

Produce Buyers Seek Local Farm Products

Safeway Buyer Seeks Local Farmers

Produce buyer, Mike Swift for Safeway expressed a genuine willingness to work with farmers to increase that local farm produce supply in area Safeway supermarkets. The Safeway warehouse facility in Upper Marlboro, Maryland is a major Safeway produce receiving and distribution site. The warehouse facility provides 24-hour a day produce channeling for nine Safeway Supermarket divisions from Florida to Quebec, servicing over 1000 stores. Mike Swift and other Safeway facility managers offered the following Safeway produce policy, and buying requirements:



- ◆ **All produce must be received at this warehouse facility for distribution to Safeway stores – No direct farm to store sales.**
- ◆ **A grower must enter a Vendor agreement with Safeway, and a vendor number and account must be established. A cooperative may act as a vender for several farmers.**
- ◆ **A Safeway produce Vendor must have the following:**
 1. **A Continuing Commodity Agreement with Safeway, which is a responsibility and liability waiver**
 2. **\$2,000,000 product liability insurance**
 3. **A PACA license for in state and out of a state produce sales, or a business license for in state sales only**
 4. **Federal I.D. number**
- ◆ **All produce must meet US Grade 1 standards or higher as defined by the Safeway Acceptable Minimum Quality Standards, provided to vendor/farmer.**
- ◆ **Specific varieties may be required as well as grading and packaging standards defined by Safeway.**
- ◆ **LIL, Less than a Truckload Volume” will be accepted at the warehouse, as well as mixed produce loads.**

Produce Buyers at Jessup Speak Out

Are there opportunities for local farmers to sell directly to wholesale produce buyers at the Jessup Terminal Market? According to Barbara Hulick, Fresh Cut Produce Manager for L & M Produce, there are 650 growers from across the country that deal directly with her company. Ms. Hulick reiterated that if growers are willing to meet L & M Produce's guidelines for safe product guarantee then direct deals with farmers are a reality. All produce sold by L & M Produce Company carries a "safe product guarantee." Therefore, good





and safe agricultural practices must be documented for each farm, such as a fully implemented Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) Plan. Ms. Hulick also stressed that L & M Produce Company would not buy from farmers who used animal manures due to increased liability. Bear in mind that the Jessup Terminal Market houses many produce companies that operate very similar to L & M Produce. Mr. Herbie Lichtenstein is the main buyer for L & M Produce, and is always busy, however, setting up an appointment and talking with him is always welcome. You may contact Ms. Hulick or Mr. Lichtenstein via the following:

L & M Produce
Maryland Wholesale Produce Market
7460 Conowingo Avenue, Unit 74
Jessup, Maryland 20794
Phone: 800 323-6434
Fax: 410 799-8261 or 301 621-2515



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