

FARM-TO-SCHOOL PROCUREMENT ACT (EXCERPT)
Act 315 of 2008

388.843 Memorandum of understanding; execution between MDE and MDA; duties.

Sec. 3. (1) The MDE and the MDA shall collaborate and cooperate by means of a memorandum of understanding executed between the departments in order to implement the provisions of this act.

(2) As part of the collaboration, the MDE shall do the following:

(a) Investigate the potential of various procurement procedures and tools for school food authorities to purchase local farm products and abide by federal regulations, including, but not limited to, the small purchase threshold and multiple or line-item awards to farmers, processors, and suppliers within larger food contracts.

(b) Educate food service directors on the small purchase threshold and other procurement procedures and tools and promote their use for farm-to-school initiatives.

(c) Implement food preparation training for food service staff to accommodate sourcing fresh and local foods.

(d) Encourage school food service directors to include local farmers, processors, and suppliers when taking bids for farm products that fall under the small purchase threshold.

(e) Encourage all new school construction projects to consider kitchen facilities capable of producing fresh and healthy school meals and opportunities for hands-on learning.

(3) As part of the collaboration, the MDA shall do the following:

(a) Hire a farm-to-school point person to coordinate efforts between MDA, MDE, and the Michigan department of community health, who would be responsible for identifying local farmers, processors, and suppliers and work with MDE to make that information available to school food service directors and for creating and disseminating information on the school food procurement process to help farmers, processors, and suppliers learn more about the process.

(b) Identify, target, and promote job creation around farm-to-school initiatives.

(c) In cooperation with commodity groups and growers associations, utilize existing web-based market development tools or adopt a voluntary web-based directory of farmers searchable by location. The directory should be updated and consistently maintained and usable by anyone interested in locating farmers and Michigan farm products.

(d) Investigate opportunities for farmers to supply their products to commercial distributors.

History: 2008, Act 315, Imd. Eff. Dec. 18, 2008.