

# SELLING B.C. FOOD TO B.C.'S GOVERNMENT-SUPPORTED FACILITIES



**A STARTER GUIDE FOR PRODUCERS AND PROCESSORS:  
IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES  
UNDERSTAND THE FOODSERVICE SUPPLY CHAIN  
DISCOVER THE STEPS TO MARKET**

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## INTRODUCTION

### ABOUT FEED BC: A MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE INITIATIVE

FeedBC is a Ministry of Agriculture initiative to inspire, support and encourage the use of more B.C.-grown and -processed foods in government-supported facilities (“facilities”).

Increasing the use of B.C. food in facilities helps build provincial food supply; support local farmers, fishers and food processors; bring high quality food to B.C. residents being served by facilities; and bring prosperity to local communities across the Province.

FeedBC is a collaborative effort between government ministries and industry partners including farmers, fishers, food processors, food distributors, group purchasing organizations, food service management companies, food services staff and facilities. Together, FeedBC partners work to support the development of new, long-term market opportunities for B.C. producers and processors.

### ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This guide (the “guide”) was commissioned and published as a tool for B.C. food producers and processors who are interested in selling to facilities, with specific emphasis on hospitals, residential care facilities and post-secondary institutions (PSIs).

Going to market can be a complex process. Obtaining certifications, adapting to consumer trends, scaling production capacity, addressing facilities’ needs, marketing and professional networking are just some of the steps involved for producers and processors. The path to reaching a customer may seem daunting, especially for someone who is just starting up a food business or is venturing into foodservice sales for the first time. If you are feeling overwhelmed, consider one important fact: **YOU ARE NOT ALONE.**

Countless businesses have been where you are, with the same questions and concerns. With careful planning, many of those businesses found success. Understanding common requirements and considerations allows businesses to develop products, relationships and strategic marketing plans that are actionable and drive results.

A wealth of resources (including this guide) exists to help you succeed. In fact, entire industries exist for the sole purpose of helping producers and processors go to market.

This guide will introduce users to the government-supported facilities market; and introduce tips and considerations for preparing businesses and products for entry into the facilities market.

## FACILITIES FOODSERVICE IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

B.C. facilities are part of the Province's non-commercial foodservice industry. Non-commercial foodservice is comprised of operations and facilities that offer food as a necessity or convenience for its patients or customers rather than a core fee-for-service objective (e.g., the facility exists for a purpose other than foodservice, but must provide food to its community).

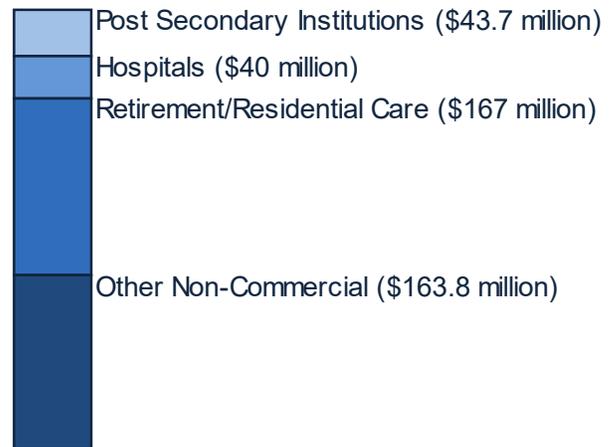
B.C.'s non-commercial market purchases approximately \$414 million<sup>1</sup> of food products annually across several market segments. Each segment has its own challenges, needs and objectives that may affect how and what food is purchased. The guide focuses on hospitals, residential care and post-secondary institutions (defined below), but the tips and processes presented in the guide are applicable to other segments and markets as well.

**POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTIONS** include universities, colleges and academic/research institutes. In the 2018/2019 academic year, approximately 295,494 students were enrolled in B.C.'s PSIs. Foodservice in PSIs is provided in a variety of service formats such as residential dining halls, cafeterias, food kiosks/carts, pubs, cafés, vending machines and catering. While most PSI foodservice is contracted, one campus may have multiple foodservice operators that service various members of the campus community including: students, faculty, staff, and visitors for conferences and events. This variety of services allows PSIs to incorporate a greater variety of products and potentially increases opportunity for both large and small producer/processors.

PSI operators are likely to use a broadline distributor for most food purchases but some PSIs may have the flexibility to purchase some products through smaller specialty distributors and, less frequently, directly from a producer or processor.

<sup>1</sup> Food purchases exclude branded or chain restaurant concepts that may not be accessible to producers and processors through the facility. All cost and sales figures stated in this section are based on data from fsSTRATEGY's Institutional Foodservice Market Report and are revised to 2019 figures.

### Annual Non-Commercial\* Foodservice Purchases in B.C. (\$414.5 million)



\*Includes government-supported, private, semi-private and non-profit facilities  
Source: fsSTRATEGY Inc. (Updated to include 2019 figures)

**HEALTHCARE** includes hospitals, retirement homes and residential care facilities (RCFs). In B.C., healthcare facilities are overseen by five regional health authorities and the provincial health services authority. Healthcare menus are designed as multi-week cycles far in advance of implementation. Most decisions about menu planning and purchasing take place at the health authority level. Most food is purchased through a broadline distributor; however, some facilities may have more flexibility to use smaller contracts than others.

Healthcare facilities may operate in more than one segment. Hospitals may have a limited number of residential care beds and retirement homes may offer age-in-place programs that allow residents to transition into long-term care within the same facility.

