

The School Lunch Tray: November 30, 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

- SMART Funds Next Steps

Need to Know

- No Table Talk on Thursday, December 1, 2022
- Now Available for School Year 2022-23: CSDE's Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12
- USDA Webinar Recording Available: Supply Chain Assistance (SCA) Best Practices for State Agencies and School Food Authorities
- How to Sign Up for USDA Updates
- Resource Roundup: CSDE's Resource Lists for the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 and Preschool

Good to Know

- Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN) Training Opportunities Webpage
- Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Issues Guidance on Food Allergen Labeling Requirements
- Promote Physical Activity and Healthy Eating with New Move Your Way Resources
- Webinar, January 26, 2023: Where Our School Milk Comes From: A conversation with a New England Dairy Farmer

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

SMART Funds Next Steps

As a reminder, the SMART funds remaining balance **cannot** be used on equipment. Please review the information below regarding the next steps for SMART funds.

Note: The next steps below do **not** apply to school food authorities (SFAs) that have submitted the [Notice to Conclude](#) and will be using partial SMART funds and funds from the nonprofit school foodservice account (NSFSA) to extend the serving student meals at no cost for the entire month. Please disregard.

The next steps below apply to SFAs that meet either of the following conditions:

- The SFA **has submitted** the Notice to Conclude and the submitted [Projection Calculator](#) **indicates that the SFA will have a remaining balance** after the Conclusion Date listed in the Notice to Conclude; or
- The SFA **has not submitted** the Notice to Conclude.

Next Steps

- Continue to evaluate SMART funds for your district/school and submit the [Notice to Conclude](#) as applicable.
- All SMART funds **must be used to support meals free of charge** for students. Therefore, please note the following choices and select one of the following options that is best for your district/school.
 1. The SFA may continue to offer meals free of charge to students with their remaining SMART funds balance for a partial month and if the SFA has excess funds (more than three-months operating costs), the SFA may use excess funds from the SFA's NSFSA or other allowable funds (donations, general fund, etc.) to continue the meals free of charge for students for the remainder of the month. If the SFA decides to take this course of action, the SFA will need to submit a [Notice to Conclude](#) listing the last day of the month that partial SMART Funds will be used and funds from the NSFSA will be used.
 2. The SFA may continue to offer meals free of charge to students with their remaining SMART funds balance for a partial month ending free meals on the day after the SMART funds run out. If the SFA decides to take this course of action, the SFA will need to submit the [SMART Funds Remaining Balance Calculator](#) after the SMART funds run out to document the days the SFA uses the SMART funds. The CSDE will pay the remaining balance after the Remaining Balance Calculator is submitted. The Notice to Conclude must list the last day of the final full month that the SFA will pay the household share for reduced-price and paid school meals using monthly SMART funds reimbursement.

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3. If the SFA determines that they do not wish to use the remaining SMART funds balance identified in the Projection Calculator after the conclusion date listed on the Notice to Conclude, these funds will be forfeited.

Please contact Fionnuala Brown (fionnuala.brown@ct.gov) or Greg King (greg.king@ct.gov) with questions.

Need to Know

No Table Talk on Thursday, December 1, 2022

Table Talk will not be held on Thursday, December 1, 2022.

Now Available for School Year 2022-23: CSDE's Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12

The CSDE's *Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12* (MPG) for school year 2022-23 is now available on the CSDE's [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals](#) webpage. Please discard any downloads of the 2021-22 version and replace with the updated version. Bookmark the webpage for easy access.

The MPG contains comprehensive information and guidance on planning menus to meet the USDA meal patterns for grades K-12 in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), and Seamless Summer Option (SSO) of the NSLP, based on current USDA regulations and policy and Connecticut statutes and regulations. The sections of the MPG include:

- Cover and Contents
- 1 – Meal Patterns
- 2 – Menu Records
- 3– Meal Components
- 4 – Weekly Requirements
- 5 – Meal Service
- 6 – Dietary Specifications
- 7 – Resources
- Glossary

An overview of each section is contained in the document, [Overview of Contents for the Menu Planning Guide for School Meals](#).

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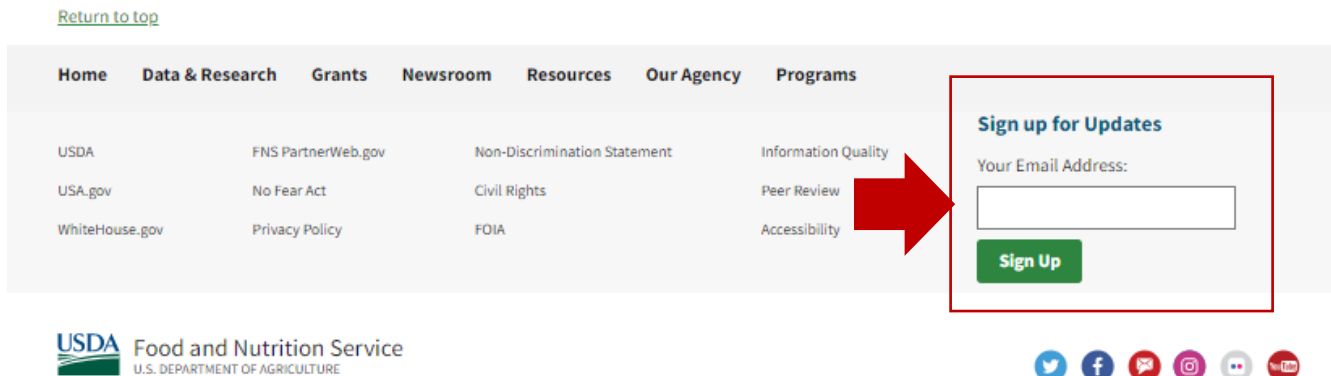
USDA Webinar Recording Available: Supply Chain Assistance (SCA) Best Practices for State Agencies and School Food Authorities

