



From Farm to Cafeteria: Sourcing Fresh, Local Ingredients for Schools

November 18, 2025

1:30 PM - 2:00 PM

Professional Standards Learning Codes: 1130, 2430



Meet Your Host



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HEALTH AND NUTRITION SERVICES SPECIALIST

Welcome!



upLIFT was designed specifically for child nutrition professionals like you. It offers resources to help you LEARN about nutrition, get INSPIRED on meal choices for your participants, FEED students healthy meals, and TEACH others in your community about your programs.

You can look forward to materials and monthly webinars featuring unique upLIFT content showcasing Arizona child nutrition professionals, and providing ongoing inspiration throughout the year. This will empower you to upLIFT your programs in your own unique way!

Overview

1. Procuring Local Foods Overview
2. Farm to School in School Meals
3. Farm to School Success in AZ Schools

Procuring Local Foods Overview

Local Foods Definition

Local Foods include fruits, vegetables, beans, grains, meats, condiments, herbs, eggs, and dairy procured within a certain **proximity**. Important note, local is determined by the school district and what works best for meal service!

This can mean a farm located...



Within miles
from the entity



Within the
county



Within the
state

Local Food to Schools

Procuring Local Foods in CNPs

An SFA's decision to procure local products is **individual**, and procurement may be achieved through a **combination** of the sources listed below.

Direct from Producers	Produce Auctions	Co-Ops and Food Hubs	Food Service Management Companies	Distributors	School Gardens and Farms
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Procuring Local Food Resources

Local Procurement Guide

USDA Food and Nutrition Service has updated and created the 'Procuring Local Foods For Child Nutrition Programs' [guide](#).



Procuring Local Food Resources

This guide highlights a collection of topics to help schools **source** and **purchase** local foods including:



- Menu Planning
- Procurement Methods
- Solicitation Practices and Geographical Preference
- Buying from School Gardens
- USDA Foods and DoD Fresh
- ...and MORE!

Local First Arizona

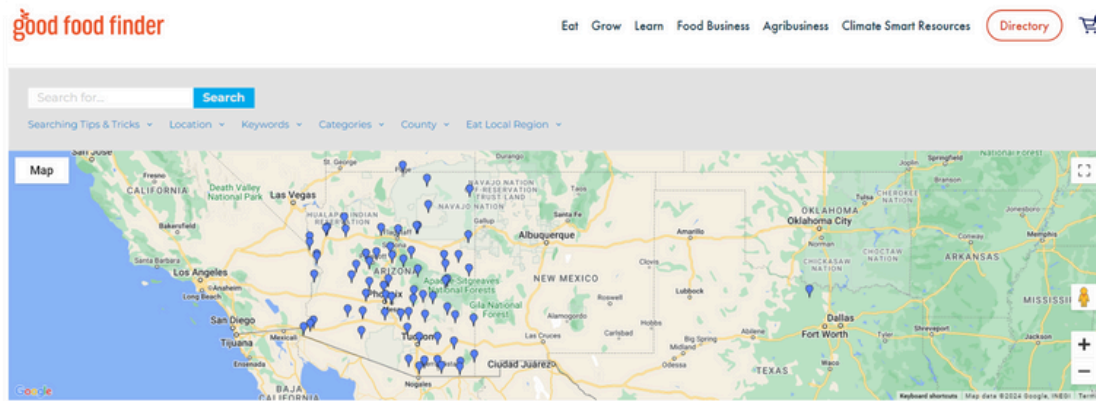
Good Food Finder

Local First Arizona sponsors the [Good Food Finder](#) initiative, which makes it easy to buy and support local food across Arizona. The website includes:

- [Farm to School](#) resources
- Farmer's Market locations
- Community garden locations
- Local farmer and producer lists



Local First Arizona



Try It Local: Local Foods for Schools

There's still time to participate in Try It Local!

This campaign is intended to promote local AZ products for use in school meals. It aims to **strengthen** local and regional food supply chains and to **encourage** and **support** SFAs with creating sustainable local procurement practices. To **receive reimbursement**, schools must first purchase eligible foods and then upload receipts and invoices to HNS.

