

The School Lunch Tray: March 15, 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

- Summer Meals 2023 Interest Survey: Due March 24, 2023
- Comment Period for Proposed Rule: *Child Nutrition Programs: Revisions to Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans*: Deadline is April 10, 2023

Need to Know

- Table Talk will Resume on Thursday, March 23, 2023
- Reminder of USDA Department of Defense (DoD) Receipting Procedures
- Updated CSDE Guide: Menu Planning Guide for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program
- Connecticut Nutrition Standards (CNS) for School Year 2023-24
- New USDA Resource Available for Community Meals Program Operators on the Proposed Rule: *Child Nutrition Programs: Revisions to Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans*
- New Section Added to CSDE's Laws and Regulations for Child Nutrition Programs webpage: USDA Proposed Rules for Child Nutrition Programs to Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans
- Developing Policies for Meal Modifications in the School Nutrition Programs
- Resource Roundup: USDA's Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs

Good to Know

- 21-Day Racial Equity Habit Building Challenge: April 3-23, 2023

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

Summer Meals 2023 Interest Survey: Due March 24, 2023

The CSDE is asking all organizations interested in participating in the Seamless Summer Option (SSO) of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) for Summer 2023 to complete a [brief interest survey](#). This survey is only five questions and will take less than 2 minutes to complete. Please submit the interest survey by close of business on **Friday, March 24, 2023**.

Note: This interest survey is not the application to participate in Summer Meals, which will come later in the spring. Indicating an interest to participate does not lock the district into participating, nor does it confer eligibility to participate. This survey simply allows the CSDE to plan adequate technical assistance and support for sponsors that intend to participate.

The CSDE will follow up with interested sponsors to provide assistance with establishing eligibility of proposed meal sites. Please contact your assigned [Summer Meals staff](#) with any questions.

Comment Period for Proposed Rule: *Child Nutrition Programs: Revisions to Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans*: Deadline is April 10, 2023

The deadline for submitting public comments on the USDA's proposed rule on the meal pattern revisions ([Child Nutrition Programs: Revision to Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#)) is **April 10, 2023**. Comments on the proposed rule can be submitted through the [Federal eRulemaking Portal](#). Follow the online instructions for submitting comments.

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Need to Know

Table Talk will Resume on Thursday, March 23, 2023

Table Talk will resume on Thursday, March 23, 2023, and will be held every other Thursday from 2:00-3:00 p.m. Table Talk will review pertinent information from the School Lunch Tray newsletters. To submit questions in advance, visit https://sdect.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5px5YKVBdQNOZDo.

Registration is not required. Please use the link below to join Table Talk on Microsoft Teams.

Microsoft Teams meeting

Join on your computer, mobile app or room device

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 225 336 668 44

Passcode: muTuBy

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[+1 860-840-2075, 327687577#](tel:+18608402075327687577) United States, Hartford

Phone Conference ID: 327 687 577#

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Reminder of USDA Department of Defense (DoD) Receipting Procedures

As a reminder, the procedures below apply to Recipient Agencies (RAs) seeking credit for product quality issues.

1. Inspect orders within 24-hours of arrival to the RA. Open all case boxes. **Note:** If issues are communicated after 24-hours, it may be difficult to get credit.
2. Immediately after noticing “poor product quality,” contact Gargiulo at DODCustomerSupport@gargiuloproduce.com. The RA must include pictures. RAs cannot “deduct” the number of affected cases on the FFAVORS website. If credits were not approved by Gargiulo, the RA will be charged back for credits taken without permission. If the product is needed, request that Gargiulo redelivers it.
3. Copy the following Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) staff on the email to Gargiulo: David Lucht david.lucht@dla.mil and Amanda Holzman amanda.holzman@dla.mil. They are responsible for communicating issues to the USDA and finalizing any credits taken on the FFAVORS website.
4. Copy the Connecticut FDP team on the email to Gargiulo: Monica Pacheco at monica.pacheco@ct.gov and Allison Calhoun-White at allison.calhoun-white@ct.gov.

