

FARM TO SCHOOL PROCUREMENT IN MAINE

A Pilot Study of Procurement Practices in Maine Schools during the 2010/11 School Year

Maine Farm to School Work Group Procurement Subcommittee

*With research assistance from Jamel Torres, Masters Degree Candidate,
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Acknowledgements

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Introduction

Created in 2009, the Maine Farm to School Work Group is comprised of representatives from Healthy Maine Partnerships, the Maine Department of Agriculture, the Maine Department of Education, and other organizations and partnerships working on farm to school and food systems issues in Maine. In 2010, the Work Group formed a volunteer subcommittee comprised of representatives from the Maine Department of Education, Healthy Acadia, Western Mountains Alliance, AgComm, Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association (MOFGA), and University of Maine Cooperative Extension. The subcommittee was charged with a) collecting information on successful local foods procurement programs in Maine; b) investigating the current barriers and opportunities facing farm to school activities in Maine; c) exploring ways to replicate successful farm to school programs; and d) identifying innovative strategies to overcome existing barriers and create appropriate place-based solutions.

During the fall of 2011, the Procurement Subcommittee begin planning for a pilot study to collect preliminary data on farm to school procurement practices in Maine public schools and for development of a tool to assist school food service staff in tracking local food purchases over the course of the year. With minimal funding available, the subcommittee decided to work with a student intern to conduct a pilot study. Jamel Torres, a graduate student studying community planning & development at the University of Southern Maine's Muskie School of Public Service, was hired as an intern for the project and charged with: a) researching the existing literature on flourishing farm to school efforts across the nation; b) developing the questions to be included in the survey; c) printing and sending the surveys; d) analyzing the data; and e) developing this report.

Limited resources, as well as the need for further information on current procurement tracking methods and existing data from school districts, deferred the development of a tracking tool. The Subcommittee moved forward with the study and in October 2011, 120 surveys were mailed to Maine school districts. 40% were returned by the December 2 deadline for responses. The survey focused on questions pertaining to the types and amounts of produce purchased by school districts and on barriers to increased local food procurement.

One of the key findings in the study was the fact that 80% of the respondents noted that farmer contact leading to local food purchasing was a result of personal connections and farmers reaching out to schools. Thus, ample opportunities for food purchasers and producers to meet should be facilitated. This may include "meet-ups" based at a school or a farm, farmers doing more outreach to schools, or other formats that allow for personal interaction. Other key findings include the fact that 27% of respondents indicated that they did not purchase Maine meat and eggs during the 2010/11 school year and 38% of the respondents also noted that they did not purchase Maine seafood during the 2010/11 school year. There is a significant opportunity for a regional market for local meat, eggs and seafood among Maine's schools.

The long term vision of the Maine Farm to School Procurement Subcommittee is to develop a system to annually collect information on school procurement of local foods, the types of foods and amount of funding for these purchases, in order to obtain baseline data and to begin developing indicators to evaluate the success of efforts to increase local procurement in Maine. Data and findings presented in this study are preliminary and intended to serve as a starting point for further research and tracking of procurement in public schools. While the validity of results presented here are limited somewhat by how the survey was administered, the findings suggest that many of the barriers already identified by farm to school advocates continue to present challenges for increased procurement, and that there is significant room for growth in procurement of some local products.

Scope and Goals of the Survey

The purpose of the survey was to:

1. Collect information on current barriers and opportunities facing farm to school programs in Maine.
2. Obtain baseline data on the amount of local food procurement taking place in Maine's schools and the methods used to acquire local foods.
3. Understand from the schools' perspectives how local foods are, or could most easily be sourced and purchased through school breakfast and lunch programs.

Methodology

The first step in this process was to research farm to school programs across the U.S. Based on this research, a literature review outline was developed about farm to school programs across the country. The outline aided the process of drafting potential questions to be used on the survey. Important sources that aided the drafting process included Healthy Acadia's *Kitchen Spending on Local Food in 2010* survey, New Jersey's *Farm to School Survey*, and Minnesota's *Farm to School Survey*. These sources can be found in this document's reference list.

The next step was to finalize a draft of the survey, incorporating feedback from key partners, including the Maine Farm to School Network and the Maine Department of Education. Once the survey was approved by the committee, an online survey was created using Google forms and was sent out to members of the procurement subcommittee to test it. The online survey was then made live, and the Maine Farm to School Network, including staff from Maine Department of Education publicized the survey to schools across the state.

The survey was also administered using a paper form that was sent to 120 Maine schools and included a stamped, self-addressed envelope for returns.¹ Surveys were mailed to individual contacts in the business offices of 120 schools. Contact information and addresses for Maine schools were obtained using MEDMS Labeling System database, available through the Maine Department of Education database using the following criteria: "Business Administrator / Manager."

Some schools received multiple surveys. Although schools without a designated business manager may not have received a survey, all districts with designated business managers would have received at least one survey. Paper surveys were printed and packaged at Western Mountain's Alliance's office in Farmington, Maine. The paper surveys were mailed on October 20, 2011. A total of 34 paper surveys were completed and returned and a total of 14 online surveys were completed and submitted. The survey was also promoted through Maine Department of Education staff, Walter Beesley, who encouraged responses to the survey in one edition of his weekly email to the child.nutrition listserv in October.

Once the paper surveys were returned, Mr. Torres began analyzing the acquired data, from both the online and paper surveys. In order to have a sufficient amount of time for Mr. Torres to fully analyze the data and write this report, the online survey was closed on December 2, 2011. The data was analyzed, charts and graphs were created, and this report was completed at the end of Mr. Torres' semester.

¹ The use of both paper and online surveys was recommended by staff from the Maine Department of Education. Paper surveys were recommended as a means to increase the return rate. Surveys were sent to specific business managers in school districts, as opposed to food service managers, for similar reasons although the data indicates that food service directors were most likely to complete the survey.

Limitations of the Data

While the study results provide several solid findings, limitations to the data exist in the following areas:

- Surveys were administered to both public school districts and individual private schools in Maine. At the recommendation of a Maine Department of Education Child Nutrition Specialist and Maine Farm to School Working Group member, surveys were sent directly to school business managers instead of food service directors. In some cases, the business managers may have been the least likely to directly respond to the surveys.
- The survey was administered to business managers but only 2% of respondents were business managers. In some cases business managers may have passed the survey on to food service directors. However we are fairly confident that in many cases this didn't happen and no response was returned.
- The survey was not randomized. This may have resulted in a bias within the data toward schools already involved in farm to school. In other words, schools with existing farm to school programs or procurement practices may have been more likely to complete the survey.
- A significant number of respondents (10) did not list any identifying information (name, school name, district, etc.). This creates obstacles to tracking whether the information provided is from a private school, a public school, or a public school district comprised of multiple schools. It also hinders tracking data as related to geography and may reflect some duplication between school districts.
- Due to an oversight by the Procurement Committee, no data was collected specific to fruit and vegetable purchasing, while we did collect data specific to seafood, meat, egg, and dairy purchasing.
- On survey questions regarding dollar amounts spent on particular categories of food, choices included "\$0-500" and "Did not buy local", creating the possibility for confusion in cases where schools that did not purchase locally may have selected "\$0-500" though our intention was for this category to represent purchases between \$1-500.

Results

The survey was mailed on October 20, 2011. A total of 120 surveys were mailed out, and it was also made available online. The total response rate is 40%, as 48 of the 120 surveys were completed and returned. The following graph illustrates who completed the surveys by position title.

Surveys Completed by Position Title

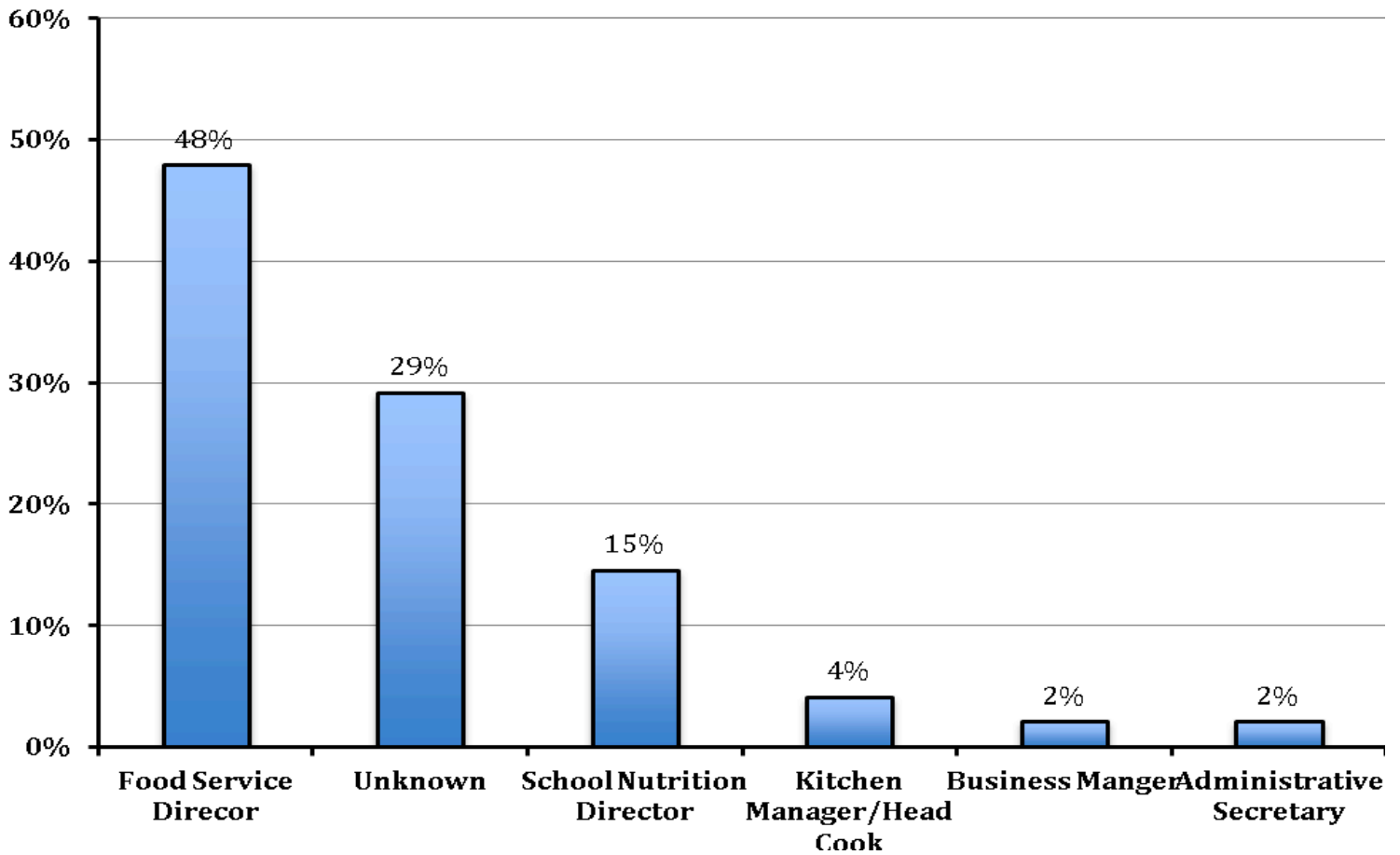


Figure 1 Bar graph illustrating the surveys completed by self-identified position title

Question 1:

Overall, how would you rate your food service program's interest in using food from Maine farms?

