

Farm to School

The USDA Pilot Project for Procurement of Unprocessed Fruits and Vegetables

Washington State is one of eight states selected to participate in the USDA Pilot Project for Procurement of Unprocessed Fruits and Vegetables, as directed by the Agricultural Act of 2014, also known as the Farm Bill. The pilot enables school districts to use their USDA entitlement funds to purchase locally-grown unprocessed fruits and vegetables. Through this pilot Washington State hopes to strengthen current school-vendor relationships and broaden the diversity of vendors selling to schools.

farm opportunity

- Support growing demand for fresh products from local schools in your area
- Develop connections with local Food Nutrition Directors and build a foundation for future business relationships
- Broaden your customer base to schools, students and families in a stable, high-volume market
- Show support for your community and help improve childhood nutrition
- Feature your company as a USDA approved vendor

school opportunity

- Serve more healthy, fresh and locally-procured fruits and vegetables
- Support local economy, build community relationships and promote your food service program
- More flexibility over where and how to spend your entitlement money
- Purchase from vendors with approved liability insurance and food safety practices
- Participate with minor adjustments to standard purchasing practices

Food sold through the pilot can include any “unprocessed” produce that has been sliced, diced, chopped, washed, frozen or dried. Foods that have been heat-treated during processing such as canning or pickling are not allowed.

How to participate?

Vendors must apply to become a USDA approved vendor. Application details can be found on the [USDA-AMS website](#) and [WSDA's Farm to School toolkit](#).



1 Product Liability Insurance



2 Food Safety Certification

USDA-AMS Specialty Crops Inspection Division or Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) recognized

Once approved, vendors will need to contract with schools and are responsible for submitting invoices to USDA at fvproject@ams.usda.gov.

School can participate by contacting the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI):

Food Distribution Program Supervisor
Child Nutrition Services, OSPI
(360) 725-6209

Participation is open on a rolling basis through December of each school year. School districts get to determine their own entitlement set aside amount for the pilot.

More info?

[WSDA's Farm to School Toolkit](#)

[USDA-Agriculture Marketing Services](#)

[USDA-Food Nutrition Services \(FNS\)](#)

Washington State
Department of Agriculture
Farm to School Team
Chris Iberle
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(206) 256 - 1874

School Procurement Process

The USDA Pilot Project for Procurement of Unprocessed Fruits and Vegetables

The pilot supports the purchase of local and regional produce, however standard procurement rules still apply

Schools can only purchase from USDA approved vendors on USDA-AMS website

Option 1

Modify an existing contract with an USDA approved vendor.

Competitive bids are not required.

School buyers can modify an existing, exclusive contract (i.e. purchases made from only the contracted vendor) and if participation in the pilot does not result in a material change.

If that is the case, schools can create an addendum to current contracts which (1) outlines school buyer participation in the pilot and changes to contract, including at minimum, the vendor payment method, and (2) requires the vendor to issue a separate invoice for unprocessed produce sold under the pilot.

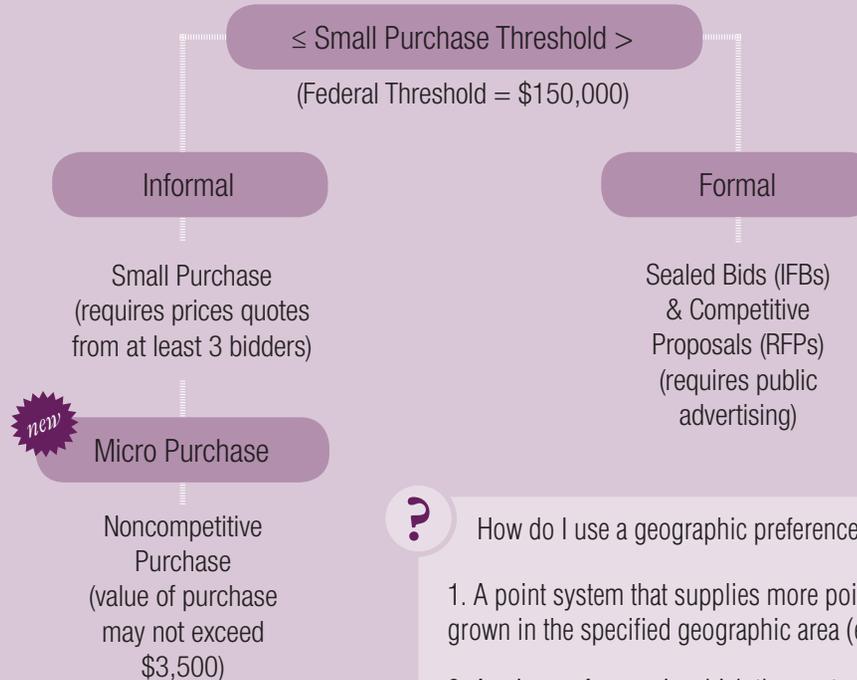
? Can I amend a DoD Fresh contract?

DoD Fresh Contracts are held by the Department of Defense (DoD) Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program. Schools cannot modify this contract unless they have a contract with Pacific Coast Fruit Company outside of DoD Fresh.

Option 2

Solicit a new contract with USDA approved vendors.