Criteria for Allowable Foods:

- unprocessed or minimally processed
- local or regional
- domestic
- purchased for use in School Meal Programs



Try It Local: Local Foods for Schools

- 1 Purchase** minimally processed local or regional foods to be used in school meals.
- 2 Submit** invoice, photo of product box, or receipt to HNS in ADEConnect: CNP Supplemental Payments.
- 3 Receive** reimbursement for all qualifying purchased food.

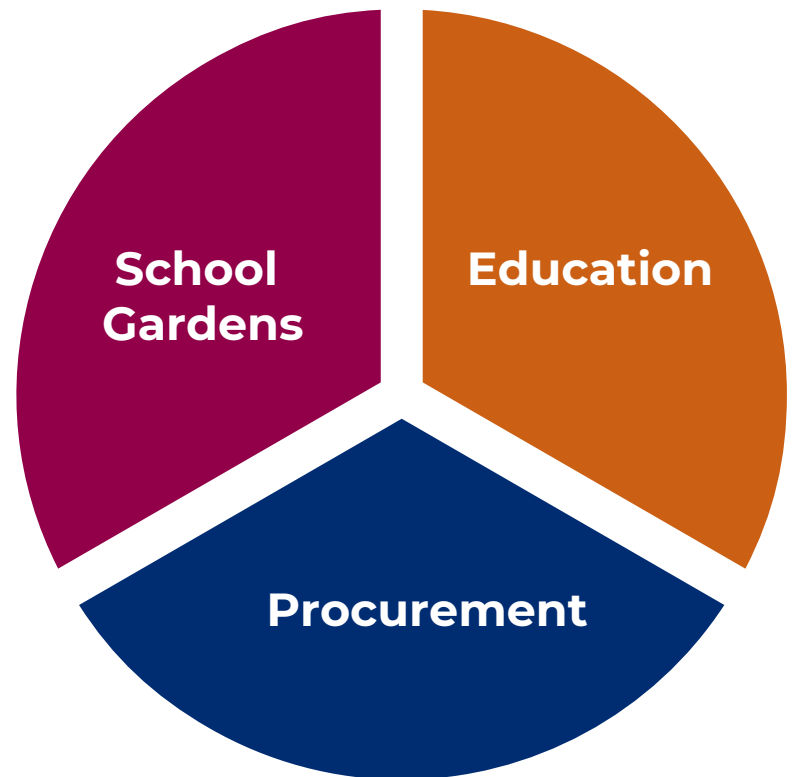
Farm to School in School Meals

Farm to School

Core Elements of Farm to School

Farm to school includes one or more of the following:

- Procurement
- Education
- School gardens



Farm to School

Why Farm to School?

The **Farm to School Movement** was established in the 1990s to address concerns about processed foods served in school meals.

Procuring food **directly** from school gardens, local farms, and local producers into schools is a great way to introduce children to healthy, fresh food. This movement aims to teach children where their food comes from and introduce them to the concept of **farm-to-table** as soon as possible. Institutional procurement holds more power to benefit farmers than any other local food market.

Farm to School

Why Farm to School?

Farm-to-school programs and local food procurement policies encourage partnerships between farmers and school food buyers that work to bring local food into school meal programs.

Since 2011, the Arizona Department of Education's [Health and Nutrition Services Division \(HNS\)](#) has worked to connect school food buyers with Arizona producers by offering regional farm tours, regional buyer-supplier meetings, and [training](#) to schools on topics such as local procurement, food safety, and basics in school gardening.

Farm to School

Farm to School Benefits All!

Farm-to-school benefits everyone from students, teachers, and administrators to parents and producers.

- **Students:** Farm to school provides all kids access to nutritious, high-quality local food so they are ready to learn and grow.
- **Farmers:** Farm-to-school can serve as a significant financial opportunity for agricultural producers by opening doors to an institutional market worth billions of dollars.
- **Communities:** Buying from local producers and processors creates jobs, strengthens the local economy, and builds vibrant and connected communities.

Farm to School

Where to start?

-  1 Identify what your district is already buying locally.
-  2 Determine what reimbursement or funding opportunities are available.
-  3 Familiarize yourself with harvest seasons.

Farm to School

USDA Farm to School Planning Toolkit

This [guide](#) reviews questions to consider and helpful resources to reference when starting or growing a farm-to-school program.

