

# The School Lunch Tray: October 25, 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

- Financial Report for School Nutrition Programs Due October 31, 2023
- Reminder: Food Safety Inspection Report for SY 2022-23 must be completed in the Child Nutrition Program (CNP) Online Application and Claiming System by October 31, 2023
- Nonprogram Foods in the School Nutrition Programs: Complete Documentation by December 31, 2023

## Need to Know

- Recording Available for CSDE Information Session: New Paid Lunch Equity (PLE) Allowances for School Year 2023-24 Only
- Next Table Talk on Thursday, November 2, 2023: Focus on Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) Final Rule
- Reminder: Webinar for Applying for Next Round of Connecticut Grown for Connecticut Kids (CTG4CTK) Grants, Thursday, October 26, 2023
- Resource Roundup: Dietary Specifications (Nutrition Standards for School Meals)

## Good to Know

- USDA Report on Household Food Security in the United States in 2022

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

### **Financial Report for School Nutrition Programs Due October 31, 2023**

All school food authorities (SFAs) must submit the Financial Report in the Connecticut Online Application and Claiming System for Child Nutrition Programs (CNP System) by October 31, 2023. The CSDE's [Instructions for Submitting the Financial Report for School Nutrition Programs](#) provides guidance on how to submit the annual Financial Report.

Section 210.14 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) for the NSLP requires that all SFAs must maintain a nonprofit status for the school food service operations, and any revenues must be used only for the operation or improvement of the food service program. As indicated under "Net Cash Resources" (7CFR 210.14(b)), the SFA shall limit its net cash resources to an amount that does not exceed three months average expenditures for its nonprofit school food service. The annual financial report monitors adherence to this regulation.

### **Plan to Reduce Excess Operating Balance (only for SFAs that exceed three months' average expenditures)**

As part of the annual Financial Report, SFAs that exceed three months' average expenditures must submit a [Plan for Reducing Excess Operating Balance](#) to the CSDE to indicate how the excess balance will be spent to maintain the SFA's nonprofit status. Expenditures must make improvements to the USDA school nutrition programs such as improving food quality and replacing or purchasing necessary equipment. The completed form/plan must be uploaded under "Corrective Action Plan Attachments" in the annual Financial Report section of the [CNP System](#).

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### **Reminder: Food Safety Inspection Report for SY 2022-23 must be completed in the Child Nutrition Program (CNP) Online Application and Claiming System by October 31, 2023**

As required in section 9(h) of the NSLA, 42 U.S.C. 1758(h), at least twice a year, schools must obtain a food safety inspection conducted by a state or local agency responsible for such inspections. As part of that requirement, the CSDE must annually collect the total number of inspections conducted at each SFA and report the number to the Food and Nutrition Services by November 15, 2023. The food safety inspections requirement applies to all food preparation-service sites and service-only sites.

The Food Safety Inspection Report for SY 2022-23 must be completed in the [CNP System](#). Guidance begins on page 29 of the [Updating the Sponsor Application for School Nutrition Programs](#) guide. The Food Safety Inspection Report can be completed by anyone who has access to the CNP System.

### **Food safety inspections for facilities not under the jurisdiction of the local or state health department**

Some schools or facilities (such as schools or group homes operated by the Department of Children and Families) do not fall under the jurisdiction of the Department of Public Health (DPH) and therefore, will not be inspected by DPH or the local health department. **However, food safety inspections conducted by the state agency that licenses the facility qualify toward meeting the requirement of two food safety inspections annually.**

While the CSDE recognizes that there may be difficulty in obtaining the two food safety inspections, SFAs are responsible for requesting such inspections and documenting such efforts. When two health inspections are not conducted, each sponsor is responsible for requesting the inspections and documenting these efforts (refer to the CSDE's [Sample Letter for Food Safety Health Inspection for the National School Lunch Program \(NSLP\) and School Breakfast Program \(SBP\)](#)). Retain a copy of the letter/email sent to the health department to document attempts to comply with this regulation.

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### Nonprogram Foods in the School Nutrition Programs: Complete Documentation by December 31, 2023

As a reminder, Section 7 CFR 210.14 (f) of the NSLP regulations requires that the revenue from the sale of nonprogram foods covers the cost of the food and is not subsidized through federal reimbursement. “Nonprogram foods” include any nonreimbursable foods and beverages purchased using funds from the nonprofit school food service account (NSFSA). This encompasses all foods and beverages sold in schools such as a la carte items (e.g., milk, juice, entrees, and snack foods), second student meals, adult meals, foods sold outside of school hours, and any foods used for catering or vending activities. For most SFAs, a la carte foods offered during meal service account for the largest share of nonprogram foods.

