

The School Lunch Tray: October 11, 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

- None

Need to Know

- Happy National School Lunch Week (October 9-13)
- Operational Memorandum No. 01-2024: Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer - Local Level Administrative Cost Grant for Fiscal Year 2023
- Updated CSDE Resource: Crediting Tofu and Tofu Products in the NSLP and SBP
- Updated CSDE Resources for the Afterschool Snack Program (ASP): ASP Meal Patterns and Menu Planning Forms for Preschoolers and Grades K-12
- Updated versions of CSDE's Menu Planning Guide for Preschoolers, NSLP Preschool Meal Pattern, and Preschool Menu Planning Forms
- Reminder: CSDE Procurement 101 Webinar Series on October 19 and 20, 2023
- Application for Next Round of Connecticut Grown for Connecticut Kids (CTG4CTK) Grants
- New Spanish Versions of USDA's Offer versus Serve (OVS) Materials for School Nutrition Program
- USDA's Guide to Professional Standards Now available in Spanish
- Resource Roundup: CSDE's Lists of Resources for the School Meal Patterns

Good to Know

- New for 2023: Nominate Farm to School Champions by October 20, 2023
- Dairy Grant Opportunity for School Meals: Deadline November 11, 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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Need to Know

Happy National School Lunch Week (October 9-13)

Every day, about 30 million students across the nation receive a healthy school lunch. School meals are planned to be consistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, the national recommendations based on the latest nutrition science. The CSDE joins the USDA in celebrating the many ways school lunches are offered using continued creativity and innovation. These efforts level up nutrition and ensure kids have the healthy fuel they need to learn and grow.

The CSDE would like to thank all school nutrition professionals for their commitment to ensure children are well-nourished and ready to succeed in school! Thank you for your hard work and dedication each and every day!



Operational Memorandum No. 01-2024: Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer - Local Level Administrative Cost Grant for Fiscal Year 2023

[CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 01-2024](#) contains important information about the additional funding awarded to the CSDE through the Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) Local Level Cost Grant. This grant will be distributed to eligible school food authorities (SFA) to help offset the SFA's administrative costs incurred in support of P-EBT benefits in school year 2022-23.

Updated CSDE Resource: Crediting Tofu and Tofu Products in the NSLP and SBP

An updated version (October 2023) of the CSDE's [Crediting Tofu and Tofu Products in the NSLP and SBP](#) is available. This document includes a new chart that indicates the meat/meat alternates contribution for different serving sizes of tofu and the minimum grams of protein required per serving.

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Updated CSDE Resources for the Afterschool Snack Program (ASP): ASP Meal Patterns and Menu Planning Forms for Preschoolers and Grades K-12

Updated versions (October 2023) of the CSDE's ASP meal patterns and menu planning forms are available. The updates include additional clarification regarding the serving sizes for tofu, modifications to the "menu planning notes" section, and some typo corrections. Please discard any previous versions.

Grades K-12

- [ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12](#)
- [ASP Menu Form for Grades K-12](#)

Preschoolers

- [ASP Meal Pattern for Preschoolers](#)
- [ASP Menu Form for Ages 1-2](#)
- [ASP Menu Form for Ages 3-4](#)

The menu forms are available in the "[Menu Forms](#)" section of the CSDE's ASP Webpage. The meal patterns are available in the "[Meal Patterns for the ASP](#)" section of the CSDE's ASP Webpage.

Updated versions of CSDE's Menu Planning Guide for Preschoolers, NSLP Preschool Meal Pattern, and Preschool Menu Planning Forms

Updated versions (October 2023) of the CSDE resources below are available.

- [Menu Planning Guide for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program](#): The updates include a new chart that indicates the meat/meat alternates contribution for different serving sizes of tofu and the minimum grams of protein required per serving, updated preschool lunch and snack meal patterns with additional clarification regarding the serving sizes for tofu, and modifications to the "menu planning notes" sections of the preschool meal patterns.
- [NSLP Meal Pattern for Preschoolers](#): The updates include additional clarification regarding the serving sizes for tofu, and modifications to the "menu planning notes" section.
- [Preschool menu planning forms](#): The updates include additional clarification regarding the serving sizes for tofu, modifications to the "menu planning notes" section, and correcting the required serving for the meat/meat alternates component from 1 ounce to 1½ ounces.

Please discard any previous versions.

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

The CSDE's virtual Procurement 101 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 sessions 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 monica.pacheco@ct.gov.

Application for Next Round of Connecticut Grown for Connecticut Kids (CTG4CTK) Grants

The Connecticut Department of Agriculture (CT DoAg) is accepting applications for up to \$50,000 in funding for 18-month long projects from eligible entities for projects that align with one of five grant tracks. Simplified microgrants of less than \$5,000 are also available. CT DoAg has approximately \$900,000 in funds to award for CTG4CTK Grant projects in fiscal year 2024. A webinar with a question-and-answer session will be held **Thursday, October 26, 2023**, from 2:00-3:30 p.m. For the webinar registration and more information about the grant application, visit CT DoAg's [CTG4CTK Grant](#) webpage.

New Spanish Versions of USDA's Offer versus Serve (OVS) Materials for School Nutrition Program

[Spanish versions of the USDA's Offer versus Serve \(OVS\) materials](#) for school nutrition programs are now available online. The OVS materials include five posters and two tip sheets. These tools help students more quickly select reimbursable meals in the breakfast and lunch lines and provide guidance for school nutrition professionals on breakfast and lunch meal service.

USDA's Guide to Professional Standards Now available in Spanish

A Spanish translation of the USDA's [Guide to Professional Standards for School Nutrition Programs](#) is now available online. This guide comprehensively outlines the USDA's Professional Standards requirements for state and local school nutrition professionals who manage and operate the NSLP and SBP.

Resource Roundup: CSDE's Lists of Resources for the School Meal Patterns

The documents below include resources and websites to assist school food authorities (SFAs) with meeting the USDA meal patterns and crediting requirements for the NSLP, SBP, Seamless Summer Option (SSO) of the NSLP, and Afterschool Snack Program (ASP). Resources are organized alphabetically by topic.

- Grades K-12: [Resources for the School Meal Patterns for Grades K-12](#)
- Preschool: [Resources for the Preschool Meal Patterns](#)

Links to these document are also available in the "[Resource Lists](#)" section of the CSDE's Program Guidance for School Nutrition Programs webpage.

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Good to Know

New for 2023: Nominate Farm to School Champions by October 20, 2023

The Farm to School Collaborative wants to recognize exceptional contributions to Farm to School initiatives by designating Connecticut Farm to School Champions in the four categories below.

1. Local Food Team (Food Service Director/Staff and farmer)
2. Farm to School Legislator Champion
3. Farm to School Educators
4. Farm to School Community Supports

You can nominate yourself or others. Selected champions or teams will receive \$500 for their chosen Farm to School item or activity. Visit the [Farm to School Champions webpage](#) for a nomination form and more information. The nomination deadline is **October 20, 2023**.

Dairy Grant Opportunity for School Meals: Deadline November 11, 2023

The Connecticut Milk Promotion Board and New England Dairy are pleased to announce a funding opportunity from Connecticut Dairy Farmers to eligible schools in Connecticut to support food service needs related to expanding school meal programs or serving new dairy menu items. New for 2023, schools can apply for a [turn-key Bulk Milk Dispenser kit](#), [turn-key hot chocolate milk kit](#), or [turn-key smoothie kit](#). Visit New England Dairy's [School Grants](#) webpage for the application and more details. The application deadline is **November 11, 2023**. Funding for this program 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, 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_10_11_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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