


2025 ISBE School Nutrition Training

Farm to School

Lindsay Blough, M.S.



**CHILD NUTRITION
PROGRAMS**

 **ILLINOIS**
STATE BOARD OF
EDUCATION



FARM TO SCHOOL

Lindsay Blough, M.S.

Illinois State Board of Education

Nutrition Programs

Farm to Child Nutrition Programs Administrator

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Agenda

**General Farm to School Info
& the USDA F2S Census**

Resources

Local Food for Schools (LFS)

Success Stories

Q&A

Thank you!

What is Farm to School?



Buying Local



School Gardens



Education

General F2S Information

VISIT OUR FARM
TO CHILD
NUTRITION
PROGRAMS
WEBSITE (F2CNP)

[HTTPS://WWW.ISBE.NET/PAGE
S/SCHOOL-NUTRITION-
FARM-TO-SCHOOL.ASPX](https://www.isbe.net/Pages/School-Nutrition-Farm-to-School.aspx)

NUTRITION FARM TO CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS (F2CNP)

EVENTS & FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

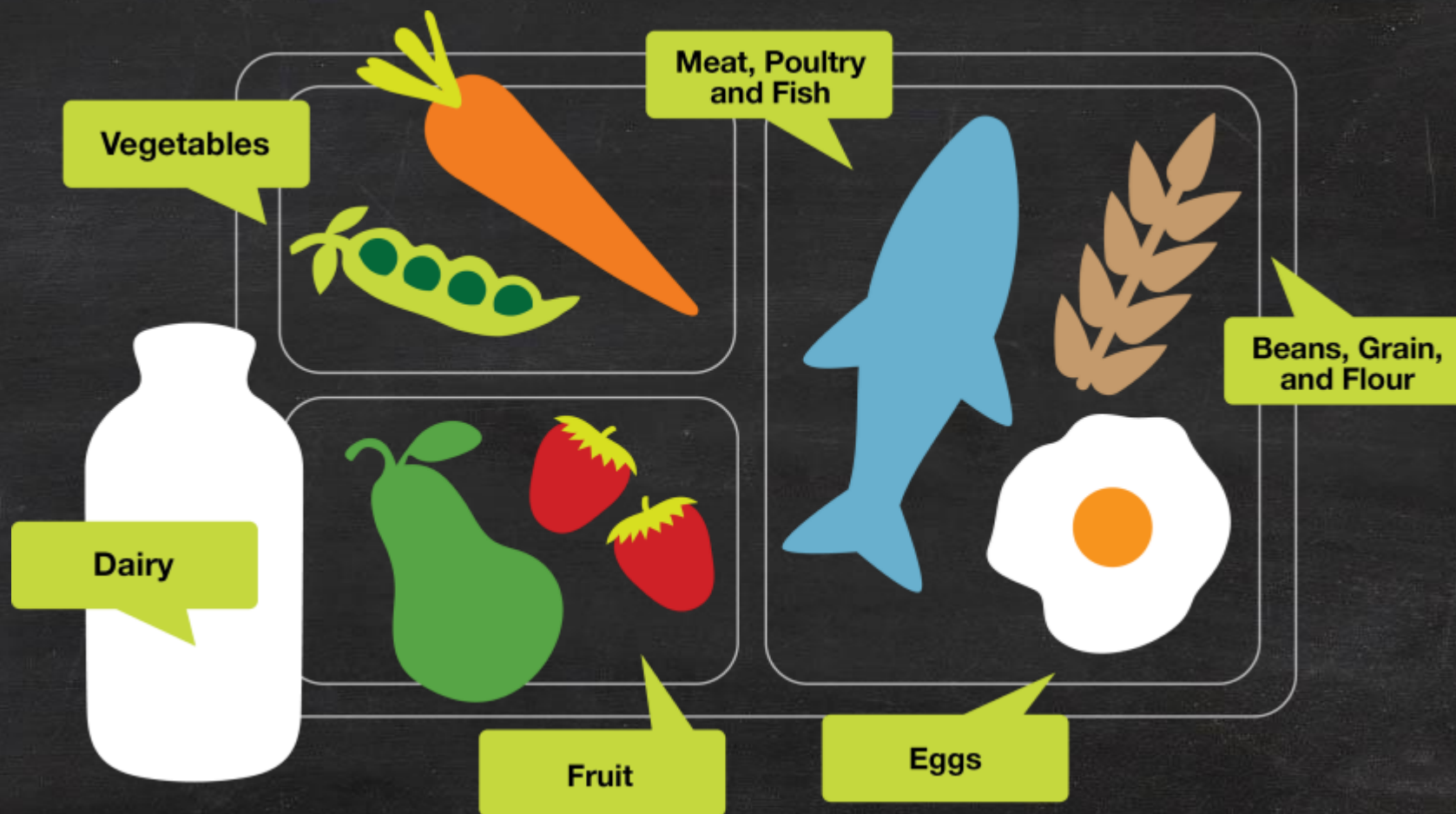
- Click here to register for the Local Food for Schools (LFS) Overview, Updates and Q&A webinar - 2-3 p.m. Tuesday May 7
- Open Enrollment for Local Foods for Schools (LFS) funding has ended. If you did not sign up for LFS, but are interested please reach out to ISBE staff at localfoods@isbe.net to inquire if funds are still available. We will do our best to accommodate requests to participate!
- Out of LFS funds? If you used all of your LFS funds but would like to request additional funds, click here for guidance on how to request additional LFS funds.
- We Need Your Input! Please complete ISBE's Farm to School survey by clicking here. On average the survey takes less than 15 minutes to complete.
- Check out the Illinois Farm to School Network website for upcoming Events.

