

The School Lunch Tray: May 8, 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: 2024-25 Healthy Food Certification (HFC) Statement Due July 1, 2024
- Reminder: Interschool Agreements for School Year 2024-25 Due July 1, 2024 (Full Service) or August 30, 2024 (Vended)

Need to Know

- Reminder: USDA Webinar Tomorrow (May 9, 2024) on the Final Rule: Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans
- Summer Meals Training for Seamless Summer Option (SSO) Sponsors on May 16, 2024: Summer Option of the National School Lunch Program.
- Reminder: USDA Foods Transfer Request Forms
- Connecticut Grown for Connecticut Kids Week 2024: October 7-11
- Resource Roundup: Food Safety for Child Nutrition Programs

Good to Know

- School Meals Grab n' Go Newsletter: Innovation in the Cultural Diversity of School Meals
- FRAC Webinar: Boosting Breakfast in Older Youth: May 23, 2024
- Institute of Child Nutrition (UCN) Recorded Webinar: Recognition of School Culinary Professionals – Spotlight on School Meal Innovations

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

Reminder: 2024-25 Healthy Food Certification (HFC) Statement Due July 1, 2024

All public schools that participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) must submit the annual HFC Statement in the CSDE's Online Application and Claiming System for Child Nutrition Programs (CNP System) by July 1, 2024.

- Review the CSDE's [Instructions for Submitting Connecticut's Healthy Food Certification Statement for School Year 2024-25](#) for important information and specific steps for completing the 2023-24 HFC Statement in the CNP System. Note: The claims preparer must first enroll the district in the school nutrition programs for school year 2024-25 before one of the two authorized signers can complete the HFC application.
- The HFC application requirements are summarized in [Operational Memorandum No. 07-24: Requirements for Submitting the Healthy Food Certification \(HFC\) Statement for School Year 2024-25](#). Guidance is available in the CSDE's recorded training module, [Completing the Application Process for Healthy Food Certification](#).

For additional information, visit the "[Apply](#)" section of the HFC webpage or contact Susan Fiore at susan.fiore@ct.gov.

Reminder: Interschool Agreements for School Year 2024-25 Due July 1, 2024 (Full Service) or August 30, 2024 (Vended)

Sponsors that sell USDA meals or Afterschool Snack Program (ASP) snacks to another district or school during school year 2024-25 must complete and submit an interschool agreement to the CSDE.

- Full-service Interschool Agreement form: Due July 1, 2024.
- Recipient Site Vended Interschool Agreements: Due at least two weeks before the start of the school year, but no later than August 30, 2024.

The interschool agreement forms are available under "I" on the CSDE's [Forms for School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage. For more information, refer to [Operational Memorandum No. 06-24: Interschool Agreements for School Year 2024-24](#).

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Need to Know

Reminder: USDA Webinar Tomorrow (May 9, 2024) on the Final Rule: Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans

On May 9, 2024, the USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) will host a webinar for school food authorities on the final rule, Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent With the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. The webinar will be recorded and will be available the USDA's [Updates to the School Nutrition Standards](#) webpage.

- Date and time: Thursday, May 9, 2024, 2:00 p.m.
- Registration: [registration link](#)

Summer Meals Training for Seamless Summer Option (SSO) Sponsors on May 16, 2024: Summer Option of the National School Lunch Program.

The CSDE strongly encourages SSO sponsors to attend the next session of the CSDE's annual Summer Meal Programs training on May 16, 2024.

- Training: Seamless Summer Option of the National School Lunch Program.
- Date and time: Thursday, May 16, 2024, from 2:00-3:00 p.m.

Registration is not required. Join the Teams trainings using the regular SLT Table Talk link below: The recorded webinar will be available for sponsors who cannot attend live. For questions about Summer Meal training, please contact caroline.cooke@ct.gov.

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](tel:+18608402075).,920756855# United States, Hartford

Phone Conference ID: 920 756 855#

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Reminder: USDA Foods Transfer Request Forms

With the end of the school year approaching, the Connecticut Food Distribution Program's (FDP) staff are getting requests for additional pounds at processors to finish the year. CSDE [Operational Memorandum No. 02-19](#) summarizes the FDP's procedure for requesting transfer of pounds of USDA Foods diverted for further processing. Recipient Agencies (RAs) must complete and submit the [USDA Foods Transfer Request Form](#) when requesting any transfers. This form assists RAs with critically reviewing current usage and forecasting projected usage.

Requests must come from the RAs directly. The FDP will not accept requests from processors or brokers. The FDP staff will review the request and contact the RA with any questions or additional instructions. The RA will receive an email notification if the requested pounds are available and the transfer request is approved.

Connecticut Grown for Connecticut Kids Week 2024: October 7-11

The Connecticut Departments of Education (CSDE) and Agriculture (DoAg) are excited to announce this year's CT Grown for CT Kids Week, October 7-11, 2024. Let the planning begin! Now is the time to start thinking of menu ideas and reaching out to local farmers and producers to plan the CT Grown items to be offered. For schools that have not used all their Local Food for Schools Incentive Program funds, this is a great way to do so. Need help getting started? Reach out to Monica Pacheco (CSDE) at monica.pacheco@ct.gov, Hannah Carty (DoAg) at hannah.carty@ct.gov, or the team at [Put Local on Your Tray](#).

Resource Roundup: Food Safety for Child Nutrition Programs

The CSDE's [Food Safety for Child Nutrition Programs](#) webpage includes guidance to help school food authorities comply with the current Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Food Code, including links to links to many resources such as handouts, posters, and training materials. More resources are available in the CSDE's [Resource List for Food Safety in Child Nutrition Programs](#).

Good to Know

School Meals Grab n' Go Newsletter: Innovation in the Cultural Diversity of School Meals

This edition of [Team Nutrition's School Meals Grab n' Go newsletter](#) features tips to plan and prepare menus that are diverse and appealing to students. Positive food experiences and nutrition education activities can help students develop a sense of identity and acceptance, as well as expose students to a variety of foods and flavors. This newsletter includes tips to help school nutrition programs embrace cultural cuisines and qualify for a Healthy Meals Incentives (HMI) Recognition Award.

FRAC Webinar: Boosting Breakfast in Older Youth: May 23, 2024

School breakfast is associated with positive social, emotional, and academic outcomes; however, far too many secondary students (grades 6-12) skip this essential morning meal. According to the CDC, 75 percent of teens do not eat breakfast daily. Skipping breakfast can contribute to poor school performance, and compound negative health outcomes. Join the Food Research & Action Center to explore successful strategies to engage older students and increase school breakfast participation in middle and high schools.

- Date and time: Thursday, May 23, 2024, 3:00 p.m.
 - Registration: [Webinar Registration - Zoom](#)
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Institute of Child Nutrition (UCN) Recorded Webinar: Recognition of School Culinary Professionals – Spotlight on School Meal Innovations

The ICN's [Recognition of School Culinary Professionals – Spotlight on School Meal Innovations](#) celebrates the work of school nutrition culinary professionals with a spotlight on school meal innovations. In this session, school foodservice directors share highlights from their school districts that have been awarded recognition as innovators and trailblazers in school breakfast and lunch. Participants will gain insights into strategies and practices for innovation in school meals, including utilizing local foods in school kitchens and advancing school culinary operations to appeal to student taste preferences.

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_05_08_2024.pdf.

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Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
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3. email: program.intake@usda.gov

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