MINNEAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Request for Proposal (RFP) for Local Harvest Food Products RFP: 26-07

Minneapolis Public Schools - Special School District No. 1

1250 West Broadway Ave.
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55411-2533

Procurement

Issued: December 18th, 2025
Proposals Due: February 2nd, 2026, 2 pm

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SECTION I: **OVERVIEW**

A. Project Objective

Minneapolis Public Schools (MPS) is seeking proposals from small organizations and individuals wishing to provide locally grown produce, grains, and other products for the School Nutrition program. Vendors who are interested in selling animal proteins (meats/dairy products), and produce farms whose annual gross sales exceed $1.5 million should not respond to this Request for Proposal. Such vendors are encouraged to apply to MPS's Regional Sourcing RFP issued later this fiscal year.

Minneapolis Public Schools or Special School District Number 1 (SSD #1) is a school district that is coterminous with the City of Minneapolis, Minnesota. With authority granted by the state legislature, the school board makes policy, selects the superintendent, and oversees the district's budget, curriculum, personnel, and facilities. Students speak ninety different languages at home and most school communications are printed in English, Hmong, Spanish, and Somali. The District covers over 70 school programs at 65 sites, with approximately 30,000 students and 3,200 teaching staff.

The District's Farm to School and Local Harvest program is coordinated by the Culinary & Wellness Services department. The program aims to provide students fresh, high-quality, local farm products and education about local food, nutrition, and sustainable agriculture. The District is particularly interested in partnering with small and medium sized farms, farms in which families own or control decision making on the farm, and emerging farmers – including women, people of color, immigrants, young and beginning farmers, Native Americans, and veterans. More information about Minneapolis Public Schools (MPS) Culinary & Wellness Services and the Farm to School Program can be found online: https://www.mpschools.org/departments/cws and https://www.mpschools.org/departments/cws/true-food/farm-to-school.

The District intends to select multiple proposals to provide the necessary Local Harvest products. To facilitate the submission and evaluation of proposals, this request for proposals provides additional background information regarding MPS that will be relevant to submissions.

The majority of awarded products will be directly ordered by and delivered to the District's prime produce vendor, Russ Davis Wholesale/Liberty Fresh located at 653 Rice St, St. Paul MN 55103.

RFP Primary Objective 1: To identify farms and organizations interested in collaborating with the District to supply its students with local food products in a way that is mutually beneficial to the District and farmers. With the goal of providing a firm timeline and preplanned purchases to help smaller farms plan their operations, preference will be given to submissions from proposers with a gross annual sales of less than 1.5 million dollars per year or aggregators working with such entities. Larger prospective vendors, or farmers offering animal proteins, processed dairy products, or other locally raised products that are not fresh produce, grains or beans, are encouraged to apply to the Regional Sourcing RFP issued later this fiscal year.

RFP Primary Objective 2: Gain a thorough understanding of the Farm to School total proposed costs for school year 2026-27.

RFP Primary Objective 3: Gain a thorough understanding of Farm to School relevant supplies available for school year 2026-27.

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B. Schedule of Proposal

1.	Issue RFP:	December 18th, 2025
2.	Intention to Submit:	January 9th, 2026, 4 pm CST
3.	Mandatory Pre Bid Call:	January 14th, 2026, 10 am CST
4.	Written Questions Due:	January 21st, 2026
5.	Responses to Questions:	January 23rd, 2026
6.	Proposals Due:	February 2nd, 2026, 2 pm
7.	Award bid – Selection:	February 11th, 2026
8.	Award Notification:	February 13th, 2026
9.	Implementation:	July 1st, 2026

C. Mandatory Intention to Submit Proposals

In order for your organization to receive updates to this Request for Proposal, including responses to submitted questions from all participating firms, please complete the submission form located at: https://forms.gle/JbHFHQxpbV76Bs7w7 by 4:00 PM on January 9th, 2026. This will allow the District to provide timely information to interested parties. This document is a mandatory document, if this is not submitted by January 9th, 2026; the organization will not be able to participate in Local Harvest Food Product RFP 26-07.

D. Mandatory Pre-Bid Conference Call

The District will hold a **mandatory pre-bid conference call on Wednesday, January 14th, 2026 at 10:00 AM Central Standard Time**. The District will review the RFP process and answer any questions at this time.

Connection information for the Mandatory Pre-Bid Conference Call will be emailed by 10:00 am Monday, January 12th, 2026 to all organizations who complete the Mandatory Intention to Submit a Proposal Form. Participants should connect at 10:00 am Wednesday, January 14, 2026 Central Standard Time for the Mandatory Pre-Bid Conference Call.

E. Submission of Written Questions

All written questions about the RFP shall be submitted by e-mail by 4:00 p.m. Central Standard Time on or before January 21st, 2026 to: RFX@mpls.k12.mn.us. The District will provide written responses to questions from prospective Proposers no later than January 23rd, 2026 EOD. These responses will be posted on the MPS Procurement website alongside the RFP. After January 21st, 2026, no additional questions or inquiries will be allowed.

F. Changes to the RFP

Vendors who are registered with MPS for this RFP via the intention to submit form will be notified by email of any changes in the specifications contained in this RFP. If any changes are issued to this RFP, a good faith attempt will be made to deliver the additional information to those persons or firms who, according to the records of MPS, have previously received a copy of and are registered (on the Intent to Submit form) with the District for this RFP.

G. Preparation of Proposal

1. For consistency and ease of response and evaluation, MPS has supplied a Response Form for this RFP, also posted online. Please download and fill out this form as your response to this notice. Be sure to carefully read and respond to each question clearly and concisely which will aid and speed evaluation and awards.
2. Some questions in this RFP may require organizations to submit documents as an Appendix. Applicants may wish to submit additional supplemental materials to support responses to

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questions. If an applicant intends to include supplemental materials, separate appendices for each part must be developed. Each appendix should be clearly labeled (e.g., Appendix A: Financial Records, etc.).