Depending on the health authority, foodservices are provided in-house, by a third-party contractor or both.

Healthcare facilities service at-risk populations that have compromised immune systems. As such, food safety (important for all foodservice facilities) is critical in healthcare environments.

**HOSPITALS** provide a wide range of health services to the public. Hospital foodservice may vary based on the healthcare services offered at a specific location and may

be provided in a variety of formats including in-patient nutrition (servicing patients staying at the hospital), catering (servicing business and administration components of the hospital) and retail foodservice (servicing staff, visitors and out-patients).

In-patient feeding typically provides three meals a day plus nourishments (snacks), referred to as a meal day. Meal days are subject to strict budget and nutrition requirements. Hospitals in B.C. provide approximately four million patient meal days per year.

fsSTRATEGY estimates the average cost per meal day for in-patient hospital meals in Western Canada is approximately \$35.00 of which only \$10.00 might reflect food purchases. The remaining \$25.00 is used to cover labour and other overhead costs.

Retail foodservice (including catering) in hospitals may not be operated by the same foodservice operator as in-patient meals. Offerings will vary based on the location, types of healthcare services offered and traffic levels at the hospital. Some facilities may lease space to tenant foodservice operators instead of self-operating or contracting retail foodservices. If foodservice is offered through leased outlets, the sales opportunity lies with the lease tenant not the hospital.

**RESIDENTIAL CARE FACILITIES** provide 24-hour personal and/or medical care for residents that cannot care for themselves. While RCFs may service residents of any age, most RCFs are home to elderly populations. Residents may have private or shared rooms. The location of meals will vary based on the condition and needs of the resident but will usually be served in a unit dining room or central dining area.

RCF foodservice typically services a greater number of texture-modified and therapeutic diets (i.e., low glycemic, renal, etc.).

fsSTRATEGY estimates the average cost per meal day for RCF in Western Canada is approximately \$28.00, of which only \$9.90 is designated to food purchases.

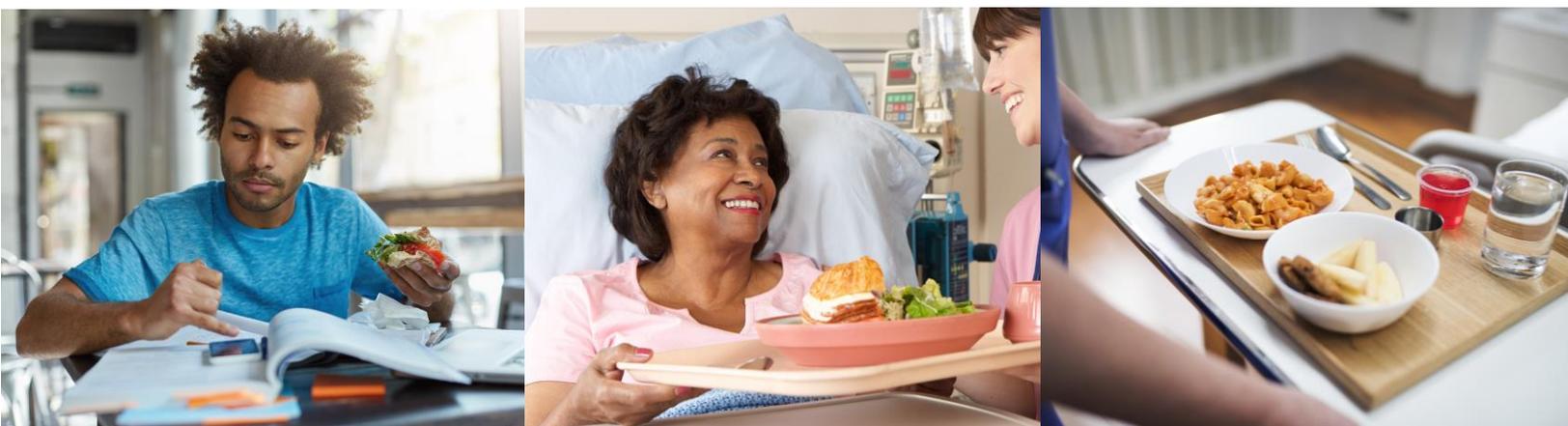
**RETIREMENT HOMES** are multi-unit housing facilities for elderly or aging people and couples. Retirement home residents are generally more mobile and require significantly less care than those in RCFs. Residents will typically live in a private room or suite and eat meals in a central dining area. Retirement homes may be public, semi-private or privately run. This guide focuses on public, government-supported retirement homes.

Retirement facilities increasingly cater to the Baby Boomer generation, who are accustomed to a greater variety and quality of food offerings. This increases the importance of products that align with industry culinary trends. Most retirement facilities are self-operated and are likely to use broadline and/or specialty distributors.

fsSTRATEGY estimates the average cost per meal day for retirement homes in Western Canada is approximately \$23.60, of which only \$8.60 is designated to food purchases.

**OTHER TYPES OF FACILITES** with non-commercial food services may provide potential markets for BC foods. These include, but are not limited to schools, offices, plants, ferries, cruise lines, summer camps, corrections facilities, utility and resource camps. Some of these market segments are government-supported, while others are semi-private, private or non-profit.