Updated CSDE Guide: Menu Planning Guide for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program

The CSDE recently updated the [Menu Planning Guide for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program](#). This guide contains information and guidance on planning menus to meet the USDA's meal patterns for preschoolers (ages 1-4) in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), Seamless Summer Option (SSO) of the NSLP, and Afterschool Snack Program (ASP) of the NSLP. Please discard any previous versions dated prior to March 2023 and replace with the updated versions. For additional resources on the preschool meal patterns and crediting foods, visit the CSDE's [Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

Connecticut Nutrition Standards (CNS) for School Year 2023-24

The CNS for school year 2023-24 will remain the same as the CNS for the current school year. Visit the CSDE's [Connecticut Nutrition Standards](#) webpage for the CNS summary and the full CNS document. Training on the CNS is available in *Module 3: Connecticut Nutrition Standards (CNS)* of the CSDE's training program, [Complying with Healthy Food Certification](#).

Public school districts that choose to implement the healthy food option of Healthy Food Certification under C.G.S. Section 10-215f must follow the CNS for all foods sold to students separately from reimbursable school meals on school premises, at all times and from all sources, including a la carte sales in the cafeteria, vending machines, school stores, fundraisers, culinary programs, and any other sources of food sales to students. For additional guidance, visit the CSDE's [Healthy Food Certification](#) webpage.

New USDA Resource Available for Community Meals Program Operators on the Proposed Rule: *Child Nutrition Programs: Revisions to Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans*

On February 7, 2023, the USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) released the Proposed Rule, [Child Nutrition Programs: Revision to Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#). This proposed rule includes updates to the school nutrition standards to reflect the goals of the most recent Dietary Guidelines, as required by law. Updates for the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) are also detailed within certain provisions of this proposed rule. The FNS recently released a resource, [Revisions to Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020 DGAs – Proposed Rule – CACFP & SFSP Impact](#), to assist in identifying the provisions in the proposed rule that could impact the CACFP and SFSP.

New Section Added to CSDE’s Laws and Regulations for Child Nutrition Programs webpage: USDA Proposed Rules for Child Nutrition Programs

The CSDE’s Laws and Regulations for Child Nutrition Programs webpage has a new section, [USDA Proposed Rules for Child Nutrition Programs](#). This section contains links to the proposed rule, *Child Nutrition Programs: Revisions to Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, and related resources. Resources include the USDA’s new comparison chart of the current and proposed standards, the USDA’s recorded webinar, and other related resources.

Developing Policies for Meal Modifications in the School Nutrition Programs

The CSDE recommends that local educational agencies (LEAs) develop a written policy and standard operating procedures (SOPs) for meal modifications in the school nutrition programs. Written policies are important because they provide clear guidelines for students, families, and school staff; ensure consistent practices in all schools and among all staff; and document compliance with federal and state requirements and best practices. The resources below provide guidance on developing policies for meal modifications.

- Section 5 of the CSDE’s guide, [Accommodating Special Diets in School Nutrition Programs](#)
- “[What’s Next](#)” section of the CSDE’s [Special Diets in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage
- [Sample Action Plan: Developing District Policy for Meal Modifications in School Nutrition Programs](#)
- [Sample Action Plan: Promoting District Policy for Meal Modifications in School Nutrition Programs](#)
- [Self-assessment of Local Practices for Special Diets in School Nutrition Programs](#)

The policy should be integrated with the LEA’s [procedural safeguards process](#) and [food allergy management plan](#) and be developed in collaboration with school health services and administrators.

Resource Roundup: USDA’s Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs

The USDA’s [Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs \(FBG\)](#) is an essential resource for determining food yields and crediting information. The FBG assists school food authorities (SFAs) with purchasing the correct amounts of foods for school meals and determining the contribution that each food makes toward the meal pattern requirements. SFAs should ensure that menu planners use this resource for crediting foods used in reimbursable meals.

The FBG is available as an Interactive Web-based Tool (which includes the Exhibit A Grains Tool, Recipe Analysis Workbook, and Product Formulation Statement (PFS) Workbook), a Mobile App, and a downloadable PDF. The FBG webpage also includes training modules and recorded webinars.

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Good to Know

21-Day Racial Equity Habit Building Challenge: April 3-23, 2023

Registration is open for the 21-Day Racial Equity Building Challenge, which will be held from April 3-23, 2023. For additional information and to register, visit <https://foodsolutionsne.org/21-day-racial-equity-habit-building-challenge/>.



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, Bureau of Child Nutrition Programs, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841.

This document is available at https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SLT/2023/SLT_03_15_2023.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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