



MASSACHUSETTS
FARM TO SCHOOL

NFS Minimally Processed:

What Does It Mean?

November 1, 2023



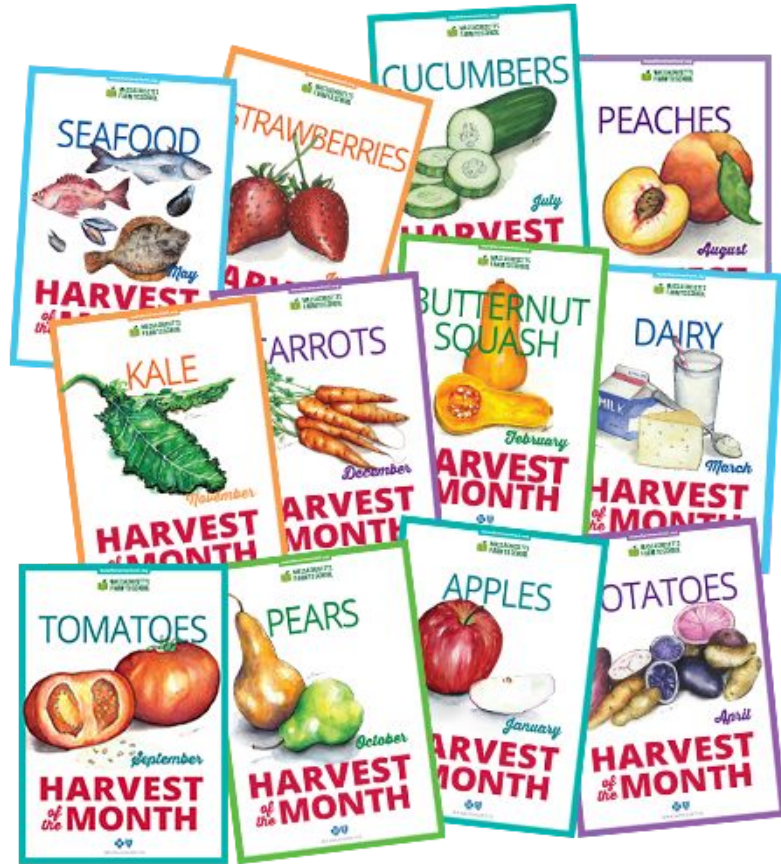
Agenda

1. USDA Guidance on Minimally Processed Foods
2. Examples by product category
3. Mass. Farm to School Resources
4. USDA Farm to School Census
5. Questions & Contact



Photo courtesy of Littleton Public Schools

MASS. FARM TO SCHOOL OVERVIEW



Mass. Farm to School strengthens local farms and fisheries and promotes healthy communities by increasing local food purchasing and education at schools.

Get involved through our:

- Professional learning opportunities
- Networking
- Policy/Advocacy
- Communications

USDA Examples of Allowable NFS Products

A5. Examples of allowable food products include fruits and vegetables (including 100% juices); grain products such as pastas and rice; meats (whole, pieces, or food items such as ground meats); meat alternatives such as beans or legumes, and fluid milk and other dairy foods such as cheese and yogurt. Foods in a wide variety of minimal processing states (e.g., whole, cut, pureed, etc.) and/or forms (e.g., fresh, frozen, canned, dried, etc.) are also allowable.

Foods that are generally understood to be significantly processed or prepared are unallowable. Examples of unallowable products would include baked goods such as breads, muffins, or crackers; prepackaged sandwiches or meals; other prepared and/or pre-cooked items that come ready-to-eat or that require no further preparation beyond heating (eg. chicken nuggets, fish sticks, pre-made pizzas, etc).

Minimally Processed Foods

What is Minimally Processed?

Products are altered from their fresh, whole, state in some way:

- Ground
- Peeled
- Cut
- Pureed
- Canned
- Dried



In Sept. Littleton Public Schools featured a local hamburgers from Walden Local, as well as Fairview Orchards apples, Stonefield Farm red grape tomatoes & Verrill Farm green peppers.

Minimally Processed Meat & Fish

Examples of Minimally Processed Meat & Fish:

If requesting NFS reimbursement, animals must be grown/raised/caught within 400 miles of your SFA. If buying through butcher or fishmonger, ask for verification the meat sourced from animals raised within your NFS radius.

- 4 oz Ground Hamburger Patties
- Beef Strips
- Ground Pork
- Ground Turkey
- Boneless Chicken Thighs
- 4oz Fillets of Fish (unbreaded)



Local beef strips served in Franklin Public Schools in September.

References: Franklin Public Schools went through an Invitation for Bid (IFB) for beef and pork products, focusing on local vendors who could verify animals raised on local farms.

Minimally Processed Vegetables



Chicopee Public Schools utilizes local carrot coins and potatoes from Czajkowski Farm in Hadley, MA. Photo courtesy of Chicopee Fresh

Examples of Minimally Processed Vegetables:

If requesting NFS reimbursement, produce must be grown within 400 miles of your SFA. If buying through a distributor, ask for information about farm of origin to confirm it is within your NFS radius.