3. All appendix materials (e.g., sample letters, curricula, lesson plans, progress reports, academic effectiveness data, etc.) must be labeled with the name of the organization and reference the appropriate section and question (e.g., Section C: Description of Expected Services 1a)**. Although there is no page limitation for the Appendix, the appendix should not be excessive in length. Applicants should also ensure the appendix items are appropriately described and referenced in the narrative section of the Response.**
4. The Response must be submitted in the appropriate order. Each part of the Response should be separated with a section divider page listing the *title* of the next part of the Response that is enclosed. All Responses should follow the order below:
    a. Response form
    b. Appendix Materials
5. Additional circumstances that may lead to Responses not being reviewed and/or selected:
    a. Response was received after the deadline, which includes not only the deadline date but also after the deadline time.
    b. Applicant does not intend to complete criminal history checks on employees when required.
    c. Applicant's previous clients have significant complaints regarding the quality of the Title services, communication issues, or other problems.
    d. Any applicable section of the Response is missing or incomplete.
    e. The Response does not meet length, font, or other formatting requirements.

H. Submission of Proposals

In order to be considered for selection, organizations must submit a signed physical or electronic (.pdf) response to this solicitation no later than 2:00 p.m. on February 2nd, 2026**. Late proposals shall not be accepted.**

1. **To submit a proposal electronically**
   Electronic proposals (.doc or .pdf) are to be sent to and must be received by MPS at the email addresses below prior to 2:00 PM on Monday, February 2nd, 2026:
    a. Email proposals to MPS Procurement at: RFX@mpls.k12.mn.us
    b. Subject to read: "RFP #26-07 Farm to School: BID FROM "Company/Organization"
    c. MPS will reply to sender that email was received and that documents (.doc or .pdf) are viewable.

2. **OR, to submit a physical proposal:**
   Mail or deliver one physical copy to:

   Christopher Boyce
   Director, Procurement
   Minneapolis Public Schools
   1250 West Broadway Ave.
   Minneapolis, MN 55411

No other distribution of the proposal shall be made by the organization. It is the sole responsibility of the organization to assure that the proposal is delivered to the designated district office in Item H, above, prior to the deadline. No proposal received after the deadline will

be considered. No unsolicited corrected or resubmitted proposals will be accepted after the proposal submission deadline.

I. Withdrawal of Proposals

A proposal may be withdrawn by the vendor prior to the date and time for submittal of proposals by means of a written request signed by the vendor or its properly authorized representative. Such written request must be delivered via the same methods as the original submission listed in section H. This written request can be either electronic or a hard copy format.

J. Evaluation and Selection Process

1. The Farm to School Evaluation Committee members will include, but is not limited to, a minimum of one member from at least two departments to be named by the Director of Culinary Services. Potential participating committee members from departments could include, but not be limited to:
    a. Culinary and Wellness Services
    b. Procurement
2. Proposals, responses, and references will be included as the Evaluation Committee recommends a solution for the District. Upon approval from the authorized District signer on February 13th, 2026, the District will then proceed with contract discussions with the selected vendor(s) (where needed). The District has no liability to any vendor participating in this RFP process prior to when the authorized District signer signs a contract to that vendor.
3. Proposal selection will be determined by the Evaluation Committee reaching consensus on the selection. The Local Harvest Evaluation Committee members will use a rubric to evaluate the responses to the questions outlined in this RFP. The rubric is provided in Appendix 1 below.
4. The Evaluation Committee shall evaluate all proposals to determine which meet the minimum service/product requirements, without regard to price. This evaluation may, at the Evaluation Committee's discretion, be augmented by verbal or written requests for clarification, or additional information as necessary to determine whether the technical requirements can be met. The Evaluation Committee can contact references supplied in vendor proposals. Findings from these inquiries will be included in the assessment of products for selecting finalists.
5. The Evaluation Committee will then only consider those proposals that meet the minimum service requirements for further evaluation. The Evaluation Committee will evaluate and score the vendor with regard to the scoring rubric that is provided in Appendix 1.

K. Effective Period of Proposals

Unless otherwise stated by proposer, proposals are assumed to be valid for the greater of 90 days or until awards are accepted by the proposer.

L. Bid Reservations

Notwithstanding any other provisions of this RFP, the District reserves the right to award contracts to the organization(s) that best meet the requirements of the RFP, and not necessarily to the lowest cost Proposer. Further, the District reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to award in whole or part, and to waive minor immaterial defects in bids. The District may consider, at its sole discretion, any alternative bid.

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M. Notifications of Unsuccessful Vendors

The Evaluation Committee through the Director of Procurement Christopher Boyce shall notify all Vendors after evaluation but no later than the award recommendation and approval to proceed being placed on the School Board agenda.

N. Contract Negotiations

Negotiations may include all aspects of services and fees. After a review of the proposals, and in-person presentations, the District intends to enter into contract negotiations with some selected organization(s). If a contract with the selected organization is not finalized within 90 days, the District reserves the right to open negotiations with the next ranked organization(s).

O. Award of Contract

The District intends to make awards in part (by product) to multiple organizations; however, the District reserves the right to award in part or as a whole, whichever is deemed most advantageous to the District.

The selected organizations shall be required to enter into written agreements (Letter of Award) or contracts with the District in a form approved by legal counsel for the District. This RFP and the proposal, or any part thereof, may be incorporated into and made a part of the final contract(s). The District reserves the right to negotiate the terms and conditions of the contract(s) with the selected Proposer(s).

P. Contract Term

It is the intent that award letters and contract(s) be valid for a 1 (one) year period.

Q. Disposition of Proposals

All materials submitted in response to this RFP will become the property of the District. All information submitted is considered public and may be disclosed to third parties.

R. Cost Incurred in Responding

This solicitation does not commit the District to pay any costs incurred in the preparation and submission of proposals or in making necessary studies for the preparation thereof, nor to procure or contract for services.

S. Assignment

The successful proposer shall not assign, transfer, convey, or otherwise dispose of the contract, or right, title of interest, or power to execute such a contract to any person, firm, or corporation without the previous consent in writing by the District.

