



LOCAL FOOD FOR SCHOOLS

What is the Local Food for Schools Cooperative Agreement Program (LFS)?



Objective

The LFS is funding for **states to assist in the supply chain disruption**. This program will strengthen the food system for schools by helping to build a fair, competitive, and resilient local food chain, and expand local and regional markets with an **emphasis on purchasing from historically underserved producers and processors**.



LFS defined

Local - for the purpose of the LFS funding local is defined as products raised, produced, aggregated, stored, processed and distributed within **New Jersey. *all purchases must be local**

Small Business - A small business is generally defined by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) as a business that is: a for profit-businesses of any legal structure; **independently owned and operated, not nationally dominant in its field**, and physically located and operated in the U.S. or its territories.

Socially Disadvantaged -For the purpose of this program, “socially disadvantaged” is a farmer or rancher who is a member of a Socially Disadvantaged Group. A Socially Disadvantaged Group is a group whose members have been subject to discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and, where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or a part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program.

LFS defined

Unprocessed or Minimally processed - Examples of allowable food products include fruits and vegetables (including 100% juices); grain products such as pastas and rice; meats (whole, pieces, or food items such as ground meats); meat alternates such as beans or legumes, and fluid milk and other dairy foods such as cheese and yogurt. Foods in a wide variety of minimal processing states (e.g., whole, cut, pureed, etc.) and/or forms (e.g., fresh, frozen, canned, dried, etc.) are also allowable. ***all purchases must be unprocessed or minimally processed**

Domestic Food - “Agricultural Commodity” means a product grown, processed, and otherwise prepared for sale or distribution exclusively in the United States or its territories, **except with respect to minor ingredients.** Minor ingredients from nondomestic sources will be allowed to be utilized as a United States product if such ingredients are not otherwise: (1) produced in the United States; and (2) commercially available in the United States at fair and reasonable prices from domestic sources. The following ingredients are determined by AMS Commodity Procurement as not available at fair and reasonable prices and are waived from U.S. origin restrictions: (1) Vitamin A (Retinol Palmitate), (2) Vitamin D, (3) Carageenan (stabilizing agent), (4) Sorbic Acid (preservative), (5) Potassium Sorbate (preservative), (6) Rennet (coagulant), (7) Items excepted from the Buy American Act under FAR 25.104 Nonavailable Articles

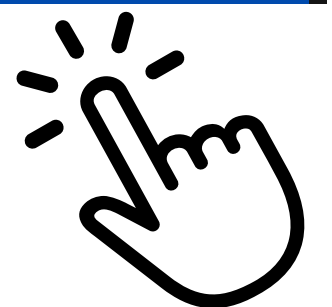
Who is eligible to receive funding?



