



DRAFT

Maryland Farm to School Workshop: *Growing the Connections*

Eastern Shore Hospital Center – English Hall
 5262 Woods Road
 Cambridge, MD 21613
 Weds, February 22, 2012
 9:00 am – 4:00 pm

There's a growing movement to get local farm products into the schools. The Mid-Shore and Lower-Shore Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) staff and Maryland producers from the Eastern Shore will explore opportunities to incorporate more local product in school meal programs. The focus of the workshop is on public school system childhood nutrition programs. Foodservice representatives from independent schools are also invited to participate.

Agenda

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| 9:00 am – 9:15 am | Welcome –Introductions |
| 9:15 am – 9:45 am | Growing the Connections |
| | Maryland's producers and school's Food and Nutrition Services operate with their own set of challenges, but these challenges can be overcome with some basic knowledge and understanding to get Maryland farm products into schools. |
| 9:45 am – 10:30 am | Using the Geographic Preference Rule to Purchase from Local Producers |
| | This session is targeted toward the FNS directors but local producers will become better acquainted with the various school systems procurement rules. This workshop will cover the content of the Geographic Preference Rule and any recent guidance from the USDA on its application. Examples of bids that use the rule will be provided. FNS staff will be encouraged to bring their own produce bids to discuss how they might apply the Rule to their own operations. |
| 10:30 am– 10:45 am | Break |
| 10:45 am – 11:30 am | Creating a Market from Producer's Surplus to Benefit School Meals |
| | Some produce is better suited to schools than a wholesale market (i.e., small apples, sun bleached watermelon, surplus). What happens to the abundant produce at the end of the season? Identifying these products creates a win-win situation for schools and producers. For FNS staff, basics of spec writing and applying procurement rules will be covered; for producers, you can develop potential business opportunities. |

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| 11:30 - Noon | Food Safety |
| | Schools are working hard to serve more fresh fruits and vegetables. In support of these efforts, USDA is more focused than ever on food safety. Maryland has responded to this concern with the Maryland Good Agriculture Practices (GAP) program. Learn about the MDA GAP program, existing resources, and recommendations for schools purchasing directly from producers. |
| Noon – 1:00 pm | Lunch |
| 1:00 pm – 1:30 pm | Child Nutrition Program Boot Camp |
| | SNLP, SSMP, FFVP – lots of acronyms and what does it all mean for Maryland producers? School lunch and the other USDA nutrition programs can offer a reliable market for producers and an important opportunity for children to learn about food, nutrition, and agriculture but come with a long set of rules and requirements. Learn the basics of the programs and the balancing act your local food and nutrition services staff manages daily. |
| 1:30 pm – 3:30 pm | Ideas in Action |
| | Review availability of local product and some basic variables that alter growing seasons then hear about the creative ways school systems and producers across the country prepare local foods year round. Ideas on marketing your fresh local product in school meals and an update on the Environmental Literacy Standard and its relationship to Farm to School will also be discussed. |
| 3:30 – 4:00 | Wrap-Up |

This workshop is sponsored by the Maryland Department of Agriculture, the Maryland Specialty Crop Block grant and the Maryland State Department of Education.