T. Causes for Termination

Causes for termination of the agreement may include any of the following: Failure to promptly and faithfully provide the services required at the prices indicated in the Proposal; violation of any law governing services provided to the District; failure to cooperate upon receiving any reasonable request for information or service; or improper actions of the officers or employees, which in the opinion of the District, would adversely affect its interest, or endanger the structure of the proposing organization such as a spin off or merger which materially affects the terms of this agreement. The District may terminate the agreement without cause on 90-days notice. The District may terminate the agreement with cause on 30 days notice.

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SECTION II: **SCOPE OF SERVICES**

A. Project Background

This section begins with some background information on the Minneapolis Public School District and then discusses the overall expectations for the Local Harvest food products, as well as the district's specific needs.

The Minneapolis Public Schools is the fourth largest K-12 District in Minnesota. Minneapolis, located in Hennepin County, is the largest city in the state of Minnesota, and is the 46th largest in the United States. The District covers 67 school programs at 65 sites, with approximately 30,000 students and 3,200 teaching staff.

70 school programs include:

- ✓ K-5 Schools: 19
- ✓ K-8 Schools: 17
- ✓ Middle Schools (6-8): 5
- ✓ High Schools (9-12): 7
- ✓ Special Education Schools: 2
- ✓ Specialty Schools: 1
- ✓ District Alternative Schools: 4
- ✓ Contract Alternative Schools: 12

Growth projection: Stable
Superintendent: Dr Lisa Sayles-Adams
Chief Financial Officer: Ibrahima Diop
Director of Culinary Services: Bertrand Weber
Director, Procurement: Christopher Boyce

Current Farm to School Environment

The District's Farm to School program began in 2012 and is centered on a commitment to sourcing sustainably grown food from small and mid-sized farms in the region for the District's school meal programs. At the root of the program is the belief that students, farmers and communities benefit from successful Farm to School programs.

The program prides itself on providing high quality, fresh produce to students while maintaining strong, mutually beneficial relationships with farmers. Currently the District's Farm to School program is one of the strongest in the country, recognized nationally for how a large, urban school district can build meaningful partnerships with local farmers and provide educational opportunities for students around food, farming and nutrition. The program has also gained recognition locally among students, parents, staff, media, and partners.

Farm to School Vision

Each year, the program has seen farmers interested in returning as partners, and growth in terms of product varieties and volumes. By the end of the current 2025-2026 school year, the District will have purchased over 150,000 pounds of fresh produce from small to mid-sized farms in our region, grown using sustainable or certified organic growing practices. A total of 21 farms and organizations representing multiple farms in the region currently provide nearly 40 varieties of fresh produce and animal products to the District.

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B. Farm to School Goals & Values

The goals and values of the Farm to School program are as follows. These goals and values are reflected in the included Selection Criteria (Appendix 1). They may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Growing a Farm to School program that is cost-effective for the District and mutually beneficial for both the District and the farmers
- Partnerships with suppliers that are respectful and professional, based in open, honest, and timely communication
- Consistent, high-quality produce and other foods for students and staff
- Equity and diversity among suppliers and their employees
- Commitment to good stewardship of the land (sustainable or organic growing practices)
- Commitment to serving produce grown safely and without the use of chemicals that are harmful to child health
- Reliable, accurate, timely deliveries of products according to the agreed-upon product specifications and pack sizes

MPS also participates in the Good Food Purchasing Program and incorporates many of their goal into evaluation of potential suppliers. Information about the Good Food Purchasing Program can be found at https://goodfoodpurchasing.org

C. Culinary & Wellness Services Organization

Minneapolis Public Schools is on a mission to improve meals and snacks offered from the perceived "traditional school lunch" of highly processed convenience foods, to wholesome, healthy, and fresh foods.

Number of Serving Sites: 65
Approximate Lunches Daily: 18,000
Approximate Breakfasts Daily: 10,000
Approximate Afterschool Snacks Daily: 5,000
Approximate Number of FFVP servings per week: 33,000

Under Minnesota State Statute 471, the District is a member of the Minnesota School Food Buying Group (MSFBG). Additionally, the District reserves the right to joint purchasing under this Contract with St. Paul Public Schools.

- Bertrand Weber is the Director, overseeing all aspects of the Culinary & Wellness Services department and directing the strategic vision of the department. Mr. Weber's commitment to Farm to School is robust and he is a national leader in the movement.
- Madison Taylor is the Farm to School Coordinator managing all services awarded through this RFP process, farmer relationships, local produce procurement, and Farm to School marketing/education.
- Aaron Krulc is the Senior Buyer, coordinating day-to-day purchasing operations by the department and vendor management.

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D. Description of Expected Services

1. MPS expects the highest level of quality, professionalism, and results from the vendor and product and the development and implementation of services provided by them, including, but not limited to the following:
    1. Supplier shall comply with all applicable federal, state, and local statutes, laws, ordinances, rules, and regulations, including securing and maintaining in force such permits and licenses as are required by law in connection with the furnishing of services pursuant to this agreement.
2. MPS expects that success of the suppliers' performance and product will be determined at the sole discretion of MPS.
3. MPS expects that success of the bidder's performance and product will be determined by both qualitative and quantitative means of data collection and analysis.

4. Documentation

Farmers must provide documentation that the following requirements are met. This documentation does not need to be included with the RFP Response, but if awarded, farmers must provide the information to MPS no later than **Monday June 1st, 2026:**

- Accurate Food Safety Plan covering on-farm food safety topics covered in Site Visit Checklist (available at: https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1765989479/mplsk12mnus/t8nonbdfxgfe2jzywnv7/SiteVisitChecklistMPS2026.pdf) ***OR*** certification of passage of a GAP audit or audits for the specific crop(s) awarded.
    - Relevant supporting food safety documentation, such as logs or sign-in sheets, may be requested by the District at any time during the partnership period or one year after the partnership period.
- Certificate demonstrating proof of Liability Insurance (at least $1 million) valid during the partnership period.
- Current year water test results proving passing results generic *E. coli*. Other water tests, such as nitrates and nitrites, are optional. Listeria is NOT required. Farms utilizing municipal water are exempt from this requirement.

