal bid solicitations
- F: Formal bid process
- I: Informal bid process
Top 3 Obstacles to Purchasing Local Foods

- **86%** consistent availability of product
- **85%** seasonality constraints
- **81%** limited staff time for coordinating procurement

Many Obstacles Relate to Processing Capacity

- **74%** limited staff time for preparing fresh product
- **63%** capacity to handle raw, whole produce
- **66%** limited availability of WA-grown minimally processed foods
- **61%** farms’ capacity to minimal food processing
Schools Desire Minimally Processed Foods

Nearly 90% of school districts report that at least some of the produce they purchase needs to be minimally processed.

Other Obstacles to Serving WA-grown Foods

- Budget constraints: 70% of school districts
- Consistent quality of product: 64% of school districts
Procurement Process

- 81% of school districts reported obstacle to serving WA-grown foods: limited staff time for coordinating procurement.
- 68% of school districts reported obstacle to serving WA-grown foods: procurement process for geographic preference is complex.
- 60% of school districts reported obstacle to serving WA-grown foods: food safety and liability.

www.wafarmtoschool.org
Schools Create Market for WA-grown

1 in 5 school districts would prioritize purchasing if produced locally

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Item</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>whole fresh fruits &amp; vegetables</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>minimally processed vegetables</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>minimally processed fresh fruits</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>frozen fruit</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>canned beans/lentils</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>bread</td>
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<td>canned fruit</td>
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<td>canned vegetables</td>
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High Interest in School Markets
3 in 4 farms are interested or would consider growing crops specifically for schools.
GAPs Feedback Checklist:

- Document the implementation of GAPs: 20%
- Communicate food safety practices to customers: 78%
- Implement GAPs on my farm operation: 51%
- Attend GAPs workshops or trainings: 40%
- Receive questions about food safety from customers: 34%
- GAPs audit certified: 8%

Chart:

- 11% strongly agree
- 33% agree
- 43% unsure
- 2% disagree

"I have a clear idea of what would likely be involved if I decide to have my operation GAP certified."  \( n=115 \)

"I have started implementing GAP practices and improvements to food safety on my farm, or increased my efforts in the past three years."  \( n=121 \)
Product Liability Insurance

Just over half of farmers have liability insurance

- Up to 1 million (35%)
- Up to 2 million (14%)
- Up to 5 million (3%)
- Up to 6 million (1%)
- None (32%)
- Unavailable/unknown (15%)

81% of farmers are interested in attending and/or hosting an event.
19% of farmers are affiliated with a marketing cooperative or other type of partnership that collaborates on aggregation, marketing, sales and processing.

Market Development & Networking

- 39% Food processing and co-packing
- 56% Developing and selling products to schools and institutions
- 53% Developing and selling products to direct-to-consumer markets
- 27% Developing and selling products to emergency food assistance providers
- 42% Network with other growers to knowledge share and create cooperative partnerships
- 9% Developing and
- 24% Direct introduction to school nutrition staff
- 18% Gleaning
- 8% Resource translation
Types of Processing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>%</th>
<th>Processors</th>
<th>Minimally Processed</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>baking</td>
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<td>dry mixes</td>
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<td>butters, dips, dressing, sauces</td>
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Processors Report Demand for WA-grown

Processors report that their buyers are requesting products make with locally sourced ingredients:

- Desire locally sourced ingredients: 64%
- Willing to pay more for products with local ingredients: 44%
- Require locally sourced ingredients: 11%
Minimum purchases quantities per vendor are low, making it easier for small farms to work with processors than might be expected.
Resources Desired by Processors