

# The School Lunch Tray: April 3, 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**

- None

## **Need to Know**

- Celebrate School Lunch Heroes in May 2024
- Recording Available for CSDE's SFSP 2024 Annual Sponsor Training Session 1: USDA Updates
- Connecticut Summer Meals 2024 Outreach Materials Order Form
- Resource Roundup: USDA's Indirect Costs Guidance Manual

## **Good to Know**

- Alliance for a Healthier Generation Webinar: Active & Engaged Learning for Afterschool and Summer Programs, April 10, 2024
- Food Research & Action Center (FRAC) Webinar: Maximizing Participation in Summer Meals and Summer EBT: April 11, 2024
- Connecticut Farm to School Institute Applications for 2024-25: Deadline is April 12, 2024
- USDA Team Nutrition Newsletter: School Meals Grab n' Go: Quick Tips to Improve Your Meal Service
- Alliance for a Healthier Generation Resource: Increasing Student Engagement Through Taste Tests
- Alliance for a Healthier Generation Resource: Creating Collaborative Nutrition Education: Partnering with Educators and Nutrition Services
- Alliance for a Healthier Generation On-demand Training: Fresh from the Farm: Farm to School and Out-of-School Time Programs

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

### **Celebrate School Lunch Heroes in May 2024**

Celebrate school nutrition professionals on School Lunch Hero Day on May 3, 2024. Visit the [School Nutrition Association's \(SNA\) website](#) for printable activities, official logos, and artwork. Order early to ensure on-time delivery.

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### **Recording Available for CSDE's SFSP 2024 Annual Sponsor Training Session 1: USDA Updates**

A recording of **Session 1: USDA Updates** (March 28, 2024) of the CSDE's annual SFSP sponsor training for 2024 is now available. Access the webinar recording and training slides in the "[SFSP Annual Sponsor Training 2024](#)" section of the CSDE's SFSP webpage.

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### **Connecticut Summer Meals 2024 Outreach Materials Order Form**

End Hunger Connecticut! (EHC!), a nonprofit partner in statewide promotion of the free Summer Meal Programs in Connecticut, is now accepting orders for CT Summer Meals outreach materials. EHC!'s goal is to provide printed materials to students before school concludes to increase program participation in the summer. All outreach materials are free, available in Spanish and English, and come in multiple sizes. Please read all details in the [order form](#) and submit by **April 5, 2024**. Materials will be distributed on a first-come, first-served rolling basis. For questions, please contact EHC! Program Manager Molly Stadnicki at [mstadnicki@endhungerct.org](mailto:mstadnicki@endhungerct.org).

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### **Resource Roundup: USDA's Indirect Costs Guidance Manual**

As a reminder the USDA's [Indirect Costs: Guidance for State Agencies & School Food Authorities](#) manual outlines the considerations for expending nonprofit school food service account (NSFSA) funds to purchase food service equipment and kitchen renovations. Page 16 specifically addresses renovating a school kitchen.

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## Good to Know

### **Alliance for a Healthier Generation Webinar: Active & Engaged Learning for Afterschool and Summer Programs, April 10, 2024**

This Healthier Generation webinar provides information about The Walking Classroom, an evidence-based, fun, and engaging way for students in afterschool and summer programs to get supplemental academic instruction, fresh air, physical activity, and more. The Walking Classroom is simple: kids listen to fun, educational podcasts that align with content standards while they learn and move more.

- Date and time: Wednesday, April 10, 2024, 12:00 – 1:00 p.m.
- Registration: [registration link](#)

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### **Food Research & Action Center (FRAC) Webinar: Maximizing Participation in Summer Meals and Summer EBT: April 11, 2024**

The traditional Summer Nutrition Programs and Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer (Summer EBT) Program are complementary programs – ensuring access to both programs will help alleviate summertime food insecurity for millions of children across the country. Join the Food Research & Action Center for a webinar on promising practices for maximizing participation at summer meals sites as well as in the new, permanent Summer EBT program. Advocates and stakeholders will share their outreach plans and strategies for leveraging both programs for Summer 2024 and beyond.

- Date and time: Thursday, April 11, 2024, 3:00 p.m.
- Registration: [registration link](#)

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### **Connecticut Farm to School Institute Applications for 2024-25: Deadline is April 12, 2024**

The Connecticut Farm to School Institute team recently announced the statewide application period for the 2024-25 [Connecticut Farm to School Institute](#), a comprehensive year-long professional learning opportunity for Connecticut school teams to develop and refine their farm to school programs. **Note:** Previously, the application was open exclusively to recipients of CT Grown for CT Kids Grant but is now open to all schools. The [2024-25 Statewide CT application](#) is currently open through **April 12, 2024**, at 5:00 pm.

### **USDA Team Nutrition Newsletter: School Meals Grab n' Go: Quick Tips to Improve Your Meal Service**

The [March edition of Team Nutrition's School Meals Grab n' Go newsletter](#) features quick tips to improve the nutritional quality of school meals and engage students in fun menu planning and taste-testing activities. Incorporating more scratch menu items, fruits, vegetables, and whole grains make school meals tastier and more nutritious for students and may also help schools qualify for a Healthy Meals Incentives (HMI) Recognition Award. This newsletter includes information on the HMI Recognition Awards, how to apply, and strategies to take school meals to the next level.

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### **Alliance for a Healthier Generation Resource: Increasing Student Engagement Through Taste Tests**

The Alliance for a Healthier Generation provides taste test tips in their resource, [Increasing Student Engagement Through Taste Tests](#). Taste tests can help expose students to new foods and increase participation in school meal programs. Nutrition services and school administrators can use taste tests to increase student engagement and collect feedback about new and existing food and beverages offered on school menus.

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### **Alliance for a Healthier Generation Resource: Creating Collaborative Nutrition Education: Partnering with Educators and Nutrition Services**

The Alliance for a Healthier Generation's resource, [Creating Collaborative Nutrition Education: Partnering with Educators and Nutrition Services](#), is a planning tool to co-create engaging, skills-based lessons for students of all grades.

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### **Alliance for a Healthier Generation On-demand Training: Fresh from the Farm: Farm to School and Out-of-School Time Programs**

The Healthier Generation's [Fresh from the Farm: Farm to School and Out-of-School Time Programs](#) is a self-paced on-demand module that equips out-of-school time staff and stakeholders with the knowledge and resources to integrate farm to school strategies into their out-of-school time programming.

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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\\_04\\_03\\_2024.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SLT/2024/SLT_04_03_2024.pdf).

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1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
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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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