



Buying Locally Grown Fruits and Vegetables

Currently, most child care facilities buy food from a distributor, a grocery store or a big box store like Sam's Club. Through Farm to Child Care, child care facilities may choose to buy locally grown fruits and vegetables in one of these ways:

- ✓ From a farmer directly
- ✓ From a distributor that sells locally sourced fruits and vegetables
- ✓ From a fruit and vegetable box delivery program (which purchases produce from several farmers)
- ✓ From a centralized kitchen that prepares snacks and meals with locally sourced fruits and vegetables
- ✓ From a farmers' market

Farmers in North Carolina and businesses that sell produce in our state are eager to work with child care facility directors. This is a new and exciting opportunity for both centers and local fruit and vegetable suppliers. Many suppliers have not worked with child care facilities in the past, but they are eager to have a relationship that works well for everyone.

You may also want to shop local farmers' markets in Wake County for fruits and vegetables and consider field trips to markets with young children.

Why buy local?

In addition to the health benefits of children eating more fruits and vegetables, there are also benefits to buying NC produce.

Buying local helps:

- ✓ Local farmers support themselves—farmers who sell their produce directly keep all of the money, which helps to keep them in business and on their land.
- ✓ Support a local economy. We buy from local farmers, and local farmers need to buy supplies and goods. This helps to support local businesses and create jobs in our communities.
- ✓ People eat more fresh fruit and vegetables. Food that is locally grown doesn't need to be shipped, and can therefore be picked at peak ripeness. If fruits and vegetables taste great, kids are more likely to want to eat more of them!