Each year, SFAs are required to determine if the percentage of total revenue generated from their nonprogram food sales is equal to or greater than the percentage of total food cost attributable to the SFA’s purchase of nonprogram foods. For example, if the cost of nonprogram food is 25 percent of the SFA’s total food cost, then the amount of revenue generated from the sale of these nonprogram foods must be at least 25 percent of the total revenue in the NSFSA.

SFAs must use the resources below to document compliance with the USDA’s nonprogram foods regulation by **December 31, 2023**. Maintain all documents at the school/district for review by the CSDE during the Administrative Review. Do not submit documents to the CSDE.

- [USDA Memo SP 20-2016](#): Nonprofit School Food Service Account Nonprogram Food Revenue Requirements
- [A La Carte Food Cost and Price Charged Comparison Worksheet](#): This CSDE Excel worksheet determines if the a la carte price for a food or beverage item covers the cost of producing that item.
- [Nonprogram Pricing Worksheets for Adult Meals](#): This CSDE Excel document contains two worksheets to determine the breakfast and lunch price for adult meals: Worksheet 1: Pricing of Adult Meals in School Nutrition Programs; and Worksheet 2: Pricing of Adult Meals in Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) Schools.
- [Pricing Worksheet for A La Carte Sales in School Nutrition Programs](#): This CSDE Excel worksheet determines the correct pricing of a la carte items to meet a SFA's desired food cost percentage.
- [Nonprogram Revenue Calculator](#): This USDA Excel worksheet helps SFAs ensure that revenue from the sale of nonprogram foods covers the cost of the food and is not subsidized through federal reimbursement.

These resources are available in the “[Nonprogram Foods](#)” section of the CSDE’s Financial Management for School Nutrition Programs webpage. For questions, contact your [school nutrition team member](#).

# The School Lunch Tray: October 25, 2023

## Need to Know

### **Recording Available for CSDE Information Session: New Paid Lunch Equity (PLE) Allowances for School Year 2023-24 Only**

The recording of the CSDE's PLE information session on October 19, 2023, is now available at the direct link below.

- [CSDE Information Session: New Paid Lunch Equity \(PLE\) Allowances for School Year 2023-24 Only](#)

This recording and other resources may also be accessed in the "[Paid Lunch Equity](#)" section of the CSDE's Current School Year Operational Updates for School Nutrition Programs webpage.

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### **Next Table Talk on Thursday, November 2, 2023: Focus on Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) Final Rule**

The next Table Talk will be held on Thursday, November 2, 2023, from 2:00-3:00 p.m. This session will focus on the CEP final rule, [Child Nutrition Programs: Community Eligibility Provision - Increasing Options for Schools](#). To submit questions in advance, visit <https://forms.office.com/g/GWS7DCbbgo>.

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

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

##### **Or call in (audio only)**

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

Phone Conference ID: 327 687 577#

[Find a local number](#) | [Reset PIN](#)

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## The School Lunch Tray: October 25, 2023

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### **Reminder: Webinar for Applying for Next Round of Connecticut Grown for Connecticut Kids (CTG4CTK) Grants, Thursday, October 26, 2023**

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

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### **Resource Roundup: Dietary Specifications (Nutrition Standards for School Meals)**

The USDA regulations for the NSLP and SBP meal patterns for grades K-12 require that school meals must meet the weekly dietary specifications for calories (minimum and maximum levels) and limits for saturated fats and sodium. In addition, all food products and ingredients used to prepare school meals must contain zero grams of trans fats per serving, as indicated by the Nutrition Facts label or manufacturer's specifications. Guidance and resources on meeting these weekly dietary specifications are available in the "[Dietary Specifications \(Nutrition Standards for School Meals\)](#)" section of the CSDE's Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs webpage.

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## Good to Know

### **USDA Report on Household Food Security in the United States in 2022**

Today, the USDA's Economic Research Service released the report, [Household Food Security in the United States in 2022](#), which examined American households' ability to access sufficient food last year. The report found that the vast majority of U.S. households – 87.2 percent – were food secure throughout 2022, meaning they had consistent, dependable access to enough food for active, healthy living. However, 17 million households were food insecure at some point during the year, including 6.8 million households that reported very low food security. The study also found statistically significant increases across categories from 2021.



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\\_25\\_2023.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SLT/2023/SLT_10_25_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](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

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