

• Procuring Portabella Mushrooms •

Procuring portabella mushrooms is the first step to implement this program. You will need to identify where you can purchase the mushrooms, what types to purchase, and a timeline to follow when purchasing (so that your orders come on time). Additionally, we have identified the size of portabella mushroom to purchase that provides you with accurate crediting for your school meals program.

Where can I purchase portabella mushrooms?

The main vendors schools can use to purchase mushrooms are:

- **Department of Defense (DoD) Distributor**
 - » DoD Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program
 - » The program allows schools to use USDA Foods entitlement dollars to buy fresh produce.
- **Commercial Broadline Distributor**
 - » Wholesale Distributors
 - » Distributors are the link to virtually every institutional foodservice operation in the country. Request local food products, like mushrooms, and the names of the farms they purchase from. By requesting local mushrooms from your existing produce supplier, you can keep logistics and ordering simple.
- **Produce Distributor**
 - » Communicate your desire to source local mushrooms with your current produce supplier.
- **Local Mushroom Producer**
 - » Direct Purchasing
 - Some schools purchase bulk food products at wholesale prices directly from farmers. Research mushroom farms in your region and set up a meeting with the farmers directly. Since mushrooms are grown year-round, supply is consistent. Meet with a local farmer to determine the best way to purchase and deliver mushrooms direct from the farm.
 - » Contract Growing
 - If you plan on purchasing large amounts of produce for your district, you can potentially develop a contract growing partnership. Foodservice staff can meet with a local farmer and agree upon a price and a given amount of produce for the year. This could potentially save you money but requires discussion and planning between staff and farmers with both parties assuming a bit of risk.

- » Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)
 - CSA subscribers receive weekly shares of a farmer’s harvest, after paying farmers up front for operating costs. As a subscriber, a school can be a part of a farm harvest which is an opportunity for classroom education.
 - CSA’s are a good alternative for smaller schools that can work with a rotating array of farm products.
 - CSA shares can also supplement produce for harvest dinners and classroom taste testing. Many farms offer summer, fall and winter CSA shares and work with schools on the payment. Parents and businesses also can donate CSA shares to schools.
- » Marketing Cooperative
 - Some farmers work together to share in the distribution, marketing, processing, selling, or billing of their products. The benefit of buying from a cooperative like this is that it is easier for farmers to get enough variety and quantity of product to your kitchen, and it is easier than coordinating with multiple farmers.

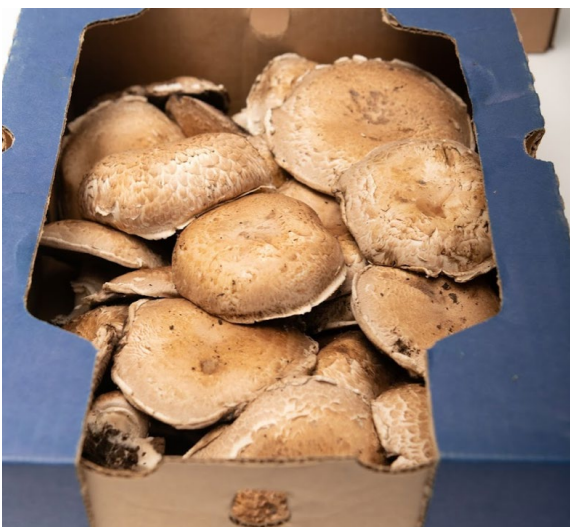
If you would like more information on sourcing mushrooms, please read our [Mushroom Sourcing Catalog](#).



What should I purchase?

Formats: Portabella mushrooms can be ordered whole, with or without the stems and roots attached. Portabellas without the stems are typically referred to as “caps.” For the best shelf life, we recommend purchasing whole mushrooms (with the roots and stems attached).

Pro Tip: Here’s a photo of the whole portabella, straight to you with the roots on, some peat moss clinging to the tiny roots. These whole “ports” survive much longer and are much plumper than portabellas whose roots and peat moss are cut away in the harvesting.



Sizes: Portabellas do not have a standard size (other than what the marketplace determines), but the most frequent sizes are:

- 3-4 inch diameter (what we recommend for schools)
- 4-5 inch diameter
- 5-6 inch diameter

Case Weights: Most likely, you can order portabellas in 3 or 5 pound boxes. Portabellas with roots are typically sold in 5 pound boxes; caps are typically sold in 3 pound boxes.

