

# Connecticut Farm to School Baseline Survey 2012



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## Connecticut Farm to School Baseline Survey 2012

The Eastern Connecticut Resource Conservation & Development Area, Inc. (ECRC&D) Sustainable Communities Subcommittee has in its annual plan of work a goal to assist the Connecticut Department of Agriculture (DoAg) Farm to School Program in growing and re-energizing respect and interest in farming. The assistance will also support the resurgence in buying locally and the reinvestment of good fresh food for kids at their schools and the growth and expansion of the markets for farmers in Connecticut. To realize these goals the ECRC&D Area created three surveys for Connecticut as part of the Connecticut Farm to Institution of New England (FINE) Project. The CT DoAg assistance was an integral part of project.

The surveys targeted farmers, school food service directors and wholesalers/distributors. They were developed after reviewing similar media and studies from Michigan, New York, Washington State, Delaware, Minnesota, Missouri, New Mexico, Ohio, California, and Maryland, as well as materials available on the [www.farmtoschool.org](http://www.farmtoschool.org) website and from the Community Food Security Coalition and the Center for Food & Justice at Occidental College. The intent of the surveys was to verify the level of Connecticut Grown product being shipped to and used by Connecticut schools. Each was written to obtain the perspectives of the three distinct groups. The draft surveys for Connecticut were reviewed by personnel from the Connecticut Department of Agriculture, the Connecticut Department of Administrative Services, the Connecticut State Department of Education and the South Windsor School System.

An organized study that looks at the Connecticut Farm to School Program (CT FTS) has not been conducted in over ten years and it is hoped that these surveys can be used on an annual basis to track the growth or decline of Connecticut product in schools. The CT FTS is a statewide program designed to encourage the use of Connecticut Grown fruits and vegetables in school cafeterias for meals and snacks. The goals of CT FTS are to develop new markets for local farms and to offer fresher, local produce in school lunch programs. The conclusions reached by this study will help to promote the advancement of state level initiatives supporting the growth of the farm to institution infrastructure in Connecticut. It is seen as a key building block for an effective and sustainable region-wide farm to institution system.

Two types of surveys were created; a paper survey mailed directly to prospective respondents and a web-based surveys using SurveyMonkey. The CT DoAg provided the farmer and wholesaler/distributor lists. The farmer list included 67 farms and 11 distributors/wholesalers. The majority of the farmers and wholesalers/distributors were sent an e-mail with a link to the survey. There were a few farmers and wholesalers/distributors that did not have an e-mail

address and were sent a paper copy with a self-addressed stamped envelope. The surveys were also publicized in the *Connecticut Weekly Agricultural Report*. The school food service director's survey link was disseminated by the CT Department of Education to 167 schools/districts. As an incentive to return a completed survey the ECRC&D Sustainable Communities Subcommittee provided a \$100 prize raffle for each survey category.

While the survey response from each category was low, the rates were within the parameters set in the grant work plan. Also, the goal for the number of surveys sent (50 farmers, 10 wholesalers/distributors and 150 school food service directors) was met. At least a 20% response rate was achieved for all three surveys.

The lower than expected survey return rates may have been due to the timing of when the surveys were sent out. Because early difficulties in completing grant contract details and memorandums of understanding, time spent working on the project was impeded until December 2011. The farmers received the survey just as spring planting was getting underway and may have been too busy to respond. In the future a better time of year, perhaps January – March, should be targeted for the farmer survey. Assistance from the Connecticut Farm Bureau should also be sought to publicize the importance of providing information. With respect to the school food service director's survey the length and complexity may have been a problem. Many respondents either quit before the end or skipped over sections that required specific dollar figures and product amounts. The survey should be shortened and thought given to determining how to get more school food service directors to respond. The wholesaler/distributor category may respond better to personal interviews and more research is needed to determine how to get them to cooperate in providing meaningful information about Connecticut Grown products.

Several general trends emerged from the data received:

- Farmers want to sell direct.
- Food service directors and farmers are interested in a statewide aggregation hub.
- Farmers, school food service directors and wholesalers/distributors all agree that using Connecticut Grown products in schools is important.
- There do appear to be opportunities for Connecticut farmers to increase their direct sales.
- Education about CT Farm to School Program needs to be continuous.
- Food safety issues are important to school food service directors and wholesalers/distributors.

## Increasing CT Grown Usage in Schools

In Connecticut, we have several major wholesale distributors, and they say they use some CT Grown. Among these distributors, some are Connecticut based companies, and several are nationally managed, with CT warehouses. One national distributor is then subcontracting to a subdivision of their corporation to provide CT Grown for several food service management companies. Most state that they try to provide CT Grown, as well as regionally and nationally grown product, to many Connecticut schools. All distributors, both local and national, operate throughout the state, and deliver product to our schools more commonly than farmer direct sales (farmer's field to school). This has been a programmatic dilemma for CT FTS as both food safety and ease of the aggregated 'one stop shopping' delivery issues trump direct purchases from farms (a call for Good Agricultural Practices (USDA-GAP) or similar (i.e. Primus) for all school food purchasing here continues to grow). Anecdotal figures of what is used suggest no more than 20% of the products in school are from the region. However, this is not confirmed by hard research. Most, it can be safely stated, are moved about the country, to supply our schools. Considering the last statistics from the CT State Department of Education on the number of meals served in schools, dollars spent on school meals, and based upon questionnaires sent to schools, wholesalers and farmers, and the lack of response to questions asking about the volume of CT Grown used in schools we felt it would be irresponsible to set new goals at this time. It is hoped reusing the questionnaires in the future will assist goal setting. Part of the issue is that the food service directors do not know if they are getting regional or CT Grown products. However, we can safely assume that we have barely touched 5% CT Grown usage in our schools.

| <b><i>Connecticut Schools – 2010-2011<br/>School Breakfast and Lunch Figures</i></b> |                     |                       |
|--|---------------------|-----------------------|
| <b><i>School Breakfast Meal Totals for 2010-11</i></b>                               |                     |                       |
| <b><i>Paid</i></b>   | <b><i>Free</i></b>  | <b><i>Reduced</i></b> |
| 271,922  | 10,567,391          | 1,122,561             |
| <b><i>School Lunch Meal Totals for 2010-11</i></b>                                   |                     |                       |
| <b><i>Paid</i></b>   | <b><i>Free</i></b>  | <b><i>Reduced</i></b> |
| \$24,338,669   | \$22,159,347        | \$3,920,945           |
| <b><i>Total Federal Dollars for 2010-11</i></b>                                      |                     |                       |
| <b><i>Breakfast</i></b>  | <b><i>Lunch</i></b> |                       |
| \$20,621,008.99  | \$76,240,823.93     |                       |
| <i>Figures Courtesy of CT State Dept. of Education</i>                               |                     |                       |

Future questions and directions could include:

- Personal interviews to gain more detailed information from all three groups in order to set goals.
- An easier way for Connecticut schools to track Connecticut Grown purchases whether direct sales or from a distributor/wholesaler.
- Continued education and outreach for the Connecticut Farm to School Program for farmers who want to sell direct to schools and schools that want to purchase direct.
- Research on the possibility of a statewide aggregation hub.
- Should there be an incentive program for the use of Connecticut Grown products?
- Continuing education on food safety certification.

# Reducing the Miles Food Travels

This is the final report from the Connecticut Department of Agriculture – Farm to School Program (CT-FTS) to complete a grant requirement for the Eastern Connecticut Resource Conservation and Development Area, Inc. (ECRC&D) work on a recent USDA grant awarded to the Farm to Institution of New England (FINE). CT-FTS agreed to look at if the use of CT Grown, instead of produce from other parts of the United States (US), would positively affect our carbon footprint. Materials from other USDA funded projects were used from on-line sources. We used Agricultural Marketing Resource Center (AGMRC), <http://www.agmrc.org> , the USDA-Agricultural Marketing Service (USDA-AMS), <http://www.marketnews.usda.gov> , and other resources to create an estimate of the excess miles our foods travel. The user guide for USDA-AMS Market news was very helpful. Please see: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSV1.0/getfile?dDocName=STELPRDC5048679>

We ask our New England partners these questions: How many times do you hear that New England products “cost more to use” in schools? Do we New Englanders demand that our produce distributors all consider fuel consumption and food security “costs” in the purchasing habits for our schools? The CT-FTS does anecdotally hear from schools that “CT Grown costs more,” and CT Grown is not readily available for food service directors. However, the public -- the moms and the dads-- demand “local.” Is the idea of reducing the miles that produce travels—the greening of the produce industry --helpful in reducing overall costs—including the long-term costs of national food security and reducing the use of fuel and the subsequent environmental savings -- to schools? Will it help CT-FTS to encourage the use of more CT Grown for Farm to School?

## Climate Change Plan in Progress in Connecticut

The Connecticut Department of Energy and the Environment (DEEP) is charged with tracking and planning for climate change issues. They are supporters of the farm to school effort. We applaud their efforts to manage the natural resources in Connecticut, while remaining committed to the preservation of agriculture and our Connecticut farm businesses.

There is an Adaptation Subcommittee of the Governor's Steering Committee on Climate Change, initiated by Public Act No. 08-98 - An Act Concerning Connecticut Global Warming Solutions. They have produced a draft Connecticut Climate Preparedness Plan. The plan does discuss climate change on Connecticut agriculture and has developed strategies to reduce climate change impacts. Based upon a 2010 report, "Impacts of Climate on Connecticut Agriculture, Infrastructure, Natural Resources and Public Health", some initial strategies that could help address the potential effects of climate change were produced.

The 2010 Climate Impacts report shows Connecticut's climate will see:

- More days greater than 90 degrees
- Rising seawater levels and water temperatures
- More frequent and more intense storms
- More poor air quality days

This draft plan is available now for initial public review and comment. The public will be able to comment on the Plan, posted at [www.CTclimatechange.com](http://www.CTclimatechange.com) (click on the [Connecticut Climate Preparedness Plan](#)). This plan addresses several topics about agriculture. Findings and recommendations from the public will be considered, incorporated and the final version will be submitted to the Governor and General Assembly.

### **How Far Does Our Food Travel – How Do We “Green” the Produce Distribution System?**

Unfortunately, we continue to use the same distribution patterns. The State of Connecticut has a central shipping point in Hartford, CT, known as the Connecticut Marketing Authority, or the Hartford Regional Market. It could be a place to aggregate product to help more farmers sell CT Grown to schools for many years to come.

However, we have to show the produce industry why we need to change our habits. We want to show the food service directors the number of miles that school food travels. We wanted to use crops that would actually work in New England. CT-FTS picked five typical popular produce items commonly used in CT schools, which are also available for wholesale purchase from CT growers. We hoped to show food service personnel how far our food travels. We want to find ways to encourage the produce distributors to use CT Grown crops, when in season. We hope this will help our plea to improve and change distribution practices in Connecticut.



To start, we visited the USDA-AMS site, and found a major shipping point for each of these five crops, as found at [www.marketnews.usda.gov/portal](http://www.marketnews.usda.gov/portal), then, going to <http://marketnews.usda.gov/portal/fv> and pulling assorted reports. To see how many miles we could save, we “watched” them travel from the main US producer of a fruit or vegetable crop (the leader for that produce item, as declared by the AGMRC website). To complete this part of the task, we “Googled” how many miles it takes to get to back to Hartford, Connecticut (theoretically, to our Connecticut schools). For the region, we compared our other partner states, and we used the state capital, except for Boston for Massachusetts and the Bronx, NY, for a shipping point for New York State. We charted miles between different shipping points.

Ironically, this simple process of reading shipping information and the movement of produce immediately showed a disturbing food security pattern in the US. While spending time on the USDA-AMS site, it became evident New England is glaringly California and Florida-dependent for produce. It is only widely discussed shortly after storms in one of those two states, and then quickly forgotten by the public and the press. Soon, the wholesale markets settle back into their regular purchasing habits. If California and Florida suffer significant climate changes or short term devastating weather, we here in the Northeast will see the negative affects on supplies of many fruit and vegetable products.

We then interviewed several long distance tractor trailer drivers at the Travel America, located at Ruby Road, Willington, CT. They were asked for basic information about their trucks and diesel usage. On average, tractor trailer trucks have tanks that hold 200-300 gallons of diesel fuel. The trucks average 7-8 miles per gallon. The drivers said they were averaging \$3.85-\$4.00 per gallon for fuel. Some drivers get additional discounts as they work for larger firms that have purchasing power, and discounts for fuel. They fill their trucks every few days. We used these facts to do our analysis.

Remember, selected items are products that are commonly used in quantities in the schools or are grown in Connecticut or could be easily grown in Connecticut, and potentially could be scaled up to supply five percent to schools in Connecticut. The items are tomatoes, sweet corn, potatoes, apples, and hard winter squash.

## **Background about Each Selected Product**

Apples - Washington state produces 60 percent of our domestic apples. Connecticut has nearly 100 growers, and of those 100 or so farms, over 35 are listed as providing a wholesale product. This is our most popular CT-FTS item.

Corn - Florida is the top producer of sweet corn in the USA. However, there are about 3,000 acres of sweet corn planted each year, in Connecticut. Schools love to buy sweet corn.

Winter Squash - Florida leads the nation in squash production followed by New York, California and North Carolina. This is an easily grown and stored crop, and Connecticut has several large growers. The new USDA National School Lunch Program meal plan calls for orange vegetables.

Sweet Potatoes, Yams, and White Potatoes - North Carolina produces the most sweet potatoes, followed by California and Louisiana. This is not a significant crop in New England; however, Massachusetts has a grower. Orange foods are an important emerging market. Idaho and Washington State produce the most white potatoes in the United States. White potatoes used to be a Connecticut crop. Chef potatoes and some smaller variety potatoes are coming back in limited acreage. Several large growers have established markets, which uses most of the Connecticut potatoes. Few schools see them. The schools ask for potatoes all the time, and we cannot meet the demand.

Tomatoes- California and Florida produce 2/3rds the fresh tomatoes in the US. Connecticut producers grow significant amount of fresh larger tomatoes, with some cherry tomato production. Most are sold retail and to other wholesale markets. Connecticut residents are very enthusiastic supporters of CT Grown tomatoes.

## **The Charts Show Distance Traveled**

The charts attached were produced to show the mileage of the distance between two shipping points. For each product, it lists the shipping points mentioned in the above overview for the crop, based upon information from the AGMRC website. We also calculated the distance we would have those same items travel to each of our New England and New York state shipping point, to be able to show a significant difference in mileage. Based on these charts, we

can think about the ways to reduce the use of fossil fuels, reduce the time some of our food is on the road, and the potential to work as a region, buying products from each other, and using CT Grown product when in season.

| <b>apples</b>     |     |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
|-------------------|-----|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
|                   | to: | NY   | MA   | VT   | ME   | NH   | RI   | CT   |
| from:             |     |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Yakima Valley, WA |     | 2300 | 2400 | 2300 | 2400 | 2350 | 2400 | 2300 |
| Bronx, NY         |     | 0    | 200  | 311  | 367  | 263  | 169  | 112  |
| Boston, MA        |     | 200  | 0    | 180  | 168  | 68   | 50   | 101  |
| Montpelier, VT    |     | 311  | 180  | 0    | 180  | 117  | 230  | 200  |
| Augusta, ME       |     | 367  | 161  | 180  | 0    | 141  | 211  | 255  |
| Concord, NH       |     | 263  | 68   | 118  | 169  | 0    | 118  | 151  |
| Providence, RI    |     | 169  | 50   | 231  | 233  | 119  | 0    | 86   |
| Hartford, CT      |     | 112  | 102  | 200  | 260  | 155  | 87   | 0    |

| <b>corn</b>    |     |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
|----------------|-----|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
|                | to: | NY   | MA   | VT   | ME   | NH   | RI   | CT   |
| from:          |     |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Oviedo, FL     |     | 1084 | 1287 | 1386 | 1445 | 1339 | 1251 | 1188 |
| Bronx, NY      |     | 0    | 200  | 311  | 367  | 263  | 169  | 112  |
| Boston, MA     |     | 200  | 0    | 180  | 168  | 68   | 50   | 101  |
| Montpelier, VT |     | 311  | 180  | 0    | 180  | 117  | 230  | 200  |
| Augusta, ME    |     | 367  | 161  | 180  | 0    | 141  | 211  | 255  |
| Concord, NH    |     | 263  | 68   | 118  | 169  | 0    | 118  | 151  |
| Providence, RI |     | 169  | 50   | 231  | 233  | 119  | 0    | 86   |
| Hartford, CT   |     | 112  | 102  | 200  | 260  | 155  | 87   | 0    |
|                |     |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |

| <b>winter squash</b> |     |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
|----------------------|-----|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
|                      | to: | NY   | MA   | VT   | ME   | NH   | RI   | CT   |
| from:                |     |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Oviedo, FL           |     | 1084 | 1287 | 1386 | 1445 | 1339 | 1251 | 1188 |
| Los Angeles, CA      |     | 2797 | 2982 | 2935 | 3136 | 2961 | 2977 | 2981 |
| Raleigh, NC          |     | 520  | 711  | 810  | 865  | 761  | 668  | 611  |
| Bronx, NY            |     | 0    | 200  | 311  | 367  | 263  | 169  | 112  |
| Boston, MA           |     | 200  | 0    | 180  | 168  | 68   | 50   | 101  |
| Montpelier, VT       |     | 311  | 180  | 0    | 180  | 117  | 230  | 200  |
| Augusta, ME          |     | 367  | 161  | 180  | 0    | 141  | 211  | 255  |
| Concord, NH          |     | 263  | 68   | 118  | 169  | 0    | 118  | 151  |
| Providence, RI       |     | 169  | 50   | 231  | 233  | 119  | 0    | 86   |
| Hartford, CT         |     | 112  | 102  | 200  | 260  | 155  | 87   | 0    |

| <b>potatoes</b>   |     |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
|-------------------|-----|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
|                   | to: | NY   | MA   | VT   | ME   | NH   | RI   | CT   |
| from:             |     |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Los Angeles, CA   |     | 2797 | 2982 | 2935 | 3136 | 2961 | 2977 | 2981 |
| Baton Rouge, LA   |     | 1373 | 1583 | 1682 | 1737 | 1633 | 1541 | 1483 |
| Raleigh, NC       |     | 520  | 711  | 810  | 865  | 761  | 668  | 611  |
| Idaho Falls, ID   |     | 2251 | 2437 | 2390 | 2591 | 2416 | 2432 | 2346 |
| Yakima Valley, WA |     | 2300 | 2400 | 2300 | 2400 | 2350 | 2400 | 2300 |
| Bronx, NY         |     | 0    | 200  | 311  | 367  | 263  | 169  | 112  |
| Boston, MA        |     | 200  | 0    | 180  | 168  | 68   | 50   | 101  |
| Montpelier, VT    |     | 311  | 180  | 0    | 180  | 117  | 230  | 200  |
| Augusta, ME       |     | 367  | 161  | 180  | 0    | 141  | 211  | 255  |
| Concord, NH       |     | 263  | 68   | 118  | 169  | 0    | 118  | 151  |
| Providence, RI    |     | 169  | 50   | 231  | 233  | 119  | 0    | 86   |
| Hartford, CT      |     | 112  | 102  | 200  | 260  | 155  | 87   | 0    |

| <b>tomatoes</b> |     |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
|-----------------|-----|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
|                 | to: | NY   | MA   | VT   | ME   | NH   | RI   | CT   |
| from:           |     |      |      |      |      |      |      |      |
| Los Angeles, CA |     | 2797 | 2982 | 2935 | 3136 | 2961 | 2977 | 2981 |
| Florida         |     | 1084 | 1287 | 1386 | 1445 | 1339 | 1251 | 1188 |
| Bronx, NY       |     | 0    | 200  | 311  | 367  | 263  | 169  | 112  |
| Boston, MA      |     | 200  | 0    | 180  | 168  | 68   | 50   | 101  |
| Montpelier, VT  |     | 311  | 180  | 0    | 180  | 117  | 230  | 200  |
| Augusta, ME     |     | 367  | 161  | 180  | 0    | 141  | 211  | 255  |
| Concord, NH     |     | 263  | 68   | 118  | 169  | 0    | 118  | 151  |
| Providence, RI  |     | 169  | 50   | 231  | 233  | 119  | 0    | 86   |
| Hartford, CT    |     | 112  | 102  | 200  | 260  | 155  | 87   | 0    |

The numbers are very interesting to look at. Based upon the charts and the information from the truck drivers:

- If you calculate it out, the cost of diesel for a 40-foot truck full of apples, from Washington State to Connecticut costs about \$9600.00 in fuel alone, using 300 gallons of diesel.
- California tomatoes travel about 3,000 miles to get to our schools, and 375 gallons of diesel (3000miles/8mpg). Florida tomatoes travel 1,000 miles. That is 125 gallons of diesel fuel.
- Sweet potatoes from Baton Rouge to Massachusetts travel 1500 miles. Massachusetts is developing a sweet potato wholesale market. If Massachusetts uses Massachusetts sweet potatoes, they are saving 187 gallons of diesel per truckload of potatoes.
- Maine potatoes should come to Connecticut until Connecticut can produce enough potatoes for their schools. It would save us 2,331 miles.

### **Conclusion -- and Additional Thoughts**

We encourage you to look at numbers and think and dream. We are all slow to accept that we need to change the way we ship food around unnecessarily. We do have to discuss how to keep the wholesale distributors happy and in business, as we will still need plenty of produce off-season. However, we need to have distributors to look for those

environmental savings —, which is good for all businesses. By using more local, it is helping keep and put farmland back to work in Connecticut.

We have to do a better job of asking and convincing farmers to go back into wholesale production. We need better incentives to be a wholesale farm in New England. The food supply, and food security of New England, and ultimately, of the United States depends upon our ability to feed ourselves. We must act upon these issues, before it is too late to recover. We are approaching that critical point now, as the changing weather patterns are beginning to show a need for an evaluation of crops we grow, what we can and cannot expect to do in 25, 50 and 100 years from now. However, it must also be worth their time and effort to go back into wholesale production to make this work.

Purchasing locally should lower costs to the end user, the schools, based upon the reduction in shipping costs. There seems to be a need to point this out more often. Perhaps there needs to be an incentive for using CT Grown versus other states' produce, especially in season and while school is in session—for the environment's sake. Even if these crops are available in limited amounts, substituting these crops will reduce emissions. Our school food service directors in Connecticut are champions and love supporting local farms. They are willing to pay more for Connecticut product for a special occasion. They would like to support the local farm more often. But is that really necessary? They need to know more about the actual costs of local produce and the environmental impact their purchases have on their town and state.

State of Connecticut-Special Act 12-5, "An Act Establishing a Task Force to Encourage the Purchase of Food Products Made or Grown in Connecticut," will convene Fall 2012 members of the Connecticut legislature and agencies to discuss ways to encourage the use of CT Grown and incentives that can help to move the use of CT Grown forward. Would stronger language in state and local contracts mandating the use of local CT Grown be worthy of further investigation, to include an accounting of the miles that produce travels, say, in state or local contracts, to enable more local farmers a wholesale market with schools or with distributors in our state? Would funding for an aggregating cooperative, for farmers in Connecticut enable this process by consolidating quantities of product or creating more competition for existing wholesale distribution systems? The Connecticut Department of Agriculture will obviously be at the table for these talks.

FINE should engage members of the Governor's Council for Agricultural Development of Connecticut in their work. The overall goals and plans of this group of Connecticut's agricultural leaders are to increase the use of CT Grown by all citizens in Connecticut. By including this group in the funding streams and dialogue, FINE would be connecting to

Connecticut's statewide plan. The Governor's Council work will provide the detail the CT FTS needs to create a long-term plan for our schools. Expanding Connecticut agricultural industry on true costs, factual nutritional information, and "environmental costs" versus traditional distribution processes we use now will preserve working lands and keep local sources of food secure for the future generations.

We suggest several more studies, to locate incentives to further the use of CT Grown. Remember, we are aiming for a positive change of the distribution systems for K-12 food service food to help stabilize and grow farm businesses in New England, for the good of the environment, but also for food security purposes.

The following research should be done in consultation with Connecticut Department of Agriculture-Governor's Council on Agricultural Development. These studies can be conducted concurrently. The University of Connecticut-College of Agriculture and Natural Resources has capable and qualified researchers to do this work.

They include:

- A cost analysis of farming in Connecticut – to establish if wholesaling to schools directly or indirectly is truly profitable for farmers and what changes need to be made to distribution system to make that happen.
- A study of the quality of the food shipped hundreds of miles versus local—is there a nutritional benefit of using CT Grown produce versus shipped in produce – to encourage nutritionists to help our system change.
- A research project to look at as many town K-12 contracts and the timing of the K-12 food service contracts as possible, with the hopes of working with Wellness Committees at the schools to look for opportunities to use CT Grown, and develop language for schools to use that would encourage the purchase of state grown foods.

Last, the work of End Hunger, CT! food service directors, nonprofit organizations and the Connecticut State Department of Education with school breakfast, supper and summer feeding programs for Connecticut's children is another opportunity to increase the use of CT Grown for K-12 students. Food security for our children is important to our state. Expanding our wholesale agricultural industry in Connecticut will allow us to encourage the use of CT Grown in these programs, and it would be a win-win situation.

Farm to Institution in New England (FINE) should set aside dollars for these projects.

These are exciting times for Connecticut agriculture, and we welcome the challenge of providing a safe, plentiful, nutritional and perhaps, a little greener line of products to our children at their schools.

# Connecticut Farm to School

Farmer Survey

Survey Highlights





Total farm acreage for respondents ranged from 15 acres to 350 acres, with a median of 75 acres.

