

Farm2School

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR THE 2024-2025 FARM2SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM

Mesabi East School District ISD #2711
601 North 1st Street W.
Aurora, MN 55705

FARM FRESH GROWN FOOD

PROPOSALS DUE: **NOT LATER THAN 1:00 PM, February 1, 2024**
LATE PROPOSALS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED



1 OVERVIEW

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Mesabi East School District ISD #2711 seeks proposals from farmers, growers and producers for food as part of the Farm2School Lunch Program.

1.2 TERM OF CONTRACT

The contract term shall be the 2024-2025 school year with products being procured for the once a month Farm2School Lunch Program [F2S]. Months include September through May.

1.3 CONTRACT PROVISIONS & TIMELINES

Proposers are advised to read and become familiar with ISD #2711 standard terms and conditions provided in section 5.

TIMELINES

| ACTIVITY | DATE |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| Issue and Advertise RFP | January 5, 2024 |
| Deadline for Questions | January 26, 2024 |
| Proposals Due | February 1, 2024 |
| Procurement Committee Meeting | February 9, 2024 |
| Anticipated Contract Award | February 26, 2024 |

NOTE: The Procurement Committee reserves the right to deviate from this schedule.

1.4 PROCUREMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Rachel Doherty, ISD #2711 Greenhouse Manager

Dr. Jeff Burgess, Superintendent, ISD # 2711

Walt Hautala, School Board Member, ISD # 2711

Demetri Johnson, Food Service Director, ISD # 2711

Pam Zahn, Finance Officer, ISD # 2711

Selina Layman, RN CLC

2 SCOPE OF WORK

2.1 STATEMENT OF WORK

The selected Contractors/Farmers/Ranchers will provide and deliver farm fresh produce, protein and eggs. Individual product specifications are listed on ATTACHMENT D, Cost Proposal. Mesabi East Public School District ISD #2711 implemented the Farm2School Lunch Program in September 2019. The program provides lunch once a month which introduces farm fresh grown food to students. The Farm2School Lunch Program promotes healthy eating habits, supports neighboring small and mid-sized farmers and helps build the local economy. Tarehe program offers important learning opportunities for students, staff and guests. The school cafeteria is a model for health, wellness and food system sustainability. At ISD #2711, the cafeteria is viewed as a learning laboratory to introduce students to locally sourced food. ISD #2711 is interested in purchasing products from farmers whose production practices support environmental sustainability goals, such as, [but not restricted to], reduced use or elimination of chemical pesticides and fertilizers, use of organic fertilizers, fewer transport miles between farm and ISD #2711, and environmentally friendly packaging. Featured ISD #2711 products will be promoted through the Food Service Department. In addition, ISD #2711 may choose to provide supplemental educational activities during the Farm2School lunches. ISD #2711 used the following in determining which products to feature in the 2020-2021 Farm2School Program.

1. Availability of the item in the area where students live such that the featured items are more likely to also be offered outside the school environment.

2. Consideration was given to **children's food preferences** and how much children generally like each item selected for Farm2School.

3. Foods are selected to represent the **diverse** bio-cultural landscape and food economy in which ISD #2711 is located. Considerations included foods both associated with traditional farming and those that honor the local hunting traditions and cultural diversity.

4. To promote **school and home garden connections**, foods are selected that are also likely to be grown in local gardens.

5. Nutrient dense foods are selected.

6. So that kitchens may incorporate the F2S products into a variety of dishes, the **versatility** of the selected item is considered.