Analysis:

Most prevalent answer:

- 79% of the respondents are “very interested” in local foods procurement

Other significant information:

- 21% of the respondents are “moderately” interested in local foods procurement
- 0% of the respondents are “slightly interested” or “not interested” in local foods procurement

Interest in Local Foods Procurement

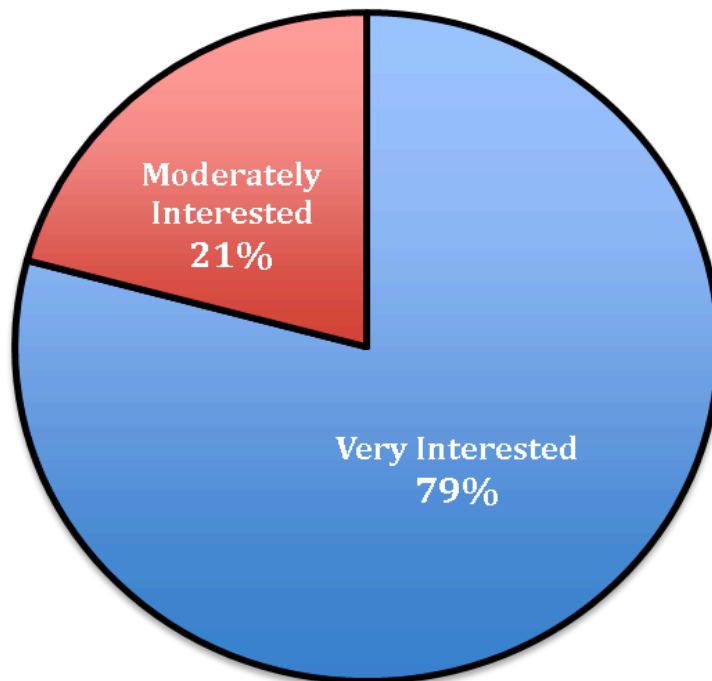


Figure 2 Pie chart illustrating the distribution of interest in local foods procurement

Question 2:

If your district's food service program is currently purchasing or interested in purchasing local foods, does the district have a targeted dollar amount allocated for this type of procurement?

Analysis:

Most prevalent answer:

- 37.5% of the respondents' current targeted dollar amount allocated for local food procurement is between \$1,000 - \$5,000

Other significant information:

- 16.7% of the respondents' current targeted dollar amount allocated for local food procurement is greater than \$10,000
- Each interval of \$0 – 500, \$500 - \$1,000, and \$5,000 - \$10,000 received 14.6% of the answers, respectively
- Only 2.1% of the respondents “did not buy local”

Note:

- We are assuming that those respondents who spent \$0 on local foods chose “did not buy local” and those who spent between \$1 - \$500 chose \$0 - \$500

Current Targeted Dollar Amount Allocated for Local Food Procurement

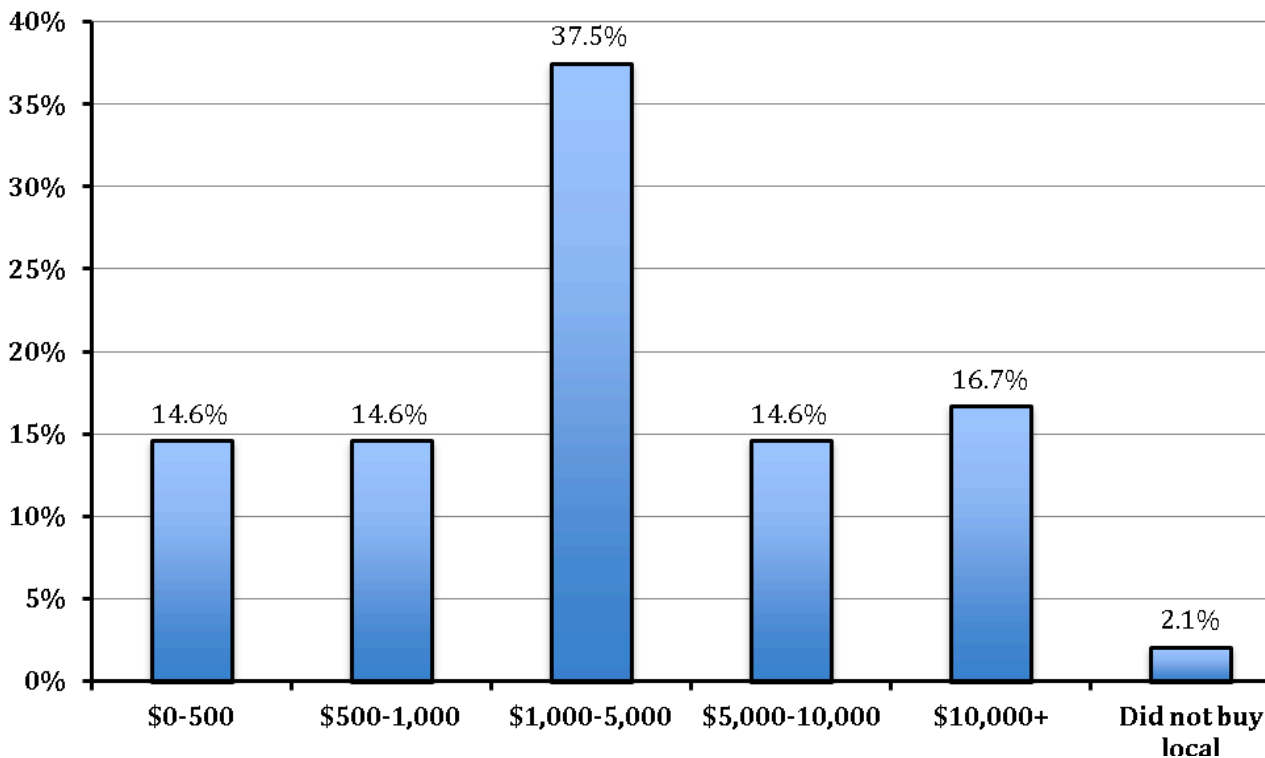


Figure 3 Bar graph illustrating targeted dollar amount allocated for local foods procurement

Question 3:

Please estimate how much your food service program spent in the 2010/11 school year on local food purchases.

Analysis:

Most prevalent answer:

- 39.6% of the respondents estimated that their school district spent between \$1,000 - \$5,000 on local foods in the 2010/11 school year

Other significant information:

- 18.8% of the respondents estimated that their school district spent between \$0 - \$500 on local foods in the 2010/11 school year
- 16.7% of the respondents estimated that their school district spent more than \$10,000 on local foods in the 2010/11 school year

Note:

- We are assuming that those respondents who spent \$0 on local foods chose “did not buy local” and those who spent between \$1 - \$500 chose \$0 - \$500

Estimation of Money Spent on Local Foods 2010/11 School Year

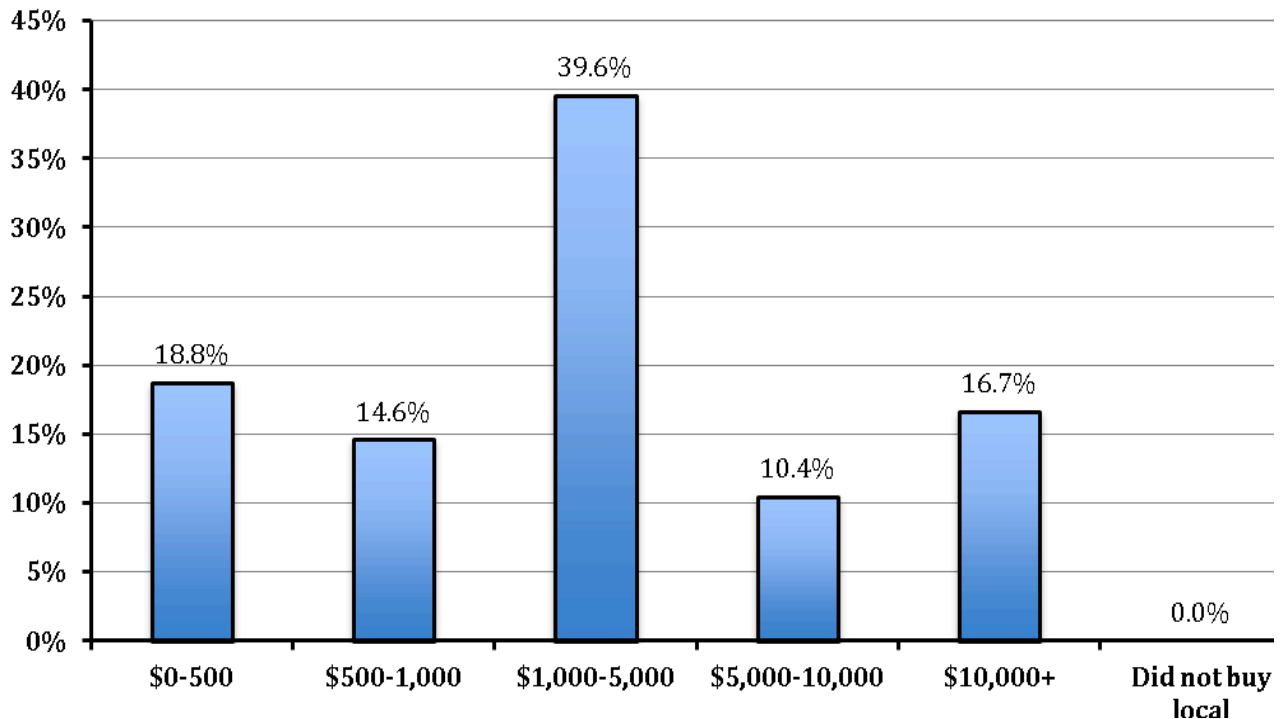


Figure 4 Bar graph illustrating the estimated dollar amount spent in the 2010/11 school year on local food purchases

Question 4:

How is food purchasing done in your food service program?

