

## Helping Schools Buy Local

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Northeast Iowa Food and Fitness Initiative Fall Conference  
October 20, 2009  
Luther College

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## Objectives

At the end of this session, participants will be able to:

1. Identify state and federal purchasing regulations regarding Farm to School programs
2. Identify food safety best practice for procurement and handling of fresh produce
3. Explain rationale of fresh produce food safety best practice
4. Provide input to district decision-makers about school gardens.

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## State Guidance for Foodservices

- Food Code 2005 - Term of "Approved Suppliers"
- Attention to potentially hazardous foods/TCS
- Recognition all foods potential concern
- Which ingredients are concern?

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## Specified Regulations

Restrictions for some products (most PHF) that require license and inspection at state level:

- fresh shell eggs
- processed foods
- meats and poultry
- dairy
- some fresh produce

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## Reported FBI Outbreaks\*

<i>E. coli</i> O157:H7	Spinach, hamburger, apple cider, alfalfa sprouts, lettuce, coleslaw
<i>Salmonella</i>	bean sprouts, cantaloupes, tomatoes, poultry, eggs
Hepatitis A	lettuce, green onions
<i>Cryptosporidium</i>	water, apple cider, onions

\* Source: CDC

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## Iowa Procurement Regulations\*

- Food purchased from an *approved supplier*
  - Sellers' implied warranty that food is safe.
- Packaging must protect integrity of food and be approved food contact material.
- Most fresh produce is NOT considered a Potentially Hazardous Food Item
- No license is required by the vendor to sell **most whole, unprocessed or minimally trimmed fresh produce**
  - Distinction between *food service* and *food processing*

\* Food Code 2005

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## Extension Publication: PM 2047 Reviewed DIA

### Want to know more?

- Buy Fresh Buy Local  
www.buyfreshbuylocal.org
- City or county health agencies
- Food Alliance - www.foodalliance.org
- Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship  
www.iadls.state.iowa.us
- Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship - the Iowa Fresh Food Program  
www.iowafresh.org
- IOWA State Extension Center - www.extension.iastate.edu
- IOWA State Department of Business and Economic Development - Iowa Fresh  
www.iowafresh.org
- Local Food Center for Sustainable Agriculture  
www.localfoodcenter.org
- Local Food Store and Regional Aggregators - www.localfoodcenter.org
- United States Food and Drug Administration - www.fda.gov
- United States Food and Drug Administration - www.fda.gov
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### These resources focus on Local Agricultural

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www.iadls.state.iowa.us
- Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship - the Iowa Fresh Food Program  
www.iowafresh.org
- IOWA State Extension Center - www.extension.iastate.edu
- IOWA State Department of Business and Economic Development - Iowa Fresh  
www.iowafresh.org
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### Buying Local Foods for Retail Foodservices



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## Local Procurement in Child Nutrition Programs---Basics

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### Why regulations are in place

- Regulations require SFAs to comply with a host of requirements, many of which pertain to purchasing goods or services with Federal funds received in the School Nutrition Programs
- Procurement regulations are in place to ensure that Federal Funds, when used to purchase products or services, result in the best and most responsive product at the lowest possible price

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### Why is it so important?

- Many stakeholders have an interest in how procurements with Federal Funds are made.
- Ongoing public and congressional interest in effective use of Federal funds
- Congress wants to achieve two goals:
  - Make sure that Program benefits are widely available to eligible schools and children
  - Make sure that benefits are used effectively and efficiently without waste or abuse.

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### Importance cont'd.

- USDA requires that all purchases made by local school officials, whether funded wholly or in part with School Nutrition Program funds, are conducted in accordance with all Federal procurement requirements.

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### Where to begin

- Establish sound competitive practices
  - A good procurement is a competitive procurement
  - Free and open competition means that all suppliers are "playing on a level playing field and have the same opportunity to compete.
- Procurement procedures may never unduly restrict or eliminate competition.

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### Why is competition important?

- Price
- Quality

### Appropriate methods for Procuring goods and services

- **Informal Procurement - below threshold**
  - Small Purchase
- **Formal Procurement - above threshold**
  - Competitive Sealed Bidding
  - Competitive Negotiation

### When to Use Informal

- According to Federal regulation, when the value is under \$100,000, informal procurement can be used
- If there is a local threshold which has been established that is lower, then there is a lower threshold for formal purchasing
- What is your threshold?