The vegetable crops produced by the farmers include:

Pumpkins  
Winter Squash  
Summer Squash  
Cherry Tomatoes  
Slicing tomatoes  
Cucumbers  
Peppers  
Beans  
Lettuce  
Sweet Corn  
Broccoli  
Onions  
Peas  
Potatoes  
Radishes  
Spinach

Carrots  
Cauliflower  
Asparagus  
Hdyroponic lettuce  
Greenhouse tomatoes  
Specialty greens and herbs

The fruit crops produced by the farmers include:

Apples  
Blueberries  
Peaches  
Pears  
Strawberries  
Nectarines  
Plums  
Melons  
Raspberries  
Black currants  
Jostaberries

The proteins produced by the farmers include:

Chicken (flock sizes range from 40 – 400)  
Eggs (flock sizes range from 35 – 100)  
Ground Beef (herd size from 4 – 30)  
Dairy (herd size 20)  
Hogs (10)

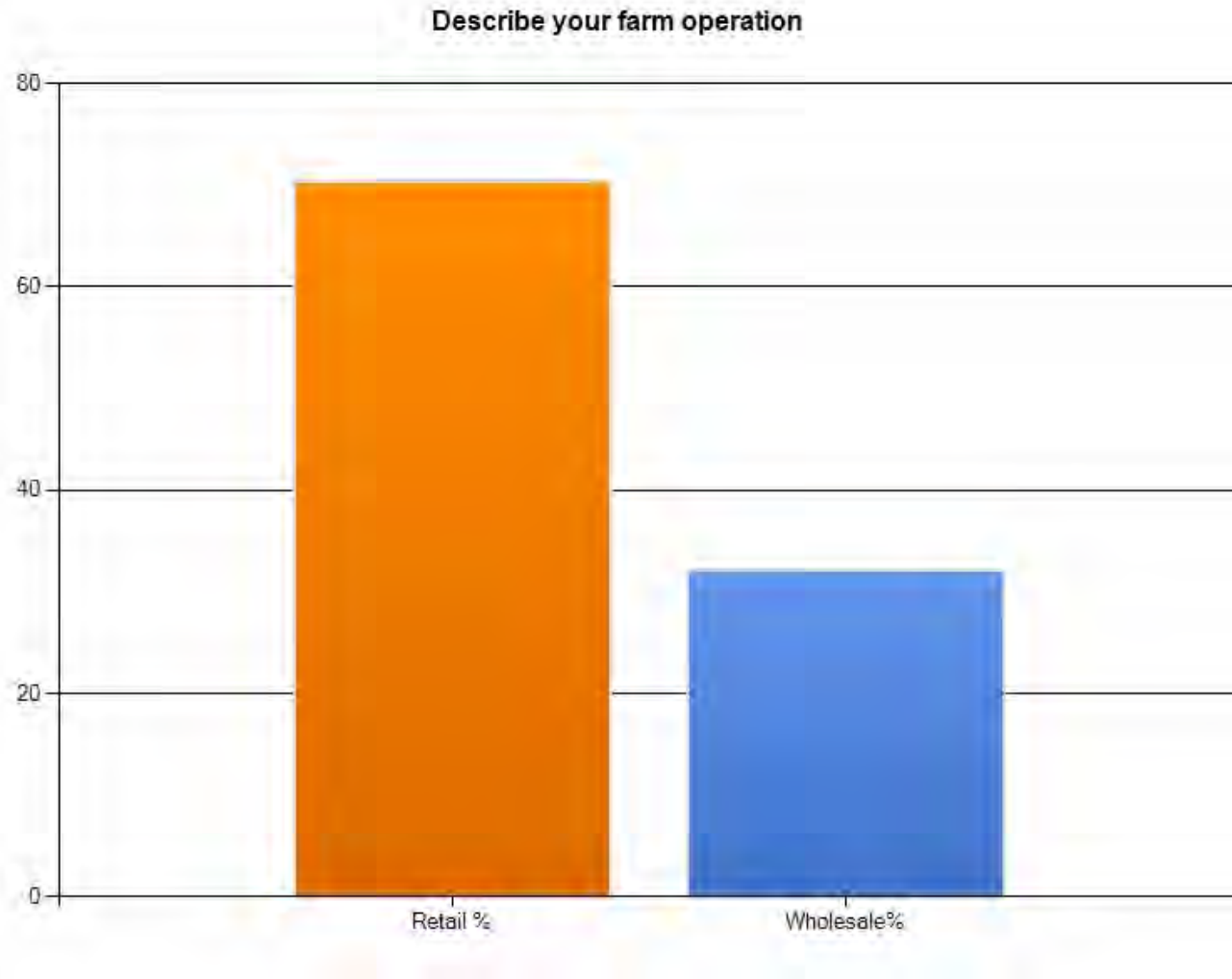
The farmers listed 21 schools or districts statewide and 7 wholesaler/distributors that they sell product to.

## **Farmer comments:**

“It has been a huge help for me to move my apples through the local schools. It has also garnered much publicity for my farm. People living in the school districts seem to know that the apples in the children’s school lunch program come from here. Many new customers. It is a good program for me.”

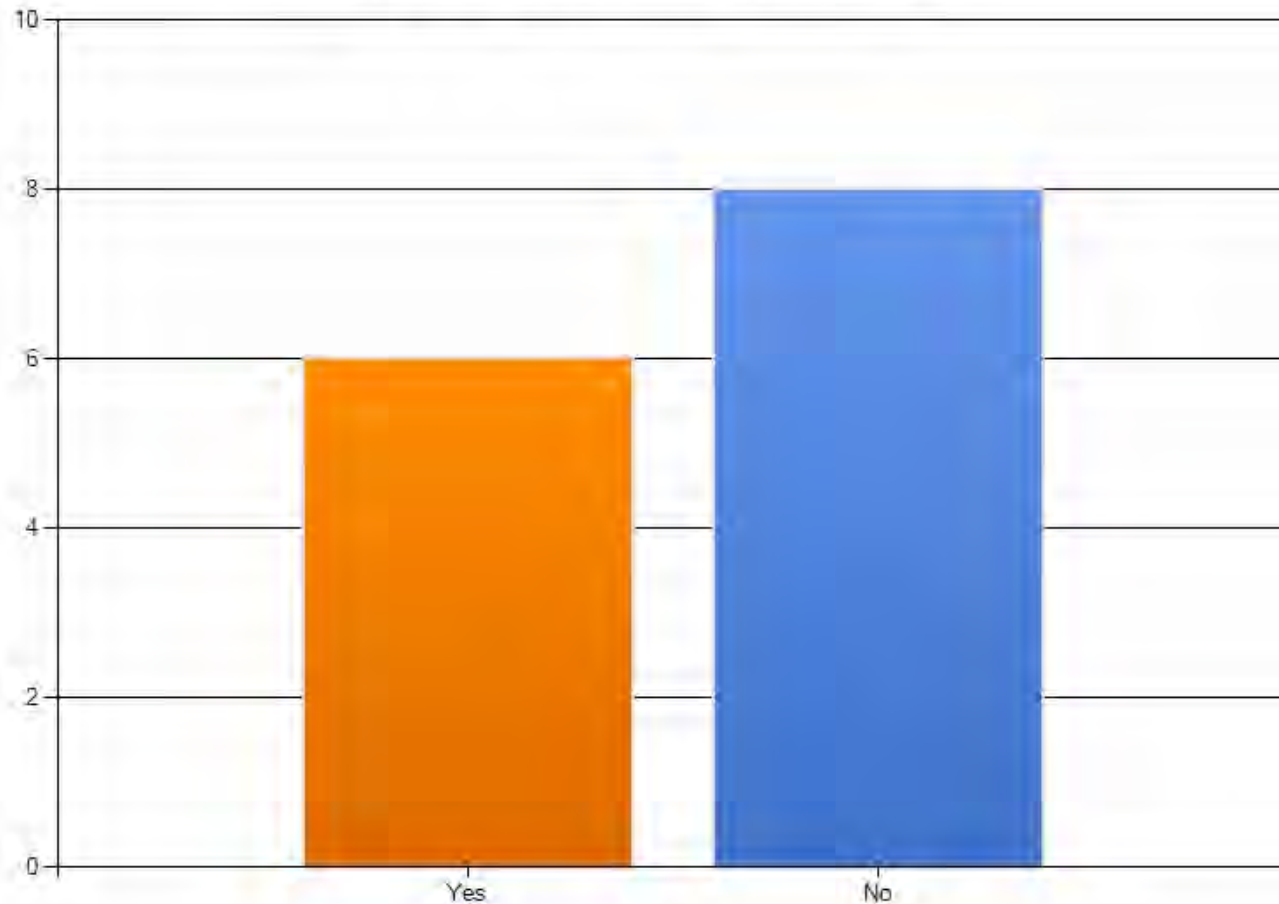
“The business proposition will have to be made to increase sales to schools .... We should take a look at the whole end to end process to see where we can optimize local products and cut costs by following the product through its delivery process from the farms to the schools.”

“I think this is a good program. I tell my farmer friends to try to sell to their local schools. I have lost some schools from wholesalers finding out they are buying from a farmer.”



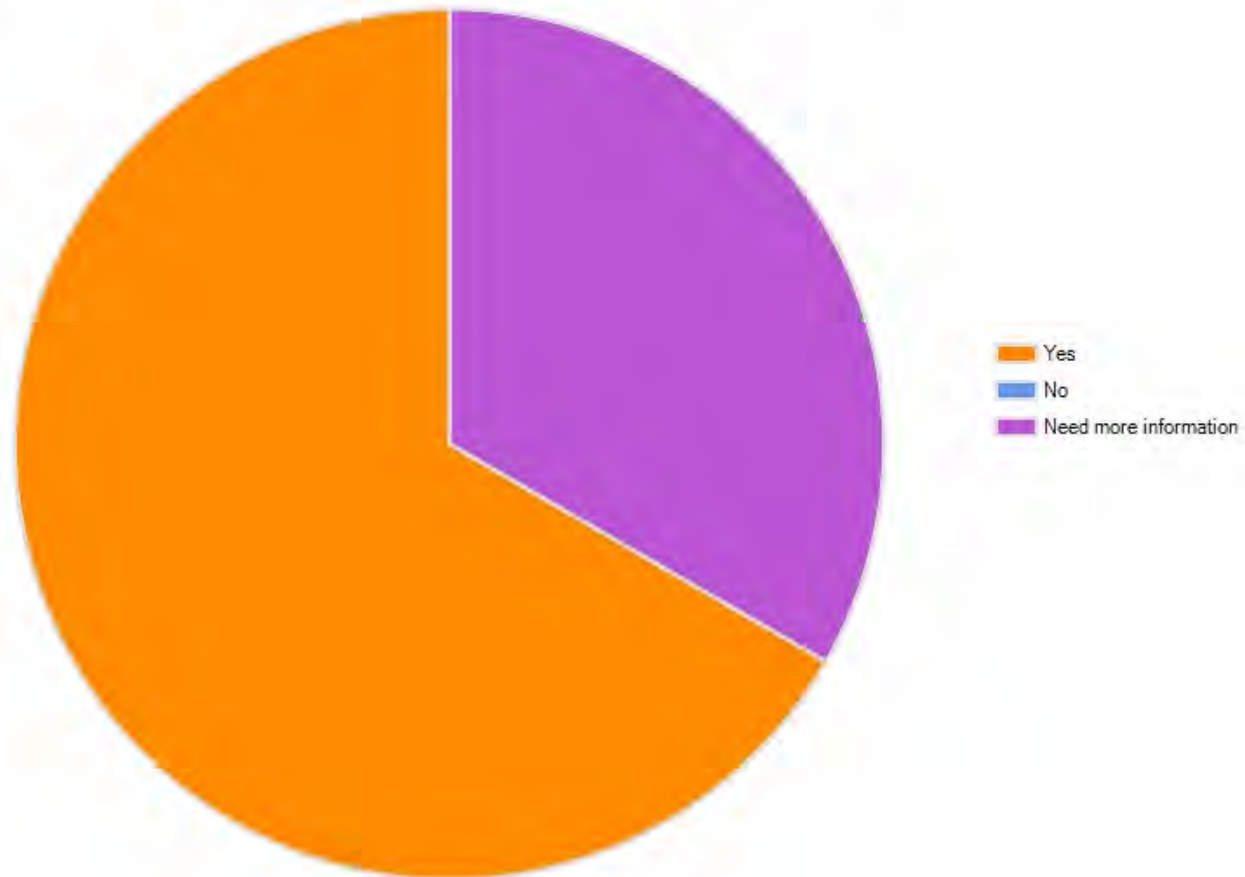
Farmers responded that on average their farm operation was 70% retail sales and only 30% wholesale sales. This may indicate that Connecticut farmers are not interested in wholesale sales.

### Do you sell any product directly to schools?



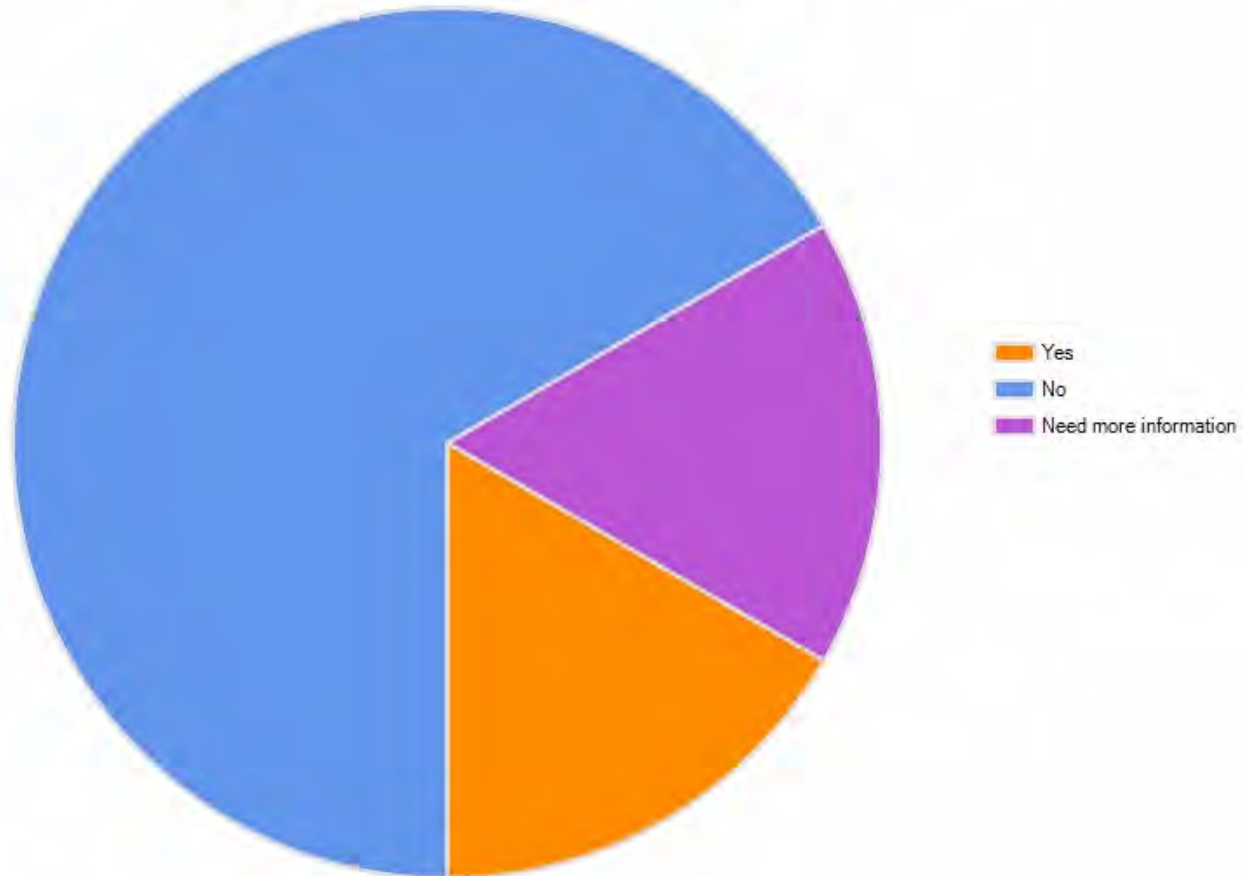
The number of “No” responses may indicate that an opportunity exists in Connecticut to increase the number of farmers selling directly to schools.

Are you interested in increasing the number of schools you sell to directly?



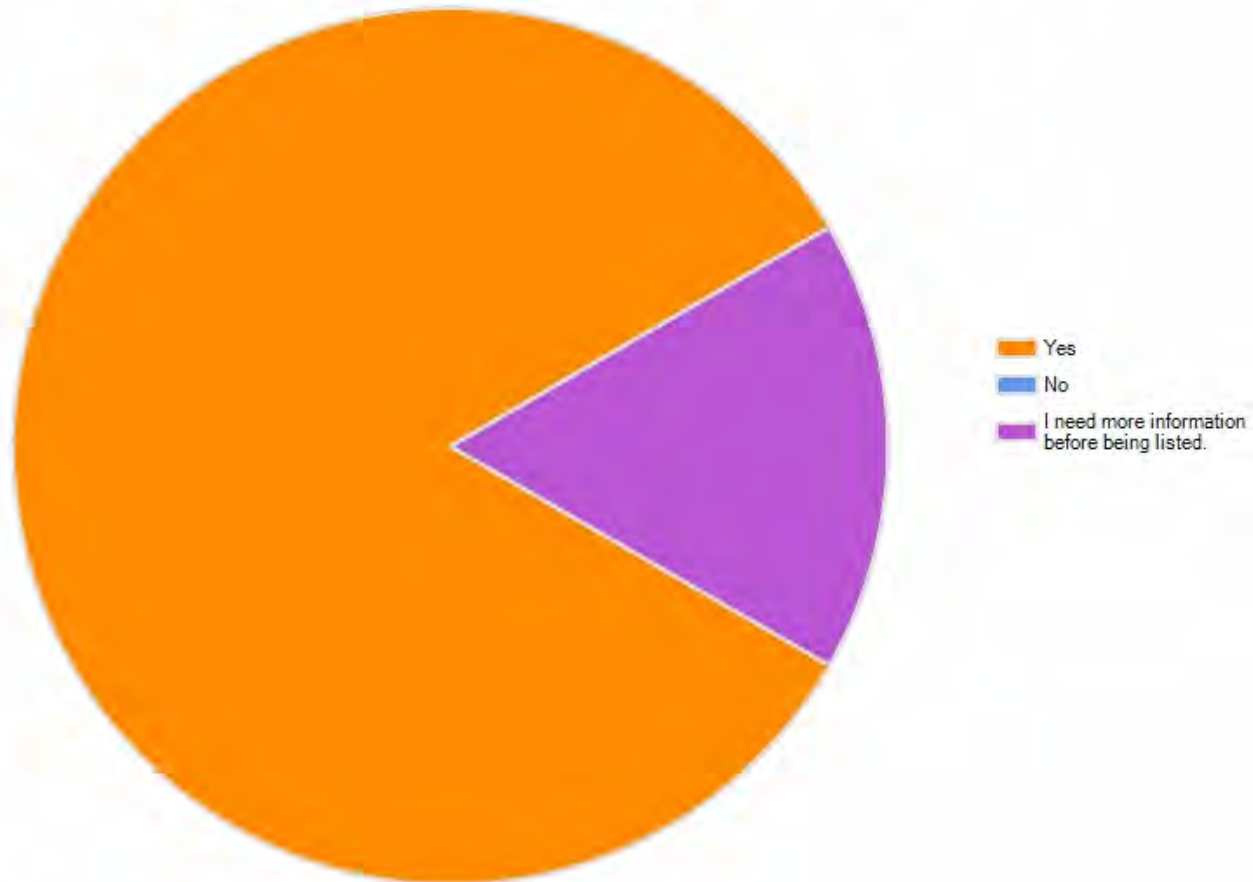
There is an indication that farmers are interested in increasing the number of schools that they sell to directly and that more outreach and education on opportunities to farmers is needed.

**Are you interested in increasing your production for wholesale sales to a wholesale distributor or vendor?**



Farmers did not seem to be interested in increasing production for wholesale sales.

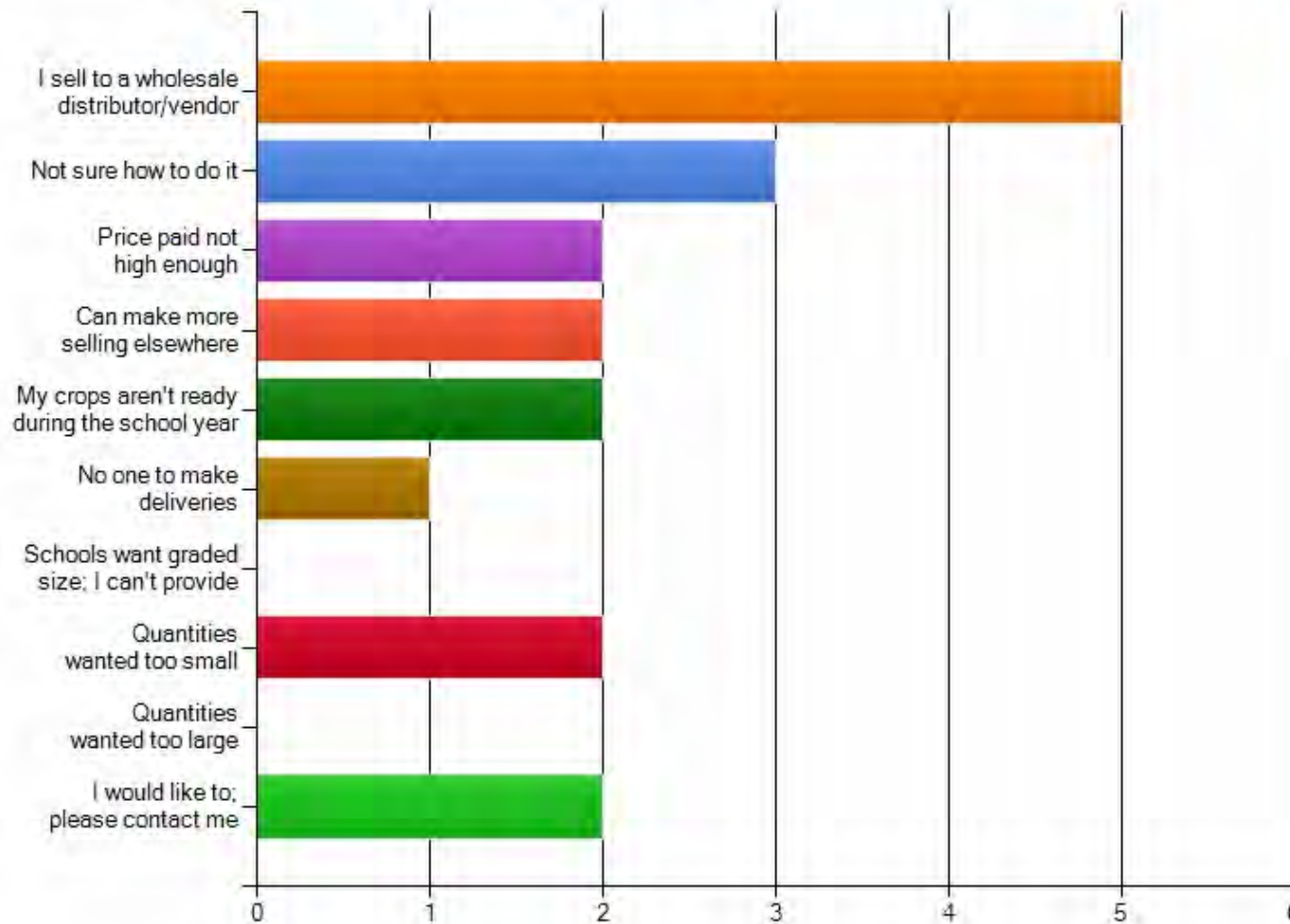
Would you like to be listed on the Connecticut Farm to School website as a participating farmer? There is no cost to this.



Most farmers were interested in being listed on the Connecticut Farm to School Website which was very encouraging.

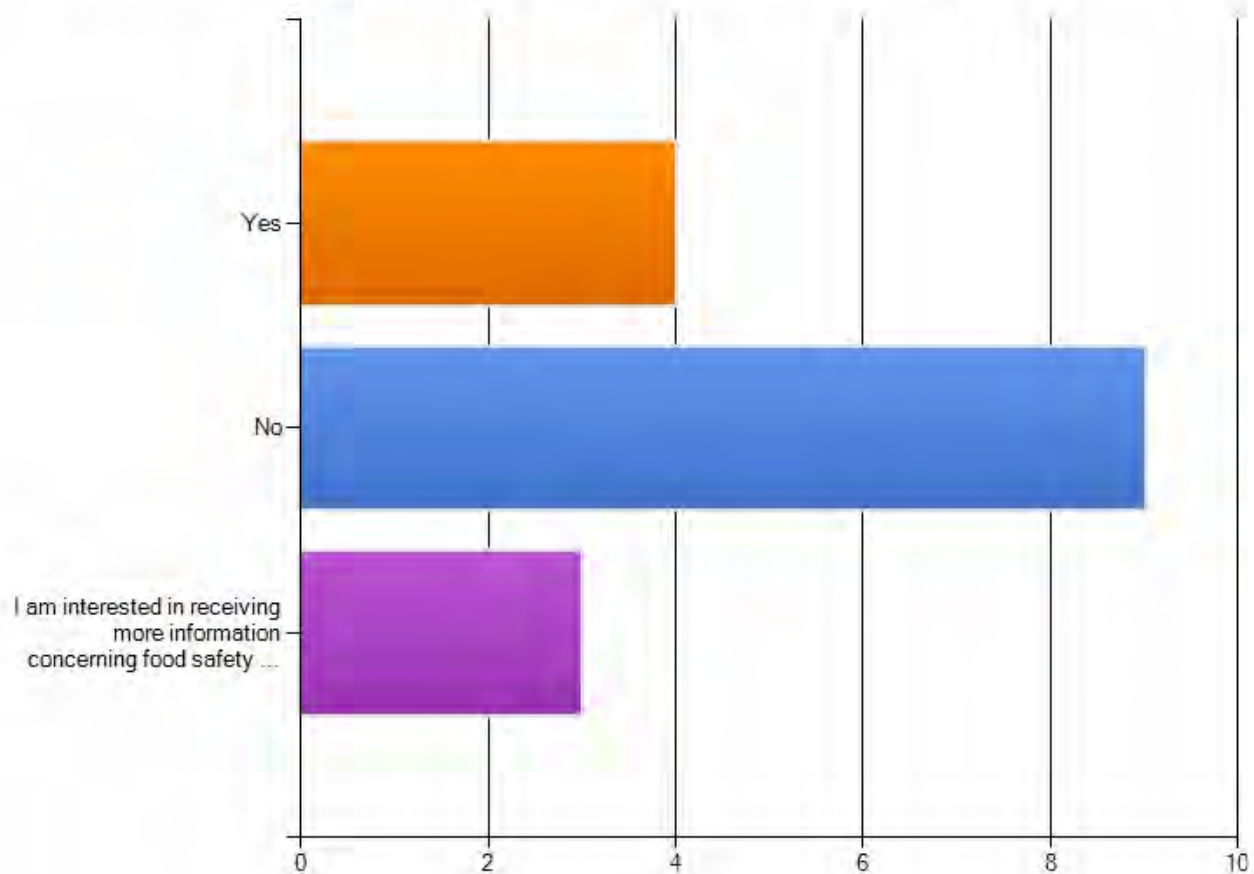


**If you are not selling directly to schools, why not (check all that apply)**



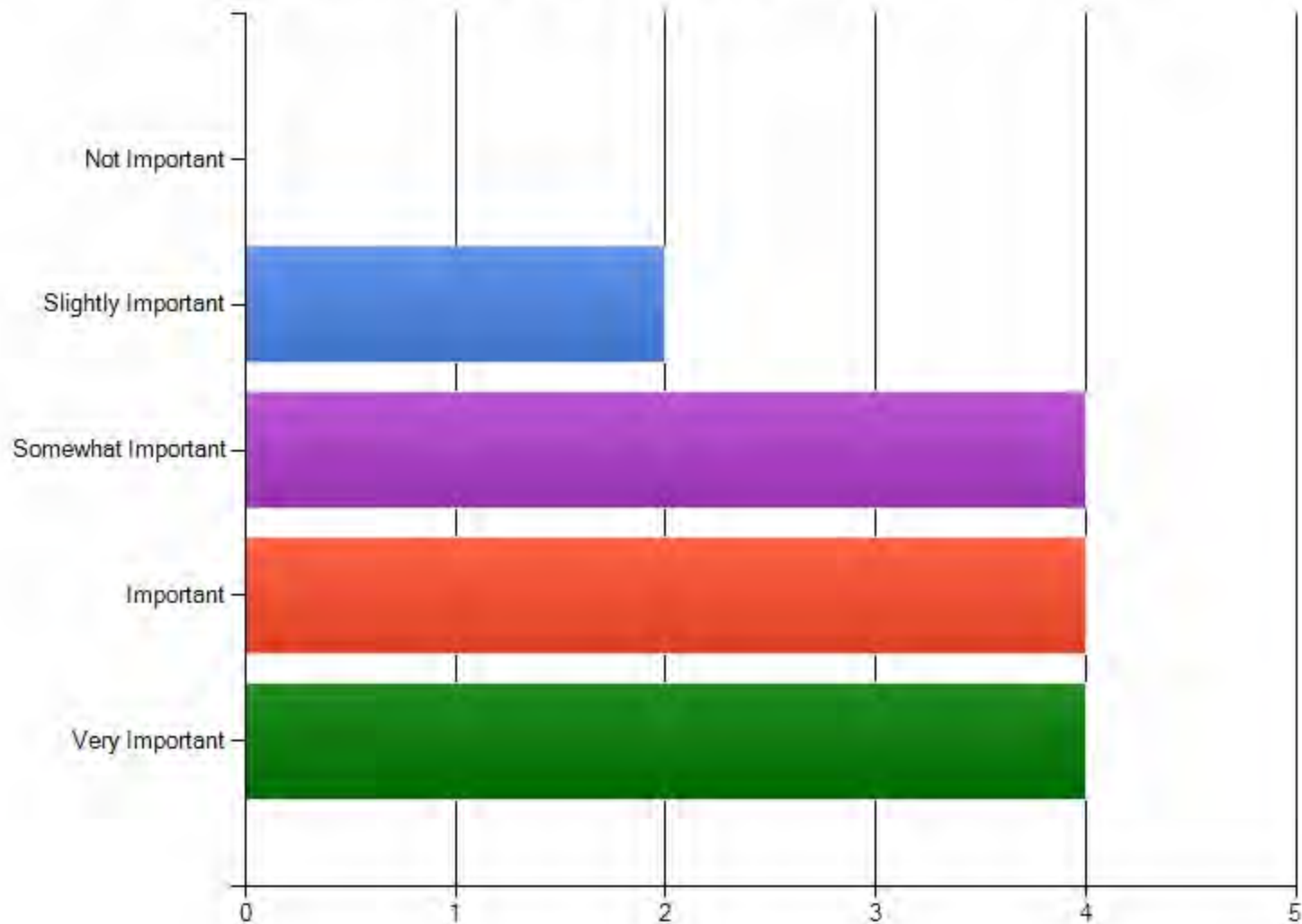
Responses point to more education and outreach needed to interested farmers.

