

## The School Lunch Tray: February 22, 2023

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**

- School Meals Assistance Revenue for Transition (SMART) Funds 2.0 Opt-in Survey Due February 24, 2023
- Survey about Events for National School Breakfast Week: March 6-10, 2023: Due February 28, 2023

### **Need to Know**

- Revised Link for USDA's Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form
- Where to Find USDA Foods in Schools Product Information
- Resource Roundup: Key Information for Connecticut School Business Officials about School Nutrition Programs

### **Good to Know**

- New Feature Alert for USDA's Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool
- Lessons That Matter: Strategies to Translate Pandemic-Era School Meal Innovations to Common Practice

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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## Action Items

### School Meals Assistance Revenue for Transition (SMART) Funds 2.0 Opt-in Survey Due February 24, 2023

Pursuant to House Bill (HB) 6671, an additional \$60 million of federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds was allocated to the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) for the Free School Meals for Children grant, which is referred to as SMART funds 2.0. Beginning March 1, 2023, the additional funding will allow eligible school food authorities (SFAs) operating the NSLP and SBP to offer meals at no cost to students for the remainder of school year (SY) 2022-23.

SFAs electing to receive these funds must notify the CSDE of their intent to accept these funds by completing the [SMART Funds 2.0 Opt-In Survey](#) by **February 24, 2023**. Please refer to [Operational Memorandum No. 06-23: School Meals Assistance Revenue for Transition \(SMART\) Funds 2.0](#) for important information. Note that the Operational Memorandum includes Attachment 1: *School Meals Assistance Revenue for Transition (SMART) Funds 2.0: Questions and Answers for School Food Authorities*.

Questions may be directed to your [school nutrition team member](#).

### SMART Funds 2.0 Information Session: Friday, February 24, 2023

Date: February 24, 2023

Time: 1:00-1:30 p.m.

Platform: Microsoft TEAMS (use log in information below, you do not need a Microsoft account to join)

#### Microsoft Teams meeting

*Join on your computer, mobile app or room device*

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 242 748 968 542

Passcode: 9tSTjj

[Download Teams](#) | [Join on the web](#)

*Or call in (audio only)*

[+1 860-840-2075..934864166#](#) United States, Hartford

Phone Conference ID: 934 864 166#

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## The School Lunch Tray: February 22, 2023

### Survey about Events for National School Breakfast Week: March 6-10, 2023: Due February 27, 2023

The CSDE is looking for schools that are conducting special events to promote National School Breakfast Week during March 6-10, 2023. The USDA Northeast Regional Office (NERO) would like to attend some local events. Please complete this [brief survey](#) to provide information about your National School Breakfast Week event by **Monday, February 27, 2023**.

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### Need to Know

#### Revised Link for USDA's Form AD-3027: USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form

On May 5, 2022, the USDA Food and Nutrition Service's (FNS) Civil Rights Division issued a memorandum informing FNS program recipients that the prohibition of discrimination based on sex in Title IX and the Food and Nutrition Act includes gender identity and sexual orientation. The changes impacted the USDA nondiscrimination statement (NDS) and the And Justice for All (AJFA) posters. For more information, refer to "Revised USDA Nondiscrimination Statement and "And Justice for All" Posters" in the [School Lunch Tray from July 6, 2022](#).

- The USDA's 2022 nondiscrimination statement (NDS) includes a link to [Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#). The USDA has updated this link. The previous content of the 2022 USDA NDS remains unchanged.
- The complete USDA NDS including the updated link is available on the CSDE's [Nondiscrimination Statements](#) webpage. The USDA NDS statement is available in Spanish and many other languages on the USDA FNS [Nondiscrimination Statement](#) webpage.
- The CSDE reminds school food authorities (SFAs) that all documents, pamphlets, websites, and similar materials should be updated with the 2022 USDA NDS, including the correct link for Form AD-3027.

The CSDE is working to update the USDA NDS on all CSDE publications and resources for Child Nutrition Programs.

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#### Where to Find USDA Foods in Schools Product Information

The USDA has four main resources to help schools find information about USDA Foods.

1. The [USDA Foods Available List](#) is updated each year in December/January and includes every food item available for purchase for the following school year. This list contains basic information such as the Web-Based Supply Chain Management (WBSCM) material code and description, food group where the food item belongs, form (i.e., canned, frozen, dried, fresh), pack size, and if the material is a whole grain or has a commercial Kosher certification.

## The School Lunch Tray: February 22, 2023

2. The [USDA Foods in Schools Product Information Sheets](#) are organized by food group and can be identified by their USDA Foods Description and WBSCM material code. These are useful for menu planning as they provide a more detailed product description, crediting and nutrition information, case yield, and culinary tips and recipes. The Product Information Sheets are more detailed than the USDA Foods Available List, but less detailed and technical than the product specification. *The Product Information Sheets are expected to be phased out by December 2023 and replaced by the USDA Foods Database.*
3. [Product Specifications](#) can be found on the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) website. Products can be searched by food type (e.g., fruits, vegetables, eggs, chicken, dairy) and form. Each product specification contains detailed information such as defined serving sizes, limits on specific nutrients, ingredients that are included or restricted, which commercial kosher certifications a product may have, or if a product is raw or cooked.
4. The [USDA Foods Database](#) provides access to vendor-specific nutrition, allergen, and ingredient information for direct delivered USDA Foods for Child Nutrition Programs. Products can be searched by food category and WBSCM material code. The USDA Foods Database has similar information to the Product Information Sheets but also includes nutrient, allergen, ingredient, and certification information unique to each vendor that supplies a particular USDA Foods product. *The USDA Foods Database will replace the Product Information Sheets when they are phased out.*

Links to these resources are also available from the CSDE's [Food Distribution Program \(USDA Foods\)](#) webpage.

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### Resource Roundup: Key Information for Connecticut School Business Officials about School Nutrition Programs

Looking for an overview of the information that business officials need to know about the school nutrition programs? The CSDE's resource, [Key Information for Connecticut School Business Officials about School Nutrition Programs](#), can help. This document provides an overview of important information and key resources for Connecticut school business officials regarding the oversight of the USDA's school nutrition programs operated by the district's school food authority (SFA). Please share this information with your school business officials.

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## Good to Know

### **New Feature Alert for USDA’s Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool**

New capabilities for director and manager users are now available on the USDA’s [Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool \(PSTTT\)](#). The “View Employee List” and “Search Employees” pages under the “Employees” menu are now one page. The “View Employees” page which has a search function, now has the option to hide inactive employees from view. Users have the capability to filter the list of employees by school year and assigned school. The option to hide inactive employees is also available on the “Log Training” page.

For additional information about the PSTTT, refer to the USDA’s recorded webinars linked at the bottom of the [Professional Standards Resources](#) webpage. Additional help for using the PSTTT, such as the user guide and training videos, can be found under the “Help” menu. Please contact [cnpntab@usda.gov](mailto:cnpntab@usda.gov) for further assistance with the PSTTT.

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### **Lessons That Matter: Strategies to Translate Pandemic-Era School Meal Innovations to Common Practice**

Share Our Strength recently released a new report, [Lessons That Matter | Strategies to Translate Pandemic-Era School Meal Innovations to Common Practice](#), which identifies lessons learned by child nutrition program staff operating school meal programs during the pandemic. This report translates those lessons learned into practice and policy recommendations for stakeholders at the national, state, and local level to understand what school meal program staff learned during the COVID-19 crisis.

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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/2023/SLT\\_02\\_22\\_2023.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SLT/2023/SLT_02_22_2023.pdf).

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To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

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](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

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