Farms selling only non-produce items may not need to provide all the above-listed documentation. The District will communicate required documentation with selected non-produce vendors.

5. Produce Food Safety

In order to ensure that the fresh produce provided is safe for District students and staff, produce vendors are expected to follow good on-farm food safety and post-harvest handling practices. This includes, but is not limited to, safe planting, use of nutrients, pest-control mechanisms, harvesting procedures, cooling, washing, packing, and delivery. The Food Safety Plan that non-GAP certified vendors must provide must describe the policies and practices the farm employs to minimize on-farm and post-harvest food safety risks. The food safety plan must be detailed, accurate, and reflective of actual on-farm practices. Relevant logs and documentation associated with good food safety practices must also be detailed and accurate.

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The Food Safety Plan must address all of the topics covered in the Site Visit Checklist (available at https://resources.finalsite.net/images/v1765989479/mplsk12mnus/t8nonbdfxgfe2jzywnv7/SiteVisitChecklistMPS2026.pdf) relevant to the farm. Food Safety topics will also be explained in detail during the Food Safety Phone Review Sessions in Spring 2025. Tools, resources, and training will be provided prior to the Food Safety Plan due date of June 2, 2025. A University of Minnesota (UMN) Extension Food Safety Educator will be available to selected farmers to provide ongoing food safety technical assistance and respond to food safety questions.

Proof that farmers are using safe, clean water is required, and a current year water test with passing results for generic *E. coli* must be provided to the District by awarded vendors before Monday June 1st, 2026.

6. Produce Workshop Participation

First time awarded vendors will be required to participate in the following events. Attendance by vendors who have sold to the District in the past year is optional.

- Food Safety Phone Review Sessions – 1-2 hours, Spring 2026
  MPS and the UMN Extension will schedule review calls with individual vendors to review food safety requirements in detail, provide learning opportunities around specific food safety issues, and offer support and feedback for vendors' food safety plans.
- Institutional Sales Workshop – 2-4 hours, Spring 2026
  The workshop topics will include, but are not limited to product specifications, pack sizes, delivery logistics and timing, quality and crediting expectations, and invoicing/payment specifics. Non-produce farms are welcome to join for this workshop.

7. Site Visits

Staff from the District, UMN Extension, and the District's designated Produce Company may choose to conduct site visits to awarded produce farms to meet the farm staff, observe farm practices, and assure that good food safety practices are being followed as described in the Food Safety Plan. Farmers that provide certification of a successful GAP audit are exempt from a mandatory site visit. The site visit should take place during the months of June and July. Each farmer will receive a report within 10 business days of the visit outlining any corrective actions that must be taken before the District begins purchasing from the farm. A UMN Extension Educator will be available to assist farmers with corrective actions and provide technical assistance. If applicable, a follow-up conversation, photo evidence, or additional site visit will confirm that corrective actions have been taken.

The District may also choose to schedule site visits to non-produce farms to meet staff and observe farm practices.

In addition to a scheduled site visit in June-July 2026, the District reserves the right to conduct site visits to any awarded vendor with 24 hours advance notice.

8. Insurance Coverage

Farmer must carry product liability insurance of no less than $1 million. Proof of insurance must be submitted to the Farm to School Coordinator no later than Monday June 1st, 2026. If proof is not submitted within this window, MPS reserves the right to withdraw the award or cancel the contract.

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9. Specifications and Pack Sizes

All products must be packed and stored under sanitary conditions, kept at proper temperatures, and handled in accordance with good commercial practices. Products delivered must match specifications and pack sizes agreed-upon for each product. Product specifications and pack sizes will be designed to maximize consistency for the District's produce company and value for the District.

Product specifications and pack sizes are listed in the summary sheet below and will be described in greater detail at the Institutional Sales Workshop in Spring 2026 and/or via email communications. The information and resources provided will walk vendors through pictures and tangible examples of appropriate and inappropriate products/packs, as well as other requirements for ordering, delivery, and invoicing.

The Pricing and Availability Forms allows vendors to bid on standard produce industry pack sizes and bulk pack sizes.

10. Quality Assurance

All products delivered must meet agreed-upon quality standards. Produce must be delivered in good condition, free of mold, decay, excessive dirt, or spoilage. Quality expectations will be communicated at the Institutional Sales Workshop in Spring 2026 and via email communications. Good condition will be at the discretion of the District and/or of the Produce Company upon receipt and inspection of, at minimum, 20% of product. Product that does not meet product-specific specifications, pack sizes, or quality standards will be rejected at the point of delivery or discovery and farmer will provide credit as applicable.

For all products, failure to supply products according to agreed-upon specifications and standards may result in request for credit, communication to avoid future occurrences, and the cancellation of the award or contract.

6. **Traceability**

Each case of produce delivered must be labeled with farm name, product, date harvested, and date packed. The District reserves the right to request documentation that verifies the traceability information provided on each case, and the supplier must provide documentation within 24 hours of the request.

7. **Ordering**

MPS will communicate individually with selected vendors to plan orders and identify specific delivery dates based on awarded items.

For Produce: The 2026-2027 school year for MPS will begin in September, after Labor Day. The first Farm to School produce deliveries for the school year will likely be the last two weeks of August.

Farmers must designate a primary contact person to work with the District in a timely manner to communicate availability and order logistics, as well as a secondary contact (for instances when primary contact is unavailable). This person is expected to be responsive to District inquiries regarding availability and orders via phone and email and respond in a timely manner.

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The quantities and timelines in the Pricing and Availability forms describe what and when the District plans to purchase from awarded vendors. The District will be in close communication with awarded farmers to refine quantities as the summer and school year draw near, and then will be in weekly communication regarding exact purchase quantities. MPS will put forth a good faith effort to fulfill commitments with awarded vendors and order produce quantities similar to what is described in the Pricing and Availability Forms. The District will employ good communication to make sure any unexpected changes in demand are communicated as soon as possible.

