

The School Lunch Tray: February 9, 2022

Dear School Sponsors of Child Nutrition Programs:

The School Lunch Tray contains the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) weekly email notifications for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) school nutrition programs. This week's topics are listed below.

Action Items

- USDA Foods DoD Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program: Notify Connecticut FDP by Tuesday, February 15, 2022, if DoD Fresh Amount is Incorrect
- USDA Foods Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) Bonus Orders: Deadline February 15, 2022

Need to Know

- USDA Foods Catalog Opening Soon
- USDA Foods Update: Bonus Pollack Frozen Fish Sticks
- New Final Rule: Child Nutrition Programs: Transitional Standards for Milk, Whole Grains, and Sodium: Effective July 1, 2022
- Reminder: Beverage Requirements for Public Schools
- Resource Roundup: CSDE's Forms for School Nutrition Programs Webpage

Good to Know

- USDA Webinar: Transitional Standards for Milk, Whole Grains, and Sodium: Wednesday, February 16, 2022
- New School Meals Training Opportunities from Team Nutrition: School Breakfast Wednesday, March 9, 2022
- Updated Team Nutrition Resource: Child Nutrition Program Meal Service During Coronavirus (COVID-19): Best Practices for Parent Pick-Up of Meals and Snacks

Please review and share with appropriate staff members. For previous versions of the School Lunch Tray, visit the CSDE's [School Lunch Tray and Table Talk](#) webpage.



Action Items

USDA Foods DoD Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program: Notify Connecticut FDP by Tuesday, February 15, 2022, if DoD Fresh Amount is Incorrect

The USDA Department of Defense (DoD) Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program allows schools to use USDA Foods entitlement dollars to buy fresh produce. The program is operated by the Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) at the Department of Defense. The DoD program is an option to all Recipient Agencies (RAs) in Connecticut. There is a \$150 minimum drop per site. You can choose the amount of entitlement you would like use in this program, and there is no cap on the dollar amount you can allocate towards the DoD Fresh program.

All USDA DoD allocations from school year (SY) 2021-22 will roll over in full to SY 2022-23. These allocations were rolled over from the prior year (July 1, 2020, through July 30, 2021). As a reminder, many adjustments were made to DoD accounts as RAs added dollars and/or moved dollars to other vendors. **Please double-check that the correct amount was entered into WBSCM.**

If WBSCM does not have the correct DoD Fresh Amount, contact Allison Calhoun-White at allison.calhoun-white@ct.gov by **Tuesday, February 15, 2022**, with the requested DoD allocation amount for SY 2023 so it can be adjusted in WBSCM before placing orders. RAs can check the amount allocated in WBSCM by running the Entitlement Bonus Summary Report. Refer to the FDP's [WBSCM Training Guide](#) for further assistance on running the Entitlement Bonus Summary Report. Instructions start on page 34.

Entitlement/Bonus Summary Report

Sold-To State	Program Year	Beginning Balance	DOD Fresh Amount	Ent. Order Total	Ent. Pounds	Ent. Balance	Bonus Order Total
CT	2022	127,661.27	33,000.00	0.00		94,661.27	0.00

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To add additional delivery sites or add the DoD Program for the first time, please e-mail Annette Rivera at annette.rivera@ct.gov and Allison Calhoun-White at allison.calhoun-white@ct.gov prior to placing any orders in WBSCM. Include the information below.

If you are a **current DoD customer**, please provide:

1. name, address, and e-mail contact for any new sites
2. District Customer CD Number (starts with OCT) from the FFAVORS ordering system



If you are a **new customer to DoD**, please provide:

1. allocation amount for SY 23;
2. name, address, and e-mail contact for the person who will be placing orders in FFAVORS;
3. name, address, and e-mail contact for any requested delivery locations. Reminder: The minimum drop amount for DoD orders is \$150/site.
4. indicate you are requesting to be a **new user** of the DoD Program

The vendor for the DoD program is Hartford Provision Company. The FDP team will provide updates regarding any changes to the contract or vendor as soon as the USDA provides any information.

USDA Foods Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) Bonus Orders: Deadline February 15, 2022.