Frozen broccoli florets

Pepper Strips

Peeled and cut squash

Carrot coins

Tomato sauce

Diced, frozen potatoes

Hot Tip: Ask your produce distributor if they carry fresh-cut items or local IQF products.

Minimally Processed Fruit

Examples of Minimally Processed Fruit:

If requesting NFS reimbursement, produce must be grown within 400 miles of your SFA. If buying through a distributor, ask for information about farm of origin to confirm it is within your NFS radius.

Apple Slices

Frozen Berries

Fruit Purees

100 % Apple Cider



If requesting NFS reimbursement, produce must be grown within 400 miles of your SFA. If buying through a distributor, ask for information about farm of origin to confirm it is within your NFS radius.

Hot Tip: Ask your produce distributor if they carry fresh cut or local IQF products you could utilize

Minimally Processed Foods

Minimally Processed Dairy Products:

If requesting NFS reimbursement, products must be grown/raised within 400 miles of your SFA.

- Cheese
- Plain Yogurt
- Sour Cream

Minimally Processed Grain Products:

If requesting NFS reimbursement, grains must be grown within 400 miles of your SFA.

- Corn tortillas
- Raw flour



Ineligible for NFS Reimbursement

Examples of INELIGIBLE Foods Include:

- Breded Product examples:
 - Sandwich breads
 - Rolls
 - Muffins
 - Croutons
- Ready to eat food examples:
 - Breaded fish
 - Hot dogs
 - Chicken nuggets
 - Mozzarella sticks
 - Pizza
 - Pudding
- Produce examples:
 - Orange slices
 - Instant mashed potatoes
 - Banana chips
 - 100% Juice mixes (ex: fruit punch, grape, etc.)



How to Find Local

Utilize Mass Farm to School's Local Food Map

MASSACHUSETTS FARM TO SCHOOL

Get Involved /
Harvest of the Month
Food Source Map

Where to Find Local Food

Use our searchable database to find farmers and food producers interested in supplying your institution.

[View Local Producer List](#)

[View Food Hub List](#)

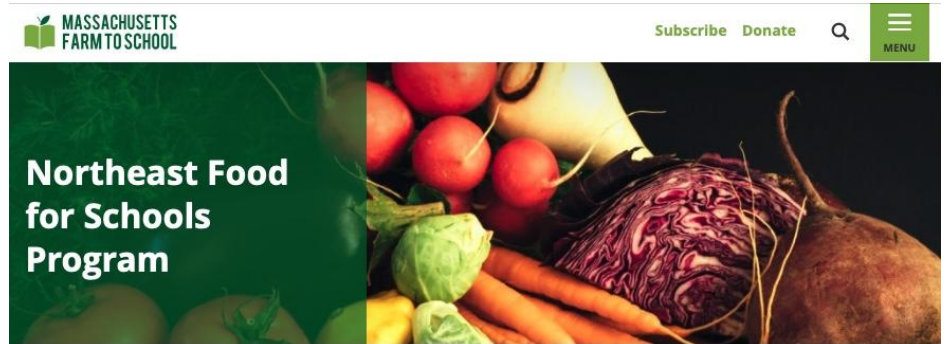
[List Your Business Here](#)

Filter by "Harvest of the Month" or Specialty:

How to Find Local

Utilize the 3 Quote Sample

- Updated to reflect \$100,000 small purchase threshold
- Customizable
- Developed by DESE and Mass. Farm to School to support compliant procurement



SAMPLE Produce

REQUEST FOR QUOTES

The **ADD SCHOOL DISTRICT NAME** (hereinafter "District") invites quotes from vendors that can provide the following items listed in Appendix B: RFQ Quote Form. We are requesting firm fixed pricing from **September 1, 2023**, through **December 30, 2023**.

District information:

PROVIDE GENERAL DISTRICT INFORMATION

Northeast Food Enr Schools: We are participating in a grant that provides funding for unprocessed or minimally processed products (e.g., whole, cut, pureed, etc.) and/or forms (e.g., fresh, frozen, canned, dried, etc.) with a preference that items are raised, produced, aggregated, stored, processed, and distributed within 400 miles.

****All quotes/submissions are due to **ADD NAME** via email at **ADD EMAIL** by **ADD DATE** at 5pm**

Please contact **ADD NAME** at **ADD EMAIL** with any questions by **3:00 pm on August 12, 2023**.

PROGRAM PRINCIPLES

Complete the USDA Farm to School Census



2023 Farm to School Census Survey

- The USDA conduct a Farm to School Census survey every 4 years to provide a nationwide picture of farm to school activities
 - Survey results are leveraged to secure funding and resources for future farm to school initiatives
- All school food service directors were emailed a unique survey link for their school/district Census survey on October 2nd
- Encourage the schools/districts you work with to complete the census even if they do not participate in farm to school activities
- Census survey must be completed by the end of December 2023



Featured Right: FY23 MA FRESH Grantees: Rainbow Child Development Center in Worcester, MA

Questions & Contact



Visit us online:

www.massfarmtoschool.org

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Submit your Terrific Trays Photos!

<https://bit.ly/3s4uZC8>



What other learning opportunities are you looking for?

Complete our very brief exit survey:

<https://forms.gle/WGcEKDctUJNnZVfu5>