- General Farm to School Information
- Farm to Early Care
- Food Safety
- Procurement
- For Producers (Farmers, Ranchers, Processors, and Distributors)
- Local Food for Schools (LFS)
- Websites/Links
- Scratch Cooking
- School Gardens

Buying Local



What Types of Products?



Procurement Rules

- Schools do have to follow procurement processes for purchasing local foods.
- The process they have to use is based on the dollar value of local foods they will be buying for the whole school year, along with some other factors.
- < \$10,000 = micropurchase
- \$10K-\$250K = informal
- >\$250K = formal



What is Procurement?

Procurement is the purchasing of goods and services.

The procurement process involves:



Why are Procurement Rules Important?

- Full and open competition is essential to ensure low cost and high quality of goods and services
- To ensure that the program receives maximum benefits and taxpayer dollars are well spent!



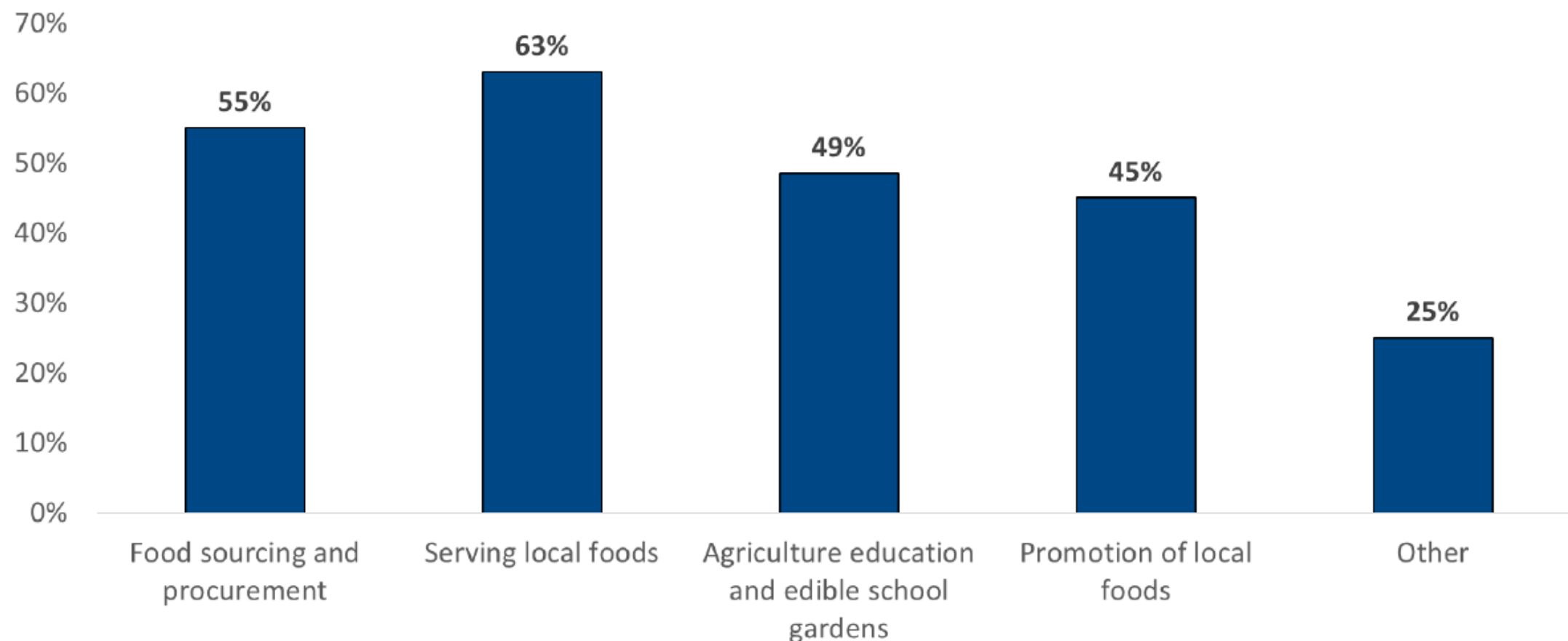
2023 Farm to School Census

An Analysis of National and
State-Level Findings in the
2023 Farm to School Census

