Selling Fruits & Vegetables to Schools has never been Easier!

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Legislative Charge:
To increase the use of local farm and ranch products in school food service programs to improve child nutrition and strengthen local and regional agricultural economies.
CO FTS Task Force Funders
Agenda

• Overview of Farm to School
  o What is FTS?
  o The growth of FTS in Colorado
  o The FTS Marketplace in Colorado
• Producer Barriers to FTS
• FTS Challenges of Schools
• Grant Programs and Resources
• Wrap-up and Discussion
Poll #1

How many of you have sold produce to schools?
What is Farm to School?
Benefits of Farm to School

**Kids WIN**
Farm to school provides all kids access to nutritious, high quality, local food so they are ready to learn and grow. Farm to school activities enhance classroom education through hands-on learning related to food, health, agriculture and nutrition.

**Farmers WIN**
Farm to school can serve as a significant financial opportunity for farmers, fishers, ranchers, food processors and food manufacturers by opening the doors to an institutional market worth billions of dollars.
Benefits of Farm to School

Communities WIN
Farm to school benefits everyone from students, teachers and administrators to parents and farmers, providing opportunities to build family and community engagement. Buying from local producers and processors creates new jobs and strengthens the local economy.

The FTS Marketplace in CO

$17,854,400
INVESTED IN LOCAL FOOD IN COLORADO

WITH THE AVERAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT SPENDING 4% OF THEIR BUDGET ON LOCAL PRODUCTS.

School districts in Colorado are currently buying the following types of local foods:

- 75% FRUITS
- 85% VEGETABLES
- 46% MILK
- 34% MEAT OR POULTRY

33% of Colorado districts surveyed plan to increase local food purchases in the future.

Colorado school districts are serving local items throughout the school day. In Colorado, local foods are being served at the following times:

- 61% Breakfast
- 92% Lunch
- 5% Supper
- 25% Snacks
- 20% Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Program
Growth of FTS in Colorado since 2010

http://bit.ly/2cCTATJ
Producer Barriers & Opportunities
Poll #2

What do you perceive as your top 3 challenges for entering the FTS marketplace?
BARRIER

Schools have small budgets and can’t afford local produce

OPPORTUNITY

• Higher volume offsets lower prices and minimizes the proportion of fixed costs
• Schools will buy seconds
• Stable and predictable market
Producer Barriers & Opportunities

**BARRIER**

*School bid processes are too complicated*

**OPPORTUNITY**

- Some school districts hold pre-conference bids to train and educate local producers
- Online resources and trainings help navigate the bid process
Small producers can’t be competitive

Transporting produce to schools is not cost-effective

BARRIER

OPPORTUNITY

• Geographic preference
• Some school districts will pick up produce
• Food hubs (e.g. Northern CO Cooperative bid)
• Distributors (e.g. FreshPack, LoCo)
Producer Barriers & Opportunities

- Summer school meal program
- Spring & fall crops are needed
- Root crops extend into the winter
- Season extension
  - On the farm (high tunnels, greenhouses, storage)
  - Flash freezing & canning
What questions do you have?

Please submit in Q&A box
Have you ever been contacted by a school interested in buying produce from you?
School Food is Changing

• Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010
  o FTS Grant program at USDA
  o New Meal Pattern
• Scratch cooking
• It’s not point & click ordering anymore
  o How do I find a local farmer?
    • Local food directories – online and hard copy
    • Call your local school’s food and nutrition department
School Food Services Regulations

- Federal
  - National School Lunch Program
  - National School Breakfast Program

- State & Local
  - Food safety – storing, handling, processing, and serving
  - HACCP (Hazard Analysis & Critical Control Points)
Brave New World for School Food Services

- On-Farm food safety
  - Direct procurement
  - Serving children
  - Not experts
What questions do you have?

Please submit in Q&A box
Producer Grant Programs
Peer-to-Peer Mentoring

A peer-to-peer program funded by a USDA FTS grant is designed to provide guidance for new producers entering the FTS marketplace.

The goal of the mentoring program is to increase the number of Colorado fruit and vegetable producers who are willing and able to sell to Colorado schools.

The program provides new-to-FTS producers with seasoned FTS producers who can provide insight in navigating the school food procurement process.

The Mentor program will provide 20 hours of contact time between Mentor and Mentee between winter 2016 and fall 2016.
Peer-to-Peer Mentoring

Could you be a FTS Mentor?
- Seasoned Farm to School producer
- Passionate and able to help others
- Interested in receiving $600 stipend
- Able to give 20 hours of contact time

Do you want to be a Mentee?
- Considered selling to schools
- Unsure how to do it
- Interested in a peer-to-peer program
- Receive 20 hours of guidance

http://coloradofarmtoschool.org/colorado-farm-to-school-task-force/ita-workshops/producer-mentoring-program/
Farm to School Regional Grant Program

A unique FTS Regional Grant pilot program funded by CoBank that seeks to aid small to mid-sized farms in implementing on-farm food safety measures.

The pilot program’s objective is to aid fruit, nut and vegetable farmers with their food safety plans in order to access institutional and wholesale markets.

The two-year pilot program provides grants to support producers’ ability to develop and implement on-farm food safety plans.

