

OSPI Child Nutrition Programs

Reference Sheet

Washington Grown Food Procurement for Public School Districts

The 2008 Washington (WA) State Local Farms-Healthy Kids Act was enacted to strengthen the connections between the state's agricultural industry and the state's food procurement procedures in order to expand local agricultural markets, improve the nutrition of children and other at-risk consumers, and have a positive impact on the environment. One outcome of the act was allowing an exemption to Washington State Common School Bidding Procedures outlined in RCW 28A.335.190. This exemption allows school districts to raise their Simplified Acquisition threshold, also known as the Small Purchase threshold, from the state's threshold of \$75,000 to the federal threshold of \$250,000.

Washington Grown Procurement Thresholds

Procurement Method	Washington Grown Foods State Threshold for Public Schools
Micro-Purchase	\$10,000 or less*
<ul style="list-style-type: none">No quotes neededDocument how prices were determined to be reasonable. Should distribute equitably among qualified suppliers.	
Simplified Acquisition	\$249,999 or less
Obtain and document quotes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">\$10,000 –\$40,000 requires at least two quotes.\$40,001–\$249,999 requires at least three quotes.	
Formal	\$250,000 or more
Solicit quotes through: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Sealed Bids/Invitation for Bid (IFB).Competitive Proposals/Request for Proposals (RFPO).	

Requirements

- The WA Common School Provisions Bid Procedures do not apply to the purchase of Washington grown food.
- "Washington grown" is defined in [RCW 15.64.060](#) as grown and packed or processed in Washington.
- The procurement of Washington grown food must comply with applicable federal, State, and local laws.
- School Districts may develop and adopt policies and procedures to facilitate and maximize to the extent practicable, purchases of



Washington grown food including, but not limited to, policies that permit a percentage price preference for the purpose of procuring Washington grown food.

- A Geographic Preference, such as including Washington grown in your specifications or providing a defined scoring advantage to Washington grown products, may only be applied to unprocessed or minimally processed agricultural products that maintain their inherent characteristics. See OSPI's Geographic Preference Reference Sheet for more Information.
- Washington Grown Procurement must not restrict full and open competition, such as not having an appropriate number of qualified vendors to compete.
- Districts must include the Buy American Provision in solicitations, even if specifying WA-grown foods.

Considerations

- Purchasing Washington grown foods streamlines procurement by raising the state's Simplified Acquisition threshold, allowing districts to go up to \$249,999 per solicitation without having to use the formal procurement method, however documentation and fair competition are still required.
- *Sponsors may self-certify a federal micro-purchase threshold of up to \$40,000 on an annual basis if they qualify. See OSPI's [Micro-Purchase Reference Sheet](#) for more information.
- Utilizing grant funding that requires you to purchase locally grown foods (i.e. Washington Grown) justifies a separate solicitation from general food procurement.
- Districts with programs such as Harvest of the Month, Seasonal Special, Taste WA Day and the Washington Apple Crunch provide reasons to purchase and promote Washington Grown foods. These programs also justify separate solicitations for one-time, seasonal purchases.
- While the WA Grown exception provides an allowance, districts should adopt the policy internally. It is important to have policies or procedures that support your efforts to purchase locally grown products for your School Meal Programs.

Reference

- [RCW 28A.335.190 Common School Provisions Bid Procedures](#)
- [2 CFR Part 200 Subpart D – Procurement Standards](#)
- [SP 22-2024 Geographic Preference Expansion Related to the Final Rule](#)
- [7 CFR 210.10 National School Lunch Program](#)
- [7 CFR 215.14a Special Milk Program](#)
- [7 CFR 220.16 School Breakfast Program](#)
- [7 CFR 225.17 Summer Food Service Program](#)

Resources

- [OSPI CNS Procurement webpage](#)
 - Procurement Reference Sheet
 - Micro-Purchase Reference Sheet
 - Micro-Purchase Template – Local Procurement
 - Simplified Acquisition Method Reference Sheet
 - Simplified Acquisition Method Template
 - Simplified Acquisition Method – Defind Scoring Advantage Template
- [USDA Procuring Local Foods for Child Nutrition Programs](#)
- [OSPI CNS Procurement in Child Nutrition Programs Training](#)
- [OSPI Procurement Vocabulary Reference Sheet](#)

Acronym Reference

- CFR – Code of Federal Regulations
- LEA – Local Education Agency
- NSLP – National School Lunch Program
- OSPI – Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
- USDA – United States Department of Agriculture

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