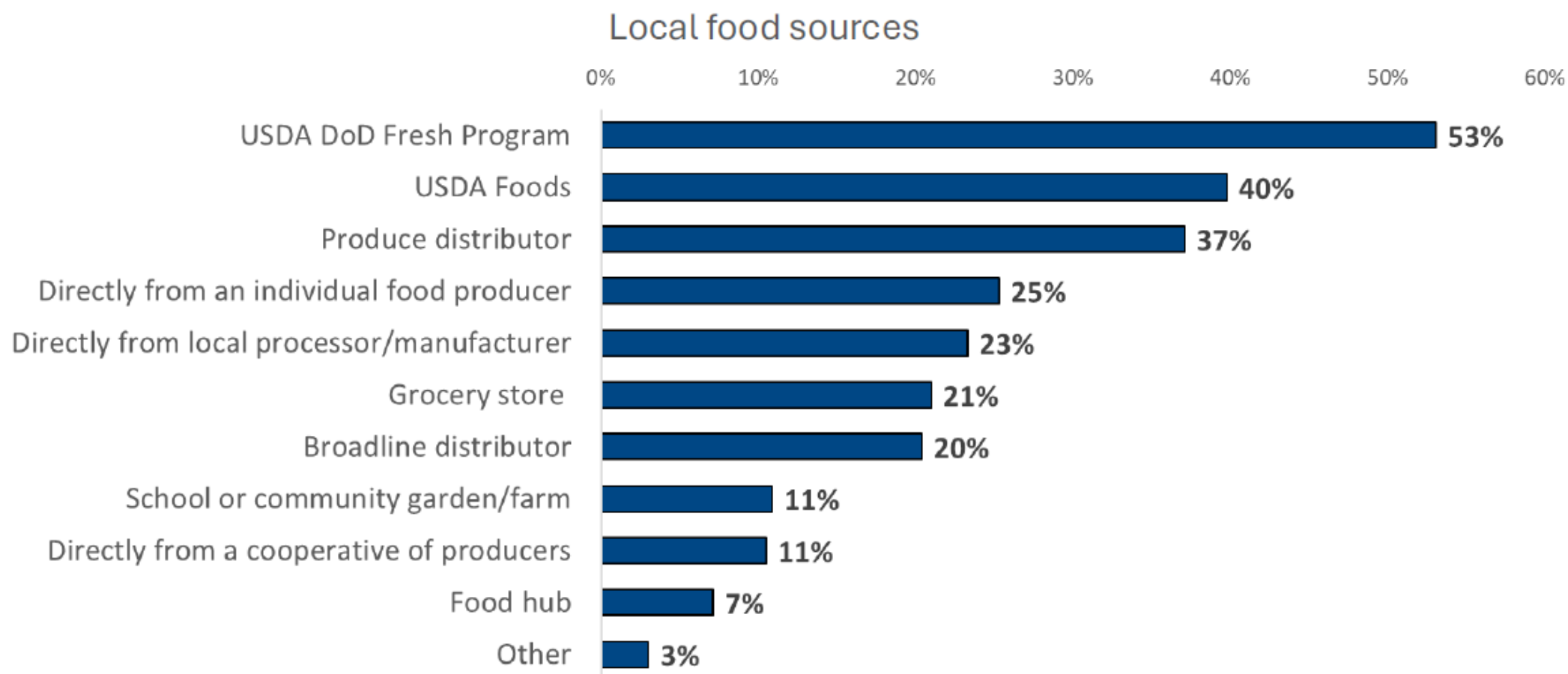
Illinois

Different forms of participation in farm to school

Participation in farm to school activities among all SFAs



SFAs participating in farm to school bought local foods from a variety of market channels



