This diagram illustrates the process for determining local procurement options (which are not mutually exclusive) for your school system and how ASAP can help.

WNC Child Nutrition Director Wants to Source and Promote Local Food

Does the school system participate in the NCDA Farm to School Program?

YES. Determine what products are coming from your region of the state. Go to Step #2.

NO. Look at sourcing local product through distributor or direct from GAP certified farms and Go to Step #3.

Does distributor currently source local produce/food?

NO. Are they willing to?

YES. Step 1: Determine what local farms they source from. How is “local” defined? ASAP works with distributor to ID local through chain from farm to school. How will local availability be communicated with CND? How will cafeteria staff know what local is coming in?

NO. Are there other options for distribution?

YES. What are the contract specifications with the current distributor? Can the CND use geographic preference and/or minimum purchasing threshold to source local through other distributors and/or local farms?

NO. Can demand from teachers/parents/students for local food be used to motivate distributor to buy local?

[YES. ASAP meets with distributor to determine what their needs are—product interest, requirements/certification, delivery, insurance, etc. Works to connect with wholesale growers who are a good match. Go to Step #3.]

NO. Are there any other existing distribution systems or approved vendors they could be connected with?

YES. Does the school system have a central warehouse or drop spot?

NO. They might not be a good option for local purchasing at this time. Look at sourcing local product through distributor or NCDA Farm to School Program and Go to Step #3.

YES. Determine if farmers’ prices, products and availability are a good match for CND.

Step 2: Make a plan for promotions, which could include farmer profiles, in cafeteria menu listings, website, newsletters, events, press, etc.

ASAP follows up with CND and/or cafeteria staff to see what items/volumes are coming in. Could they continue to ask vendors for more local (volume and/or product diversity)? Are cafeteria promotions happening? Are there issues or barriers with communications or logistics that ASAP could help with?

YES. Try to facilitate that connection. Go to Step #2.

NO. They might not be a good option for local purchasing at this time. Look at sourcing local product through distributor or NCDA Farm to School Program and Go to Step #3.

NO. Do you have the capacity to deliver?

Step 3: Schools make connections between cafeteria and other educational components. Implement/expand educational components of Farm to School - cafeteria tastings of local items, events, local food cooking demos/classes.

YES. Go to Step #2.

NO. They might not be a good match for CND.

Visit www.growing-minds.org for more resources.