

The School Lunch Tray: September 7, 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.

Need to Know

- New CSDE Resource: School Meals Assistance Revenue for Transition (SMART) Funds Estimator
- Transitioning to Standard Child Nutrition Operations in School Year (SY) 2022-2023 – USDA Webinar Recording and Questions and Answers
- Updated CSDE Resources on Federal and State Requirements for Competitive Foods
- USDA Foods Reminder on Refrigerated Cheeses
- Reminder: USDA Foods Update on Inventory from School Year 2021-22
- School Nutrition Association of Connecticut (SNACT) Conference: Navigating Nutrition: From Choppy Seas to Smooth Sailing! October 14-15, 2022
- Resource Roundup: Considerations for Implementing Web-based Applications

Good to Know

- September is National Food Safety Education Month
- USDA Webinar Recording Available: Unpaid Meals: Best Practices to Ensure Student Access to Meals

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.



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Need to Know

New CSDE Resource: School Meals Assistance Revenue for Transition (SMART) Funds Estimator

The CSDE has a new resource for local educational agencies (LEAs) participating in the SMART funds opportunity. The [SMART Funds Estimator](#) helps LEAs estimate the length of time that school meals can be offered at no cost to students in school year 2022-23.

Transitioning to Standard Child Nutrition Operations in School Year (SY) 2022-2023 – USDA Webinar Recording and Questions and Answers

The USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) recently released the [Transitioning to Standard Child Nutrition Operations and the Keep Kids Fed Act of 2022 Follow-Up Questions and Answers](#) from Webinars for School Year 2022-2023. These questions and answers are a follow-up to the live FNS webinars held on April 18, 2022, May 12, 2022, and July 6, 2022.

Recorded Webinars:

- April 18: [Transitioning to Normal Child Nutrition Operations](#)
- May 12: [Transitioning to Normal Child Nutrition Operations: Additional Waiver Opportunities](#)
- July 6: [Overview of the Keep Kids Fed Act and New Supply Chain Assistance Funding](#)
- Additional Resources: [Child Nutrition Flexibilities for Summer 2022 and School Year 2022-23](#)

For more information, visit the “[Transitioning to Standard Operations for School Year 2022-23](#)” section of the CSDE’s Operating Child Nutrition Programs during COVID-19 webpage.

Updated CSDE Resources on Federal and State Requirements for Competitive Foods

The chart below summarizes recently updated CSDE resources that address the federal and state laws for selling and giving competitive foods to students in Connecticut public schools. Competitive foods are foods and beverages available for sale to students on school premises separately from reimbursable meals through the USDA’s Child Nutrition Programs. Please discard any previous documents dated prior to **August or September 2022** and replace with the updated versions.

Note: The federal and state laws for competitive foods apply differently to public schools that choose the healthy food option of Healthy Food Certification (HFC) under Section 10-215f of the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.), non-HFC public schools, and private schools and residential child care institutions (RCCIs). For an overview of the federal and state laws and when they apply, refer to the CSDE’s [Overview of Federal and State Laws for Competitive Foods in Connecticut Public Schools, Private Schools, and Residential Child Care Institutions](#), and visit the “[Overview of Requirements](#)” section of the CSDE’s [Competitive Foods in Schools](#) webpage.

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Topic	HFC Public Schools	Non-HFC Public Schools	Private Schools and RCCIs
Webpage: location of resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “HFC Public Schools” section of the CSDE’s Competitive Foods in Schools webpage • “Related Resources” section of the CSDE’s HFC webpage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Non-HFC Public Schools” section of the CSDE’s Competitive Foods in Schools webpage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Private Schools and RCCIs” section of the CSDE’s Competitive Foods in Schools webpage.
Competitive Foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connecticut Competitive Foods Regulations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connecticut Competitive Foods Regulations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connecticut Competitive Foods Regulations
Complying with State and Federal Laws	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requirements for Competitive Foods in HFC Public Schools • Resources for Meeting the Federal and State Requirements for Competitive Foods in Schools • Summary Chart: State and Federal Requirements for Competitive Foods in HFC Public Schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requirements for Competitive Foods in Non-HFC Public Schools • Resources for Meeting the Federal and State Requirements for Competitive Foods in Schools • Summary Chart: Federal and State Requirements for Competitive Foods in Non-HFC Public Schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requirements for Competitive Foods in Private Schools and RCCIs • Resources for Meeting the Federal and State Requirements for Competitive Foods in Schools • Summary Chart: Federal and State Requirements for Competitive Foods in Private Schools and RCCIs
Culinary Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requirements for Foods and Beverages in Culinary Programs in HFC Public Schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requirements for Foods and Beverages in Culinary Programs in Non-HFC Public Schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requirements for Foods and Beverages in Culinary Programs in Private Schools and RCCIs
Fundraisers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requirements for Food and Beverage Fundraisers in HFC Public Schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requirements for Food and Beverage Fundraisers in Non-HFC Public Schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requirements for Food and Beverage Fundraisers in Private Schools and RCCIs