Top Local Products

Top local products served in schools nationally

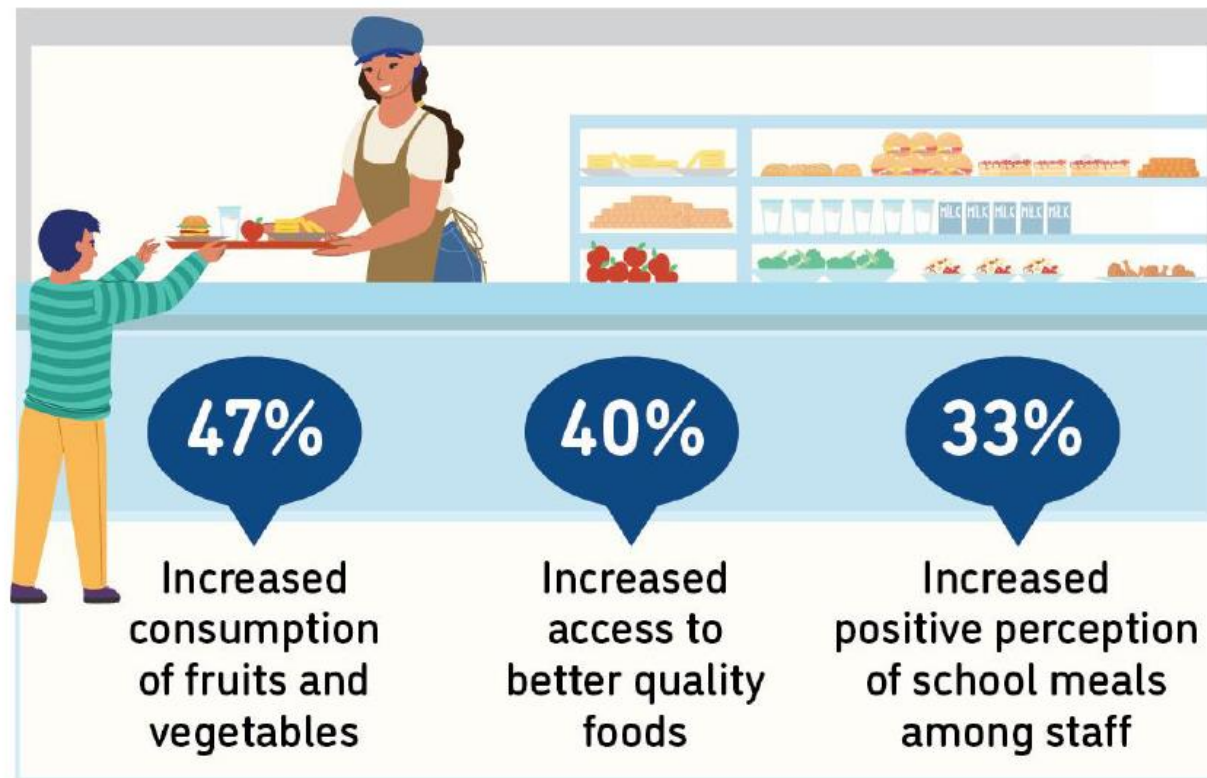


Top local products served in Illinois schools



USDA F2S Census - Illinois

Positive outcomes of SFAs from farm to school participation



Great Job Illinois!

	Illinois	Midwest	National
Response Rate	78.6%	69.1%	66.3%
SFAs that participate in F2S	63.8%	62%	74.1%
Students reached by F2S programming	74.8%	72.8%	88.6%



RESOURCES



Resources & Partners

- Illinois Department of Agriculture
- IL Farm to School Network
 - <http://illinoisfarmtoschool.org/>
 - farmtoschool@sevengenerationsahead.org
- Illinois Market Maker
 - <https://il.foodmarketmaker.com/>
- IL Farm Bureau
 - County Contacts: <https://www.ilfb.org/about-us/directory/>
 - Main webpage: <https://www.ilfb.org/>
- Local Farmers Market
 - IL Farmers Market Association: <https://www.ilfma.org/>
- Uofl Extension
 - Find a Uofl Ext. Office: <https://extension.illinois.edu/global/where-we-serve>
- Your Current Distributor or DoD Provider
- Your Purchasing Cooperative
- ISBE Known Farmer, Rancher, Producer, Processor, Distributor Lists
 - It is not required that SFAs must purchase from suppliers on our “known” list nor do we “recommend” any supplier.



College of Agricultural, Consumer & Environmental Sciences
Illinois Extension



ISBE Resources

- General F2CNP resources
- Farm to Early Care
- Procurement
- Food Safety
- Resources for Farmers, Ranchers, Producers
- LFS
- Links to Partner Resources
- Scratch Cooking resources
- School Gardens
- Success Stories

Resources for Sourcing Local Foods

If you are like many schools, figuring out where to get local foods from can feel very overwhelming and can often cause a roadblock in moving forward with local food purchasing. We put together a list of places to start on your journey of sourcing local foods to serve in your school meal programs. Our list is not all-inclusive but does include a variety of methods for sourcing, from online search engines to one-on-one assistance from organizations that have experience with farmers, ranchers, producers and farm to school.

When purchasing local foods, it is the responsibility of the SFA to ensure that the food items meet the definition of local, that they are unprocessed or minimally processed, that all foods safety requirements are met and that they follow all applicable procurement rules.



