

FOOD CHAT NOTES | MAY 20, 2020

FARM TO SCHOOL CONNECTIONS



NEBRASKA FOOD COUNCIL

Fostering new connections and encouraging action.

PRESENTERS



MARGARET MILLIGAN

Buy Fresh Buy Local Nebraska



KAYTE PARTCH

National School Lunch and Summer Food Service,
Nebraska Department of Education

PRODUCER RESOURCES

Buy Fresh Buy Local® Nebraska (buylocalnebraska.org) promotes the production and consumption of local foods for their 80+ member base. Their efforts focus on connecting member producers with new markets, developing training and workshops, and expanding consumer awareness. Check out BFBL's annual publication, the 2020 Local Food Guide (buylocalnebraska.org/PDFs/2020-food-guide.pdf). BFBL Nebraska's work in the farm to school space created the Nebraska Harvest of the Month program (<https://go.unl.edu/harvest-of-the-month>). The producer capacity survey for institutional market connections is still open and can be found at go.unl.edu/producercapacity2020.

SCHOOLS CURRENTLY PURCHASING LOCAL FOOD:

- Farm to School Stories: Nebraska Thursdays
- Schools do not need pre-packaged or pre-portioned produce

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRODUCERS TO HAVE ACCESS TO FEDERAL FUNDS:

- <https://sustainableagriculture.net/blog/will-the-heroes-act-rescue-farmers>
- <http://ne.gov/go/neproduce>

GAP AND FSMA CERTIFICATIONS:

- FSMA law requires producer compliance for any farm selling over \$25,000
- For FSMA questions, contact Caitlyn Andrews with the Nebraska Department of Agriculture, Caitlyn.andrews@nebraska.gov; 402-840-0147
- School districts set specific requirements. Omaha Public Schools currently does not require GAP certification
- For more information about GAP visit, www.ams.usda.gov/services/auditing/gap-ghp
- For more information about FSMA visit, <https://go.unl.edu/fsma-certifications>

SCHOOL RESOURCES

USDA SUMMER FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM:

- Nebraska has 265 sites operating between June and August.
- The USDA reimburses schools for fruit, vegetables, milk, meat and meat alternatives.

MANY NEBRASKA SCHOOLS ARE USING THE FRESH FRUIT & VEGETABLE PROGRAM (FFVP):

- Nebraska awarded sites for the 2019-2020 school year - www.education.ne.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Revised-2019FFVP_Awarded.pdf

COVID-19 IMPLEMENTATIONS (CURRENT AND POTENTIAL):

- Grab and go meals vary by site
- One distribution includes food for 3-5 days
- Reduced usage of salad bars (Department of Health and Human Services health inspectors anticipate that salad bars will not be operational in the fall of 2020)
- Individual meals served in classrooms
- Distribution of whole fruits and vegetables, e.g. cucumbers, is an option. Whole produce must be enough to cover the minimum serving size required for the number of meals being provided.

LOCAL PROCUREMENT PLANS:

- School may include "local" in procurement plans, but cannot specify "local" in a bidding specification.
- Micropurchasing: bids are not required for purchases at or below \$10,000, and may include single purchases or spread among multiple suppliers.

OMAHA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- Summer meal program: Distributes 5 breakfasts and 5 lunches on Mondays (storage is at a premium)
- To date, fall food service is unknown. A blended approach of virtual and in-person is anticipated to allow for physical distancing.
- Meals will likely be preserved on a plate/tray. The key to this service will be the supply of packaging (cups, bags, etc.). Currently stocking up on these items.

MEAL MAPS

- Nebraska Appleseed Summer Meals Map - <http://ow.ly/46rK50zbeYn>
- USDA Food Nutrition Service (FNS) Meals for Kids Maps - <https://go.unl.edu/usda-meals-for-kids-map>

MARKET  **MAKER**

COMING SOON!

Nebraska Extension and our partners will be launching a statewide MarketMaker page very soon. You can create and update your profile now. Stay tuned for the official launch! ne.foodmarketmaker.com