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Topic	HFC Public Schools	Non-HFC Public Schools	Private Schools and RCCIs
School Stores	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requirements for Foods and Beverages in School Stores in HFC Public Schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requirements for Foods and Beverages in School Stores in Non-HFC Public Schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requirements for Foods and Beverages in School Stores in Private Schools and RCCIs
Vending Machines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requirements for Foods and Beverages in Vending Machines in HFC Public Schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requirements for Foods and Beverages in Vending Machines in Non-HFC Public Schools: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requirements for Foods and Beverages in Vending Machines in Private Schools and RCCIs

USDA Foods Reminder on Refrigerated Cheeses

Mozzarella String Cheese has a 90-day warrantee from the pack date. Shredded Cheddar Cheese has a 120-day warrantee from the pack date. Please keep this in mind if you have any of this product at the HPC warehouse. So far, the below pack dates have been received at HPC:

Product	Best used by	Pack date
Cheese, cheddar, shredded white	December 10, 2022	August 12, 2022
Cheese, mozzarella, part skim string 1 oz	November 20, 2022	August 22, 2022 August 28, 2022

Reminder: USDA Foods Update on Inventory from School Year 2021-22

As the USDA continues to experience supply chain issues with procuring USDA Foods, the CSDE and HPC stored remaining USDA Foods from last school year over the summer. Some foods that were close to their expiration dates were donated over the summer. Therefore, not all allocations will be available for ordering. Recipient Agencies will have one final chance to order any remaining inventory on their first USDA Foods Order date.

All HPC allocation reports will contain products from last year and new school year 2022-23. All remaining allocations from school year 2021-22 must be ordered by the end of September. Remaining inventory that is not ordered by the end of September will be added to the “Excess USDA Foods” ordering form or donated locally.

Please contact the Connecticut Food Distribution Program (FDP) Staff for any questions regarding USDA Foods. Contact Steve Cop at Scop@HPCFS.com for questions regarding scheduling deliveries.

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School Nutrition Association of Connecticut (SNACT) Conference: Navigating Nutrition: From Choppy Seas to Smooth Sailing! October 14-15, 2022

Mark your calendars! The SNACT conference *Navigating Nutrition: From Choppy Seas to Smooth Sailing!* will take place October 14-15, 2022, at the Mystic Marriott. This two-day conference features something for everyone including hands-on workshops and the following dynamic speakers: Kern Halls and Joe Pettit. The conference will also include the SNACT's 73rd **Food & Industry Trade Show** on Friday, October 14, 2022. **Note:** There will not be a separate USDA food show this year.

[Agenda](#) highlights include:

- CSDE 2022-23 Update
- Powering a New Role Model: Tips to Building a Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Kitchen Team
- Ways to Improve Morale, Have Fun, and Increase Participation
- Recipe Workshop

For registration information, visit [SNACT annual conference](#). SNACT members have a discounted rate. Refer to the [SNACT 2022 Conference Rates](#) for more information.

Resource Roundup: Considerations for Implementing Web-based Applications

As districts adopt more sophisticated application certification systems, local educational agencies (LEAs) must have measures in place to ensure that a computerized application for free and reduced-price meals or free milk (i.e., a web-based application) and supporting materials comply with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) regulations. This includes ensuring that non-required information (such as date of birth, school, grade, and student ID) do not block the parent or guardian from completing the application if they choose not to complete these specific areas. For more information, refer to the CSDE's [Considerations For Implementing Web-Based Applications](#).

Good to Know

September is National Food Safety Education Month

The Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) National Food Safety Education Month (NFSEM) provides 30 days for health educators at the national, state, and local levels to focus attention on the fundamentals of buying, storing, preparing, and serving food as safely as possible. This year, FDA's NFSEM program is refocusing on the four basic messages of food safety at home: clean; separate, don't cross-contaminate; cook; and chill.

FDA offers [NFSEM resources](#) all year round for consumers and educators on a variety of subjects, including learning who is most at risk for foodborne illnesses and how to avoid food waste while maintaining food safety.

Additional Information

- [Safe Food Handling: What You Need to Know](#)
- FDA's [Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition \(CFSAN\) Education Resource Library](#): Downloadable food safety publications and videos

USDA Webinar Recording Available: Unpaid Meals: Best Practices to Ensure Student Access to Meals

On August 24, 2022, FNS delivered a live webinar featuring panelists from the Minnesota and Virginia state agencies sharing proactive strategies to prevent and manage unpaid meal charges as schools return to standard counting and claiming in school year 2022-23. The [webinar recording](#) is now available. For additional guidance, visit the USDA's [Unpaid Meal Charges](#) webpage. This webpage contains policy guidance, best practice resources, and other tools to overcome the challenge of unpaid meal charges.



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](#) at the Connecticut State Department of Education, School Health, Nutrition and Family Services, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841.

This document is available at https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SLT/2022/SLT_09_07_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; or
2. **fax:** (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. **email:** program.intake@usda.gov

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