- ISBE Known Farmer, Rancher, Producer, Processor, Distributor List
 - Located in the WINS System under Sponsor Tasks. Click on Local Food for Schools (LFS) Farm Search, then select a county and the results will display.
 - Please note this is not a required list, recommended list or approved list. This is a list of those that sell local foods that completed a survey and indicated that they are interested in selling to schools.
- IL Farm to School Network
 - <http://illinoisfarmtoschool.org/>
 - [Where to Find Food](#) – listing of search engines, directories and maps to locate sources of food grown near you.
 - farmtoschool@sevendgenerationsahead.org
- Illinois Market Maker
 - <https://il.foodmarketmaker.com/>
- IL Farm Bureau
 - County Contacts: <https://www.ilfb.org/about-us/directory/>
 - Main webpage: <https://www.ilfb.org/>
- Local Farmers Market
 - IL Farmers Market Association: <https://www.ilfma.org/>
- UofI Extension
 - Find a UofI Ext. Office: <https://extension.illinois.edu/global/where-we-serve>
- Ask Your Current Distributor or through a new local food distributor
 - Finding out if local foods are available through your current distributor starts with you inquiring about it and letting the know what you are looking for.
 - Creating a consistent needs for local products could create motivation for a distributor to source more local products.
- Through Your DoD Provider
 - SFAs will need to set up a separate account with their DoD provider for purchasing your LFS eligible foods. SFAs cannot purchase LFS foods through FAVORS and will need billed separately for LFS foods.
- Through Your Current Purchasing Cooperative
- Contact a Food Processor

Need Help Finding Local Foods?

Visit our F2CNP Website at:

<https://www.isbe.net/Documents/Resources-Sourcing-Local-Foods.pdf>

SCAN ME



Food Safety

- Visit our Farm to School website for information and resources
- Always check with your local county health department for food safety requirements.



Food Safety for Local Foods

Food safety must be a top priority when purchasing and serving local foods to Illinois children. When it comes to knowing the requirements, there can be federal requirements, state requirements, county requirements and your own local requirements, which can seem overwhelming. Within this document we will provide an overview of federal requirements, along with links to additional information, some state information and contact information for agencies that oversee each type of food you may be looking to purchase locally. When it comes to food safety, if you are unsure of where to start, your local county health department is always a great starting place. Click [here](#) to locate your local county health departments contact information.

MEAT, POULTRY & FISH

Per the USDA Guidance Meat and Poultry must be processed in a USDA Inspected facility or in a State Meat and Poultry Inspection (MPI) programs that is considered "at least equal to" Federal inspection programs. The State of Illinois is 1 of 27 States that do have approved MPI programs.

USDA Guidance: [Fast Sheet](#), [USDA Memo - Promoting Local Meat, Poultry, Game, and Eggs for Child Nutrition Programs](#), [SF 01-0106](#), [CACFP 01-0106](#), [SFSP 01-0106](#)

Meat, fish, and poultry safety: The USDA, Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) is the public health agency responsible for ensuring the Nation's commercial poultry, cattle or cattle-like species, and processed egg products is not correctly labeled and packaged. Wild caught and farm-raised fish other than species would fall under the jurisdiction of State and local (county) along with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the FDA Food Safety and Inspection programs. Twenty-seven State Meat and Poultry Inspection (MPI) programs that are considered "at least equal to" Federal inspection programs. This means that school districts can buy and serve meats participating in an MPI program within their State, expanding selling opportunities from smaller slaughter and/or processing establishments are type 1 and type 2 licensed facilities. Schools can only purchase from with type 1 licenses, type 2 are not allowed for school purchases.

An approved source will have either the federal mark of inspection, who stamp or it will have the Illinois MPI stamp which is shown in the shape of the State of Illinois.

Those that are selling meat or poultry wholesale must have an Illinois D License Meat and Poultry license. Visit the [Illinois Meat and Poultry](#) for additional information and to view the Licensee Look-up to search if license a facility has.

Fish: Wild caught and farm-raised fish other than cattle or cattle-like, under the jurisdiction of State and local (county, city) authorities along with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the FDA Food Codes. Contact your local County Health Department for more information.



EGGS

Federal requirements for eggs state that liquid, frozen and dried egg products used in Child Nutrition Programs are required to be USDA inspected. Before entering commerce, liquid, frozen and dried egg products must meet the regulatory requirements found in [16 CFR 135.10](#), which include the requirement to be pasteurized and be found negative for salmonella, before entering commerce. In regards to shell eggs, the USDA requirements are less restrictive than the Illinois requirements, therefore, we would refer SFAs to the Illinois Department of Agriculture for additional guidance regarding purchasing and serving eggs in your meal programs.

Illinois Egg and Egg Products Act requires anyone who grades, packs, sells or barbers eggs must be licensed with the Illinois Department of Agriculture. Eggs sold for human consumption must be candled, [graded](#), and refrigerated. Egg cartons must be labeled to identify day of pack, expiration date, grade, size, name, address, and identification of the packer. Inspectors perform inspections at all points of the distribution channel, including: packing plants, distribution centers, grocery stores, schools, hospitals, nursing homes, restaurants and bakeries. The Illinois Department of Agriculture cooperates with the [Food and Drug Administration](#), the [Food Safety and Inspection Service](#), and the [Illinois Department of Public Health](#) to provide uniform enforcement of temperature requirements for eggs at all locations.

