

Remember! Most Centers use a variety of options for getting local foods or try different ones. Don't be discouraged if it takes time to get it right!

Step 1: Assess your readiness

Your center wants to buy local food!  
Let's assess center's readiness for local food.

Thinking about how your cook uses the kitchen and how food has been prepared in the past, does your center...

Use fresh foods occasionally, like once or twice a week?

Use fresh foods on a regular basis, like every day?

Not use fresh foods yet in meals and snacks?

Great! You are well equipped and experienced to jump into local food purchasing!

Cool! You are ready for local purchasing, but may need to be mindful of cook experience and kitchen set-up limitations

You're not quite there yet to start purchasing local food. Try starting with fresh food first to help you explore what cook skills and kitchen equipment you need.

Now take a look at your center and determine your needs and capacity. Do you...

Step 2: Assess your needs, capacity, and preferences

Only need food for snacks and/or taste tests

Want to outsource cooking to a meal service?

Need enough food for meals, snacks and taste tests

Want to grow your own food?

Have less than 50 children enrolled?

Have more than 50 children enrolled?

Garden!

Caterer/ Centralized Kitchen

Okay with indirect access to your farmer?

Want a direct relationship with your farmer?

Don't need delivery

Need delivery

Want a direct relationship with your farmer?

Willing to start a new account and work with a farmer to figure out delivery

Need delivery and don't want to start a new account

Shop and choose each item?

Just enough of each item to try something new?

Step 3: Choose the local food option that works for you!

Farmers Market/ Farm Stand!

CSA/ Box Program!

Grocery Store!

Food Hub!

Farmer Direct!

Distributor!