

## The School Lunch Tray: June 26, 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

- No Table Talk for the Summer
- Updated Meal Patterns and Menu Planning Documents for SY 2024-25 Based on Final Rule Changes
- Updated NSLP and SBP Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 for SY 2024-25
- Updated Menu Planning Checklists for Lunch for Grades K-12 for SY 2024-25
- Updated Preschool Meal Patterns for SY 2024-25: NSLP, SBP, and Afterschool Snack Program (ASP)
- Updated Preschool Menu Planning Forms for SY 2024-25
- Updated Afterschool Snack Program (ASP) Meal Pattern and Menu Planning Form for Grades K-12 for SY 2024-25
- Updated CSDE Resources: Overview of Menu Planning for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP
- Updated Smart Snacks Nutrition Standards Effective July 1, 2024
- Updated Connecticut Nutrition Standards for School Year 2024-25: Effective July 1, 2024
- Resource Roundup: "Upcoming Meal Pattern Changes" Section of CSDE's Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs Webpage

### Good to Know

- USDA Listening Session on the USDA Foods Processing program at SNA Annual National Conference: July 16, 2024

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: June 26, 2024

## Need to Know

### No Table Talk for the Summer

Table Talk is on vacation for the summer and will resume after the start of the new school year. Enjoy the summer break!

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### Updated Meal Patterns and Menu Planning Documents for SY 2024-25 Based on Final Rule Changes

The meal patterns and menu planning forms below all reflect the changes implemented by the USDA final rule, [Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#), effective July 1, 2024. For an overview of these changes, refer to “Summary of Meal Pattern Updates for School Year 2024-25: USDA’s final rule, Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans” in the [School Lunch Tray from June 19, 2024](#), and [USDA Memo SP 19-2024, CACFP 07-2024, and SFSP 12-2024](#): Initial Implementation Memorandum: *Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans Program Guidance for School Nutrition Programs*.

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### Updated NSLP and SBP Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 for SY 2024-25

The CSDE’s school year (SY) 2024-25 NSLP and SBP meal patterns for grades K-12 (dated June 2024) are now available. These meal patterns reflect the changes implemented by the USDA final rule, effective July 1, 2024 (refer to “Updated Meal Patterns and Menu Planning Documents for SY 2024-25 Based on Final Rule Changes” above). The NSLP and SBP meal patterns are available for four-day weeks, five-day weeks, and seven-day weeks in the “[Documents/Forms](#)” section of the CSDE’s [Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

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### Updated Menu Planning Checklists for Lunch for Grades K-12 for SY 2024-25

The CSDE’s [Menu Planning Checklists for Lunch for Grades K-12](#) for SY 2024-25 (dated June 2024) are now available. These meal patterns reflect the changes implemented by the USDA final rule, effective July 1, 2024 (refer to “Updated Meal Patterns and Menu Planning Documents for SY 2024-25 Based on Final Rule Changes” above). The menu planning checklists assist SFAs with planning meals to meet the NSLP meal patterns. They are available for five-day and seven-day weeks for the required grade groups (K-5, 6-8, and 9-12) and the optional grade groups for K-8.

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## The School Lunch Tray: June 26, 2024

### Updated Preschool Meal Patterns for SY 2024-25: NSLP, SBP, and Afterschool Snack Program (ASP)

The updated SY 2024-25 preschool meal patterns for the NSLP, SBP, and ASP (dated June 2024) are now available on the CSDE's [Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage. These meal patterns reflect the changes implemented by the USDA final rule, effective July 1, 2024 (refer to "Updated Meal Patterns and Menu Planning Documents for SY 2024-25 Based on Final Rule Changes" above).

- [ASP Meal Pattern for Preschoolers](#)
- [Breakfast Pattern for Preschoolers](#)
- [Lunch Meal Pattern for Preschoolers](#)

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### Updated Preschool Menu Planning Forms for SY 2024-25

Updated SY 2024-25 preschool menu planning forms for the NSLP, SBP, and ASP (dated June 2024) are available in the "[Menu Forms for Preschoolers](#)" section of the CSDE's [Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage. These meal patterns reflect the changes implemented by the USDA final rule, effective July 1, 2024 (refer to "Updated Meal Patterns and Menu Planning Documents for SY 2024-25 Based on Final Rule Changes" above).

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### Updated Afterschool Snack Program (ASP) Meal Pattern and Menu Planning Form for Grades K-12 for SY 2024-25

The updated [ASP meal pattern for grades K-12](#) for SY 2024-25 is now available in the "[Meal Patterns for the ASP](#)" section of the CSDE's ASP webpage. The updated SY 2024-25 [ASP Menu Form for Grades K-12](#) is now available in the "[Menu Planning for the ASP](#)" section of the CSDE's ASP webpage. These documents are dated June 2024.