The USDA Farm to School Planning Toolkit



Questions and Resources for
Designing a Robust Farm to School Program

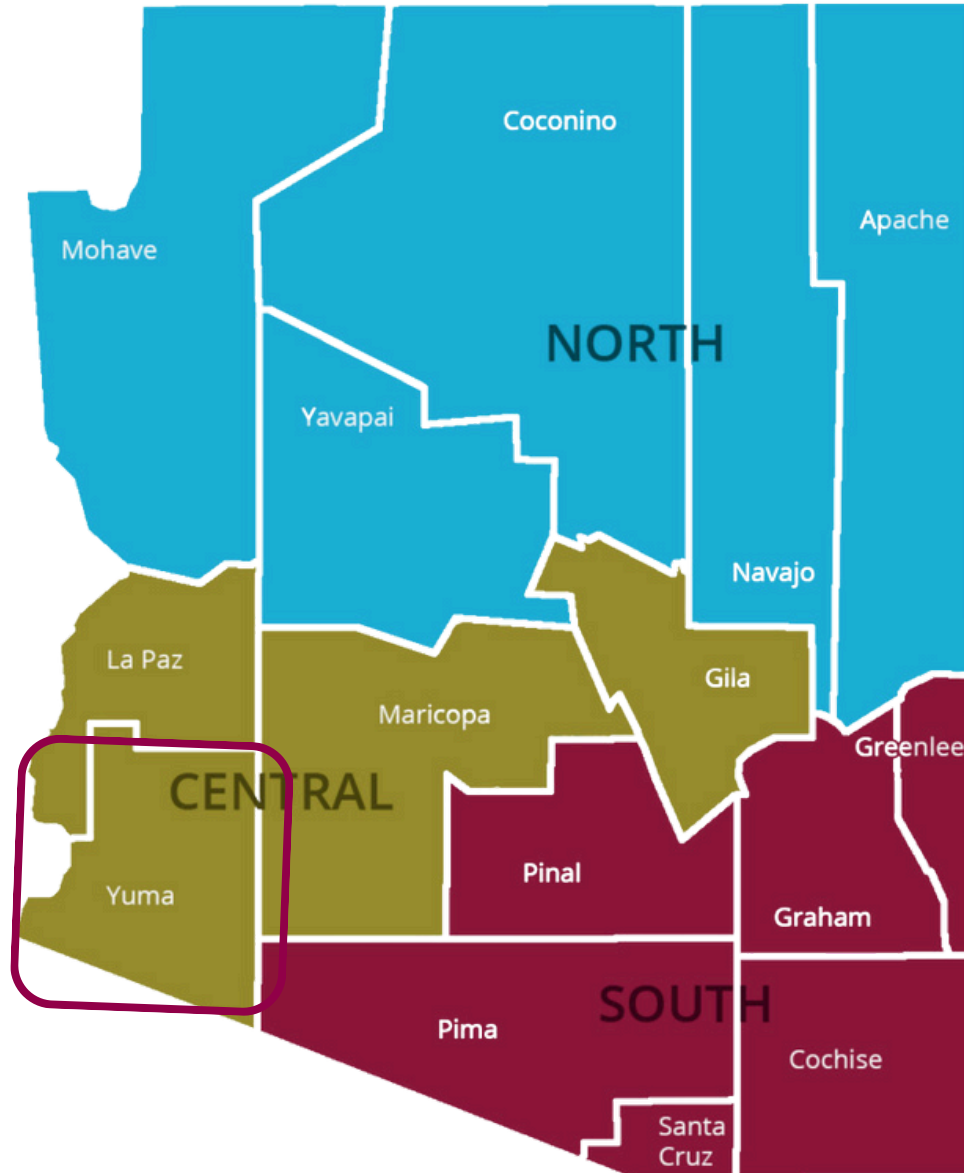
United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service

