

The School Lunch Tray: February 14, 2024

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

- Instructions for Ordering USDA Foods for School Year 2024-25: Orders due March 8, 2024

Need to Know

- Save the Dates: Summer Meal Programs Annual Training 2024
- Crediting Hummus in the School Meal Patterns
- Updated CSDE Resource: Crediting Legumes in the NSLP and SBP
- Updated CSDE Resource: Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12
- Updated CSDE Resource: Menu Planning Guide for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP
- Updated CSDE Resource: Afterschool Snack Program Handbook
- National School Breakfast Week (NSBW) is March 4-8, 2024
- Resource Roundup: Staff training with What's in a Meal Module 4 - School Breakfast Program (SBP) Meal Pattern

Good to Know

- New look for USDA's Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool (PSTTT)
- Recorded Webinar Available from the Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN): Produce Safety University (PSU) Keeping School Food Safe Starts with Science
- Recorded Webinar Available from the Culinary Institute of Child Nutrition (CICN): Optimizing School Nutrition Kitchens: A Guide to Efficient Facility Design and Equipment Selection
- American Commodity Distribution Association (ACDA) Membership

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

Instructions for Ordering USDA Foods for School Year 2024-25: Orders due March 8, 2024

The Connecticut Food Distribution Program's (FDP) catalog for USDA Foods for school year (SY) 2024-25 opens on **Thursday, February 15, 2024**, in Web Based Supply Chain Management (WBSCM). The deadline to place orders in WBSCM is **Friday, March 8, 2024**. Recipient Agencies (RAs) that miss the ordering deadline will not receive USDA Foods.

Please carefully review and follow the CSDE's [Instructions for Ordering USDA Foods for School Year 2024-25](#). This document and the [USDA Foods Ordering Worksheets for School Year 2024-25](#) are available in the "[WBSCM](#)" section of the CSDE's FDP webpage. For questions, please contact the [FDP staff](#).

Need to Know

Save the Dates: Summer Meal Programs Annual Training 2024

The CSDE's annual Summer Meal Programs training will consist of a six-part series of one-hour webinars. Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) sponsors are required to have representation at **each** of the six sessions. Sponsors of the Seamless Summer Option (SSO) of the National School Lunch Program are welcome at each session but may choose to skip the SFSP-specific sessions.

The webinars will take place from 2:00-3:00 pm on the following Thursdays:

- March 28, 2024
- April 11, 2024
- May 9, 2024
- May 23, 2024
- June 6, 2024
- June 20, 2024

Please contact Caroline.Cooke@ct.gov with any questions related to Summer Meals training.

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Crediting Hummus in the School Meal Patterns

School food authorities (SFAs) may credit hummus as either the meat/meat alternates (MMA) component or the vegetables component in the meal patterns for preschoolers and grades K-12 in the school nutrition programs (National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), and Afterschool Snack Program (ASP)). However, one serving cannot credit as both components in the same meal or ASP snack.

To credit as the MMA component, the serving must contain at least $\frac{1}{4}$ ounce equivalent (oz eq) of MMA from the chickpeas/garbanzo beans (legumes) and tahini (sesame paste) combined.

- A $\frac{1}{4}$ -cup serving of legumes credits as 1 oz eq of the MMA component. The minimum creditable amount is 1 tablespoon ($\frac{1}{4}$ oz eq).
- Tahini credits the same as nut/seed butters. Two tablespoons of tahini credit as 1 oz eq of the MMA component. The minimum creditable amount is $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoon ($\frac{1}{4}$ oz eq).

Hummus credits as the vegetables component (legumes subgroup) based on the amount of chickpeas per serving. For example, hummus that contains $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of chickpeas per serving credits as $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of the legumes subgroup. The minimum creditable amount is $\frac{1}{8}$ cup.

SFAs must maintain crediting documentation for hummus that indicates the amount of legumes and tahini per serving. Commercial products require a Child Nutrition (CN) label or manufacturer's product formulation statement (PFS). Hummus made from scratch requires a standardized recipe.

Updated CSDE Resource: Crediting Legumes in the NSLP and SBP

The CSDE recently updated [Crediting Legumes in the NSLP and SBP](#) (February 2024) to include crediting guidance for hummus. This resource includes information on crediting legumes as the vegetable component and meat/meat alternates component and guidance on how to credit legumes in recipes.

Updated CSDE Resource: Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12

An updated version of the CSDE's [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12](#) (dated February 2024) is available. The updates include:

- crediting guidance for hummus added to "Meat/Meat Alternates Component" and "Vegetables Component" in section 3;
- revision to *Table 3-2. USDA's nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes* in "Milk Component" (section 3) to update the percent Daily Values (% DV) for each nutrient required by the USDA in 1 cup of a fluid milk substitute, based on the current daily values and the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) labeling laws (refer to the [February 7, 2024, School Lunch Tray](#));
- guidance on the requirements for electronic production records added to section 2 (refer to the [February 7, 2024, School Lunch Tray](#)); and
- updated resources and links.

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Updated CSDE Resource: Menu Planning Guide for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP

An updated version of the CSDE's [Menu Planning Guide for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP](#) (dated February 2024) is available. The updates include:

- crediting guidance for hummus added to “Meat/Meat Alternates Component” and “Vegetables Component” in section 3;
 - revision to *Table 3-3. USDA’s nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes* in “Milk Component” (section 3) to update the % DV for each nutrient required by the USDA in 1 cup of a fluid milk substitute, based on the current daily values and the FDA’s labeling laws (refer to the [February 7, 2024, School Lunch Tray](#));
 - guidance on the requirements for electronic production records added to section 2 (refer to the [February 7, 2024, School Lunch Tray](#)); and
 - updated resources and links.
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Updated CSDE Resource: Afterschool Snack Program Handbook

An updated version of the CSDE's [Afterschool Snack Program Handbook](#) (dated February 2024) is available. The updates include crediting guidance for hummus added to “Meat/Meat Alternates Component” and “Vegetables Component” in section 2 (Meal Pattern Components for Grades K-12), and updated resources and links.

