

LETTERHEAD HERE

Dear Farmer,

[school district] [department] has been working on a project to develop a sustainable Farm-to-School Program for the District. Our goal is to increase the volume of produce on our menu with specific emphasis on utilizing more products grown, raised, or made locally.

During this past year we have evaluated our overall usage of produce and have worked on identifying additional seasonal products that could be offered to students on our menus. The next phase of the project is to purchase produce directly from local farmers. This informal quote document incorporates geographical preference language, and was developed to send to interested farmers to document a competitive direct purchasing process that is required by districts operating breakfast and lunch programs under the USDA guidelines.

Under federal law, this district, as the purchasing institution, has the authority to apply a “local” geographic preference to minimally processed foods and to determine what is “local” for the purposes of United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) programs such as the National School Lunch Program, the School Breakfast Program, the Fresh Fruits and Vegetable Program, the Special Milk Program, the Child and Adult Care Food Program, the Summer Food Service Program, and the Department of Defense Fresh Program.

We hope to purchase produce items, directly from farmers, that are grown and packed or processed in the neighboring counties of (district) , and will apply a 10% price preference to such products as we review the quotes.

The price percentage preference means that **for the purposes of comparison**, prices for product grown in one of the listed in counties xxx will be adjusted to a price 10% lower than the price quoted for the product by the farmer. The price percentage preference affects the quoted price only for awarding of the quote, not the actual price paid to the vendor.

The quote attached to this email message is the document produced to solicit product availability and pricing from selected farmers. You are receiving this document because either you are a past farmer who has previously sold fresh produce to [school district] or you have indicated interest in providing products in the future.

We are primarily looking to purchase produce for our lunch program. The products listed on the attached quote will be offered to [number] students in the district on a schedule that currently operates [frequency of service – e.g. three days a week].

This quote provides background information on estimated quantities of products and the projected date they will be served. If you choose to respond to this quote, there are three specific documents you must complete and either email or fax to my attention at [department]. The three documents are:

1. Form A: Response to Questions
2. Form B: Product Pricing
3. Form C: Checklist for Purchasing of Local Produce Direct from Farm

The Checklist for Purchasing of Local Produce Direct from Farm is included as part of the quote to document food safety practices that your farm or growers you represent follow. This form must be submitted annually or after any facility or procedural changes that you incorporate in your daily business practices.

We would also like your feedback on the clarity of the specifications contained within the document so we can make any necessary changes to achieve a document that will serve both the needs of farmers and our school district.

Quotes are due back by the end of business on **???**. If you are unable to provide a quote, please either send an email with that message or return Submittal Form A after checking the box that you will not be providing a response on this quote.

Thank you. *[name]*, *[title]*

[district name]

Phone:

Email:

SAMPLE

Specifications:

The District has established the following specifications:

- a) Using the USDA allowed geographic preference, a 10% price preference will be given to the farmer(s) who can provide all produce that is grown and harvested in Beaufort, Colleton, Jasper, or Hampton Counties. (If all responding farmers meet this standard, then a price preference will not be applicable.)
- b) All produce must be harvested no longer than a week before delivery.
- c) Produce must be delivered in clean, sanitary and appropriately temperature-controlled vehicles. Produce shall be stored at appropriate industry standard storage temperatures post-harvest, and may be unrefrigerated for transport for no longer than 6 hours.
- d) All products will be delivered to _____, located at _____

Evaluation and Award:

The District reserves the right to purchase these products from multiple farmers, based on price and availability. The decision resulting from the evaluation process as to which product best meets the needs of the district remains the sole responsibility of the district and is final. The final decision of selecting the farmer/farmers will be based on the following criteria:

- Lowest cost (as determined after 10% preference adjustment is made when products from outside of XXXXcounties are included with quote responses. (Please note: The 10% price preference applied when out of “locally” defined counties, does not affect the price paid to you. The preference allows [school district] [department] to apply a geographic preference in the decision of which vendor will receive the order award.
- Ability to provide the products specified (if unable to supply specified products, please identify and list any substitutions you feel are appropriate along with their associated costs)
- Ability to deliver to SCHOOLS on a weekly delivery schedule that meets the needs of [school district] [department]. Actual delivery date will be [lead time – e.g. 2 to 3 days before menu date] to allow proper time for meal preparation.
- Willingness to provide a personal visit to the school district by the farmer or staff employed on the farm, to educate students about the farm and the products offered. Such visits should be offered at least one time at a time and place mutually agreed upon by vendor and [school district] [department].
- Acceptable response to the Checklist for Purchasing of Local Produce Direct from Farm and proof of GAPs or other third party food safety audit/certification, and ??? in liability insurance.

