

The School Lunch Tray: September 27, 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

- Final Reminder: Complete Required Healthy Food Certification (HFC) Training for HFC Public Schools by September 30, 2023

Need to Know

- USDA Final Rule: Child Nutrition Programs: Community Eligibility Provision – Increasing Options for Schools
- Updated Addendum C: Information on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- CSDE Procurement 101 Webinar Series: October 19 and 20, 2023
- USDA Foods Update on Beef Patties, 90/10, Frozen, Material Code 110346
- Updated CSDE Resource: Servings for Grains/Breads in the Afterschool Snack Program Meal Pattern for Grades K-12
- Resource Roundup: County Assignments for School Nutrition Programs

Good to Know

- Reminder: USDA's Farm to School Census is coming in October
- USDA Spanish Food Safety Resources

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

Final Reminder: Complete Required Healthy Food Certification (HFC) Training for HFC Public Schools by September 30, 2023

As indicated in the [August 2, 2023, School Lunch Tray](#) and the CSDE approval email for the district's 2023-24 HFC Statement, the district's HFC contact person is required to complete the CSDE's [Complying with Healthy Food Certification](#) training program by **September 30, 2023**. The HFC contact person is the point person identified on the annual HFC Statement by the school district for coordinating the implementation and monitoring of the district's HFC (refer to the CSDE's [Responsibilities of District Contact Person for Healthy Food Certification](#)). This training program is also recommended for individuals that coordinate sales of competitive foods to students on school premises, such as food service directors and managers, culinary programs staff, fundraising coordinators, vending machine operators, and school store operators.

Need to Know

USDA Final Rule: Child Nutrition Programs: Community Eligibility Provision – Increasing Options for Schools

On September 26, 2023, the USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) published a final rule, [Child Nutrition Programs: Community Eligibility Provision – Increasing Options for Schools](#). This final rule amends the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) regulations by lowering the minimum identified student percentage (ISP) from 40 percent to 25 percent. Lowering the minimum ISP will give states and schools greater flexibility to offer meals to all enrolled students at no cost when financially viable. More information, including the [Summary of Final Rule](#), is available on the USDA's [Community Eligibility Provision](#) webpage.

Note: Since the final rule is effective after the June 30th CEP election deadline for school year (SY) 2023-24, the CSDE is required to request a waiver from FNS that will allow school food authorities (SFAs) to take advantage of the new minimum ISP during SY 2023-24. **The CSDE will issue an operational memorandum when additional information and guidance is received on implementing this final rule.**

Webinar: FNS is hosting a webinar on the final rule for SFAs on Thursday, October 5, 2023, at 2:00 p.m. Register at https://www.zoomgov.com/webinar/register/WN_Y1zYX1IfST6fFqMMBV4uQQ.

This webinar will be offered with closed captioning. Participants who require a different accessibility tool to participate in this webinar should contact SM.FNS.HRD.ReasonableAccommodation@usda.gov. For questions about webinar logistics or content, contact sm.fn.cndinternet@usda.gov.

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Updated Addendum C: Information on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

The CSDE has revised Addendum C: Information on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to include the updated income guidelines for SNAP which become effective October 1, 2023. Please share this addendum with schools and households and update school websites accordingly. English and Spanish versions are available in the “[Addenda](#)” section of the CSDE’s [Eligibility for Free and Reduced-price Meals and Free Milk in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

CSDE Procurement 101 Webinar Series: October 19 and 20, 2023

The CSDE is pleased to announce the return of Procurement 101 Training. This virtual training will provide a comprehensive overview of the procurement requirements for the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program. New school food service directors are **required** to attend this training. Food service directors who would like a refresher of the procurement requirements may also attend. The training will be offered in two sessions on October 19 and 20, 2023 from 1:00-4:00 p.m. each day. Attendance at both session is required to complete the training.

Registration: Registration is required. Use the link or QR code below to register by Tuesday, October 17, 2023.

<https://forms.office.com/g/FSVEoKinYR>



Questions: Contact Andy Paul andrew.paul@ct.gov or Monica Pacheco monic.pacheco@ct.gov.

USDA Foods Update on Beef Patties, 90/10, Frozen, Material Code 110346

Due to vendor constraints, the beef patties scheduled for delivery on November 30, 2023, were not purchased. A second invitation will be requested for the delivery dates of January 1, 2024, through January 30, 2024. Information about the status of USDA Foods is available by running the Requisition Status Report in WBSCM.

Material Code	Material Description	Sales Order	Sales Order Item Number
110346	BEEF 100% PTY 90/10 FRZ 2.0MMA CTN-40 LB	5000834439	100
110346	BEEF 100% PTY 90/10 FRZ 2.0MMA CTN-40 LB	5000834439	200

Updated CSDE Resource: Servings for Grains/Breads in the Afterschool Snack Program Meal Pattern for Grades K-12

The CSDE's resource, [Servings for Grains/Breads in the Afterschool Snack Program Meal Pattern for Grades K-12](#), has been updated. The serving size for Group H (cereal grains) was incorrectly listed in ounce equivalents instead of grains/breads servings. The revised version (dated September 2023) has the correct amounts:

- 1 serving = $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooked (or 25 grams dry)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ serving = $\frac{1}{4}$ cup cooked (or 13 grams dry)

Resource Roundup: County Assignments for School Nutrition Programs

Each Connecticut county has an assigned CSDE school nutrition team member to provide technical assistance for the school nutrition programs (refer to the CSDE's [County Assignments for School Nutrition Programs](#)). This is the person SFAs should contact with any questions about operating the school nutrition programs.

Good to Know

Reminder: USDA's Farm to School Census is coming in October

The USDA FNS will release the fourth Farm to School Census (Census) in October 2023, and everyone's participation counts. Data collected through the Census truly shapes the future of farm to school. State, local, and federal governments, researchers, advocates, and more use Census data to inform future legislation, investments, and programs.

This year, Census surveys will be "sharable" for the first time, so SFAs can leverage the help of their partners in gathering accurate data on their district or schools' farm to school activities. The USDA encourages SFAs to collaborate with partners they engage with in school gardens, farm field trips, curriculum development, and more to share a comprehensive farm to school story through the Census.

New food service directors can review the [2019 Farm to School Census results](#) for their district to get inspired about the power of the Census and explore the data at the state and district level.

USDA Spanish Food Safety Resources

The food safety resources below are available in Spanish on the USDA's [Recursos de seguridad alimentaria en español](#) webpage.

- The Emergency Response Pocket Guide
- A Flash of Food Safety, a video series
- The Food Allergy Book
- Reducing the Risk of Choking in Young Children at Mealtimes



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_09_27_2023.pdf.

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1400 Independence Avenue, SW
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