



# USING DOD FRESH TO PURCHASE LOCAL PRODUCE

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**THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE** Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (DoD Fresh) allows schools to use their USDA Foods entitlement dollars to buy fresh produce. As of 2014, schools in 47 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and Guam participate; schools received more than \$120 million worth of produce during SY 2013-2014.

## How Does It Work?

The Defense Logistics Agency manages more than 47 contracts with produce vendors across the country who in turn contract with growers to supply their designated region. Schools can view the catalog of offerings from the produce vendor serving their area via an online ordering system. DoD analyzes the product prices and the vendor updates the catalog on a weekly basis. In addition, most vendors send a weekly newsletter with product information.

## What are the Advantages of DoD Fresh?

- \* **Flexibility:** States can change DoD Fresh allocations on a monthly basis, which allows them to utilize USDA Foods entitlement dollars more effectively. USDA does not impose a cap on the amount of entitlement dollars that a state can allocate to DoD purchases.
- \* **Consistency:** DoD Fresh vendors update the catalog weekly, and depending on the state, schools can receive deliveries every week, making orders timely, fresh, and responsive to market fluctuations.
- \* **High quality:** DoD maintains high quality standards through Produce Quality Audits, encouraging vendors to follow Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Good Handling Practices (GHP), and requiring that pre-cut and packaged produce is sourced from approved suppliers.
- \* **Variety:** DoD Fresh vendors offer as many as 50 different types of produce, available in multiple forms (whole, pre-cut, and a variety of pack sizes) and from multiple locales (local and non-local items are routinely offered).
- \* **Easy ordering and funds tracking:** Schools place orders via the web-based Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Order/Receipt System (FFAVORS). The prices listed in the FFAVORS catalog reflect the prices that schools will be billed for the product. FFAVORS tracks schools' entitlement fund balances and total order costs. DoD manages vendor payment and reconciliation.



CASE QUANTITY	ITEM CODE	DESCRIPTION	CASE CONTENTS	CASE PRICE
	14P01	Apple Any Type USF/XF 100-113 1/40 LB CS	40 LB	\$35.35
	18B41	Cauliflower Multi-Color 6-8 CT 8 LB CS	8 LB	\$19.38
	15N95	Orange Cara Pink 80CT 1/35 LB	35 LB	\$29.87
	15P16	Potato SWT Local 40 LB CS (Co-op)	40 LB	\$14.96
	14P23	Starfruit 20-30 CT 1/8 LB CS	8 LB	\$26.31

The FFAVORS catalog indicates which foods are grown locally.

### Purchasing Local Foods through DoD Fresh

DoD vendors are encouraged to purchase local products, and about 15 to 20 percent of the produce DoD provides to schools is currently considered local. Products are designated as local by the produce vendors and are marked with a local tag in the FFAVORS catalog. Currently, local denotes that the produce is sourced from within the state of service, the contract award zone or adjacent states. In all cases, local or regionally sourced products must meet the quantity and quality requirements necessary for the contract and be priced competitively.

### What Should States and School Districts Do if They Want to Source Local Foods Through DoD Fresh?

States and schools that want to purchase local foods through DoD Fresh should start by looking for products already marked as local in the FFAVORS catalog. States or schools can also contact their DoD Fresh produce vendor to find out which local products the vendor expects to carry throughout the year, or to make their desires for local produce known to their DoD Fresh produce vendor.

### How is the Program Funded?

The Farm Bill requires that at least \$50 million in commodity entitlement funds be used each year to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables for distribution to schools and service institutions through the DoD Fresh program. Since there is no cap, USDA accommodates all requests for additional entitlement allocations to DoD Fresh throughout the school year. States work with districts to determine how much to allocate to the program.

### Learn More

The Defense Logistics Agency website provides background information about DoD and links to each vendor's contract: [www.troopssupport.dla.mil/subs/produce/school/index.asp](http://www.troopssupport.dla.mil/subs/produce/school/index.asp) Patricia Scott; [patricia.scott@dlm.mil](mailto:patricia.scott@dlm.mil); 215-737-3601

The Food and Nutrition Service website provides contact information for farm to school personnel in your area, and a helpful history of the DoD Fresh program:

[www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/programs/dod/default.htm](http://www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/programs/dod/default.htm)

Christina Conell; [christina.conell@fns.usda.gov](mailto:christina.conell@fns.usda.gov); 415-705-1353

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For more information, and to sign up to receive USDA's bi-weekly Farm to School E-letter, please visit [www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool](http://www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool). Questions? Email us at [farmtoschool@fns.usda.gov](mailto:farmtoschool@fns.usda.gov).

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