\* \* \*



## KEY PLAYERS IN FOODSERVICE SUPPLY CHAINS



**PRODUCERS AND PROCESSORS** create products for foodservice operators who serve facility users. Producers include harvesters, farmers, fishers. Processors include a wide variety of food and beverage businesses that transform primary products or food into other forms and products.



**CO-PACKERS** are industry partners that manufacture and/or package products on behalf of producer clients. Co-packers can be extremely valuable for start-up producers that need to scale production rapidly or introduce greater controls and systems than their existing facilities are able to provide.



**BROKERS** are agents that sell products on behalf of producers and processors (as opposed to producers and processors employing their own sales force). Brokers may also provide sales strategies and troubleshooting if sales decline and leverage their connections with distributors and foodservice operators that may otherwise be difficult for producers and processors to access. These services are invaluable to producers and processors that have not built a reliable network of their own or who wish to focus on their product, letting someone else handle sales.

Most brokers operate on a commission basis, typically charging between 5% and 20% of sales. Brokers may require some evidence that the product is in demand or has demand potential and that the producer or processor has appropriate production capacity before taking on a new product account.



**DISTRIBUTORS** provide logistics, selling and delivering goods on behalf of producers and processors. Distributors range from niche specialty distributors that focus on a few unique product lines, to national broadline distributors that aim to be a one-stop-shop for foodservice operators.

Foodservice operators use broadline distributors for ease of ordering and receiving (one call, one delivery) compared to using multiple smaller suppliers. Specialty distributors may be used when specific products are required that are not offered by the broadline distributor.

Unlike brokers, distributors will typically purchase the product from producers and processors at a discount, take possession of the product and sell the product for a profit. Distributors' warehouse space is limited and a minimum sales volume (e.g., 16 cases per week) is usually required. If the product does not meet or exceed the minimum volume, the product may be dropped from the distributor's product line.

Distributors may offer hundreds or even thousands of products, so Producers and processors should not rely on distributors to market or sell their product. Producers and processors are responsible for ensuring foodservice operators and consumers want to buy the product.



**GROUP PURCHASING ORGANIZATIONS** (GPOs) aggregate purchase volumes of its members to realize purchasing advantages of larger operations. For example, within a GPO, several smaller facilities may all purchase the same soup products and realize reduced product costs, like those of larger facilities, due to the combined volume.

GPOs are funded either by membership fees, administration fees paid by product vendors or a combination of these methods. Vendors, producers and

processors are typically selected by GPOs through a Request for Qualification process followed by a formal bid process. Major national GPOs (like HealthPRO) may offer opportunities for both national and regional producers and processors.

GPO members may be required to maintain a minimum percentage of total food purchases through the GPO to ensure the GPO achieves the necessary volumes to realize savings. This requirement, and the associated savings, incentivizes foodservice operators to buy GPO products. The use of a GPO may, therefore, limit a facilities' ability to purchase a new product unless that product is offered by the GPO.



**FOODSERVICE OPERATORS** purchase, prepare and serve food products to customers, residents or patients. The foodservice operator may be the same organization that operates the facility,

but not necessarily. Several operating models exist in facilities foodservice; the four most common include:

- **Self-Operated Foodservice:** The facility operates its own foodservice – plans menus, procures supplies, employs workers.
- **Contracted Foodservice:** The facility contracts a third-party firm/caterer to operate foodservices. The contractor's roles may vary from management only (the contractor runs the foodservice, but the facility employs the workers) to fully contracted (the contractor is responsible for all aspects of the foodservice operation). In healthcare facilities, the contractor may also provide dietician services in addition to production and service.
- **Auxiliary Foodservice:** Retail foodservice is provided by a volunteer auxiliary at a hospital with the purpose of raising funds for the facility, or a student association raising funds for the student body at a PSI. Planning and management may be overseen by facility management or be completely autonomous. In larger hospitals and

PSIs, auxiliary foodservices are often part of a larger retail foodservice program that includes other foodservice operators.

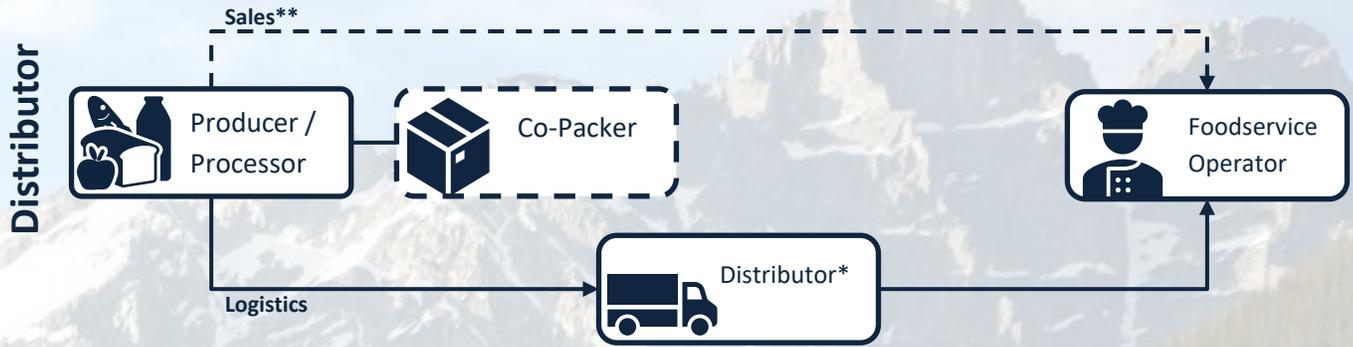
- **Leased Foodservice:** The facility leases retail space to third-party foodservice operators. When foodservice space is leased, the sale opportunity lies with the tenant, not the facility. If the tenant is a franchisee of a chain restaurant, the opportunity lies with franchisor, not the tenant as the tenant will not have license to add to or change the menu offering.