Analysis:

Most prevalent answer:

- 56% of the respondents' food is ordered by a food service director and delivered to each individual school.

Other significant information:

- 29% of the respondents' food is ordered and prepared by individual schools
- Only 9% of the respondents' food is ordered by a food service director and delivered to a central location

Method of Food Purchasing

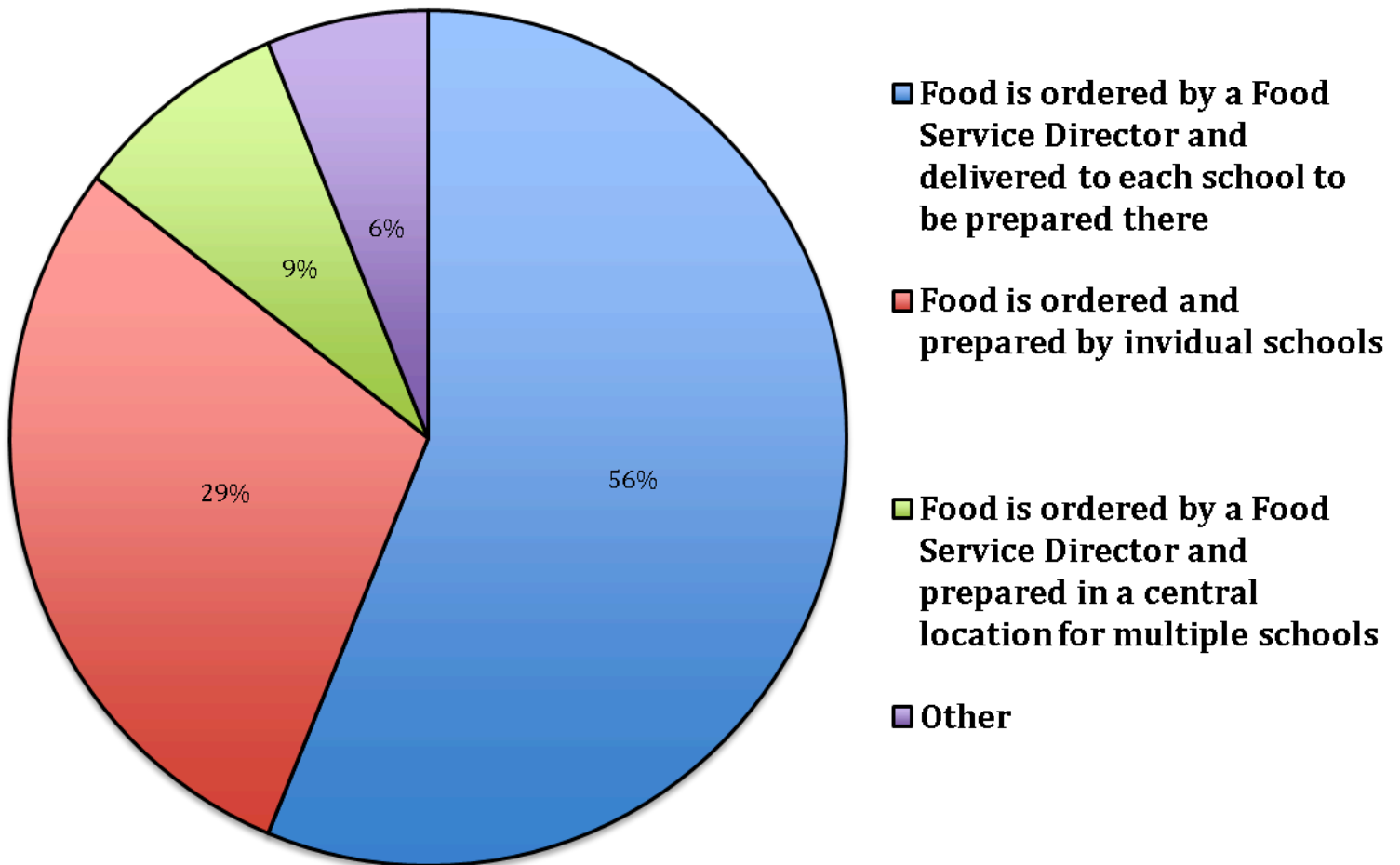


Figure 5 Pie chart illustrating the distribution of food purchasing methods

Question 5:

What is your approximate annual budget for food procurement?

Analysis:

Most prevalent answer:

- 31% of the respondents approximated that their annual budget for food procurement is greater than \$300,000

Other significant information:

- 21% of the respondents did not know their approximate annual budget for food procurement
- The rest of the respondents' approximate annual budget for food procurement is roughly equally distributed among the remaining intervals

Approximate Annual Budget for Food Procurement

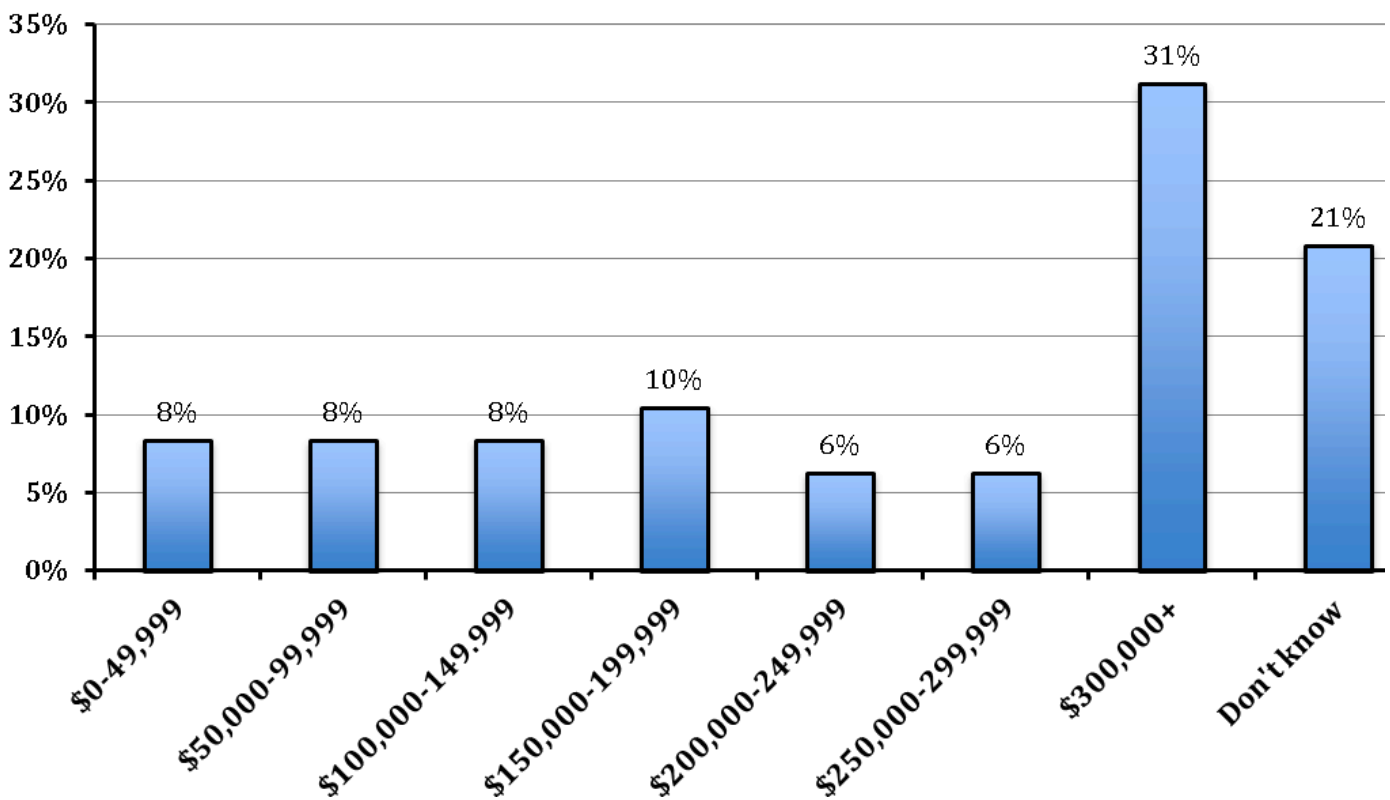


Figure 5 Bar graph illustrating the distribution of approximate annual budget for food procurement

Question 6:

If your 2010/11 food service program included purchases of Maine meat and eggs, please estimate the dollar amount your district spent.