Quote Responses:

Responses to this quote request may be emailed or faxed to #####. The email address and fax number are provided below.

1. Vendor is responsible for making sure all questions are answered, details and pricing of any of the requested products they can supply have been listed, and a current copy of the food safety questionnaire is on file or submitted with this response.
2. Vendor response must be made on forms provided with this quote request in order for response to be considered. Vendor must submit:
 - a. **Form A: Response to Questions**, b. **Form B: Product Pricing (2 pages)**
 - c. **Check List for Purchasing of Local Produce Direct from Farm**
3. Prices quoted should be F.O.B [Your Address].
4. If freight is not included in price for purchase unit, any associated freight costs must be clearly identified and discussed with [designated person] at the time of order.
5. Vendor is expected to honor prices quoted for the period of time quote request covers.
6. Contact point person if you have questions or if assistance is needed.
7. Responses due by the end of business on date. The first delivery for product will be scheduled for the week of date.
8. If a vendor chooses not to participate in this quote, they can check the box on the bottom of Submittal Form A and either fax or email the form to the phone number or email address referenced below.

Contact Information:

[Name],[Title]

[Your School District] [Your Department] [Your Address, zipcode]

Email:

Main Office Phone: Main Office Fax:

Submittal Form B- Page 1: Product Pricing: (due by end of **business on** _____)

Farmers are asked to provide pricing and the information asked for on the products contained in the attached market basket.

For **Month, Year**

| Quantity Needed | Item | Menu Date | Locally Grown? Please Circle | | Name of the farm/grower | Count or Size | Pack Size | Order Units for quantity needed? | Price per Pack | Total Price to be charged to District |
|--|---|-----------|------------------------------|----|-------------------------|---------------|-----------|----------------------------------|----------------|---------------------------------------|
| | | | Yes | No | | | | | | |
| ? lbs. | Baby spinach | | Yes | No | | | | | | |
| ? lbs. as heads. or ? lbs. as | Broccoli, fresh (specify if you can provide florets) | | Yes | No | | | | | | |
| ? lbs. as heads or ? lbs. chopped | Cabbage, fresh, whole or washed, trimmed, and | | Yes | No | | | | | | |
| ? lbs. | Collard Greens, , fresh washed, and chopped or stripped | | Yes | No | | | | | | |
| ? lbs. | Cucumbers, fresh, whole | | Yes | No | | | | | | |
| ? lbs. for grape. Or, ? lbs. other variety | Tomatoes, grape or other variety, fresh, whole | | Yes | No | | | | | | |
| ? lbs. | Spring Mix, fresh, washed | | Yes | No | | | | | | |
| ? lbs. | Summer Squash, fresh, whole | | Yes | No | | | | | | |

We will not be participating in this quote.

Continue on to next page for **month, year**

Vendor Name:

Submittal Form B- Page 2: Product Pricing: (due by end of business on **Friday xx/xx/201x**)

For **month:**

| Quantity Needed | Item | Menu Date | Locally Grown? Please Circle | | Name of the farm/grower | Count or Size | Pack Size | Order Units for quantity needed? | Price per Pack | Total Price to be charged to District |
|---|---|-----------|------------------------------|----|-------------------------|---------------|-----------|----------------------------------|----------------|---------------------------------------|
| | | | Yes | No | | | | | | |
| ? lbs. | Baby spinach | | Yes | No | | | | | | |
| ? lbs. as heads. or | Broccoli, fresh (specify if you | | Yes | No | | | | | | |
| ? lbs. as heads or ? lbs. chopped | Cabbage, fresh, whole or washed, trimmed, and | | Yes | No | | | | | | |
| ? lbs. | Collard Greens, , fresh washed, and chopped or stripped | | Yes | No | | | | | | |
| ? lbs. | Cucumbers, fresh, whole | | Yes | No | | | | | | |
| ? lbs. for grape. Or, ? lbs. other variety | Tomatoes, grape or other variety, fresh, whole | | Yes | No | | | | | | |
| ? lbs. | Spring Mix, fresh, washed | | Yes | No | | | | | | |
| ? lbs. | Summer Squash, fresh, whole | | Yes | No | | | | | | |

We will not be participating in this quote.