Retail foodservice concepts run by foodservice operators may be **independent** (foodservice concepts with only one to two locations) or **branded/chain** concepts (foodservice concepts with three or more locations and possibly franchised).

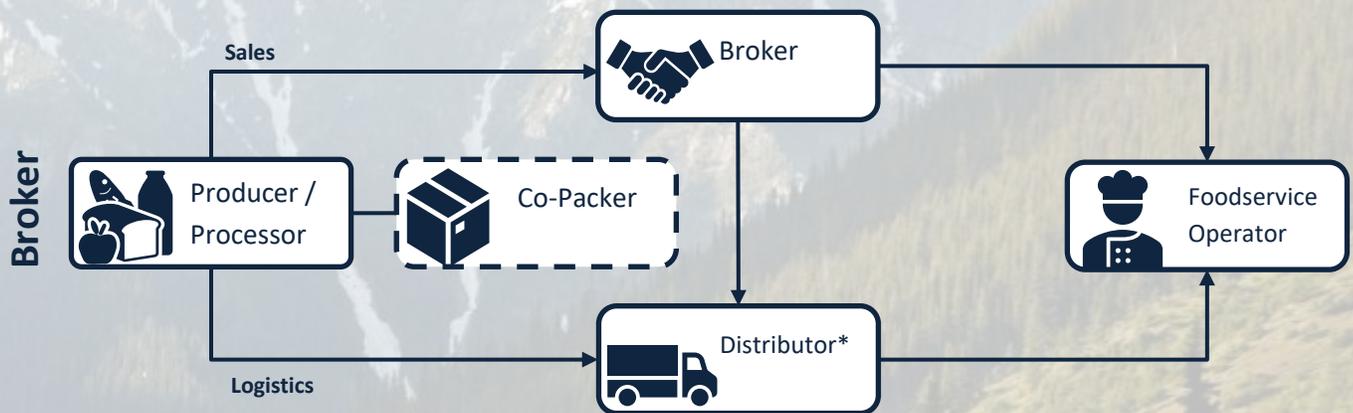
Facilities may use multiple foodservice models at one institution to achieve their objectives. For example, a large hospital may contract its in-patient and catering services, allow the auxiliary to operate a café and lease kiosk space to tenants in a food court.

\* \* \*

# Facility Foodservice Supply Chain Examples



Distributor is the most common supply chain to BC facilities. Currently, nearly all food sales go through a distributor.



Brokers are used when producers/processors are unable or do not wish to promote or market their products themselves. Brokers act as an agent between the producer/processor and the distributor and may also be responsible for general marketing efforts that build demand for the product.



Although less common, there are examples of direct sale supply chains from producers or processors to facilities, particularly in post-secondary institutions, retirement homes and schools.

*\* Where a GPO is used, its position and role within the supply may vary depending on the organization. Operators may order directly through the GPO or through a distributor. Sales efforts should start with the operator. Even if interested in a product, an operator may refer the producers and processors to a GPO instead of purchasing directly; in that case, the producers and processors still gain valuable insight: who to speak to, direct feedback about the product and, hopefully, a pre-qualified buyer to aid negotiations with the GPO, Broker or distributor.*

*\*\* Even when selling through a distributor, producers and processors still need to promote their products to drive demand that pulls the product through the system and entices distributors to carry the product.*

## KEY CONSUMER TRENDS



**LOCAL FOOD** – The origin of food products has become an important factor in consumer decisions. Among several benefits, local foods may be harvested closer to ripeness (potential for greater quality), travel fewer miles to the consumer (potential to reduce carbon footprint) and support the local economy.



**SUSTAINABILITY** – Growing demand exists for sustainable products within the food service industry. Consumers and foodservice operators look for food with a low environmental/social impact for both the product and its packaging (i.e. sustainable farming, fair trade, recyclability, etc.)



**GLOBAL & CULTURAL FOODS** – B.C. is home to people of many backgrounds and cultures. This diversity is reflected in consumers' interest in flavourful, authentic dishes and tastes. For some, these flavours are a touch of home and for others, a chance to experience new and exciting flavours.



**PLANT-BASED FOODS** – From emerging, engineered protein alternatives to traditional plant-forward cuisines, many consumers are exploring options to reduce animal proteins in their diets. Further driven by the revised Canada's Food Guide that places greater emphasis on plant-based calories, the plant-based food trend may impact both retail preference and institutional menu planning.



**SPECIALTY DIETS** – The diversity and frequency of specialty diets in B.C. are increasing. Whether for personal lifestyle/ethical philosophies, religion, food allergies or medical conditions, B.C. facilities strive to adapt to the needs of their customers.



**CLEAN INGREDIENT LISTS** – The use of simple recognizable, low-processed, ingredient names in a product makes it easy for a consumer to understand what they are eating. Many consumers connect clean ingredients to a healthier food option.

\* \* \*

## KEY FOODSERVICE CONSIDERATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

Foodservice operators must consider a variety of issues when designing menus. Many of these issues appear to be challenges but may be solved through networking and collaboration with partners throughout the supply chain. One example of such a partnership at the University of British Columbia is shared in the side bar of this page.