Awarded farmers must be in good communication with the District regarding product availability and must strive in good faith to provide the products awarded or contracted by the District. Reliability is important to MPS, but we understand that farms may face unexpected supply issues due to weather or other circumstances out of the vendor's control. If awarded vendors, in spite of good planning and good faith efforts, cannot provide the desired quantities for a specific order or orders, the District reserves the right to instead purchase the item(s) from other sources. Substitutions may be suggested and negotiated at the sole discretion of the District.

Purchase Orders (POs) for deliveries will be emailed to farmers with product need dates and quantities by the Produce Company approximately one week before the delivery date. Deviations to the specified quantities or delivery dates should be avoided, but rare, necessary changes must be communicated to the District as soon as possible.

8. **Delivery**

Awarded suppliers must deliver products in clean, new boxes/bags or other mutually agreed-upon containers using clean, sanitary delivery vehicles. Bulk boxes may be negotiated on a product by product basis. Delivery must be made in clean, enclosed vehicles. Refrigerated transportation is strongly preferred. Unless otherwise stated in the product specifications, all products should be below 40 degrees Fahrenheit when received. In all cases, product temperatures will be checked upon delivery for appropriate ranges for food safety.

Farmers are expected to bring copies of Purchase Orders with each delivery. Depending on agreement or contract, produce deliveries will be made to the Produce Company or the District's Culinary Center. This will be specified through advanced communications. Non-produce items may be delivered to the District's Culinary Center.

Prices bid are for delivered products. Farmers may not charge additional delivery fees. Vendors will be able to aggregate deliveries into large orders when possible if desired to reduce delivery costs, depending on product perishability and advance communication. The District will communicate with vendors, whenever possible, to assure that deliveries are comprised of enough products to make it worth the vendor's efforts to deliver, but small deliveries may be required.

The District or Produce Company will have the right to refuse products that do not match agreed-upon product specifications, pack sizes, quantities, temperatures, or delivery times.

9. **Invoicing & Payment Requirements**

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Farmers must provide invoices to the Produce Company or District, depending on agreement or contract, at time of delivery or within 5 business days of delivery via email. Invoices will be paid by the Produce Company or the District within 30 days of receipt of invoice. Awarded products that are delivered according to all specified requirements will be paid for according to the awarded price per pound. The price per case will be calculated using the average weight of each case multiplied by the price per pound identified in the bid. Average case weights may be audited by the District at any time.

10. **Audits**

Audits of the vendor's records will be made at the discretion of District officials at any time. Awarded farmers must agree to make available to the District or its agent any and all information including food safety documentation or chemical application records. The District will give the vendor 30 days' notice of an audit to allow the vendor to gather and assemble records.

11. **Education and Engagement**

The District believes it is important for students to know where their food comes from. On the first Thursday of most months during the school year, the District features an entirely locally sourced meal called Minnesota Thursdays. Minnesota Thursdays and the Farm to School program are promoted on the District' website, local media channels, print marketing materials, and more.

The District values direct connections between farmers and our students. Participants in the District' Farm to School program are encouraged (but not required) to visit schools and talk with students and school staff about growing food for school meals. As feasible, the District hopes to coordinate staff and student visits to farms. The District understands the busy nature of farm life, so educational opportunities may be tailored to the interest level and capacity of each farmer.

Learn more about the District' Farm to School education and promotion at https://www.mpschools.org/departments/cws/true-food/farm-to-school

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SECTION III: MPS Appendix Documents

1. Selection Criteria Summary
2. Product Specifications Summary
3. Pricing Reference Sheet
4. Response Form (Please see separate document) MPS Local Harvest Response Form 2026-27

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APPENDIX 1
SELECTION CRITERIA

The following criteria may be used by the selection committee to assign a vendor score. These criteria are subject to change and additional criteria may be added. The descriptions are not necessarily requirements but rather items that the committee will consider based on the RFP responses.

1. 10% - Organizational capacity
    a. Have sold produce/products in seasons past
    b. Confidence in scale
    c. Seasons selling to MPS
    d. Strong organizational structure
2. 10% - Equity & Diversity
    a. Preference for organizations that are Disadvantaged, GLBT, Veteran, Woman, Minority, Non-Profit owned/controlled
3. 20% - High quality produce/products
    a. Geographic preference (local)
    b. Product physical quality
    c. Ability to meet product specifications and pack sizes
4. 20% - Food Safety
    a. Delivery vehicle
    b. Traceability
    c. Food Safety Plan or GAP certification
    d. Food safety logs/documents
    e. Liability insurance
    f. Water test
5. 15% - Customer Service
    a. Proven customer service track record
    b. Dedicated responsive point of contact
    c. Reliability/accuracy in filling orders
6. 10% - Community Connection, Values Alignment
    a. Demonstrated interest in MPS sales
    b. Good value for dollar response
    c. Interested in Education/Engagement
7. 15% - Sustainability
    a. Commitment to sustainability
    b. Use of chemical pesticides, fertilizers, etc.
    c. Farm size
    d. Farm ownership

The following criteria may be used by the selection committee to assign a product score. These criteria are subject to change and additional criteria may be added.

1. Price – preference for competitive pricing
2. Alignment – preference for items that meet the requirements as described (based on notes)
3. Availability – slight preference for growers who can provide all of specific product requested (for long duration, if storage product)
4. Size – Preference will be given to smaller firms with less than $1.5 million dollars gross yearly revenue and aggregators representing such firms.

Specific product selections will be made based on the vendor score and the product score by the selection committee.

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APPENDIX 2
Product Specifications Summary

Below are listed the products MPS is seeking to award for this RFP along with various specifications to help in determining viability to potential bidders.