Analysis:

Most prevalent answer:

- 29% of the respondents estimated that they spent between \$0 - \$500 on Maine meat and eggs in the 2010/11 school year

Other significant information:

- 27% of the respondents did not buy Maine meat and eggs in the 2010/11 school year
- 19% of the respondents estimated that they spent between \$500 - \$1,000 on Maine meat and eggs in the 2010/11 school year

Note:

- We are assuming that those respondents who spent \$0 on Maine meat and eggs chose “did not buy local” and those who spent between \$1 - \$500 chose \$0 - \$500

Estimated Dollars Spent on Maine Meat & Eggs in 2010/11 School Year

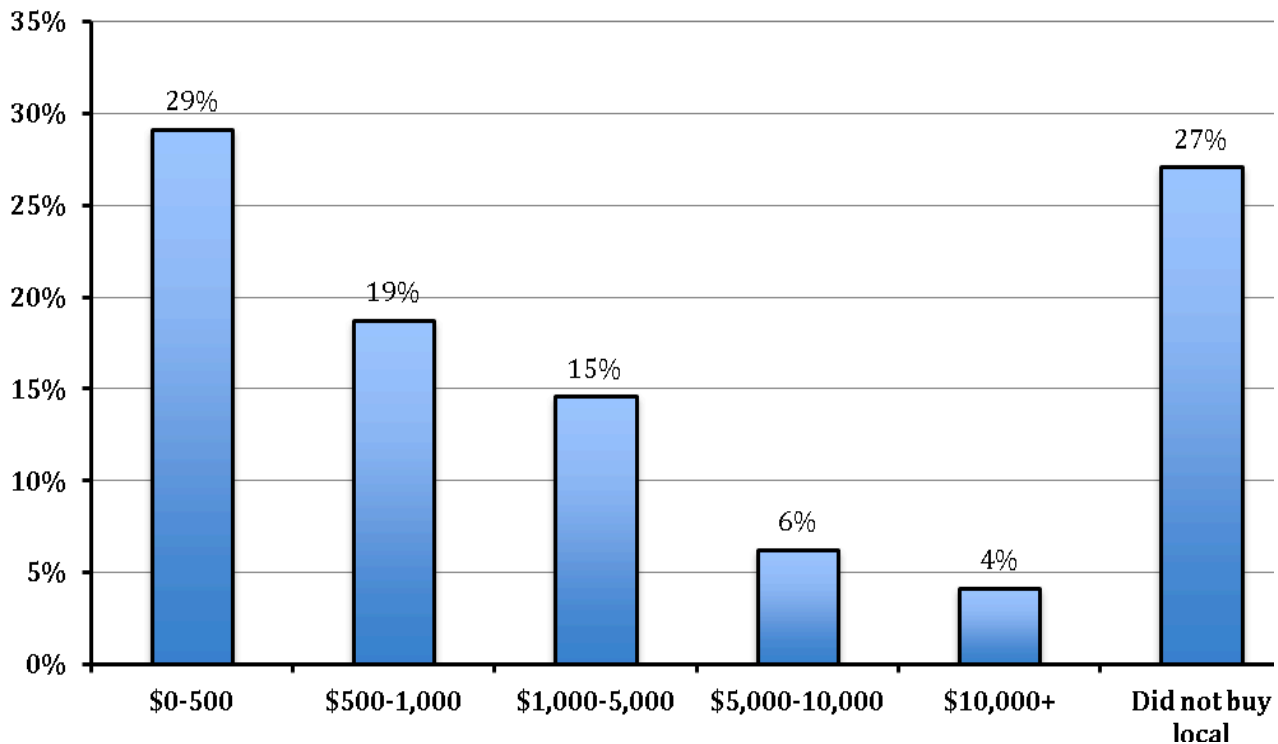


Figure 7 Bar graph illustrating the distribution of estimated dollars spent on Maine meat and eggs in the 2010/11 school year

Question 7:

If your 2010/11 food service program included purchases of Maine seafood, please estimate the dollar amount your district spent.

Analysis:

Most prevalent answer:

- 50% of the respondents estimated that they spent between \$0 - \$500 dollars on Maine seafood in the 2010/11 school year

Other significant information:

- 38% of the respondents did not buy any Maine seafood in the 2010/11 school year

Note:

- We are assuming that those respondents who spent \$0 on Maine seafood chose “did not buy local” and those who spent between \$1 - \$500 chose \$0 - \$500

Estimated Dollars Spent on Maine Seafood in 2010/11 School Year

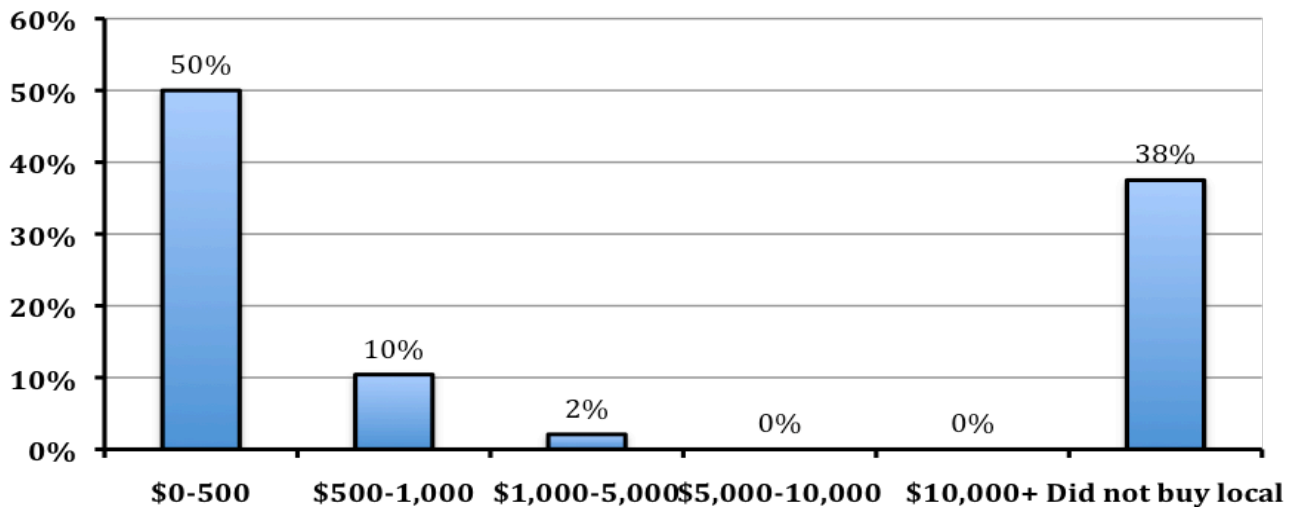


Figure 8 Bar graph illustrating the distribution of estimated dollars spent on Maine seafood in 2010/11 school year

Question 8:

If your 2010/11 food service program purchased milk from Maine (i.e., Oakhurst, Maine’s Own Organic Milk Company, Smiling Hill Farms, etc.), please estimate how much your district spent.

Analysis:

Most prevalent answer:

- 56% of the respondents estimated that they spent greater than \$10,000 on Maine milk in the 2010/11 school year

Other significant information:

- 19% of the respondents estimated that they spent between \$5,000 - \$10,000 on Maine milk in the 2010/11 school year
- 15% of the respondents estimated that they spent between \$1,000 - \$5,000 on Maine milk in the 2010/11 school year

Note:

- We are assuming that those respondents who spent \$0 on Maine milk chose “did not buy local” and those who spent between \$1 - \$500 chose \$0 - \$500

Estimated Dollars Spent on Maine Milk in 2010/11 School Year

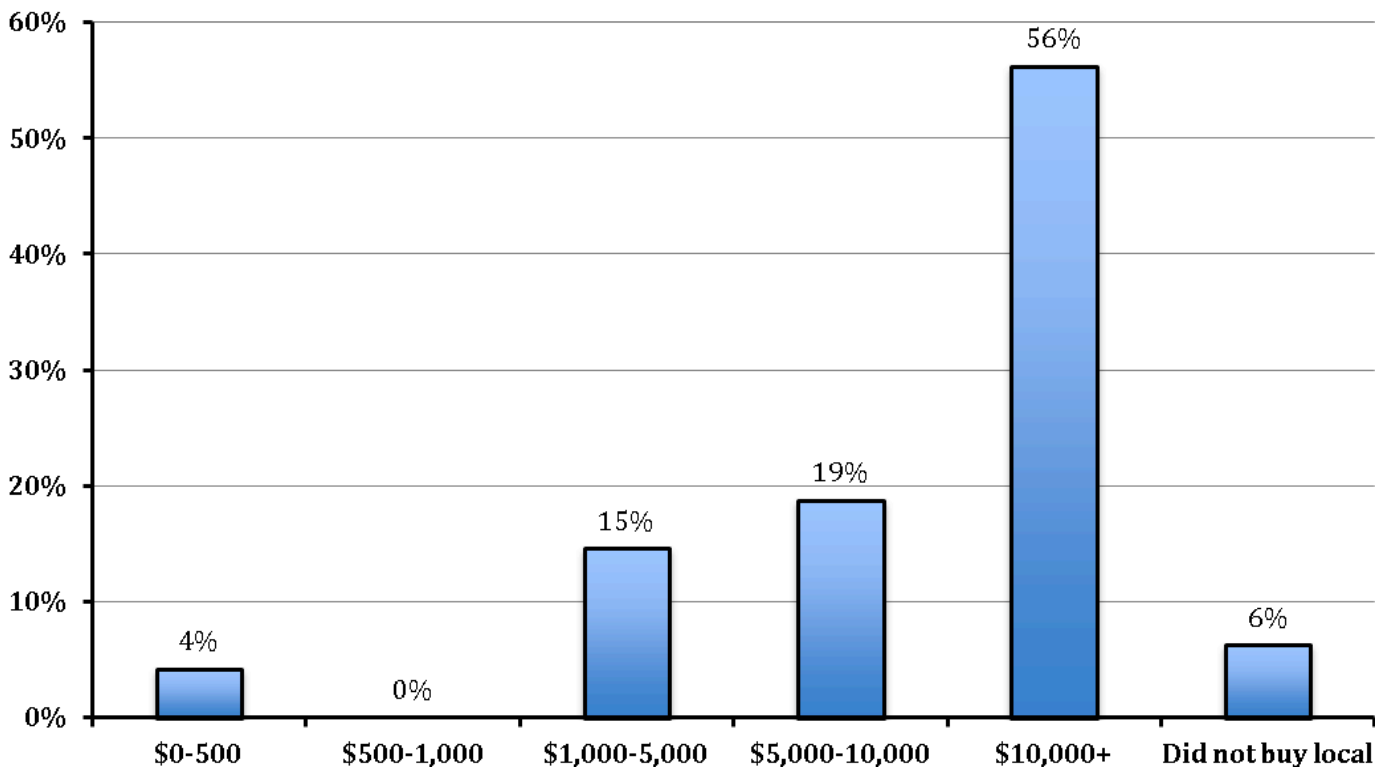


Figure 9 Bar graph illustrating the distribution of estimated dollars spent on Maine milk in 2010/11 school year

Question 9:

*Which distributors does your food service program currently purchase from?
(Respondents were asked to choose all that applied)*

Analysis:

Most prevalent answer:

- 22% of the respondents purchase their food from Sysco

Other significant information:

- 21% of the respondents purchase their food from Northcenter
- 20% of the respondents purchase their food from Dennis Paper
- 12% of the respondents purchase their milk from Oakhurst
- Common answers in “other” include:
 - Garelick Farms
 - Spears Farm
 - Port Clyde Fresh Catch
 - Other local farms/farm stands

