



How to Talk to a Farmer About Procuring for Schools

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After finding a farm or few to potentially partner with, think about what it is your school or district has to work with, and what exactly you are requesting from the farmer.

Questions to ask yourself before talking to the farmer:

- What are your district/school's food safety requirements? Consider importance of traceability for your ingredients.
- How equipped are your kitchens? Can foods be processed raw?
- Do you need ingredients to be preprocessed? (ex. Needing vegetables chopped or packaged)
- What foods are you already ordering? Consider asking the farmer for these.
- What are your delivery preferences for farm fresh ingredients?

Having considered and answered some of these questions for yourself, form them into corresponding questions for the farmer.

Questions to ask your farmer:

- Ask if they have any of the ingredients you already order, but remember to be flexible and remember seasonal eating. (ex. Strawberries won't be available in January)

- Inform your farmer of your food safety requirements. Ask how to best meet these with their products.
- If needed, ask your farmer if they can process items for your school kitchens in some way. (Packaging, sizing, prewashing, etc.) If not, consider a middleman processing facility, volunteers, or maybe just easier ingredients.
- Communicate your delivery preferences and date you need your order. Remember to allow enough time, as local farms are typically smaller operations.

Essentially, this relationship is all about communication. Anything you feel important for the farmer to know about your school/district, or that you want to know about the farmer/farm, just ask!