School Food Innovator Series

FRESH FROM CALIFORNIA

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Presenters

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Agenda Overview

**Center for Ecoliteracy:** Fresh from California Campaign

**LunchAssist:** Menu Planning and Procurement Support

**CAFF and CHIP:** Local Food Purchasing Resources for School Districts

**Prize Giveaway:** Farm Fresh Trivia Game

**Breakout Sessions**

**Resources**
Fresh from California
Collaboration with Food Distributors

- List of seasonal crops
- Growers information for your promotional collateral and nutrition education activities

San Joaquin County, CA-Grown
Farmers Visits

- Taste test activities
- Promotional handouts
- Educational presentations
- Nutrition education
Why should we choose California-grown fruits and vegetables? Because California grows some of the best food in the world. It's fresh, healthy, and delicious. And when you choose fresh, local food you support our farmers, their families, and our communities. Food connects us. Fresh from California.
District Highlights
Fresh from California
Menu Planning and Support
Menu Planning and Support

● Monthly virtual menu planning sessions beginning Spring 2022
● Sessions will cover scratch-cooking, recipe development, and kitchen equipment
● Tailored information that’s adaptable and achievable for school districts of any size
Next Steps

- Visit the [Fresh from California](#) webpage
- Complete the [sign-up form](#)
- Questions? [crystal@ecoliteracy.org](mailto:crystal@ecoliteracy.org)
Local Food Purchasing Resources for School Districts
CA School District Produce Procurement Guide

Resource include sections on:

- Micro-Purchases
- Informal Procurement
- Request for Proposals
- Emergency Non-Competitive Solicitations

www.caff.org/ca-school-district-produce-procurement-guide/

www.f2icenter.org/resources/farm-to-school-taskforce/
When to Use Micro-Purchases (< $10,000)

- Making a one-time purchase, spread across different farms
- Alternating small purchases across farms throughout a season
- First time trying something directly from a local farm
- Special events
- Emergency Purchase
Micro-Purchase Requirements

• Distribute micro-purchases equitably among qualified suppliers
• Develop written specifications, required terms, contract provisions and conditions
• Shop around!
• Document all purchases!

Step 1: Develop Specifications

1. Develop specifications, and determine:
   • What do you want to buy?
   • When do you need the product?
   • What volume do you want to purchase?
   • Where do you need the product delivered?
Step 2: Conduct Market Research

• Check to see if your product:
  • Is it in season?
  • Is it available in your area?

Step 3: Contact a vendor and make the purchase

• Let the farmer/vendor know:
  • Your estimated volumes per delivery site(s).
  • What the farmer/vendor will need to provide to be added to your system for payment (e.g., W2/9, food safety plan, insurance).
  • How long they can expect to receive payment and make sure that the terms (i.e., “Net 10” vs. “Net 30” day payment turnarounds) work for them.
Step 4: Manage the relationship

• Continue to stay connected with farmer/vendor.
• Communicate updates to farmer/vendor on shifts in menu, items of interest, etc.
• Celebrate your local purchase by sharing with your community! Include local farmer/vendor connection in flyers, newsletters, social media, and updates on your menu.

Step 5: Track your purchase

• CDE requires school districts to track vendors (i.e., farmers or aggregators) that district’s purchase from under micro-purchases and informal bids.
  • CAFF micro-purchase and informal bid tracking lists – use these to track the quotes you receive for informal bids and vendors you purchase from off-contract.
Best Practices

• Rotating vendors after two consecutive micro-purchases from the same vendor to demonstrate fair vendor selection.

• If you purchase more than twice from the same vendor, switch to an informal bid.

• Each single purchase under $10,000 is a micro-purchase, meaning it has to be one purchase under $10,000, not multiple orders that combined are under $10,000 throughout the year.

Davis Farms, Persimmons ready for November distribution!
Benefits

• Great for schools to purchase local food without soliciting competitive quotes.
• Allow schools to react quickly to changing markets and urgent needs when making small purchases.
• Try out produce from new local farmers.
• Feature local farms for promotional events
• All small local farms that districts want to support might not be a good fit for a longer-term contract, a few micro-purchases can mean a lot to a small farm business.
Informal Purchases: “3 Bids and a Buy”

When to use?

“Small purchases”

Multi-purchase contracts

1 year or less

When lowest price makes sense

When all bids need to meet all requirements

Informal Purchases

USDA Thresholds

$250,000

$10,000.0

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Two Styles of Informal Bids

Simple:

• Calls or emails

• Make sure all needs are communicated & responses tracked evenly (write specs)
Two Styles of Informal Bids

Advanced:

- Written solicitation request (RFQ)
- Lists requirements & items
- Recommended for more advanced needs/ higher $ solicitations
5 Steps to an Informal Bid

1. Develop Specifications
2. Identify 3 Sources and request quotes
3. Evaluate responses
4. Award the Contract
5. Manage the contract and farmer relationship
Informal Bids: Challenges & Benefits

Benefits:
- Easier than public RFPs
- More flexibility and choice in solicitation process
- Ensures compliance while supporting food hubs and farm direct purchasing

Challenges:
- Less than 3 quotes = track why and justify choosing from 2 vendors
- Informal bid announcement
Farm Fresh Trivia Game
How many pounds of strawberries does California produce each year?
One billion pounds!
Which county in California produces the most avocados?
Ventura County!
Which of the following fruits are technically considered berries?
Both oranges and avocados!
Winners!
Breakout Sessions
a) Share a win you’ve had in procuring or promoting California-grown food

b) What has been a challenge when procuring or promoting California-grown food?

c) What do you hope to improve in your farm to school program in the next year?
Resources

- CEL: [Fresh from California Campaign Webpage](#)
- CHIP/CAFF: [California School District Produce Procurement Guide](#)
- CAFF: [Bid Generator](#)
- FOE: [Organic Product and Supplier List](#)
Q + A
Thank you!

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