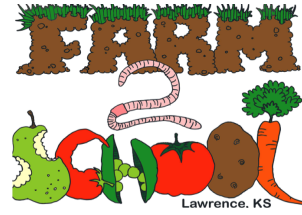


USD 497 Farm 2 School Partner Pack 2026-2027



Primary Contact:

Julie Henry, MS Ed., SNS

Director, Nutrition & Wellness

julie.henry@usd497.org

(785) 832-5000 x 2192

Secondary Contact:

Jennifer Flowers

Supervisor, Nutrition &
Wellness

jflowers@usd497.org

(785) 832-5000 x 1974

Farm 2 School Coordinator:

Pantaleon Florez III

pantaleon.floreziiii@usd497.org

(785) 832-5000 x 3012

For Weekly Orders, Contact:

Tracy Pobjoy

High School Kitchens Coordinator

tpobjoy@usd497.org



Key Dates:

- **February 24, 2026** - Producer's Informational Meeting
- **April 3, 2026** - F2S Partners notified of plan to procure for fall of 2026
- **Ongoing** - Additional proposals accepted on an ongoing basis

Farm 2 School RFP Process Steps:

1. **Complete Online F2S Partner Response Form**
<https://forms.gle/WBFYRP2JUsqYkLP39>
2. **Complete Online Food Safety Checklist**
<https://forms.gle/NKV9B27VrTpHWcEw6>
3. **Email proof of Insurance to Julie Henry**
4. **Email proposed product availability & pricing to Julie Henry**
5. **Julie will notify partners of planned procurement by April 3, 2026**
6. **Complete Vendor Forms from USD 497 Business Office** (required for new partners or if payment information has changed)

General Information

Lawrence Public Schools (USD 497) is seeking proposals from organizations and individuals wishing to provide fresh and local produce, meat, and grains, for the 2026-2027 school year.

USD 497 is a school district that serves the Lawrence, Kansas area. The District includes 21 sites, with approximately 10,000 students and 1,300 teaching staff.

The District intends to select multiple individuals or organizations to provide fresh and local produce, meat, and grains to USD 497.

Primarily procured produce includes: apples, pears, cucumbers, radishes, lettuce (romaine & mixed greens), melons, peas (edible pod), peppers (snacking, bell, and jalapeño), and tomatoes (slicers & cherry/grape). USD 497 is also looking for beef producers to provide 81/19 ground beef and grains for scratch-made bakery items. USD 497 encourages applicants to include additional items of interest in their pricing guides and is open to considering minimally processed items such as chopped vegetables and value-added products.

USD 497 is required by the Buy American Act to purchase American made products. Suppliers must certify the percentage of US content of their products on the Partner Online Response Form. USD 497 cannot make a purchase from anyone who is unable or unwilling to provide this information.

District staff may conduct a site visit to each awarded partner to meet the farm staff, observe farm practices, and/or to take photographs for marketing purposes. District staff will work with the farmer to determine a time for the visit and no visit shall be spontaneous or unscheduled. Farmers are welcome to schedule site visits to schools to see their food served in school meals.

Cancellation

Either party may cancel this partnership with a verbal or written notice of seven (7) days for any reason. Written requests must be sent to Julie Henry. USD 497 reserves the right to cancel this agreement without notice if any of the following applies:

- Producer is found in violation of the law;
- Producer is found to be in violation of KDHE/KDA Food Safety Standards.

Description of Expected Services

USD 497 expects the highest level of product quality and professionalism from farm to school (F2S) partners. F2S partners 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.

Product specifications are described on the Online Pricing Availability Form. For information regarding grading standards, farmers should review the USDA grading standards at:

<http://www.ams.usda.gov/grades-standards>

To ensure food safety, every case and delivery to USD 497 must be able to be traced. The process for maintaining this information must be outlined on the Partner Online Response Form and will require that every case is traceable by:

- Name of farmer
- Name of farm
- Farm address
- Field harvested from (if more than one)
- Date harvested
- Date packed

Procedures

Ordering Procedures

Each week, the vendor will email Tracy Pobjoy (cc Julie Henry) a list of products available for the following week. Tracy will respond to the email and let the vendor know which products and how much will be needed.

To best accommodate the variability of weather and crop production timelines, USD 497 expects its partner farmers to remain in consistent communication via e-mail or telephone throughout the season about anticipated crop harvest dates, in order to ensure proper menu planning and enable the district to place orders from the mainline distributor in the case that a crop fails or is not ready as planned. A primary and secondary point of contact may be listed on the response form to ensure the priority partner can communicate in a timely manner.

