

## Ministry of Children and Youth Services – Ontario’s Student Nutrition Program Guidelines [Page 10-11, 26-27]

### **Food Safety:**

The Nutrition Guidelines provide important information about safe food handling practices.

Lead Agencies support programs in achieving compliance to the Ontario Food Premises Regulation 562 (O. Reg 562/90) by collaborating with and facilitating connections between programs and Public Health Unit(s).

Local Public Health Units determine the requirements regarding program equipment and infrastructure (for example, number of hand-washing sinks) based on information about the food served in the program, how food is prepared, and other relevant conditions.

Public Health Units also have expertise in supporting menu planning and supporting safe food handling practices for program volunteers.

### **Food Procurement:**

Program food must be purchased and/or accepted from sources that are safe. See Appendix A for helpful information about identifying safe food sources.

Procurement strategies incorporate a combination of approaches for sourcing program food including, but not limited to:

- Centralized, wholesale, or bulk purchasing;
- Partnering with suppliers, distributors, community food hubs, local businesses, or not-for-profits;
- Shopping by local volunteers;
- Sourcing from farmers and/or farmer’s markets;
- Partnering with the foodservice sector;
- Acquiring food donations; and
- Participating in large- or small-scale discount and/or coupon programs.

Procurement strategies should reflect best practices related to food safety and traceability including:

- Keeping records to document food sources when engaging in centralized, wholesale or bulk purchasing supplied to local program sites;
- Requiring local sites to maintain a record of food sources and refrigerate any perishable products immediately upon receiving;

- Educating volunteers responsible for food shopping about safe food transportation practices (see Appendix B); and
- Sourcing minimally processed foods (for example, produce that has been pre-peeled or cut) from a supplier that is Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) certified or recognized under the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI) benchmarking scheme.

Only food that can be reasonably consumed or frozen in the appropriate timelines should be sourced. Packaged food and beverages must be unopened and display a best before date or expiry date that has not yet passed.

For additional information regarding safe food storage for shelf stable foods, perishable foods, refrigerated and cooked foods, please refer to the Nutrition Guidelines.

## APPENDIX A: Identifying Safe Food Sources

### **Grocery Stores, Wholesalers and Distributors**

- Suppliers to these facilities should be Canada GAP or HACCP certified.
- When considering a partnership with a wholesaler or distributor, look for proof of certification.

### **Food Service (e.g., caterers)**

- These facilities are inspected by the local Public Health Unit.
- Check your local Public Health Unit's website for a list of inspected facilities and inspection reports.

### **Farmer's Markets**

- These suppliers are under the authority of their respective Public Health Units.
- Contact the local Public Health Unit for questions or concerns related to a particular farmer's market.

### **Community Food Hubs**

- These premises may be inspected by their respective Public Health Unit.
- Contact your local Public Health Unit to find out if a specific program or facility is inspected.

## APPENDIX B: Transportation of Program Food

- As much as possible, food should be delivered directly to the SNP site.
- Transport vehicles should be clean and well-maintained.
- Perishable and refrigerated products must be kept cool during transit.
- Produce must be loaded and stored to minimize physical damage and risk of contamination.
- Food products and non-food items should be kept in separate areas of the vehicle.