

## The School Lunch Tray: May 15, 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

- 2024-25 Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) Grant Announcement: Applications due June 7, 2024

### Need to Know

- No Table Talk for Thursday, May 16, 2024: Replaced by Summer Meals Training
- Summer Meals Training on May 16, 2024: Seamless Summer Option (SSO) of the National School Lunch Program
- Information Session on Tuesday, May 21, 2024: Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer (SEBT) Program
- New Connecticut Local Food for School Incentive Program
- USDA Foods Reminder: Guidance on Complaints
- Reminder: University of Connecticut Training on Friday, May 17, 2024: Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCC) Academy
- Resource Roundup: New CSDE Resource: Managing an Excess Operating Balance

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.



# The School Lunch Tray: May 15, 2024

## Action Items

### 2024-25 Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) Grant Announcement: Applications due June 7, 2024

The CSDE's [FFVP Grant Announcement](#) provides information regarding the 2024-25 FFVP grant opportunity. The FFVP provides funding to serve a variety of free fresh fruit and vegetable snacks to all children in participating schools. **This grant funded program is different from the USDA Foods DOD program.**

The CSDE will accept completed applications online until close of business on **June 7, 2024**. For questions, please contact Andy Paul at [andrew.paul@ct.gov](mailto:andrew.paul@ct.gov) or 860-807-2048, or Jen Bove at [Jennifer.bove@ct.gov](mailto:Jennifer.bove@ct.gov) or 860-807-2044.

**Information Session:** The CSDE will hold a one-hour information session on the FFVP application process via Teams on Friday, May 17, 2024, from 10-11 a.m. All potential applicants must attend this informational session as it will address the definition of **elementary school** used for the FFVP. We will also answer any questions regarding the FFVP and application process.

#### Microsoft Teams [Need help?](#)

[Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 214 271 314 059

Passcode: Dt2t4W

#### Dial-in by phone

[+1 860-840-2075,,250039004#](#) United States, Hartford

[Find a local number](#)

Phone conference ID: 250 039 004#

**Submission Process:** The 2024-25 FFVP Applications must be completed and submitted in the Online Application and Claiming System for Child Nutrition Programs ([CNP System](#)). Applicants must have a user ID and password to access the system or connect with a district staff member who has current access. The [Instructions for Submitting the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program \(FFVP\) Grant Application](#) describes how to enter and submit the completed application.

- **Applicants must complete and upload the [Application Certification form](#).**
- Schools must be **elementary** schools to apply, which are defined as schools inclusive of any grade between kindergarten and grade 6 (e.g., Pre-K-6, K-12, and 5-8) where at least **50 percent** of the children are eligible for free and reduced-price meals.
- The [FFVP Area Eligibility List](#) and [FFVP Site Eligibility List](#) are specific to the FFVP grant only, and will assist school food authorities in determining which schools are potentially eligible to participate in the FFVP.

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For information on the FFVP, visit the CSDE's [FFVP](#) webpage. Applicants must review the USDA's [Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program Handbook](#) prior to completing the online application to ensure it meets the federal guidelines.

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### Need to Know

#### **No Table Talk for Thursday, May 16, 2024: Replaced by Summer Meals Training**

This week's Table Talk will be replaced by the annual Summer Meals training for Seamless Summer Option (SSO) sponsors (see below). The next Table Talk will be on Thursday, May 30, 2024. To submit questions in advance, visit <https://forms.office.com/g/GWS7DCbbg0>.

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#### **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](mailto: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#](tel:+1920756855) United States, Hartford

Phone Conference ID: 920 756 855#

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## The School Lunch Tray: May 15, 2024

### Information Session on Tuesday, May 21, 2024: Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer (SEBT) Program

On Tuesday, May 21, 2024, the Connecticut State Department of Education and Connecticut State Department of Social Services are hosting an information session about the Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer (SEBT) program launching in summer 2024. Thousands of children in Connecticut will be eligible to receive grocery benefits during the summer. Join the information session to learn about the program and school food authorities' role in ensuring that kids receive this critical benefit this summer.

- **Date and time:** Tuesday, May 21, 2024, from 2:00-3:00 p.m.
- Registration is not required. Join the meeting using the link below.

#### Microsoft Teams [Need help?](#)

[Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 225 522 033 195

Passcode: R3mWGv

#### Dial in by phone

[+1 860-840-2075,,775640774#](#) United States, Hartford

[Find a local number](#)

Phone conference ID: 775 640 774#

For organizers: [Meeting options](#) | [Reset dial-in PIN](#)

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### New Connecticut Local Food for School Incentive Program

In addition to the federally funded program currently administered by CSDE, state funding has been allocated to support locally and regionally sourced food. This program is administered by the Connecticut Department of Agriculture (CT DOAG) in cooperation with CSDE.

[The Connecticut Local Food for Schools Incentive Program](#) provides reimbursement payments to eligible boards of education for the purchase of **locally sourced food** and **regionally sourced food** to be used in an eligible meal program. An eligible board of education shall be entitled to receive reimbursement payments in an amount equal to:

- one-half of such board's expenditures for locally sourced foods and
- one-third of such board's expenditures for regionally sourced foods

Any eligible board of education interested in participating in the program must complete the [CT DOAG Microsoft Office form](#). This is a non-competitive program, but eligible boards of education must opt-in to participate or affirmatively opt-out of participating.

There are some differences between the two incentive programs. Detailed guidance and a presentation are available on the [CT DOAG webpage](#). The Connecticut Local Food for School Incentive Program runs from May 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025.

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For questions and assistance, please contact the CT DOAG staff below.

- Hannah Carty at [Hannah.Carty@ct.gov](mailto:Hannah.Carty@ct.gov) or 860-471-1620
- Cyrena Thibodeau at [Cyrena.Thibodeau@ct.gov](mailto:Cyrena.Thibodeau@ct.gov) or 860-895-3094

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### USDA Foods Reminder: Guidance on Complaints

The three USDA Foods Programs (Direct Delivery, USDA DoD Fresh, and Further Processed USDA Foods) have different procedures for submitting complaints. Guidance on the complaint process for all three programs is available in the CSDE's document, [Overview of USDA Foods Complaint Process in Connecticut](#). This document and the [Web-Based Supply Chain Management \(WBSCM\) Direct Delivery Complaint Form](#) are available in the "[Complaints](#)" section of the CSDE's Food Distribution Program webpage.

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### Reminder: University of Connecticut Training on Friday, May 17, 2024: Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCC) Academy

Join the University of Connecticut for a day of free professional development on implementing the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCC) model. The Connecticut WSCC Partnership will host its 2024 WSCC Academy on Friday, May 17, 2024. At this one-day training, school and district wellness teams will learn how to strengthen their school practices to promote whole child development. Visit the [WSCC Academy](#) website for more information and to register.

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### Resource Roundup: New CSDE Resource: Managing an Excess Operating Balance in the School Nutrition Programs

The CSDE's new resource, [Managing an Excess Operating Balance in the School Nutrition Programs](#), is a one-page summary of the requirements and process for handling an excess operating balance for the school nutrition programs. This document also includes guidance to assist school food authorities with determining allowable and unallowable costs. For more information on financial management, refer to the CSDE's [Financial Management Requirements for the School Nutrition Programs](#).

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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\\_05\\_15\\_2024.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/slt/2024/slt_05_15_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](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

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