

The School Lunch Tray: May 17, 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

- CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 11-23: Annual Application Process for the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP): Notification Due June 1, 2023
- 2023-24 Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) Grant Announcement: Applications Due June 9, 2023
- Reminder: 2023-24 Healthy Food Certification (HFC) Statement Due July 1, 2023
- Agency Information Collection Activities: USDA Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool (PSTTT): Comments Due July 10, 2023

Need to Know

- USDA Foods Update on State Contracted Warehouse
- Seamless Summer Option (SSO) Sponsors Encouraged to Attend Annual Summer Meals Training Webinars
- Resource Roundup: CSDE's Training Program: What's in a Meal Module 7: Milk Component

Good to Know

- Tips for Offering School Meals Trays, Many Ways

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

CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 11-23: Annual Application Process for the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP): Notification Due June 1, 2023

CSDE [Operational Memorandum No. 11-23](#), Annual Application Process for the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), outlines the annual application process for the CEP. Local educational agencies (LEA) are eligible to participate in the CEP if the Identified Student Percentage (ISP) for the entire district, groups of schools, or an individual school meets or exceeds 40 percent.

The school year (SY) 2023-24 lists of eligible and near-eligible LEAs and schools are now available in the [Eligibility](#) section of the CSDE's [CEP](#) webpage.

- [List of Eligible and Near-eligible Connecticut LEAs \(Districts\)](#)
- [List of Eligible and Near-eligible Connecticut Schools](#)

LEAs must formally apply for the CEP for SY 2023-24 if they are interested in participating in the CEP for SY 2023-24 and if they meet at least one of the following criteria:

- LEAs/schools electing CEP participation for the first time;
- LEAs/schools in the mid-cycle of CEP participation that are requesting changes to their currently approved ISP;
- LEAs/schools that are currently in the fourth year of CEP participation with an ISP greater than or equal to 40 percent, and would like to start a new four-year cycle; and
- LEAs/schools currently in the fourth year of CEP participation with a new, calculated ISP greater than or equal to 30 percent, but less than 40 percent (eligible for one “grace” year based on the ISP as of April 3, 2023, of the current four-year cycle).

Note: LEAs and schools **must notify the CSDE no later than June 1, 2023**, if they intend to:

- formally apply for the CEP for the next school year;
- continue with their current ISP (for mid-cycle CEP participating LEAs and schools);
- recalculate their ISP; or
- withdraw from the CEP and revert to the regular meal counting and claiming process.

To notify the CSDE about the LEA/school's CEP decisions above, e-mail your [CSDE school team member](#). This memo is available on the CSDE's [Operational Memoranda for School Nutrition Programs webpage](#).

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2023-24 Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) Grant Announcement: Applications due June 9, 2023

The CSDE's [FFVP Grant Announcement](#) provides information regarding the 2023-24 FFVP grant opportunity. The FFVP provides funding to serve a variety of free fresh fruit and vegetable snacks to all children in participating schools. **This grant-funded program is different from the USDA Foods DOD program.** The goals of the FFVP are to:

- create healthier food choices;
- expand the variety of fruits and vegetables children experience;
- increase children's fruit and vegetable consumption; and
- make a difference in children's diets to impact their present and future health.

The CSDE will accept completed applications online until close of business on **June 9, 2023**. For questions, please contact Andy Paul, Associate Education Consultant, at andrew.paul@ct.gov or 860-807-2048.

Information Session: The CSDE will conduct a one-hour information session on the FFVP application process on Thursday May 18, 2023, from 10:00 -11:00 a.m.

Microsoft Teams meeting

Join on your computer, mobile app or room device

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 249 663 337 44

Passcode: Qbcwso

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

Or call in (audio only)

[+1 860-840-2075..843163274#](tel:+18608402075843163274) United States, Hartford

Phone Conference ID: 843 163 274#

Submission Process: The 2023-24 FFVP Applications must be completed and submitted via the CSDE's Online Application and Claiming System for Child Nutrition Programs ([CNP System](#)); therefore, applicants must have an ID and Password to access the system or must connect with a district staff associate with current access. The [Instructions for Submitting the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program \(FFVP\) Grant Application](#) describes how to enter and submit the completed application. **Applicants must complete and upload the [Application Certification form](#).** The [FFVP Area Eligibility List](#) and [FFVP Site Eligibility List](#) are specific to the FFVP grant only, and will assist in determining which schools are potentially eligible to participate in the FFVP.

FFVP Information: For information on the FFVP, visit the CSDE's [FFVP](#) webpage. Applicants must review the USDA's [Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program Handbook](#) prior to completing the online application to ensure it meets the federal guidelines.