This is an idea of what one 3-pound portabella cap box looks like:



This is a photo of a 5-pound case of portabellas with stems attached.



How should I store my mushrooms?

Portabella mushrooms should be stored in the original packaging, not stacked, and kept in a cool dark space away from odorous foods. This could be your walk-in refrigerator with the temperature kept under 38 degree Fahrenheit. By exposing mushrooms to warm temperatures prior to cooking, this will decrease the shelf life.

When stored correctly, fresh portabella caps will last for 3-5 days. Whole portabella mushrooms can last for a week or more.

Need a food safety poster for your kitchen? We have you covered - [click here](#).

How far in advance should I order?

To prepare your team for receiving orders on time, you will need to speak with the distributor or farmer to identify how far out they need the orders to be able to fill them. Additionally, some vendors may require a minimum order in order to fill - make sure to ask that question.

We recommend scheduling your delivery to arrive 2-3 days before your first planned menu.

How much should I order?

Based on the **Food Buying Guide**, 2.656 ounces of raw mushrooms provides 1/2 cup cooked mushrooms (1/2 cup other vegetable credit).

According to **FoodData Central from USDA**, a fresh whole portabella mushroom (cap and stem) weighs 84 grams or 2.96 ounces. Generally, this weight corresponds to a mushroom cap diameter of 3 inches.

With the stem removed, a medium-sized mushroom cap credits for 3/8 cup vegetable. You'll find that all of the recipes provided in this toolkit have enough vegetables added so each recipe credits for at least 1/2 cup of vegetable total.

When finalizing your standardized recipes, we highly recommend weighing a sample of your received mushrooms and testing these recipes to ensure the proper weight and crediting of your portabella mushrooms.



Pro Tip: Not all of the portabella caps are going to be the same size (even in the same case), or some may be broken or damaged. No problem - these ports can be sliced and served in a Philly Cheese Portabella Hoagie, in Tacos, or Fajitas. Bigger portabellas (that may be too big for a burger) are great for Pizza Stuffed Portabellas, and too-small ports can be doubled up for a Double Portabella Burger!

To determine how many pounds and cases of mushrooms to order, use the below chart as a guide. The chart is based on our own testing of mushroom yields and FoodData Central weight data. To ensure accurate crediting, use this information as a guide, but perform your own in-house yield analysis.

Food as Purchased	Purchase Unit	Servings Per Purchase Unit, EP	Serving Size per Meal Contribution	Purchase Units for 100 servings	More Information
Medium (3-4 in diameter), Portabellas with Roots Attached	Pound	5.18	1/2 cup trimmed, ready-to-cook vegetable	19.30	1 lb AP = 0.86 lb EP (about 4 caps plus 2.27 oz of stems) ready-to-cook mushrooms
Medium (3-4 in diameter), Portabella Caps Only (No Stems or Roots)	Pound	6.48	1 portabella cap (3/8 cup ready-to-cook vegetable)	16.44	1 lb AP = 1 lb EP (about 6 caps) ready-to-cook mushrooms

• Portable Portabella Recipes • Overview

This table lists the meal components provided by each recipe, as written. Please confirm your specific product crediting (i.e. grain crediting from your bakery provider) prior to service. Please note that fruit and milk meal components will need to be added to your menus.

Recipe Name	Meat/Meat Alternate (oz. eq.)	Grains (oz. eq.)	Vegetables (cups)
All-American Cheeseburger	2	2	Total: 1/2 c. Dark Green: 1/8 c. Red/Orange: 1/8 c. Other: 3/8 c.
Mediterranean Burger	2	2	Total: 3/8 c. Other: 3/8 c.
Pizza Burger	2	2	Total: 1/2 c. Red/Orange: 1/4 c. Other: 3/8 c.
Portable Fajitas	2	2.25	Total: 7/8 c. Red/Orange: 1/4 c. Other: 5/8 c.
Portable Fajitas - Spicy	2	2.25	Total: 7/8 c. Red/Orange: 1/4 c. Other: 5/8 c.
Portable Philly Sub	2	2.25	Total: 7/8 c. Red/Orange: 1/4 c. Other: 5/8 c.
Portable Pizza	2	2	Total: 3/4 c. Red/Orange: 1/4 c. Other: 1/2 c.
Western Burger	2	2	Total: 1/2 c. Other: 1/2 c.

*oz. Eq. means ounce equivalent