

The School Lunch Tray: February 21, 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

- Reminder: Orders for USDA Foods for School Year 2024-25 Due March 8, 2024

Need to Know

- No Table Talk for Thursday, February 22, 2024
- Now Available: CSDE's List of Area Eligible Schools and List of Site Eligible Schools for School Year 2023-24
- New CSDE Resources on the Federal and State Requirements for A La Carte Foods and Beverages in School Cafeterias
- Updated CSDE Resources on Federal and State Requirements for Competitive Foods in Schools
- Resource Roundup: Allowable Beverages in Connecticut Public Schools

Good to Know

- Dairy Grant Opportunity for School Meals: Deadline March 15, 2024
- Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Webpage: Information on Select Dietary Supplement Ingredients and Other Substances

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

Reminder: Orders for USDA Foods for School Year 2024-25 Due March 8, 2024

The Connecticut Food Distribution Program's (FDP) catalog for USDA Foods for school year (SY) 2024-25 is open in Web Based Supply Chain Management (WBSCM) through **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.

While the catalog for USDA Foods is open, the FDP staff will be available during the office hours below. Please review all information in this document and be prepared with questions specific to the district's order.

Day	Date	Time: <i>Click on the times below to join the office hours.</i>
Tuesday	February 27, 2024	8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.
Thursday	February 29, 2024	2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

For questions, please contact the [FDP staff](#).

Need to Know

No Table Talk for Thursday, February 22, 2024

Table Talk will not be held on Thursday, February 22, 2024. The next Table Talk is scheduled for March 7, 2024. Watch the School Lunch Tray for a reminder. In the meantime, schools may submit questions for future Table Talks at <https://forms.office.com/g/GWS7DCbbgo>.

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Now Available: CSDE's List of Area Eligible Schools and List of Site Eligible Schools for School Year 2023-24

The CSDE's [List of Area Eligible Schools](#) and [List of Site Eligible Schools](#) (February 2024) include schools with at least 50 percent of children eligible for free and reduced-price meals in the USDA's school nutrition programs, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP). These lists can be used to determine school eligibility to participate in the Summer Food Service Program, Seamless Summer Option of the NSLP, Afterschool Snack Program, and Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program. These lists are available on the CSDE's [Area Eligibility for Child Nutrition Programs](#) webpage. Links to the USDA [CACFP and SFSP Area Eligibility Mapper](#) and USDA [Dataset for FY 2024 CACFP SFSP Eligibility](#) are also available at the bottom of this webpage.

Area Eligibility for Summer Meals 2024: For questions about using either school or census data to determine the eligibility of a potential Summer Meal Program site, please contact the CSDE's [Summer Meals](#) staff.

New CSDE Resources on the Federal and State Requirements for A La Carte Foods and Beverages in School Cafeterias

The CSDE has three new resources (dated February 2024) that summarize the federal and state laws for cafeteria a la carte sales in public schools, private schools, and residential child care institutions (RCCIs). These laws apply differently depending on the type of school, and whether an eligible Connecticut public school certifies for the healthy food option of Healthy Food Certification (HFC). The resources below provide specific guidance on the requirements for a la carte sales and identify strategies to ensure compliance, based on the applicable laws for each type of school.

- **HFC public schools:** [Requirements for Cafeteria A La Carte Foods and Beverages in HFC Public Schools](#)
- **Non-HFC public schools:** [Requirements for Cafeteria A La Carte Foods and Beverages in Non-HFC Public Schools](#)
- **Private Schools and RCCIs:** [Requirements for Cafeteria A La Carte Foods and Beverages in Private Schools and Residential Child Care Institutions](#)

These resources are available in the "[Documents/Forms](#)" section of the CSDE's Competitive Foods in Schools webpage.

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Updated CSDE Resources on Federal and State Requirements for Competitive Foods in Schools

The chart below summarizes the recently updated (February 2024) CSDE resources on the federal and state requirements for selling and giving competitive foods to students in Connecticut HFC public schools, non-HFC public schools, and private schools/RCCIs.

