

Serving more organic and nutritionally-balanced food in Munich's schools

City of Munich (Germany)

Background

Munich is the state capital of Bavaria (Germany), and with a population of around 1.5 million people, it is the third largest city in Germany.

The [City of Munich](#) has a long tradition of working on socially responsible procurement. As early as 2002, the City decided not to purchase any products which involved the use of child labour (or violated [Convention 182](#) of the International Labour Organisation - ILO), and the City has since taken measures in various procurement areas to strengthen sustainable public procurement (SPP) and promote fair trade (for further details, see [here](#) in German).

In 2013, Munich's city council voted to further its SPP activities to include textiles, office materials,

and food. Action on food centres covering the SPP obligation was established by the October 2013 Decree - [Prevent Food Scandals - Sustainable, regional food supply strategy of the city of Munich](#). This Decree required that 50% of food served in municipal childcare facilities come from organic sources, and as much of 90% in the case of meat.

Procurement objectives

A tender for the City of Munich's most recent school food catering framework contract, which uses the 'cook and freeze' approach, was launched at the end of March 2017. Cook and freeze refers to food which is prepared, cooked and frozen, and is then thawed and reheated before serving. Munich aims for high quality, nutritionally balanced food to be delivered to various schools and day-care centres.

The 'cook and freeze' tender required caterers to provide a basic assortment of frozen foods at all times. This required listing in a product catalogue which was to include information on price, allergens and organic certification. Basic frozen goods included soups and stews, sauces, starch supplements, vegetables, meat, fish, vegetarian dishes, savoury egg dishes, pizza, sweet dishes, ice cream, baked goods and fruit.

The tender was divided into four lots. Offers could be submitted for one, several or all lots.

Criteria used

Subject matter of the contract:

Framework agreement for lunch time catering using the 'Cook and Freeze' process.



Technical specifications:

A basic assortment of frozen foods was required at all times, specified in a product list which defined the minimum number of articles required per product group, as well as the minimum number per product group which must meet organic standards.

It was specified that:

- At least 50% of food (measured monetarily across all commodity groups) must come from organic production. Food from organic farming must comply with the European Commission's [Ecological Regulation No. 834/2007 \(EC\)](#) and/or [Implementing Regulation \(EC\) No 889/2008](#) and the implementing provisions for third country imports and be certified accordingly.
- For pure meat components, at least 90% must be organic, and for sausages and dishes including meat as an ingredient, 100% must come from organic production.
- All fish is required to come from organic aquaculture or be certified as from a sustainable source such as [Marine Stewardship Council](#), [Friends of the Sea](#) or equivalent.
- Eggs must come from organic (according to Council Regulation (EC) No 834/2007 on organic production and labelling of organic products) or free-range sources. Only where the egg component is less than 10% of the total quantity of all ingredients may eggs from deep-litter indoor (cage-free) sources be used.
- No genetically modified (GM) foods are allowed. This includes animal products (e.g. milk, eggs, meat) from animals which have been given GM-feed, or the use of additives and processing aids produced from GM microorganisms. In addition, products and their ingredients must not have been treated with ionizing radiation.

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Award criteria:

The contract was awarded to the most economically advantageous tender (that is, the offer with the most value points) per Lot.

Points were weighted as follows:

- 40% - Price.
- 25% - Product variety. This criterion awarded points for product catalogues which included greater diversity than what was required as a minimum. For example, provision of an additional organic meat dish could receive two points, with a maximum four points available for this variation.
- 25% - Test sample. The appearance, taste and texture of food were sampled by nine taster judges (such as procurers, members of parents councils and employees), with each bidder producing samples of the same dishes to ensure fair comparison.
- 5% - for taking into account the special needs of food users.
- 5% - for further social and environmental aspects, such as the presence of raw materials certified through the [Fairtrade International](#), [World Fairtrade Organisation](#) or the EC organic agriculture regulation.

Contract performance clauses:

Contract conditions included a requirement to avoid packaging material as far as possible, with priority given to reusable packaging. Disposable packaging (or similar) must be environmentally friendly (that is, recyclable). Reusable containers must be made available for transport to the facility, without deposit or billing, and must also be collected.

Training requirements were also included. Four training courses (of three hours each) are required on the preparation of menu components in order to assist the change in focus desired by the city, and suppliers are also required to provide consultations for kitchen staff on the preparation of food at the request of the client, lasting approximately one hour (but not more than three times within the contract term per institution). Clients are also able to request information events for parents (approximately one and a half hours per facility) where clients can be required to prepare small tasting portions from the current weekly schedule free of charge.

Results

The cook and freeze contracts for each Lot were awarded at the end of August 2017 and will each operate for two years. Three bids were received for each Lot - all from SMEs. A total of three suppliers were awarded contracts across the four Lots. In total, these contracts cover over 300 facilities and will cater for over 490,000 school children.

Environmental impacts

Procuring organic food provides a means to reduce the impact of farming systems on the environment. Organic farming, for example, typically uses energy and natural resources in a more responsible way, is better for biodiversity and the maintenance of ecosystems, enhances rather than degrades soil fertility, and maintains water quality.

Organic food can also be a driver of higher animal welfare. In an earlier pilot project in Munich called [Bio für Kinder](#), management guidelines for meat and meat products guaranteed animal welfare increased by at least 30%, or 100% at municipal events.

Lessons learned

- It is important to secure commitment of all involved parties (that is, management, employees, parents, children, etc.) to promote a sense of ownership to ensure the success of the project, as well as collect good ideas.
- The feared additional costs of purchasing organically grown food still form the largest resistance to change. It is possible to finance (in-part at least) the conversion to organic through optimising kitchen management and substituting expensive ingredients, including reducing the meat content of meals, buying more seasonal produce, and reducing costs associated with waste. To do so effectively, it is important to track costs in detail. This enables more effective assessment of where savings can be made. Using a cost calculator to estimate the additional expenses (such as www.oekolandbau.de) can also help with financing the conversion to organic menus. Resistance to change is often a result of simply missing the necessary information: take advantage of tastings, lectures, fairs and learning from others who have already implemented similar programmes.
- The cook and freeze approach is relatively expensive, which is an issue as public budgets are tight. If municipalities are servicing larger-sized establishments (catering to more than 120 people in one facility), then it is generally recommended to use fresh produce and own cooking facilities. However, this only makes economic sense if trained cooking staff can work with fitted kitchen equipment. This approach is particularly recommended for campus style establishments and/or facilities requiring children consume their afternoon meals there.

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For related information, please see European GPP criteria for [Food and Catering](#) and the [Technical Background Report](#). These criteria are currently under revision. All documents related to the revision process can be found [here](#).