

Table below outlines the differences between Local Food for Schools requirements and Geographic Preference Expansion when procuring food items for NSLP/SBP. Geographic Preference is a tool to buy locally grown, raised, and caught agricultural products and not a requirement for solicitation. *Geographic preference allows program operators to create their own definition of local as a specification in the bids and apply it to purchases but again, is not a requirement to do so. The Local Food for Schools Cooperative Agreement Program (LFS) is a grant with its own terms and conditions and is not impacted by this policy change.*

<b>Local Food for Schools Grant</b> <a href="http://www.squaremeals.org/LFS">www.squaremeals.org/LFS</a>		<b>Geographic Preference Expansion related to the Final Rule: Child nutrition programs; meal patterns consistent with the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans</b> <a href="https://www.fns.usda.gov/f2s/procuring-local-foods">https://www.fns.usda.gov/f2s/procuring-local-foods</a>
<b>Definition of Local</b>	For the purposes of this grant, the “local or regional,” food item must be from Texas. The food item is to be raised, produced, aggregated, stored, processed, and distributed in Texas.	The child nutrition program (CNP) operator may vary the definition of local for unprocessed agricultural products within a solicitation. The definition of local may change with the product, the seasons, events, program values, and other factors. For example, a CNP operator in a State with many ranches and few fruit and vegetable farms may decide that local beef must come from within the State, and local vegetables must come from the State or neighboring States. Identifying a CNP’s goals around local sourcing will help purchasers craft a definition that serves its goals. For more information on defining local, see <i>Procuring Local Foods for Child Nutrition Programs</i> .
<b>Headquarters</b>	The headquarters of the producer or distributor does not have to be local.	Headquarters is not required to be local and definition of local may change based on product. The geographic preference option is tied to where the unprocessed agricultural product is grown, raised, or caught.
<b>Applicable participants</b>	Applies to LFS grantees	Applies to all CNP operating NSLP, FFVP, SMP, SBP, SFSP, SSO, CACFP and is optional.
<b>Product Types</b>	Food products that are unprocessed or minimally processed includes: fruits and vegetables, including 100% juices, olive oil, grains like pasta and rice, meats in	Geographic preference applies to unprocessed agricultural product that retain their inherent character includes: Fruits (including sliced, diced, whole raw, dried, or frozen products); Vegetables

	whole, pieces, ground forms, meat alternates like beans or legumes, fluid milk and dairy products like yogurt and cheese, a variety of processing states (whole, cut, pureed) and forms (fresh, frozen, dried, canned). Whole foods and foods in a wide variety of minimal processing states (e.g., whole, cut, pureed, etc.) and/or forms (e.g., fresh, frozen, canned, dried, etc.) are allowable	(including sliced, diced, whole raw, dried, or frozen products); Grains (including quinoa, rice, barley, etc., in whole form and other grains in ground form such as flour); Eggs (including whole, shell); Fish (including whole, form, fillets, or nuggets that contain no additives or fillers); Meats (including fresh or unprocessed frozen products and formed products, such as patties, that contain no additives or fillers); Poultry (including whole, form, or various cuts); and Dairy (includes pasteurized, unflavored).
<b>Processing food items</b>	Food items must also be processed in Texas to meet LFS requirements for reimbursement	The geographic preference option may not apply to items processed but not produced within the geographic preference option
<b>Can the state or other local government entity require the child nutrition program operator to use geographic preference option in a certain way?</b>	For the purposes of this grant, the “local or regional,” food item must be from Texas as outlined by AMS.	CNP operators are not obligated to adopt any local definition established by a State, locality, nonprofit organization, or other entity, even if the definition is required by State or local regulations. However, CNP operators may voluntarily elect to use the State or local government’s definition of local and/or strategy for applying the geographic preference option. Section 9(j) of the NSLA grants the authority to apply the geographic preference option directly to schools, sponsors, and institutions participating in any of the CNPs.
<b>Items processed but not produced within a defined geographic area</b>	Food item must be processed and produced within Texas for the purposes of the LFS grant.	CNP operators may only apply the geographic preference option to raw food products that retain their original character (e.g., chopped raw carrots, ground beef, chicken leg quarters, etc.) <i>and</i> are produced (i.e., grown, raised, or caught) within a defined region.
<b>Canned Vegetables/Fruit</b>	Canned fruit and vegetables are allowed if the product is produced, aggregated, stored, processed and distributed in Texas	The geographic preference cannot be applied to canned vegetables because the heating process involved in canning changes the inherent character of the agriculture product

<b>Vegetables</b>	Applies to vegetables, minimally processed or unprocessed as whole, cut or puree and either fresh, frozen, canned or dried forms.	Can be applied to freezing or combining vegetables in a bag, vegetables in portion-sized or single-serving bags as these options do not change the inherent character of the vegetables.
<b>Ground Beef</b>	To be eligible, ground beef cannot be purchased seasoned, heated, cooked or canned	Cannot apply geographic preference option when purchasing seasoned, heated, cooked or canned ground beef
<b>Flavored milk</b>	Flavored milk is an allowable purchase with LFS.	No, the geographic preference option does not apply to fluid milk products that contain additives, such as chocolate or strawberry-flavored milk, nor to any processed dairy products such as cheese, yogurt, etc.
<b>Value-added items like chili, salsa, and soup</b>		A defined scoring advantage to or use local as a specification for value-added products that include processed agricultural products but can apply to the sourcing of the raw ingredients, as long as the ingredients are unprocessed agricultural products.
<b>Additional resources</b>	<a href="https://squaremeals.org/lfs">https://squaremeals.org/lfs</a>	<a href="https://www.fns.usda.gov/f2s/procuring-local-foods">https://www.fns.usda.gov/f2s/procuring-local-foods</a>