Do you have any food safety certifications for your farm, such as Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Hazard Analysis & Critical Control Points (HACCP)?



The majority of the respondent farmers do not have any food safety certifications, but there is some interest in learning more about available certifications and training.

**How important is it to you that your products are used in Connecticut schools?**



It is encouraging that farmers view the use of their products in Connecticut schools as important.

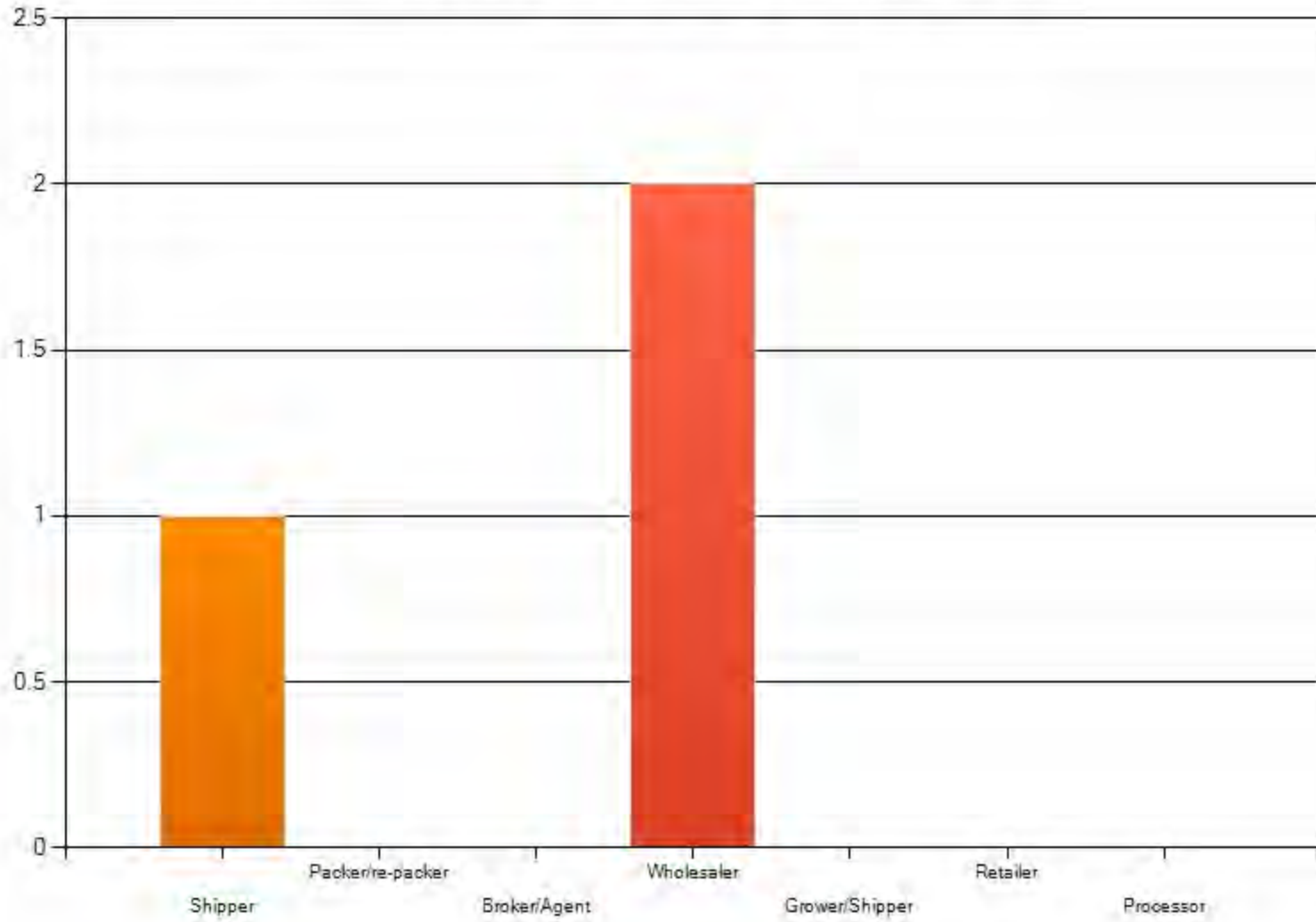
# Connecticut Farm to School

## Wholesaler/Distributor Survey

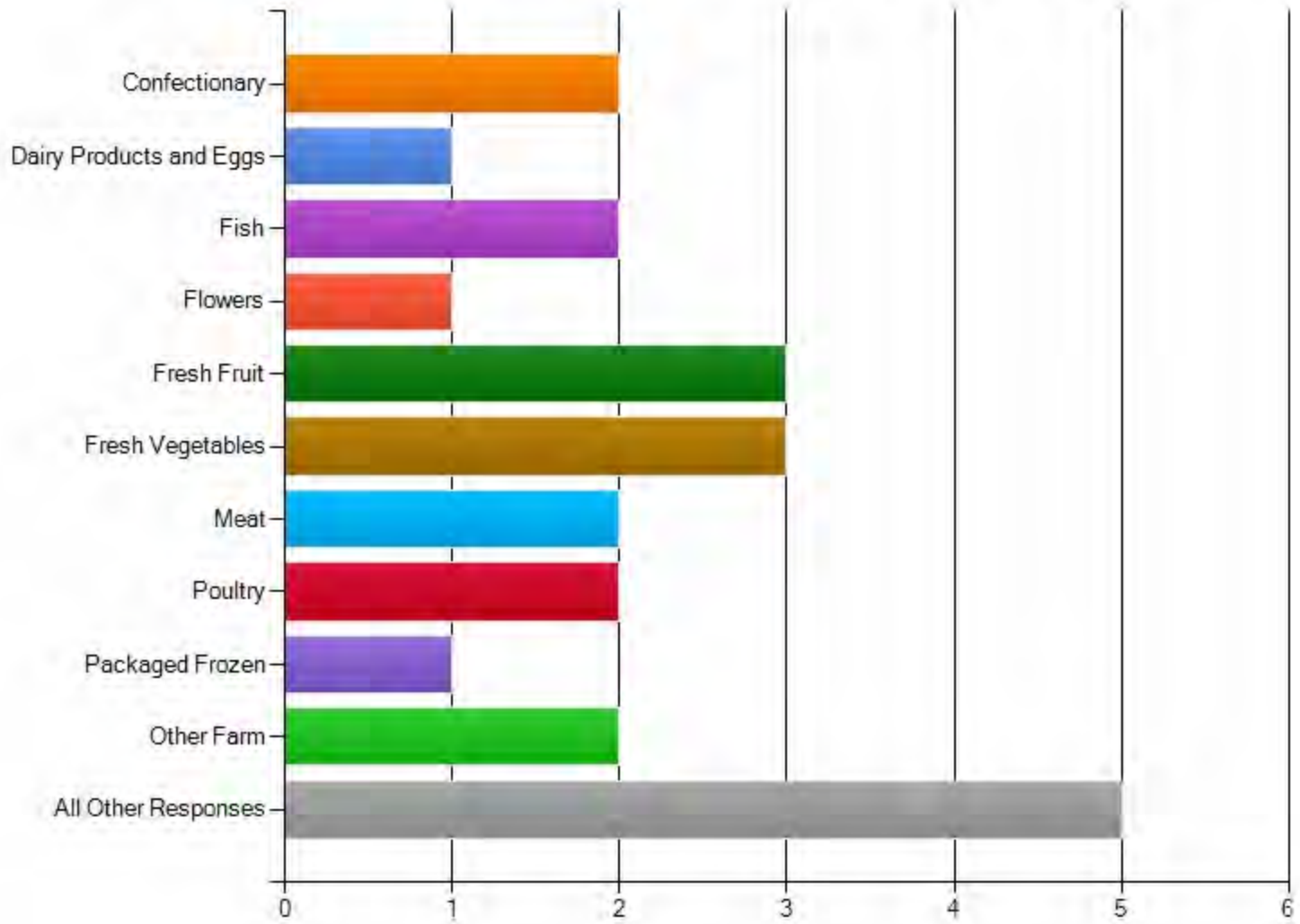
### Survey Highlights



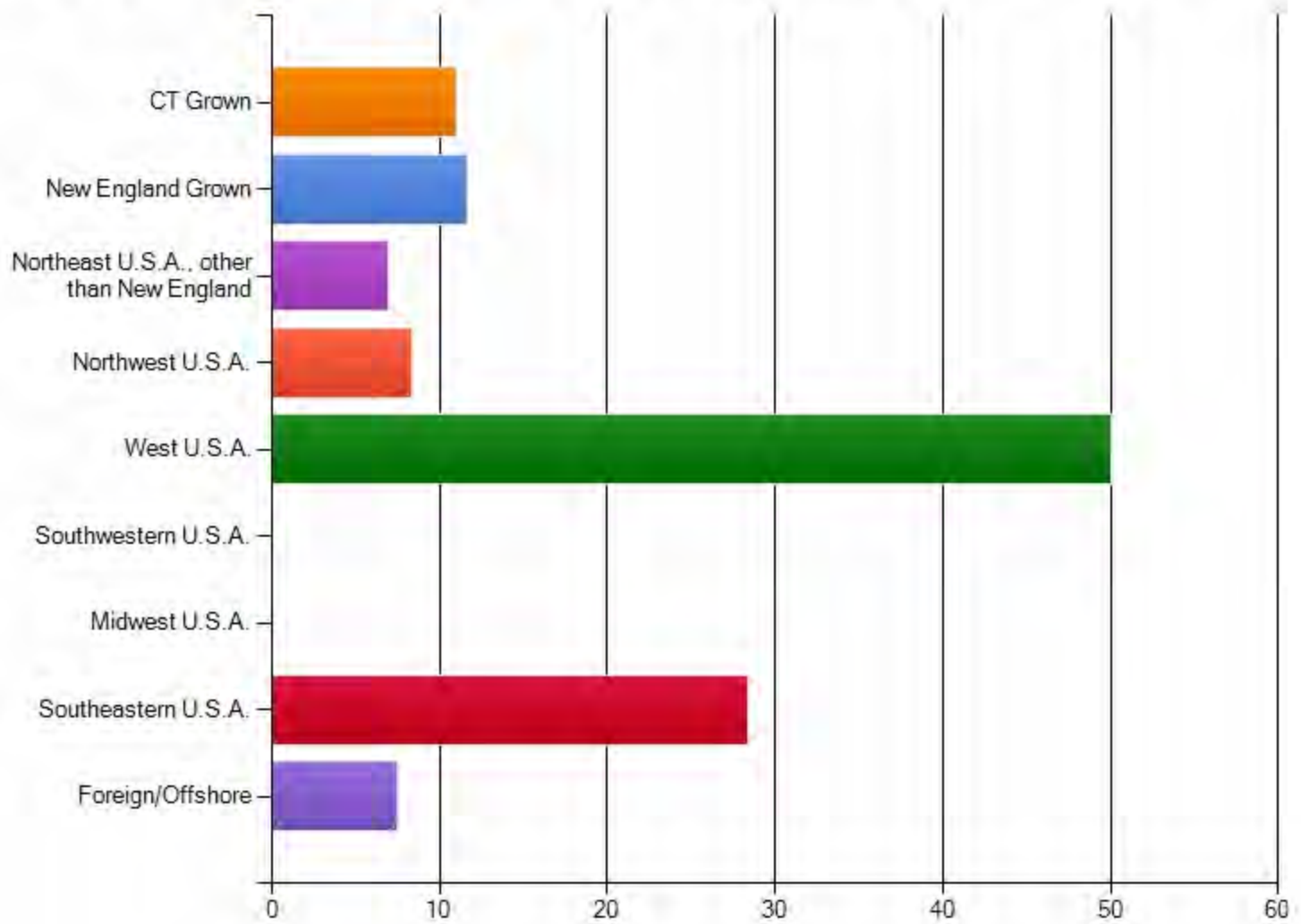
Please check all the categories that describe your services



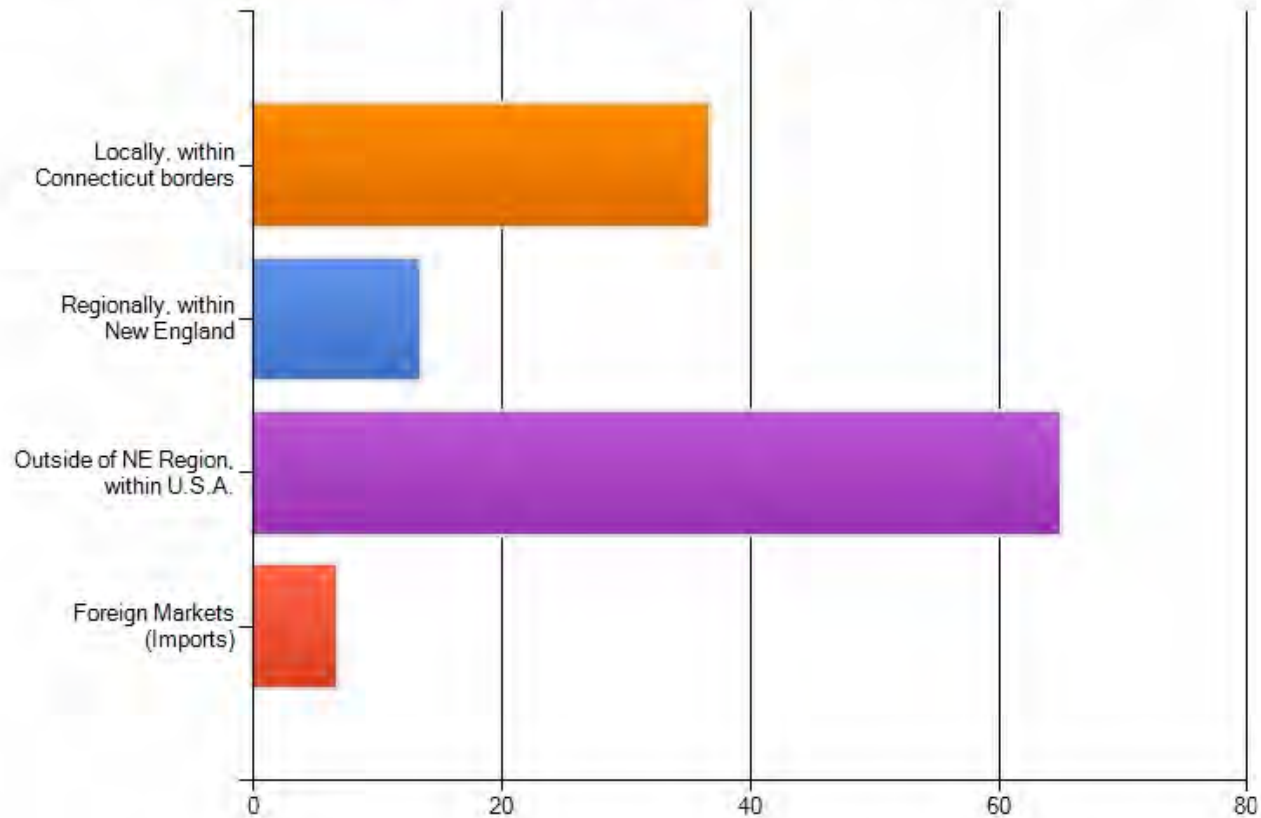
**What broad categories of products do you distribute. Check all that apply**



**Where does your fresh produce come from? (Use percentages, and should total 100%)**



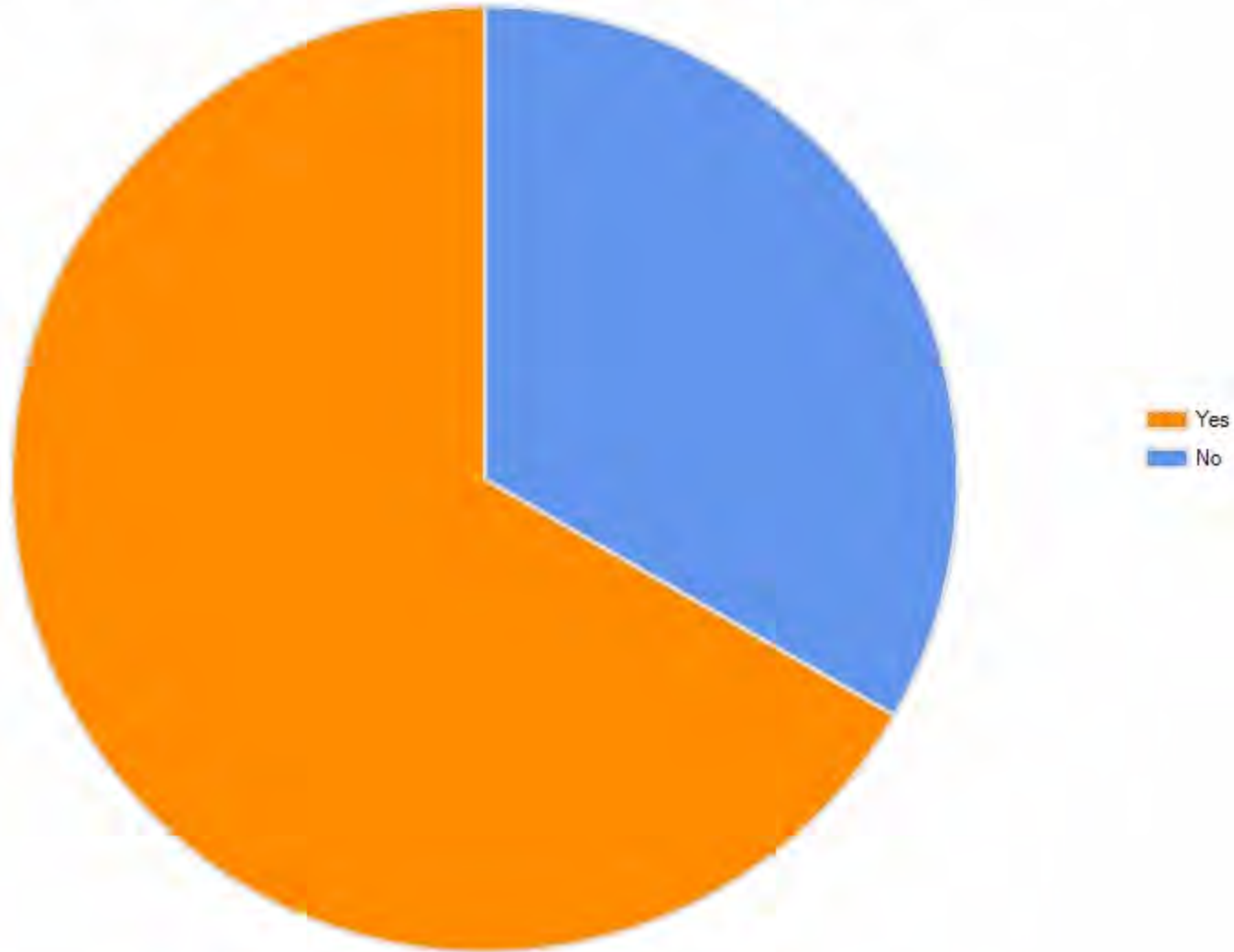
We are interested in understanding where distributors/wholesalers source their fresh fruits and vegetable inventory in the height of the Connecticut growing season (summer to fall). From your distribution center, please estimate how much of your fresh produce inventory is from the following (please use percentages to add up to 100%):



Answers ranged from a low of 10% to a high of 75% CT Grown fruits and vegetables, with most of the produce coming from outside of the New England Region, even during the height of the CT growing season.



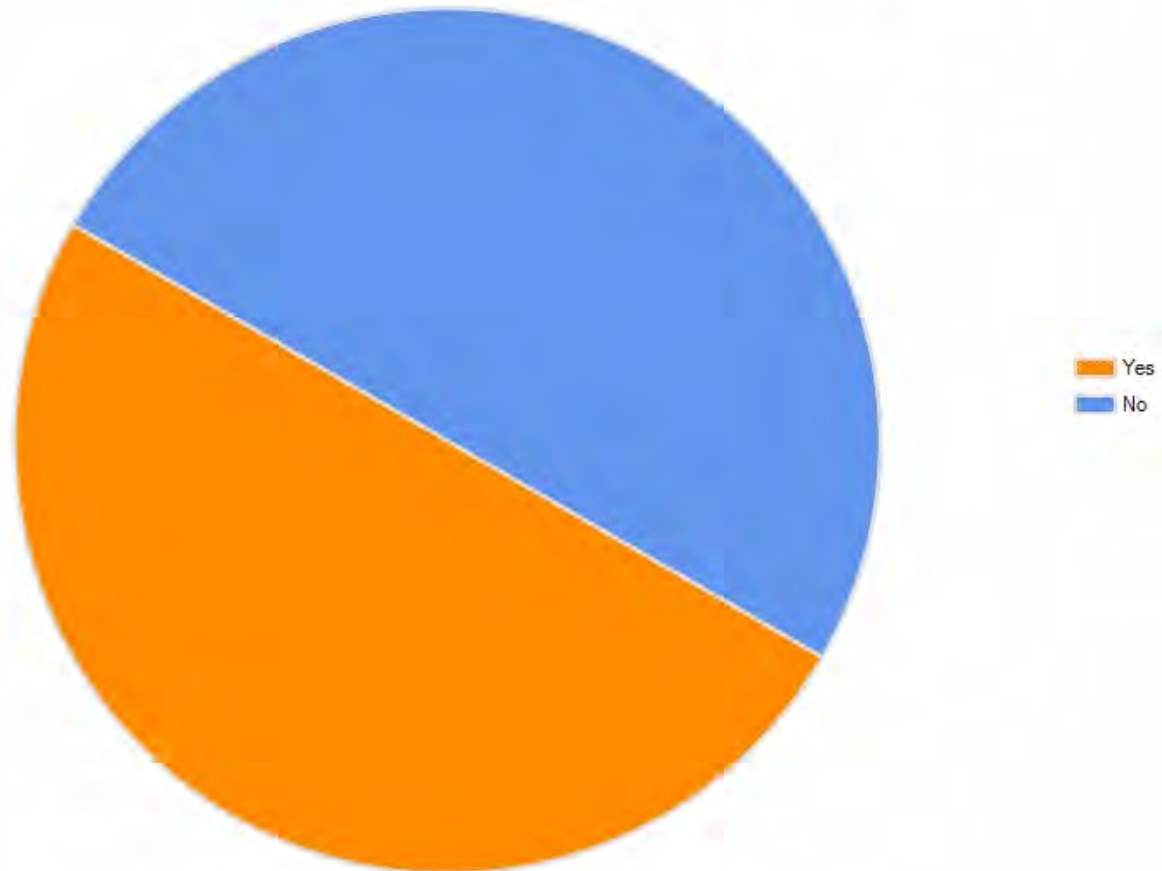
Do you sell CT Grown products to Connecticut K-12 schools?



