

CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM - FOOD
FP-2024 FRESH PRODUCE & FARM TO SCHOOL
SECTION B2
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Introduction:

Unified Purchasing Cooperative of the Ohio Valley (UPC) has member school districts that are committed to farm-to-school practices. UPC is seeking proposals from organizations and individuals wishing to provide specific farm-to-school fresh produce items available locally and seasonally for the 2024-2025 school year.

A. Mission

UPC's mission is to increase the amount of locally grown fresh fruit and vegetables and provide nutrition and agriculture education for students throughout Southwest Ohio, Northern Kentucky and Southeast Indiana. UPC member schools wish to celebrate foods grown in the region by building relationships with local producers to improve access to fresh, healthful foods and to strengthen the regional food system's economy. It is also the goal of these member schools to create healthier school food environments that make the healthy choice the easy choice for students and improve students' knowledge of where and how food is grown.

B. Objective

This bid for the 2024-2025 school year will be made available to UPC members throughout Southwest Ohio, Northern Kentucky and Southeast Indiana interested in procuring fresh, healthful, local foods to serve to students. The program is seeking producers and distributors that are able to provide whole, unprocessed and/or minimally processed, locally grown fruits and vegetables. This bid is also seeking businesses in Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana that create value-added products for schools that source at least 50% of the ingredients from Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana. A list of members can be found on the UPC website. UPC would like to expand its Farm-to-School program so that all the schools and farms benefit. UPC is also interested in gaining a better understanding of the supply available of high-quality produce from local vendors in order to procure farm-to-school produce for the next school year and beyond.

C. Definition of Local and Geographic Preference:

UPC desires to serve fresh, locally grown and produced products to students. To this end, UPC defines locally grown product eligible for the geographic preference for the purposes of this proposal as agriculture products that are minimally processed and grown and packaged or processed:

- Within 250 miles of Hamilton County

D. Minimally Processed Products

UPC is also seeking vendors that are able to provide some or all of these fruits and vegetables in minimally processed form. Minimally processed includes but is not limited to fresh cut, frozen whole, and frozen processed products.

Bidders who offer fresh produce from within 250 miles of Hamilton County and grown in Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana other than those listed on Section E2 are encouraged to submit these products for consideration by filling out the required information in the blank spaces provided.

E. Value-Added Products

In addition to locally grown fruit and vegetables, UPC also desires to support local businesses in Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana that create value-added products appropriate for schools that source at least 50% of the ingredients sourced in Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana.

Bidders who offer value-added products that source at least 50% of the ingredients in Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana and are located in Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana are encouraged to submit these products for consideration by filling out the required information on Section E2 in the blank spaces provided.

Scope:

A. Project Description

The Unified Purchasing Cooperative (UPC) seeks information from farmers and distribution partners interested in selling fresh, healthful, local foods to serve students fruit and vegetables that are minimally processed, value-added products and will assist in developing marketing materials for UPC member school districts for the 2024-2025 school year. UPC is specifically interested in produce grown on local farms. Geographic preference shall be given during the evaluation process to give an advantage to local producers. UPC reserves the right to use other producers if better pricing is available and does not guarantee any specific ordering volumes. No exchange of information will occur regarding status of any bid before the bid is awarded. During the bid term, UPC will monitor and keep documentation on producer service, product quality, price and compliance with these guidelines to ensure UPC continues to work with the most responsive and responsible producers.

B. Objectives

This bid identifies farmers and distribution partners supporting farms and producers who are interested in selling to UPC members fresh fruits and vegetables, minimally processed products and value-added products. Interested bidders should read all documents carefully and complete all pertinent sections and forms. Section E2 requests details about products available, pricing, farming practices, etc. Based on the most responsive and cost-effective submissions, grower and/or distribution partners that best fit the needs of UPC will be selected for the 2024-2025 school year. Multiple farms and/or distribution partners may be chosen for one or more products based on availability and member needs.