Common considerations include budgets, food safety, product consistency and volume.

**BUDGETS** - All facilities and foodservice operators work within a budget. For cost-based operations like in-patient and resident meals in healthcare facilities, foodservice operators may not exceed their budget.

Budgets are not limited to the cost of food. Foodservice operators must also consider the cost of labour, the availability of skilled labour and equipment requirements when developing menus. Facility foodservice operators look for products that reduce time and complexity during production.

Sales-based operations like retail foodservice (cafés, kiosks, cafeterias, etc.) and catering make similar considerations, but may have greater flexibility to incorporate premium or higher-cost items into their menus provided consumers are will to pay a premium



### **WHERE THERE'S A WILL, THERE'S A WAY**

*In 2018, the University of British Columbia identified an opportunity to improve social and environmental contributions by changing its hamburger patties. The University would enhance its patties by substituting part of the beef with aromatic vegetables.*

*The right product did not exist, so the University partnered with a local processor to develop a custom patty. The processor was small enough to be excited about the University's \$75,000 annual spend. The University worked with the processor to find a co-packer that offered the required certifications, like HACCP, which the processor could not yet offer.*

*UBC's story shows how partnerships between producers and processors, foodservices and other players in the supply chain can overcome challenges to the benefit of all parties.*

*The new patties taste amazing, increase student nutrition, reduce environmental impact and address plant-based food trends. The processor gained an opportunity develop a new product with guaranteed sales, a willing test market and the support of its customer.*

price for that product, and the product aligns with the foodservice operator's vision and values.

**FOOD SAFETY** – Food safety is critical for all foodservice operations, but paramount for healthcare where consumers have weakened immune systems. Broadline distributors and GPOs may not carry products without specific food safety certifications such as Good Agricultural Practices (on-farm) and Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP).

Producers and processors should implement strict food safety protocols and ensure the appropriate certifications are met. If certification is not currently feasible, work with co-packers or other supply chain partners to produce the product in certified facilities.

**PRODUCT CONSISTENCY** - Every foodservice operator wants consistent products they can rely on for the planning and implementation of menus. In healthcare, the need for consistency is greatest as dieticians must rely on precise nutritional values when planning diets for patients and residents. Producers and processors should implement strict production processes and

recipe formulations to ensure consistent product quality and nutritional content is maintained. If strict controls are not possible in the existing facilities, work with co-

packers or other supply chain partners to produce the product in certified facilities.

**PRODUCT VOLUME** – Smaller producers and processors may struggle to meet the volume requirements for facilities and other larger markets, especially if they are selling through a broadline distributor or group purchasing organization that relies on large-volume purchases to keep prices down. This challenge may be overcome by either targeting smaller facilities that require lower volumes, or by increasing their production capacity. Co-packers can help producers and processor increase capacity in facilities that meet certification

requirements. Smaller producers and processors may also look to product aggregators such as co-operatives, food hubs or other shared storage or distribution to pool their products with similar businesses to increase total supply volumes.

Understanding the requirements of a target market helps producers and processors develop marketing plans and identify markets with the greatest opportunity. The following table summarizes typical considerations and requirements profiles in existing markets; there will always be some exceptions.

TYPICAL PURCHASING PROFILE FOR EXISTING FACILITIES FOODSERVICE							
	Hospitals In-Patient Meals	Residential Care	Retirement Homes	Post-Secondary Institutions	Public Schools (K-12)	Independent Retail Outlets	Branded / Chain Retail Outlets
Interested in purchasing B.C. food products	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Look for innovative products	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Benefit from products that reduce labour or skill requirements	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Purchase through broadline distributors	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Menu development driven by current consumer trends			●	●	●	●	●
Develop menus at the individual facility level			●	●	●	●	●
Able to accommodate products with limited/seasonal availability			●	●	●	●	●
Have time/ability to respond to producer/processor sales calls			●	●		●	●
Able to easily modify menus to accommodate new products			●	●		●	
May purchase products without third-party food safety certifications					●	●	●
May adjust menu pricing to accommodate premium product costs				●		●	●
May purchase directly from producer/processor				●	●	●	

# PRICING FOR SUCCESS

**SETTING THE PRICE** of a product is an important decision that should involve careful analysis and planning, especially in cost-sensitive markets like facilities.

The approach to pricing may vary by the type of service being offered by the foodservice operator. For example, pricing considerations for retail foodservice may be different than those for in-patient meals. In all cases, producers and processors must remember to consider packaging and supply chain costs in their pricing model.

In resident (PSIs or RCFs) and in-patient (hospitals) foodservice, the foodservice operator is provided a specific budget per meal day. Most of the budget will be used to cover overhead costs and labour. If that budget is \$9.00 per day, the foodservice operator may have less than \$3.00 per meal, on average, to spend on food (typically including a drink, center of plate protein, gravy, vegetable, starch, dessert).