[Illinois Department of Agriculture Egg Inspection Website](#)
[Illinois Egg License Lookup](#)
[Illinois Department of Agriculture Standards for Shelled Eggs & General Information](#)

DAIRY

Food Safety for dairies and dairy products is regulated by the Illinois Department of Public Health. Schools will need to purchase dairy products from licensed dairy processors that produce Grade A fluid milk, yogurt, kefir, cottage cheese, cheese, etc. In order for the dairy plants to receive and process the milk it has to be processed from a licensed dairy farm in Illinois that receives routine inspections twice a year and that conduct milk samples for drug and bacteria testing.

[Illinois Department of Public Health \(IDPH\) Dairy Information website](#)



FRUITS & VEGETABLES

Food safety for fruits and vegetables is regulated by the Illinois Department of Public Health. Reach out to your local County Health Department for the most current information specific to your county. Visit the [weblink](#) provided in the blue contacts box to search for your counties office contact information.



For questions related to purchasing local foods, that is unrelated to the food safety, reach out to the Illinois State Board of Education Nutrition Programs.

Email: localfoods@isbe.net

Website: <https://www.isbe.net/Pages/School-Nutrition-Farm-to-School.aspx>

Food Safety

Food safety must be a top priority when purchasing and serving local foods to Illinois children. When it comes to knowing the requirements, there can be federal requirements, state requirements, county requirements and your own local requirements, which can seem overwhelming. Due to the possibility of county and local requirements varying across the state, that presents challenges for providing a one size fits all answer. Therefore, in order to best assist SFAs, below you will find some helpful resources and we always suggest that your first call be to your local county health department.

- [Food Safety - ISBE Resource](#) 📄



COLLEGE & CAREER
AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND NATURAL RESOURCES
About AFNR

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) supports Agricultural Education in our Illinois schools as an important component of one of the most important industries in Illinois – the Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources (AFNR) industry. Agriculture has a major impact on the State's economy and the industry is eager for additional potential employees in the pipeline to fill the demand for hundreds of careers. Nowhere is this support more evident than in the support of the Agricultural Education specific line item in the ISBE budget. See the current [ISBE budget](https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Agriculture-Education.aspx) for appropriations and proposed funding levels.

<https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Agriculture-Education.aspx>



- Illinois Future Farmers of America (FFA) Association
- Illinois 4-H
- Jr. National Society for Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources & Related Sciences Program (MANRRS)
- Grant Opportunities
- Curricular Resources
- Teacher Support and Resources

ISBE Contact: Jason Mott

GROWING FOOD AT SCHOOL

Illinois Ag Ed Partners



AFNR = FOOD



USDA RESOURCES



- Farm to School Planning Tool Kit : <https://www.fns.usda.gov/f2s/planning-toolkit>
- The Dirt newsletter: <https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/USFNS/bulletins/3a96ccd>
- Farm to School Fact Sheets: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/f2s/factsheets>
- The Patrick Leahy Farm to School Program website: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/f2s/farm-to-school>

INSTITUTE OF CHILD NUTRITION RESOURCES

- [STAR: Tips and Strategies for Growing and Strengthening Farm to School Programs](#)
- [Farm to School Success Stories: Buying From Local Growers, Producers, and Processors](#)
- [Tips and Strategies for Purchasing Directly from Local Producers](#)
- Child Nutrition Sharing Site (CNSS): <https://theicn.org/cnss/farm-to-school-resources/list>
- ICN main webpage: theicn.org
 - Online training, in-person training, ICN newsletter and more!



Produce Safety University:
The Produce Lab (June
2025)



CICN: A Roadmap for
Success: Competencies,
Knowledge, and Skills for...



CICN: Resources Gallery
Walk: Tools and Training to
Enhance Child Nutrition...



Whole Kids Healthy Food
Service Program

ILLINOIS AGRICULTURE IN THE CLASSROOM RESOURCES

- Ag in the Classroom main webpage: <https://www.agintheclassroom.org/>
 - Teacher Resources
 - Programs & Events
- Join their Listserv: https://ilfb.informz.net/ILFB/pages/AITC_Sign_Up



UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

- Illinois Extension: <https://extension.illinois.edu/>
- Illinois 4-H: <https://4h.extension.illinois.edu/>
- Local Food Systems & Small Farms: <https://extension.illinois.edu/lfssf>



What is 4-H

Empowering Youth with skills to lead for a lifetime

[Start Here](#)



How We Do It

Putting research into practice to transform lives

[Start Here](#)

ILLINOIS
FARM TO SCHOOL
NETWORK



About ▾ **Now More Than Ever** The Toolkit! Programs ▾ Learn, Connect & Grow Case Studies Contact us!