Product Quality of Produce

Fresh fruit and vegetables shall be:

- Cool to the touch
- Of reasonably uniform color
- Free from foreign flavor and odor
- Normally developed
- Free from objectionable matter
- Clean and free from foreign material

Fresh fruit and vegetables shall be reasonably free from:

- Extraneous vegetable material
- Stem ends
- Rot
- Damage by insects, rodents or disease
- Insect infestation
- Mechanically damaged units
- Moderate amount of bruising
- Fibrous units and stems

Food Safety Requirements for Produce

Farmers shall have a written on-farm food safety plan, which shall address:

- Handwashing in field and packing area
- Health and hygiene training for workers
- Management of manure and compost as fertilizer
- Limiting animals in fields and packing areas
- Cleaning of equipment, storage containers, and tools
- Testing of well water
- Do not need to have a gap audit. Template included.
- Resources and FAQs listed under Attachment A

NO!

Not Acceptable



Potatoes should have no green skins or pest damage.



All root vegetables shall be free of deris and pest damage.



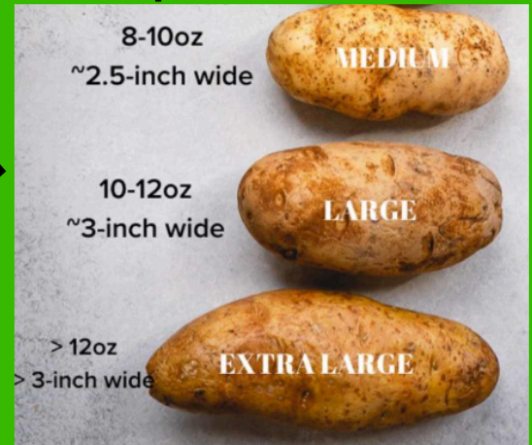
All vegetables shall be free of deris and pest damage, fresh and cool to the touch.



All vegetables shall be fresh, vibrant and cool to the touch.

YES!

Acceptable



Product Quality and Requirement of Meat

All meat purchased by ISD-2711 must be processed at an establishment that is inspected continuously either by the USDA or Minnesota Department of Agriculture Meat and Poultry "Equal to" Program.

For an updated list, please visit the following links shown below:

[Minnesota State "Equal To" Plants](#) (MN-Equal To Inspected)

<https://www.fsis.usda.gov/wps/portal/fsis/topics/inspection/mpi-directory> (USDA Inspected)

Product Quality and Requirement of Eggs

A retail egg license is required if a farmer distributes eggs from other farms, not their own; or have more than 3,000 hens in production. Otherwise, farmers need to register with the MDA using the form found on the next page. Farmers selling eggs from their small flocks need to follow the grading, candling, packing and labeling requirements. This fact sheet lays out the rules for food facilities accepting locally grown eggs from farmers:

https://www.mda.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/docs/2021-01/Safely_Selling_or_Buying_Locally_Produced_Eggs_1.22.21.pdf

Sales to Grocery Stores, Farmers Markets, Restaurants, Schools, etc.

Producers must meet the requirements of Minnesota Statutes 29 and Minnesota Rules 1520. Basic compliance with these requirements include the following:

- **CLEANING:** The eggs must be cleaned by approved methods.
- **CANDLED AND GRADED:** All eggs must be candled and graded.
- **REFRIGERATION:** Eggs must be refrigerated at 45°F or less after grading and be maintained at that temperature during storage.
- **PACKAGING:** Containers (cartons, flats, and cases) of eggs must be labeled with the following mandatory information:
 - Grade and size of the eggs.
 - Your name, address and zip code.
 - The statement, "Perishable. Keep Refrigerated."
 - A pack date in the Julian calendar (day of the year). For example: The labeling of a grade A egg packed on June 1 will have a pack date of 152.
 - A freshness date not to exceed 30 days from the date of pack. The freshness date must also have an explanation such as "exp." best if used by or similar explanation. In the above example using June 1 as the pack date, the freshness date is July 1.
 - The safe handling instructions: "To prevent illness from bacteria: keep eggs refrigerated, cook eggs until yolks are firm, and cook foods containing eggs thoroughly."