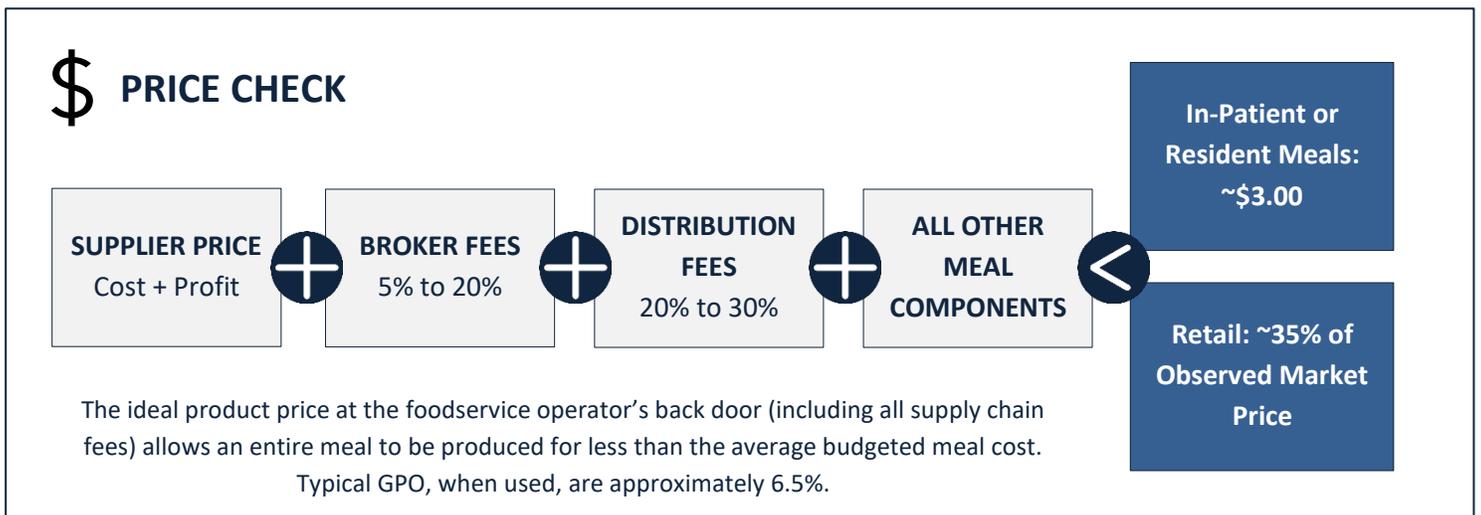
Producers and processors often provide only one component of a meal and should, therefore consider the product's role in the meal when considering price. For example, a center or plate protein (i.e., chicken, beef, fish, pork, protein alternative, etc.) will typically comprise a greater share of the meal's budget than the starch or sauce component).

Foodservice operators may occasionally exceed this budget, provided they are able to make up for the overage through less costly meals elsewhere in the menu cycle.

For retail and catering foodservice, producers and processors may use market menu pricing (review prices on similar operation menus online) and cost of goods sold (food cost) ratio (approximately 35% of sales price on average in B.C.<sup>2</sup>) to determine appropriate prices.

If your product does not fit in the foodservice operator's budget, they will not purchase your product.

**PORTION SIZE** is another important consideration when pricing a product for entry into a new market. If the new target market requires smaller portions than the producer's or processor's standard product, reducing the products portion may help achieve the portion price.



<sup>2</sup> Restaurants Canada 2019 Operations Report

## CHECKLIST: ARE YOU READY TO SELL TO GOVERNMENT-SUPPORTED FOODSERVICE?

Are you interested in taking the next step towards selling your B.C. -grown or B.C.- processed food to a government-supported facility? This checklist reviews the common needs and considerations for the facilities market and connects you with resources to help you get started.

### Is your business ready?

A healthy business is the foundation for successful business growth. Be specific about your business goals and develop a strong business plan to get there. Take advantage of programs designed to help you.

Resources: [BC Ministry of Agriculture Agri-Business Development Program](#); [BC Ministry of Agriculture Taking Stock Self-Assessment](#); [BC Small Business Resources](#); [Small Business BC – Business Plan Services](#); [Small Business BC – Starting a Business](#); [Managing a Food or Beverage Processing Business](#); [Innovate BC](#)

### Do you understand your target markets?

Different markets may have different needs, and not all products are relevant to all facilities (i.e., the needs of a PSI will be different than the needs of long-term care). Before attempting to sell to a new customer, make sure you understand their needs. Research and compare the needs of the market segment to the benefit of your product and company. Industry associations, both in your industry and your target segment, may provide valuable market intelligence on needs and resources.

Resources: [Ministry of Agriculture Domestic Market Development](#); [BC Agri-food and Seafood Market Development Program](#); [Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Sector Intelligence](#); [Food and Beverage Processing](#); [Canada-BC Agri-Innovation Program](#); [Value Chains: Strategic Alliances for Improving Profitability](#); [How to Conduct and Use Market Research](#); [List of major industry associations](#) (page 16)

### Is your product priced appropriately for your target market segment?

Facilities typically provide foodservice within a tight budget. Retail foodservice operations in facilities may have slightly greater flexibility in pricing but are still bound by market prices. Producers and processors must understand the price foodservice operators are able to pay as well as the types of fees incurred by their product as it travels through the supply chain (see page 7).

**Do you need to sell through a distributor or group purchasing organization?**

Many facilities purchase exclusively from a single broadline distributor and/or a limited number of specialty distributors or suppliers. As such, a foodservice operator may require your product be sold through their current broadline distributor or offered through their GPO. Before you approach a distributor or GPO, make sure you are prepared to provide the information and standards they require. Distributors want to know that demand exists for your product. Interview potential customers and prepare a pre-qualified buyer list. The list should include names of foodservice operators who have expressed an interest in purchasing your product and potential purchase volumes.