Reminder: The CCC bonus catalog is open and will close at the end of the day on Tuesday, **February 15, 2022**. When submitting orders, enter HPC when asked for a destination. Be sure to use the [CCC Bonus Items Ordering Worksheet](#) updated with new pricing on Thursday, February 3, 2022. Refer to the [February 2, 2022, School Lunch Tray](#) for details.

Need to Know

USDA Foods Catalog Opening Soon

Information about the USDA Foods catalog opening will be announced in next week's School Lunch Tray. The catalog will open on **Thursday, February 17, 2022**. All resources will be updated and available to assist RAs in placing orders.

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USDA Foods Update: Bonus Pollack Frozen Fish Sticks

The item below had an expected delivery date of March 15, 2022, but was not purchased due to current vendor constraints.

- Bonus item material code #110850, Fish, Alaskan Pollock, frozen breaded sticks, 2, 20# bags

These orders have been postponed until next school year when they will go back out for another invitation to bid. The expected delivery date is late August or early September. The FDP team will update RAs when more information is available.

New Final Rule: Child Nutrition Programs: Transitional Standards for Milk, Whole Grains, and Sodium: Effective July 1, 2022

On February 7, 2022, the USDA released the new final rule, [Child Nutrition Programs: Transitional Standards for Milk, Whole Grains, and Sodium](#). This final rule establishes the following requirements beginning July 1, 2022:

- **Milk:** Allows the option to offer flavored low-fat (1%) milk in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP); and for ages 6 and older in the Special Milk Program (SMP) and Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). The NSLP and SBP must offer a variety of milk choices (unflavored or flavored low-fat milk and unflavored or flavored nonfat milk) and at least one choice must be unflavored milk.
- **Whole grains:** At least 80% of the grains served in the NSLP and SBP each week must be whole grain-rich. All other grains must be enriched.
- **Sodium:** The weekly sodium limit for the NSLP and SBP will remain at the current level for school year (SY) 2022-23. For the NSLP only, there will be a 10% decrease in the sodium limit for SY 2023-24. This aligns with the U.S Food and Drug Administration's recently released guidance that establishes voluntary sodium reduction targets for processed, packaged, and prepared foods in the U.S. ([Guidance for Industry: Voluntary Sodium Reduction Goals](#))

All other nutrition standards, including fruit and vegetable requirements, will remain the same as the 2012 standards for school meals. For more information, visit the USDA's [Transitional Standards for Milk, Whole Grains and Sodium - Final Rule](#) webpage.

The USDA encourages stakeholders to submit written comments on this final rule by **March 24, 2022**, at <https://www.regulations.gov/document/FNS-2020-0038-2936>.

For additional background about school meals and the rulemaking process ahead, refer to the resources below.

- Webpage: [Building Back Better with School Meals](#)

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- Fact Sheet: [Child Nutrition Programs: Transitional Standards for Milk, Whole Grains and Sodium](#)
- Infographic: [The Road Ahead: Building Back Better with School Meals](#)
- Infographic: [Ten Reasons to Build Back Even Better with School Meals!](#)

The CSDE will be providing additional information as it becomes available.

Reminder: Beverage Requirements for Public Schools

All beverages available for sale to students in Connecticut public schools must comply with the state beverage statute (C.G.S. Section 10-221q) and the USDA's Smart Snacks beverage standards. The state beverage statute applies at all times to all beverages available for sale to students on school premises, including beverages sold as part of and separately from reimbursable meals and Afterschool Snack Program (ASP) snacks. Smart Snacks applies to all beverages sold to students on school premises separately from reimbursable meals during the school day.

Public schools can sell only the following five categories of beverages to students: 1) milk; 2) 100 percent juice; 3) nondairy milk substitutes; 4) beverages containing only water and juice; and 5) water. Each category must meet specific requirements, which are summarized in the CSDE's resource, [Allowable Beverages in Connecticut Public Schools](#). The CSDE's [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#) webpage identifies commercial beverage products that comply with the state beverage statute and the Smart Snacks beverage standards.

Beverages that do not comply with the state beverage statute cannot be sold to students on school premises unless the local board of education or school governing authority has voted to allow beverage exemptions and the sales meet the following exemption criteria of the state beverage statutes: 1) the sale is in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend; 2) the sale is at the location of the event; and 3) the beverages are not sold from a vending machine or school store.

