



Food Nutrition and Distribution to Local Schools

KDA's School Nutrition and Distribution Role

- USDA Foods in Schools Program
- Farm to School Programs
- USDA Farm to School Grants
- Chefs in Schools

Local Food for Schools Cooperative Agreement

- \$3.2 million from the USDA to purchase local products from Kentucky Producers for school cafeterias
- Program successful and further demonstrated that Farm to Schools programs can grow
- Ended April 2025





What Drives Schools Away From Buying Local?

Procurement Processes and
Complying with Local, State and
Federal Obligations

Federal Dietary Guidelines and
Program Specific Nutritional
Requirements

Cost and Sourcing

What Drives Schools Away From Buying Local?

Federal programs that schools follow

- Dietary Guidelines and Meal Patterns
- Program Specific Nutrition Regulations
- National School Lunch Program
- Community Eligibility Provision
- Breakfast and Summer Feeding Programs
- Child and Adult Care Food Program
- USDA Foods in Schools
- DoD Fresh Purchases
- General Allowables
- Food Buying Guide



What Drives Schools Away From Buying Local?

Cost and Sourcing

- Meticulous Meal Reimbursement Process
- Already Low Rate of Reimbursement Per Meal
- Federal Formula Dependent on a District's demographics
- Access to Local Products / Access to Enough Local Product
- Farmers' Market Mentality to Local Sourcing
- Preparing More Producers to Sell to Schools

How Can KDA Help Districts Purchase More Local Products?

Intentional Policy

- Work with KY School Board Association to set federal micropurchase and small purchase levels across Kentucky
- General Assembly: Top down procurement changes from local preference to incentives to cover cost gap with local products, etc.
- Increase local products in GFS and DoD Fresh inventories
- Federal credit to schools for donated food to keep food waste low

How Can KDA Help Districts Purchase More Local Products?

Collaborate and Support Innovation

- Pilot Projects with Barren County Schools and expand to pilots in Marion and Jefferson County
- Attract More Processors to the Commonwealth
- Help Local Producers prepare eligible food items
- More education for Farmers on Bid Responses, Negotiation workshops, etc.
- Buyer/ Grower Meet Ups for Schools

How Can KDA Help Districts Purchase More Local Products?

Stakeholder Engagement:

- KY Center for Agriculture and Rural Development
- KY School Board Association
- KY School Nutrition Association
- KY Department of Education
- USDA
- Community Farm Alliance
- University of Kentucky's The Food Connection
- School Districts and Food Service Directors
- Producers
- Local, state and federal leaders



