

The School Lunch Tray: August 7, 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

- Operational Memorandum No. 15-24: Federal Meal Reimbursement Rates for School Year (SY): July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025
- Reminder: USDA Foods Update on Web Based Supply Chain Management (WBSCM) and Fresh Fruit and Vegetables Order Receipt System (FFAVORS) Login Transition to Login.gov
- New USDA Webinar: School Year 2024-25 Paid Lunch Equity Tool Walkthrough
- Resource Roundup: School Nutrition Association (SNA) 2024-25 Promotion Calendar

Good to Know

- Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN) 2024 Back to School Toolbox
- New ICN Resource: Facility Design and Equipment Purchasing for School Nutrition Programs
- Food Research & Action Center (FRAC) Webinar: Boosting School Budgets with Afterschool Suppers and Snacks: August 15, 2024
- FRAC Webinar: Expansion Strategies for Afterschool Suppers and Snacks: August 22, 2024
- ICN STAR Webinar: Strategies for Improving Lunch Line Efficiency: August 29, 2024
- FRAC Webinar: The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) in Schools: September 5, 2024
- Culinary Institute of Child Nutrition (CICN) Recorded Webinar: Tools of the Trade - Exploring K-12 Market Trend Reports and Agriculture Marketing Tools to Build Menus for Flavor and Flexibility
- ICN STAR Recorded Webinar: Incorporating Plant-Based Options in Schools

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: August 7, 2024



Need to Know

Operational Memorandum No. 15-24: Federal Meal Reimbursement Rates for School Year (SY): July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025

[Operational Memorandum No. 15-24](#) summarizes the annual adjustments to the federal reimbursement rates for local educational agencies (LEAs) for lunches, breakfasts, afterschool snacks, and milk served to students participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), Afterschool Snack Program (ASP), and Special Milk Program (SMP); and the NSLP reimbursement rate for USDA donated foods for SY 2024-25. This memorandum is available in the “[School Nutrition Memos 2024](#)” section of the CSDE’s Operational Memoranda for School Nutrition Programs webpage.

Reminder: USDA Foods Update on Web Based Supply Chain Management (WBSCM) and Fresh Fruit and Vegetables Order Receipt System (FFAVORS) Login Transition to Login.gov

Registered WBSCM and FFAVORS users have received emails regarding the upcoming transition from the WBSCM and FFAVORS login to the Login.gov login. The eAuthentication (eAuth) Phase 1 transition to Login.gov went live as of September 12, 2023, which introduced the [new USDA eAuthentication Login page](#) and the new logon options using Login.gov credentials and multi-factor authentication (MFA) methods.

These changes are being implemented to prepare users to fully transition by September 2024. At that time, Login.gov will be required to access USDA resources; users will not be able to access WBSCM or FFAVORS using their current eAuth credentials.

More information on this transition is available on [the eAuth website](#) and [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\) webpage](#).

The School Lunch Tray: August 7, 2024

New USDA Webinar: School Year 2024-25 Paid Lunch Equity Tool Walkthrough

The USDA Food and Nutrition Service recently released a recorded webinar, [School Year 2024-2025 Paid Lunch Equity Tool Walk-Through](#). This webinar includes a brief introduction to the Paid Lunch Equity (PLE) requirement and how to complete the tool based on the method the school food authority chooses to use to meet the PLE requirement. This webinar and other resources are available in the [“Paid Lunch Equity”](#) section of the CSDE’s Financial Management for School Nutrition Programs webpage.

Resource Roundup: School Nutrition Association (SNA) 2024-25 Promotion Calendar

The SNA’s [2024-25 Promotion Calendar](#) includes month-long, week-long, and single-day holidays and events, offering endless opportunities to brighten your school meal program.

Good to Know

Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN) 2024 Back to School Toolbox

The ICN’s [2024 Back to School Toolbox](#) webpage contains a variety of resources to help school food authorities prepare for the upcoming school year, including a [Back to School Checklist](#).

New ICN Resource: Facility Design and Equipment Purchasing for School Nutrition Programs

The ICN’s [Facility Design and Equipment Purchasing for School Nutrition Programs](#) provides guidance for school nutrition professionals involved in facility renovation, facility design, and purchasing equipment. This manual helps school nutrition professionals understand the basics of facility design and equipment purchasing, provides research and guides to support their projects, and helps team members make informed facility design and procurement decisions.

Food Research & Action Center (FRAC) Webinar: Boosting School Budgets with Afterschool Suppers and Snacks: August 15, 2024

This webinar will showcase how school districts are drawing down funding to create financially viable afterschool nutrition programs, as well as tips and tricks for covering extra staff hours, program structure, and staffing ideas.

- Date and time: August 15, 2024, 3:00p.m.
 - Registration: <https://frac.peachnewmedia.com/store/seminar/seminar.php?seminar=201500>
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The School Lunch Tray: August 7, 2024

FRAC Webinar: Expansion Strategies for Afterschool Suppers and Snacks: August 22, 2024

As we head into the new school year, this webinar will feature existing and new promising practices for expanding access to afterschool suppers and snacks in every state.

- Date and time: August 22, 2024, 3:00p.m.
 - Registration: <https://frac.peachnewmedia.com/store/seminar/seminar.php?seminar=201502>
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ICN STAR Webinar: Strategies for Improving Lunch Line Efficiency: August 29, 2024

Efficient lunch service is crucial for ensuring that students have ample time to eat and enjoy their nutritious meals. This webinar will explore strategies for improving student queues in the dining room and enhancing communication among school nutrition staff. Join us to learn effective strategies for improving lunch line efficiency and enhancing the overall dining experience for students.

- Date and time: August 29, 2024, 3:00p.m.
 - Registration: <https://theicn.docebosaas.com/learn/courses/417/star-strategies-for-improving-lunch-line-efficiency-august-29th-2024-3pm-est>
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FRAC Webinar: The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) in Schools: September 5, 2024

Join the Food Research & Action Center, Hunger Solutions New York, Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank, and Hunger Free Oklahoma to learn the benefits and potential of SNAP outreach in schools.

- Date and time: September 5, 2024, 3:00p.m.
 - Registration: https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_hUvdmxLcRo6iZ0G6Vq5pMA#/registration
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Culinary Institute of Child Nutrition (CICN) Recorded Webinar: Tools of the Trade - Exploring K-12 Market Trend Reports and Agriculture Marketing Tools to Build Menus for Flavor and Flexibility

A recording is available for the CICN's August 2024 webinar, [Tools of the Trade - Exploring K-12 Market Trend Reports and Agriculture Marketing Tools to Build Menus for Flavor and Flexibility](#). This webinar explores culinary tools to design and update school meal menus with a focus on popular flavors and flexibility to respond to changes in fresh produce supplies during the school year. It also shares highlights from the recent ICN K-12 Food Trends Report, provides an overview the USDA Market Report and other agriculture marketing tools, and offers tips on how these resources can be leveraged to help schools build popular and flexible school menus.

ICN STAR Recorded Webinar: Incorporating Plant-Based Options in Schools

A recording is available for the CIGN's webinar, [Incorporating Plant-Based Options in Schools](#). This webinar highlights the importance of implementing plant-based options and how they align with the USDA school meal patterns to ensure healthier and more sustainable meal choices for students. It also shares operators' experiences incorporating plant-based meals in their programs and provides practical implementation strategies and tips for introducing plant-based meals in 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_08_07_2024.pdf.

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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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