USD 497 will, in good faith, work with farmers to address any issue with respect to service or product concerns. USD 497 reserves the right to terminate a contract at any time should it experience unsatisfactory service in the delivery or fulfilling of orders.

Delivery Procedures

Deliveries must occur in a professional, sanitary, and efficient manner. To assist farmers selling to USD 497, the district may provide washable yellow bins for use throughout the season, if requested by the farmer. The yellow bins will be washed and sanitized by USD 497 employees. Upon completion of the growing season and that year's farmer distribution agreement, USD 497 will withhold final payment until all bins are retrieved.

If another product vessel will be used, it must be approved by USD 497 in advance. USD 497 requires use of new cardboard boxes or washable/reusable bins.

USD 497 will inspect all deliveries and reserves the right to refuse delivery of unacceptable products (based on quality, quantity, specifications, size, and temperature) or improper delivery procedures, for credit. USD 497 will contact farmers as soon as possible to address the issue, no later than within 3-5 days if it would like to seek a credit.

Tobacco or e-cigarettes shall not be used at any time in or on district grounds.

Delivery location shall be determined based upon USD 497 needs and each farmer's ability and preferred delivery logistics. In general, however, deliveries are preferred from 6am to 10am Monday through Thursday. Select storage crops, such as apples, may be able to have alternative arrangements.

Invoicing Procedures

Farmers must include two copies of each invoice upon delivery, for the receiving district employee to sign off on. Electronic copies can additionally be sent to Julie Henry at julie.henry@USD497.org, but are not required.

Invoices must include the following information:

- Name
- Physical Address
- Business Name (if different than farm or personal name)
- Product type, quantity, total

As a public purchaser, all sales to USD 497 are exempt from tax. Farmers will receive the district's tax exempt information when an approved vendor packet is completed and accepted by USD 497.

In general, USD 497 processes invoices on the first and third Monday of the month, following the public School Board Meetings. Farmers should expect electronic payment within two weeks to a month following delivery.

Farm 2 School Promotion and Education Opportunities

For USD 497, Farm 2 School means linking the classroom, garden, and lunchroom to foster a comprehensive and enriching experience for our students that supports health and learning. We welcome the opportunity to work with the farmers we buy from to enhance the food, farming, and nutritional education of our students.

USD 497 may use your likeness (photographs, video recordings, or electronic images) for marketing, educational programming, or publication purposes after consenting approval. For example, the District may include the name and a logo or photo on the serving line for students to see or mention farmers in a press release including outputs from partnering organizations like LiveWell Douglas County.

We hope to engage with our farmers in more ways than just purchasing products. This could include in-school visits, creation of lessons or cafeteria posters/signs, etc. The F2S Online Partner Response Form offers farmers the chance to indicate if they would like to fulfill one of these supplemental roles.

Documentation

All Farm 2 School partners must provide the following documentation before their product offerings will be considered.

1. Farm 2 School Partner Response Form (Online Form)

<https://forms.gle/WBFYRP2JUsqYkLP39>

The Kansas State Department of Education, Child Nutrition & Wellness Team, requires that “A vendor letter should be kept in the school Food Safety (HACCP) Plan to ensure traceability of the local products.” In adherence with this statewide policy, USD 497 has a question regarding traceability on the Farm 2 School Online Partner Response Form.

2. USD 497 Food Safety Checklist (Online Form)

<https://forms.gle/NKV9B27VrTpHWcEw6>

The health and safety of our students and their meals is a top priority of USD 497. We must receive a completed food safety checklist form from every farmer selling to USD 497. This document has been created with K-State Research & Extension partners to determine if proper precautions are taking place to minimize on-farm and post-harvest food safety risks. USD 497 reserves the right to conduct visits to any farm with which it has a purchasing relationship to verify food safety practices. At least 24 hours’ notice will be given before visits.

3. Demonstration of Minimum Liability Insurance (email to julie.henry@usd497.org)

USD 497 requires the farmers and local food priority partners it purchases from to hold a minimum product liability insurance of \$1,000,000 to cover those items being sold to the District.

4. Product, Pricing & Availability Form (email to julie.henry@usd497.org)

5. Required Business Forms (paper packet) - New Partners Only

Newly selected partners will receive a new vendor packet from the USD 497 Business Office. This packet includes all required forms the school must have on file in order to purchase from a vendor, including a W9 Taxpayer form, priority partner Information Form, and KS Sales Tax Exemption Form. Entities who have sold to the District previously are not required to fill out new priority partner forms each year.