Illinois Farm to School Toolkit

Looking for resources on school gardening, nutrition education, local food sourcing, or selling local food to schools? Check out our toolkit!

Access the Toolkit

Resources

IL Farm to School Toolkit:

<https://illinoisfarmtoschool.org/toolkit/>

- Sourcing local
- Gardening
- Farm to Summer
- Education
- Resources for local producers
- Funding opportunities
- Illinois Stories

Harvest of the Month

Apple Crunch!

Fresh from the Farm

Training Opportunities

Technical Assistance

LOCAL FOOD FOR SCHOOLS (LFS)





- Local Food for Schools (LFS) is funding from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) to purchase local unprocessed or minimally processed foods to be served in the:
- National School Lunch,
- School Breakfast programs,
- After School Snacks and
- the Seamless Summer Option.

General Requirements of LFS

**Local (in IL) –
grown/raised, processed
in IL**

**Local (outside IL) –
grown/raised,
processed within
400 road miles of
your school**

**Unprocessed or
minimally processed**

LFS FUNDING

- **Local Food for Schools** funding currently goes through Jan. 31, 2026!
 - For any districts that have not signed up – funding is still available:
 - Watch our recorded training module: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6V_foXifhlo
 - Email: localfoods@isbe.net
(Include district/school name, RCDT, and acknowledge you have viewed the recording)
 - We do want to acknowledge that we did receive a notification from the USDA that a 2nd round of local foods funding that was set to start after LFS concluded, called the Local Food for Schools and Child Care (LFSCC) was terminated.
 - However, we do still have LFS funds through January 31st and we want schools to continue to utilize this wonderful program!
-

Illinois State Board of Education Local Food for Schools(LFS) Funding

Funding for
Illinois Schools

**\$7.3
million**

For schools to purchase local unprocessed or minimally processed foods from Illinois farmers, ranchers & producers for school meals.

of Local Food
Producers selling
to LFS schools

99

When schools purchase from local producers, those funds stay local and support the local community!

Local Food Items
Served with LFS
funds

57

Common local food items purchased include:
Apples
Beef
Lettuce
Rice
Chicken
Flour

of School
Districts in LFS

347

347 School Districts in Illinois have signed up for LFS Funds to purchase local foods from right here in Illinois!

of Students
Impacted @ LFS
schools

**Over 1
million**

Healthy students who are not hungry during the day are better prepared to learn & are improving their knowledge about healthy food choices.

Requesting Additional LFS Funds

School Food Authorities (SFAs) that have signed up for Local Food for Schools (LFS) and have used up their LFS allotment and would like to request additional funds, ISBE will do our best to approve requests for additional funds. Please see the guidelines and instructions for submitting a request.

Guidelines for submitting a request for additional funds

- Only request funds that you know you will spend in the next 30-90 days (limited exceptions will be made & please include an explanation in your request).
- SFAs can submit multiple requests during the LFS funding period, SFAs are not limited to just 1 or 2 requests for additional funds.
- Submit requests with at least 5 business days of advanced notice.
- We cannot guarantee additional fund requests will be approved. Therefore, it is not recommended to purchase additional local foods until you receive an official approval to your request from ISBE. The SFA would be responsible for any purchases made that exceed the ISBE approved allotment.
- Purchases made with additional LFS funds must remain in compliance with all applicable LFS requirements.

Instructions for submitting a request for additional funds

- Submit an email to localfoods@isbe.net that contains the following information:
 - Name of the SFA (sponsor name – ex. school district, school, Church, RCCI sponsor, Juvenile Detention Center)
 - RCDT/Agreement Number – 11-digit number for your SFA (this number can be found in the WINS system at the top of your home page)
 - Dollar amount you would like to request
 - If the funds are not going to be used in the next 30-90 days provide an explanation of the scenario.

After submitting a request for additional funds

- ISBE staff will review and approve or deny request as quickly as possible. Please allow up to 5 business days for a response.
- ISBE staff will notify the requester in writing of the approval or denial of the request.
- Once approved, the SFA may move forward with their LFS purchase.



Local Food for Schools (LFS)

Local Foods for Schools Cooperative Agreement Program (LFS)

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) is excited to announce that Illinois will be participating in the USDA's Local Food for Schools Cooperative Agreement Program (LFS). This new program will provide 7.3 million dollars to ISBE, that will be distributed to eligible schools to purchase local unprocessed and minimally processed food. ISBE plans to issue non-competitive sub-awards of these funds to School Food Authorities (SFAs) that participate in the National School Lunch and/or School Breakfast Program for use by January of 2025.