Sales Direct to Consumer from Farm Premise

- Allowed by the MDA and farmers are exempt from licensing and inspection
- Must own less than 3,000 layers

Cleaning of Eggs

- Wet cleaning using rags, sponges or other devices to scrub or wipe by hand is prohibited
- Dry cleaning with abrasive material (sandpaper) reasonably free of bacterial contamination is permitted
- To use washing equipment for cleaning of eggs, you must meet requirements outlined in [MN Rule 1520.0500](#)

Cartons

- Cartons may be reused for selling eggs
- Must be clean
- Maintained in a sanitary manner
- Include labeling information pertaining to the eggs stored in the cartons
- Any claims or information not pertaining to your eggs must be covered or blackened out

What Type of Eggs Can Be Sold in Minnesota

~Chicken ~Turkey ~Duck ~Goose ~Any domesticated fowl



DAIRY AND MEAT INSPECTION DIVISION, PHONE: 651-201-6300, FAX: 651-201-6116

Egg Grading and Sales for Small Producers Exempt from Licensing Poultry Slaughter and Sales Direct to Consumers Exemption

| Date of Application: | | Establishment E-mail: | |
|----------------------|--|-----------------------|------|
| Name of Applicant: | | | |
| Address: | | | |
| City: | | State: | Zip: |
| Establishment Phone: | | Establishment Fax: | |
| Name / Title | | Present Home Address | |
| | | | |
| | | | |

Exemption Requested

I (we) are applying for an exemption to slaughter and process poultry for direct sales to consumers. I (we) understand that we are limited to the number of poultry we can sell and that the poultry products must only be sold from our farm. Type an "X" in the appropriate box.

- Selling less than or equal to 1,000 poultry per calendar year
- Selling between 1,000 and 5,000 poultry per calendar year
- Selling between 5,000 and 20,000 poultry per calendar year
- Candling and grading shell eggs for sales to restaurants, grocery stores, or farmer's markets.

Agreement and Certification

When an exemption is granted by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture to sell eggs without a food handler license, I (we) agree to conform to Minnesota Statutes Section 29 and Minnesota Rules 1520 in regard to the candling, grading and handling of eggs. We have a copy of the appropriate rules and regulations and will strictly adhere to them. I (we) are aware that any violations of state requirements may cancel this exemption.

Signature and Title of Owner, Partner, or Authorized Officer making this application:

 Applicant's Signature

 Title

 Printed Name

 Date

To Be Completed by MDA

Date Received

 Signature of Area Supervisor

 Date

3 PROPOSAL FORMAT, EVALUATION AND SELECTION

3.1 All proposals will be uniform by completing the RFP. **[ATTACHMENT A]**

3.2 The proposals shall be evaluated by the Procurement Committee. The Committee will assign scores to each proposal described under the Evaluation Criteria below.

| CATEGORY | MAXIMUM SCORE |
|---|---------------|
| 1. Meets Product Specification | 20 |
| 2. Sourcing | 20 |
| 3. Experience & Capacity of Proposer | 10 |
| 4. Cost | 40 |
| 5. Additional information for consideration | 10 |
| TOTAL POSSIBLE SCORE | 100 |

1. Category: Meets Product Specification

Information required: Meets products-processing receipt of “Equal to”
Produce meets product quality specifications

Evaluation criteria: Can provide amount and form of product requested
 Can complete 100% of requested amount 20 points
 Can complete 80% of requested amount 15 points
 Can complete 60% of requested amount 10 points

2. Category: Sourcing

Information required: Address of farm

Evaluation criteria: Farm located 30 miles 20 points
 Farm located 75 miles 15 points
 Farm located >75 but in Minnesota 10 points

3. Category: Experience & Capacity of Proposer

Evaluation criteria: Met obligation of past contracts 10 points
 New to the Farm2School Program 5 points

4. Category: Cost

Information required: Cost of products offered

Evaluation criteria: Lowest Bidder 40 points
 Second Lowest 30 points
 Third Lowest 20 points

5. Category: Ability to meet proposals as stated.

Information required: [checks from list below on RFP]

