

Want to know more?

Contact these groups.

- Buy Fresh Buy Local:
Iowa program—
www.practicalfarmers.org/buyfresh.asp
national program—
www.foodroutes.org
- City or county health inspector
- Food Alliance—www.foodalliance.org/
- Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship—
www.agriculture.state.ia.us/agdiversification.htm
- Iowa Department of Inspection and Appeals—www.dia.iowa.gov/food
515/281-6538
- ISU Extension Distribution Center—
www.extension.iastate.edu/store
- ISU Hotel, Restaurant, and Institution Management Extension: local foods—
www.iastatelocalfoods.org
- Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture—
www.leopold.iastate.edu
- Produce Marketing Association—
www.pma.com
- United Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Association—www.unitedfresh.org
- United States Food and Drug Administration: “Guide to Minimize Microbial Food Safety Hazards for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables”—
www.cfsan.fda.gov/~dms/prodguid.html

These resources focus on Good Agricultural Practices (GAPS):

Cornell University Good Agricultural Practices Project—
www.gaps.cornell.edu

New England Extension Food Safety Consortium—
www.hort.uconn.edu/ipm/foodsafety/index.htm

United States Department of Agriculture—
www.ams.usda.gov/fv/fpbgapghp.htm

University of California-Davis Postharvest Technology Research and Information Center—
<http://postharvest.ucdavis.edu>



LEOPOLD CENTER

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... and justice for all

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Buying Local Foods for Retail Foodservices



IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
University Extension



What are some benefits to buying local foods?

Buying and serving locally-produced foods offers several advantages. You can

- obtain fresh, full-flavored, high-quality products.
- choose unique produce varieties.
- customize your orders.
- demonstrate your support for local farmers.
- keep Iowa food dollars in Iowa.
- differentiate your business and establish a competitive edge.
- reduce the distance food travels.
- document your food sources.
- increase your sales.

Preliminary research found consumers would pay more for menu items identified from local sources; see “Local Food Connections: Economic Impact of Use in Restaurants” (PM 1853e) for details.

(www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/PM1853E.pdf)

What about regulations?*

Can I buy from local producers?

Foodservice establishments need to keep these points in mind.

- Anyone who sells food products must understand that consumers assume the food is safe for human consumption and must accept responsibility for providing such food.
- Potentially hazardous items—such as meat, dairy products, fresh pasta, shell eggs, and certain produce items—must come from licensed or inspected processing plants.
- Meats must be processed in a state or federally inspected facility. Meat must bear an inspection shield. Products sold across state lines must be from a federally inspected facility.
- Fluid milk must be pasteurized if used in a foodservice operation.
- Fresh pasta can be made in the foodservice. If it is purchased, the product should come from a vendor who has used a licensed kitchen.
- Foods that are not potentially hazardous—such as fresh bread or fruit pies—can be prepared in private homes and sold directly to customers at farmers’ markets. A foodservice establishment can purchase these food products from a local vendor only if the product is made in a licensed kitchen.

**Regulations are based on Food Code 2005.*

What are the guidelines for buying local produce?

Fresh produce suppliers—whether local or out-of-state—generally have no regulations or licensing requirements. Recent events have raised concerns about the safety of fresh produce. Because these items often are not cooked, it is very important for foodservice operations to follow good purchasing practices.

- Some produce items are potentially hazardous; an example is alfalfa sprouts. These should be purchased from a licensed vendor.
- Local growers may sell fresh produce that has been cleaned and minimally trimmed. For example, the carrots can be washed and the tops trimmed. Cutting into the edible portion of a food by the producer is not allowed; an additional processing license is required to sell chopped, sliced, canned, or frozen products. For further information, contact Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals at 515-281-6538.
- Produce items must be transported in containers that protect the integrity of the product and ensure there is no risk of the food becoming contaminated. There are no state regulations about size of purchase units or delivery amounts.
- Packaging materials must be safe for food contact. Large garbage bags are not acceptable because the interior is often treated with chemicals to reduce odors and this may pose a risk to the food.