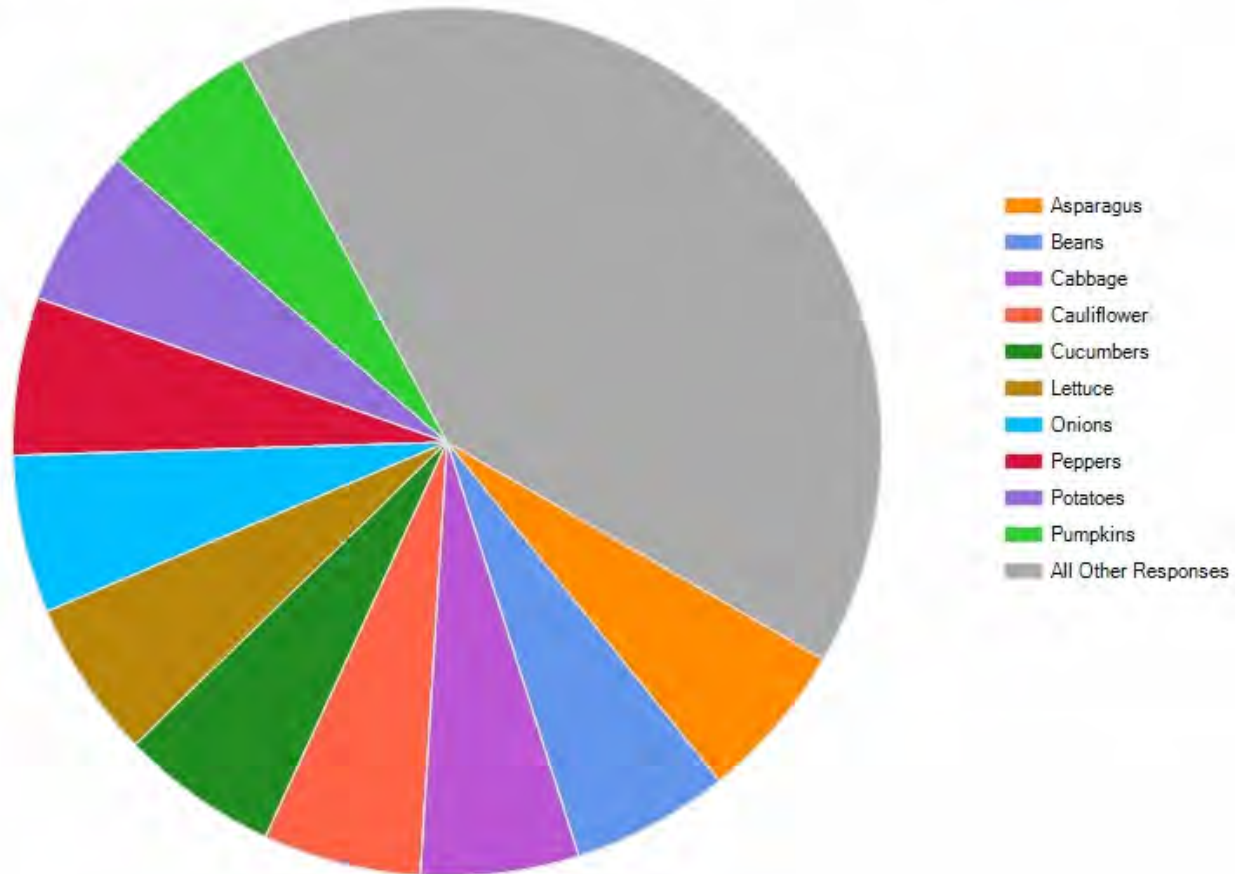
**What proportion of your 2011 sales of CT Grown products were to Connecticut K-12 schools?  
(Please state in a percentage)**

Two companies answered this question and their percentages varied greatly from a low of 1% from a nationwide company to 80% from a Connecticut based company serving the northeast region.

Are you actively seeking new Connecticut farmers to purchase CT grown products from?

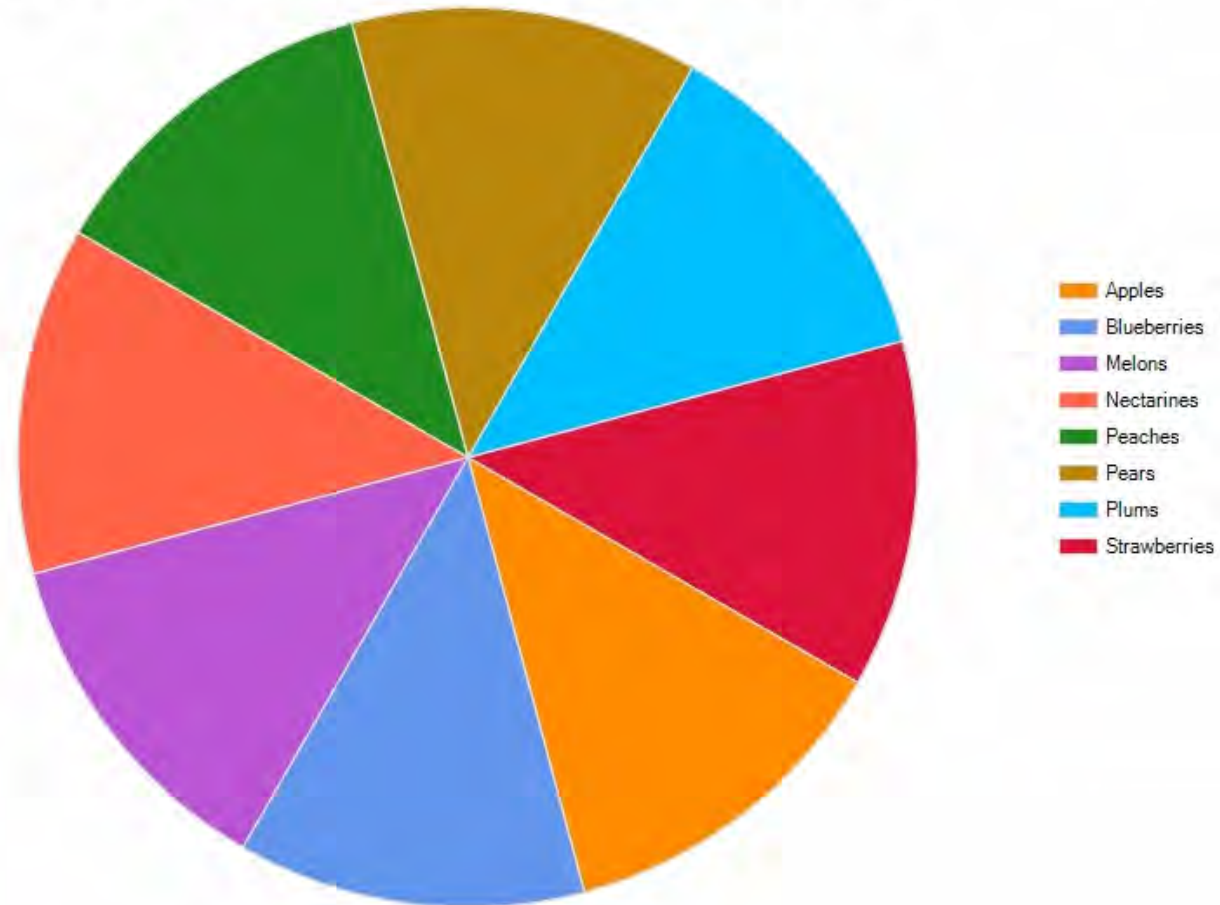


If yes, what vegetable products are you looking for? (Check all that apply)



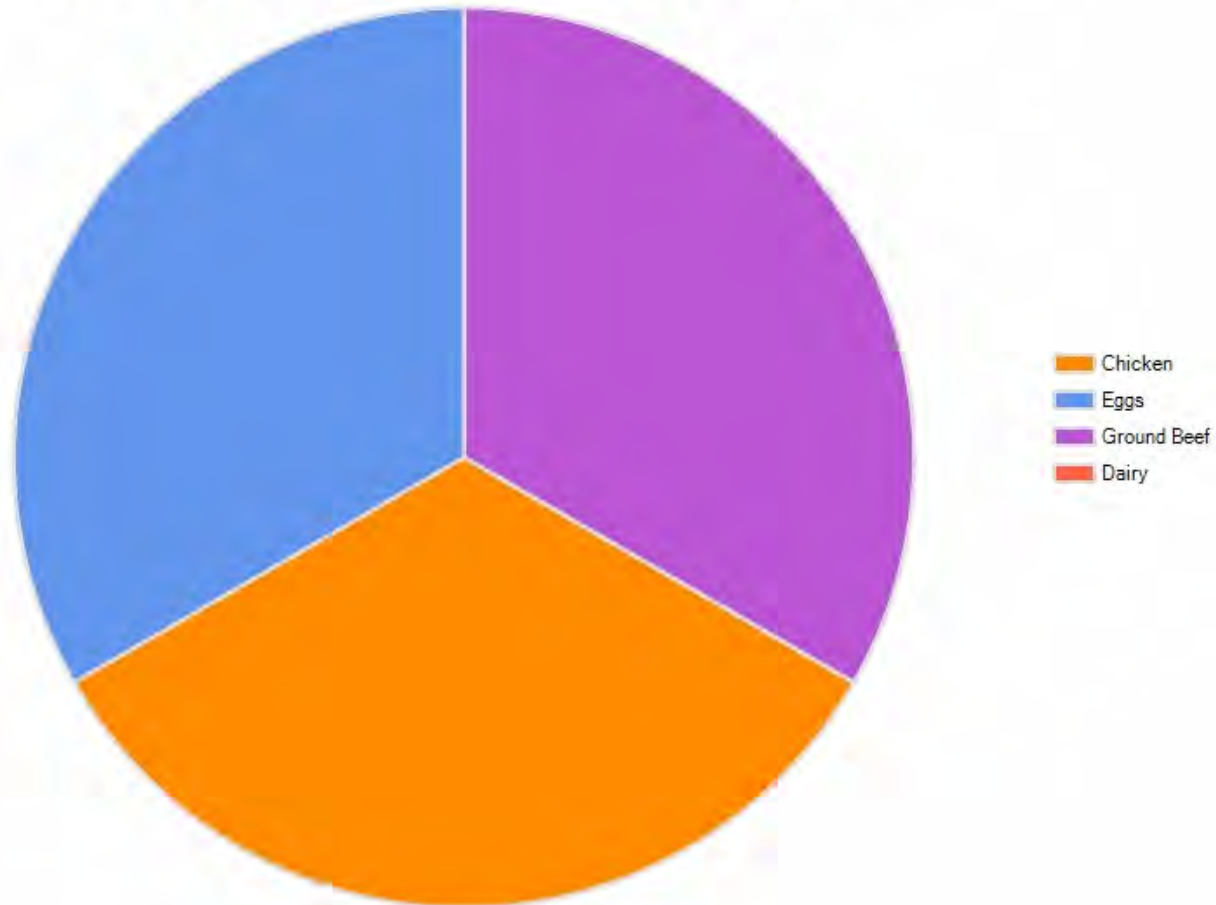
There may be opportunities for Connecticut farmers especially with regard to new dietary requirements for the USDA National School Lunch Program that increase consumption of orange vegetables such as winter squash, carrots and pumpkin.

If yes, what fruit products are you looking for? (Check all that apply)



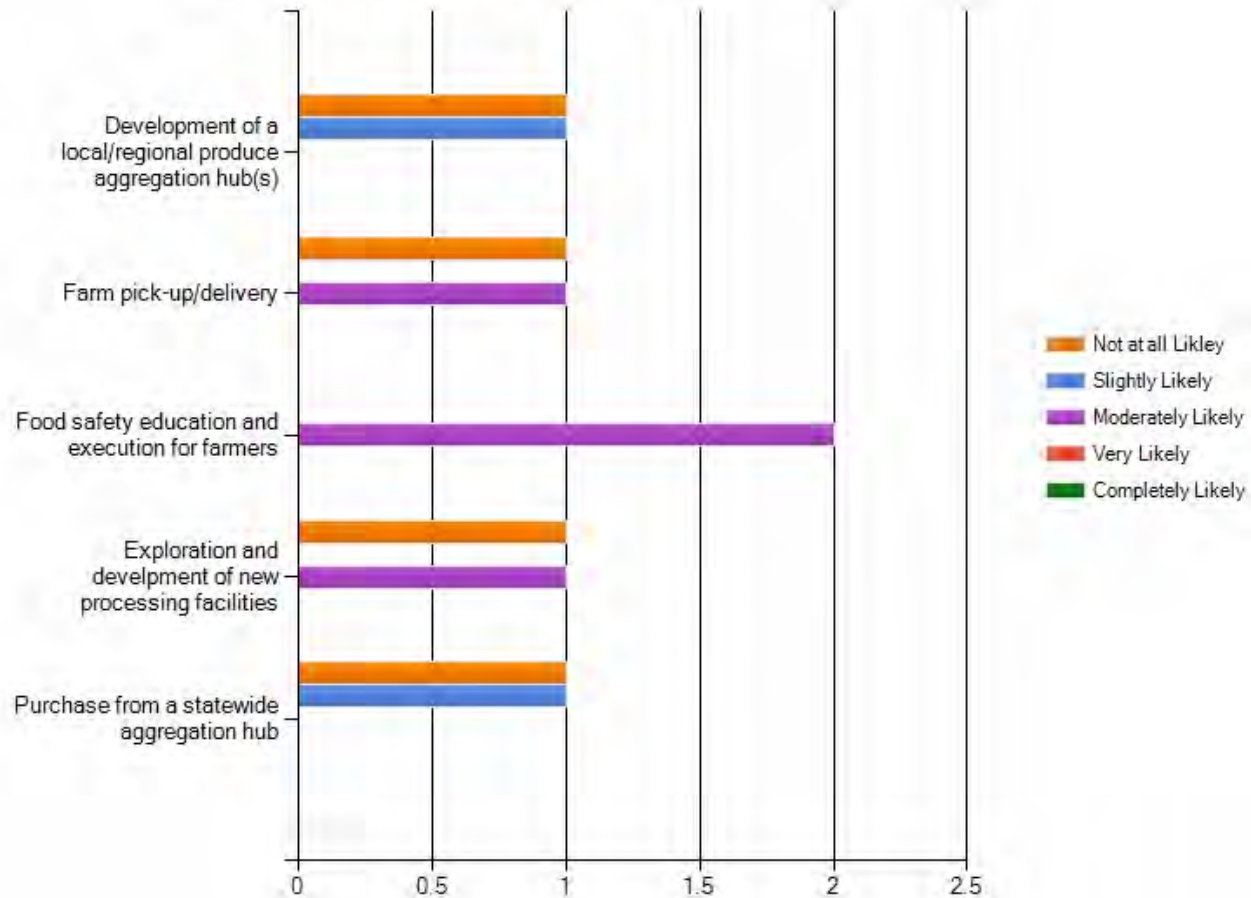
This list may be valuable for farmers looking to focus on fruit production.

If yes, what proteins are you looking for? (Check all that apply)



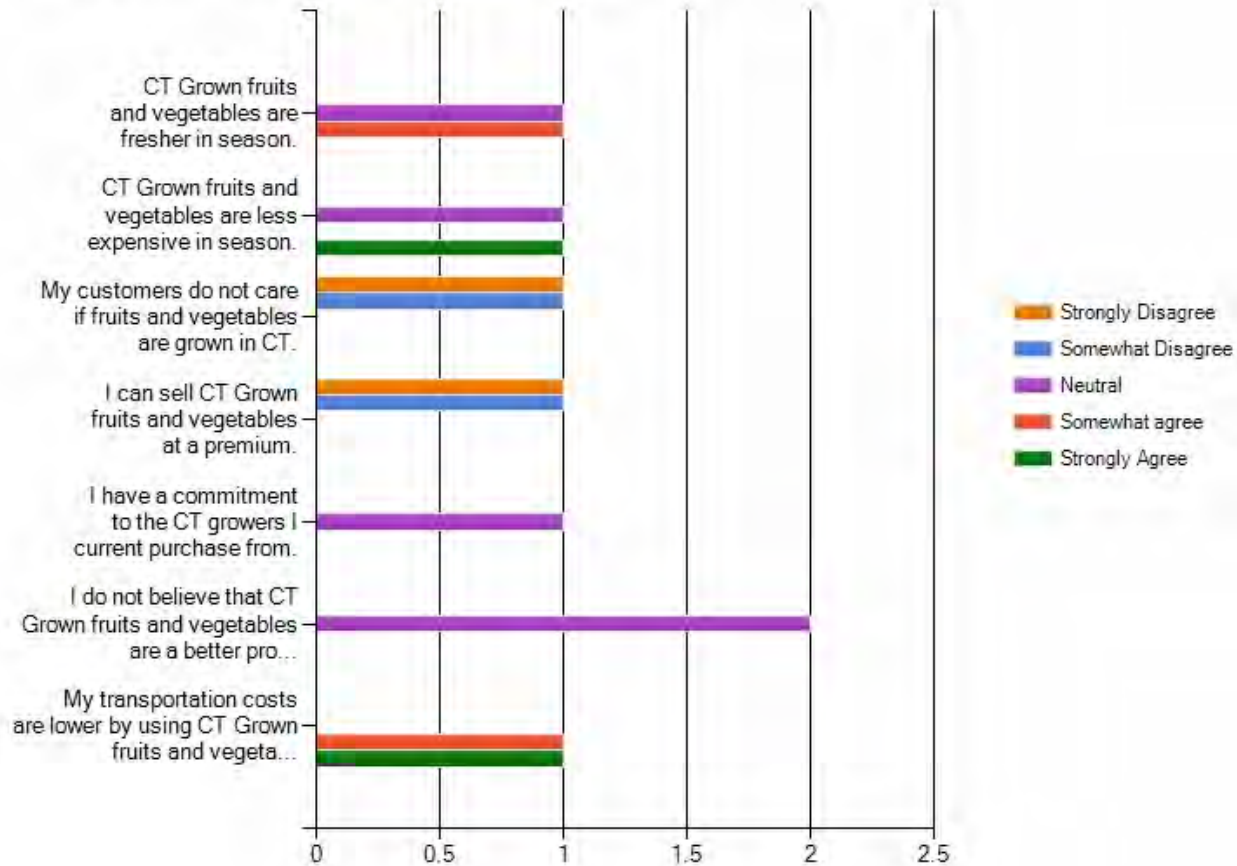
Connecticut Grown chicken, ground beef and eggs are sought after products and offer growth opportunities for farmers.

Would you consider the following:



Wholesalers/distributors seem interested in ensuring that farmers receive food safety education and are less interested in development of an aggregation hub or processing facility.

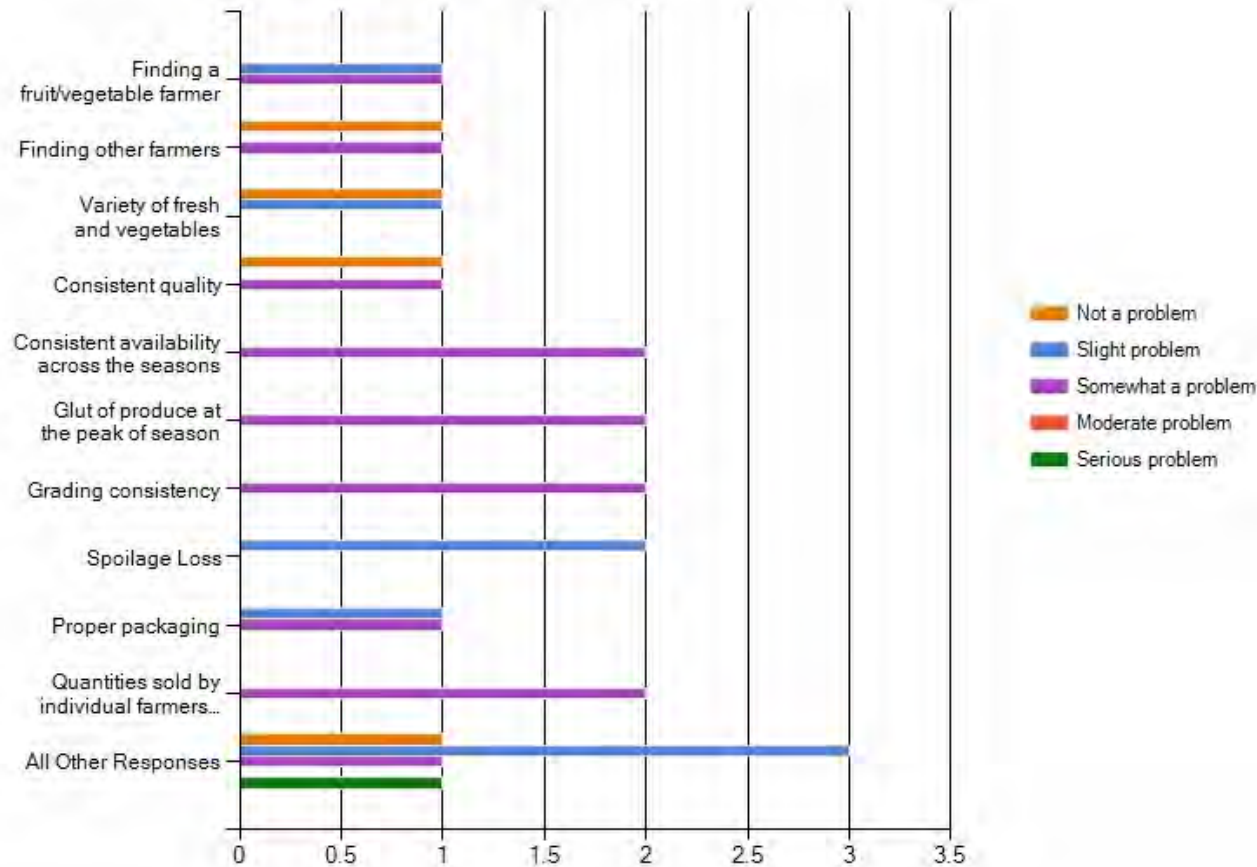
**Please rate your agreement with the following statements concerning your decision to purchase CT Grown products?**



Wholesalers/distributors seem aware that customers are concerned about where their products come from, but seem less willing to think that Connecticut Grown products are better and fresher than elsewhere. There is more agreement that transportation costs are lower when using Connecticut Grown products.

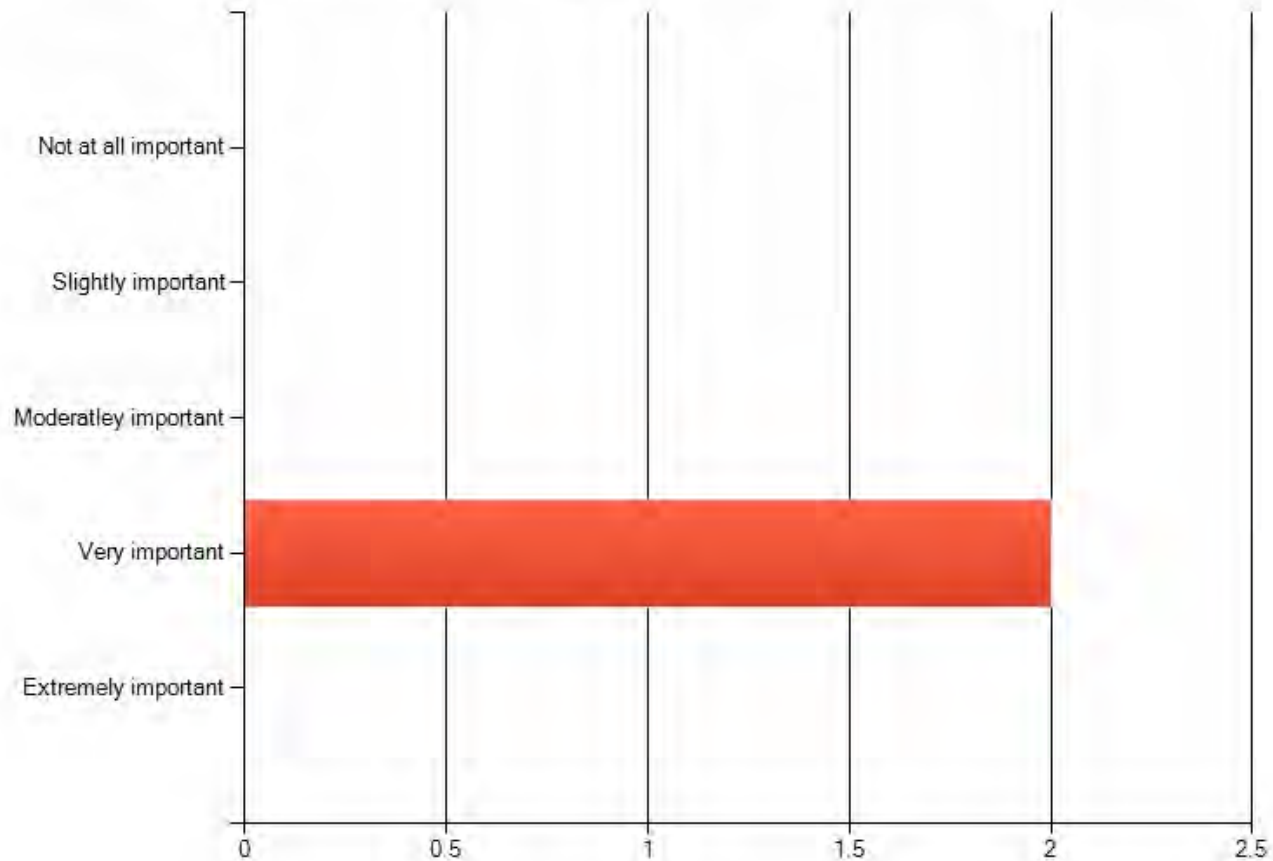


**When you consider purchasing CT Grown products, how problematic are the following?**



One wholesaler/distributor said that producers carrying sufficient insurance was a significant problem. Other challenges and issues cited included: the growing season is not long enough, no trucks with refrigeration, the cost of the raw materials to grow products, taxes on farmers are too high for them to be profitable and that competition won't sell to smaller guy if a big wholesaler is also a customer.

**How important is purchasing Connecticut fruits and vegetables to the future of your business?**



It is encouraging that Connecticut Grown is seen as important to the future of their business because customers care about where their products come from. Opportunities seem to be there for farmers despite obstacles.