- Free-range
- GMO free
- No antibiotics
- No grain ration
- No hormones
- No pesticides
- No herbicides
- OTHER:

Evaluation criteria: Category 5 items will be discussed by the procurement committee and assigned points from 0 to 10



MINNESOTA HARVEST OF THE MONTH



4 PURCHASING REQUIREMENTS

4.1 PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

Farmers must submit the proposal electronically or in paper form to:

Rachel Doherty , Farm2School Coordinator

ELECTRONICALLY: rdoherty@isd2711.org

PAPER FORM: Mesabi East School District ISD #2711

Attn: Rachel Doherty

601 North 1st Street W.

Aurora, MN 55705

PROPOSALS MUST BE RECEIVED ON OR BEFORE 1 PM ON February 1, 2024

4.2 REJECTION OF PROPOSALS

ISD #2711 reserves the right to reject any or all responses to this RFP.

4.3 CLARIFICATION OF RESPONSES

Mesabi East ISD #2711 reserves the right to request clarification of any item in a farmer's proposal or to request additional information necessary to properly evaluate a particular proposal.

4.4 PUBLICITY

News releases pertaining to the Farm2School Program will share the awarded contracts and profiles of each farm.

4.5 COLLUSION

A Proposer submitting a proposal hereby certifies that no employee of ISD #2711 has a pecuniary interest in this proposal; that the proposal is made in good faith without fraud, collusion or connection of any kind with any other Proposer and that the Proposer is competing solely in its own behalf without connection with, or obligation, to, any undisclosed person or firm.

5 CONTRACT TERMS AND CONDITIONS

5.1 Mesabi East, ISD #2711 SCHOOL FARM2SCHOOL STANDARD CONTRACT

Farmers awarded a contract will be notified and a Procurement Contract will be drawn up and sent to the Farmer. See ATTACHMENT B for a sample contract. Farmers will have 10 business days to sign and return the contract to Mesabi East ISD #2711 Rachel Doherty, Farm2School Coordinator.

5.2 PAYMENT OF INVOICES

Dr. Jeff Burgess and Rachel Doherty will sign each contract and submit for payment to the District Business Office. Copies of the completed contract will be mailed or emailed to the awarded farmers with instructions for delivery and payment of invoices.

Please invoice:

Mesabi East Schools
Attention, Pam Zahn
601 N. 1st St.
Aurora, MN 55705

Farmers will receive payment after the product is delivered per awarded contract via the district office Financial Officer.

5.3 DELIVERY OF PRODUCT

The 2023-2024 Farm2School Lunches will be assigned on the third week monthly beginning in September and ending in May. Products must be delivered to Mesabi East ISD #2711 School kitchen. Deliveries shall be coordinated with the Food Service Director.

5.4 DELAYS

If delivery delays are foreseen: Mesabi East ISD #2711 Food Service must be notified within 24 hours of the contractor's knowledge of such delay. Contractor shall keep the school advised of the status of deliveries. Two failures to meet delivery dates will constitute a breach of contract by contractor which may subject the contractor to termination under terms and conditions of the resultant contract, and may further jeopardize future bidding opportunities with Mesabi East ISD #2711 Public School District. In the event of default by the contractor of their obligations, ISD #2711 reserves the right to obtain the required products elsewhere.

Frequently Asked Questions:

1. Do I have to deliver during a certain time?
 - a. Morning delivery times (before 10a.m) are preferred. Please call the Food Director Demeteri Johnson for scheduling your delivery times.
2. If I can not fulfill the amount of produce I bid, what then?
 - a. We understand that crops can fail. Please notify the Farm2School Coordinator as soon as possible so that other arrangements to procure the food can be made.
3. Do I get compensated for delivery?
 - a: You must incorporate your delivery costs into your cost-per-product.



