

USDA Foods Processing Timeline

Action	Start time (prior to serving a meal)	Sample timeline
<p>Plan menus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review past production records and available student feedback • Review past USDA Foods received • Determine products necessary to produce menus • Plan menus incorporating USDA Foods • Estimate quantities needed • Develop quality standards • Develop specifications/descriptions • Product testing 	10 months	October
<p>Analyze market</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review past procurements • Review past year's USDA Foods entitlement values • Search availability and potential costs of items • Compare bought items versus processed like items 	8-10 months	October-December
<p>Determine purchasing system</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review projected total costs • Determine projected threshold • Review vendor availability utilizing the Tennessee Department of Agriculture (TDA) approved vendors • Determine item categories • Utilize informal (micro or small) or formal (IFB, RFP) or sole source procurement method 	Eight months	December

<p>Develop solicitation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a template of potential bid conditions • Reserve desired raw USDA product values for processing (diverting of USDA Foods) 	<p>Six to eight months</p>	<p>December-February</p>
<p>Notify the TDA of intent to process (potential bid) and entitlement marked (diverted) for processing</p>	<p>Six to eight months</p>	<p>December-February</p>
<p>Issue solicitation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publically advertise the issuance of bids with contact information and deadlines • Allow reasonable time for vendors (at least four to six weeks for IFB, large food category) to actually submit an IFB/RFP 	<p>Five to eight months</p>	<p>December-March (timeline for final formal procurement determined by the TDA)</p>
<p>Receive bid documents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open IFB/RFP solicitations • Document the process 	<p>Six months</p>	<p>February</p>
<p>Evaluate submissions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate IFB proposals • Evaluate, score, and/or negotiate RFP proposals • Maintain all documentation showing the comparison of bid items 	<p>Six months</p>	<p>February</p>
<p>Award bid</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notify TDA and vendors of bid award • Notify vendors of non-award • Obtain board/governing body approval (if applicable) 	<p>Six months</p>	<p>February</p>
<p>Order food/prepare meals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage the contract • Track diverted product values 		<p>August</p>