### How does Informal process work?

- Must still be conducted in a manner that maximizes **full and open competition**
- Recommended that SFAs put the number, quality and type of product in writing and an appropriate specification
- Recommended that at least three sources be contacted
  - Eligible
  - Able
  - Willing to provide product

### What procedures must be followed?

- Specifications encourage written
  - Clarifies what you want
  - Provides consistency from supplier to supplier
  - When you expect delivery
  - Pack size
- Sources
  - Fruits and Vegetables Galore
  - Choice Plus
  - First Choice
- May be done by using the weekly case price from the Chicago produce market and then bidding on delivery charges

### Procedures cont.

- Suppliers must bid on the same thing so that you can evaluate
- May be done by phone
- Document the process and the award, for example:
  - Hagerty Apple Orchard bid \$25 per 120 case of Jonathans
  - Mobley Orchard bid \$24.50 per 120 case of Jonathans
  - Crispy Orchard bid \$24.50 per 120 case of Jonathans

### What else to consider?

- Geographic Preference
  - Even if there are state or local laws for geographic preference, they are prohibited in Federal procurements (procurements using Federal funds)
  - 2008 Farm Bill amended the National School Lunch Act to allow institutions receiving funds through the CNP to apply a geographic preference when procuring unprocessed locally grown or locally raised agricultural products

### What if Procurement exceeds the threshold?

Formal procurement **must** be conducted!

### What do I need to do next?

- Find out if there is a local procurement threshold and what it is
- Determine what local products you might want to purchase
- Prepare specifications
- Locate potential suppliers
- Stay current with memos

### Food Safety Concerns Fresh Produce

- Recent outbreaks fresh produce – not all PHF
- Need to wash whole product prior to service
- Presence of pathogens is likely
- Fresh produce won't get heat treated - no kill step
- Lower risk due to acidity and lack of protein
- Pathogens from environmental or human sources can contaminate
- Ex: Norovirus, E. Coli O157:H7 & Hepatitis A
- GAPS are important!

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**GOOD AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES PROJECT**

**BACKGROUND PUBLICATIONS**

- Food Safety Begins on the Farm: A Grower's Guide
- Good Agricultural Practices - Checklist
- GAPs 4D (PowerPoint Presentation)

**CONTACT US**

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<http://www.gaps.cornell.edu>

**POSTHARVEST TECHNOLOGY**  
Research and Information Center

**Goals:**  
Improving the quality and value of harvested crops available to the consumer  
Reducing postharvest losses and improving marketing efficiency  
Solving particular problems in handling fruits, vegetables, and ornamentals to maintain their quality and safety

**Postharvest Technology Research and Information Center**

- About the Center
- Endowment Fund
- Short Courses and Workshops
- Announcements and Meetings
- Center Publications - list and order form

**Online UC Postharvest Information**

- Freshness Facts
- Physiological Disorder Fact Sheets
- Properties and Recommended Conditions for Storage of Fresh Fruits and Vegetables
- Additional Information

<http://postharvest.ucdavis.edu>

## Contamination from Microbial Pathogens Can Occur ...

- In fields or orchards
- During harvesting and transport
- During processing or packing
- In distribution and marketing
- In restaurants and food service facilities
- In the home

**FARM to FORK**

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## Direct/Indirect Contamination From Environmental factors

### Wild and Domestic Animals

- Livestock (cattle, swine, poultry, horse, & sheep)
- Dogs and Cats
- Birds
- Rodents
- Deer
- Flies/insects
- Humans

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## Environmental Sources of Pathogenic Microorganisms

- Soil and water
- Plants and plant products
- Air and dust
- Insects and birds
- Compost
- Containers for harvesting produce
- Packing materials

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## Human Sources Contamination

### Workers'

- Health – ill with transferable disease
- Practices – poor handwashing, cleaning
- Training – do they know?
- Tools – proper tools and supplies provided

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## Hand Drying Supplies?



Fingers after touching apron



The Apron

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**Fresh Produce  
Growers and  
Packers  
ARE Food Handlers  
!!!**

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## Best Practice: Purchasing & Receiving

### Conduct due diligence, ask about:

- GAPS
- Water supply (*stealth ingredient*)
- Irrigation practices
- Testing program for water
- Packing procedures and materials,
- Health and hygiene of your employees
- Transportation practices
- Insurance Liability

\* From GAPS PP on [www.iastatelocalfoods.org](http://www.iastatelocalfoods.org)

\*\* PM 2046 A - Checklist

## Take a Look: PM 2046A

Checklist for Retail Purchasing of Local Produce

Name of Producer: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Website: \_\_\_\_\_

Product Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Quantity: \_\_\_\_\_

Price: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

Harvest Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Storage Conditions: \_\_\_\_\_

Transportation: \_\_\_\_\_

Inspection Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Inspector: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

## Best Practice: Handling

- Product is yours once it is received
- Need to protect from:
  - Poor personal hygiene practices
  - Contamination
  - Cross contamination
  - Time and temperature abuse