Farm to School



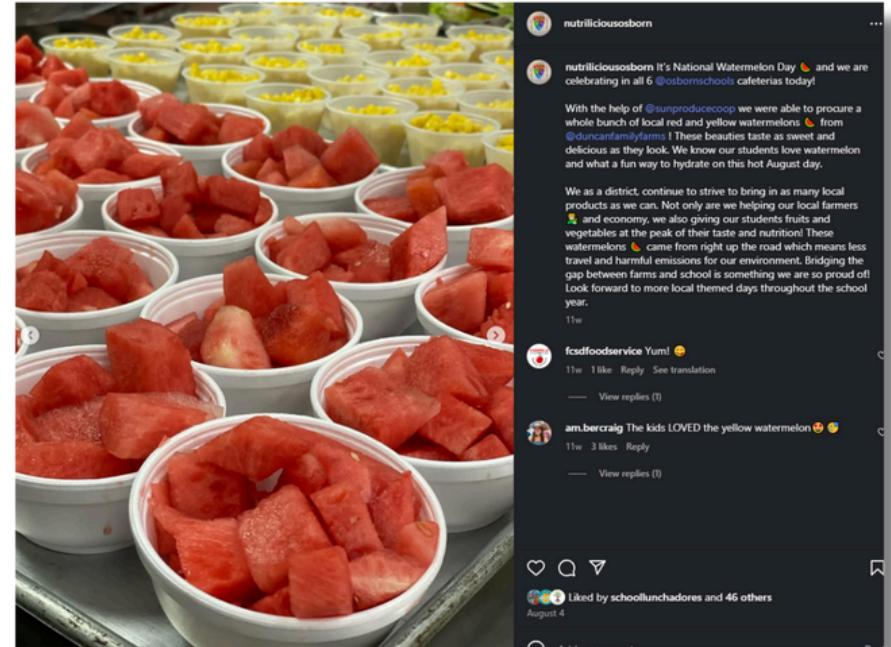
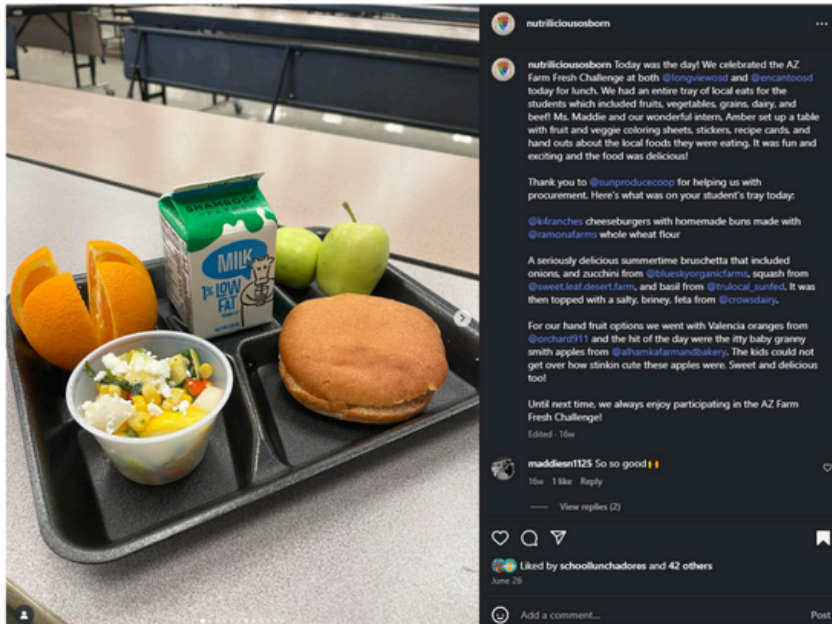
This is how ADE is interpreting the regions for Try it Local purposes.

Yuma is considered Southern Arizona.