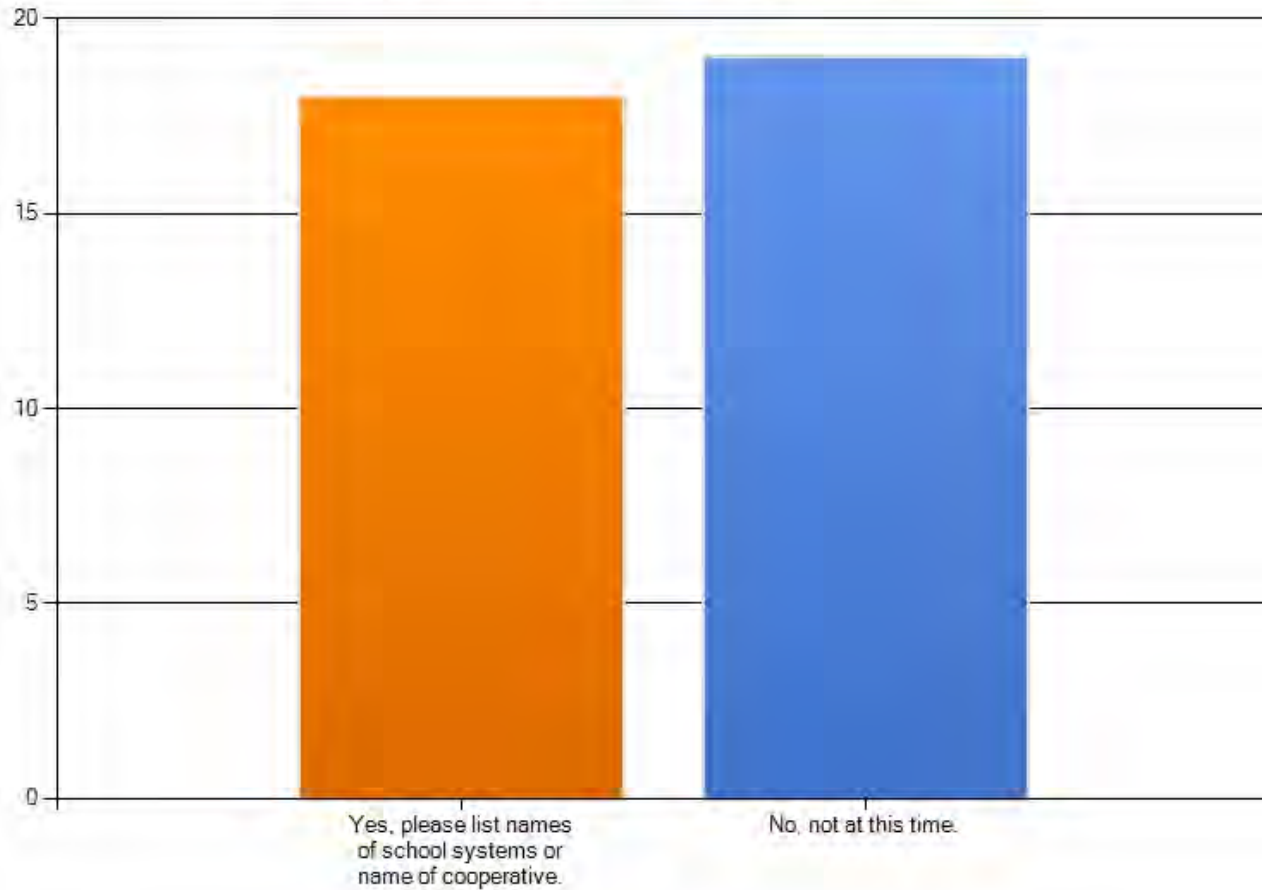
# Connecticut Farm to School

## School Food Service Director Survey

### Survey Highlights

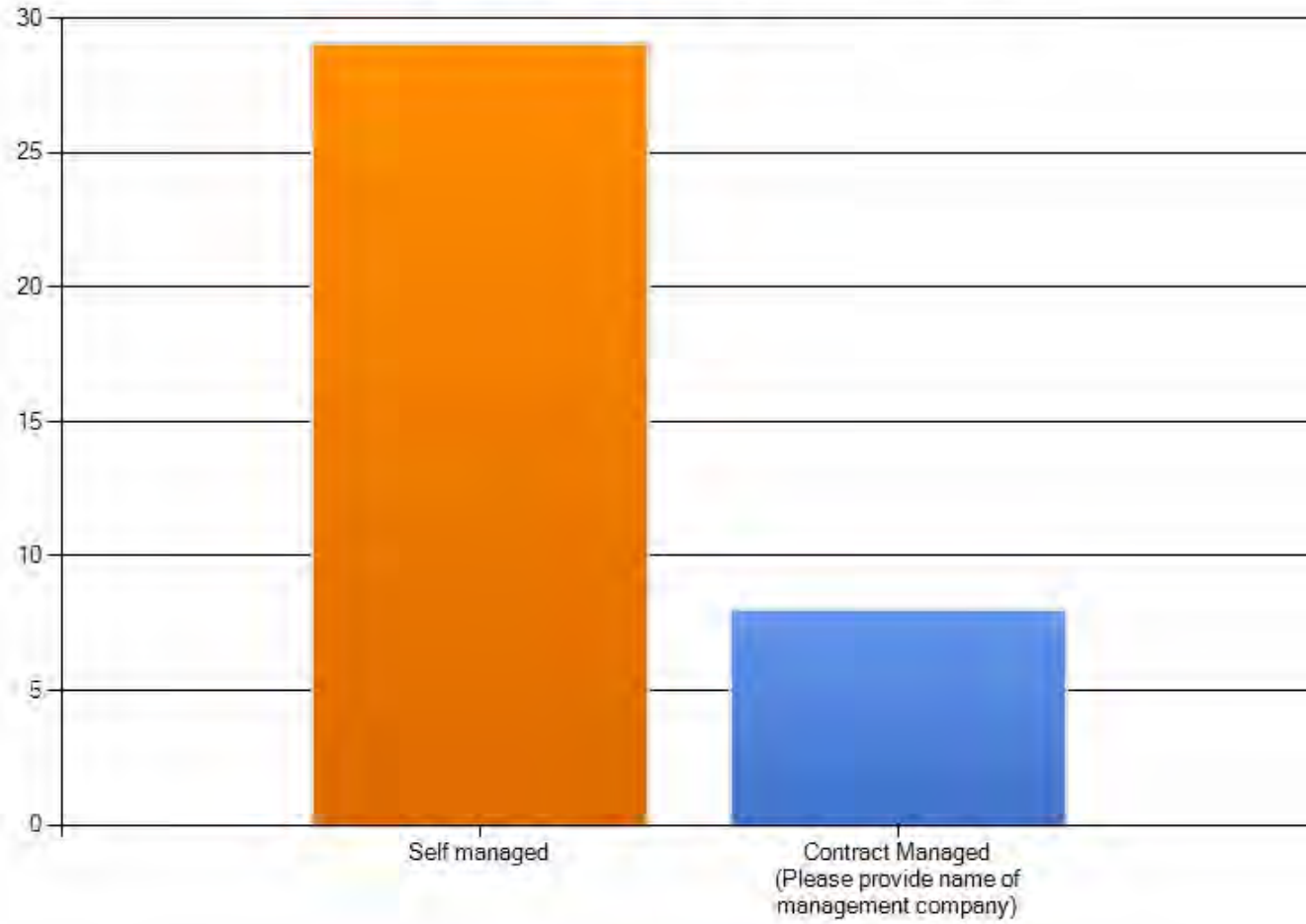


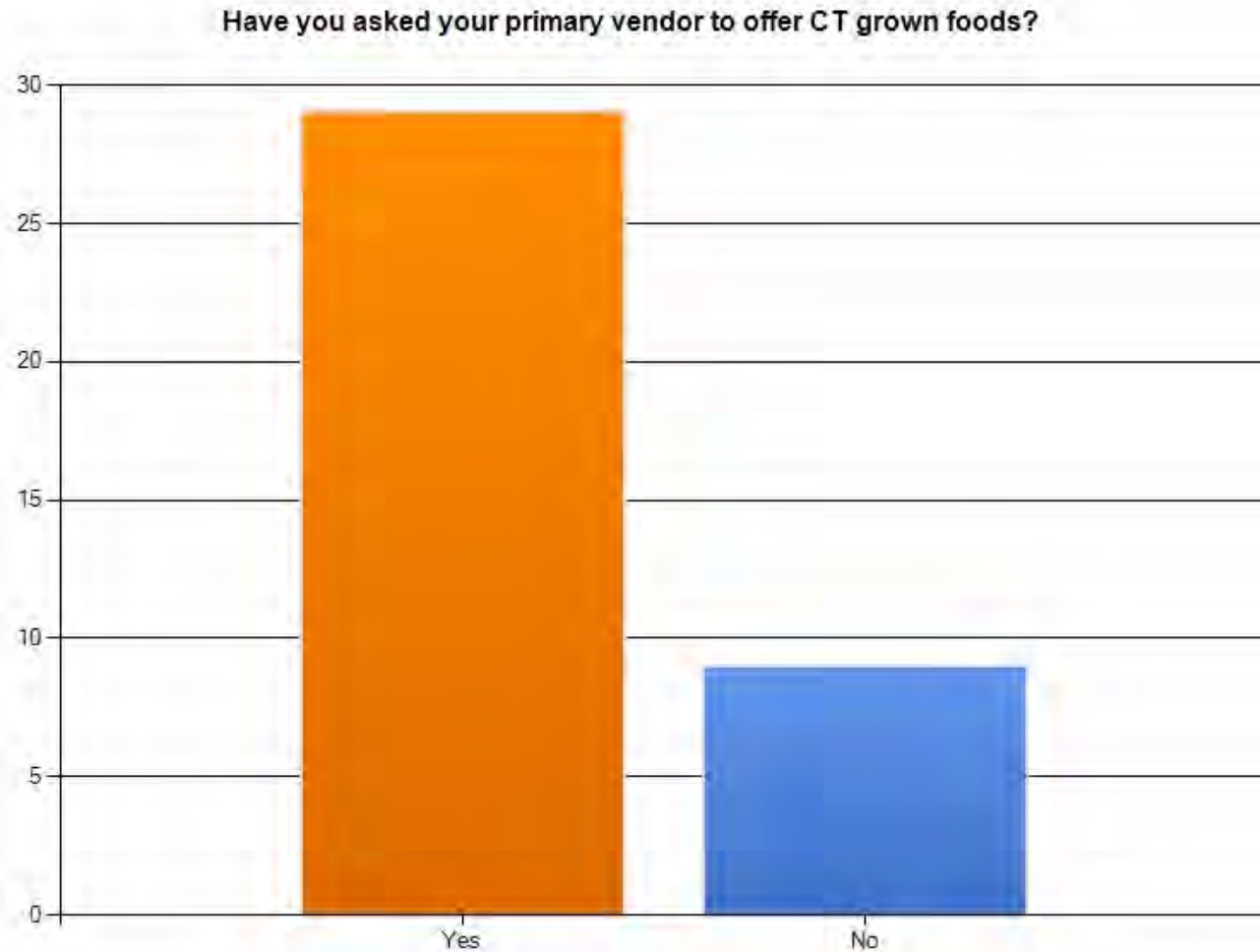
### Are you a member of any purchasing cooperative?



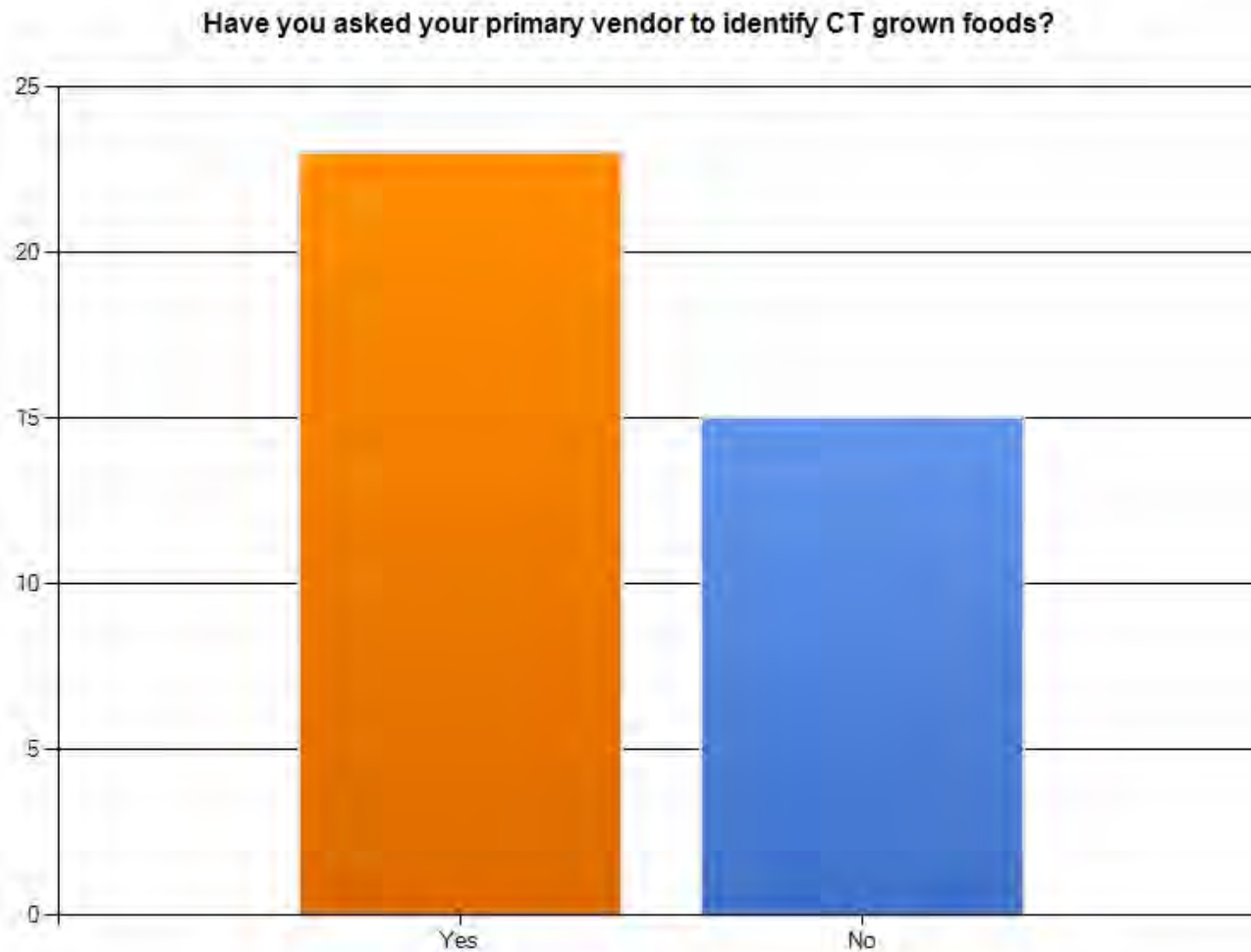
A purchasing cooperative allows member schools to purchase food service items such as grocery and cafeteria supplies at very low prices. These items could be milk, ice cream, bread and a la carte items.

### How is your school food service operation managed?



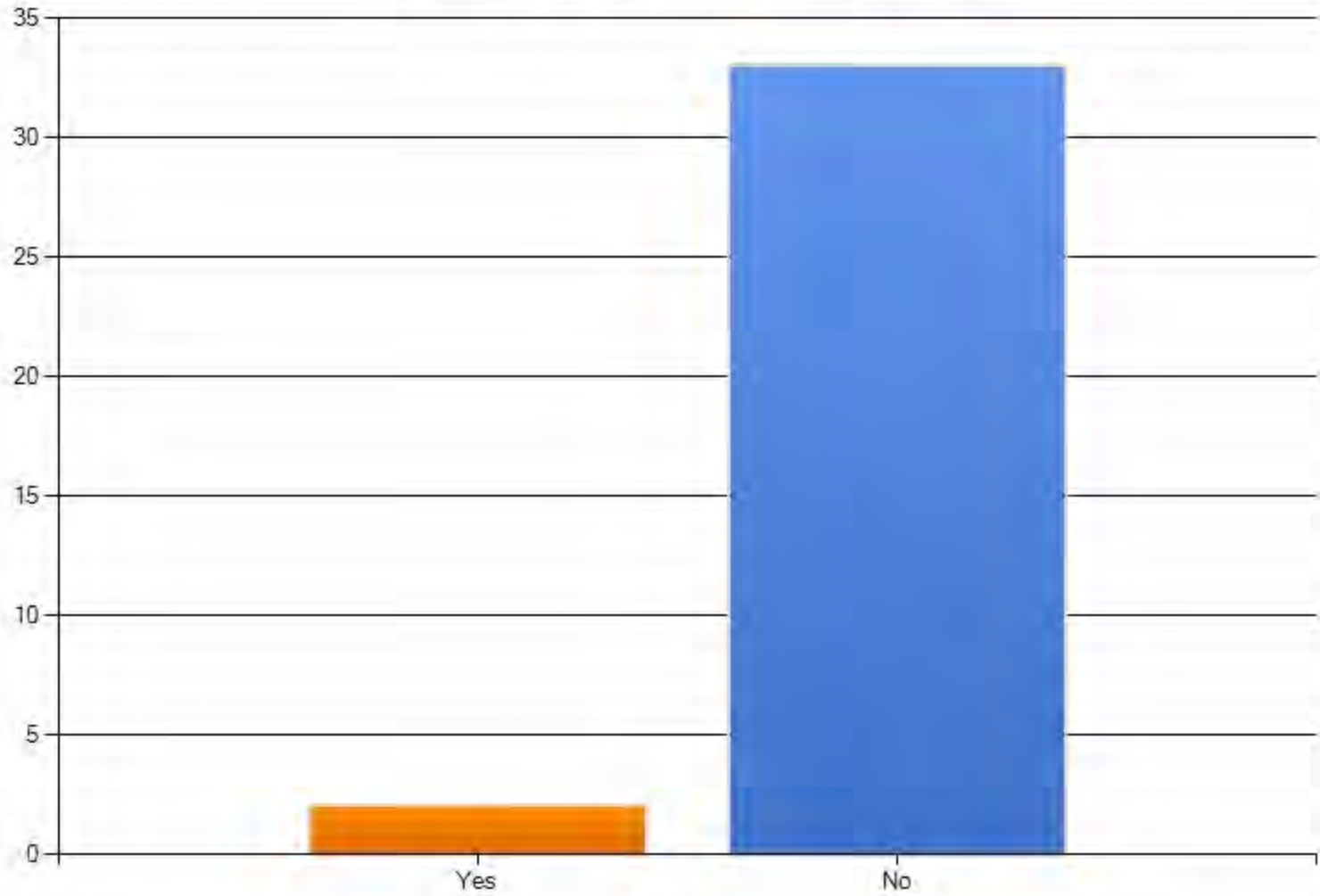


There is great interest in Connecticut Grown products by school food service directors and indicates that schools have the facilities to prepare them.



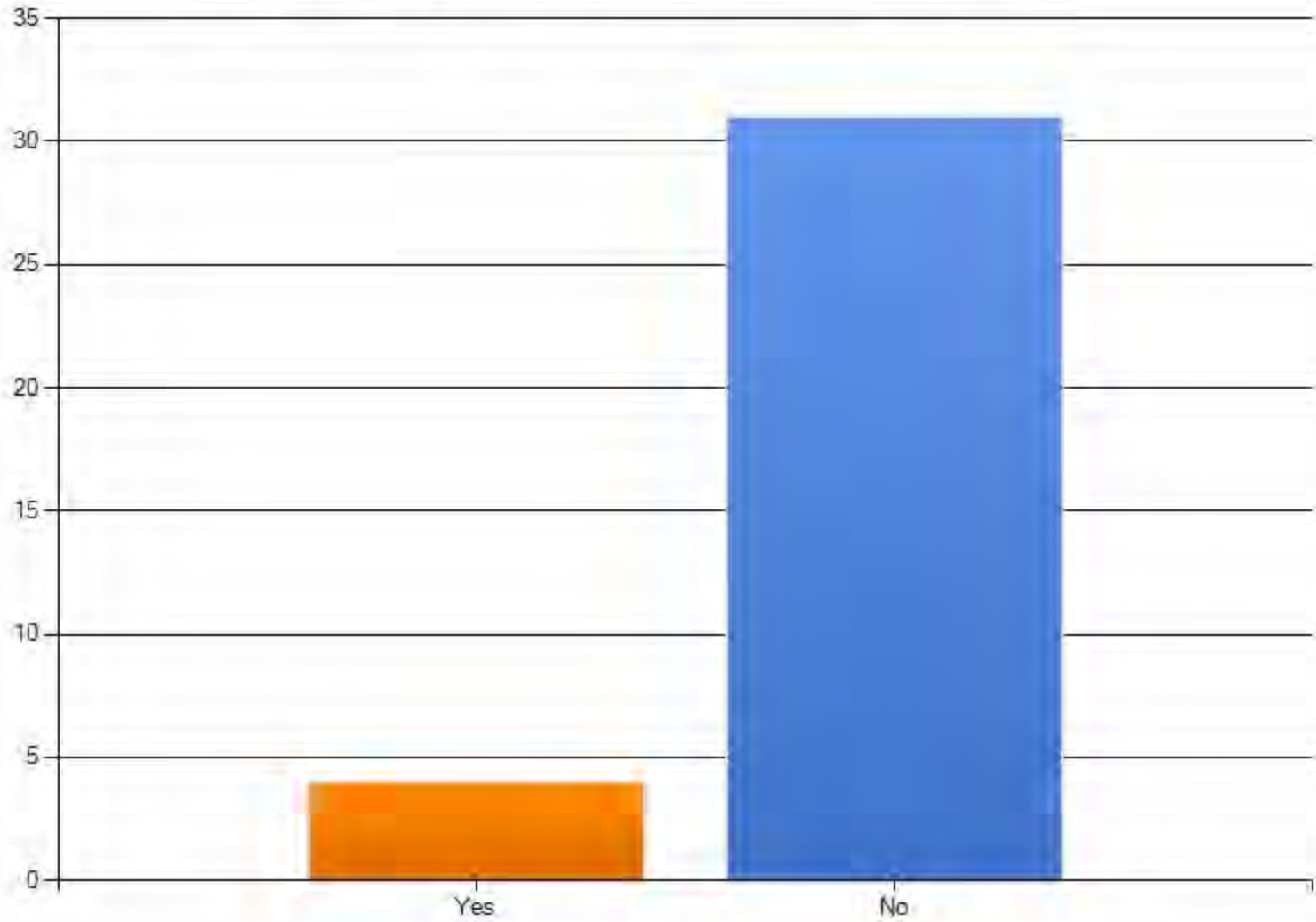
It is encouraging that schools are asking that Connecticut Grown products be identified.

**Do you have a contract with a food vendor or wholesale distributor that prohibits you from making CT Grown purchases directly from a farm?**

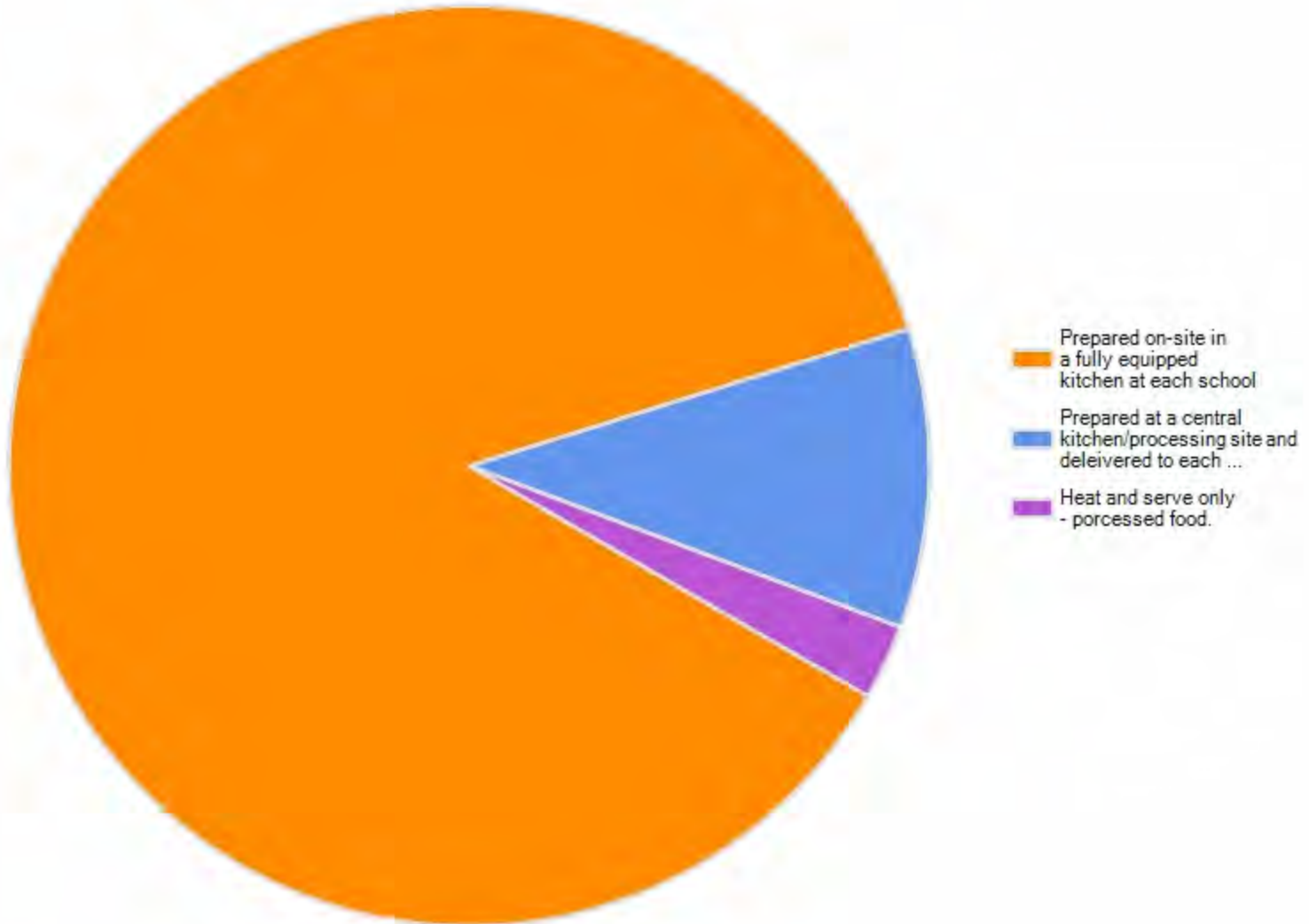




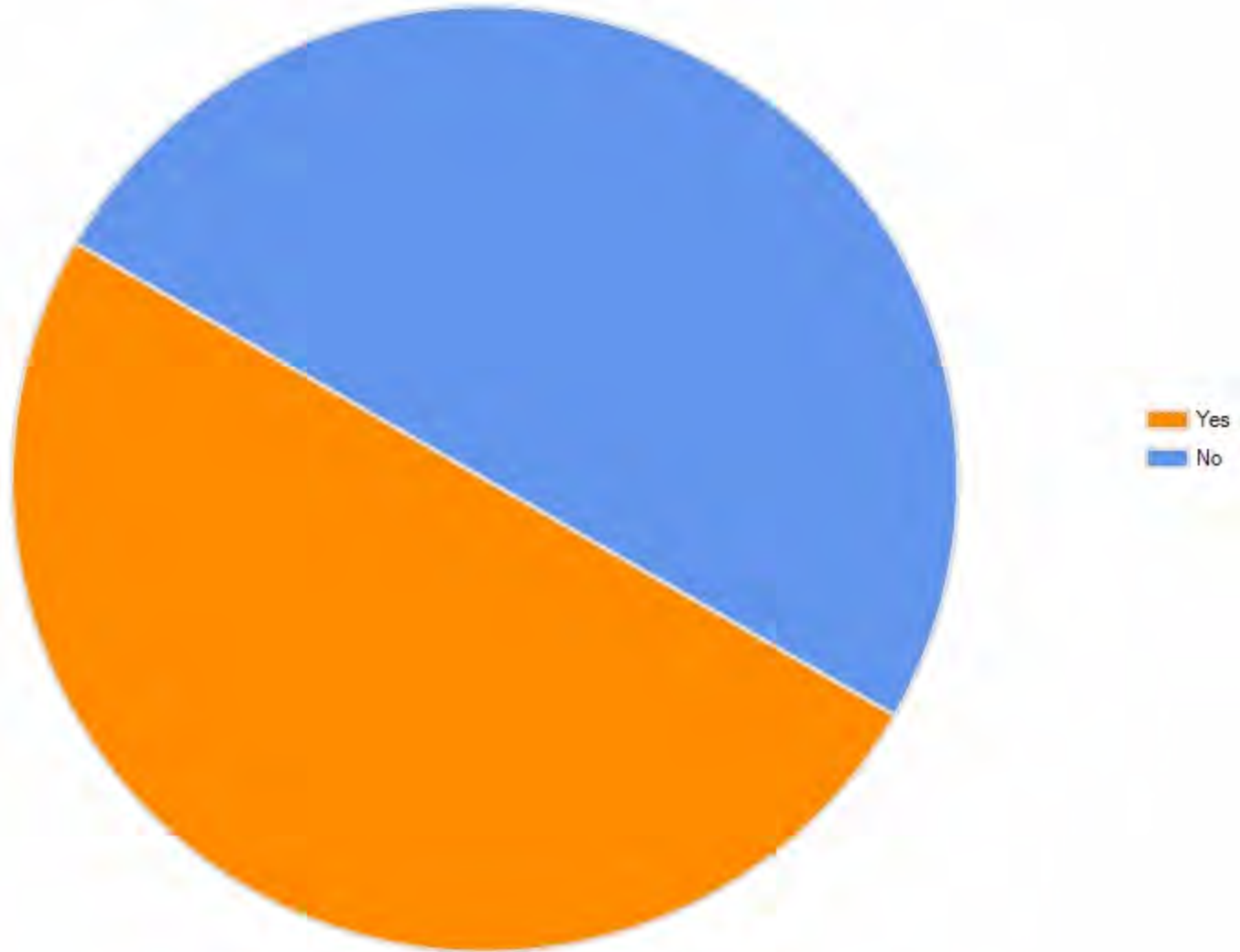
### Does your supplier require an exclusive agreement?



