

Sierra Harvest

REQUEST FOR PRODUCE AVAILABILITY

Supplying Harvest of the Month Produce

Feb. – May, 2021

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION: October 31st, 2020

Sierra Harvest

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www.SierraHarvest.org

We want to purchase Produce from your Farm!

Sierra Harvest is seeking organic farmers to supply 9,000 tastes of a produce item (fruit or vegetable) to be delivered on Feb. 1st, March 1st, April 5th and/or May 3rd 2021 for western Nevada County students and several community organization members to taste. Sierra Harvest will pay wholesale pricing.

An additional component of the Harvest of the Month (HOM) program will be to provide a more interesting fruit or vegetable that the students may not normally be eating – whether it's a different shape, color or size than the average similar produce. Many produce items will be used as part of our new anti-racism educational program.

Sierra Harvest exists at this intersection and our Harvest of the Month program provides the ideal platform for ongoing education regarding racism and all the inequities built into our national food system.

See list of recent Harvest of the Month items here: <https://sierraharvest.org/harvest-of-the-month/>

What is Harvest of the Month?

Sierra Harvest's mission is to transform lives and strengthen community through fresh, local, seasonal food. We envision a thriving local food economy where residents of all ages have access to nutritious, local, seasonal food through strong connections among farmers, schools, and the community. We envision a network of financially viable farms providing good food for the community, where health and wellness is the norm, and people are engaged in growing, harvesting, preparing, and sharing fresh food.

We accomplish the mission by delivering programs to meet community needs that address the problems of obesity, chronic disease, hunger and the loss of farmland. Programs for children include Farm to School, the Food Love Educational Farm, and School Food. The Farm to School program provides fresh, local produce and nutrition education to 9,500 students, pre-K through community college in Western Nevada County.

Harvest of the Month Program (HOM)

Harvest of the Month (HOM) education, a component of our Farm to School program is delivered in over 300 Pre-K-8 classrooms, three high school cafeterias, on the Sierra College campus and to several partner organizations such as Hospitality House, Sierra Nevada Memorial Hospital and Brunswick Village.

The Harvest of the Month is a multi-dimensional educational program that includes a produce tasting, a newsletter for each month's featured fruit or vegetables with information about the

local farm where the food was grown, serving tips, fun facts and recipes families can make at home. Many times, the program introduces new foods and culinary tastes to families.

From jicama to kumquats, purple cauliflower to kiwis - thousands of Nevada County students and adults alike have munched their way through 50 different local and seasonal favorites over the years. After trying so many new foods, local students averaged a 43% increase in liking the items sampled through the HOM program.

Sierra Harvest has found that even picky eaters will often try vegetables at school if they see other kids trying them. A parent recently reported, "I want you to know I have been trying to get my son to eat celery for years... He said someone at school gave him celery at the Harvest of the Month tasting... For the first time last night he asked me for celery with peanut butter on it! Because he tried it at school. So this project you have going is making the kids want to try vegetables. It probably is a life changer for kids in their future because they want to start trying other things while they're so young!" For the 2018/19 school year, 72% of students tried something new through and 56% ate more HOM fruits and veggies after trying them at school.

For the 2020/21 school year, we are adding a specific educational addendum three times in the school year that will highlight the diversity of the item being tasted with discussion questions for teachers to follow to prompt critical thinking in the areas of food and social justice.

Testimonials for the program:

"We love the farm to school program! Kids are tasting vegetables that they would have never tasted. The kids beg for the extra food when we pass out the Harvest of the Month tastings."
4th/5th grade teacher.

"This harvest of the month program was beneficial for my students because it helped change the students' views on how food arrives to their tables at home, while also exposing them to unfamiliar foods in a positive and engaging way. Many picky eaters in my class began to enjoy fresh fruits and vegetables more!" 2nd grade teacher

Farm / Farmer / Produce Requirements

To sell to the Harvest of the Month program, the farm/farmer must meet the following minimum qualifications:

- Be a certified or registered Organic farm.
- Your farm sells to the Nevada County region.
- Ability to deliver produce to Nevada City, CA on the date/s chosen to supply for the HOM program (either Feb. 1st, March 1st, April 5th or while COVID precautions remain in place, tastes must consist of whole items and may not be processed or require processing.)

- For some of the tastings, we are seeking 2 variations of the same fruit or vegetable to engage students in our anti-racism program. Example: orange and purple carrots, golden raspberries and red raspberries, green and red peppers.
- Able to offer 3,000 - 9,000 tastes – for example (1 apple/taste or handful of microgreens/taste, 1 radish/taste or 2 grapes/taste). Please be sure to tell us availability of anything close to this volume. We'd love to know if you can supply part of one month's Harvest of the Month tasting as we are moving towards aggregating produce from multiple farms to reach out 9000 tastes / month.
- Produce must be "grade A" in quality and uniformity for all tastes.
- We will pay competitive market pricing or wholesale pricing, however, please be aware that due to our budget limitations, higher priced items will likely not be possible.
- Timely communication with the Farm Institute Associate regarding the status of the produce and delivery. Let us know as soon as possible if you will be short.
- Submit a thorough invoice including date of date delivery, pounds weighed in advance of delivery, address of farm, etc.
- While COVID precautions remain in place, tastes must consist of whole items and may not be processed or require processing. The produce must be clean and ready for eating upon delivery – no cutting or processing of the product can occur or be required after delivery.

WE COMMIT TO YOU, YOU COMMIT TO US

Once a farm (or multiple farms) is confirmed to provide the 9,000 tastes for a specific month, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will be signed by the farmer and Sierra Harvest. The farmer will be in communication 60 days in advance of how the produce is growing ensuring that it will be ready for the date agreed upon. If a farm cannot fulfill the agreed upon tastings, they will notify Sierra Harvest at a minimum of 30 days in advance so that Sierra Harvest may find an alternative product in time for the monthly HOM. An alternative produce item from the farmer might be a possibility- let's talk!

PAYMENTS

Payment will be made to the farmer after delivery of the agreed upon produce that meets the standards of the agreement with submission of a formal invoice. Payment will be mailed within one week of delivery or one week of receiving the invoice after the delivery.

To enter into a commitment with Sierra Harvest and sell us an item from your farm, please submit the online form by October 31st, 2020.

Important Dates for Harvest of the Month Farm-direct purchases

EVENT	DATE
1. Request for Produce Availability	Sept. 22, 2020
2. Produce Availability Application Due Date	Oct. 31, 2020
3. Selection of Produce items and supplying farms	November 2020
4. MOU signed between farm and Sierra Harvest	December 2020
5. Harvest of the Month program begins	Feb. 1st, 2021

Sierra Harvest will purchase from farms who can supply produce that:

- Meets the minimum requirements listed above;
- Is priced reasonably and competitively; and
- Is relevant to the Harvest of the Month program (i.e., has it been a featured item in the recent past and whether the produce can be part of the anti-racism program.)

See list of recent Harvest of the Month items here:

<https://sierraharvest.org/harvest-of-the-month/>