*Remember, no kill step*

## Best Practice: Handling Steps

1. Wash hands and don new gloves - *bare-hand contact is prohibited RTE foods*
2. Wash product under cool running water, use some abrasion if appropriate
  - clean vegetable brush
  - produce rinses are not necessary
3. Let product drain well - *excess moisture may provide water source for bacterial growth*
4. Keep cool, but not too cool - *watch location in refrigerator*

## Guidance: PM 2046

Want to know more?  
Contact these agencies:

- Buy Food Buy Local: [www.buyfoodbuylocal.org](http://www.buyfoodbuylocal.org)
- City or county health agencies
- Food Alliance: [www.foodalliance.org/](http://www.foodalliance.org/)
- Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship: [www.iadhs.state.ia.us/](http://www.iadhs.state.ia.us/)
- Iowa Department of Inspection and Appeals: [www.dia.iowa.gov/](http://www.dia.iowa.gov/)
- IOT: Interstate Trade Show Center: [www.iotcenter.com/](http://www.iotcenter.com/)
- IOT: Health, Environment, and Sustainable Management Extension: [www.iotcenter.com/](http://www.iotcenter.com/)
- IOT: Local Council for Sustainable Agriculture: [www.iotcenter.com/](http://www.iotcenter.com/)
- Produce Marketing Association: [www.pma.org/](http://www.pma.org/)
- United Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Association: [www.unitedfresh.org/](http://www.unitedfresh.org/)
- United States Food and Drug Administration: [www.fda.gov/](http://www.fda.gov/)
- United States Department of Health and Human Services: [www.hhs.gov/](http://www.hhs.gov/)

There resources from the Great Agricultural Practices (GAPs):

- Council Community Local Agricultural Practice Program: [www.cclap.org/](http://www.cclap.org/)
- New England Extension Food Safety Coordinator: [www.nesaf.org/](http://www.nesaf.org/)
- United States Department of Agriculture: [www.usda.gov/](http://www.usda.gov/)
- University of California State Partnership: [www.usda.gov/](http://www.usda.gov/)

What retail foodservices should know when purchasing local produce directly from farmers

Photo credit: [www.iastate.edu/](http://www.iastate.edu/)

## Foodservice Issues

(NE FFI F2S survey and past ISU research)\*

- Clarification of regulations – inspectors, buyers, administrators
- Sources of product
- Quality and Quantity
- Producer awareness of needs
- Trust product delivered when/amounts ordered.
- Product is safe – often at risk groups served
- Costs – adjustments needed to maintain food cost %

\* Strohbehn and Gregoire

## Farm to Foodservice: Making Connections

- Challenge is communicate via supply chain.
- Fewer links in food chain with local foods
- Foodservices provide some education/direction to producers of needs
- Schools specify local and added value
- Producers/suppliers need to know their market and understand how product will be used
  - List of products when in season
  - Summary of location and production practices
  - Promotion materials

## Publication for Producers: PM 2045



## Understanding Added Value of F2S

- Known source
- Production practices
- Education
- Promotion

## Resources – ISUE [www.iastatelocalfoods.org](http://www.iastatelocalfoods.org)

- **Extension Publications**
  - Local Food Connections Series (PM 1853 a-e)
  - On Farm Food Safety Series (PM 1974 a-c)
- **Presentations SafeFood® Handling on Farm**
- **On line Calculator**
- **Market Maker** (search tool Value Added Ag)
- Extension Publications available at [www.extension.iastate.edu/store](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/store)
  - Enter PM number in search box
  - Downloadable copies available

## An Educational Tool: School Gardens

- A district-sponsored learning environment
- Typically on school property
- Involvement of students, staff, and community
- Usually project-driven for curriculum unit
- Products can include flowers, shrubs, trees, fruits and/or vegetables

*The Edible Schoolyard is a non-profit program located MLK Junior Middle School in Berkeley, California*

## School Gardens

- Gardens are integrated into educational curriculum to teach children science, history, environment, economics, nutrition, food safety, geography, and math.
- Some grow food for meals program with separate production garden .
- *Edible Schoolyard Kitchen Lessons - 90-minute class in which students prepare and taste products made from garden ingredients*

## School Garden Considerations

Composting if Organic  
Organizing People  
Garden design  
Use of Fertilizers and Pesticides - conventional  
Garden Care  
Theft and Vandalism  
Liability  
Resources  
Produce or Harvest

## Internet Resources

- California School Garden Network – <http://www.csgn.org>
- KidsGardening! – <http://www.kidsgardening.com>
- School Garden Network – <http://www.schoolgardens.org>
- School Garden Wizard – <http://schoolgardenwizard.org>