Topic	HFC Public Schools	Non-HFC Public Schools	Private Schools and RCCIs
Webpage location of resources	“HFC Public Schools” section of the CSDE’s Competitive Foods in Schools webpage	“Non-HFC Public Schools” section of the CSDE’s Competitive Foods in Schools webpage	“Private Schools and RCCIs” section of the CSDE’s Competitive Foods in Schools webpage
	“Related Resources” section of the CSDE’s HFC webpage		
Overview of the federal and state laws and when they apply	Overview of Federal and State Laws for Competitive Foods in Connecticut Public Schools, Private Schools, and Residential Child Care Institutions	Same	Same
	“Overview of Requirements” section of the CSDE’s Competitive Foods in Schools webpage	Same	Same
Competitive foods	Connecticut Competitive Foods Regulations	Same	Same
Complying with state and federal laws	Requirements for Competitive Foods in HFC Public Schools	Requirements for Competitive Foods in Non-HFC Public Schools	Requirements for Competitive Foods in Private Schools and RCCIs
	Summary Chart: State and Federal Requirements for Competitive Foods in HFC Public Schools	Summary Chart: Federal and State Requirements for Competitive Foods in Non-HFC Public Schools	Summary Chart: Federal and State Requirements for Competitive Foods in Private Schools and RCCIs
	Resources for Meeting the Federal and State Requirements for Competitive Foods in Schools	Same	Same

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Topic	HFC Public Schools	Non-HFC Public Schools	Private Schools and RCCIs
Culinary programs	Requirements for Foods and Beverages in Culinary Programs in HFC Public Schools	Requirements for Foods and Beverages in Culinary Programs in Non-HFC Public Schools	Requirements for Foods and Beverages in Culinary Programs in Private Schools and RCCIs
Fundraisers	Requirements for Food and Beverage Fundraisers in HFC Public Schools	Requirements for Food and Beverage Fundraisers in Non-HFC Public Schools	Requirements for Food and Beverage Fundraisers in Private Schools and RCCIs
School stores	Requirements for Foods and Beverages in School Stores in HFC Public Schools	Requirements for Foods and Beverages in School Stores in Non-HFC Public Schools	Requirements for Foods and Beverages in School Stores in Private Schools and RCCIs
Vending machines	Requirements for Foods and Beverages in Vending Machines in HFC Public Schools	Requirements for Foods and Beverages in Vending Machines in Non-HFC Public Schools	Requirements for Foods and Beverages in Vending Machines in Private Schools and RCCIs

Resource Roundup: Allowable Beverages in Connecticut Public Schools

As a reminder, all beverages available for sale to students in public schools (as part of and separately from reimbursable meals and Afterschool Snack Program (ASP) snacks) must comply with the state beverage statute ([C.G.S. Section 10-221q](#)). Five categories of beverages are allowed: 1) milk; 2) 100% juice; 3) nondairy milk substitutes (e.g., soy milk); 4) beverages containing only water mixed with 100% juice; and 5) water. Each category must meet specific nutrition requirements. For detailed guidance on these requirements, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Allowable Beverages in Connecticut Public Schools](#) and visit the CSDE's [Beverage Requirements](#) webpage.

Note: Beverages that do not comply with the state beverage statute (such as soda, coffee, tea, sports drinks, hot chocolate, sweetened water, and juice drinks that are not 100% juice) cannot be sold to students on school premises unless 1) the board of education has voted to allow beverage exemptions; and 2) the sales meet the exemption criteria of the state beverage statute, i.e., occur at the location of an event held after the school day or on the weekend. Noncompliant beverages can never be sold to students from vending machines or school stores.

Good to Know

Dairy Grant Opportunity for School Meals: Deadline March 15, 2024

The Connecticut Milk Promotion Board and New England Dairy are pleased to announce a funding opportunity from Connecticut Dairy Farmers. This grant for eligible Connecticut schools supports food service needs related to expanding summer or school meal programs or serving new dairy menu items. Visit New England Dairy's [School Grants](#) webpage for the application and additional details.

Funding for this program is provided by the Connecticut Milk Promotion Board and New England Dairy.

Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Webpage: Information on Select Dietary Supplement Ingredients and Other Substances

The FDA's [Information on Select Dietary Supplement Ingredients and Other Substances](#) webpage is intended to help manufacturers, retailers, and consumers stay informed about ingredients and other substances found in products labeled as dietary supplements. This webpage includes an ingredient directory with links to FDA's actions and communications.



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_21_2024.pdf.

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To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

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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