ATTACHMENT A

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

Farm Name: _____

Farmer's Full Name: _____

Address: _____

Which county is your farm located? _____

Miles from Farm to Mesabi East: _____

Phone/cell #: _____

Email: _____

Website: _____

DIRECTIONS:

Indicate which product/s you can provide by completing the minimum weight, month and price per pound columns. If handwriting the information, please write legibly.

The examples of produce, meats, and other products are listed in Appendix D. Along with a sample of how to indicate what items you are able to provide.

Questions regarding the RFP must be submitted via email on or before noon on February 1, 2024 to Rachel Doherty at rdoherty@isd2711.org

Questions submitted after the aforementioned time will not be answered.

Additional Resources -

Rachel Doherty Farm2School Coordinator/Greenhouse Manager

rdoherty@isd2711.org or 218-229-5318

Following is a list of product examples that the Mesabi East School District would be interested in. Please use this as a guideline and add any items you feel you may be able to provide. Please do not hesitate to contact one of the resources listed above.

Attachment D

| Requested product Please indicate variety if applicable | Product Description/Usage | Amount used for year | Which month can you provide the product? | Price per unit | Total units you can provide |
|--|---|----------------------|--|----------------|------------------------------|
| *Example* Carrots - rainbow mix | Salad Bar and Carrot coins. Relatively uniform diameter > ³ / ₄ " preferred | 3000 lbs | Sept., Oct. | \$0.10/lb | Sept - 50lbs Oct - 100lbs |
| Apples | Sweet, Crisp, Tart and unique varieties. | 2,000 ct | | | |
| Blueberries | Free of blemishes and frozen | 200-300 lb | | | |
| Beets | For dicing and roasting. Large size preferred. (baseball size) misshape ok. | 50 lb | | | |
| Broccoli | Florets served raw/cooked. Larger crowns preferred. (>4") | 880 lb | | | |
| Cabbage | Shredded in coleslaw. Tight, firm, large heads preferred. | 100lb | | | |
| Carrots | Salad Bar and Carrot coins. Relatively uniform diameter > ³ / ₄ " preferred | 1700 lb | | | |
| Cauliflower | Florets served raw or roasted. Minimal browning ok | 200 lb | | | |
| Celery | Crisp stalks | 200 lb | | | |
| Cucumbers | Sliced/diced on salad bars. Long and relatively | 1000 lb | | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|------------|--|--|--|
| | straight in shape. Not hard or woody. | | | | |
| Green Beans | Fresh on salad bars, steamed or roasted. Interested in green, yellow or multicolor sweet beans. Minimal blemish ok. | 1000 lb | | | |
| Greens, Mixed | Served fresh on salad bar. Must be able to sit on salad bar for 3 hours. | 200 lb | | | |
| Kohlrabi | Served on salad bar. "Sticks" Large varieties preferred. | 100 lb | | | |
| Melon | Salad bar cubed or wedge. Minimum weight of 3 lbs. | 300 lb | | | |
| Peas, snap | Served raw on salad bar. Minimal cosmetic imperfections. | 50 lb | | | |
| Peppers Green, Red, Yellow, Orange, Purple | Used diced or served raw in strips. Large size preferred. Cosmetic issues or slight misshapen ok. | 200-300 lb | | | |
| Peppers, hot mix | Jalepeno preferred medium size. Cosmetic issues or slight misshapen ok. | 50 lb | | | |
| Potatoes, Red, Yellow, Russet and sweet | Uniformly sized, to use baked, diced, wedge. Size medium to large. Slight to minimal cosmetic imperfections. | 3400 ct | | | |
| Onions | Diced and sliced for cooking. | 250 lbs | | | |