Column Definitions

1. Product Requested
    a. The common name of the product MPS is seeking to receive bids for
2. Use and Acceptable Specification
    a. MPS planned usage of the product and guidelines to for what the district is seeking as far as size, sorting/grading, quality, and consistency
3. Requested packaging
    a. Prep and packaging expected for delivery to the Culinary Center or our Produce Company partner
4. Planned Usage window
    a. The timeframes in which the District would like to use the item and the volume for those timeframes
5. Planned Volume
    a. The total amount of this product that the district is seeking for the RFP and associated school year
6. Additional notes
    a. Any additional information requested or needed to aid in evaluation by the District

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Product Requested	Use and Preferred size/variety/weight	Preferred Packaging Specifications	Planned Usage	Planned Volume	Additional Notes
Apples, Small	Small apple (125ct-138ct) in good shape cosmetically for picky student eaters. Sweet, crisp, tart, unique varieties preferred. No baking varieties and no McIntosh.	128-138 case count, 40# on a bushel	Sept-May: 50 cs/week	1,500 cs total	Please specify varieties available.
Apples, snack-sized	Snack-sized apple (250 ct)	250 case count, Case counts should be consistent	Sept-Dec: 3 Deliveries	400 cases	Please specify varieties
Beet, Golden	For dicing and roasting. Large sizes preferred (i.e. baseball sized or larger). Some misshape ok.	25# in 5/9 Bushel Box, Bags or boxes is okay, Rinsed, free of debris/soil. Trimmed, bulk, no leaves, minimal stems.	Oct-Feb: 1-2 Delivery(s)	1,200# total	
Beet, Red	For dicing and roasting/cooking. Large sizes preferred (i.e. baseball sized or larger). Some misshape ok.	25# in 5/9 Bushel Box, Bags or boxes is okay, Rinsed, free of debris/soil. Trimmed, bulk, no leaves, minimal stems.	Oct-Mar: 6-8 Delivery(s)	2,500# total	
Broccoli	Florets served raw or roasted/cooked. Larger crowns preferred (>4"). Some discoloration ok.	1 1/9 bushel box, Free of debris/soil. Packed in 18# box.	Sept-Oct: 1-2 Delivery(s)	1,500# total	Please specify whether price is with stems or crown cut in notes.
Cabbage, Green	Shredded in coleslaw. Tight, firm, large heads are preferred.	3/4 Bushel Box - cabbage box, 45#, Outside 1-2 leaves removed, unwashed.	Sept-Feb: 6 Delivery(s)	3,000# total	

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Carrot, Orange	Orange carrots for coins, sticks, dicing, and matchstick. Large, long carrots with wide, relatively uniform diameter >3/4". Ideally for use un-peeled. Some cosmetic defects okay as long as yield is good.	25# bag or box, Rinsed, free of excess soil/debris	Sept-April: 3000#/Month	30,000# total	
Carrot, Rainbow	Blend of multicolored carrots for coins. Large, long carrots with wide, relatively uniform diameter >3/4". Ideally for use un-peeled. Some cosmetic defects okay as long as yield is good.	25# bag or box, Rinsed, free of excess soil/debris	Sept-Mar: 1-2 Delivery(s)	3,000# total	Please specify carrot colors included in the blend in notes.
Cauliflower, Multicolor	Florets served raw or roasted. Purple, yellow, and/or blended with white. The bigger the better (9ct). Hardy varieties (to minimize flowering or browning) preferred. *Minimal* browning.	bushel 1/9, Free of debris/soil knocked off. Packed in 9ct box.	Sept-Oct: 1-2 Delivery(s)	1,500# total	Please specify cauliflower color(s) in notes.
Cucumber	Sliced on salad bars or diced in salads. Sweet, burpless varieties preferred. Long and relatively straight in shape. Some cosmetic issues or yellow color ok, but not hard/woody. 1”-2” diameter.	1 1/9 Bushel Box, about 40#, Rinsed, free from debris/soil.	Sept: 2 Delivery(s)	2,000# total	
Green Bean	Interested in green, yellow, or multicolored sweet beans for eating raw. Served fresh on salad bars, steamed or roasted. Minimal blemish ok.	1 1/9 Bushel Box, 25#, Unwashed, untrimmed, minimal soil/debris.	Sept - Oct: 2 Delivery(s)	3,000# total	Please specify colors/varieties in notes.
Greens, Collard	Cleaned, trimmed bunch packed	1 1/9 Bushel Box, 14#, Free of soil/debris.	Sept - Oct: 2 Delivery(s)	2,000# total	

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Greens, Mixed	Hydroponic, pre-washed greens for salad bars. Interested in unique and flavorful blends.	Pre-washed, packed in 3lb bags (or other bulk option)	Dec-May: 14 Delivery(s)	7,000# total	Please specify varieties in notes and bulk pack size(s) available.
Greens, Swiss Chard	Cleaned, trimmed bunch packed	1 1/9 Bushel Box, 14#, Free of soil/debris.	Sept-Oct: 1 Delivery	1,000# total	
Herb, Cilantro	Cleaned, trimmed bunch packed	3/4 Bushel Box, 10# box - no bunches, or Washed, trimmed, bunched and packed in bunches	Sept-Oct: 3-4 Delivery(s)	2,000 Bunches total	
Kale	Shredded for use in salad bar lettuce blend and specialty salads (raw). Hardy, curly leaf green and/or purple varieties preferred for best yield and season extension capacity.	1 1/9 Bushel Box, 14#, Free of soil/debris.	Sept-Dec: 4 Delivery(s)	2,000# total	Please specify varieties in notes.
Kohlrabi	Raw served as sticks or matchsticks. Large varieties preferred. Cosmetic defects ok.	3/4 Bushel Box, 40#, Rinsed and free of debris/soil. Trimmed, bulk.	Oct-Nov: 2-4 Delivery(s)	2,000# total	
Melon, Cantaloupe	For salad bars, cubed or wedges (with rind on). Large varieties preferred for better yields. Some scarring ok. Minimum melon weight of three pounds. Melons need to store for one week and be consistently sized.	bushel 1/9, Free of soil/debris. Packed in 35# box or bulk bin.	Sept: 1 Delivery(s)	2,000# total	Please specify average weight per melon of the proposed variety.
Melon, Honeydew	For salad bars, cubed or wedges (with rind on). Large varieties preferred for better yields. Some scarring ok. Minimum melon weight of three pounds. Melons need to store for one week and be consistently sized.	bushel 1/9, Free of soil/debris. Packed in 35# box or bulk bin.	Sept-Oct: 2 Delivery(s)	2,000# total	Please specify average weight per melon of the proposed variety.

