



## Conversation Guide: Child Nutrition Director and Producer First Meeting

Use these questions as a guide for an initial meeting between a Child Nutrition Director and a local grower. They are written from the Child Nutrition Director's point of view but can also assist a grower with identification of key issues important to a school food service staff person.

1. Are you interested in supplying products to Arkansas public schools?
2. What crops/products do you grow and when are the times throughout the year that they are available?
3. Have you previously sold directly to schools or other institutions?
4. Do you have a price and/or availability sheet for your products?
5. What is your preferred order size (minimum and maximum volume)?
6. How do you package your products (minimum and maximum package sizes)?
7. Do you sort and grade produce? Can you tell me about that process?
8. What quality control (food safety processes) do you have on your farm to ensure the product is safe? Is your produce washed before packing?
9. Can you tell me about your delivery methods?
10. What transportation (truck/refrigerated truck/distributor) do you have for your products?
11. Do you currently work with any distributors?
12. What is your preferred method of communication: phone, fax, email, other?
13. Schools must receive an itemized invoice and pay all invoices once per month. Is this acceptable for you?
14. How far in advance can you tell me what products you will have and when they will be available?
15. How much lead time do you need for my orders?
16. How do you communicate if there is a delivery or product volume/quality problem? If there is no system in place what type of timeline would you be most comfortable with?

### Optional Questions

1. Would you consider conducting farm tours for students and/or food service directors?
2. Would you be willing to consider planting different, possibly new, products specifically to sell to our district? If yes, what is the best time of year to follow up with you about this? What type of commitment would you need from us to pursue this option?
3. What labels do your products carry (natural, pesticide free, etc.)?

If you have questions or would like to learn more about how you can implement farm to school, contact:

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### My Conversation Goal:

By \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_, I will contact \_\_\_ farmers to learn about their farm and talk with them about my school as a potential customer.

To find local Arkansas growers, use the following:

- Arkansas Grown website: [www.arkansasgrown.org](http://www.arkansasgrown.org)
- Arkansas MarketMaker website: <http://ar.marketmaker.uiuc.edu>
- Visit your local farmer's market or contact your local market manager. A list of markets and market managers can be found at [www.arkansasgrown.org](http://www.arkansasgrown.org) by clicking on browse products and then clicking 'Farmers Market' for point of sale.

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