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## SCHOOL FOOD SERVICE A MARKET PLACE FOR PRODUCERS



Today, school nutrition directors work to include more locally sourced ingredients in menus.

Incorporating local items into school meals is good for Texas students, producers and the local economy.

## Texas Statewide Farm Fresh Initiative

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



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Here are a few things to consider or evaluate prior to meeting with a school nutrition director or distributor representative.

If you are looking for a new marketplace for your products, consider school food service. You can either sell directly to a school or to a distributor who already works with a school. Create a free Farm Fresh Network profile online and start connecting with schools near you.

Visit [Squaremeals.org/FarmFreshNetwork](http://Squaremeals.org/FarmFreshNetwork)

#### **PRODUCTION**

Determine whether your current production levels can meet a school's needs. If not, you may benefit from a partnership with other producers.

#### **BILLING AND DISTRIBUTION**

Do you currently have a way to bill clients for purchases and deliver orders or would you need to develop a billing system and method to deliver items?

#### **FOOD SAFETY**

Do you have a food safety plan, a Good Agricultural Practice (GAP) or Good Handling Practices (GHP) certification? Although certification is not required, a school may ask about on-farm harvest and food safety handling practices.

#### **LIABILITY INSURANCE**

If you don't currently have liability insurance covering potential foodborne illnesses, a school may ask you to carry some level of insurance.

#### **PRODUCT PRICING**

Schools typically pay wholesale prices for products; USDA's Agriculture Marketing Service regularly reports market prices. Visit [www.ams.usda.gov](http://www.ams.usda.gov) for more information.

#### **GROWING SPECIFIC PRODUCTS**

If you have an interest in growing specific products for schools, share your interest during conversations with school nutrition staff.



The Texas Department of Agriculture can help identify crops schools might be interested in purchasing, identify local schools interested in purchasing Texas products, locate funding opportunities and network with producers currently selling products to local schools.

For additional information, visit [www.SquareMeals.org/TexasFarmFresh](http://www.SquareMeals.org/TexasFarmFresh).