

# Top tips for Procurement

- 1.** Be aware of seasonality so that it can be reflected within your menus. Prior to new foods being introduced, run 'teaser campaigns' for pupils. Ask them to watch out for and let you know when each new season's produce is served.
- 2.** Aim to have at least 75% of the food you serve freshly prepared either in your own or in a local kitchen. Where possible, serve produce grown in the school garden – even the smallest schools can grow herbs and salad leaves in tubs and planters. Promote these facts to both parents and pupils. Children will delight in having the vegetables that they have grown featured on the service counter or salad trolley.
- 3.** Talk to the Cook or Kitchen Manager to see which vegetables they would like you to grow – so that they can be used in the production of the meals.
- 4.** Talk to your suppliers to find out where the food actually comes from and how it is produced. Are your eggs from free range birds? Is your meat Farm Assured? Is the fish from a sustainable source? Are your meals free from any Genetically Modified ingredients? Follow the lead of the private sector by displaying interesting facts within the dining room and including them (along with any benefits to the consumer) within promotional materials.
- 5.** Arrange for suppliers to come into school and give talks to the children. Discuss the different types of produce and the processes used to get from farm to plate. Use lunch times to teach them to learn and appreciate the differences between raw, freshly cooked, frozen and canned fruit and vegetables.
- 6.** By increasing the amount of freshly prepared healthy food on offer, it looks and tastes good, so there's less much waste, which helps with cost control. Invite pupils to return to the salad trolley as many times as they wish.
- 7.** Consider ways that your school meals service - food procurement, cooking and nutrition can actively support the delivery of the curriculum.
- 8.** Consider setting up a cooking club if you don't currently teach cooking. There are many local organisations that can train you how to teach the basics.
- 9.** Consider becoming part of the Food for Life Partnership and striving for either a Bronze, Silver or Gold Award.
- 10.** The Soil Association's Food for Life Catering Mark enables caterers to show that they are taking steps to improve the food they serve, using fresh ingredients which are free from trans-fats, harmful additives and GM, and follow good animal welfare guidelines. [www.sacert.org](http://www.sacert.org)
- 11.** For further ideas, check the case studies on the Food for Life Partnership website [www.foodforlife.org.uk](http://www.foodforlife.org.uk)