A competitive **grant of $90,000** will be awarded to one of the three regions. Applications will be available at each of the regional ITA workshops.

[http://coloradofarmtoschool.org/fts-regional-grant-program/](http://coloradofarmtoschool.org/fts-regional-grant-program/)
Regional Grant Winner: Western Slope

Community Partner

Valley Food Partnership
Connecting Local Farms to Forks

School Districts

Fruit and Vegetable Producers
Example of Producer Expense Request

**Instructions:** Complete and return this form in order to receive the food safety grant (maximum grant is $10,000). Return the form via email to greta@valleyfoodpartnership.org and Sophie@sparkpolicy.com. If you have any questions, please contact Sophie via email or 303-455-1740, x. 118.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food Safety Equipment/Materials List</th>
<th>Brief Description of Item to be Purchased</th>
<th>Units (#)</th>
<th>Price per Unit</th>
<th>Total Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Food Safety Program</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee/volunteer training for proper sanitation and GAPS practices (specify if in-person training, video, etc.)</td>
<td>in-person training for employees 1/2 hr/person</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Costs of food safety audits/certifications</td>
<td>Yearly Certification 2016 complete 2017 in progress</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>786</td>
<td>1572</td>
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<tr>
<td>Materials used for tracking food safety protocols (i.e. logs, printer, tablet, etc.)</td>
<td>clipboards, paper, yearly ink</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor costs involved in tracking food safety activities</td>
<td>clipboards, paper, 4 months of harvest, 1 hour/day x 2 yr</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Product labels and packaging</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please specify): Finalizing Plan and time for audit</td>
<td>hours to write final plan and time to finalize audit</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>120</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other (please specify):</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Other (please specify):</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Personal Hygiene</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hand washing stations</td>
<td>Blue Containers water</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16.15</td>
<td>32.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renting or buying portable toilets</td>
<td>Purchased to let, cleaning $45/hr/day</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>840</td>
<td>840</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hand soap or other cleaning supplies (e.g. disinfectants for equipment surfaces, single use towels, etc.)</td>
<td>Vinegar $10, hand soap $10, paper towels $25, yearly cost</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>80.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Safety Signs (e.g. no eating, drinking, chewing gum or tobacco use in places where food products are handled; water only allowed in closed containers, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
FTS Resources for Producers
Colorado Farm to School website
http://coloradofarmtoschool.org/producers/getting-started/

Getting Started

Step 1: Get Started - Farmer Self-Assessment

The following questions are designed to help you determine your interest and ability to market your food products to local schools. This information is not necessarily for sharing with schools but is essential for you to know and will be helpful when you begin talking with school food service directors and/or distributors about supplying food to local schools and/or school districts.

SELLING LOCAL FOOD TO SCHOOLS
A Resource for Producers

A Q&A FOR COLORADO FARMERS, PRODUCERS, & VENDORS
SCHOOL FOOD SALES AND GEOGRAPHIC PREFERENCE
November 7, 2011
Colorado Farm to School website
http://coloradofarmtoschool.org/marketing-toolkit/producers/

Marketing Materials

9/16/2016
September 14, 2016 was Colorado Proud School Meal Day

http://www.farmtoschool.org/our-work/farm-to-school-month
Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) webinars

- **Part 1:** Food Safety Basics, Regulatory Landscape, 3rd Party Audits, Worker Hygiene
  Available from: https://connect.extension.iastate.edu/p97225744/Webinar 1 Slides

- **Part 2:** Minimizing Risks During Production: Irrigation Water and Manure Management
  Available from: https://connect.extension.iastate.edu/p26083829/Webinar 2 Slides

- **Part 3:** Minimizing Risks During Harvest & Post-Harvest: Washing & Packing, Cooling & Storage, Transportation & Traceback
  Available from: Webinar 3 Slides (http://farmtotable.colostate.edu/docs/GAPsWebinar3.pdf)
CSU Resources - Creating a Food Safety Plan


• Colorado Farm Plan Template: http://www.farmtotable.colostate.edu/grow-files/2012-ColoradoFarmPlanFillableForm.pdf
More Food Safety Resources

• Food Safety Begins on the Farm: A Grower’s Guide

• Global GAP: http://www.globalgap.org/uk_en/for-producers/crops/

• Harmonized GAP: https://www.ams.usda.gov/services/auditing/gap-ghp/harmonized

• CSU Extension food safety web site:
  www.farmtotable.colostate.edu

• Food safety & direct marketing regulations:
  www.cofarmtomarket.com

• CO FTS Task Force producer workshop materials
  http://coloradofarmtoschool.org/resourcelibrary/
Farm to School Marketplace

Wrap Up
Farmer Benefits of Farm to School

1. Expand market opportunity, income potential
2. Sell “surplus” / “seconds” products
3. Diversify market, help manage risk
4. Generate awareness and marketing opportunities for farm and products
5. Increase demand and awareness for local foods
Now it's your turn...
Resources & Supports

http://coloradofarmtoschool.org/
http://www.farmtoschool.org/

Contact:
Lyn@SparkPolicy.com
Sophie@SparkPolicy.com