The goal of LFS is to increase purchases of domestic, locally grown foods from local producers, small businesses, and socially disadvantaged farmers/producers for distribution to schools in order to build a more resilient local food chain by expanding and strengthening local and regional markets.

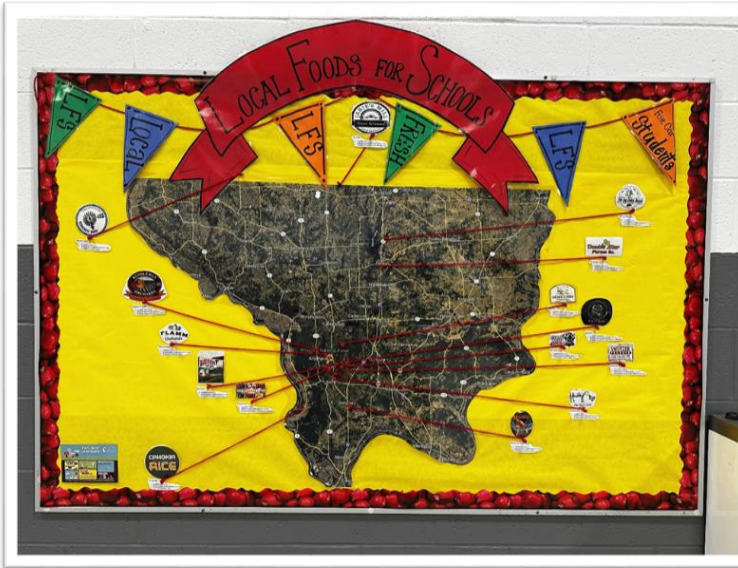
- Open Enrollment for Local Foods for Schools (LFS) funding has ended. If you did not sign up for LFS, but are interested please reach out to ISBE staff at localfoods@isbe.net to inquire if funds are still available. We will do our best to accommodate requests to participate!
- [USDA Press Release](#)
- "Sourcing Local Foods Using Illinois Market Maker" Webinar (May 11, 2023) 
- [SFAs that are signed up for LFS](#) 
- [SFAs that are not signed up for LFS, but may be eligible](#) 
- [LFS Questions & Answers](#)  (8/10/23)
- [LFS Flyer for Schools](#) 
- [Local Food for Schools \(LFS\) Overview, Updates and Q&A webinar](#) (May 7, 2024) 
- [Resource for Sourcing Local Foods](#) 
- [LFS Claims for Reimbursement](#)
 - [LFS Claims for Reimbursement Instructions](#) 
 - [Click here to submit your claim](#)
- [LFS Funding and Data Tracking Tool](#) 
- [Procurement Flowchart: Determining if Your LFS Purchases are Eligible to Utilize the Micro Purchase Method](#) 

Success Stories



THE
FARM *to* **SCHOOL**
PROGRAM

COBDEN UNIT SCHOOL DISTRICT



HERRIN CUSD 4



Pawnee School District

PAWNEE CUSD 11

Pawnee schools are working on sourcing local foods and scratch cooking as a part of their movement to a farm to school program for their district of approximately 565 K-12 students.

They recently received funding through the Sangamon County Board in partnership with the Community Foundation for the Land of Lincoln to work with Beyond Green Partners to transition Pawnee schools to a Farm to School model meal program.

[Farm Week Now Article](#)

[State Journal Register Newspaper](#) (duplicate of Springfield SD 186 article above)

[Fox News Video](#)



Moving to a locally sourced, scratch kitchen is not an overnight change. But Pawnee Cafeteria Manager Kedra Brown and her five full-time staff members are ready for the challenge.

Carbondale ESD 95
Beef & Noodles (local stew meat)



Glenwood Academy – local turkey mac



North Greene
Thanksgiving Dinner
Chicken (Bland Family Farm)
Sweet potatoes (Meuller Family Farms)



Deerpark SD82
Local beef and local
cheese = taco salad
& other local goodies



Jacksonville
Local beef from Gregurich Beef Company

Lincoln ESD 27



LINCOLN ESD 27

Lincoln ESD 27 has been sourcing local foods and scratch cooking for a couple of years. They too received funding to assist them in transitioning to fresh local cooked meals. They have worked diligently to develop partnerships with local farmers and producers. They also have found that feedback from students is a valuable tool to make their meal programs successful and rewarding.

[Illinois Farm Bureau Partners video and article](#)

[Lincoln 27 Project Overview Video](#)





We know there are awesome things going on in our IL schools & we would love to see and hear more about it! Please share info with us about:

- Local foods
- Scratch recipes
- Local SFA or Purchasing Cooperative purchasing
- School gardens
- Grow towers
- Ag education
- Farm visits
- Etc.

Send pictures, links, descriptions to localfoods@isbe.net



Thank You!

Visit the F2CNP Webpage

SCAN ME



Lindsay Blough
localfoods@isbe.net