Distributors Used

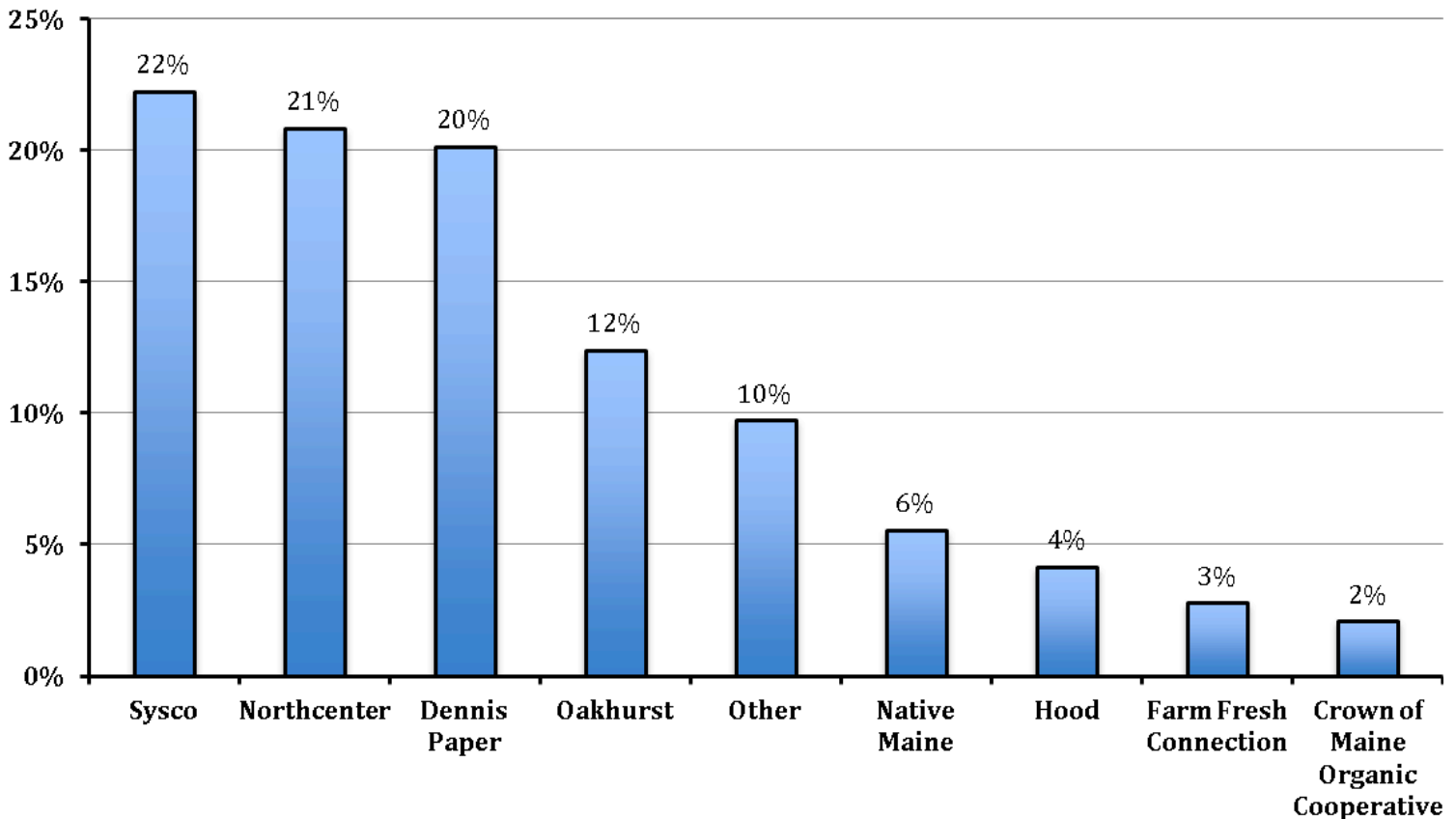


Figure 10 Bar graph illustrating distribution of food distributors used

Question 10:

Does your food service program currently purchase foods directly from local farms? If yes, how does your food service program order from those farms?

Analysis:

Most prevalent answer:

- 84% of the respondents use the telephone to order from local farms

Other significant information:

- 8% of the respondents use email to order from local farms
- Only 2% of the respondents use an online ordering system to order from local farms

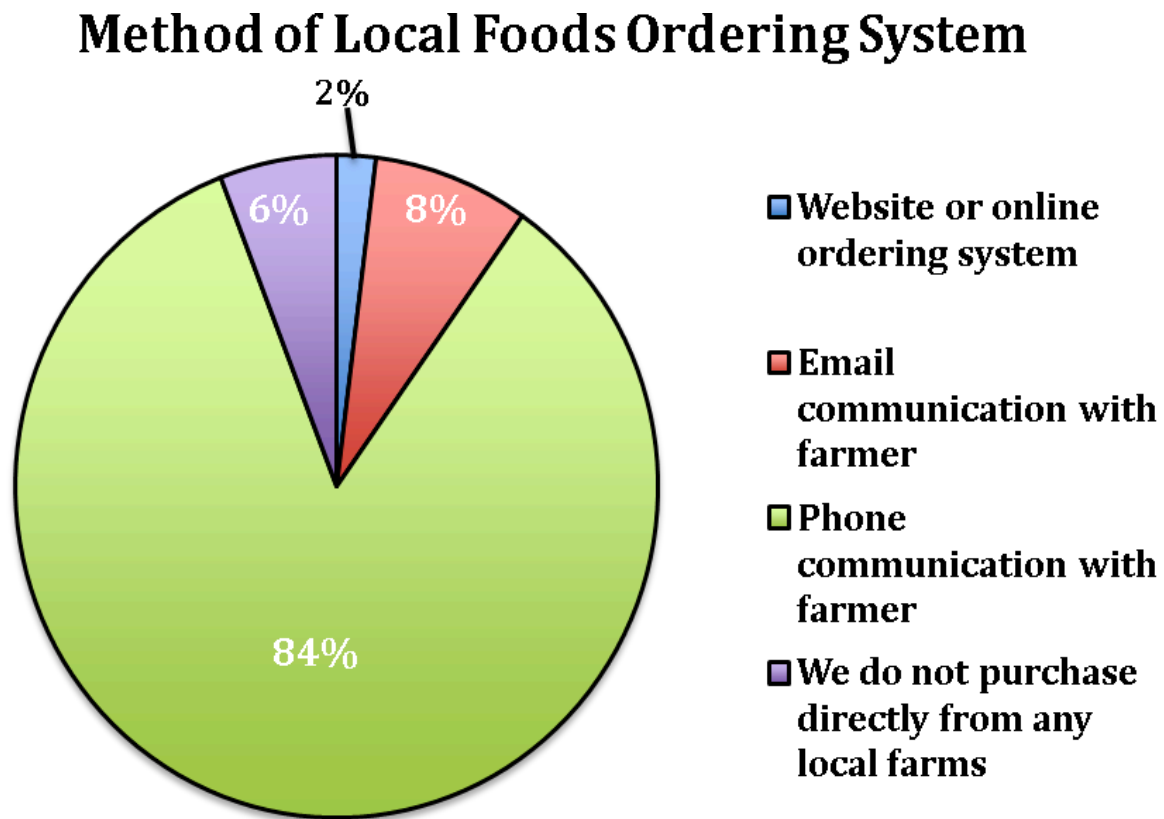


Figure 11 Pie chart illustrating the distribution of methods used for ordering from local farms

Question 11:

How does your food service program connect with local farms?

Analysis:

Most prevalent answer:

- 58% of the respondents connect with local farms via personal contact

Other significant information:

- 22% of the respondents were contacted by a local farmer
- 13% of the respondents connect with local farms through a farm to school coordinator

Method of Connecting with Local Farms

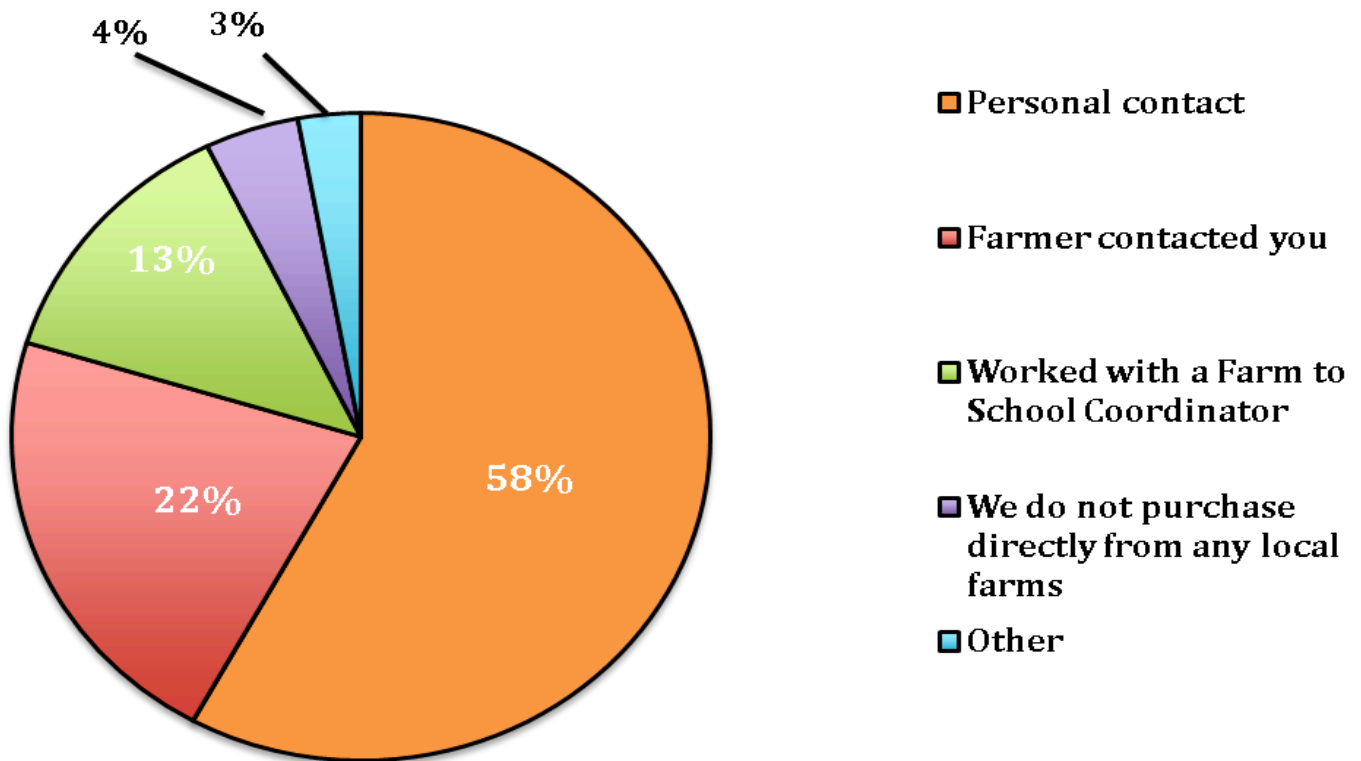


Figure 12 Pie chart illustrating the distribution of methods used to connect with local farms

Question 12:

If your food service program purchases from local farms how do they acquire the product?