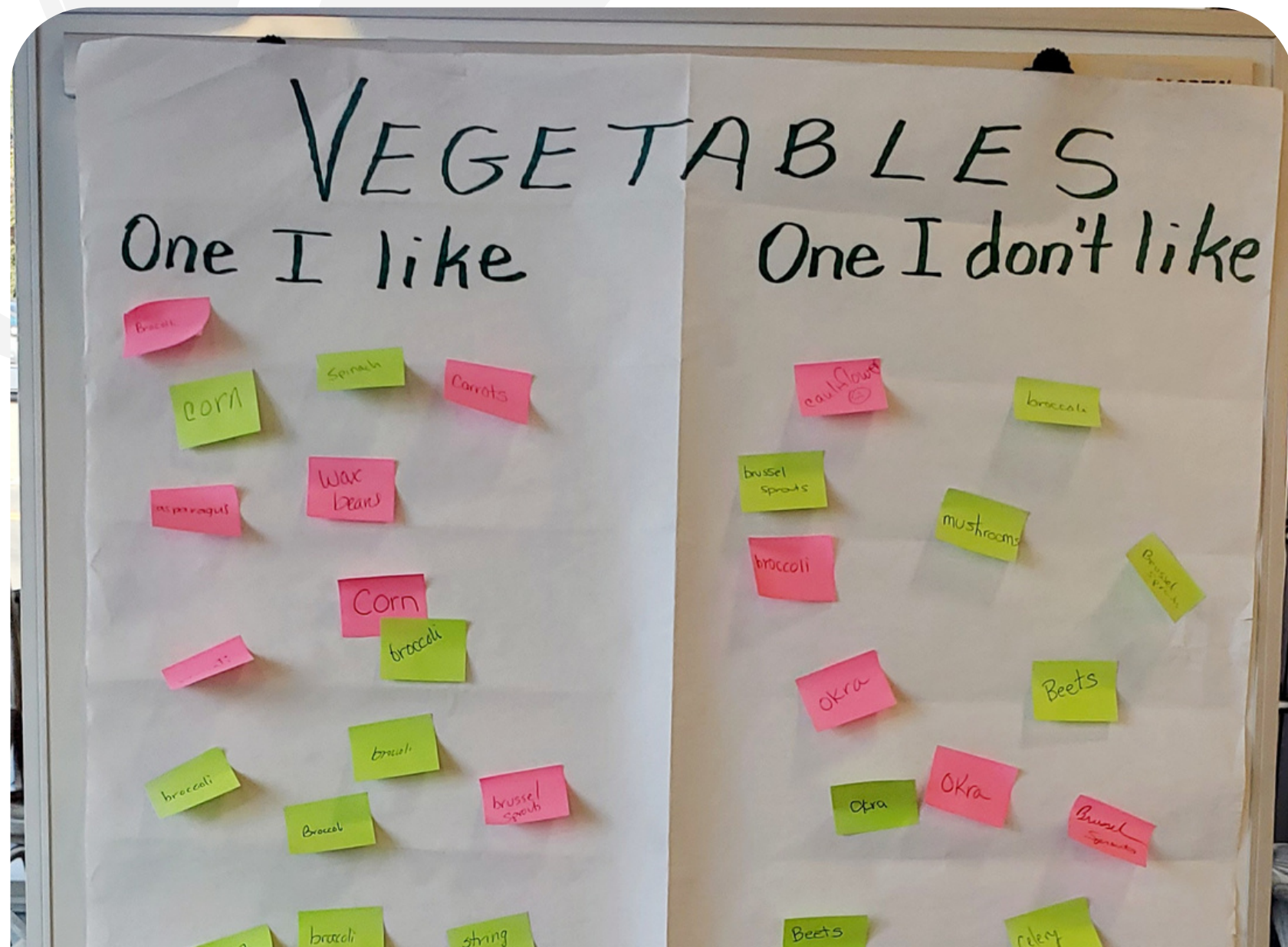
Eligibility

Schools participating and in good standing with the National School Lunch Food Distribution Program are eligible to participate.

[Eligible Participants Estimated Allotment](#)



When can we purchase using funds from the Local Food for Schools Opportunity Grant?



The total funds for the Local Food for Schools Opportunity Grant can be used through **March of 2024**. SFA's will be reimbursed quarterly for purchases made **once NJDA approves your agreement**.

Where can we purchase minimally processed foods?



SFA's can purchase minimally processed foods **direct from a farmer/producer or vendor.**

The resource list attached is a sample of vendors with NJ products.

 [Resource List](#)

*the resource list will be updated throughout the duration of the grant



How does my SFA participate?



The school **Business Administrator** will **complete the NJ LFS Attestation Agreement**. NJDA will approve agreement & funds will be reimbursed on a quarterly basis after verifications of proper documentation have been received.

The SFA must keep a separate accounting of the LFS funds.



Local Food for Schools **in action**

Farm to School Super School has been anxiously awaiting the LFS funding. They have been working with a local farmer (by LFS definition meets both small business and socially disadvantaged) & their vendor to bring in local chicken. They will use the funding to purchase local chicken to serve on their cafeteria line. The funding for the local chicken was made available through the SFA's LFS grant.

AgVenture School has done extensive community outreach. This year, Farmer Jane has graciously donated cucumbers and tomatoes to the AgVenture School for a whole school tasting. Next year, the AgVenture School will have the funding to purchase seasonally what Farmer Jane has to offer.

Above & Beyond School has held "Farmers Markets" in their school. The school uses the "Farmers Markets" as a hands-on learning based economic and nutritional lesson. The school partners with the local market to bring in Jersey Fresh produce to offer at the "Farmers Market." Students have the opportunity to make "purchases" at the market.

Local Food for Schools **in action**

On The Go School has set up grab and go baskets while the students exit the building. The healthy afternoon snack is a much needed provision for students in sports & clubs.

Food Truck Fest H.S. has been hosting their cafeteria event for the past 5 years. Food Truck Fest H.S. has used an interdisciplinary approach with students from both Family & Consumer Science and Business Management participating. Each year, the students from Family & Consumer Science create a menu & cook for all lunches in the cafeteria. The Business Management class works with a group from Family & Consumer Science to market and sell their product. This year, they have added the element of **local** to all their menus.

Top Chef School has been wanting to purchase local for their students. The cost has been a barrier preventing this. **Top Chef School** plans to use the LFS funds to work with local farmers/producers in the area to purchase and sustain their local food chain.

Reporting

Quarterly Reporting Form



Do I need the farm/producer on the receipt?

answer: Yes, your receipt/purchase order should specify what farm/producer the item came from.

What if I use a vendor who procures from multiple farmers?

answer: The vendors on our resource list have agreed to list the farms in which the food has been sourced

on your invoice and/or catalogue. You will be responsible for the reporting of each farm.

Will every invoice be reviewed?

answer: Yes, each invoice will be reviewed to verify the LFS funds have been used correctly.

Can an invoice be rejected?

answer: Yes, if an invoice does not meet the parameters of the LFS the reimbursement will be denied.

Does the receipt need to be itemized?

answer: Yes, if purchasing from small business that does not produce itemized receipts you can provide them a purchase order to complete.

Frequently asked questions:

Are the funds available only for the Food Service Department?

answer: **No**, schools can utilize the funds to best meet the needs of their programs/school lunch or a combination. LFS funds are to be used for **students only**.

Can I use the LFS funds outside of the lunch or breakfast program?

answer: **Yes**, LFS funds can be used outside of the lunch and breakfast program for students only.

What account will the grant funding be deposited into?

answer: The non-profit food service account.

If we accept the funding and do not use, is there a penalty?

answer: **No**, there is no penalty for not using the LFS funding.

Will the LFS funds be redistributed if not used?

answer: **Yes**, if a SFA has not used their funding, the NJDA Food & Nutrition will redistribute funding to those schools participating.

When will the NJDA hold open office hours?

answer: the NJDA will hold open office hours at **2pm on 11/29/2022** [click here to join meeting](#)

For more immediate questions please email: njdalgs@ag.nj.gov