



Fayetteville Public Schools'

Seed to Student Program

Informal Bidding Packet

Purpose:

The purpose of this document is to outline the informal bidding process for foods defined as locally grown for use in Fayetteville Public Schools' (FPS) Child Nutrition Department and the Seed to Student program (S2S). Using an informal bidding process to make local food purchases that fall within the small purchasing threshold ensures: fair competition among growers; federal and state regulations are met; products are cost-effective; and the district can forecast product availability, and therefore, consistently purchase large amounts of local product for seasonal menus. The state established small purchasing threshold allows FPS to use the informal bidding process to buy locally grown foods when total purchases from a single grower per bid term do not exceed \$20,910.

Farm to School is broadly defined as a program that connects schools (K-12) and local farms with the objectives of serving healthy meals in school cafeterias, improving student nutrition, providing agriculture, health and nutrition education opportunities, and supporting local and regional producers. Farm to School programs are a fun way for students to try new foods, learn about where their food comes from, and feel connected to their food system. It is our hope that a robust Seed to Student program will increase students' fruit and vegetable intake, improve student nutrition, and reduce childhood hunger and obesity. We seek to accomplish the following by offering students more fresh and minimally processed foods and purchasing as many of those products locally as possible.

You are receiving this document because either you are a past vendor who has previously sold local product to FPS or you have indicated interest in providing products in the future. We are primarily interested in purchasing produce for our school lunch program and special events. The products listed in this document will be offered to 10,500+ students in the district on a schedule that currently operates 5 days a week during the academic year. Additionally, we plan to purchase local products for the summer lunch program that offers meals to approximately 360 students 5 days a week during the school summer break and to preserve for use during the winter months when availability of local product is limited.

Bid evaluation, review and award criteria:

We are asking producers provide information for the items they are interested in growing for the district within the table below. Bid term duration will be decided by grower and FPS representative during the bidding processes. The school district retains the right to award multiple bids to multiple producers. Only the information in this document, Informal Bid Evaluation Form, the food safety checklist, and FPS Seed to Student Guidelines will be used to fairly evaluate and award bids. Bids will be awarded to producers who are responsible and can provide the products sought in this solicitation at the lowest price, per federal regulation. The school district reserves the right to use other producers if better pricing is available and does not guarantee any specific ordering volumes. During the bid term, FPS will monitor and keep documentation on producer service, product quality, price, and compliance with the FPS Seed to Student Guidelines to ensure we continue to work with the most responsible producers.

Producer qualifications:

Producers are considered to be responsive, responsible and good candidates for our program and the bidding process if they meet the following requirements:

- 1) History of providing quality customer service and product to FPS or can provide references to demonstrate this, upon request
- 2) Communicate in a timely manner via phone and email
- 3) Can provide product to meet all or the majority of FPS needs for that product for several weeks during a season
- 4) Provide product that meets the specifications outlined in the informal bid information below
- 5) Comply with the requirements outlined in the FPS Seed to Student Guidelines
- 6) Can deliver product within 24 to 48 hours of harvest, unless the product can be cold stored for longer periods of time or delivered frozen
- 7) **Abide by, sign and submit a Bidder Assurance and Disclosure form provided to you by our department**

Experiential learning is a critical part of the FPS S2S program; please describe your willingness and availability to be present on school campuses for educational Seed to Student programming opportunities in the space provided below. Please describe any additional experiential educational opportunities that you might be able to provide FPS students, if any. For example, do you host farm tours or do you visit school classrooms and talk about farming and agriculture with students? If a tie in pricing occurs, producers who demonstrate the greatest educational benefit to FPS students will be awarded the bid.

Please describe below your organization's capacity to trace product from farm to institution?

Desired Local Product List

Note: This list gives the grower an idea of what products and specifications our district requires. All products will be purchased by the pound, unless otherwise agreed upon.

Product	Product Specifications	Produce	Product Specifications
Apples	All varieties, but no Arkansas Black; 138, 150, 163 or 175 ct./case or 2.5-3 inch diameter (40# cs); clean; mature but not overripe; free of dirt, decay, internal breakdown, damage and injury; minor difference in color, shape and size okay	Cucumbers	Firm, glossy, crisp, and dark green; free from decay, damage and injury; fairly well formed; not overgrown; 1-2.5in diameter; wash/ brushed with sanitized water
Beets, w/o tops	Various colors; no beets shall be smaller than 1.5" in diameter; well-trimmed of yellow leaves and rootlets; firm, fairly smooth, fairly well-shaped; fairly clean; free from cuts, freezing, growth cracks, disease; free from foreign material, decay, damage, injury	Eggplant	Dark purple skin; uniformly egg or globular shaped, fresh green calyx, firm flesh; field packed okay; clean; free from decay, damage, injury foreign materials
Beans, green	Well-formed; turgid; straight pods; bright color; tender but firm; full bean cavity; stem-end intact; reasonable shape and size; free from foreign material, decay, damage, injury	Grapes	Mature; appear and feel turgid; dry stem scar; fairly well colored; rachis are green; berries firmly attached; fairly compact bunches; free of dirt, decay, damage or injury
Bok Choy	Think, Fleshly, firm, white stalks and glossy, dark-green leaves; free from bruising or slimy spots and wilted or yellow leaves; washed with sanitized water; free from foreign material, decay, damage and injury	Hearty Greens	All types and varieties; bunches or loose packed; fresh; fairly tender; washed/ cleaned with sanitized water; well-trimmed; characteristic color/ no discoloration; free of dirt, decay, damage and injury
Broccoli	Firm, compact heads/ crowns with closed beads; side shoots/ florets okay; central head dark or bright green; field packed or washed with sanitized water; packed loose; trimmed stems and side leaves; no bitterness; free from foreign material, decay, damage, injury	Lettuce	Head or leaf okay; solid; clean/ washed with sanitized water, free from browning, crisp and turgid; bright green or characteristic color; well-trimmed (head); free of dirt, decay, damage and injury; not bitter
Cantaloupe	Mature; good internal quality; not overripe or soft; fairly well formed; free from dirt, decay, damage and injury; dry brushing/ field packed or washed with sanitized water	Nectarines	Mature, not soft or overripe; sweet; slightly under ripe okay; fairly well formed; washed/ clean with sanitized water; characteristic color some blushed or red color preferred; free of dirt, decay, damage and injury
Carrots, w/o tops	Various colors; well-colored; partially mature; ½-¾ in at shoulder; firm; straight from shoulder to tip; smooth with little residual "hairiness"; sweet with no bitter or harsh taste, no signs of cracking or sprouting; clean; free from foreign material, decay, damage and injury	Okra	Bright green, flexible, 2-6"long; turgid; tender; no seeds visible; ridges free from blackening and bruising; not fibrous; not badly misshapen; free from foreign material, decay, damage and injury; do not wash