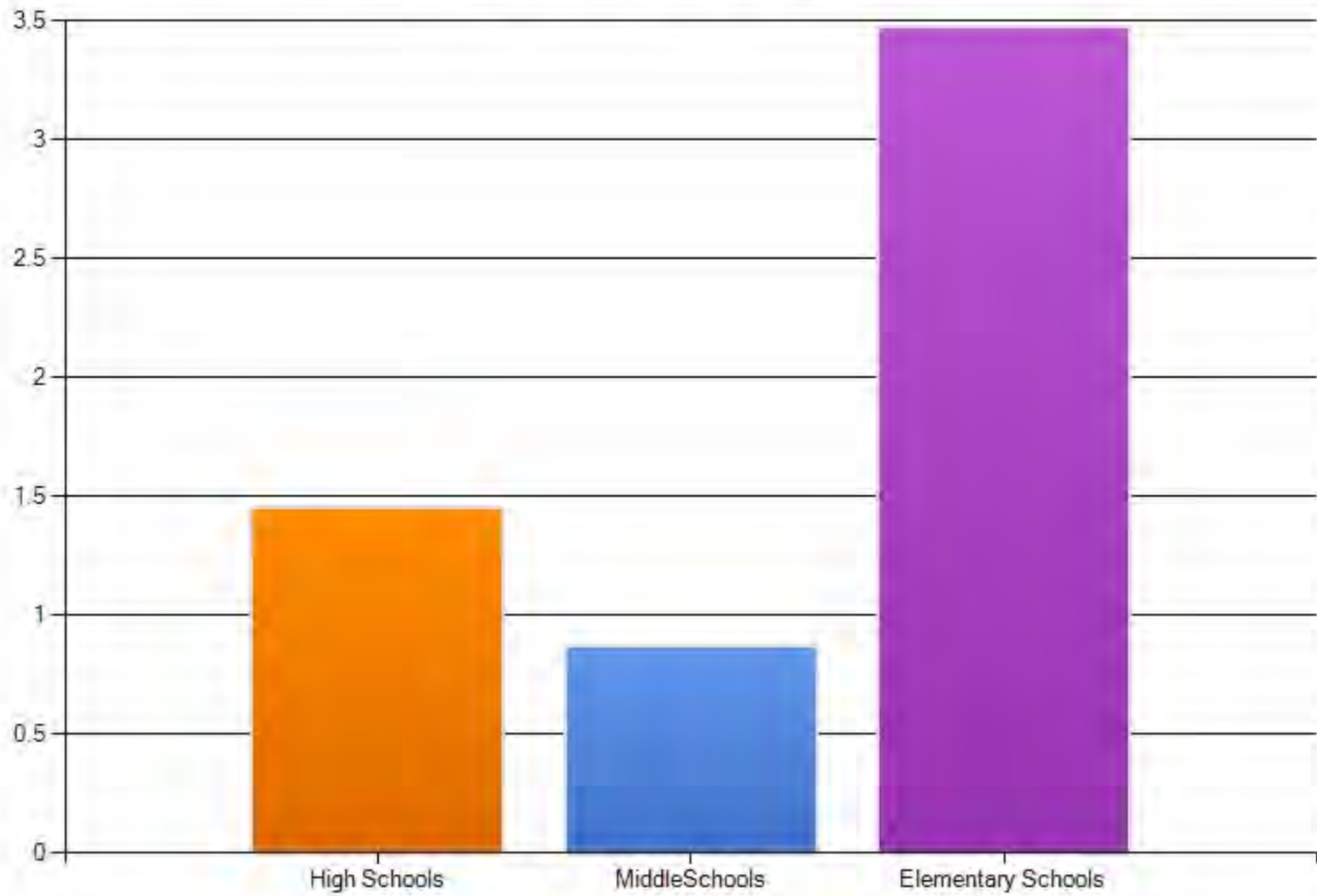
Are your menu items:



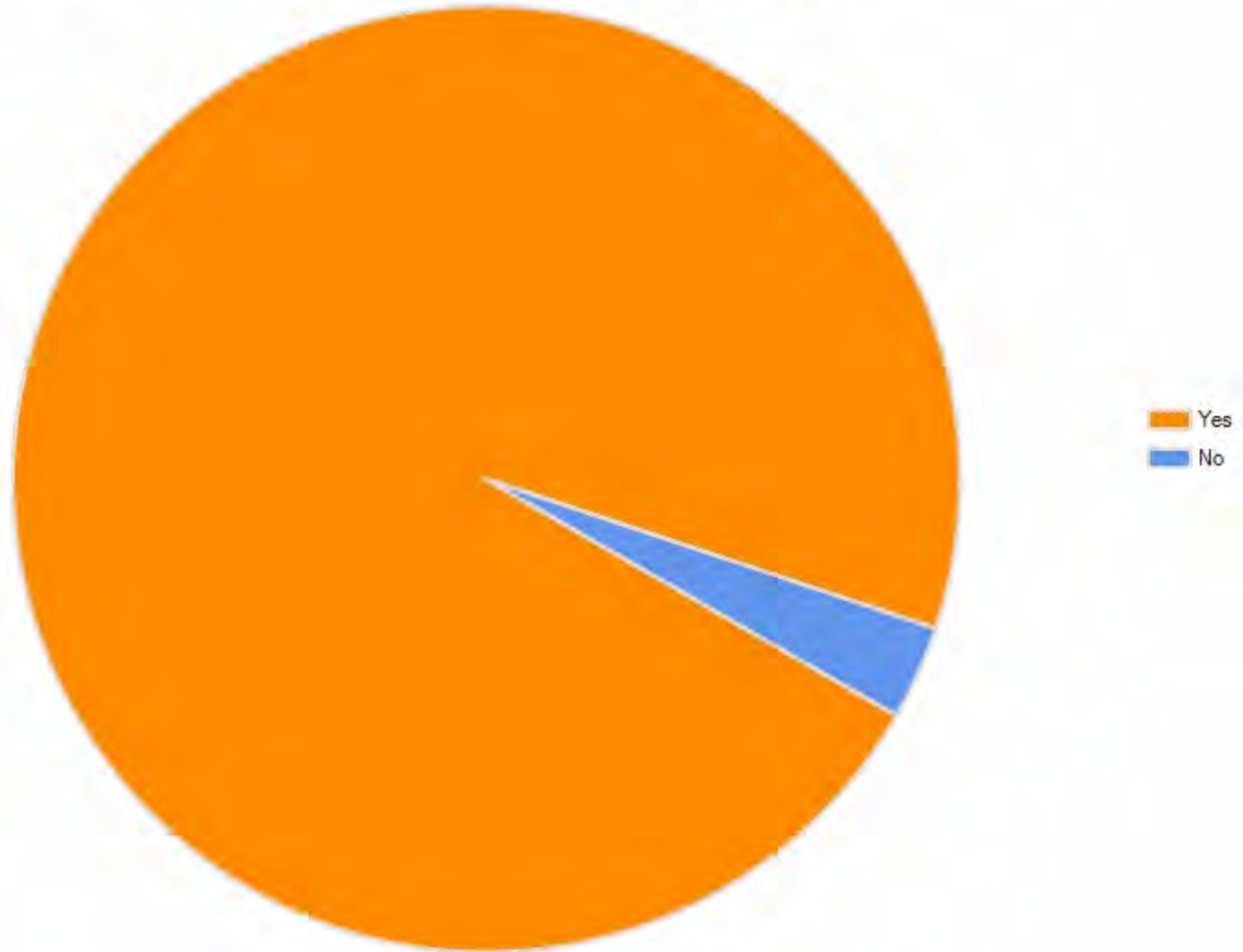
**Do your students utilize salad bars?**



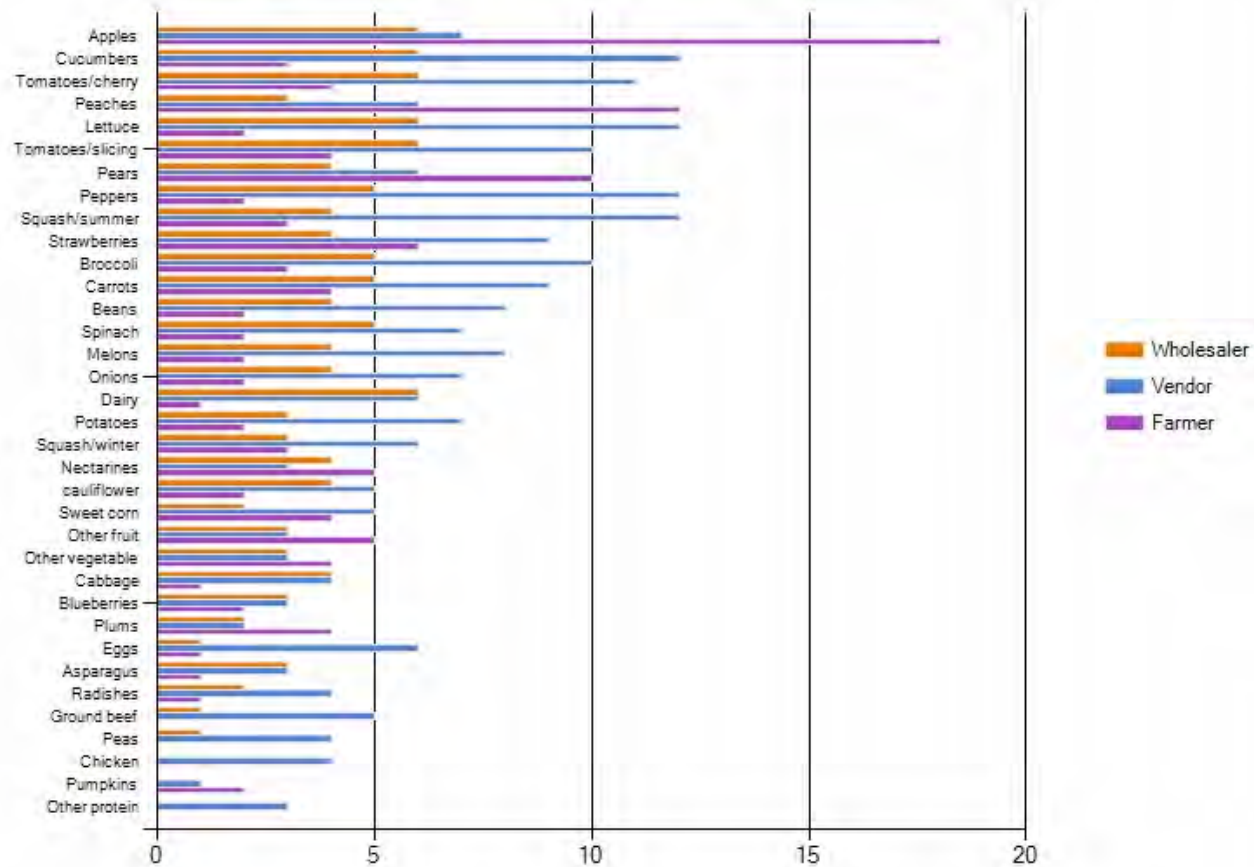
If yes to Question #13, and you represent a school district, how many schools in each category currently have salad bars?



Have you purchased CT Grown products in the past year?

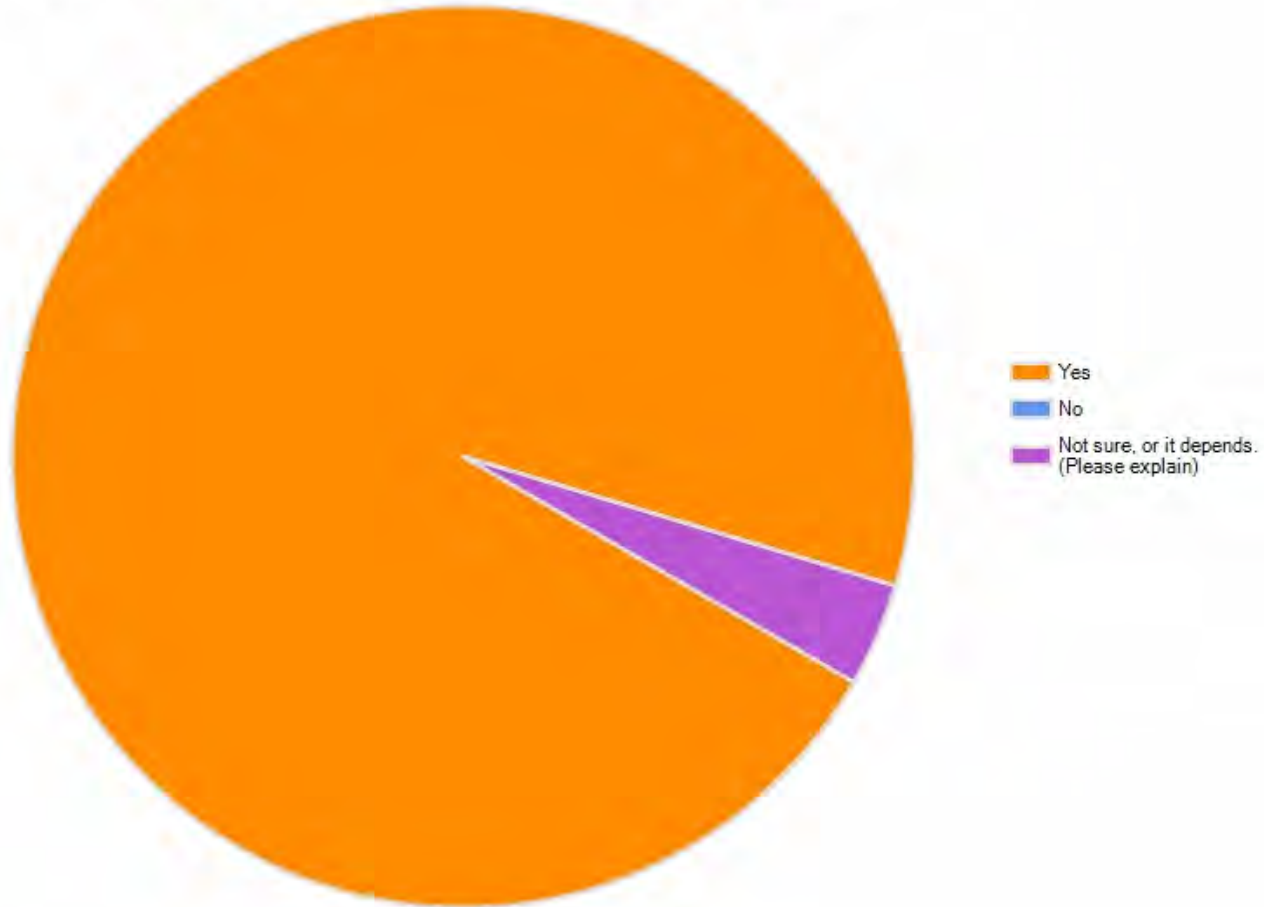


**What CT Grown products have you purchased and from whom have you purchased? (Select all that apply)**



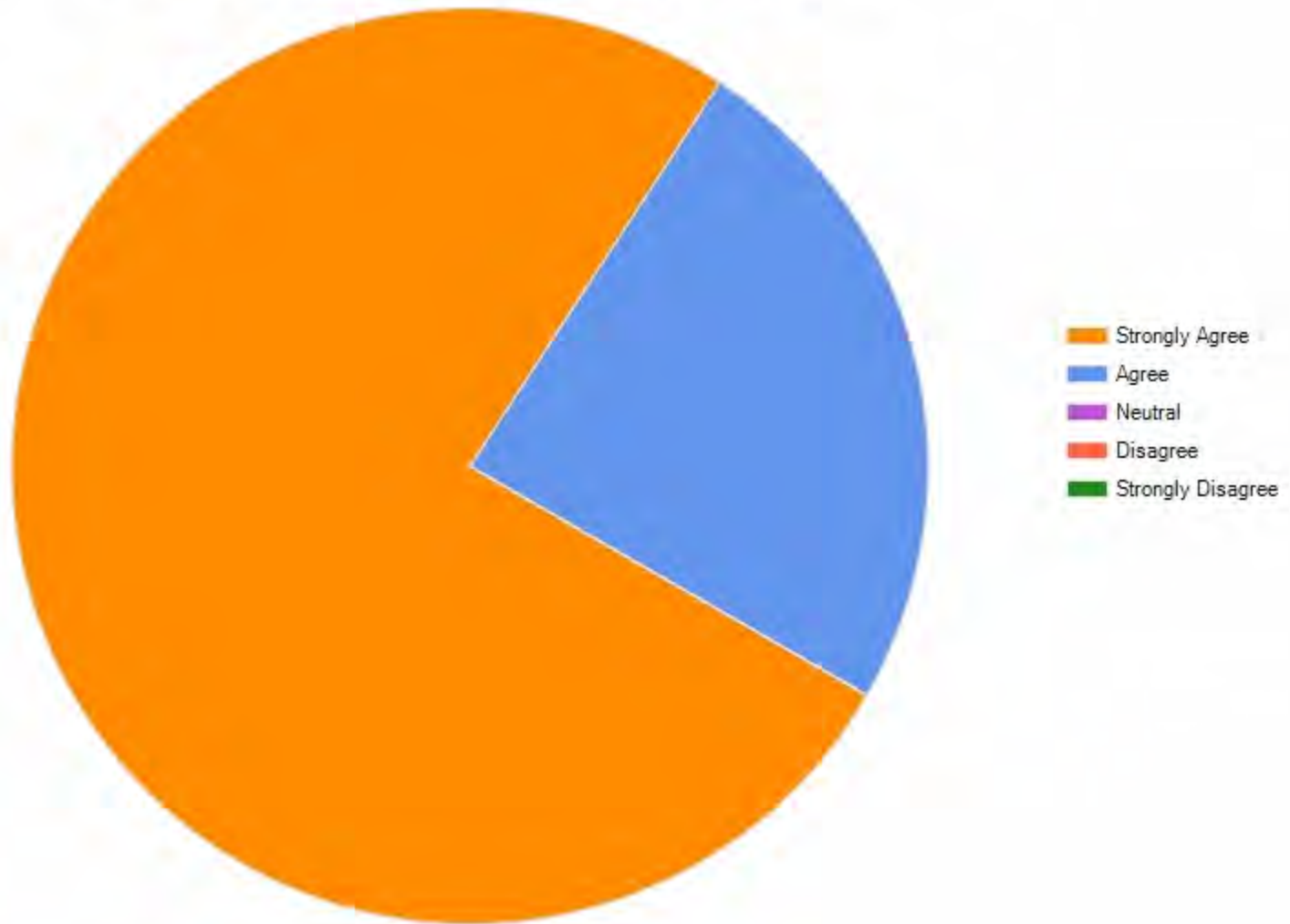
Apples, peaches and pears are the top Connecticut Grown products purchased by schools from the farmer, while cucumbers, lettuce, peppers and summer squash are the top CT Grown purchased from a vendor and dairy is the number product purchased from a wholesaler.

Would you buy products from local a farmer/producer again?



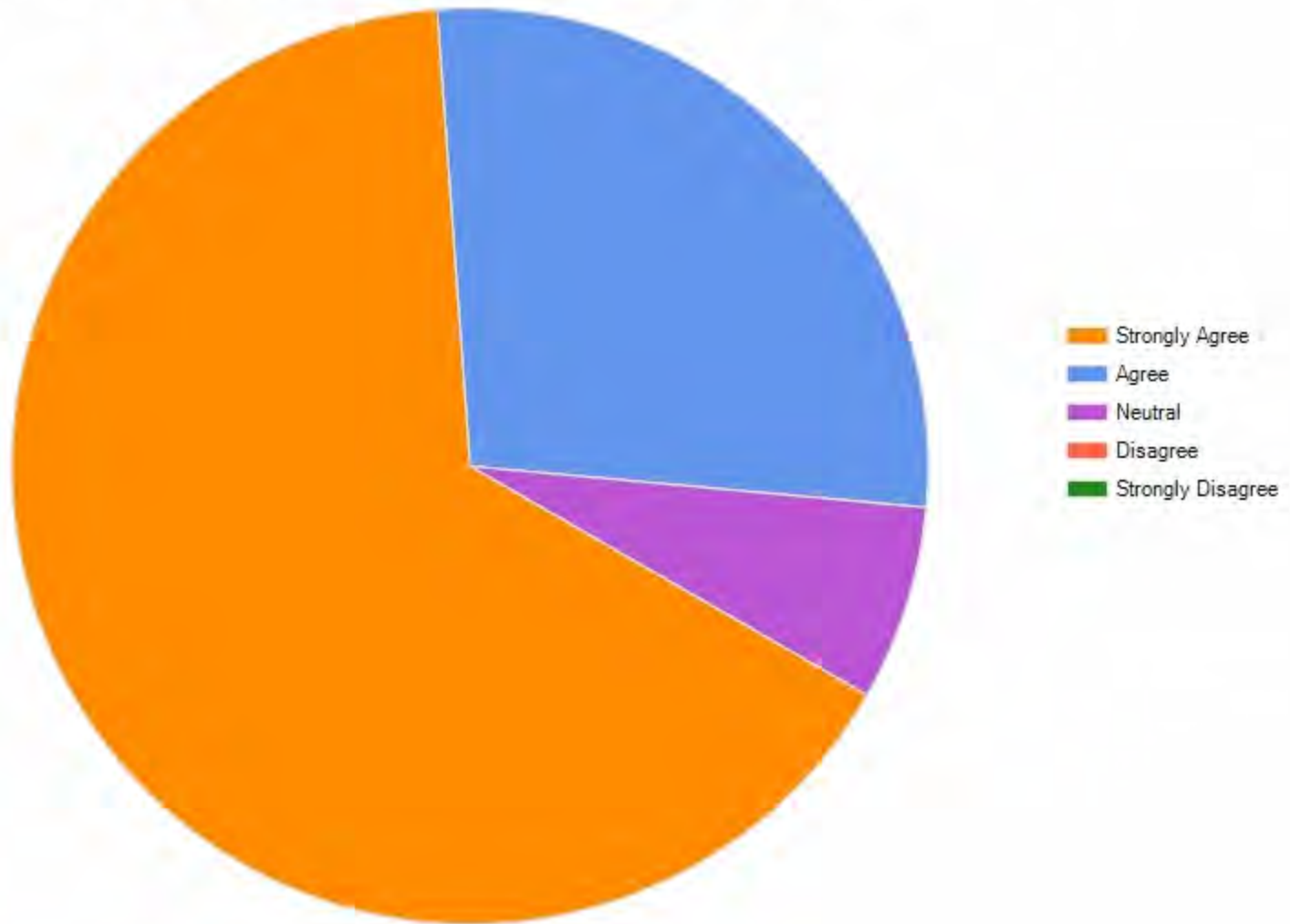
Good news for the farmer!

I would purchase food directly from a local farmer/producer if price and quality were competitive and a source was available.

