



THE FARM TO
INSTITUTION CENTER™

BUYERS GUIDE

A Resource to Assist in Local Food
Procurement for Institutional Buyers



The Farm to Institution Center™ is an initiative of Community Health Improvement Partners™

INTRODUCTION

The state, county, city, and community in which a food service operation is established in greatly impacts its ability to source and incorporate local produce. Fortunately for some, San Diego County is home to more than 5,000 farmers, many of which who grow on less than 10 acres of land. In order to keep these businesses intact, farmers must connect with and sell to diverse buyers who are willing to invest in local products. Sadly, farmers without viable sale channels often settle by selling to packing houses, who often pay bottom-dollar for high quality products. A recipe for profitloss.

In order to sustain the local food sources in San Diego County for future generations, buyers of all kinds, shapes, and sizes must find creative ways to connect with, source and incorporate local food into their food service operations. San Diego County's agricultural food production needs the support of institutional buyers and distributors to support its sustainability.

The **Local Food Procurement for Institutional Buyers Resource Guide** was developed to support and encourage good food buyers to connect with producers local to San Diego County.

THIS RESOURCE GUIDE INCLUDES



LOCAL PRODUCE COMMITMENT TEMPLATE

Template language for buyers on their sourcing and incorporating local produce.

See Pg. 3



SAMPLE LETTER TO PRODUCE DISTRIBUTORS

Sample letter to assist communication between buyer and current or new distributions.

See Pg. 3



SAMPLE "FORWARD CONTRACT"

Sample language used for a business agreement between a farmer grows crops for a buyer.

See Pg. 4



THE SDFSP LOCAL FARM DIRECTORY MAP

A map of local producers who are participants in the San Diego Farm Sustainability Program.

See Pg. 9

These efforts are being supported by the generous funding from the California Department of Food and Agriculture's Specialty Crop Block Grant Program. Through this financial support, **Community Health Improvement Partner's (CHIP) Farm to Institution Center (F2IC)** developed the **San Diego Farm Sustainability Program (SDFSP)**, a 20-month, no cost business development course to support the sustainability of 20 San Diego County farm operations.



LOCAL PRODUCE COMMITMENT TEMPLATE

“For [**Insert Organization or Business**], knowing where our food comes from is of the utmost importance. [**Insert Organization or Business**] is committed to purchasing local produce to incorporate into our food service operation whenever feasible. We believe that buying from and investing in independent, locally owned farms supports their long-term business sustainability and strengthens the local economy. We hope you continue to enjoy our meal options, and taste the hard-work put into growing and preparing the food.”



PRODUCE DISTRIBUTORS SAMPLE LETTER

Dear Produce Distributor,

Institutional buyers in San Diego County and throughout California care deeply about the quality of food that we serve, as well as the names and faces of those who grow it.

For our food service operation, we are interested in procuring local and sustainable products that can be identifiable by farm, state, and region. Your support is essential in order for us to reach our goal of increasing locally sourced produce. You can support our food procurement goals in the following ways:

1. **Increasing Local Food Supply** - Prioritize identifying and working with local farms whenever feasible.
2. **Product Origin Transparency** – Share or develop product origin details/reports in order for us to track and reach our local/sustainable procurement goals.
3. **Cross Docking** - Allow districts or buyers to purchase directly from farms or aggregators while utilizing the shipping and invoicing of their existing distributors.

We sincerely thank you for your continued supportive partnership in reaching our local and sustainable food procurement goals.

Thank you,
<<First Name, Last Name>>
<<Organization>>



FORWARD CONTRACTING BETWEEN FARMERS & BUYERS

A forward contract, also known as “contract growing” is a business agreement where a farmer agrees to grow certain crops (in specific quantities and at a set price) for a buyer.

Forward contracts can be a viable solution for both parties:

BUYERS: a forward contract allows buyers to address crop failure(s) and plan menus around the produce under contract.

PRODUCERS: a forward contract allows producers to better plan planting and packaging according to the needs of the producer.

The producer has the sale before the seeds are planted. Forward contracts may be utilized by a school district after a Request for Proposals (RFP) has been awarded. It can also be modified after an Informal Procurement Process (3 bids and a buy) to award a vendor for the agreed upon product.





SAMPLE FORWARD CONTRACT LANGUAGE

SPECIFICATIONS:

- U.S. Fancy Grade Varieties: **[Insert varieties here]**
- Sizes: **[Inset size requirement here]**
- Products are CLEAN, free from dirt and pests;
- Packaging: **[Inset packaging requirement here]**
- All boxes will be inspected for bruising and will be rejected if more than _% are showing damage. (3 out of 140; 2 out of 125)
- Price includes any delivery charges to the school indicated
- Date Range of weeks: **[Insert delivery date range here]**
- Case volume is estimated

____ **(Name of buyer or organization)** intends to buy ____ **(name of product(s))** from **(Insert Date)** to **(Insert Date)**.

