




# Local Food Funding Opportunity!

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 is available to School Food Authorities that participate in the National School Lunch and/or School Breakfast Program to purchase local unprocessed and minimally processed food. The funding period for these funds is August 2023 through January 2025.

To learn more about LFS, visit ISBE's Farm to Child Nutrition Programs webpage by clicking on the link below or scanning the QR code: <https://www.isbe.net/Pages/School-Nutrition-Farm-to-School.aspx>

- [Local Food for Schools Webinar](#)
- [Funding Allotments – for those not signed up yet](#)
- [Fast Facts and Timeline](#) 
- [Procurement Flowchart: Determining if Your LFS Purchases are Eligible to Utilize the Micro Purchase Method](#)



LFS is an exciting opportunity to incorporate local foods into your meal programs. We hope that all SFAs participate, enjoying adding some new local foods to their menus and explore the possibility of providing local foods on a regular basis as a part of their breakfast and lunch meals. If you wish to participate, please email ISBE at [localfoods@isbe.net](mailto:localfoods@isbe.net) to find out if funds are still available and how to sign up.

ISBE would love to hear about your plans for your LFS funds and would be very interested in hearing feedback from you! Please reach out to us to share your experiences through stories, photos or videos. Even better we would love to see your local foods in action, if you would like to invite us!

Contact ISBE's Nutrition Programs staff at [localfoods@isbe.net](mailto:localfoods@isbe.net) with any local foods' questions, information and/or events.



## Fast Facts about LFS

- The funds must be used for foods to be served in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), After School Snacks and/or Seamless Summer Option (SSO) meals.
- The foods purchased must be grown, raise, produced and if processed, processed in Illinois or within 400 miles of the school's location.
- The foods must be unprocessed or minimally processed. This includes cutting, chopping and butchering. The items cannot be pre-cooked with no additives.
- Schools should target to purchase from socially disadvantaged farmers/ranchers and/or small businesses. It is not a requirement to purchase from socially disadvantaged or small businesses, it is just a target. Schools should try to gather this information for reporting purposes.
- 100% of the funds must be used to purchase local foods. Allowable expenses do include the cost of the food, storage of the food and delivery of the local foods. The funds cannot be used for other costs such as equipment, gas surcharges, staffing and/or administrative costs.
- The funds awarded must supplement (by increasing or expanding) but not duplicate, existing food purchases.
- Purchases can be made directly from the farmer, rancher or producer or from a processor or from a distributor. Just keep in mind that no matter who a school purchases from they will need to know information about all of the parties in order to ensure that the local requirement is met and for data collection purposes.
  - For example: if a school purchases beef through a distributor. The school will need the name of the distributor and if they are socially disadvantaged or a small business. The school will also need to know the name of the processor of beef and will need to know where they are located (in IL or within 400 miles of the school) and they will need to ask if the processor is socially disadvantaged or a small business. The school will also need to know the name of the ranch and the address, again to ensure that the product meets the local requirements, and they will need to ask if the ranch is socially disadvantaged or a small business. Remember that the socially disadvantaged and small business information is not a requirement, it is just a target and also please note that if any of these parties do not wish to disclose this information you can still purchase from them.
- This is a reimbursement program – therefore, schools will purchase allowable items and complete a monthly claim for reimbursement. ISBE will review those claims and reimburse the school for all allowable expenses.
- For food safety requirements please see our food safety resource on the Farm to Child Nutrition Programs website. Requirements may vary from county to county. 89% of schools are receiving less than \$10,000 which allows them to select who they purchase from as long as the price is reasonable. For purchases over \$10,000 please visit our procurement flowchart for more information.