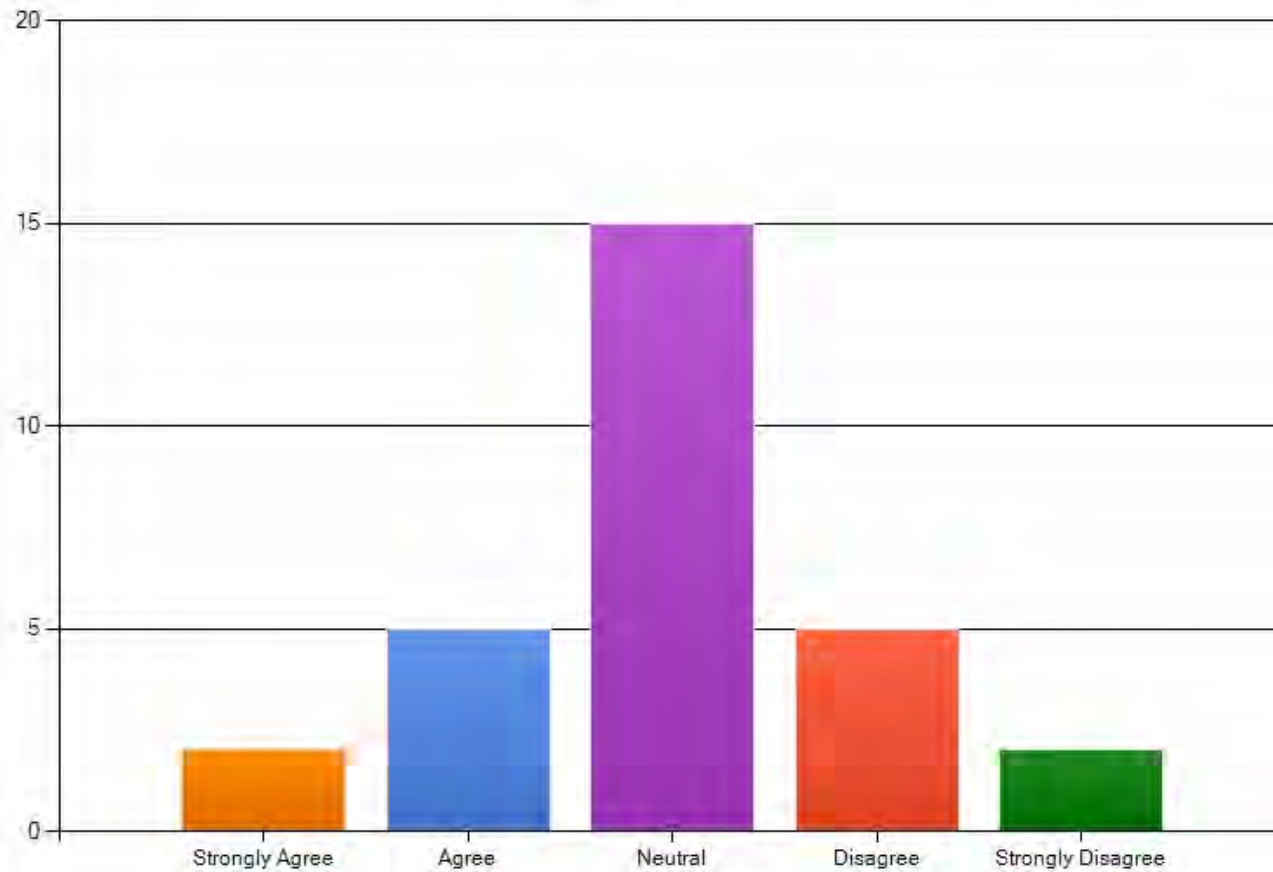




**I would purchase CT Grown foods if my vendors and/or warehouse distributor offered local foods as part of their contract services.**

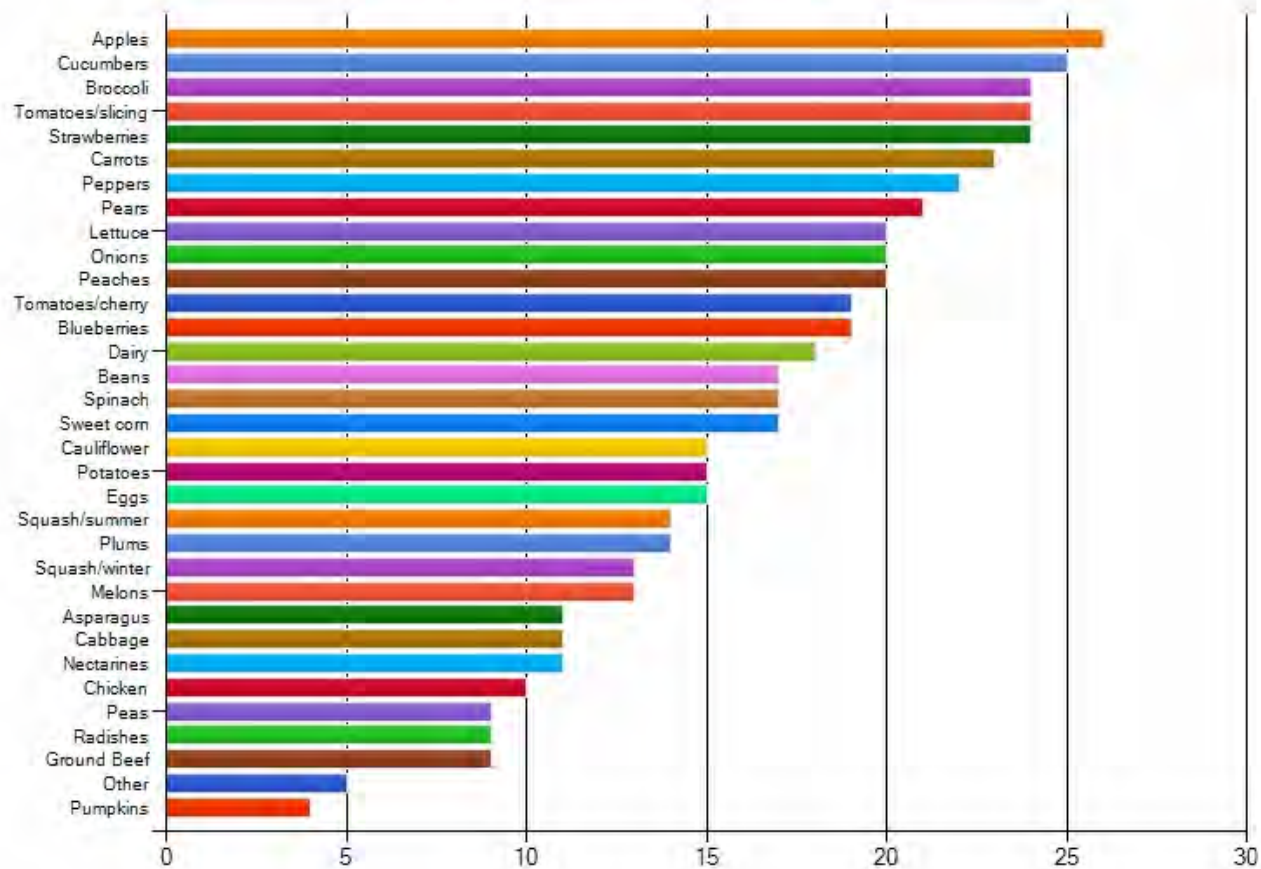


**My district/school would be willing to pay a higher price to buy CT Grown products to serve.**



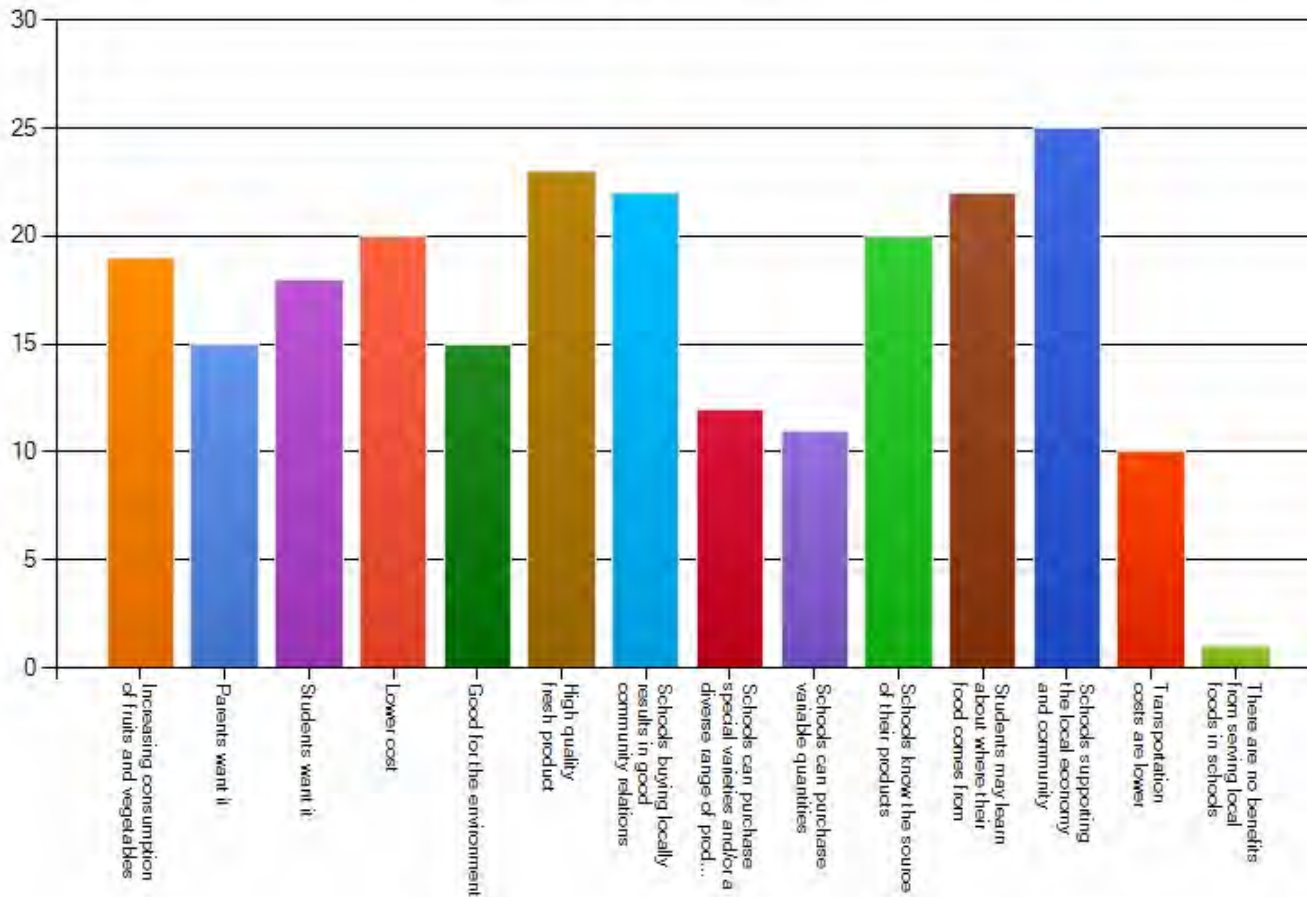
Perhaps this may be the start of an incentive program to buy Connecticut Grown.

**My district/school would be interested in buying the following CT Grown products from local farmer/producers. (Check all that apply)**



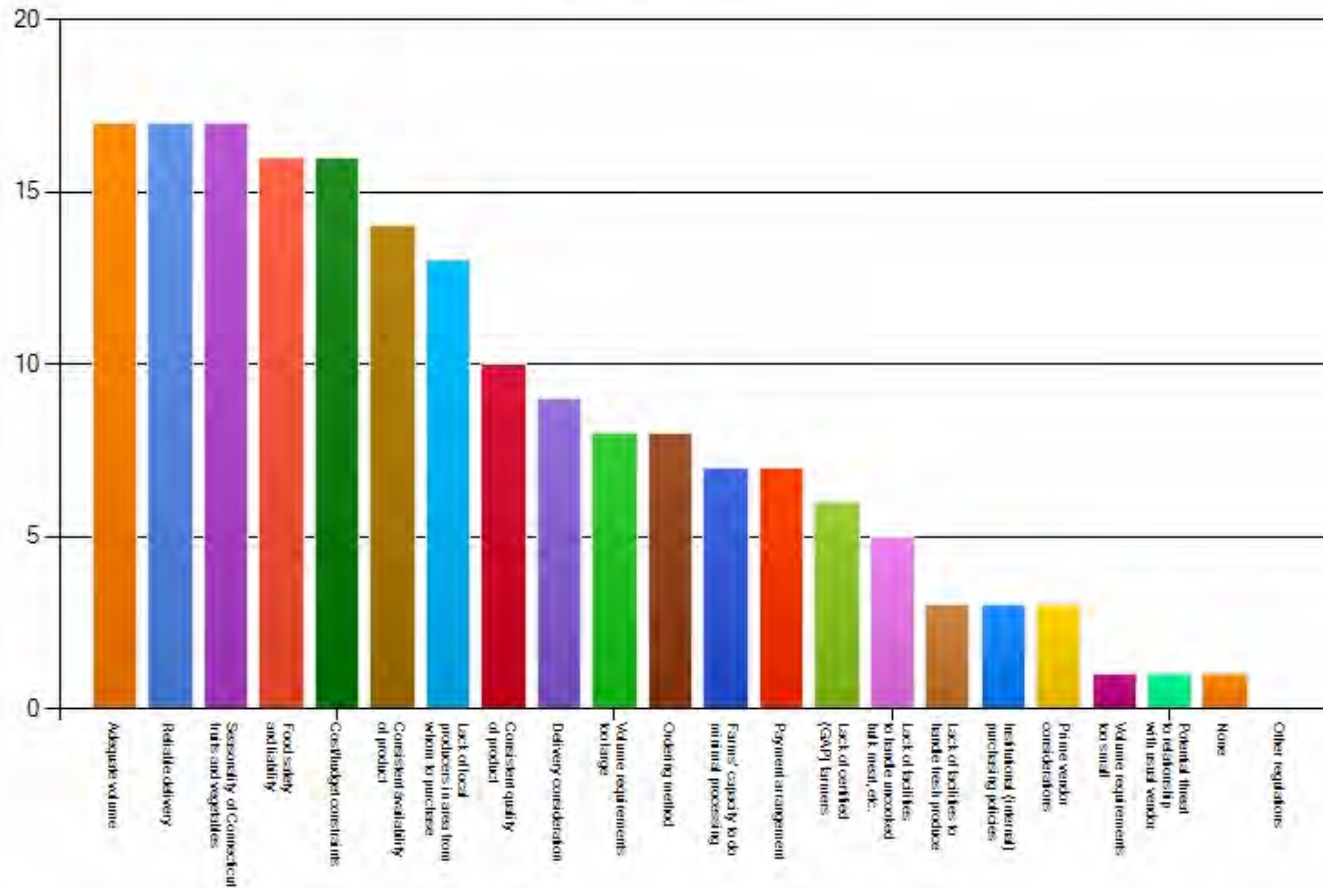
This is a good list for farmers to be aware of what Connecticut Grown products schools are interested in purchasing.

**What would motivate you to serve CT Grown or processed foods in your K-12 school?  
(Check all that apply)**



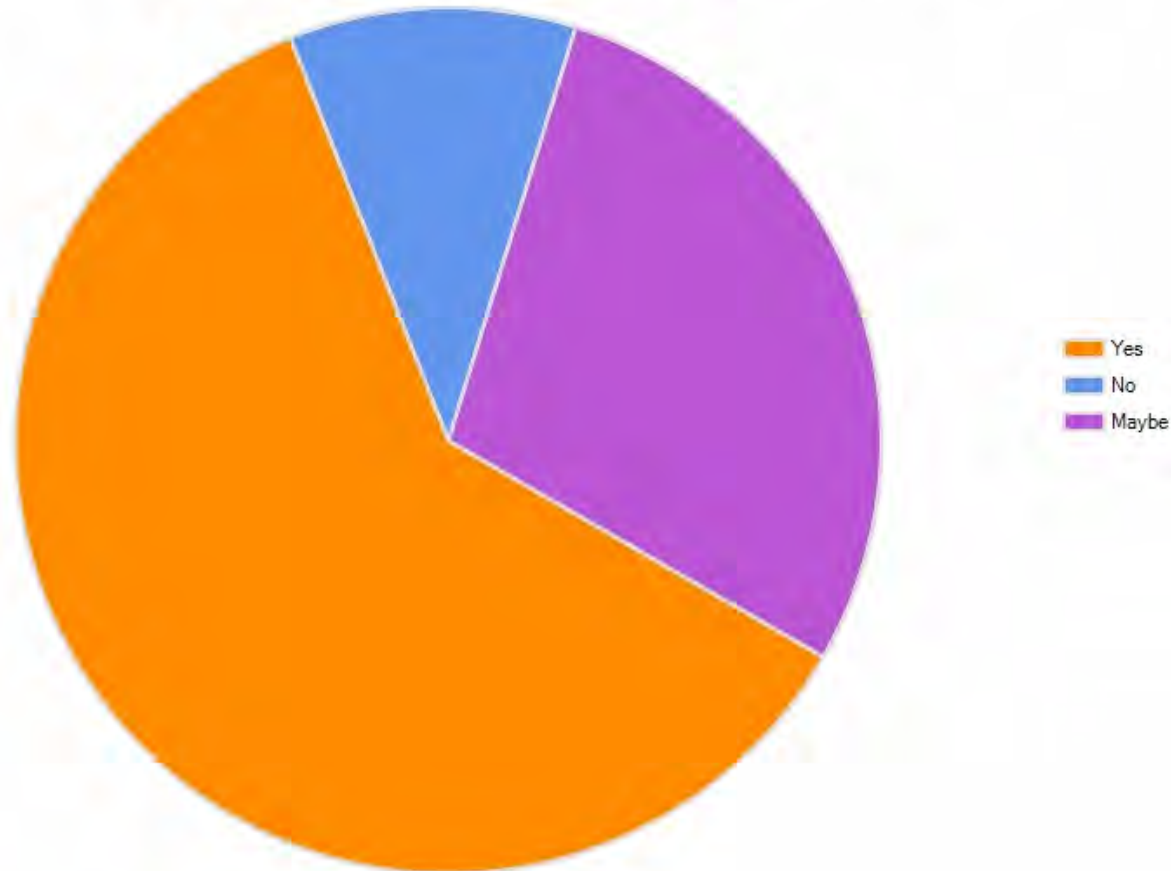
It is interesting that schools like to support the local economy and that they believe Connecticut Grown products are fresh and high quality.

**What concerns do you have with regard to purchasing locally produced foods? (Check all that apply.)**



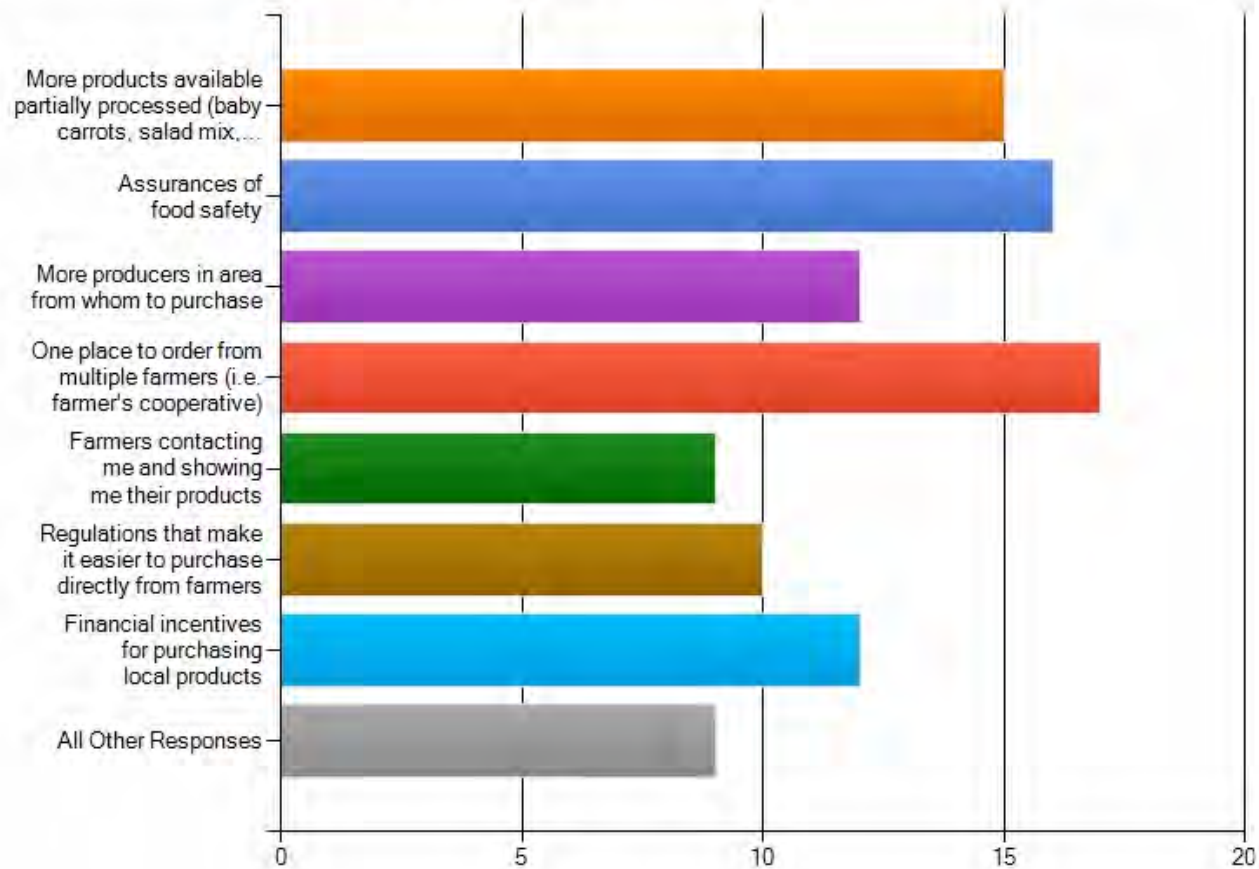
The top 4 concerns for schools are adequate volume, reliable delivery, seasonality of products and food safety.

**Are you interested in working with local farmers in the off season to plan ahead for the farms to plant what you need?**



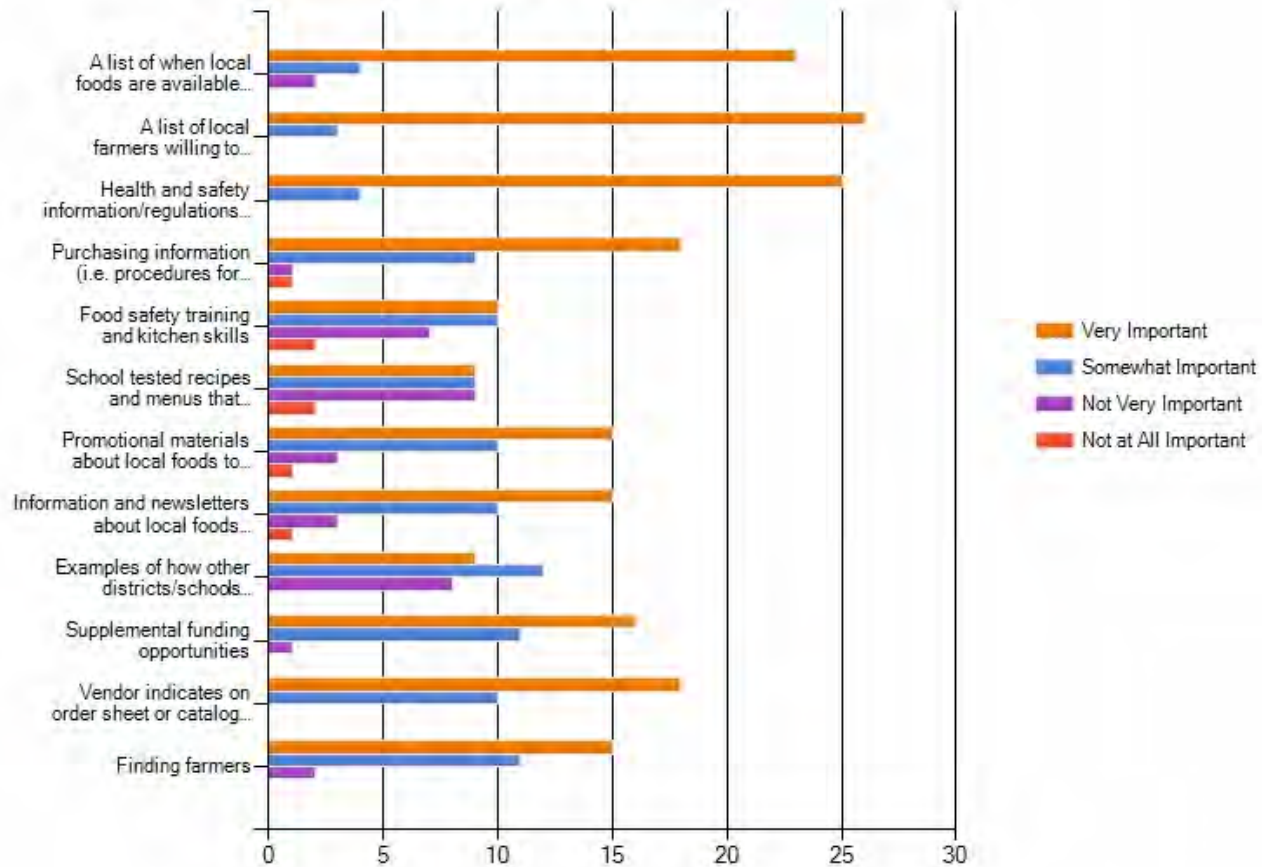
This was very encouraging that there is an interest in working directly with farmers.

**What are the top three (3) things that would motivate you to increase the use of CT Grown products in your district/school?**



The top 3 things that would motivate schools to increase Connecticut Grown were one place to order from multiple farmers (an aggregation hub), assurances of food safety (certifications) and more partially processed products.

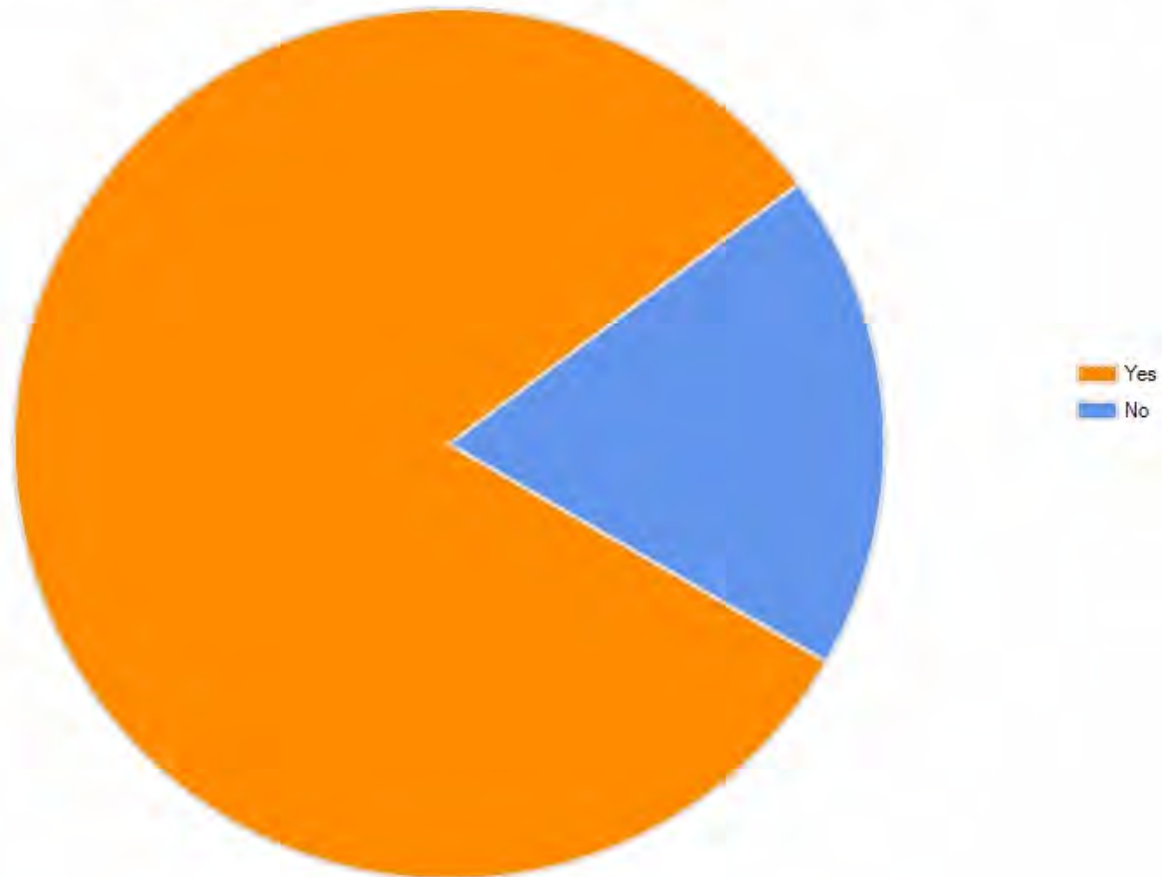
**How important is each of the following to increasing the use of CT Grown products in your district/school?**



The top 3 items of importance to increasing Connecticut Grown in the schools are already available which points to continuing education and outreach.



Would you like to be contacted by the CT DoAg Farm to School Program for further information on obtaining CT Grown products?



The majority of respondents would like to be contacted about obtaining further information on the Connecticut Farm to School which points to the need for a full time position.