Resources: [B.C. Guide – How to Sell Your Product to a Distributor](#); [List of major broadline distributors, group purchasing organizations](#) and [brokers](#) (pages 16 and 17)

**Are you able to scale to demand?**

As demand for your product grows, you will need to assess your production capacity to consistently meet demand. This includes understanding how to maintain quality and value, while also being able to meet demand without a gap in supply. For producers, this might mean exploring aggregation opportunities; for processors, it might mean working with a shared use facility, like a food hub/processing centre, or working with an industry partner such as a co-packer to extend your capacity.

Resources: [Ministry of Agriculture – Agri-Business Planning Program](#); [Ministry of Agriculture – Domestic Market Development](#); [Ministry of Agriculture – Lean Business Skills for Food Processors](#); [BC Ministry of Agriculture - Food Hubs](#); [BC Food Processing Association – Finding a Co-Packer](#); [Small Scale Food Processors Association](#); [BC Co-op Association](#)

**Do you meet the food safety standards of your target segment?**

The ability to serve safe food is important in every foodservice operation and is paramount when servicing communities with compromised immune systems such as elderly and infirmed in healthcare facilities. Most broadline distributors and facilities will require some form of food safety or HACCP certification to carry your product. Depending on the product or service offered, there are different food safety programs that can help you meet the facilities' needs.

Resources: [CanadaGAP](#); [Post –Farm Food Safety Program](#); [On-Farm Food Safety Program](#); [Canadian Food Inspection Agency](#); [Province of British Columbia – Food Safety Legislation & Training](#)

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*Resources presented in this section are hyperlinked to websites for the respective program. To access web links listed in the checklist, if you are reading the guide in hard copy, go to on-line version of this document at:  
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/industry/agriculture-seafood/growbc-feedbc-buybc/feed-bc>.*

**Do you meet labelling requirements?**

Canada has strict labelling requirements that must be followed for selling food products. A food product label must include information such as a nutritional chart, allergens, ingredients and a best before date. Additional labelling requirements may be needed including a UPC code for inventory tracking depending on who you are selling to.

Resources: [Canadian Food Inspection Agency – Food Labelling](#); [Canadian Food Inspection Agency – Labelling Requirements Checklist](#); [BC Labelling Regulations and Certification Standards](#)

**Have you prepared a value proposition for the foodservice operator?**

What solutions does your product provide foodservice operators and consumers, beyond flavour and quality? Prepare an elevator pitch: a concise statement showcasing the full value of the product for potential customers. Examples of other ways your product may be valuable:

- Your product reduces labour cost or the need for skilled labour;
- Your product helps foodservice operators achieve objectives or adapt to industry trends; or
- Your product reduces the service time of retail foodservice outlets.

Resources: [Ministry of Agriculture – How to Develop a Sales Pitch for Your Product](#); [Ministry of Agriculture – How to Develop a Positioning Map](#)

**Do you have a marketing plan?**

Compiling your knowledge of target markets, competitors and business environments into one cohesive marketing plan is a powerful tool to promote your company and its products. A solid marketing plan will help you describe your competitive advantage, attract and retain customers, prepare for changes in the market and identify the resources you need. It will also help you define your pricing strategy, how your product is unique and how you will promote your product. As you develop it, explore whether there are marketing associations that can help promote your product.

Resources: [Ministry of Agriculture –Marketing Guide Series](#); [BC Agri-food and Seafood Market Development Program](#); [Ministry of Agriculture – Buy BC Program](#); [Managing a Food Business](#); [List of industry and marketing associations](#) (see page 16)

## WHO MAKES PURCHASE DECISIONS?

Once you understand the needs and challenges of your target market, and are prepared to approach a facility, choosing the right person to contact is important. The positions below are a good place to start; they can direct you to the appropriate person or organization if they do not make the final decision. The contact person and process will vary by location based on type of facility and its management structure. The first step is determining whether a facilities' foodservice is in-house self-operated, contracted, or leased. Often, this may be determined by searching the facilities' website for foodservices.

You can also contact AgriService BC for more support and speak to Ministry staff for additional resources.

AgriService BC

1 888 221-7141

AgriServiceBC@gov.bc.ca

### Post-Secondary Institutions

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>In-house / Self-Operated Foodservice</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Executive Chef</li><li>• Directors of Foodservice, Corporate Services, and Ancillary Services</li><li>• Purchaser</li></ul> |
|---|---|

- |                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| <b>Contracted Foodservice</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Contract Caterer:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Executive Chef</li><li>○ Directors of Foodservice</li><li>○ Regional Office</li></ul></li></ul> |
|-------------------------------|--|

- |                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| <b>Auxiliary Foodservice</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Director or Chef at auxiliary food service</li></ul> |
|------------------------------|--|

- |                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| <b>Leased Foodservices</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Foodservice Tenant (if independent operator)</li><li>• Chain (if national or regional brand)</li></ul> |
|----------------------------|--|

### Hospitals and Residential Care

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>In-house / Self-Operated Foodservice</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Broadline food distributor, who may refer you to purchaser or food services manager</li></ul> |
|---|---|

- |                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| <b>Contracted Foodservice</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Contracted food service and broadline distributor, who may refer you to purchaser</li></ul> |
|-------------------------------|---|

- |                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| <b>Retail Foodservice</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Director of Business Development (Retail Food)</li><li>• Auxiliary Manager (Retail Food)</li></ul> |
|---------------------------|--|