**Note:** The ASP meal pattern requirements for grades K-12 have not changed but the menu planning notes are updated to include additional guidance, resources, and updated links. The changes to the ASP meal pattern for grades K-12 required by the USDA final rule do not take effect until school year 2025-26 (effective July 1, 2025).

## The School Lunch Tray: June 26, 2024

### Updated CSDE Resources: Overview of Menu Planning for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

The SY 2024-25 versions of the CSDE's resources below provide guidance to help menu planners meet the NSLP and SBP meal pattern requirements for grades K-12 and encourage student selections of reimbursable meals with offer versus serve (OVS).

- [Overview of Menu Planning for Grades K-12 in the NSLP](#)
- [Overview of Menu Planning for Grades K-12 in the SBP](#)

These documents reflect the changes implemented by the USDA final rule, effective July 1, 2024 (refer to "Updated Meal Patterns and Menu Planning Documents for SY 2024-25 Based on Final Rule Changes" above). They are available in the "[Menu Planning for School Meals](#)" section of the CSDE's [Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

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### Updated Smart Snacks Nutrition Standards Effective July 1, 2024

The USDA's final rule, [Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#), implements two changes to the USDA Smart Snacks Nutrition Standards, effective July 1, 2024.

1. **Elimination of trans fat standard:** The final rule removes the Smart Snacks synthetic trans fat standard. This change eliminates a requirement that the USDA determined is no longer necessary due to the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) actions that eliminated synthetic trans fat from the U.S. food supply by 2021.
2. **Addition of exemption for bean dips from the total fat standard:** The final rule adds bean dips (as defined below) to the list of foods exempt from the Smart Snacks total fat standard. This exemption applies to products marketed as hummus and bean dips made from any variety of beans, peas, or lentils. Bean dips must still meet the Smart Snacks saturated fat standard and all other Smart Snacks requirements.

**Definition of bean dip:** A spread made from ground pulses (beans, peas, and/or lentils) with one or more of the following optional ingredients: ground nut/seed butter (such as tahini [ground sesame] or peanut butter; vegetable oil (such as olive oil, canola oil, soybean oil); seasoning (such as salt, citric acid); vegetables and juice for flavor (such as olives, roasted peppers, garlic, lemon juice); and for manufactured bean dip, ingredients necessary as preservatives and/or to maintain freshness.

These changes are reflected in the updated version (June 2024) of the CSDE's [Summary of Smart Snacks Standards](#). **Note:** Public schools that implement [Healthy Food Certification \(HFC\)](#) must follow the Connecticut Nutrition Standards (CNS) instead of the Smart Snacks food standards.

## The School Lunch Tray: June 26, 2024

### Updated Connecticut Nutrition Standards for School Year 2024-25: Effective July 1, 2024

The USDA final rule, [Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#), implements two changes to the USDA Smart Snacks Nutrition Standards, effective July 1, 2024, including 1) the elimination of trans fat standard; and 2) the addition of an exemption for bean dips from the total fat standard (refer to “Updated Smart Snacks Nutrition Standards Effective July 1, 2024” above). The CSDE’s nutrition standards committee voted to update the 2024-25 Connecticut Nutrition Standards (CNS) to include both changes. Updated versions of the CNS are available on the [CNS](#) webpage and the links below.

- Summary Document: [CNS for School Year 2024-25](#)
- CNS Full Document: [CNS for Foods in Schools: School Year 2024-25](#)

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### Resource Roundup: “Upcoming Meal Pattern Changes” Section of CSDE’s Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs Webpage

Links to information and resources regarding the USDA final rule, [Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#), are available in the “[Upcoming Meal Pattern Changes](#)” section of the CSDE’s Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs. This section can also be accessed under “[Meal Patterns](#)” on the CSDE’s Program Guidance for School Nutrition Programs webpage.

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## Good to Know

### USDA Listening Session on the USDA Foods Processing Program at SNA Annual National Conference: July 16, 2024

The USDA invites school food authorities participating in the SNA Annual National Conference in Boston next month to attend the USDA Listening Session on the USDA Foods Processing program on Tuesday, July 16, 2024, from 2:00-3:30 p.m. in Room 150. The USDA is interested in getting stakeholder feedback on the USDA Foods Processing program. The USDA will also be on the exhibit floor in USDA Lane, USDA Foods booth 1505, and will hold two USDA Foods presentations on Sunday July 14, 2024.

- 10:30-11:30am – Apples to Zucchini: Basics of USDA DoD Fresh in Room 104-ABC
- 1:00 -2:30pm – USDA Foods 201 in Room 157-ABC

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\\_06\\_26\\_2024.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SLT/2024/SLT_06_26_2024.pdf).

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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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