For more information, refer to the CSDE's presentation, [Beverage Requirements for Connecticut Public Schools](#), and visit the CSDE's [Beverage Requirements](#) webpage.

Resource Roundup: CSDE's Forms for School Nutrition Programs Webpage

Looking for a specific form for the USDA's school nutrition programs? The CSDE's [Forms for School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage contains an alphabetical listing of forms by category. The current revision date is indicated after each form.

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Good to Know

USDA Webinar: Transitional Standards for Milk, Whole Grains, and Sodium: Wednesday, February 16, 2022

The USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is hosting a webinar for school food authorities and other local Program operators on Wednesday, February 16, 2022, from 2:00-3:00 p.m. on the *Final Rule: Transitional Standards for Milk, Whole Grains, and Sodium*. This final rule is providing schools and their industry partners with the certainty they need for the upcoming school years, while FNS works collaboratively on permanent standards that will build on the progress that has been made over the past decade. The transitional standards established for milk, whole grains, and sodium are practical standards that continue to promote nutrition while reflecting the current realities and challenges schools are facing.

This webinar will be offered with closed captioning. Participants who require a different accessibility tool to participate in this webinar, please reach out by Friday, February 11, 2022, to Sheila Kopczynski at sheila.kopczynski@usda.gov or 208-202-2811.

Please click this link to join the webinar:

<https://www.zoomgov.com/j/1616217461?pwd=SHJ6SVJ4TzN6RXlSdnVVSjhua3J6QT09>

Passcode: 903860

Or One tap mobile:

US: +16692545252,,1616217461#,,,,*903860# or +16692161590,,1616217461#,,,,*903860#

Or Telephone:

Dial (for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location):

US: +1-669-254-5252 or +1-669-216-1590 or +1-646-828-7666 or +1-551-285-1373

Webinar ID: 161 621 7461

Passcode: 903860

International numbers available: <https://www.zoomgov.com/u/aAbgSXR4w>

New School Meals Training Opportunities from Team Nutrition: School Breakfast Wednesday, March 9, 2022

USDA's Team Nutrition initiative is offering a new webinar series, Meal Talk Webinars. These webinars provide interactive trainings on hot topics related to school meals.

The first Meal Talk webinar will focus on **School Breakfast**, and will be held on **Wednesday, March 9, 2022**, from 3:00 to 4:00 p.m. This webinar will provide an overview of USDA's School Breakfast Program including the benefits of school breakfast, program requirements, and resources for navigating supply chain challenges. It will also feature training materials from Team Nutrition on hot topics in school breakfast, including offering meats and meat alternates, offering smoothies, and best practices to reduce added sugars.

For more information and to register, please visit <https://usda-fns-events.webex.com/usda-fns-events/onstage/g.php?MTID=e0e07d9670247b6a994e9d98a7d737f7f>.

This webinar may count toward USDA Professional Standards for School Nutrition Programs, Key Area 1000: Nutrition and Key Topics 1100: Menu Planning. Certificates of participation will be provided for those who attend the entire webinar. The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and the Commission on Dietetic Registration have also approved this webinar for 1.0 hours of Continuing Professional Education Units (CPEUs), Activity Number 168352.

This webinar will be offered with closed captioning. Participants who require a different accessibility tool to participate in this webinar, please reach out by Friday, February 23, 2022, to Sheila Kopczynski at sheila.kopczynski@usda.gov or 208-202-2811.

Updated Team Nutrition Resource: Child Nutrition Program Meal Service During Coronavirus (COVID-19): Best Practices for Parent Pick-Up of Meals and Snacks

USDA's Team Nutrition initiative recently updated their publication, [Child Nutrition Program Meal Service During Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): Best Practices for Parent Pick-Up of Meals and Snacks](#). This revised publication includes information and language about SY 2021-22 waivers and flexibilities, as well as additional tips for improving traffic flow, verifying eligibility, managing alternative pick-up options, and communicating with families. Many of these new suggestions were gathered from schools, child care, and summer meals sites that have successfully implemented parent pick-up in their communities during the COVID-19 public health emergency.



For more information, visit the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) [School Lunch Tray and Table Talk](#) webpage, or contact the [school nutrition programs staff](#) in the CSDE's Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841.

This document is available at https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SLT/2022/SLT_02_09_2022.pdf.

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- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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