____ **(Grower/Producer)** intends to grow, harvest and deliver the products identified in the Specification section of this document.

____ **(quantity to be delivered in case or pounds)** will be delivered to the following drop off site(s):

PAYMENT TERMS & PROCESS:

- Invoices will be included with each delivery, and will include the following:
 - Vendor
 - Name
 - Quantity
 - Variety
 - Extended price from a computerized system if required
- Payments should be made within the following month on the buyer or district's cycle.



SAMPLE FORWARD CONTRACT LANGUAGE CONT.

Weather and devastating drought or storms may prevent the completion of this forward contract. No obligation by the vendor or buyer will be assumed in this event. Neither party shall be responsible for any losses resulting if the fulfillment of the terms of the agreement is delayed or prevented by:

- **Wars**
- **Acts of public enemies**
- **Strikes**
- **Fires**
- **Floods**
- **Acts of God**
- **Any other acts which could not have been prevented by the exercise of due diligence**

CONTINGENCY PLAN:

At the time of ordering, should any of the crops be unavailable due to growing or harvesting issues, the buyer contact will be notified with substitutions to consider.

THE VENDOR CONTACT WILL:

- Contact the buyer one month before the first delivery to apprise the buyer of any issues with the anticipated harvest;
 - At the latest, one month prior, the vendor can request alterations to the RFP award to adjust for: growing conditions and harvest including item substitution, item cancellation or price adjustment in extreme situations
- Will give any credit for any quality problems with the product within 2-5 days of delivery as long as the buyer stored the product at the proper temperature
- Will notify the buyer of any problems with delivery or school site issues
- Will send a price list of other products weekly to the buyer for additional purchases

THE BUYER CONTACT WILL:

- Contact the vendor two weeks prior to the first shipment to confirm order amounts, dates and location(s) of deliveries
- Any special instructions for delivery including challenges that will affect their weekly order or the buyer's order
- Contact the vendor whenever events may reduce meal service in order to minimize impacts on the fulfillment of the Agreement; working with the vendor to avoid cancellation.



SAMPLE FORWARD CONTRACT LANGUAGE CONT.

This is not a legally binding document. It serves to document the intentions and agreement from both parties.

Buyer Signature of Acknowledgement

Date: _____

Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Vendor Signature of Acknowledgement

Date: _____

Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____





MAP

- 1 JDavis Farms
- 2 Willow Creek
- 3 Canyon View Farms
- 4 Bay Fruit and Herb Co.
- 5 Hillcrest Healthy Grove
- 6 Riley Ranch
- 7 San Gabriel Ranch
- 8 Avohill Farms
- 9 Davis Farms
- 10 Terra Madre Gardens
- 11 The Grove
- 12 Roadrunner Farms
- 13 SGG Farms
- 14 Hukama Produce
- 15 Hatfield Creek Aquaponics
- 16 Full Sail Farm
- 17 A La Vuelta Farm
- 18 Paradise Found Vermiponic Farm
- 19 Pixca Farm





TONI KRAFT

SENIOR PROGRAM MANAGER

Toni earned a B.S. in Hospitality and Restaurants from Madison University with an emphasis in Agribusiness and Culinary Destination Management. Toni has owned two successful restaurants in North County San Diego, one on 10 acres of farm, olives and vines, and one in the Poway Unified School District Offices, setting the Earth's table with farm to desk style scratch cooking. Proud past president of Slow Food San Diego North, Chopra trained Lifestyles and Functional Nutrition Instructor, cooking class teacher with over 7,000 students from around the globe and Amazon Best Seller cook book author. In her role, Toni manages and oversees the efforts and programs of the F2I Center, facilitates collaborative meetings, and fosters and maintains relationships with partners.



DANE PETERSEN

PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Dane earned a B.S. in Kinesiology and Health Promotion and a minor Psychology from California Polytechnic State University, Pomona. In his role with the Farm to Institution Center, Dane leads program coordination, logistics, and brokering of local farm-to-buyer sales. Prior to his coordinator position, Dane served as the department's program assistant from 2017 to 2019 and as an intern during the summer of 2017. Dane was born and raised in San Diego, and enjoys contributing to the local good food movement through supporting our essential food producers.



NATALIE LAREAU

PROGRAM ASSISTANT

Natalie earned a B.S. in Environmental Science and double minors in Biology and Food Studies from the University of Oregon. She previously served as an intern on a 2.5-acre non-profit garden in Eugene, Oregon where she grew and cooked food that was donated to local food banks, as well as educated garden volunteers on planting, ecology, maintenance, and harvesting, sparking her passion for local food. Natalie has a love for sustainability, food, gardening, and all things local. She began as an intern for the F2I Center, then became Program Assistant during the height of the pandemic. In her role, Natalie leads program curriculum development, direct education, communications, and administrative logistics. In her spare time, she enjoys gardening, trying out new recipes, and taking her dog on adventures.



GROW LOCAL AND GO LOCAL



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