Analysis:

Most prevalent answer:

- 36% of the respondents have local farmers deliver their produce to individual schools within the district

Other significant information:

- 32% of the respondents have local farmers deliver their produce to a central location within the district
- 30% of the respondents have their food service program staff pick up produce from local farms

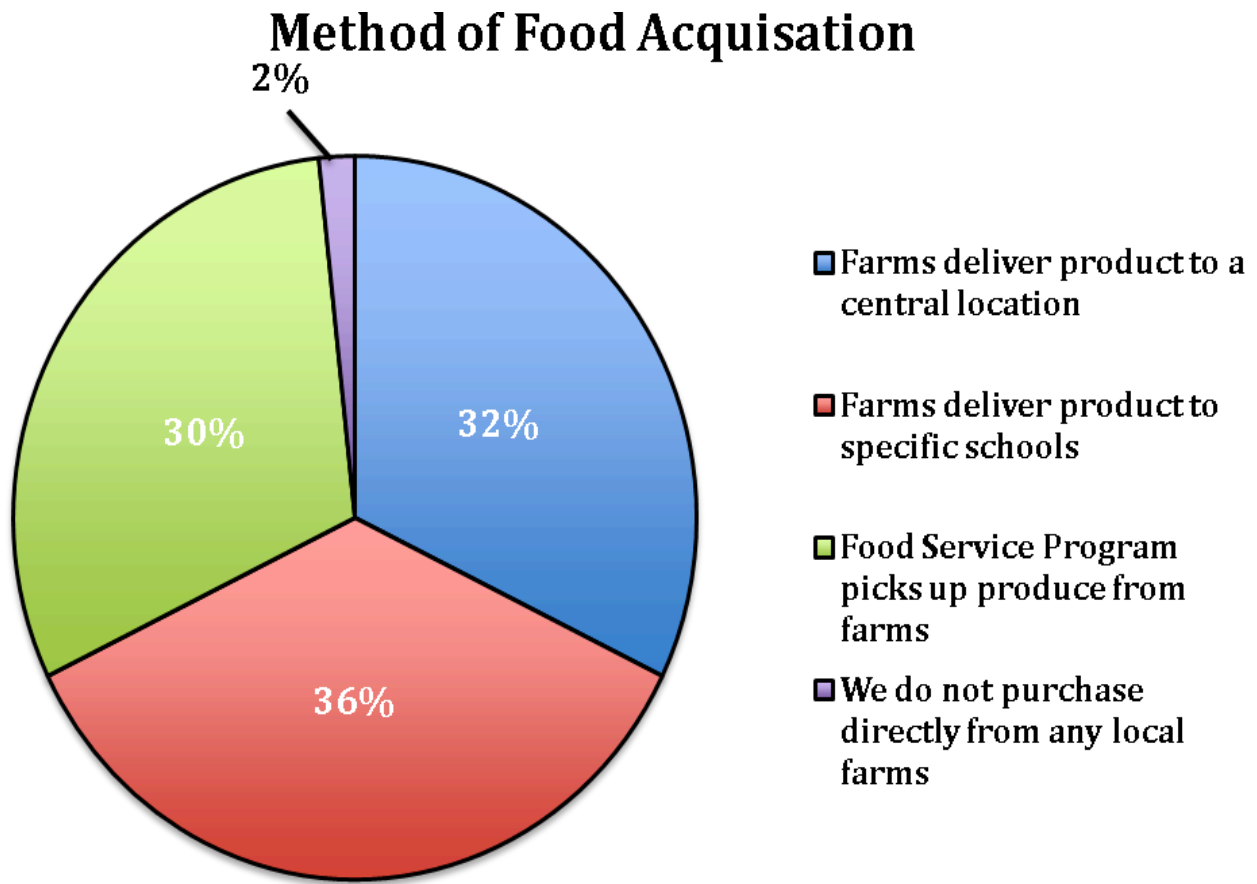


Figure 13 Pie chart illustrating the distribution of methods used for food acquisition

Question 13:

Did you participate in an advance purchase agreement with a farm (i.e., agreeing in the spring on the products you would buy weekly during the fall)?

Analysis:

Most prevalent answer:

- 81% of the respondents did not participate in an Advance Purchase Agreement with a local farm

Other significant information:

- Only 19% of the respondents participated in an Advance Purchase Agreement with a local farm

Participation in an Advance Purchase Agreement with a Local Farm

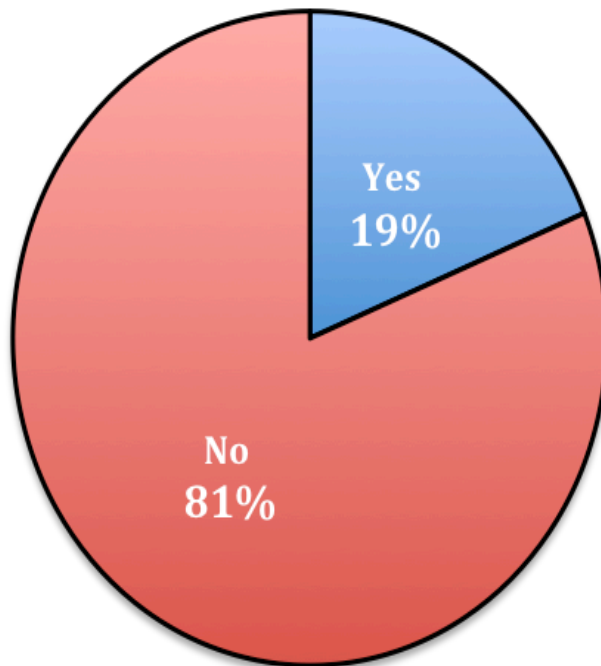


Figure 14 Pie chart illustrating the distribution of willingness to participate in an advance purchase agreement with a local farm

Question 14:

If your district is experiencing issues with purchasing more local food, which would you identify as the top three challenges your district faces?

Analysis:

Most prevalent answers:

- 23% of the respondents indicated cost to be the top challenge with purchasing local foods
- 22% of the respondents indicated inadequate local supply to be the top challenge with purchasing local foods

Other significant information:

- 12% of the respondents indicated challenges with delivery from farms/fisheries to be the top challenge with purchasing local foods
- 11% of the respondents indicated insufficient processing capacity within the district to be the top challenge with purchasing local foods
- 1 respondent noted s/he had food safety concerns with packaging, processing, and delivery
- 1 respondent noted s/he would need a weekly “availability email” to describe the products, price, delivery, and amount available

Top Challenges with Purchasing Local Foods

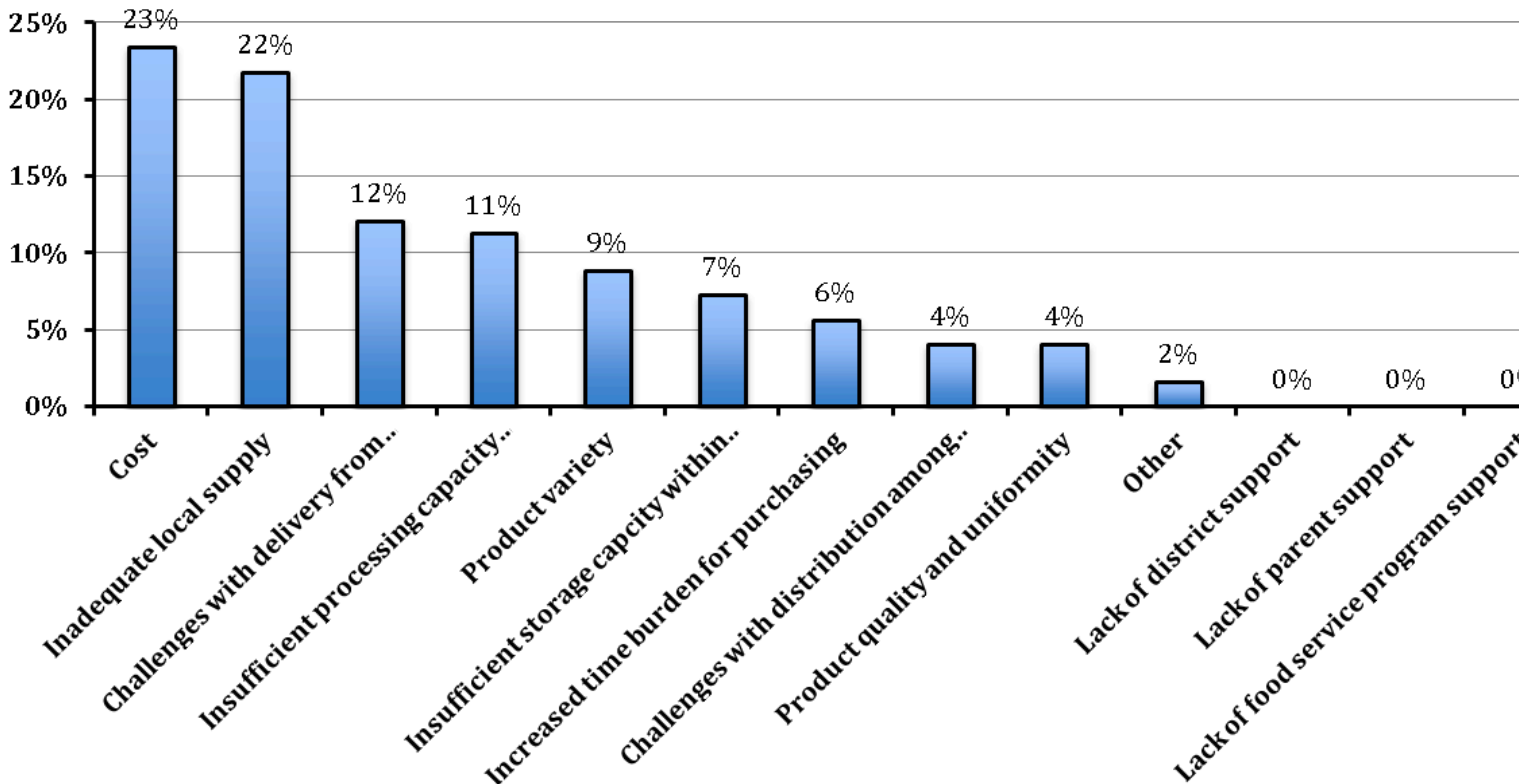


Figure 15 Bar graph illustrating the distribution of the top three challenges with purchasing local foods

Question 15:

How many schools in your district provide a salad bar?

