**Appendix C -In-depth Manufacturer Interviews**

Introduction: The purpose of these interviews is to gather information from Manufacturers in order to develop extension publications and workshops where we can share insights, lessons, and best practices that help both manufacturers and farmers locate supply chain partners, develop efficient supply systems, negotiate fair contracts, and leverage the relationship in marketing.

***Introduction/History of your operation***

1. Can you please tell us a little about the history of your firm? We are interested in when the firm was first established and how it has changed over time.

***Ingredient sourcing/ relationships/ obstacles/ range***

1. What do you consider to be your key ingredients?

When you started, how did you source these ingredients?

1. How were the initial transactions structured (**formal contract, informal commitment, other**)?

What has changed over time?

Have you ever ended sourcing relationships? Why?

1. What are the three most important criteria you use when choosing a supplier for your firm's most important ingredient category? (prompts if necessary: year-round availability, price, quality, organic cert, nonGMO cert, gluten-free cert, other cert, food safety practices, minimum/maximum quantity for order, convenience of logistics, stories about ingredients, and local/regional sources)
2. What were your most significant obstacles (sourcing, distributing) and how has this changed over time (or as you grew)?
3. What was the original geographic range (local/national/global) of your distribution and did the range change as you grew? If it changed, did this influence your relationships with your suppliers?

***Purchases from Farms***

1. How much and what percentage (if any) of your key ingredients do you currently purchase directly from farmers? Do you anticipate that amount changing? How large are the farms that supply you and where are they located?
2. Are there challenges and opportunities specific to in working directly with farmers as ingredient suppliers?
3. Why do you source directly from farms? [For example: quality, reliability, or requests from customers (retailers, institutions, and final consumers) specifically request products made from ingredients produced by small and medium-sized and/or local farmers?
4. How did you “meet” your farmer suppliers – i.e., how did you identify them, make contact with them, and decide on establishing a business relationship with them?

***Marketing strategies***

1. Have the sources of your ingredients ever been part of your marketing strategies? For example, do you use ‘farm stories’ or “ingredients (local, organic, certified?)” as a marketing tool, have you ever? If so, has your ability to carry farm stories changed over time?
2. Do you consider the size and location of farms when you select your suppliers? If yes why?