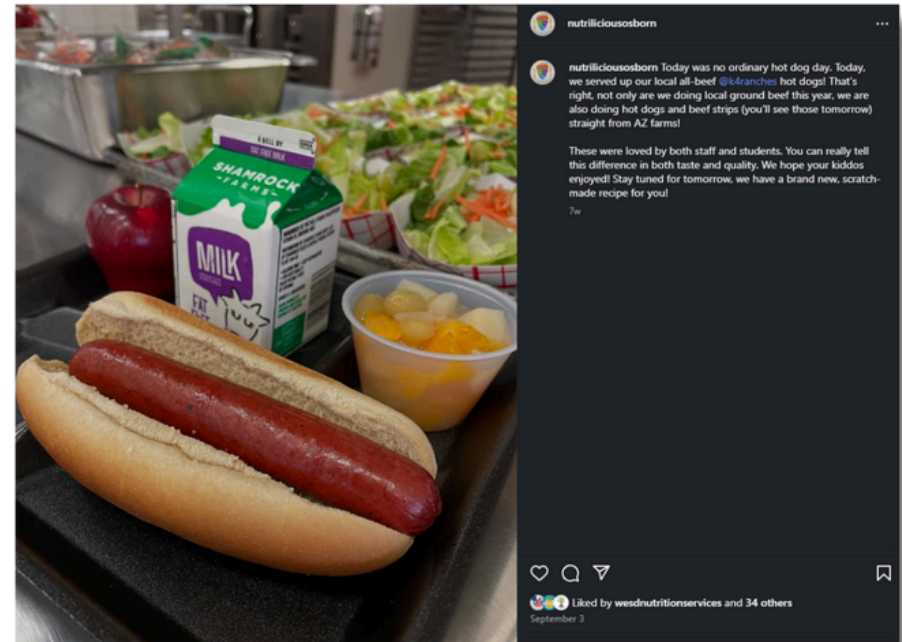
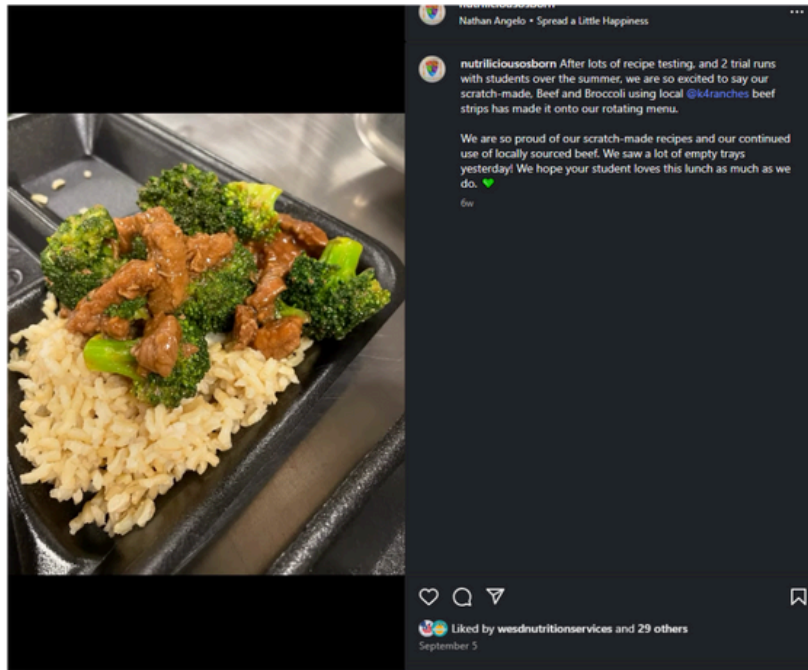


Farm to School Success in AZ Schools

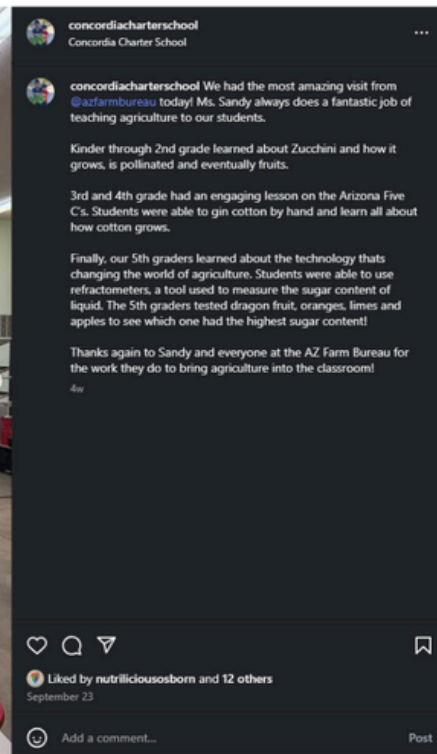
Osborn School District



Osborn School District



Concordia Charter School



Queen Creek Unified School District

QCUSD Child Nutrition
20h · 🌐



Queen Creek Unified School District is with QCUSD Child Nutrition.
1d · 🌐

🌱🍅 October is National Farm to School Month! QCUSD partners with local farms to bring fresh, healthy menu options to students. Our amazing child nutrition staff was even featured on Fox 10 Phoenix! Check it out and see how we support student learning every day. Enroll now to grow with QCUSD!

