

June 6, 2012

The Arlington Public Schools Food Service Program desires to serve fresh, locally grown products to its students. As such, the Food Services Department is seeking to develop a list of vendors that meet all procurement requirements from which quotes may be requested or supplied through weekly Fresh Sheets on an “as needed” basis.

Under federal law, this district, as the purchasing institution, has the authority to apply a “local” geographic preference to minimally processed foods and to determine what is “local” for the purposes of United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) programs such as the National School Lunch Program, the School Breakfast Program, the Fresh Fruits and Vegetable Program, the Special Milk Program, the Child and Adult Care Food Program, the Summer Food Service Program, and the Department of Defense Fresh Program.

This district defines “locally grown products” eligible for this geographic preference at two levels. These levels are:

1. Grown in Snohomish, Skagit, or Island Counties
2. Grown in Washington State

As allowed under federal law, the Arlington Public Schools will provide a price percentage preference during evaluation of quotes to “locally grown products” purchased for school food procurement as defined under this geographic preference. The price percentage is as follows:

1. Grown in Snohomish, Skagit, or Island Counties-5%
2. Grown in Washington State-3%

The price percentage preference means that prices for product grown in one of the 3 counties will be adjusted to a price 5% lower than the price quoted for the product by the vendor or 3% for product grown outside these counties and still within Washington State. The price percentage preference affects the quoted price only for awarding of the quote, not the actual price paid to the vendor.

Pursuant to USDA regulations, the geographic preference is applied only to “minimally processed” agricultural products that retain their inherent character. This includes the following:

Cooling; refrigerating; freezing; size adjustment made by peeling, slicing, dicing, cutting, chopping, shucking, and grinding; forming ground product into patties without any additives or fillers; drying/dehydration; washing; packaging (such as placing eggs in cartons) vacuum packing and bagging (such as placing vegetables in bags or combining two or more types of vegetables or fruits in a single package); addition of ascorbic acid or other preservatives to prevent oxidation of produce; butchering livestock and poultry; cleaning of fish; and the pasteurization of milk.

Fruits and Vegetables used in the past have included the following:

Broccoli	Apples
Cabbage (shredded)	Bananas
Carrots	Grapes
Cauliflower	Kiwi
Celery	Peaches (canned)
Corn (canned)	Pears
Green Beans (canned)	Pineapple (canned)
Jicama	Mixed Fruit (canned)
Lettuce (salad and shredded)	Oranges
Squash-winter	
Sweet Potatoes	

We would like to consider other varieties and types of “value added” to fruits, vegetables, and other locally grown product as well, including fresh and minimally processed versions of the foods we have previously purchased in canned form.

To be placed on the quote list, please submit a letter to:

Arlington Public Schools
Food Service Department
Attn: Ed Aylesworth, Director
315 North French Avenue
Arlington, WA 98223

The letter must include responses to the following questions:

1. What products will you have available within the next year? (Please provide seasonal or monthly information.)
2. Are you able to pack and deliver to two main kitchens or would you want to work with a local distributor? If you can deliver, do you have a minimum delivery amount (case count, pounds, etc.)?
3. Do you have a Good Agricultural Practices, HACCP, or other third party food safety certification? If so, please submit a copy of the certificate with your letter. If not, please supply a copy of your farm food safety plan or respond to the questionnaire available on-line at www.asd.wednet.edu under the Food Services section.
4. Please briefly describe your farm and growing practices. Do you have any certifications, (besides food safety certification) such as Organic or Food Alliance?
5. Proof of a minimum of one million (1,000,000) dollars of product liability insurance.
6. Your level of interest in partnering for education purposes (like visiting the school to speak to students, providing picture and farm description for a farm profile poster, hosting a farm visit, etc.)? If interested, please list your ideas for education about your farm or the farms you source from.

Thank you for your interest in working with us to serve our students the best product possible!