Competitive quotes for purchases over \$3,500 required (may include Geographic Preference)



? How do I use a geographic preference? Example ways to apply:

1. A point system that supplies more points to vendors who can supply produce grown in the specified geographic area (e.g. state, county, mile-radius).
2. A price preference in which the quote from any vendor offering produce from the geographic preference area (usually WA-grown) will be reduced by a specified percentage (usually 5% or 10%, but it is up to the school district) for comparison.

Refer to [A School's Guide to Purchasing Washington-Grown Food](#) for more details

Option 3

Recruit new or existing vendors to participate!

Inform vendors of requirements:

1. Liability Insurance
2. Food Safety Certification (USDA-AMS or GFSI accredited)

Additional qualifications may be required for businesses that work with other suppliers, carry non-domestic product and/or plan to sell minimally processed product. Vendors can get help with application and meeting requirements by online at [WSDA's Farm to School Toolkit](#) or ciberle@agr.wa.gov.

Vendor Requirements

The USDA Pilot Project for Procurement of Unprocessed Fruits and Vegetables

See [USDA Vendor Eligibility Requirements for further details](#)

- 1 Product Liability Insurance
- 2 Food Safety Certification

Which best describes your operation? Certification options vary by vendor type:

Farm

Distributor

Processor

Good Agricultural Practices (GAP)

Good Handling Practices (GHP) / Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP)

Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP)

[USDA Good Agricultural Practices \(GAP\)](#)

[USDA Harmonized GAP](#)

Any Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) recognized scheme. [See GFSI website for options.](#)

Approved Certifiers

[USDA - Agricultural Marketing Service \(AMS\)](#) - federal division that provides audit and accreditation programs

[Global Food Safety Initiative \(GFSI\)](#) - collaborative that recognizes various private food safety certifiers based on global quality standards

do NOT repack

repack or handle produce

dried or frozen

fresh-cut

Signed statement certifying that vendor meets GHP/ GMP, and has been audited (audit can be other than USDA or GFSI recognized). Must have Food Defense Audit benchmarked by GFSI or USDA.

[USDA Good Handling Practices \(GHP\)](#)

[USDA Plant Survey](#)

[USDA Plant Systems Audit \(PSA\)](#)

Any Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) recognized scheme. [See GFSI website for options.](#)

[USDA Plant Survey](#)

[USDA Plant Systems Audit \(PSA\)](#)

Any Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) recognized scheme. [See GFSI website for options.](#)

[USDA Plant Survey](#)

[USDA Plant Systems Audit \(PSA\)](#)

[USDA Qualified Through Verification](#)

Any Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) recognized scheme. [See GFSI website for options.](#)



All distributors and processors must have a USDA or GFSI benchmarked Food Defense Audit



Do you have suppliers? Food safety certifications are required for all suppliers, except for produce processed into dried or frozen product.



Do you handle non-domestic product? If so, you must submit a Product Segregation Plan to ensure only US-grown produce. Your supplier(s) plan may be requested during an audit.

fresh-cut requires a HACCP Plan certified by USDA or other recognized GFSI certifier

Vendor Application Instructions

The USDA Pilot Project for Procurement of Unprocessed Fruits and Vegetables

For vendors with required (1) product liability insurance and (2) food safety certifications

A Complete two forms

(1) [Vendor Application Form](#) (electronic signatures accepted)

Attachment A - Company Info

List only products that will be sold through the pilot. All products must be certified through USDA Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) or other approved certifier.

Attachment B - Self-Certification (yes/no check boxes)

Operations that sell more than 2,000 lbs per day and/or operations that negotiate the sale of produce on behalf of another person (i.e. a broker) need a [PACA license](#). Farms that handle their own product are exempt.

Operations that manufacture, process, pack or hold food for human consumption need a [FDA Food Facility Registration](#) (registration is free). Farms are exempt.

Attachment C - Domestic Origin Requirement (yes/no check boxes)

This pilot is for US-grown food only. If you handle any non-domestic product, you must include your Product Segregation Plan. You are also responsible for your supplier(s) compliance. Their segregation plan may be requested upon audit.

Attachment D - Suppliers

If you plan to sell products from other suppliers, list those suppliers and their products. Only include suppliers that you will use for the pilot. Remember that you must be able to document food safety certifications for each of your suppliers. Vendors can also add more suppliers after becoming approved.

Attachment D is not required if you do not work with any other suppliers.

Visit [USDA-AMS](#) website for vendor application forms, eligibility requirements, list of approved vendors, invoice templates and more resources

(2) [WBSCM Form](#) (obtain online and save as pdf)

This form registers your business to accept payment from USDA

- Unless your operation is a Farm Service Agency, select “Central Vendor” instead of “International Freight Vendor”
- Requires a [SAM](#) (System for Award Management) registration and [DUNS](#) number which are both easy and free to obtain on their websites
- Business Type - If unknown or not officially certified, select “small business” or however you identify your business on SAM.gov
- Operation Type - Self-identify based on categories or select “other” and type individual response

B Submit application to fvpilotproject@ams.usda.gov

include

1 Vendor Application Form (Attachments A-D)

2 WBSCM Form (pdf)

3 Additional Attachments

Food Safety Certification (*for applicant, & supplier(s) if applicable*)
HACCP Plan (*fresh-cut processors only*)
Product Segregation Plan (*vendors handling non-domestic product*)