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Melon, Watermelon	For salad bars, wedges (with rind on). Large, seedless varieties preferred for better yield. Some cosmetic damage ok. Minimum melon weight of six pounds. Melons need to be able to store for at least one week.	bushel 3/4, 35# on boxes or a bulk bin (500#), Free of soil/debris	Sept-Oct: 1 Delivery	3,000# total	Please specify average weight per melon of the variety proposed.
Onion, Red	Sliced for service raw	onion bags - or 25# in a 1 1/9 Bushel Box, 50# - box perferred, no mesh, Free of soil/debris.	Sept-Oct: 2 Delivery(s)	2,000# total	Please specify average size
Onion, Yellow	Chopped, Diced, Sliced	onion bags - or 25# in a 1 1/9 Bushel Box, 50# - box preferred, no mesh, Free of soil/debris	Sept-Oct: 2 Delivery(s)	2,000# total	Please specify average size
Parsnips	Served cooked/roasted as coins or diced. Large and long in size, with relatively uniform diameter >1" preferred. Some cosmetic defects ok if yield is good.	5/9 Bushel for 25#, Rinsed, free of soil/debris	Nov-Feb: 2 Delivery(s)	1,000# total	
Pear, Small	Clean, consistently sized fruit for service whole as hand fruit.	125-138 cnt case. Counts should be consistent across bid	Sept-Oct: 1 Delivery	100 cs total	Please specify case count
Pepper, Jalapeno	Used for sliced/pickling	10# in a 5/9 Bushel Box, Free of soil/debris.	Sept-Nov: 2-4 Delivery(s)	2,000# total	
Pepper, “Lunch Box”	Mini peppers for snacking and serving whole. Red, yellow, orange, or mix. Should we relatively uniform in size. Minimal cosmetic imperfections.	25# case - 5/9 bushel box, Free of soil/debris.	Sept-Oct: 2 Delivery(s)	4,000# total	

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Pepper, Bell Red	Used diced in recipes, sliced into strips to serve raw. Large size (not woody) preferred. Cosmetic issues or slightly misshapen ok.	1 1/9 Bushel Box, 25#, Free of soil/debris.	Sept-Nov: 3-6 Delivery(s)	2,000# total	
Pepper, Bell Green	Used diced in recipes or sliced into strips to serve raw. Large size (not woody) preferred. Cosmetic issues or slightly misshapen ok.	1 1/9 Bushel Box, 25#, Free of soil/debris.	Sept-Nov: 3-6 Delivery(s)	2,000# total	
Potato, Red	Large (Grade A) red skinned potato for dicing and roasting, or dicing in potato salad (with skin on). The bigger the better. Cosmetic imperfections ok.	potato box, 50#, Rinsed, free of soil/debris	Sept-May: Monthly Delivery(s)	12,000# total	
Potato, Russet Small	Uniformly sized small (Grade B) russet potato to use for wedged roasted potatoes with skin on. Some cosmetic imperfections are okay.	potato box, 50#, Rinsed, free of soil/debris	Sept-May: Monthly Delivery(s)	10,000# total	
Potato, Small Blend	Uniformly small (Grade C) potatoes for roasting whole or halved. Multicolor, unique, or regular varieties okay (specify in notes).	potato box, 50#, Rinsed, free of soil/debris	Sept-Feb: 1 Delivery(s)	2,000# total	Please specify varieties in notes.
Potato, Sweet	Large (Grade A) orange flesh sweet potatoes or yams for roasting as wedge or diced, skin on. Cosmetic imperfections ok. Limited curves/knobs preferred for processing.	40#, Rinsed, free of soil/debris.	Oct-Feb: Monthly Delivery(s)	5,000# total	Please specify variety in notes.
Potato, Yellow	Large (Grade A) light skinned yellow flesh potato for dicing and roasting with skin on. The bigger the better. Cosmetic imperfections okay.	potato box, 50#, Rinsed, free of soil/debris	Sept-May: Monthly Delivery(s)	6,000# total	

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Radish, Beauty Heart	Sliced (unpeeled) and serve raw on salad bars or grab-and-go items. Large size ok (but not woody). Some cosmetic imperfections ok.	5/9 Bushel Box, 25#, Rinsed, free of soil/debris. Trimmed, bulk.	Oct-Feb: 3-4 Delivery(s)	3,000# total	
Radish, Purple Daikon	Sliced (unpeeled) and serve raw on salad bars or grab-and-go items. Large size ok (but not woody). Some cosmetic imperfections ok.	5/9 Bushel Box, 25#, Rinsed, free of soil/debris. Trimmed, bulk.	Oct-Mar: 3-4 Delivery(s)	3,000# total	
Radish, Red	Quartered or sliced for salad bars, raw. Open to long or large varieties for better yields. Minimal scarring.	5/9 Bushel Box, 25#, Rinsed and free of debris/soil. Trimmed (no leaves/ stems).	Sept-Oct: 3-4 Delivery(s)	1,000# total	
Rhubarb,	Chopped, used for baked goods	3/4 Bushel Box, 20#, Wiped free of soil/debris.	April-May 2026: 1 Delivery(s)	1,000# total	
Romaine	Served chopped in salads. Large, hearty varieties preferred. Good color, minimal bruising, no wilt.	Cabbage box (22# average case weight), 24 heads, Free of soil/debris.	Sept-Oct: 2 Delivery(s)	3,000 heads total	
Rutabaga	For dicing and roasting. The bigger the better! Cosmetic imperfections ok.	1 1/9 bushel, 40#, Rinsed, free of soil/debris.	Oct-Feb: 2 Delivery(s)	1,000# total	
Spinach, Green	Served chopped in salads. Large, hearty varieties preferred. Good color, minimal bruising, no wilt.	10# in a 1 1/9 Bushel Box, Free of soil/debris.	April-May 2026: 1 Delivery(s)	1,000# total	
Squash, Acorn	For split and roasting. Should be clean, consistently sized and with minimal or no defects	1 1/9 Bushel for 35#, Wiped free of soil/debris.	Oct: 1 Delivery	2,000# total	
Squash, Butternut	For dicing and roasting. The bigger the better! Cosmetic imperfections ok. *Minimal* soft spots and decay.	1 1/9 Bushel for 35#, Wiped free of soil/debris.	Sept-Dec: 3 Delivery(s)	4,500# total	

