



TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
COMMISSIONER SID MILLER

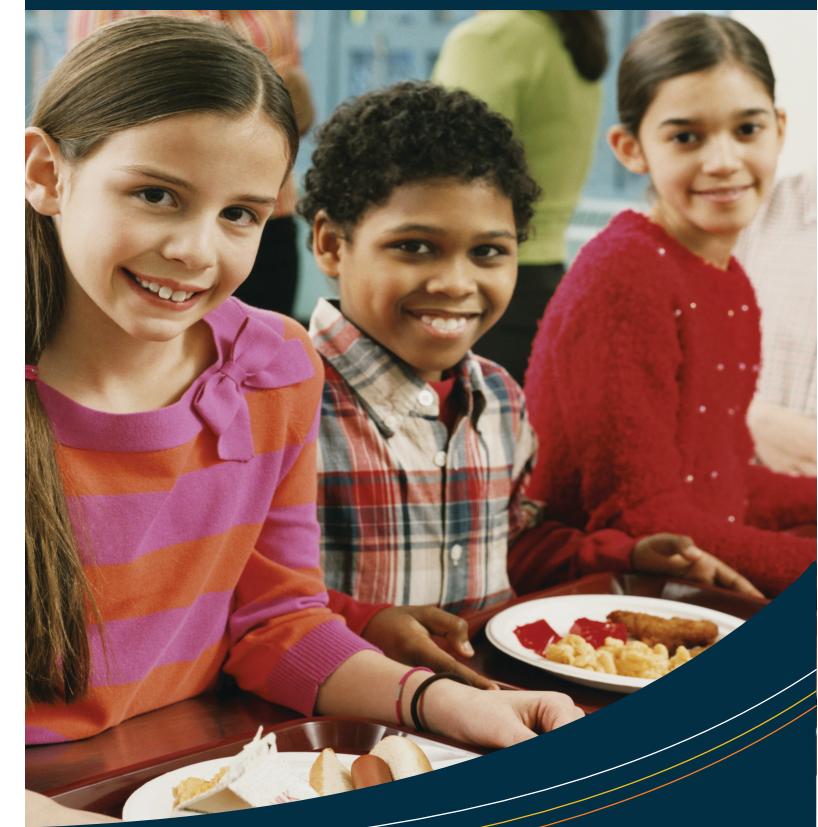
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Texas schools should contact the Texas Department of Agriculture or their regional Education Service Center to obtain the support and resources they need to establish farm to school activities such as incorporating local foods into school meals, educating students about local food and supporting garden-based learning.

For additional information, visit
www.SquareMeals.org/FarmtoSchool.

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FIVE FACTS ABOUT LOCAL FOOD IN SCHOOL CAFETERIAS



Texas Statewide Farm Fresh Initiative

Planting *the Seeds*
for Student Achievement
while Supporting
Texas Farmers *and* Ranchers



Five Facts About Local Food in School Cafeterias

Add local flavor to menus and teach students about Texas agriculture with farm to school activities. This can be accomplished by using local products in school meals, including nutrition education in classroom lessons, garden-based learning and connecting students with local farmers and ranchers.



DEFINING “LOCAL”

USDA allows schools or organizations participating in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs to choose how to define local, as long as open competition during the procurement process is not limited.

LOCAL FOOD INCLUDES MORE THAN FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

From meat and eggs to milk and whole grains, local food items can span school meal trays and salad bars. Supporting your local economy can also include purchasing from a local bakery, manufacturer or distributor.

LOCAL FOOD CAN BE PURCHASED IN A VARIETY OF WAYS

Locally sourced food can be purchased directly from a farmer or rancher, from a cooperative group of farmers and ranchers working together, or a contracted distributor.

LOCAL FOODS ARE AVAILABLE THROUGH FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAMS

USDA Foods, the Department of Defense Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program and the Department of Defense Farm to School Program offer a variety of local food items including fresh, frozen, canned and dried fruits and vegetables, lean meats, cheese and whole grain-rich products.

PRODUCT SPECIFICATIONS CAN HELP WHEN SOURCING LOCAL FOODS

During the procurement process, required or preferred product specifications may be included. These specifications may indicate a region-specific variety or number of days post-harvest for delivery, and are designed to complement a preference for local products.



Texas schools are leaders in teaching students the importance of the 3E's of Healthy Living – Education, Exercise and Eating Right.

Farm to school activities provide a solid foundation for establishing life-long healthy habits, promoting student health and strengthening local economies.