Analysis:

Most prevalent answer:

- 48% of the school districts have between 1 – 4 schools with salad bars

Other significant information:

- 29% of the school districts have between 5 – 9 schools with salad bars
- 13% of the school districts have greater than 10 schools with salad bars

Number of Schools with Salad Bars within Your School District

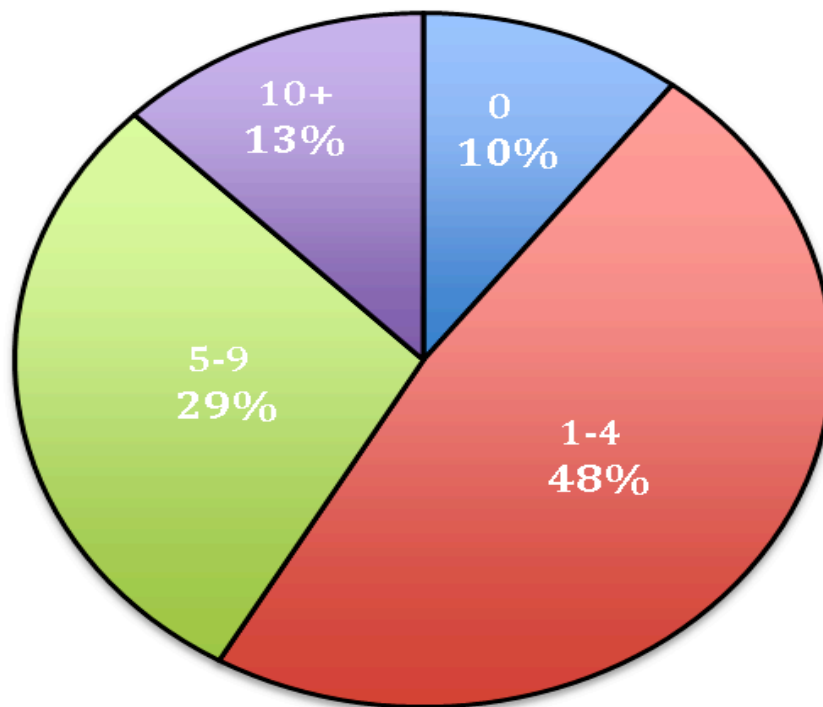


Figure 16 Pie chart illustrating the distribution of the number of schools that provide a salad bar within their school district

Question 16:

Would you be willing to provide a district kitchen outside of school hours for farms to process their produce?

Analysis:

Most prevalent answer:

- 42% of the respondents are not willing to provide a district kitchen outside of school hours for local farms to process their produce

Other significant information:

- 29% of the respondents are willing to **provide** a district kitchen outside of school hours for local farms to process their produce
- 29% of the respondents are willing to **discuss** providing a district kitchen outside of school hours for local farms to process their produce
- Most respondents noted they need the school district’s school board approval before they can provide a district kitchen for food processing

Willingness to Provide a District Kitchen for Local Farms to Process their Produce

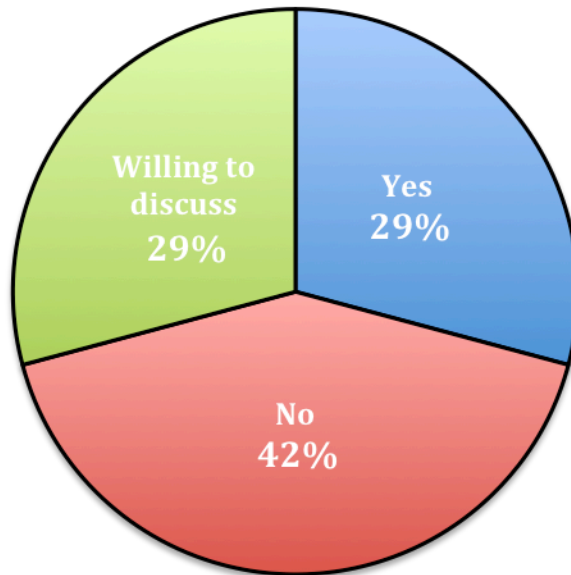


Figure 17 Pie chart illustrating the distribution of the willingness to provide a district kitchen for local farms to process their produce

Trends

1. There is a strong interest in local food procurement, as 79% of the respondents indicated they were very interested.
2. 79% of the respondents indicated very strong interest in local foods procurement, yet 27% of them did not purchase local Maine meat and eggs during the 2010/11 school year.
3. 79% of the respondents indicated very strong interest in local foods procurement, yet 38% of them did not purchase Maine seafood.
4. 56% of the respondents purchased greater than \$10,000 in Maine milk during the 2010/11 school year.
5. The majority of respondents noted they have a targeted dollar amount for local foods procurement between \$1,000 and \$5,000.
6. The majority of respondents estimated that the amount of money spent on local food procurement during the 2010/11 school year was between \$1,000 and \$5,000.
7. Of the 48 respondents, the average annual budget for food procurement is \$257,291.10.
8. Of the 14.6% of respondents who noted that they spent between \$500 and \$1,000 on local foods during the 2010/11 school year, 57% of them noted that they spent less than \$100,000 on all food procurement annually.
9. Of the 39.6% of respondents who noted that they spent between \$1,000 and \$5,000 on local foods during the 2010/11 school year, 54% of them noted that they spent more than \$200,000 on all food procurement annually.
10. Of the 16.7% of respondents who noted that they spent \$10,000 or more on local foods during the 2010/11 school year, 75% noted that they spent more than \$200,000 on all food procurement annually.
11. There is no relationship between the amounts of money the respondents spent on local foods during the 2010/11 school year and how they initiated contact with local farms.
12. Of the 9 respondents who did participate in an advance purchasing agreement with local farms, the majority estimated that they spent over \$5,000 on local foods during the 2010/11 school year.
13. Of the 18.8% of respondents who estimated that they purchased less than \$500 in local foods during the 2010/11 school year, a majority order and prepare their foods at individual schools.
14. Similar to other states, respondents in Maine found cost, inadequate local supply, challenges with delivery, and insufficient processing capacity to be the predominate barriers facing local foods procurement.
15. One of the most frequently noted challenges with local foods procurement is arranging delivery from local farms. It appears that those who are overcoming this are developing solutions relevant to their local contexts.

Recommendations

1. Advance purchase agreements between schools and farms hold potential for increasing local foods procurement. Respondents who did participate in such agreements spent more on local foods than respondents who did not. We strongly encourage schools that are interested in increasing local foods procurement to learn more about and consider developing an advance purchase agreement with a farm. These agreements take on various forms, but typically they do not involve advance payment, rather a non-binding, general agreement in the early spring about what the school would like to purchase the following fall. This allows farmers to plan accordingly and ensure an adequate supply of appropriate foods for the school, as well as helping to strengthen relationships and communication between both parties.
2. Considering that 80% of farmer contact leading to local food purchasing is a result of personal connections and farmers reaching out to schools, ample opportunities for food purchasers and producers to meet should be facilitated. This may include “meet-ups” based at a school or a farm, farmers doing more outreach to schools, arranging advance purchase agreements, or other formats that allow for personal interaction.
3. 27% of the respondents indicated that they did not purchase Maine meat and eggs during the 2010/11 school year. This may present a regional market for local meat and eggs within Maine’s schools.
4. 38% of the respondents indicated that they did not purchase Maine seafood during the 2010/11 school year. This may present a regional market for local seafood within Maine’s schools.
5. Most respondents who estimated they spent greater than \$5,000 on local foods during the 2010/11 school year indicated they had annual food procurement budgets of greater than \$200,000. Thus, local farms may want to first consider schools in Maine with food procurement budgets greater than \$200,000.

Questions for Further Analysis

1. Is the size of a school district's local foods budget related to the district's proximity to farming communities?
2. Is the size of a school district's local foods budget related to the median income per capita in the region in which school district is located?
3. At what locations would it be financially feasible and/or desirable to locate regional food processing facilities?
4. Cost is the predominate challenge facing local foods procurement. Have studies been conducted to quantify the nutritional, economic, educational, and community benefits of local food procurement and whether the additional cost justifies the public investment?
5. Inadequate local supply is the second most significant barrier to local purchasing by schools. Does this reflect an absence of farms in proximity to schools, a lack of interest among farmers in selling to schools, a need for better connection between schools and farms, or the inability of farms to supply enough product to meet the demands of schools?
6. Do models where small farms are aggregating product, delivery and/or marketing to realize greater economies of scale have the ability to lower costs to institutional buyers such as schools?
7. 12% of the respondents indicated that delivery challenges were barrier to local food procurement; what specific issues exist with the delivery practices currently used by schools and farms?
8. With adequate information and support, would more schools be interested in advance purchase agreements?

Next Steps for the Procurement Subcommittee

The Procurement Subcommittee of the Maine Farm to School Workgroup will continue to operate beyond the release of this report. Our goals for the coming year include:

- Share this report within Maine's Farm to School community, including with the Maine Farm to School Workgroup and Network, school food service professionals and farmers, and at conferences and events with relevancy to Farm to School.
- Based on these survey results, follow up with districts that are doing the most purchasing to see what they're doing, how they're doing it, and what's working well.
- Distribute an annual local foods procurement survey to school food service professionals in order to evaluate trends over time.
- Take limitations and lessons learned from our initial survey process into account when revising the survey for distribution in 2012.
- Carefully consider the idea of creating an optional local foods procurement tracking tool that can be used on an ongoing basis by school food service professionals in lieu of responding to the annual survey. This tool would need to be designed in such a way that it is intuitive, useful, and productive for school food service staff to use.
- Consider creating a parallel survey for producers to determine supply-side barriers, interests, and needs.