On September 26, 2022, the USDA conducted a webinar, Supply Chain Assistance (SCA) Best Practices for State Agencies and School Food Authorities. The [webinar recording](#) is now available

How to Sign Up for USDA Updates

The USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) offers email updates on a wide variety of topics related to the Child Nutrition Programs. You can choose to receive updates for specific programs, such as the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), Special Milk Program (SMP), Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), and Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). You can also sign up for other topics, such as USDA initiatives, USDA Foods, food safety, school meals, Team Nutrition (e.g., nutrition education resources and recipes), and webinars.

To sign up, visit <https://www.fns.usda.gov/team-nutrition>. Scroll down to the bottom of the page. Enter your email address under “Sign up for Updates” in the box on the right, then click “Sign Up.” This will bring you to a screen where you can choose your update preferences.



Resource Roundup: CSDE's Resource Lists for the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 and Preschool

Updated resource lists (November 2022) for the meal patterns for grades K-12 and preschool are now available.

- **[Resources for the School Meal Patterns for Grades K-12](#)**: Includes resources and websites to assist school food authorities with meeting the USDA meal pattern and crediting requirements for grades K-12 in the NSLP, SBP, Seamless Summer Option (SSO), and Afterschool Snack Program (ASP). Links to this document are also available on the CSDE's [Program Guidance for School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage (under "Resource Lists") and the "[Related Resources](#)" section of the CSDE's Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs webpage (under "Resources for Menu Planning").
 - **[Resources for the Preschool Meal Patterns](#)**: Includes resources and websites to assist SFAs with meeting the USDA's preschool meal pattern and crediting requirements for the NSLP, SBP, SSO, and ASP. Links to this document are also available on the CSDE's [Program Guidance for School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage (under "Resource Lists") and the [Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.
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Good to Know

Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN) Training Opportunities Webpage

For links to a variety of upcoming virtual and in person training sessions offered by the ICN in 2023, visit the [ICN webpage](#).

Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Issues Guidance on Food Allergen Labeling Requirements

On November 29, 2022, the FDA issued two guidance documents about food allergen labeling requirements to help the food industry meet the requirements to list any major food allergen on the labels of FDA-regulated foods. These documents include draft and final guidance. To access these documents, visit [FDA Issues Guidance on Food Allergen Labeling Requirements](#). This webpage includes information on how to submit comments on the draft guidance.

Note: The [Food Allergen Labeling and Consumer Protection Act \(FALCPA\) of 2004](#) identified eight foods as major food allergens: milk, eggs, fish, shellfish, tree nuts, peanuts, wheat, and soybeans. The [Food Allergy Safety, Treatment, Education, and Research Act of 2021 \(FASTER Act\)](#) adds sesame to the list of major food allergens effective January 1, 2023, which will make it the ninth major food allergen recognized in the U.S. For more information, visit the FDA's [Food Allergies](#) webpage.

Promote Physical Activity and Healthy Eating with New Move Your Way Resources

The U.S Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion developed the [Move Your Way® campaign](#) in 2018 to share key recommendations from the [second edition of the Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans](#). HHS recently released [new Move Your Way resources](#) for consumers that highlight simple steps people can take to get active and eat healthy.

Each resource is available in English and Spanish and uses a personal story to give simple, actionable tips for getting active and eating healthy. The stories are based on messaging from Move Your Way and the USDA's [MyPlate campaign](#), which promotes guidance from the [Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#).

Webinar, January 26, 2023: Where Our School Milk Comes From: A conversation with a New England Dairy Farmer

Have you been fielding questions or comments about the milk you serve? Bring your questions about farming practices to New England Dairy's conversation with dairy farmer, Melissa Griffin. Melissa will also discuss cow care, technology, and milk safety on the farm. Participants will be entered for a chance to win a cow spot wrapped milk cooler.

- *Date and time:* Thursday, January 26, 2023, from 2:00 – 3:00 p.m.
- *Registration information and official rules:* <https://www.newenglanddairy.com/class/where-our-milk-comes-from-a-behind-the-scenes-look-at-dairy-farming-in-the-northeast/>
- *Continuing education units (CEU):* 1

Funding for this webinar is provided by the Connecticut Milk Promotion Board and New England Dairy.



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_11_30_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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