[#QCLeads](#) [#ChooseQCUSD](#) [#GrowWithQCUSD](#)

QCUSD Child Nutrition
September 23 · 🌐

🌱🍅 Fresh from Bene Vivendo Farm right here in Phoenix! We're serving up locally grown summer squash, roasted to perfection for our students. A tasty way to enjoy farm-to-school goodness right here in the cafeteria! 🌱💛 [#FarmToSchool](#) [#qcleads](#)



Summary

Farm to School is for all!

Seasonal ingredients, local partnerships, and food education that helps kids choose and enjoy healthier meals.

By connecting students to the source of their food, we foster a greater appreciation for fresh produce and sustainable practices. These initiatives not only nurture healthier eating habits but also support local farmers and strengthen community ties. Through engaging activities like school gardens and cooking classes, students gain hands-on experience with the food they consume. This holistic approach empowers young minds to make informed dietary choices and cultivates lifelong habits that benefit both personal health and the environment.

Resources



I'TOI ONION ("EE-TOY")

FIND LOCAL I'TOI ONION IN ARIZONA:

HARVEST MONTHS: JULY - OCTOBER

Farms to get the local produce:

- AZ Artisan Farms, Waddell, AZ
- Maya's Farms, Phoenix, AZ

Connect with Local Producers!
[SCHOOL INTEREST FORM](#)

To ensure food safety with fresh, I'toi onion always thoroughly wash them under running water before cutting, eating and/or cooking.

LOCAL RECIPE: I'TOI RICE
"Blue Watermelon Project - I'toi Onion Recipe"

Ingredients:

- 1 cup of jasmine rice
- 1 1/2 cups of water
- 2 tablespoons of butter
- 1 tablespoon of olive oil
- 1 teaspoon of chicken bouillon
- 1 1/2 medium size I'toi onions

Instructions:

1. Rinse onion.
2. Rinse rice until water runs clear.
3. Heat up butter and olive oil in a sauce pan. Add in the onion and cook until fragrant.
4. Add cleaned rice to onion and stir together.
5. Add in water and chicken bouillon and bring to boil.
6. Cover the pan, turn the heat down to low and cook until the rice is tender, about 15 mins.
7. Top your cooked rice with additional fresh chopped onions.

QUICK MATH I'TOI ONION

1 LB FRESH I'TOI ONION AS PURCHASED (AP) YIELDS:

- 15 1/2 oz cup rice equivalent with tops
- 15 1/2 oz cup cooked with tops
- 43 1/2 oz cup rice equivalent - cooked without tops

Credits as "other vegetables" sub-group

November 2023 | TASTE AZ | The Arizona Department of Education
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Taste AZ

Probiotics Deep Dive

Probiotics help maintain a healthy balance in the digestive system. Learn about the balance of good and bad bacteria in your gut microbiome, and how these can affect your overall health!

Probiotics Support Gut Health

Probiotics are live beneficial microorganisms (normally bacteria or yeast) that occur naturally in fermented foods, such as yogurt and sauerkraut. They can also be incorporated into various foods and are available as dietary supplements. Research suggests a potential connection between the microorganisms in the gut microbiome and certain health conditions. Probiotics may help alleviate symptoms associated with these conditions and support overall digestive health.

What is "Gut Microbiome"?

A "biome" is a unique ecosystem characterized by its environment and the diverse array of living organisms it supports. Your gut, located in your intestines, serves as a miniature (or macro) biome, home to trillions of microscopic organisms. These include over a thousand species of bacteria, as well as viruses, fungi, and parasites.

Probiotic Benefits

When you take a probiotic supplement or consume foods rich in probiotics, you help increase the population of beneficial microorganisms in your gut. These microorganisms support gut health by allowing less room for, and promoting the secretion of substances that inhibit the growth of harmful microorganisms. They also regulate energy breakdown, use, and storage in the body, and strengthen the intestinal lining to prevent pathogens and harmful substances from entering the bloodstream.

Common Probiotic Sources

Since probiotics are naturally present in many everyday foods, encouraging their consumption in schools is simple! While there is no specific recommended dosage for probiotics, typical servings can be beneficial for children and may help support their digestive health. Common foods found in school meals that contain probiotics include yogurt, pickles, and cheese.

Tip: Choose products labeled with "live and active cultures," as they are rich in probiotics. Look for options that include beneficial strains like *Lactobacillus* and *Bifidobacterium*.