Product	Product Specifications	Product	Product Specifications
Onions, red	Mature bulbs; cured; good firmness and compactness of fleshy scales; fairly well shaped; size, shape and color typical for variety; no bottleneck, greening of fleshy scales or sprouting; free of dirt, decay, damage and injury	Sweet potatoes	Various colors, preferably cream to orange color; sweet; firm; smooth; fairly clean; fairly well-shaped; free from foreign material, decay, damage, injury, internal breakdown; secondary rootlets or sprouts; cured after harvest; dry brush or hand-wash to clean
Onions, yellow	Mature bulbs; cured; good firmness and compactness of fleshy scales; fairly well shaped; size, shape and color typical for variety; no bottleneck, greening of fleshy scales or sprouting; free of dirt, decay, damage and injury	Squash, Winter	All varieties, fully mature; fairly well formed; hard rinds, except for some hard varieties; solid external color typical of variety; flesh is bright yellow/ orange with fine moist texture and high sugars, solids and starch; slight stem attached; cured or uncured; deliver just washed with sanitized water, dry; free of dirt, decay, damage and injury
Peaches	Mature, not soft or overripe; sweet; fairly well formed; healed injury only; characteristic color, blushing, pink or red color preferred; dry brush to clean; slightly under ripe okay; free of dirt, decay, damage, injury	Squash, Summer, Yellow	Firm on outside; tender on inside; shiny; green types should be entirely green; stems or portion of stem attached; fairly well formed; wipe clean only; free of dirt, decay, damage and injury
Peppers, sweet	All varieties (including banana) and green and red preferred unless other color requested; fairly uniform shape, size and color for variety; firm flesh, relatively thick; sweet flavor; no shrivel or dull-color or pitting; brush washed with sanitized water; 3+in diameter preferred; free of dirt, decay, damage and injury.	Squash, Summer, Yellow	FOR PROCESSING; 2 nd grade or above, not decaying, wrinkled or soft; free of all dirt and most damage and injury
Peppers, bell	FOR PROCESSING; 2 nd grade or above, not decaying, wrinkled or soft; free of all dirt and most damage, injury	Squash, Summer, Zucchini	Firm on outside; tender on inside; shiny; green types should be entirely green; stems or portion of stem attached; fairly well formed; wipe clean only; free of dirt, decay, damage and injury
Potatoes, baking	Turgid; fairly well shaped; brightly colored; 120 ct cases or approx. 6 oz each; hand wash or brush wash with sanitized water; free of dirt, decay, damage and injury	Squash, Summer, Zucchini	FOR PROCESSING; 2 nd grade or above, not decaying, wrinkled or soft; free of all dirt and most damage and injury
Radishes w/o tops	Bright red skin color and white inside; various sizes; fresh; smooth; tender but firm; crisp; not stringy, woody, soft or wilted; free from foreign material; decay, damage, injury; pressure washed	Tomatoes	5x6, slicing; firm, turgid appearance; fairly uniform and smooth; shiny color; no shriveling; at least full pink in color; ripe, not overripe or soft; field packed, wiped off; dry, no stems unless heirloom variety; free of dirt, decay, damage and injury
Spinach	Leaves similar to varietal characteristics; fresh, fairly tender, well-trimmed, bright or dark green; bunch or loose leaf, dry; wash and cool with sanitized water; free of dirt, decay, damage and injury	Tomatoes	FOR PROCESSING; Roma preferred, 2 nd grade or above, not decaying, wrinkled or soft; free of all dirt and most damage and injury
Strawberries	Variety with longer shelf life; firm; fairly uniform red color and shape; mature but not overripe nor underdeveloped; cap attached; field packed, dry; 3/4in-5/8in diameter; free of dirt, decay, damage and injury	Beef	Lean, ground, frozen, 10# packages

Additional Product Offerings:

Please list 1) any other types of produce you may be able to offer, along with 2) proposed volume availability, 3) price quote and 4) date range of availability.

Notification criteria:

All producers will receive a notification letter via email informing them of FPS's award decisions. This letter will contain a list of all products, and the name of the growers awarded the bid for each product; in some instances multiple growers may be awarded a portion of the product bid to better meet the district's needs. Primary and secondary growers may be assigned for each product. A general outline of the ordering and delivery process and duration of the awarded bid will also be included.

For questions, please contact Ally Mrachek, Child Nutrition Director via the email provided above or call (479) 445-1526.

I have read, understand and agree to the procedures and producer qualifications outlined above.

Producer Signature: _____

Producer Printed Name: _____

Date Signed: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

FPS Child Nutrition Department Signature: _____ Date: _____