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Appendix A: Definitions

Local:

According to the definition adopted by the U.S. Congress in the 2008 Food, Conservation, and Energy Act (2008 Farm Act), the total distance that a product can be transported and still be considered a “locally or regionally produced agricultural food product” is less than 400 miles from its origin, or within the State in which it is produced (Martinez, S., Hand, M., Da Pra, M., Pollack, S., Ralston, K., Smith, T., Vogel, S., Clark, S., Lohr, L., Low, S., & Newman, C, 2010)

Food System:

The chain of activities and processes related to the production, processing, distribution, disposal, and eating of food (Raja, S., Born, B., & Russel, J., 2008).

Conventional Food System:

Food production and processing is industrial in scale and relies on advances in bio-technology, food distribution occurs over large distances (estimates suggest food travels about 1,400 miles from farm to the fork), disposal of food generates a significant amount of packaging waste, and consumers are removed – both physically and metaphorically – from the source of their food. In such a system, corporations are agri-businesses and are not farmers, while being the dominant stakeholders (Raja, S., Born, B., & Russel, J., 2008).

Community Food System:

Emphasizes the strengthening and makes visible the relationships between producers, processors, distributors, and consumers of food. A community food system has several interrelated characteristics including, a) it is place-based; b) promotes local and regional networking; c) promotes the use of environmentally sustainable methods for producing, processing, and distributing food; d) espouses the idea of social justice; and e) facilitates residents’ access to healthful, affordable, and culturally appropriate foods at all times – recognized as “food security” (Raja, S., Born, B., & Russel, J., 2008).

Procurement:

The acquisition of goods and services.

Farm to School:

A program that connects schools (K-12) and local farms with the objectives of serving healthy meals in school cafeterias, improving student nutrition, providing agriculture, health and nutrition education opportunities, and supporting local and regional farmers (National Farm to School Network, 2011).

School Districts:

Maine’s school districts and their organization are not particularly uniform in their structure. Some schools are part of a centralized school district, while some consist of just one individual school.

Appendix B: Distribution of Respondents

Note: An interactive map including the name of the schools/school districts and contact information can be found at: <http://batchgeo.com/map/52bc57fabab1d437ace422a12d3c9193>

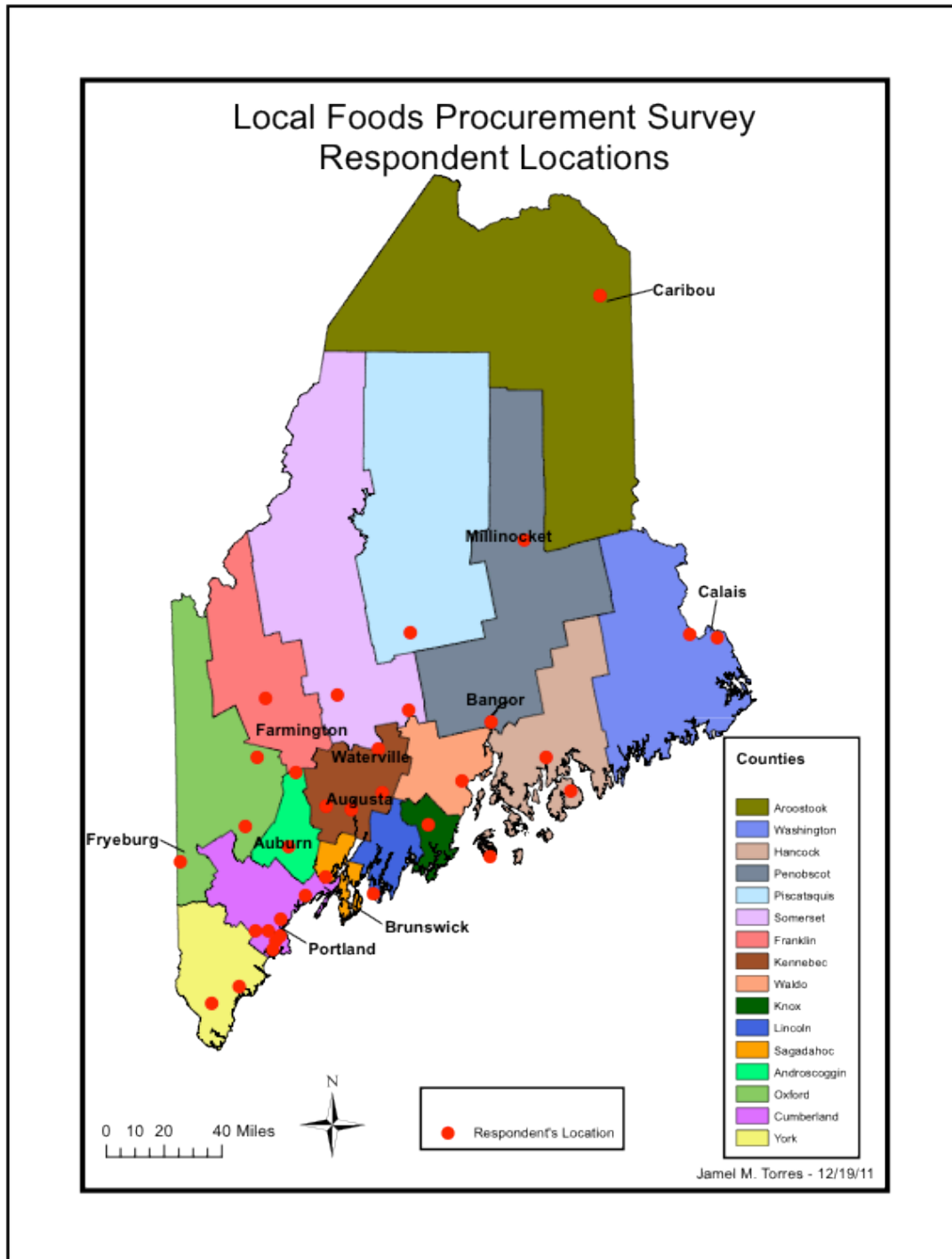


Figure 18 Map illustrating the distribution of survey respondents

Appendix C: The Survey

Local Foods Procurement Survey

Name:

Title:

School District:

1. Overall, how would you rate your food service program's interest in using food from Maine farms?
 - Very interested
 - Moderately interested
 - Slightly Interested
 - Not Interested
 - I don't know

2. If your district's food service program is currently purchasing or interested in purchasing local foods, does the district have a targeted dollar amount allocated for this type of procurement? If so, in what range:
 - \$0-500
 - \$500-1,000
 - \$1,000-5,000
 - \$5,000-10,000
 - \$10,000+

3. Please estimate how much your food service program spent in the 2010/11 school year on local food purchases (This can include produce purchased directly from farms or through a distributor)
 - \$0-500
 - \$500-1000
 - \$1000-5000
 - \$5000-10,000
 - \$10,000+
 - Did not buy local

4. How is food purchasing done in your food service program?
 - Food is ordered by a Food Service Director and delivered to each school to be prepared there.
 - Food is ordered by a Food Service Director and prepared in a central location for multiple schools.
 - Food is ordered and prepared by individual schools.
 - Other (please explain)

5. What is your approximate annual budget for food procurement?
6. If your 2010/11 food service program included purchases of **Maine meat and eggs**, please estimate the dollar amount your district spent (This can include food purchased directly from farms or through a distributor)
- \$0-500
 - \$500-1000
 - \$1000-5000
 - \$5000-10,000
 - \$10,000+
 - Did not buy local
7. If your 2010/11 food service program included purchases of **Maine seafood**, please estimate the dollar amount your district spent (This can include seafood purchased directly or through a distributor.):
- \$0-500
 - \$500-1000
 - \$1000-5000
 - \$5000-10,000
 - \$10,000+
 - Did not buy local
8. If your 2010/11 food service program purchased milk from Maine (i.e., Oakhurst, Maine's Own Organic Milk Company, Smiling Hill Farm, etc.), please estimate the dollar amount your district spent (This can include milk purchased directly or through a distributor):
- \$0-500
 - \$500-1000
 - \$1000-5000
 - \$5000-10,000
 - \$10,000+
 - Did not buy local

9. Which distributors does your food service program currently purchase from?
(Check all that apply)

- Sysco
- Northcenter
- Dennis Paper
- Farm Fresh Connection
- Market Fresh
- Native Maine
- Hood
- Oakhurst
- Crown of Maine Organic Cooperative
- Other

10. Does your food service program currently purchase foods directly from local farms? If yes, how does your food service program order from those farms?
(Check all that apply)

- Website or online ordering system
- Email communication with farmer
- Phone communication with farmer
- We do not purchase directly from any local farms
- Other (Please describe)

11. How did your food service program connect with local farms?

- Personal contacts (you know the farmer)
- Farmer contacted you
- Worked with a Farm to School Coordinator or other organizational staff person
- We do not purchase directly from any local farms
- Other (Please describe)

12. If your food service program purchases from local farms, how do they acquire the product?
(Check all that apply)

- Farms deliver product to a central location
- Farms deliver product to specific schools
- The food service program picks up produce from farms.
- Other (Please describe)

13. Did you participate in an advance purchase agreement with a farm (i.e., agreeing in the spring on the products you would buy weekly during the fall)? If yes, would you do another agreement next year? Why or why not?

14. If your district is experiencing issues with purchasing more local food, which would you identify as the top three challenges your district faces? (Please check up to three.)

- Inadequate local supply
- Product variety
- Insufficient processing capacity within the district (e.g. ability to clean, cut, and store fresh fruits and vegetables)
- Insufficient storage capacity within the district
- Challenges with delivery from farms / fishers
- Product quality or uniformity
- Challenges with distribution among schools in the district
- Cost
- Increased time burden for purchasing
- Lack of district support
- Lack of parent support
- Lack of food service program support
- Other (Please describe.)

15. How many schools in your district provide a salad bar?

16. Would you be willing to provide a district kitchen outside of school hours for farms and/or local food processors to process their products?

Please use the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope to return your survey by November 4, 2011 or you can complete the survey online by visiting (insert link.) If you have questions on this survey, please contact Jamel Torres at jamelmtorres@gmail.com and/or 207-890-1462.

Appendix D: Members of the Maine Farm to School Workgroup

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