

Our mission: To increase the VALUE of food service items provided to our members in the state of Illinois by utilizing a unified bid process and the combined purchasing POWER and professional GUIDANCE of our membership.

Who we are

The Northern Illinois Independent Purchasing Cooperative (NIIPC) began in 1995 through the joint effort of eleven charter districts. Our districts range from 500 students to 40,000 students, representing preschools through high schools and offering comprehensive food

service programs that include breakfast, lunch, before and after school snacks, vending, concessions and catering.

We are a group of food service professionals, some with many years' experience in the industry and some with fresh, new ideas brought from other industries and experiences. We have built strong relationships with our distributors and have become a vital presence in the food service industry.

What we offer

Save Money

Members benefit significantly through the buying power NIIPC membership brings. Our pricing history shows an average savings of 9%-35%.

Other cost benefits include:

- Full use of all USDA commodities, meaning less waste and more choice
- Direct-to-manufacturer pricing on selected, high-volume items

Save Time

With the NIIPC, experts prepare a unified bid, which complies with all government regulations. Some members have said that

the time they save in bid preparation alone is worth the price of membership. Time-saving benefits also include:

- Rebate tracking by the distributor; rebates are automatically credited to your account
- Nutritionally analyzed cycle menus that are coordinated with the bid items and USDA commodities

Power in Numbers

Join the NIIPC and become a part of a powerful negotiating team. As a member, you'll be able to:

- Learn from experienced food service professionals
- Share your experiences and knowledge with your peers
- Add your buying power to negotiate an effective bid

How it works

1 Call the **contact** member on the enclosed form, or complete the form and mail it as directed.

3 Have your School Board President and Secretary **sign** the inter-governmental agreement and membership form.

4 **Send** signed forms and application fee as directed in your membership packet.

5 **Schedule** a brief orientation meeting with a current NIIPC member by contacting the NIIPC Chair.

6 **Plan** to attend the NIIPC meetings. Only one is mandatory for at least one person from your district, but all are informative. You'll receive a directory of current members at the mandatory meeting.

7 **Order** on line and save even more time.

8 **Save money** and serve quality products.

2 **Look** for your membership packet in the mail. It will contain all the paperwork you need to join.

"[NIIPC members] are a wealth of information and [are] very helpful."

—Lynn McGill, Kinnikinnick School District

Frequently Asked Questions

Will I be able to purchase products I currently use?

Yes, even if an item is not on the bid, you can purchase it using the fixed fee set for that product group.

Will I be required to purchase from only one distributor?

No, the bid is awarded to a primary distributor. Members may have a secondary vendor. Member districts are required to purchase at least 80% of their items from the primary distributor.

How are service problems handled?

While individual districts resolve problems as they occur, we ask that they send a report to the co-op quality control chair so tracking can be done on service levels. Those issues can then be discussed at the mandatory meeting.

Will there still be contact with salespeople?

Yes, if you wish. Contact with the distributor's sales staff is based on each district's individual preference.

Must I put all of my items on the bid?

No. For example, some members bid produce weekly with local merchants.

How much time will each district spend on the process of bidding?

As much or as little as you want; there are subcommittees that work on the bid, and you're welcome to join in. Only the annual mandatory meeting is required.

How are decisions made?

Most decisions are made by a consensus of members attending the meeting at which the issue is presented.

Here's what our members have said about the NIIPC:

"As a member of the NIIPC, people know who you are...people associate you as a member of the co-op, and it's a great feeling."

Francesca Canzoneri,
Westmont CUSD

"If you have a problem large or small, [NIIPC members] will come to your aid and support you no matter what!"

Jan Waldvogel,
Will County School District 92

"Joining the co-op was the best move that our district has made."

Bonnie Wright,
Blue Ridge CUSD

Northern Illinois Independent Purchasing Cooperative

