



USDA FOODS: A RESOURCE FOR BUYING LOCAL

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USDA FOODS has a dual mission of supporting domestic agriculture and providing healthy foods to schools. Offerings include a variety of fresh, frozen, canned and dried fruits and vegetables, lean meats, peanut butter, whole wheat grain products and cheeses.

In order to access these healthy options, each state in the country is allocated a certain amount of money, or "entitlement value," to spend on USDA Foods, based on the number of lunches served in the previous school year. In FY 2012, \$1.25 billion in USDA Foods went to schools; in any given year, about 10-15% of the value of food served through the National School Lunch Program comes from USDA Foods.

USDA Foods supports local purchasing in several ways:

Maximizes Funds for Local Purchases

In a time of tightening budgets, every dollar's worth of USDA Foods delivered to a school frees up money that a school would otherwise have to spend commercially. By using USDA Foods products, schools can save cash reimbursement dollars for local purchases.

Champions American Agriculture

USDA Foods are all produced in the United States, thus it is possible to order foods through the USDA Foods catalog that are produced in your region. For example, Mississippi is the only state that produces significant, commercial quantities of catfish. If a school is located in the Southeast, USDA Foods catfish could be local to that school. Likewise, apricots offered through USDA Foods normally come from California, and pears usually originate in the Pacific Northwest.

Supports Local Processors

Most states send a portion of their USDA Foods to processors to be turned into end products like burritos, burgers or rice bowls. Check to see if your state has agreements with processors located close to home.

Promotes Local Fruit and Vegetable Producers

The DoD Fresh program allows schools to use their USDA Foods entitlement dollars to buy fresh, and often local, produce. DoD contracts with over 47 produce distributors across the country, who are encouraged to provide local produce whenever possible and identify locally-sourced items in the ordering catalog. Several states rely on DoD produce as an integral part of farm to school efforts.

“ USDA is a partner in meeting my local purchasing goals. I often shift my entitlement to products that are not available locally and to products, like the roast chicken, that USDA Foods is able to offer at a lower price point than I could get as an individual school district. **”**

- *Andrea Early, Director of School Nutrition, Harrisonburg City Public Schools*





Which USDA Foods are Local to Your Region?

State of origin reports provide a good retrospective on where USDA Foods are typically from. To buy local with USDA Foods, identify which products USDA typically purchases from your state or region, keeping in mind that future procurements may not follow these trends. The lists below provide a snap shot of the state of origin data and highlight items that are typically purchased from each part of the country.

Northeast

- Flour
- Corn
- Green Beans

Mid Atlantic

- Corn
- Pasta
- Beans
- Chicken

Mountain Plains

- Beans
- Beef
- Flour
- Pasta
- Pork

Midwest

- Apples
- Cherries
- Beef
- Beans
- Carrots
- Cheese
- Green Beans

Western

- Pollack
- Cheese
- Apricots
- Peaches
- Tomatoes
- Pears
- Potatoes

Southwest

- Rice
- Beans
- Peanut Butter
- Beef

Southeast

- Chicken
- Peanut Butter
- Catfish
- Turkey
- Rice
- Flour

Learn More

For a complete list of the foods available and factsheets for each product, visit <http://go.usa.gov/KNUh>.

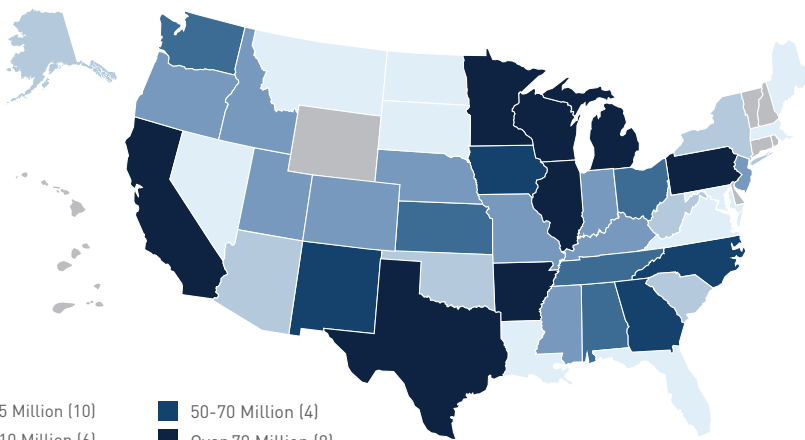
To identify USDA Foods that may be local to you, check out the state of origin reports which are available at <http://go.usa.gov/BW5A>.

To find USDA Foods' vendors local to you, reference the Agricultural Marketing Service's and Farm Service Agency's eligible vendor lists available at <http://go.usa.gov/BWNY>.

The National Processing Agreements website provides a list of eligible processors, which can be accessed at <http://go.usa.gov/BWNw>.

For more information about DoD Fresh, visit <http://go.usa.gov/BWNe>.

Dollar Value of Food Purchased from Each State for the USDA Foods Program in FY 2012



- 0-5 Million (10)
- 5-10 Million (6)
- 10-30 Million (10)
- 30-50 Million (5)
- 50-70 Million (4)
- Over 70 Million (8)
- *No Data (8)

*No USDA Foods were processed or packed in eight states.

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For more information, and to sign up to receive USDA's bi-weekly Farm to School E-letter, please visit www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool. Questions? Email us at farmtoschool@fns.usda.gov.

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