# Connecticut Farm to School

Baseline Surveys 2012

Farmer Survey

Wholesaler/Distributor

School Food Service Director





# Connecticut Farm to School (FTS) Survey - Farmers

## CT Farm to School Farmer Survey

The Eastern Connecticut Resource Conservation & Development Area Inc. (RC&D) and the Connecticut Department of Agriculture (CT DoAg) Farm to School FTS Program invite you to participate in this survey which is being sent to farmers in Connecticut. This research project is funded through a USDA grant.

Your input on this survey is critical to the Farm to School Program in Connecticut and we greatly appreciate your time. This survey has two main goals:

- gathering baseline statewide data on farm to school participation and interest; and
- identifying the best opportunities to increase sales of Connecticut grown products to K-12 schools.

We are conducting a similar survey with Connecticut school food service directors and wholesalers and distributors.

Identifying information will not be shared with other organizations or the USDA; only statistics developed, not farm names will be published. If you have asked for information we will contact you and with your permission we will update the CT DoAg database to help serve you better.

Thank you for your participation. By supplying your full name and address and completing the survey you will be entered into a drawing for a \$100 Tractor Supply gift certificate.

We ask that you complete the survey by May 4, 2012. Please contact Elaine Sych (860-345-3977) or [connecticutert@aol.com](mailto:connecticutert@aol.com) with any questions.

### 1. Name of Farm

### 2. Farm Address

Address

Town/City

State

Zip Code

### 3. Mailing Address (if different from farm address)

Address

Town/City

State

Zip Code

## Connecticut Farm to School (FTS) Survey - Farmers

### 4. Contact Information

E-mail

Telephone

Farm Website

### 5. Name of person responding

**6. I agree to allow information from this questionnaire to be used to update a record about my farm at the CT Department of Agriculture.**

- Yes
- No

### 7. Total farm acreage

Total farm acreage

### 8. Describe your farm operation

Retail %

Wholesale%

## Connecticut Farm to School (FTS) Survey - Farmers

### 9. Please supply the acreage in a number for each vegetable crop you produce.

|                     |                      |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| Asparagus           | <input type="text"/> |
| Beans               | <input type="text"/> |
| Broccoli            | <input type="text"/> |
| Cabbage             | <input type="text"/> |
| Carrots             | <input type="text"/> |
| Cauliflower         | <input type="text"/> |
| Cucumbers           | <input type="text"/> |
| Lettuce             | <input type="text"/> |
| Onions              | <input type="text"/> |
| Peas                | <input type="text"/> |
| Peppers             | <input type="text"/> |
| Potatoes            | <input type="text"/> |
| Pumpkins            | <input type="text"/> |
| Radishes            | <input type="text"/> |
| Spinach             | <input type="text"/> |
| Squash/summer       | <input type="text"/> |
| Squash/winter       | <input type="text"/> |
| Sweet corn          | <input type="text"/> |
| Tomatoes/cherry     | <input type="text"/> |
| Tomatoes/slicing    | <input type="text"/> |
| Other (please name) | <input type="text"/> |

## Connecticut Farm to School (FTS) Survey - Farmers

### 10. Please supply the acreage in a number for each fruit crop you produce.

|                     |                      |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| Apples              | <input type="text"/> |
| Blueberries         | <input type="text"/> |
| Melons              | <input type="text"/> |
| Nectarines          | <input type="text"/> |
| Peaches             | <input type="text"/> |
| Pears               | <input type="text"/> |
| Plums               | <input type="text"/> |
| Strawberries        | <input type="text"/> |
| Other (Please name) | <input type="text"/> |

### 11. Please supply the flock or herd size for each protein you produce.

|                     |                      |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| Chicken             | <input type="text"/> |
| Eggs                | <input type="text"/> |
| Ground Beef         | <input type="text"/> |
| Dairy               | <input type="text"/> |
| Other (Please name) | <input type="text"/> |

### 12. Do you sell any product directly to schools?

- Yes
- No

## Connecticut Farm to School (FTS) Survey - Farmers

**13. What schools or school districts do you sell to?**

**14. Are you interested in increasing the number of schools you sell to directly?**

- Yes  
 No  
 Need more information

**15. Are you interested in increasing your production for wholesale sales to a wholesale distributor or vendor?**

- Yes  
 No  
 Need more information



## Connecticut Farm to School (FTS) Survey - Farmers

**16. If yes, what crops? (Please list)**

**17. May we contact you concerning increasing production?**

Yes

No

**18. Would you like to be listed on the Connecticut Farm to School website as a participating farmer? There is no cost to this.**

Yes

No

I need more information before being listed.

## Connecticut Farm to School (FTS) Survey - Farmers

### 19. If you are not selling directly to schools, why not (check all that apply)

- I sell to a wholesale distributor/vendor
- Not sure how to do it
- Price paid not high enough
- Can make more selling elsewhere
- My crops aren't ready during the school year
- No one to make deliveries
- Schools want graded size; I can't provide
- Quantities wanted too small
- Quantities wanted too large
- I would like to; please contact me

Other (please specify)

## Connecticut Farm to School (FTS) Survey - Farmers

**20. If you sell to a wholesale distributor/vendor please provide company name and location.**

Name

Address

Town/City

State

Zip Code

## Connecticut Farm to School (FTS) Survey - Farmers

**21. Do you have any food safety certifications for your farm, such as Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and Hazard Analysis & Critical Control Points (HACCP)?**

- Yes
- No
- I am interested in receiving more information concerning food safety certifications

**22. How important is it to you that your products are used in Connecticut schools?**

- Not Important
- Slightly Important
- Somewhat Important
- Important
- Very Important

**23. For the sole purpose of this grant, may we contact you to clarify any information you supply in comment fields?**

- Yes
- No

## Connecticut Farm to School (FTS) Survey - Farmers

**24. Thank you for taking the survey!**

**We will enter your name in the drawing for \$100 Tractor Supply gift certificate if you filled out your name and address and completed the entire survey. Good luck!**

**Please add any additional comments concerning the Connecticut Farm to School program.**

A large, empty rectangular text box with a light blue background and a thin black border. It is intended for the respondent to provide additional comments concerning the Connecticut Farm to School program.

# Connecticut Farm to School (FTS) - Wholesaler/Distributor

The Eastern Connecticut Resource Conservation & Development Area Inc. (ECRC&D) is working with the Connecticut Department of Agriculture (CT DoAg) Farm to School (FTS) Program on a USDA grant. The goal is to gather baseline information to better understand the opportunities and limitations of the CT FTS Program and how the consumption of Connecticut Grown products may be increased as a direct result of the program. Your input on this survey is critical to the Farm to School Program in Connecticut and we greatly appreciate your time. We are conducting a similar survey with Connecticut school food service director and farmers.

Thank you for your participation. By supplying your name and address and completing all the survey questions you will be entered into a drawing for a \$100 gift certificate to Carbone's Restaurant.

We ask that you complete the survey by May 4, 2012.

Please contact Elaine Sych (860-345-3977), ([connecticutert@aol.com](mailto:connecticutert@aol.com)) with any questions.

Identifying information will not be shared with other organizations or the USDA; only statistics developed, not company names, will be published.

## 1. Name of Company

## 2. Contact information of person responding

|           |                      |
|-----------|----------------------|
| Name      | <input type="text"/> |
| Title     | <input type="text"/> |
| Address   | <input type="text"/> |
| Town/City | <input type="text"/> |
| State     | <input type="text"/> |
| Zip Code  | <input type="text"/> |
| Telephone | <input type="text"/> |
| E-mail    | <input type="text"/> |

## Connecticut Farm to School (FTS) - Wholesaler/Distributor

### 3. Please check all the categories that describe your services

Shipper

Packer/re-packer

Broker/Agent

Wholesaler

Grower/Shipper

Retailer

Processor

Other (please specify)

## Connecticut Farm to School (FTS) - Wholesaler/Distributor

### 4. What broad categories of products do you distribute. Check all that apply

- Confectionary
- Dairy Products and Eggs
- Fish
- Flowers
- Fresh Fruit
- Fresh Vegetables
- Meat
- Poultry
- Packaged Frozen
- Other Farm
- Other Grocery
- Beverage
- Full Product Line

Other (please specify)

### 5. Please describe your service/distribution area (e.g. town, city, county)



## Connecticut Farm to School (FTS) - Wholesaler/Distributor

**6. To help us understand the size of your firm, what were your company's gross sales in 2011? (Please select one answer)**

- Less than \$1 million
- Between \$1 million and \$5 million
- Between \$5 million and \$15 million
- Between \$15 million and \$25 million
- Over \$25 million

**7. Where does your fresh produce come from? (Use percentages, and should total 100%)**

|  |                      |
|--|----------------------|
| CT Grown                                 | <input type="text"/> |
| New England Grown                        | <input type="text"/> |
| Northeast U.S.A., other than New England | <input type="text"/> |
| Northwest U.S.A.                         | <input type="text"/> |
| West U.S.A.                              | <input type="text"/> |
| Southwestern U.S.A.                      | <input type="text"/> |
| Midwest U.S.A.                           | <input type="text"/> |
| Southeastern U.S.A.                      | <input type="text"/> |
| Foreign/Offshore                         | <input type="text"/> |

**8. We are interested in understanding where distributors/wholesalers source their fresh fruits and vegetable inventory in the height of the Connecticut growing season (summer to fall). From your distribution center, please estimate how much of your fresh produce inventory is from the following (please use percentages to add up to 100%):**

|                                     |                      |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Locally, within Connecticut borders | <input type="text"/> |
| Regionally, within New England      | <input type="text"/> |
| Outside of NE Region, within U.S.A. | <input type="text"/> |
| Foreign Markets (Imports)           | <input type="text"/> |

## Connecticut Farm to School (FTS) - Wholesaler/Distributor

**9. Do you sell CT Grown products to Connecticut K-12 schools?**

Yes

No

## Connecticut Farm to School (FTS) - Wholesaler/Distributor

**10. What proportion of your 2011 sales of CT Grown products were to Connecticut K-12 schools? (Please state in a percentage)**

Percent

**11. What schools or school systems do you sell to? (Please list)**

**12. What farmers do you buy from? (Please list or specify number of CT farmers you purchase from)**

**13. Are you actively seeking new Connecticut farmers to purchase CT grown products from?**

- Yes  
 No

## Connecticut Farm to School (FTS) - Wholesaler/Distributor

### 14. If yes, what vegetable products are you looking for? (Check all that apply)

- Asparagus
- Beans
- Broccoli
- Cabbage
- Carrots
- Cauliflower
- Cucumbers
- Lettuce
- Onions
- Peas
- Peppers
- Potatoes
- Pumpkins
- Radishes
- Spinach
- Squash/summer
- Squash/winter
- Sweet Corn
- Tomatoes/cherry
- Tomatoes/slicing

## Connecticut Farm to School (FTS) - Wholesaler/Distributor

Other (please specify)

### 15. If yes, what fruit products are you looking for? (Check all that apply)

- Apples
- Blueberries
- Melons
- Nectarines
- Peaches
- Pears
- Plums
- Strawberries

Other (please specify)

### 16. If yes, what proteins are you looking for? (Check all that apply)

- Chicken
- Eggs
- Ground Beef
- Dairy

Other (please specify)

## Connecticut Farm to School (FTS) - Wholesaler/Distributor

### 17. Would you consider the following:

|  | Not at all Likley     | Slightly Likely       | Moderately Likely     | Very Likely           | Completely Likely     |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Development of a local/regional produce aggregation hub(s) | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Farm pick-up/delivery                                      | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Food safety education and execution for farmers            | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Exploration and development of new processing facilities   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Purchase from a statewide aggregation hub                  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Other (Suggestions welcomed)

### 18. What additional support/resources from the CT Department of Agriculture would help you develop new relationships with farmers?

## Connecticut Farm to School (FTS) - Wholesaler/Distributor

### 19. Please rate your agreement with the following statements concerning your decision to purchase CT Grown products?

|  | Strongly Disagree        | Somewhat Disagree        | Neutral                  | Somewhat agree           | Strongly Agree           |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| CT Grown fruits and vegetables are fresher in season.                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| CT Grown fruits and vegetables are less expensive in season.               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| My customers do not care if fruits and vegetables are grown in CT.         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I can sell CT Grown fruits and vegetables at a premium.                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I have a commitment to the CT growers I current purchase from.             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I do not believe that CT Grown fruits and vegetables are a better product. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| My transportation costs are lower by using CT Grown fruits and vegetables. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Other (Comment)

### 20. Please indicate the estimated percentage of your fresh produce inventory that is composed of CT Grown fresh fruits and vegetables across the seasons.

|                      |                      |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| Spring (March-May)   | <input type="text"/> |
| Summer (June-August) | <input type="text"/> |
| Fall (Sept-Nov)      | <input type="text"/> |
| Winter (Dec-Feb)     | <input type="text"/> |

## Connecticut Farm to School (FTS) - Wholesaler/Distributor

### 21. When you consider purchasing CT Grown products, how problematic are the following?

|   | Not a problem            | Slight problem           | Somewhat a problem       | Moderate problem         | Serious problem          |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Finding a fruit/vegetable farmer                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Finding other farmers   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Variety of fresh and vegetables                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Consistent quality  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Consistent availability across the seasons                            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Glut of produce at the peak of season                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Grading consistency   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Spoilage Loss   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Proper packaging  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Quantities sold by individual farmers is insufficient                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Producers carry sufficient insurance                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Business practices of farmers (e.g. invoicing)                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Ability to communicate consistently with farmers (e.g. phone, e-mail) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Other (comments)

### 22. What are your top three (3) challenges/problems/issues to purchasing CT Grown fresh fruits and vegetables?

1.
2.
3.



## Connecticut Farm to School (FTS) - Wholesaler/Distributor

**23. Why don't you purchase fresh fruits and vegetables from Connecticut farmers and/or farmers groups? Check all that apply**

- Purchasing CT fruits and vegetables is not important to my business.
- Have never been approached by farmers or schools and asked to purchase local products.
- Quantity needed would be difficult for farmers to meet.
- Producers are not able to meet quality standards.
- Producers are not able to meet food safety standards.
- Don't have the products we need.
- Farmers don't have the structure of their business organized enough for us to work with them.
- Inconsistent grading.

Other (please specify)

**24. What is the number one (1) reason you have not purchased fresh fruits or vegetables from Connecticut farmers?**

## Connecticut Farm to School (FTS) - Wholesaler/Distributor

**25. How important is purchasing Connecticut fruits and vegetables to the future of your business?**

- Not at all important
- Slightly important
- Moderately important
- Very important
- Extremely important

**26. For the sole purpose of this grant may we contact you to clarify any information you supplied in comment fields?**

- Yes
- No

**27. Please add any additional comments concerning the Connecticut Farm to School Program.**



Thank you for your participation!

We will enter your name in a drawing for a \$100 Carbone's Restaurant gift certificate if you filled out your name and address and completed the entire survey. Good Luck!

# Connecticut Farm to School (FTS) Survey - Food Service Directors

The Eastern Connecticut Resource Conservation and Development Area, Inc. (ECRC&D) and the Connecticut Department of Agriculture (CT DoAg) Farm to School (FTS) invites you to participate in this survey, which is being sent to school food service directors in Connecticut.

Your input on this survey is critical to the Farm to School program in Connecticut and we greatly appreciate your time. Providing your experience and perspective will inform the ways Connecticut FTS will evolve the program, policy initiatives and priorities.

This survey has two (2) main goals:

- Gathering baseline statewide data on farm to school participation and interest; and
- Identifying the best opportunities to increase sales of Connecticut grown product to schools.

We are conducting a similar survey with farmers and wholesalers/distributors to identify the amount of Connecticut grown product being purchased and used by Connecticut K-12 schools and interest in increasing the amount of Connecticut grown products.

You must submit your contact information and complete the entire survey to be eligible for a drawing to win a \$100 gift certificate to Chef's Equipment Emporium.

We ask that you complete the survey by May 4, 2012.

Please contact Elaine Sych (860-345-3977) ([connecticutert@aol.com](mailto:connecticutert@aol.com)) with any questions.

Thank you for your help with this project.

## 1. Please provide your contact information.

|                        |                      |
|------------------------|----------------------|
| Name                   | <input type="text"/> |
| Title                  | <input type="text"/> |
| School District/School | <input type="text"/> |
| Telephone              | <input type="text"/> |
| E-Mail                 | <input type="text"/> |

## Connecticut Farm to School (FTS) Survey - Food Service Directors

### 2. Are you a member of any purchasing cooperative?

- Yes, please list names of school systems or name of cooperative.
- No, not at this time.

Name of School systems/cooperative:

### 3. How is your school food service operation managed?

- Self managed
- Contract Managed (Please provide name of management company)

Management Company:

### 4. What is your annual food service budget?

Figures are from what school year

Food (in \$)

Labor (not including benefits) (in \$)

Total operating cost (in \$)

## Connecticut Farm to School (FTS) Survey - Food Service Directors

**5. Please name your top 5 wholesale distributors (WD), major vendors (V) and farmers (F) and please list the percentage of purchases you make from these vendors**

Name, type and percentage

Name, type and percentage

Name, type and percentage

Name, type and percentage

Name, type and percentage

**6. Have you asked your primary vendor to offer CT grown foods?**

Yes

No

**7. Have you asked your primary vendor to identify CT grown foods?**

Yes

No

**8. How much do you currently spend annually on CT Grown fresh produce? (Please indicate if the information is estimated (E) or actual (A) data.)**

Dollars Spent

Lbs./cases/cartons

Estimated (E) or Actual (A)

**9. How much do you currently spend annually on CT Grown dairy? (Please indicate if the information is estimated (E) or actual (A) data)**

Dollars Spent

Lbs./cases/cartons

Estimated (E) or Actual (A)

## Connecticut Farm to School (FTS) Survey - Food Service Directors

**10. How much do you currently spend annually on CT Grown meat? (Please indicate if the information is estimated (E) or actual (A) data)**

Dollars Spent

Lbs./cases/cartons

Estimated (E) or Actual (A)

**11. How much do you currently spend annually on CT Grown eggs? (Please indicate if the information is estimated (E) or actual (A) data)**

Dollars Spent

Lbs./cases/cartons

Estimated (E) or Actual (A)

**12. How much do you currently spend annually on other CT Grown products? (Please indicate if the information is estimated (E) or actual (A) data)**

Dollars Spent

Lbs./cases/cartons

Estimated (E) or Actual (A)

**13. Do you have a contract with a food vendor or wholesale distributor that prohibits you from making CT Grown purchases directly from a farm?**

Yes

No

If yes, please explain (town charter, food service management company, etc):

## Connecticut Farm to School (FTS) Survey - Food Service Directors

### 14. Does your supplier require an exclusive agreement?

- Yes  
 No

If yes, please explain:

### 15. Are your menu items:

- Prepared on-site in a fully equipped kitchen at each school  
 Prepared at a central kitchen/processing site and delivered to each school.  
 Heat and serve only - processed food.

Assume the site at which food is "prepared" is where most ingredients are brought together for a final dish. With the exception of fresh fruits and vegetables, heating food is not considered preparation. Any comments may be added below.

### 16. Did your district/school offer a summer feeding program in 2011?

- Yes  
 No

### 17. Do your students utilize salad bars?

- Yes  
 No

## Connecticut Farm to School (FTS) Survey - Food Service Directors

**18. If yes to Question #13, and you represent a school district, how many schools in each category currently have salad bars?**

|                    |                      |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| High Schools       | <input type="text"/> |
| Middle Schools     | <input type="text"/> |
| Elementary Schools | <input type="text"/> |

**19. If you answered yes to Questions #12 or 13, do you need assistance locating more CT Grown product for your summer feeding program or salad bar?**

Yes

No

Comment:

**20. What was the singular most popular fresh, unprocessed produce purchase you made during your last fiscal year? (e.g., whole potatoes, whole apples, whole pears)**

|  |                      |
|--|----------------------|
| Name of fruit or vegetable               | <input type="text"/> |
| Unit of purchase                         | <input type="text"/> |
| Average # of units purchased at one time | <input type="text"/> |
| Frequency of purchase                    | <input type="text"/> |
| Average cost per unit                    | <input type="text"/> |



## Connecticut Farm to School (FTS) Survey - Food Service Directors

**21. What was the singular most popular prepared or processed fresh fruit or vegetable purchased? (e.g. salad mix, baby carrots, broccoli florets)**

Name of fruit or vegetable

Unit of purchase

Average # of units purchased at one time

Average cost per unit

**22. What was the singular most popular protein purchased and in what portion size? (e.g. cooked, uncooked, cut, ounces, cryovac, flash frozen, fresh, processed or in unprocessed state, (e.g., breaded chicken, stewed beef, roasted pork, deli meat or cheeses)**

Name of meat or protein

Unit of purchase (e.g. 3 oz. ground beef patties)

Average number of units purchased at one time

Shipped (frozen, fresh, cryovac, etc.)

Frequency of purchase

Average cost per unit

**23. Have you purchased CT Grown products in the past year?**

Yes

No

# Connecticut Farm to School (FTS) Survey - Food Service Directors

## 24. What CT Grown products have you purchased and from whom have you purchased? (Select all that apply)

|                  | Wholesaler               | Vendor                   | Farmer                   |
|------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Asparagus        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Beans            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Broccoli         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Cabbage          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Carrots          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| cauliflower      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Cucumbers        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Lettuce          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Onions           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Peas             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Peppers          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Potatoes         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Pumpkins         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Radishes         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Spinach          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Squash/summer    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Squash/winter    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Sweet corn       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Tomatoes/cherry  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Tomatoes/slicing | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other vegetable  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Apples           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Blueberries      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

## Connecticut Farm to School (FTS) Survey - Food Service Directors

|               |                          |                          |                          |
|---------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Melons        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Nectarines    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Peaches       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Pears         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Plums         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Strawberries  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other fruit   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Chicken       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Eggs          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Ground beef   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Dairy         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other protein | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**25. Please list the name and town location of farms that you have purchased CT grown products from:**

## Connecticut Farm to School (FTS) Survey - Food Service Directors

**26. Would you buy products from local a farmer/producer again?**

- Yes
- No
- Not sure, or it depends. (Please explain)

Explanation:

## Connecticut Farm to School (FTS) Survey - Food Service Directors

### 27. If no, please describe why you would not buy products from a local farmer/producer again (check all that apply):

- Inconsistent quality
- Inconsistent quantity
- Not reliable
- Too much effort
- Food safety issues
- Price
- Don't know farms to contact
- Not interested (please explain)

Explanation:

### 28. I would purchase food directly from a local farmer/producer if price and quality were competitive and a source was available.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

## Connecticut Farm to School (FTS) Survey - Food Service Directors

**29. I would purchase CT Grown foods if my vendors and/or warehouse distributor offered local foods as part of their contract services.**

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

**30. My district/school would be willing to pay a higher price to buy CT Grown products to serve.**

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

## Connecticut Farm to School (FTS) Survey - Food Service Directors

**31. My district/school would be interested in buying the following CT Grown products from local farmer/producers. (Check all that apply)**

- Asparagus
- Beans
- Broccoli
- Cabbage
- Carrots
- Cauliflower
- Cucumbers
- Lettuce
- Onions
- Peas
- Peppers
- Potatoes
- Pumpkins
- Radishes
- Spinach
- Squash/summer
- Squash/winter
- Sweet corn
- Tomatoes/cherry
- Tomatoes/slicing
- Apples
-

## Connecticut Farm to School (FTS) Survey - Food Service Directors

- Blueberries
- Melons
- Nectarines
- Peaches
- Pears
- Plums
- Strawberries
- Chicken
- Eggs
- Ground Beef
- Dairy
- Other



## Connecticut Farm to School (FTS) Survey - Food Service Directors

### 32. What would motivate you to serve CT Grown or processed foods in your K-12 school? (Check all that apply)

- Increasing consumption of fruits and vegetables
- Parents want it
- Students want it
- Lower cost
- Good for the environment
- High quality fresh product
- Schools buying locally results in good community relations
- Schools can purchase special varieties and/or a diverse range of products
- Schools can purchase variable quantities
- Schools know the source of their products
- Students may learn about where their food comes from
- Schools supporting the local economy and community
- Transportation costs are lower
- There are no benefits from serving local foods in schools

Other (please explain)

## Connecticut Farm to School (FTS) Survey - Food Service Directors

### 33. What concerns do you have with regard to purchasing locally produced foods? (Check all that apply.)

- Food safety and liability
- Adequate volume
- Volume requirements too large
- Volume requirements too small
- Potential threat to relationship with usual vendor
- Lack of certified (GAP) farmers
- Lack of local producers in area from whom to purchase
- Farms' capacity to do minimal processing
- Reliable delivery
- Ordering method
- Payment arrangement
- Lack of facilities to handle fresh produce
- Lack of facilities to handle uncooked bulk meat, etc.
- Delivery consideration
- Institutional (internal) purchasing policies
- Seasonality of Connecticut fruits and vegetables
- Prime vendor considerations
- Cost/budget constraints
- Consistent availability of product
- Consistent quality of product
- Other regulations
- None

## Connecticut Farm to School (FTS) Survey - Food Service Directors

Other (please specify)

**34. Are you interested in working with local farmers in the off season to plan ahead for the farms to plant what you need?**

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

**35. What are the top three (3) things that would motivate you to increase the use of CT Grown products in your district/school?**

- More products available partially processed (baby carrots, salad mix, chopped onions, etc.)
- Assurances of food safety
- More producers in area from whom to purchase
- One place to order from multiple farmers (i.e. farmer's cooperative)
- Farmers contacting me and showing me their products
- Regulations that make it easier to purchase directly from farmers
- Financial incentives for purchasing local products
- Additional facilities and/or equipment in the school district to prepare food
- Additional food service staff
- Interest from parents or community members
- Support from district board of education

Other (please specify)

## Connecticut Farm to School (FTS) Survey - Food Service Directors

### 36. How important is each of the following to increasing the use of CT Grown products in your district/school?

|  | Very Important        | Somewhat Important    | Not Very Important    | Not at All Important  |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| A list of when local foods are available in Connecticut              | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| A list of local farmers willing to sell to schools                   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Health and safety information/regulations about using local foods    | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Purchasing information (i.e. procedures for buying from farmers)     | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Food safety training and kitchen skills                              | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| School tested recipes and menus that incorporate local foods         | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Promotional materials about local foods to display in the cafeteria  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Information and newsletters about local foods to share with families | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Examples of how other districts/schools use more local foods         | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Supplemental funding opportunities                                   | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Vendor indicates on order sheet or catalog where foods come from     | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| Finding farmers  | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

## Connecticut Farm to School (FTS) Survey - Food Service Directors

**37. Would you like to be contacted by the CT DoAg Farm to School Program for further information on obtaining CT Grown products?**

Yes

No

If yes, best way to contact you

**38. For the sole purpose of this grant may we contact you to clarify any information you supply in comment fields if necessary?**

Yes

No

**39. Thank you for your participation, and do not forget to respond to all the questions, including your name and contact information to be eligible for our \$100 Chef's Equipment Emporium gift certificate. Please add any additional comments in the box below.**