National School Breakfast Week (NSBW) is March 4-8, 2024

NSBW is a great time to highlight that breakfast is free for all students this year. There are lots of ways to promote the School Breakfast Program (SBP) during NSBW, from displaying NSBW promotional materials to planning special breakfast meals or events in schools. Visit the School Nutrition Association’s (SNA) [NSBW webpage](#) for promotional materials, printable logos, and ideas.

Resource Roundup: Staff training with What's in a Meal Module 4 - School Breakfast Program (SBP) Meal Pattern

With the upcoming NSBW on March 4-8, 2024, this is a great time to make sure that breakfast menus comply with the SBP meal pattern, and that food service staff are trained on what constitutes a reimbursable breakfast. Check out the CSDE’s short 19-minute video from *What's in a Meal* with your staff, [Module 4: School Breakfast Program \(SBP\) Meal Pattern](#).

Good to Know

New look for USDA's Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool (PSTTT)

The USDA's [PSTTT](#) has a new look with graphic images of training statistics. Employee users can quickly view their progress to meet annual training requirements along with their Achievement Badges.

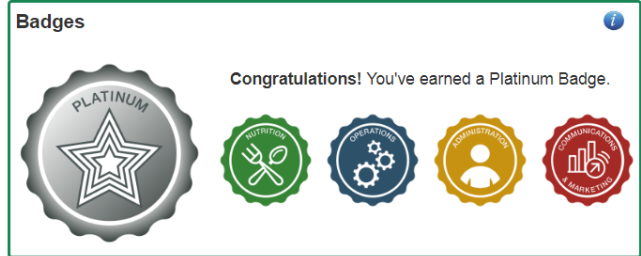
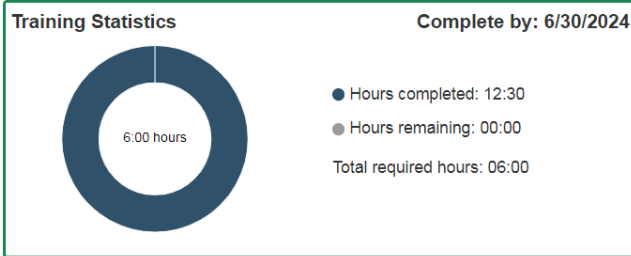
Welcome to the Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool (PSTTT)!

The PSTTT provides easy navigation and user-friendly time saving features! Some of the features include a database of trainings to auto-populate training information, the ability for managers to enter trainings for multiple employees, reminder alerts for remaining annual training requirements, and notifications for annual training requirement completion.

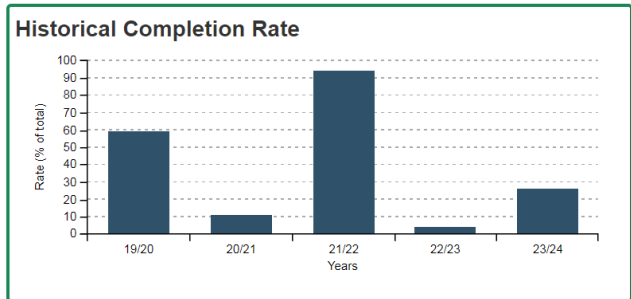
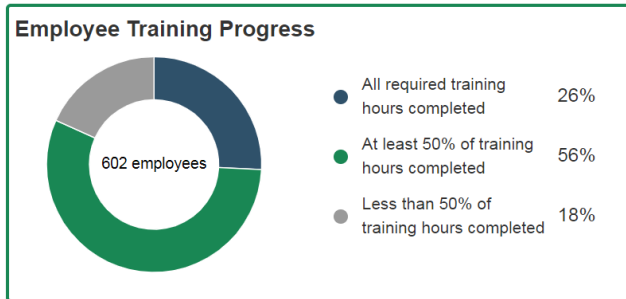
Please click on  for helpful tips.

2/7/2024

Congratulations! You have completed your required training hours. [Print/Save Certificate](#)



Manager and director users can view the progress of their employees and historical completion information from previous years.



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Recorded Webinar Available from the Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN): Produce Safety University (PSU) Keeping School Food Safe Starts with Science

A recording of the ICN's PSU webinar from January 30, 2024, is available: [Keeping School Food Safe Starts with Science](#). This webinar includes presentations from produce safety scientists conducting real-world food safety research at the USDA Agricultural Research Service. It discusses ongoing produce safety research, what challenges researchers are seeking to solve, and the impacts of USDA research on everyday lives. It also connects science to practice and discusses how food safety challenges drive research questions, and how USDA research is translated into everyday food safety practices for kitchen operations.

Recorded Webinar Available from the Culinary Institute of Child Nutrition (CICN): Optimizing School Nutrition Kitchens: A Guide to Efficient Facility Design and Equipment Selection

A recording of the ICN's PSU webinar from February 1, 2024, is available: [Optimizing School Nutrition Kitchens: A Guide to Efficient Facility Design and Equipment Selection](#). This webinar provides guidance on the best practices in planning team collaboration, facility design, and staying abreast of current trends when researching and selecting equipment for a new or remodeled school kitchen.

American Commodity Distribution Association (ACDA) Membership

The ACDA is a professional association with the purpose of strengthening the impact of the USDA Food Distribution Programs. For more information, visit <https://commodityfoods.org/join>.



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/2024/SLT_02_14_2024.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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