### Retirement Homes

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>In-House / Self-Operated Foodservice</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Corporate Chef (Chains) / Executive Chef</li><li>• Directors of Foodservice, Corporate Services, and Ancillary Services</li><li>• Purchaser</li></ul> |
|---|---|

- |                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| <b>Contracted Foodservice</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Contract Caterer:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Executive Chef</li><li>○ Directors of Foodservice</li><li>○ Regional Office</li></ul></li></ul> |
|-------------------------------|--|

## APPENDIX: KEY LINKS FOR FACILITIES FOODSERVICE IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

### Industry Associations Marketing and Related Organizations

Canadian College and University Food Service Association	<a href="http://www.ccufsa.on.ca/">http://www.ccufsa.on.ca/</a>
Canadian Healthcare Business Development Network	<a href="https://www.chbdn.org">https://www.chbdn.org</a>
Restaurants Canada	<a href="https://www.restaurantscanada.org/">https://www.restaurantscanada.org/</a>
B.C. Restaurant and Foodservices Association	<a href="https://www.bcrfa.com/">https://www.bcrfa.com/</a>
B.C. Agriculture Commodity Boards	<a href="https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/organizational-structure/ministries-organizations/boards-commissions-tribunals/bc-farm-industry-review-board/regulated-marketing">https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/organizational-structure/ministries-organizations/boards-commissions-tribunals/bc-farm-industry-review-board/regulated-marketing</a>
Agricultural Marketing Boards	<a href="https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/organizational-structure/ministries-organizations/boards-commissions-tribunals/bc-farm-industry-review-board/regulated-marketing">https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/organizational-structure/ministries-organizations/boards-commissions-tribunals/bc-farm-industry-review-board/regulated-marketing</a>
Farm to School BC	<a href="https://farmtoschoolbc.ca/">https://farmtoschoolbc.ca/</a>

### Food Service Management Companies

Aramark	<a href="https://www.aramark.ca/services/food-services">https://www.aramark.ca/services/food-services</a>
Compass: Chartwells (post-secondary institutions)	<a href="https://www.compass-canada.com/our-companies/chartwells-higher-education/">https://www.compass-canada.com/our-companies/chartwells-higher-education/</a>
Compass: Morrison Healthcare (healthcare)	<a href="https://www.compass-canada.com/our-companies/morrison-healthcare/">https://www.compass-canada.com/our-companies/morrison-healthcare/</a>
Dana Hospitality	<a href="https://www.danahospitality.ca/">https://www.danahospitality.ca/</a>
Sodexo	<a href="https://ca.sodexo.com">https://ca.sodexo.com</a>

### Group Purchasing Organizations

Complete Purchasing Services	<a href="https://www.ecps.ca">https://www.ecps.ca</a>
Entegra Procurement Services	<a href="https://www.entegraps.com/">https://www.entegraps.com/</a>
Food Buy Canada	<a href="https://www.foodbuy.ca/">https://www.foodbuy.ca/</a>
HealthPRO	<a href="https://www.healthprocanada.com/nutrition-and-food-services">https://www.healthprocanada.com/nutrition-and-food-services</a>
Sliver Group Purchasing	<a href="http://www.sgpnetwork.com">http://www.sgpnetwork.com</a>

## Broadline Distributors

Sysco Canada – BC Region	<a href="https://sysco.ca/">https://sysco.ca/</a>
Gordon Food Service (GFS)	<a href="https://www.gfs.ca/">https://www.gfs.ca/</a>

## Facilities

List of post-secondary Institutions in B.C.	<a href="https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/post-secondary-education/find-a-program-or-institution/find-an-institution">https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/post-secondary-education/find-a-program-or-institution/find-an-institution</a>
Regional health authorities map	<a href="https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/partners/health-authorities/regional-health-authorities">https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/about-bc-s-health-care-system/partners/health-authorities/regional-health-authorities</a>
Farm to Cafeteria Canada – Farm-to- School	<a href="http://www.farmtocafeteriacanada.ca/our-work/farm-to-school/">http://www.farmtocafeteriacanada.ca/our-work/farm-to-school/</a>

## Buyer Guides and Directories

Food in Canada Buyers Guide (for processors)	<a href="https://www.foodincanada.com/buyers-guide/">https://www.foodincanada.com/buyers-guide/</a>
Foodservice World Buyers Guide	<a href="https://www.foodserviceworld.com/">https://www.foodserviceworld.com/</a>
Restaurants Canada Buyers Guide	<a href="https://buyersguide.restaurantscanada.org/companies/">https://buyersguide.restaurantscanada.org/companies/</a>
Western Restaurant News Buyers Guide	<a href="https://www.westernrestaurantnews.com/industry-guides/buyers-guide">https://www.westernrestaurantnews.com/industry-guides/buyers-guide</a>
Western Restaurant News Brokers and Distributors Directory	<a href="https://www.westernrestaurantnews.com/images/pdf/WRN-WINTER-2019-BROKERS_DISTRIBUTORS-Guide.pdf">https://www.westernrestaurantnews.com/images/pdf/WRN-WINTER-2019-BROKERS_DISTRIBUTORS-Guide.pdf</a>

If your business or organization is interested in being added to this list, or if you notice any omissions, please let us know [feedbc@gov.bc.ca](mailto:feedbc@gov.bc.ca)



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