



# USDA FOODS

## A Resource for Buying Local

USDA FOODS has a dual mission of supporting domestic agriculture and providing healthy foods to schools. Offerings include a variety of fresh, frozen, canned and dried fruits and vegetables, lean meats, peanut butter, whole wheat grain products, and cheeses.

In order to access these healthy options, each state in the country is allocated a certain amount of money, or "entitlement value," to spend on USDA Foods, based on the number of lunches served in the previous school year. In FY 2015, nearly \$1.5 billion in USDA Foods went to schools; in any given year, about 10-15% of the value of food served through the National School Lunch Program comes from USDA Foods.

### USDA Foods supports local purchasing in several ways:

#### Maximizes Funds for Local Purchases

In a time of tightening budgets, every dollar's worth of USDA Foods delivered to a school frees up money that a school would otherwise have to spend commercially. By using USDA Foods products, schools can save cash reimbursement dollars for local purchases.

“ USDA is a partner in meeting my local purchasing goals. I often shift my entitlement to products that are not available locally and to products, like the roast chicken, that USDA Foods is able to offer at a lower price point than I could get as an individual school district. ”

- Andrea Early, Director of School Nutrition,  
Harrisonburg City Public Schools

#### Champions American Agriculture

USDA Foods are all produced in the United States, thus it is possible to order foods through the USDA Foods catalog that are produced in your region. For example, Mississippi is the only state that produces significant, commercial quantities of catfish. If a school is located in the Southeast, USDA Foods catfish could be local to that school. Likewise, apricots offered through USDA Foods normally come from California, and pears usually originate in the Pacific Northwest.

#### Supports Local Processors

Most states send a portion of their USDA Foods to processors to be turned into end products like burritos, burgers or rice bowls. Check to see if your state has agreements with processors located close to home.

#### Promotes Local Fruit and Vegetable Producers

The DoD Fresh program allows schools to use their USDA Foods entitlement dollars to buy fresh, and often local, produce. DoD contracts with over 47 produce distributors across the country, who are encouraged to provide local produce whenever possible and identify locally-sourced items in the ordering catalog. Several states rely on DoD produce as an integral part of farm to school efforts.



## Which USDA Foods are Local to Your Region?

State of origin reports provide a good retrospective on where USDA Foods are typically from. To buy local with USDA Foods, identify which products USDA typically purchases from your state or region, keeping in mind that future procurements may not follow these trends. The lists below provide a snap shot of the state of origin data and highlight items that are typically purchased from each part of the country.

### Northeast

Flour  
Corn  
Green Beans

### Mid Atlantic

Corn  
Pasta  
Beans  
Chicken

### Mountain Plains

Beans  
Beef  
Flour  
Pasta  
Pork

### Midwest

Apples  
Cherries  
Beef  
Beans  
Carrots  
Cheese  
Green Beans

### Western

Pollock  
Cheese  
Apricots  
Peaches  
Tomatoes  
Pears  
Potatoes

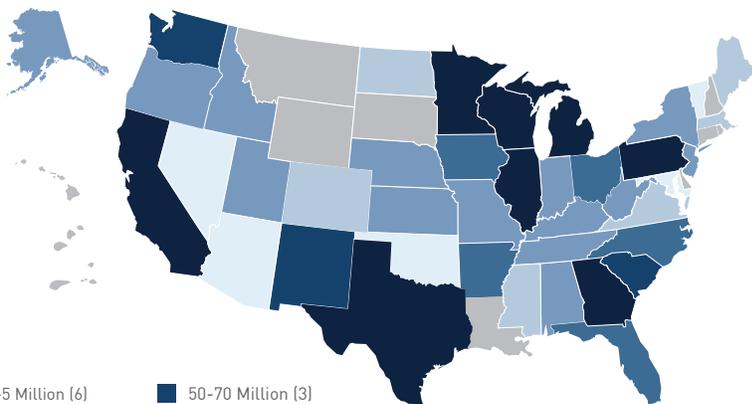
### Southwest

Rice  
Beans  
Peanut Butter  
Beef

### Southeast

Chicken  
Peanut Butter  
Catfish  
Turkey  
Rice  
Flour

## Dollar Value of Food Purchased from Each State for the USDA Foods Program in FY 2015



\*No USDA Foods were processed or packed in ten states.

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For more information, and to sign up for the bi-weekly e-letter from the Food and Nutrition Service's Office of Community Food Systems, 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).

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. Updated June 2016.

### Learn More

Refer to the [Food Distribution page](#) of the USDA's website for a complete list of the foods available and factsheets for each product.

To identify USDA Foods that may be local to you, check out the [state of origin reports](#).

To find USDA Foods' vendors local to you, reference the Agricultural Marketing Service's and Farm Service Agency's [eligible vendor lists](#).

The [National Processing Agreements website](#) provides a list of eligible processors.

For more information about DoD Fresh, please refer to the [DoD Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program](#).