| | | | | | |
|--|---|--------|--|--|--|
| Onions/Green | Use on Salad bar and cooking. | 30 lbs | | | |
| Radish | Use on Salad Bar. Not woody. Some cosmetic imperfections ok. | 50 lbs | | | |
| Rutabaga | For dicing and roasting. Bigger the Better! Some cosmetic imperfections ok. | 100 lb | | | |
| Squash Butternut, Delicata, Spaghetti | Cutting and roasting. <i>Minimal</i> soft spots and decay. | 200lb | | | |
| Tomatoes - Cherry and Grape | For Salad Bar and premade salads. Should be in good cosmetic shape. | 150 lb | | | |
| Tomatoes - Slicers | Red, orange and yellow, flavorful, vine ripened large tomato. Salad bar, sandwiches and salsa. Minimal cosmetic imperfections ok. | 200 lb | | | |
| Turnips | For dicing and roasting. Bigger the Better! Some cosmetic imperfections ok. | 50 lb | | | |
| Watermelon | Salad bar cubed or wedge. Minimum weight of 3 lbs. | 200 lb | | | |
| Zucchini | Slicing and dicing to be served raw and cooked. Some cosmetic imperfections ok. | 200 lb | | | |
| Wild Rice (MN originated) | Grade A or broken. Used in salads, | 250 lb | | | |

| | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|--|--|--|
| | soups and hot dishes. | | | | |
| Honey | 3 gallons or more | 5 gal | | | |
| Maple Syrup | 20 gallons or more | 20 gal | | | |
| Additional Products | | | | | |
| Meats must be processed in a USDA Inspected facility | | Minimum lb Quantity Needed | | | |
| Ground Beef | | 2500/yr | | | |
| Beef Roast | | 400/yr | | | |
| Pork Roast | | 400/yr | | | |
| Ham | | 100/yr | | | |
| Pork (ground or sausage) | | 400/yr | | | |
| Turkey, Breast | | 250/yr | | | |
| Eggs 15-30 dozen weekly | Large size. Hard boiled and cooking. | | | | |

Farm2School

I affirm that I can meet product specifications for produce.

One-Page Summary of Written On-Farm Food Safety Plan for Fruit & Vegetable Production: Briefly describe how you address each of the following food safety practices on your farm.

- 1. Handwashing station(s) in the field and/or packing area.**
- 2. Clean and stocked restroom facilities available to workers.**
- 3. Hygiene, illness, injury and safety training for workers.**
- 4. Regular cleaning/sanitizing for equipment, tools, storage, and transport containers.**
- 5. Manure and/or compost management plan.**
- 6. Measures to keep wild and domestic animals out of fields and packing areas.**
- 7. Annual well water testing for generic E. coli and nitrites/nitrates. (or uses city water)**

Check all that apply to your RFP for Egg and protein products.

- Free-range
- GMO free
- Grass-fed
- No antibiotics
- No grain ration
- No hormones
- Pasture-raised
- OTHER:



Is there anything else you'd like the 2024-2025 Farm2School Procurement Committee to know about your RFP?



The undersigned has read the Overview, Scope of Work, Proposal Format, Evaluation and Selection, Purchasing Requirements, and the Contract Terms and Conditions, is familiar with and understands the information contained herein and agrees to furnish and deliver the goods in accordance with the aforementioned.

Signature

Date

ATTACHMENT A
must be completed and submitted to
Mesabi East School District ISD #2711
601 North 1st Street W.
Aurora, MN 55705
Attention: Rachel Doherty
before 1:00 PM February 1, 2024

ATTACHMENT B SAMPLE CONTRACT

Farm2School

It is the intention of Mesabi East Schools ISD #2711 [name of person coordinating] to purchase **EGGS** from **ABC123 FARMS**.

It is the intention of **ABC123 FARMS** to provide and sell the following product to Mesabi East Schools ISD #2711 Lunch Program [name 1].

Product Name: **EGGS**

The total estimated quantity to be delivered: **8 Dozen**

When it will be delivered to Mesabi East Schools ISD #2711: **September 15, October 15, November 15, 2024**

Cost per unit paid: **\$3.00 per dozen**

Total cost for product: **\$24.00**

[Name 1]

Farmer Dick and Jane
ABC123 Farms