Vendor Name:

SUBMITTAL FORM C: Checklist for Purchasing of Local Produce Direct from Farm

Name of Producer/Farm: _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____ E-mail _____

Total acres farmed _____ Availability of promotional materials YES NO

Products to be purchased _____

Is an insurance liability required? YES (Dollar amount _____) NO

Is the facility licensed and inspected to process products? YES NO

Are there acceptable substitutes available if an order cannot be filled? YES NO

Production Practices: Yes/No or N/A

Are wells protected from contamination? YES NO NA

If irrigation is used, what is its source? Well Pond Stream Municipal
 Other _____

What types of manures are used? Raw manure Composted Aged No manure is used

Is raw manure incorporated at least 2 weeks prior to planting and/or 120 days prior to harvest? YES NO

Is the manure application schedule documented with a copy submitted to the retail operation? YES NO

Is land use history available to determine risk of product contamination (e.g., runoff from upstream, flooding, chemical spills, or excessive agricultural crop application)? YES NO

Is the field exposed to runoff from animal confinement or grazing areas? YES NO

Is land that is frequently flooded used to grow food crops? YES NO

Are coli-form tests conducted on soil in frequently flooded land? YES NO

Are farm livestock and wild animals restricted from growing areas? YES NO

Are portable toilets used in a way that prevents field contamination from waste water? YES NO NA

Product Handling: Yes/No or N/A

Are storage and packaging facilities located away from growing areas? YES NO

Is there risk of contamination with manure? YES NO

Are harvesting baskets, totes, or other containers kept covered and cleaned (with potable water) and sanitized before use? YES NO

Is harvesting equipment/machinery that comes into contact with the products kept as clean as possible? YES NO

Are product and non-product containers available and clearly marked? YES NO

Is dirt, mud, or other debris removed from product before packing? YES NO

Are food grade packaging materials clean and stored in areas protected from pets, livestock, wild animals, and other contaminants? YES NO

Transportation: Yes/No or N/A

- Is product loaded and stored to minimize physical damage and risk of contamination? YES NO
- Is transport vehicle well maintained and clean? YES NO
- Are there designated areas in transport vehicle for food products and non-food items? YES NO
- Are products kept cool during transit? YES NO

Checklist for Purchasing of Local Produce Direct from the Farm Facilities: Yes/No or N/A

- Is potable water/well tested at least once per year and results kept on file? YES NO NA
- Is product protected as it travels from field to packing facility? YES NO NA
- Is a product packing area in use with space for culling and storage? YES NO NA
- Are packing areas kept enclosed? YES NO NA
- Are food contact surfaces regularly washed and rinsed with potable water and then sanitized? YES NO NA
- Are food grade packaging materials used? YES NO NA
- Do workers have access to toilets and hand washing stations with proper supplies? YES NO NA
- Are toilets and hand washing stations clean and regularly serviced? YES NO NA
- Is a pest control program in place? YES NO NA

Worker Health and Hygiene: Yes/No or N/A

- Is a worker food safety training program in place? YES NO NA
- Are workers trained about hygiene practices and sanitation with signs posted to reinforce messages? YES NO NA
- Are workers and visitors following good hygiene and sanitation practices? YES NO NA
- Are smoking and eating confined to designated areas separate from product handling? YES NO NA
- Are workers instructed not to work if they exhibit signs of infection (e.g., fever, diarrhea, etc.)? YES NO NA
- Do workers practice good hygiene by:
- Wearing clean clothing and shoes? YES NO NA
 - Changing aprons and gloves as needed? YES NO NA
 - Keeping hair covered or restrained? YES NO NA
 - Washing hands as required? YES NO NA
 - Limiting bare hand contact with fresh products? YES NO NA
 - Covering open wounds with clean bandages? YES NO NA

I confirm that the information provided above is accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Signature of Seller: _____ Date _____

LETTERHEAD—sample award letter

Hello:

Thank you for your response to our quote for locally grown products that will be featured on our school meal menus. We had three responses to the quote:

1. [Vendor 1]
2. [Vendor 2]
3. [Vendor 3]

I have attached a recap sheet that shares the details of the three responses. After evaluating the quotes, we will be establishing a purchase order to purchase both the locally grown products with _____ . This purchase order will be good through **date**.

Thank you for your interest in working with our program as provider of quality produce.

[name], [title]

[department/division]

[district name]

Phone:

Email: