

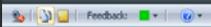
# Finding, Buying and Serving Local Food

## Finding Local Producers

February 13, 2014




## Housekeeping

- To download handouts:
 
- To make a comment or ask a question:
 
  - Type your question or comment using the Q&A tab
  - Ask your question or comment on the phone at the end of the webinar by pressing \*1
- Please turn off your computer microphone, all audio will be through the phone.
- The webinar will be recorded and available on the USDA Farm to School website: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool/webinars>



## Poll: Who is on the line?




## Our Presenters



**Colleen Matts**  
Farm to Institution Specialist  
Center for Regional Food Systems  
Michigan State University



**Mark Coe**  
Manager,  
Farm to Freezer  
Lutz Farms (Past)



**Karen Fedor**  
Senior Agricultural Marketing Specialist,  
MD Department of Agriculture



**Christina Conell**  
Program Analyst  
Food and Nutrition Service



## Overview

- Tools for Connecting
- Organizations that Can Help
- Finding Producers:
  - A State Perspective
  - The Role of the Farm to School Coordinator
  - A Farmer's Perspective
- Questions and Sharing




## Tell us! How do you connect with producers?






**Requests for Information**

- Survey the market to understand:
  - » Quantity available
  - » Price point
  - » Seasonal availability
  - » Willingness to work with schools
  - » If geographic preference is necessary
  - » Who the producers are!
- Collaborate with surrounding districts
- Work with a community partner to issue

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**Online Tools**

- Connect buyers and growers
- Great way to get a sense of the range of producers and products available

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**USDA Resources**

- Farm Service Agency
  - » County offices
  - » Listserv of producers
- Cooperative Extension
  - » State and County offices
- Farm to School Census

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**State Resources**

- State Departments of Agriculture
- State Farm to School Coordinators

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### Other Resources

- Farmers' Markets
- Food Hubs
- Producer Associations



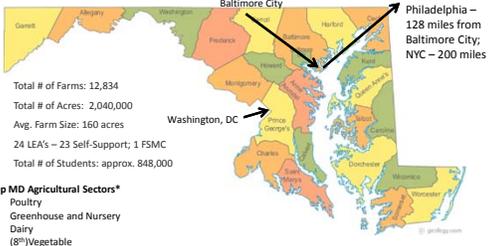



## Finding Producers: A State Perspective






### Snapshot of Maryland Agriculture and LEAs



- Total # of Farms: 12,834
- Total # of Acres: 2,040,000
- Avg. Farm Size: 160 acres
- 24 LEA's – 23 Self-Support; 1 FSMC
- Total # of Students: approx. 848,000

**Top MD Agricultural Sectors\***

- Poultry
- Greenhouse and Nursery
- Dairy
- (8<sup>th</sup>) Vegetable

\*2011 NASS Statics




### MD Farm to School Legislation

- Jane Lawton Farm to School legislation passed April 2008
  - » No designated funding
  - » [www.marylandfarmtoschool.org](http://www.marylandfarmtoschool.org)
- Purposes:
  - » Increase Maryland-grown products in school lunches
  - » Educate students about where their food comes from, how it is produced, and the benefits of a healthy diet
  - » Maryland Home Grown Lunch Week
  - » Return Maryland dollars to the Maryland economy




### MD Farm to School Coordinator

- Part of Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) Marketing & Agribusiness Development office
- Work with producers for various markets (e.g. Farm to School, hospitals, prisons, restaurants, wholesale, etc.)
- Work with MDA's state promotion program, Maryland's Best
- Work with County Economic Development, Rural Regional Councils
- Demand for local is very high (78% of Marylanders want MD-grown produce!)




### Connections

- Cross promotion with other MDA programs
  - » Maryland's Best, Farmers Market Nutrition Program, Governor's Buy Local Cookout, Buy Local Challenge
  - » Food Quality Assurance Program's GAP & GHP Training programs
- Engage Ag Royalty to go into the classroom
  - » Mar-Del Watermelon Association's Watermelon Queen
  - » Maryland Dairy Princesses
  - » State or County Farm Bureau








### Building Community Connections

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## Finding Producers: A Producer's Perspective

### A History of Lutz Farms Sales to Schools

- 2008 – peach sales to Chicago Public Schools through broker
- 2009 – explored sales to local schools
- 2010 – sold to 2 local school districts
- 2011 – sold to 5 local school districts
- 2012 – added 2 new districts
- 2013 – added 3 new districts (19 schools)

### Customers and Products

- Customers
  - » food service directors, purchasing agents, superintendents, sports boosters, school fundraisers
- Products
  - » asparagus, strawberries, sweet cherries, sweet peppers, tomatoes, pumpkins, summer & winter squash, broccoli, cauliflower, romanesco, apples and watermelon

### Giving Schools What They Need

- Services
  - » Handling, quality, packing, shipping, list of products, tiered pricing
- Assurances
  - » GAP policy, traceability, liability insurance, quality assurance plan
- Opportunities
  - » New business startup, branching out, extending your season

## Everyone Wins!

- Benefits to farmers
  - » Increased sales
  - » Expanding markets
  - » Employment opportunities
  - » Contributing to local economy
- Benefits to schools
  - » Healthy students learn better
  - » Increased lunch sales
  - » Employment opportunities
  - » Education opportunities
  - » Fundraising opportunities
  - » Spending federal dollars locally



## Farm to School Resources

- USDA Farm to School Website and E-Letter (at [www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool](http://www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool))
- Farm to School Census
- Farm to School Regional Leads
- More procurement resources coming soon!



## Questions?

