




RANCHER CHECKLIST:


MEETING A SCHOOL FOOD SERVICE DIRECTOR


BEFORE


-  Start small – decide on realistic sale volumes and a delivery schedule that will fit your life before you begin the process or potential of a school sale and relationship.

-  Create a **Product Price and Availability sheet** that can be given to a school. Keep these considerations in mind:
 - The versatility and value of cuts on the school menu, and their applicability in school kitchens (i.e. making stew meat from chuck roast, brisket, or top sirloin steak, ground beef is always in high demand).
 - Does the school have all the staff for high-labor intensive preparatory work?
 - What less expensive cuts may fit into a school food recipe?

-  Learn more about Colorado's school programs that could work well for local foods. Determine if you have certain products that could fit these programs.
 - [Colorado Proud School Meal Day](#)
 - [Farm to School Month](#)
 - [Local Food Program](#)
 - [Child Nutrition Programs](#)

-  **Set up an appointment** with a School Food Service Director.


-  Try to send them your [Product Price and Availability](#) and [Farm Bio](#) before your meeting!

-  Come prepared to talk about your ranch! This might include familial history or holistic management practices.



PRO TIPS: SELLING TO SCHOOLS

- Call the school early in the morning or after 1PM. Ask for the name, phone extension and email of the school food program.
- Some schools participate in the USDA's Summer Meal Programs. Ask the food service director if selling during the summer is an option.
- If there are several schools in your area, bring up the possibility of multiple schools purchasing a larger amount of product together to meet a volume requirement.

 **REMEMBER:** Any meat served in Colorado's schools must be processed in a USDA (federally-inspected) facility.

DURING

Think about Lead Time: What type of time frame is required between getting a processing date and menuing the product?

Logistics: Consider your food safety standards to ensure the product arrives properly frozen or under refrigeration. Think about best practices: clean trailer/truck!

Speak the Same Language: Clarify & Define Pricing (i.e. live weight, hanging weight, by cut, delivered weight). School food service directors may not know these terms.

Share any certifications that may be of interest, such as a Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) or animal welfare standards you may adhere to practicing.

Discuss the details:

What product(s) is the school looking for?
Are they willing to try something new?

What are the different ways they prepare meat?
(Re-occurring dishes)

What volume of product are they looking for?

Is there a type of packaging their staff prefers to handle and prepare?

Does the pricing work for all parties?

What does the billing and payment process look like?

What is their ordering process?

Delivery schedule (time of day, frequency, location)
How do you plan on transporting?

Gather names, phone numbers and email addresses of contact people for ordering and billing.

AFTER

Follow up with the School Food Service Director by giving them a call or email.

Keep the conversation and sales going! Consider if you're willing to connect with kids in the cafeteria, the classroom, or even on your ranch. What educational opportunities would you be willing to provide to the school and students as you move forward.

Send the School Food Service Director updated [Product Price and Availability sheets](#) to let them know what's available. Sometimes a school will be interested in bulk quantities of ground beef, if you're willing to store volume for them and piecemeal it out.

NOTES
