



**“...We need [food safety] regulations and procedures that are respectful of small farmers.**

—Marilyn Volden

## Assuring Food Safety

### Viroqua tackles on-farm food safety

“Before considering pricing I need some assurance that a local farmer is using safe food handling practices on his or her farm,” says Marilyn Volden, Food/Nutrition Program Supervisor for Viroqua Area School District.

As a result, Volden has developed on-farm food safety protocols to ensure safe, fresh, and healthy food for students.

### Surveys, farm visits and trainings

A combination of farmer food safety surveys, farm visits, and food safety trainings provide Volden with the assurance she needs to purchase fruits and vegetables from a local farmer.

While many still see food safety issues as major barriers to large-scale, statewide farm to school programming in Wisconsin, Volden doesn't see it that way. From the ground up, she has shown that buying direct from small, local family farms is safe and healthy for Wisconsin students.

**“I find a better sense of safety in visiting a farm and seeing their operating procedures first hand than buying from a big distributor. I want to know where our food is coming from and how it's being produced.”**

## Why Farm to School in Wisconsin?

### Good for kids' health

- Fresh fruits, vegetables, and other healthy foods help fight obesity.

### Good for farmers

- Schools provide local farmers with new or expanded markets.

### Good for the community

- Local farmers are supported and money stays in the local economy.

### Good for schools

- Overall, schools report a 3-16% increase in meal participation when farm-fresh food is served, thus bringing in more funds.

—Marilyn Volden

