

The questions provided below were used by the Vermont Produce Program to facilitate buyer meetings. Questions varied depending on buyer category: distributor, aggregator, retailer, food service management company (FSMC). **Items highlighted in grey indicate components of a question that will vary based on the business and indicate questions specific to a certain buyer category.**

1. Does Buyer currently purchase/distribute fresh produce from Vermont farms? If not, do you plan to purchase/distribute produce from Vermont farms in the future?
2. Who makes the produce procurement purchasing decisions at the [business name]?
3. **Distributors:** Do you distribute Vermont produce to other states?
4. **Distributors:** How many warehouses or distribution centers does your company operate out of?
5. **Distributors:** Do you pick up produce from individual farms and/or food hubs? Do farms/food hubs/produce suppliers/distributors deliver to your distribution facilities?
6. **FSMC:** How is produce delivered to schools/institution kitchens? Direct from producers? Do you own your own distribution truck or utilize a distribution service/center? Which distributors sell your schools/institutions fresh produce?
7. **Retailers: Applicable only if a local retailer has multiple branches:** Once a supplier is approved to sell produce at one of your stores, are they able to sell to any of your stores? Are there certain produce procurement decisions made at the store level, and at the broader organizational level?
8. **Retailers:** How is produce delivered to the [business name]? Do produce farms have the option to deliver direct? Or, do you own your own distribution truck or utilize a distribution service?
9. Does your organization have produce safety requirements for produce suppliers? If yes, what are your requirements? *(If applicable)* If your organization has no produce safety requirements for suppliers/growers, what kind of information does the buyer collect from a grower/supplier to ensure produce safety?
10. *(If applicable)* Does each store branch have the same produce safety requirements?
11. Do you expect any changes to your produce safety requirements in the near future?
12. *(If applicable)* How are the produce safety requirements verified and how often? If site visits are made, what are you looking for on these site visits? (e.g. annual verification / audit)
13. *(If applicable)* Does your organization reimburse growers for costs incurred to achieve or maintain the produce safety requirement(s)?
14. When it comes to food safety, do you have any particular concerns?
15. In general, would you say you are happy and satisfied with the quality of the produce that you receive from Vermont vendors.
16. *(Insert regional or local food safety certification program)* Has your organization been presented with a CAPS or CAPS+ certificate from a grower/supplier? *Answer questions about CAPS accreditation/USDA GAP certification, as appropriate.*
17. Are you familiar with the Produce Safety Alliance (PSA) Grower Training Course? Are you aware as to whether your produce suppliers have attended a PSA Grower Training Course or have producers presented you with their certificate from this course?