Probiotics occur naturally in foods or can be added to supplements and probiotic-enriched products. Foods naturally rich in probiotics include fermented dairy and non-dairy products such as:

- yogurt
- kefir
- unpasteurized cheese
- traditional buttermilk
- sauerkraut
- kimchi
- miso
- tempeh

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United Probiotic Lift Team
This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Nutrition Knowledge
Fact Sheet

Fresh Perspectives Series

Examining common misconceptions surrounding school meals to offer guidance on how to steer the conversations within your community.

Claim: "School Meals are High in Sugar"

Let's Take a Closer Look...

Response: Starting July 1, 2025, School Food Authorities must adhere to revised **nutrition standards** for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and the School Breakfast Program (SBP). These updated standards aim to **reduce the amount of added sugars** in school meals, promoting healthier choices for students. The revisions emphasize the importance of **offering a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins**, while limiting sodium and saturated fats. By prioritizing nutritional balance, the programs strive to support students' overall well-being and academic performance.

Added Sugars Versus Total Sugars

According to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, **Total sugars** encompass the sugars that naturally occur in various nutritious foods and beverages, such as milk and fruits, along with any added sugars that might be included in the product.

Added sugars refer to "sugars incorporated during the food processing, those found in packaged sweeteners, sugars derived from syrups and honey, as well as sugars from concentrated fruit or vegetable juices."

Final Rule: Added Sugar Limit Updates as of July 1, 2025
• Breakfast cereals: no more than 6 grams of added sugars per dry ounce
• Yogurt: no more than 12 grams of added sugars per 8 ounces
• Flavored milk: no more than 18 grams of added sugars per 8 fluid ounces or, for flavored milk sold as a competitive food for middle and high schools, 18 grams of added sugars per 12 fluid ounces

Crucial Points to Chat About...

Here are our recommended points to offer up during any discussion to effectively **express your commitment and efforts** to offer minimally processed foods at your sites!

- Revised School Nutrition Standards:** Guide your community to the updates to the final rule, updating regulations including added sugar, sodium, and whole grains.
- NSLP Products vs Grocery Store Products:** Remind your community that the processed grain products served at your sites differ from their grocery store counterparts. As an example, **General Mills Honey Chereños** were created exclusively for K-12 schools to contain less sugar, more whole grains, and no nuts!

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Fresh Perspectives

<https://www.azed.gov/hns/nslp/uplift/>

Looking Ahead

Take a Break!

upLIFT will be taking a break in December 2025.

Have a wonderful holiday season and New Year! We will see you in January 2026!

January Webinar

Join us in January!

**upLIFT Webinar - Nutrition Education and Teaching
Kids to Appreciate Healthy Eating**

January 20, 2026

1:30 pm - 2:00 pm

Join us in January for an invigorating session where we'll explore the importance of nutrition education and strategies for teaching kids to appreciate healthy eating. We will share insights into creating engaging lessons and activities that make learning about nutrition fun and impactful. This webinar is designed to equip you with practical tips and ideas. Don't miss out on this opportunity to inspire the next generation towards a healthier future. Register now to secure your spot!



Thank you!

Any questions?
Please type them into the Q&A now.

If you are attending the live webinar, you will receive an email once attendance has been completed. Once you have received this email, your training certificate will be available in Arizona Professional Learning Development (APLD).

If you are watching the recorded webinar, you can access the survey link and certificate of completion at the end of the webinar slides.



Congratulations!

You have completed the recorded webinar: [From Farm to Cafeteria: Sourcing Fresh, Local Ingredients for Schools](#)

To request a certificate, please go to the next slide.

In order to count this training toward your Professional Standards training hours, the training content must align with your job duties.

Information to include when documenting this training for Professional Standards:

Training Title: Recorded Webinar: [From Farm to Cafeteria: Sourcing Fresh, Local Ingredients for Schools](#)

Professional Standards Learning Codes: [1130, 2430](#)

Length: [0.5 hour](#)

Please Note:

- Attendees must document the amount of training hours indicated regardless of the amount of time it takes to complete it.

Congratulations!

Requesting a Training Certificate

Please click on the link below to complete a brief survey about this webinar. Once the survey is complete, you will be able to print your certificate of completion from Survey Monkey.

*This will not appear in your ADE Professional Learning Development (APLD) Account.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/upliftrecordedwebinar>

The information below is for your reference when completing the survey:

- Training Title: **From Farm to Cafeteria: Sourcing Fresh, Local Ingredients for Schools**

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