

A photograph of farmers in a field, wearing hats and plaid shirts, working with large green leafy vegetables. The scene is bright and sunny, with a warm, golden light filtering through the trees in the background.

What is

Farm *to* Institution?

FTI allows **farmers and ranchers** to develop new markets and sell to local institutions, such as K-12 schools, hospitals, colleges, cafeterias, and state agencies.

Growers have the opportunity to sell their goods to local institutions. This is a mutually beneficial opportunity that...

Advances the community's public health

Improves health outcomes by providing fresh, high-quality produce to hospitals, schools, and other institutions. ¹

Contributes to environmental sustainability

Creates a sustainable regional food system, cutting down on greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by reducing "food miles", food waste, and long-term refrigeration. ²

Stimulates community economic development

Augments the local economy through job and income development; Creates greater market opportunities for local producers. ³

Local Policy Support: Arkansas's Farm to Institution geographic preference policy, The Local Food, Farms, and Jobs Act (Local Food Act).

The Local Food Act requires **institutions** receiving at least \$25,000 annually from the state and that have a food program to set a goal that 20% of their total food budget be spent on **local food**. It also requires institutions to submit an annual form reporting on their local food procurement budget to the **Arkansas Department of Agriculture**.

Key Terms:

- **Institution:** Entity of the state, such as institutions of higher education, childcare facility, after-school programs, libraries, prisons, senior care centers, state agencies such as DHS or ADVA, etc.
- **Local Food:** Food products that are grown in Arkansas and/or packaged and processed in Arkansas.
- **Food packaging** is the enclosing of food for transport, storage, and retail sale. Ex: enclosing, bagging, etc.
- **Food processing** is the alteration of food from its natural raw state. Ex: washing, cutting, etc.

1. Harris, D., Lott, M., Lakins, V., Bowden, B., & Kimmons, J. (2012). *Farm to Institution: Creating Access to Healthy Local and Regional Foods*. *Advances in Nutrition*, 3(3), 343-349. doi:10.3945/an.111.001677

2. Baranski M, Babbie K, Pirog R. A Consumer's Guide to Local Food Systems and Greenhouse Gases. Michigan State University Extension; 2012:6. Accessed November 11, 2021. [https://www.canr.msu.edu/uploads/resources/pdfs/local_food_systems_and_greenhouse_gases_\(e3178\).pdf](https://www.canr.msu.edu/uploads/resources/pdfs/local_food_systems_and_greenhouse_gases_(e3178).pdf)

3. Bagdonis, J. M., Hinrichs, C. C., & Schafft, K. A. (2008). The emergence and framing of farm-to-school initiatives: Civic engagement, health and local agriculture. *Agriculture and Human Values*, 26(1-2), 107-119. doi:10.1007/s10460-008-9173-6

For more information:

<https://www.agriculture.arkansas.gov/arkansas-department-of-agriculture-programs/the-local-food-farms-and-jobs-act>

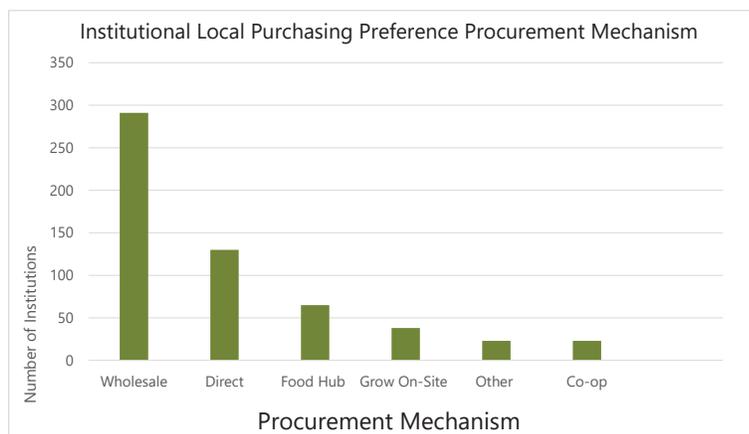
For a copy of this resource visit: <https://nwa.uams.edu/chr/resources/nutrition/>

Institutional Preferences

The Local Food, Farms *and* Jobs Act Report:

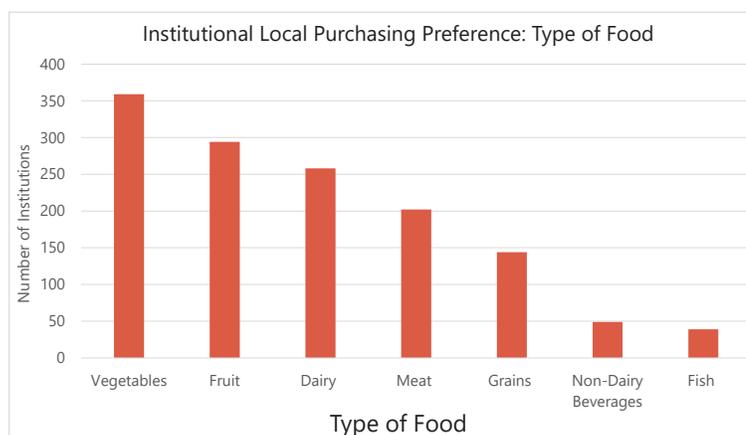
Institutional Local Purchasing Preference

Institutions were asked how they plan to purchase to meet their local procurement goals. They were able to select multiple categories, and 401 institutions responded. **291 (72.6%) indicated they intend to purchase local through their wholesale distributor, 130 institutions (32.4%) intend to work directly with a producer/grower/farmer/processor, 65 (16.2%) reported wanting to work with a food hub, 38 (9.5%) reported they intend to grow products on site, and 23 (5.7%) reported wanting to work with a cooperative.** Additional answers included examples such as utilizing farmers' markets, and working with local vendors, distributors, and food banks to identify local products.



Institutional Local Food Preference

Institutions were asked what product categories they were interested in purchasing. They were able to select multiple categories, and 394 institutions responded. **359 (91.1%) were interested in vegetables, 294 (74.6%) were interested in fruit, 258 (65.5%) in dairy, 202 (51.3%) in meat, 144 (36.5%) in grains, 49 (12.4%) in non-dairy beverages, and 39 (9.9%) in fish.**



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