Maximize Procurement
Make the Most of Your Blueberries Year-Round

Across the country, more and more schools are serving blueberries and educating students about their delicious taste and nutritious health halo, all while instilling pride for the blueberry growers in their communities.

Did you know you can source blueberries affordably year-round? From local fresh blueberries to USDA Foods frozen blueberries, your district can enjoy blueberries on the menu no matter the season! Here’s how:

**USDA Commodity Frozen Highbush Blueberries**

Frozen highbush blueberries are available to your schools year-round as an entitlement through USDA Child Nutrition Commodity Programs, also known as USDA Foods.

**USDA Highbush Blueberry Pack Sizes:**
- #110624 - 30-pound case blueberries, frozen
- #110623 - Twelve 2.5-pound packages of blueberries, frozen

For the full USDA Foods Available List, [click here](#) and reference “Schools and Institutes” for given school year.

- **Yield:** One case of blueberries provides about 179 1/2-cup servings of thawed fruit
- **Child Nutrition (CN) Crediting:** 1/2 cup blueberries credit as 1/2 cup fruit
- **Product Description:** All highbush blueberries have “clean” labels and contain only IQF unsweetened blueberries.

If you need help accessing USDA Blueberries, contact your state child nutrition office.

BlueberriesInSchools.com
Define “Local”
The definition of “local” differs greatly depending on district and school size, proximity to agricultural areas, growing season and demographics. There is no federal definition of local, thus each district can create a definition that works for their individual needs and goals. For example, your definition of local blueberries could be defined by: grown within a state, a county or specified mile radius.

Blueberries are a great staple when considering local procurement as blueberries are grown nationwide in 38 states. This coast-to-coast presence opens delicious doors of opportunity for schools considering or already implementing Farm to School programs.

Know Your Season
Understanding when your blueberries are in season is key to sourcing local. The domestic and Canadian blueberry season runs from April to October. The earliest harvest takes place in the southern states and west coast, while the northern states and Canada experience the tail-end of the harvest. Though 38 states grow blueberries commercially, 10 states account for more than 98 percent of U.S. commercial production. The top 10 blueberry-growing states are: California, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Michigan, Mississippi, New Jersey, North Carolina, Oregon and Washington.

For your district’s blueberry season, search for your state or region’s seasonality chart online or by calling your local agricultural extension office.

Identify Your Blueberry Sources
The good news is there are many ways to procure local ingredients. Sourcing your local fresh blueberries could be through any of the methods below or a mix of a few:

- Directly from Producers
- Produce Auctions
- Producer of Co-ops and Food Hubs
- Distributors
- Food Processors
- School Gardens and Farms