Reminder: 2023-24 Healthy Food Certification (HFC) Statement Due July 1, 2023

All public schools that participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) must submit the annual HFC Statement in the CSDE's Online Application and Claiming System for Child Nutrition Programs (CNP System) by **July 1, 2023**.

- Review the CSDE's [Instructions for Submitting Connecticut's Healthy Food Certification Statement for School Year 2023-24](#) for important information and specific steps for completing the 2023-24 HFC Statement in the CNP System. **Note:** The **claims preparer** must first enroll the district in the school nutrition programs for school year 2023-24 before one of the two **authorized signers** can complete the HFC application.
- The HFC application requirements are summarized in [Operational Memorandum No. 08-23: Requirements for Submitting the Healthy Food Certification \(HFC\) Statement for School Year 2023-24](#). Guidance is available in the CSDE's recorded training module, [Completing the Application Process for Healthy Food Certification](#).

For additional information, visit the "[Apply](#)" section of the HFC webpage or contact Susan Fiore at susan.fiore@ct.gov.

Agency Information Collection Activities: USDA Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool (PSTTT): Comments Due July 10, 2023

In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, the USDA's notice, [Agency Information Collection Activities: USDA Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool \(PSTTT\)](#), invites the general public and other public agencies to comment on this proposed information collection. This collection is an extension, without change, of a currently approved collection for assisting state agencies and school nutrition professionals in recording, tracking, and managing the required training hours for state and local school district nutrition professionals, in four major areas (Nutrition, Operations, Administration, and Communications and Marketing), to meet the requirements of the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act (HHFKA) of 2010 Professional Standards Rule. The HHFKA (section 306) requires Professional Standards for state and local school district nutrition professionals. In addition to hiring standards, mandatory annual training is required for all individuals involved in preparing school meals.

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Need to Know

USDA Foods Update on State Contracted Warehouse

The Department of Administrative Services awarded the new Connecticut Food Distribution Program (FDP) contract for the warehousing and delivery of Direct Delivery USDA Foods to Hartford Provision Company (HPC) as of July 1, 2023. The contract will be in effect from July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2026. The HPC contract fees are listed below.

- Delivery fee for 12 cases or more: \$5.29 per case
- Cost to pick-up USDA Foods at HPC: \$3.29 per case
- Flat delivery fee for Recipient Agencies ordering less than 12 cases: \$76.25

The contacts for the USDA Foods contract continue to be Roger Siering, Education Segment Manager, 860-760-3935, and Steve Cop, Education Support Specialist, 860-760-3985.

The FDP team anticipates that this renewed contract with the current vendor will provide a seamless continuation of services for Connecticut's USDA Foods Program.

Seamless Summer Option (SSO) Sponsors Encouraged to Attend Annual Summer Meals Training Webinars

SSO sponsors are strongly encouraged to attend the CSDE's annual Summer Meal Programs training. This training will be held as a series of webinars on Thursdays from 2:00 – 3:00 p.m. Recorded webinars will be available for those that cannot attend live.

- **May 18, 2023:** Local Foods, USDA Foods, Food Safety
- **June 8, 2023:** Summer Meals Outreach
- **June 22, 2023:** Hold in event of USDA Updates

Registration is not required for SSO sponsors. To attend each training, use the TEAMS link below.

Microsoft Teams meeting

Join on your computer, mobile app or room device

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 273 960 499 287

Passcode: tK8s2c

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

Or call in (audio only)

[+1 860-840-2075](tel:+18608402075), 128618960# United States, Hartford

Phone Conference ID: 128 618 960#

For questions about Summer Meal Programs training, please contact caroline.cooke@ct.gov.

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Resource Roundup: CSDE's Training Program: What's in a Meal Module 7: Milk Component

This 36-minute module is the seventh in the CSDE's *What's in a Meal* training program and reviews the requirements and crediting information for the milk component. Topics include the required daily and weekly servings, allowable types of milk, requirements for fluid milk substitutes in school meals, serving considerations for milk, and noncreditable milk. This module also describes resources for guidance and training on the milk component and includes a knowledge check on milk substitutes for children without a disability. This module is available on the CSDE's [Meal Pattern Training for School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

Good to Know

Tips for Offering School Meals Trays, Many Ways

Explore the many ways to offer school lunch and breakfast trays in Team Nutrition's [School Meals Trays, Many Ways](#) photo collection. This webpage also includes tips from school districts across the country to offer delicious and nutritious meals that students will love.



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_05_17_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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