



## TIPS for success

- **Start small.**

A good starting point is to pick one local product to incorporate into a meal each month.

- **Be flexible.**

Growing seasons can vary. Consider putting "seasonal vegetable" on the menu to help with any possible changes.

- **Samples.**

Request samples from the grower to learn about the product you will be purchasing.

- **Involve students.**

Receive educational materials from the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

- **Documentation.**

Record the process and maintain documentation to support decisions you have made.

- **Communication.**

It is important to be specific and clear on your needs. Developing a timeline that works for both parties is helpful.

- **Price.**

Be upfront, realistic and flexible about your pricing needs.

- **Celebrate success.**

Each success with farm to school is important. Celebrate each one whether it is big or small!

- **Shelf life.**

Local products have shorter travel distances which equals a longer shelf life.



## QUESTIONS to ask growers

- Is the grower already selling to other schools?
- Does the farmer have a way to deliver the product?
- What is the shipping temperature? Are there climate-controlled trucks?
- What type of packaging will the product arrive in?
- What products are available? When will they be available for sale?
- What are the shipping sizes? What are the shipping frequencies?
- Request a weekly/monthly availability sheet from the grower.



## PURCHASING from farmers

### A Purchasing Agreement with a Farmer Should Include:

- The total estimated volume of each item to be delivered
- Amount and price of standing order items
- Delivery schedule: time of day, frequency and location
- Packing requirements: standard box, grade, loose pack, bulk, etc.
- Post-harvest handling practices: Is the product pre-cooled?
- How clean should the product be?
- Cost per unit, payment terms, payment process
- Names and phone numbers of the contact people for ordering and billing



Source: VT FEED: A Guide for Using Local Food in Schools and Community Alliance with Family Farmers.

*This institution is an equal opportunity provider.*

**Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services**