



# State of New Jersey

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## New Jersey Farm 2 School Procurement Initiative (NJF2SPI)

### GUIDELINES AND ATTESTATION FOR PARTICIPATION

The purpose of this document is to inform New Jersey School Food Authorities (SFAs) of the opportunity to obtain funding through the New Jersey Farm to School Procurement Initiative (NJF2SPI) in School Year 2025–2026. An Attestation is also provided for SFAs to indicate if they will accept or reject this opportunity.

NJF2SPI is a State reimbursement program that offers SFAs participating in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs (Meal Programs) the option to purchase locally sourced food grown and produced exclusively within New Jersey from farms, small businesses, and ranchers. The NJF2SPI food purchases will allow SFAs to procure local foods that are unique to their geographic area, meet the needs of their Meal Programs, and offer nutritious meals to students.

The New Jersey Department of Agriculture (NJDA) received the State Hunger Initiative/Food Assistance Program grant to provide funds to organizations and programs that alleviate food insecurity in New Jersey. This year, NJDA has allocated \$1,000,000 from these funds to the NJF2SPI. The purpose is to encourage schools to purchase local food and to strengthen sustainable food procurement practices between New Jersey farms and schools. NJF2SPI funds are expected to increase the purchase and consumption of local food by New Jersey schools and students, while creating and expanding economic opportunities for local farmers, producers, and ranchers. To be eligible for reimbursement, all food purchased must meet the definition of local and be either whole, unprocessed, or minimally processed.

**-Local** is defined as domestic products both grown and sourced in New Jersey.

**-Unprocessed or minimally processed foods** include fruits and vegetables (including 100% juices); grain products such as pastas and rice; meats (whole, pieces, or food items such as ground meats), fish; meat alternates such as beans or legumes; and fluid milk and other dairy foods such as cheese and yogurt. Minimally processed means that products may be whole, cut, pureed, fresh, frozen, canned, dried or otherwise processed such that the original product character is retained. The effects of the following food handling and preservation techniques shall not be considered as changing an agricultural product into a product of a different kind or character: Cooling; refrigerating; freezing; size adjustment made by peeling, slicing, dicing, cutting, chopping, shucking, and grinding; forming ground products into patties without any additives or fillers; drying/dehydration; washing; packaging (such as placing eggs in cartons), vacuum packing and bagging (such as placing vegetables in bags or combining two or more types of vegetables or fruits in a single package); the addition of ascorbic acid or other preservatives to prevent oxidation of produce; butchering livestock and poultry; cleaning fish; and the pasteurization of milk.

The grant funds are not to be used for the purchase of processed products. See examples of allowable and unallowable purchases below.

#### Examples of **allowable** purchases:

Fruits  
Vegetables  
100% juice  
Grains, pasta, rice  
Meats – whole, pieces, ground  
(includes beef, pork and poultry)  
Beans – Legumes  
Cheese, Yogurt, Eggs  
New Jersey Milk

#### Examples of **unallowable** purchases:

Baked goods  
Premade rice or pasta dishes  
Pre-packed sandwiches or meals  
Prepared or precooked ready to eat foods  
Chicken nuggets, Chicken patties  
  
Fish Sticks, Hot Dogs, cured meats  
Pizza pies, pizza rolls, Sauces

## **Participation Requirements**

SFAs participating in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs and electing to participate in the NJF2SPI must:

- Be a Recipient Agency (RA) in USDA Foods Distribution
- Complete and submit the Attestation of Participation below

## **Procurement and Reimbursement Guidelines**

- Purchases must be made exclusively from farms, small businesses, and ranchers physically located in New Jersey
- Invoices must be submitted to NJDA for review to confirm adherence to purchase requirements
- Purchases from out-of-state vendors or products not meeting eligibility criteria will be rejected
- Reimbursements will be issued directly to RAs; payments will not be made to vendors or food service management companies
- Allocated funds must be fully expended by June 30, 2026. Extensions may be considered upon request

Funding will be allocated based on the RA's average daily participation (ADP) across all schools participating in NJF2SPI, with a minimum annual funding level of \$2,000, and a maximum annual funding level not to exceed \$10,000 per school district. No appeal shall be considered of any award made. NJDA will provide purchasing resources, including but not limited to, lists of local farms and small businesses eligible to participate in NJF2SPI and allowable purchases to all participants. Virtual Office Hours will be scheduled for participants to ask questions, obtain guidance, and connect with farmers/producers.

SFAs will receive their entitlement amounts on or about April 10, 2026.

**NJF2SPI FUNDING PARTICIPATION – ATTESTATION STATEMENT**

To receive New Jersey Farm 2 School Procurement Initiative funding, you must complete and submit the following attestation statement. Please return this document no later than April 1, 2026, to [njdaF2SPI@ag.nj.gov](mailto:njdaF2SPI@ag.nj.gov). The subject line of the email should read as follows: District name – agency number.

School Food Authority Name: \_\_\_\_\_

School Food Authority Agreement Number: \_\_\_\_\_

School Food Authority Tax Identification number in SNEARS: \_\_\_\_\_

Authorized Representative Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Authorized Representative Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Authorized Representative Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Authorized Representative Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE CHOOSE AN OPTION**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Option 1**

I hereby elect to receive NJF2SPI funding and certify the information below to be correct.

- Will only use funds to purchase local whole, unprocessed or minimally processed foods.
- Will submit signed invoices for reimbursement which include the agency number.
- Will ensure that all purchases are made from local businesses and farms in New Jersey. Purchases can also be from a vendor who works with New Jersey farmers.
- Will not use funds for any labor, indirect costs or other administrative expenses.
- Will comply with all State recordkeeping and review requirements, which include, but are not limited to, maintaining documentation demonstrating appropriate use of NJF2SPI funds.
- Will comply with all applicable State procurement regulations and financial management requirements.

**OR**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Option 2**

I hereby decline to participate and decline this additional funding.

Business Administrator Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Business Administrator Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_