



STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



**DATE:** April 1, 2026

**SUBJECT:** The Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) 2026-27 Grant Announcement

The Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 (also known as the 2008 Farm Bill) amended the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (NSLA) by adding section 19, the *Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program*. Under section 19 of the NSLA, the FFVP became a nationwide program, starting July 1, 2008, that operates in selected schools across the country.

For school year 2025-26, the Act provided an estimated \$242.6 million in funding nationwide, available as of October 1, 2025. Connecticut receives approximately \$3.6 million in FFVP funding annually.

The FFVP provides funding directly to schools for use in purchasing a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables to serve to students during the school day. Participating schools can distribute fruits and vegetables in a variety of ways, including kiosks throughout the school, in the classroom, and free vending machines. With the distribution of fresh fruits and vegetables, nutrition education activities are highly encouraged to support the program's goals. The goals of the FFVP are to: 1) create healthier school environments by providing nutritious food choices; 2) expand the variety of fruits and vegetables children experience; 3) increase children's fruit and vegetable consumption; and 4) make a difference in children's diets to impact their present and future health.

The level of funds provided to any one school depends on the enrollment of the schools that choose to participate in the FFVP, and the number of days per week that the FFVP is served. Selected schools must be elementary schools, which are defined as schools inclusive of any grade between kindergarten and grade 6 (e.g., Pre-K-6, K-12, and 5-8) where at least 50 percent of the children are eligible for free and reduced-price meals.

Connecticut's current free and reduced eligibility data indicate that the schools listed in the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) [List of Area Eligible Schools for the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program](#) and [List of Area Eligible Schools for the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program](#) meet the "at least 50 percent" criterion. These schools are encouraged to apply for the FFVP.

The CSDE will select FFVP schools based on the completed application (including all required signatures) and the level of eligibility for the schools. Schools are selected to participate in the FFVP based on the percentage of children eligible for free and reduced-price meals, with the highest priority given to schools with the highest percentages of low-income students, *to the maximum extent practicable*.

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It is important to note that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) requires the CSDE to allot between \$50 and \$75 in FFVP funding per pupil for the year. Therefore, the final selection of participating schools will be based on the number of applying schools and their student enrollment.

For each eligible school that would like to participate in the FFVP for school year 2025-26, please complete the online application in the [Connecticut Online Application and Claiming System for Child Nutrition Programs \(CNP System\)](#) by close of business on **May1, 2026**. Schools must use the CSDE's [Instructions for Submitting the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program \(FFVP\) Grant Application](#).

For more information about the FFVP, refer to the USDA's [Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program: A Handbook for Schools](#) and visit the CSDE's [Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program \(FFVP\)](#) webpage. For questions or additional assistance, please contact Jen Bove at 860-807-2044 or [jennifer.bove@ct.gov](mailto:jennifer.bove@ct.gov).

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