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Squash, Delicata	For cutting and roasting with skin-on. Should be relatively uniform size (longer than 6”). Minimal cosmetic imperfections ok.	1 1/9 Bushel for 35#, Wiped free of soil/debris.	Oct-Nov: 2 Delivery(s)	3,000# total	
Squash, Yellow Summer	For slicing or dicing, to be served cooked. Slight misshapen and minimal cosmetic imperfections ok.	1 1/9 Bushel for 35#, Wiped free of soil/debris.	Sept: 2 Delivery(s)	2,000# total	
Squash, Zucchini	For slicing or dicing, to be served cooked. Slight misshapen and minimal cosmetic imperfections ok.	1 1/9 Bushel for 35#, Wiped free of soil/debris.	Sept: 2 Delivery(s)	2,000# total	
Sweet Corn	Ears will be husked, halved, and steamed. Minimum ear length of 6 inches. Ears in good shape cosmetically with large, full kernels.	mesh bags, 48-60 ears/bushel, with husks.	Late Aug-Sept: 1 Delivery(s)	8,000 Ears total	
Tomato, Grape	For serving as salad bar option or in pre-made salads. Tomatoes in good cosmetic shape.	single layer tomato box - 1/2 Bushel Box, 10#, Free of soil/debris.	Sept: 2 Delivery(s)	2,000# total	
Tomato, Slicers	Red, flavorful, vine-ripened large tomato for slicing, wedging or dicing (used in multiple fresh applications such as on salad bars, sandwich station lines, or fresh salsa). Minimal cosmetic imperfections are okay.	Double layer tomato box, 10#, Free of debris/soil.	Sept-Oct: Weekly Delivery(s)	1200# total	

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Product Requested	Acceptable Specifications	Requested Packaging	Planned Usage	Planned Volume	Additional Notes
Legumes, Dried	Interested in garbanzo beans, lentils, and other types of legumes.	Bulk Bag, 25 or 50 lb		500#, one delivery	Please specify type(s) of legumes in "Notes"
Legumes, Dried: Black Beans		Bulk Bag, 25 or 50 lb		1,500#, 1-2 delivery	
Legumes, Dried: Pinto Beans		Bulk Bag, 25 or 50 lb		1,500#, 1-2 delivery	
Rolled Oats	For use in Baked goods	Bulk Bag, 25 or 50 lb		1,000#, one delivery	
Local Grains	Non-cultivated wild rice, wheat berries, Kernza, Barley, or other local grains.	Bulk Bag, 25 or 50 lb		500#-1000#, one delivery	Please specify grain product(s), price, pack/case size, and any other pertinent information.

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APPENDIX 3
PRICING REFERENCE SHEET

The following list is a of awarded bid prices for the 2025-26 school year for selected Local Harvest products. This list is not intended to be firm guideline, it is only for reference.

Product	Unit	Price
Apples, Small	cs	$ 68.00
Apples, snack-sized	cs	$ 90.00
Beet, Golden	lb	$ 1.13
Beet, Red	lb	$ 0.93
Cabbage, Green	lb	$ 0.65
Carrot, Orange	lb	$ 1.03
Carrot, Rainbow	lb	$ 1.76
Cucumber	lb	$ 1.20
Flours whole wheat, rye, white	lb	$ 1.30
Green Bean	lb	$ 3.00
Greens, Collard	lb	$ 1.30
Greens, Swiss Chard	lb	$ 2.00
Herb, Cilantro	Bunch	$ 0.90
Kale	lb	$ 1.30
Kohlrabi	lb	$ 1.00
Legumes, Dried: Black Beans	lb	$ 3.00
Legumes, Dried: Pinto Beans	lb	$ 2.00
Local Grains: Wheat berries	lb	$ 0.42
Local Grains: Whole Wheat Flour	lb	$ 1.25
Onion, Red	lb	$ 1.00
Onion, Yellow	lb	$ 1.00
Other: Ground Cherries	lb	$ 5.40
Other: Turnips	lb	$ 1.00
Other: Watermelon, yellow and/or orange	lb	$ 0.90
Parsnips	lb	$ 2.00
Pepper, “Lunch Box”	lb	$ 3.85
Pepper, Bell Green	lb	$ 1.20
Pepper, Bell Red	lb	$ 1.38
Pepper, Jalapeno	lb	$ 2.75
Potato, Red	lb	$ 0.40
Potato, Russet Small	lb	$ 0.40
Potato, Small Blend	lb	$ 0.70
Potato, Sweet Orange	lb	$ 2.25

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Potato, Yellow	lb	$ 0.40
Radish, Beauty Heart	lb	$ 1.28
Radish, Purple Daikon	lb	$ 1.00
Radish, Red	lb	$ 1.80
Rhubarb	lb	$ 3.00
Rolled Oats	lb	$ 1.40
Romaine	Head	$ 1.65
Rutabaga	lb	$ 1.00
Squash, Acorn	lb	$ 0.75
Squash, Butternut	lb	$ 0.60
Squash, Delicata	lb	$ 0.85
Squash, Yellow Summer	lb	$ 1.60
Squash, Zucchini	lb	$ 1.60
Tomato, Grape	lb	$ 3.00
Tomato, Slicers	lb	$ 1.00

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