

The School Lunch Tray: August 28, 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

- Deadline for Summer EBT (S-EBT) Applications is August 31, 2024
- Save the Date: CSDE's Training, Back to School with School Nutrition
- Six weeks Until Connecticut Grown for Connecticut Kids Week, October 7-11, 2024

Need to Know

- Updated CSDE Production Records for Preschool and Grades K-12 in the National School Lunch program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) for School Year 2024-25
- Reminder for Districts and Schools Using Electronic Production Records and Standardized Recipes
- Important Reminder: Disaster Preparedness for School Food Authorities (SFAs)
- Resource Roundup: USDA's Farm to School Website and Resources

Good to Know

- Food Research & Action Center Webinar: The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) in Schools, Thursday, September 5, 2024
- New Resources from the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion: Food Sources of Select Nutrients

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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Action Items

Deadline for Summer EBT (S-EBT) applications is August 31, 2024

The last day for households to apply for S-EBT is August 31, 2024. For more information, visit the Department of Social Services' [Summer EBT](#) webpage.

Save the Date: CSDE's Training, Back to School with School Nutrition

The CSDE will conduct a virtual training, *Back to School with School Nutrition*, via Teams on September 11, 2024, and September 12, 2024, from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. At least one school nutrition lead staff member with responsibilities for the child nutrition programs is expected to attend from each school food authority. More information is coming soon.

Six Weeks Until Connecticut Grown for Connecticut Kids Week, October 7-11, 2024

Now is the time to review cycle menus and start planning to incorporate Connecticut grown items. A great way to get started is to look at the vegetable subgroups offered each day and determine where locally grown items could "swap in." Early October is a great time of the year when many of Connecticut's final harvests of the season occur. Now is the time to reach out to area farms to plan procurement for items to be featured during [Connecticut Grown for Connecticut Kids Week](#) and all month long during [National Farm to School Month](#). For questions or assistance contact Monica Pacheco at monica.pacheco@ct.gov or Jen Bove at jen.bove@ct.gov.

Need to Know

Updated CSDE Production Records for Preschool and Grades K-12 in the National School Lunch program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) for School Year 2024-25

As a reminder, the USDA regulations for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) (7 CFR 210.10(a)(3)) (including the Seamless Summer Option) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) (7 CFR 220.8(a)(3)) require that all school food authorities (SFAs) must maintain daily production records for all school meals. The CSDE's resource, [Requirements for Production Records in School Nutrition Programs](#), provided guidance on this requirement.

Updated versions (dated August 2024) of the CSDE's production records for preschool and grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP are available in the "[Documents/Forms](#)" section of the CSDE's [Production Records for School Nutrition Programs](#).

Grades K-12

- NSLP Production Record for Grades K-5, 6-8, or 9-12
- NSLP Production Record for Grades K-8 Option
- SBP Production Record for Grades K-5, 6-8, or 9-12
- SBP Production Record for Optional Grade Groups (K-8, K-12, or 6-12)

Preschool

- NSLP Preschool Production Record
- SBP Preschool Production Record

These revised versions have a simplified format and more specific instructions to make them easier to complete. They help SFAs provide the information required to comply with the USDA's regulations for production records.

Reminder for Districts and Schools Using Electronic Production Records and Standardized Recipes

Districts choosing to use electronic production records must still have a physical written copy of the production records at each site to guide the daily menu production. SFAs must regularly review and update their electronic production records to ensure accuracy and compliance with all federal and state regulations.

Additionally, standardized recipes must be easily available at work locations for food service staff to use while preparing the menu items. A best practice is to have a recipe binder in the kitchen with all standardized recipes labeled for easy access.

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For information on the production record requirements, refer to the CSDE's [Requirements for Production Records in School Nutrition Programs](#). For information on standardized recipes, refer to the Institute of Child Nutrition's [USDA Recipe Standardization Guide for School Nutrition Programs](#) and visit the "[Standardized Recipes](#)" section of the CSDE's Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs webpage.

Important Reminder: Disaster Preparedness for School Food Authorities (SFAs)

The [USDA Foods Program Disaster Manual](#) and the Connecticut State Department of Education Food Distribution Program (CSDE FDP) document, [Disaster Feeding Guidance for School Food Authorities Using USDA Foods](#), address a SFA's response to disasters. Please review and share with appropriate staff. If there is a Presidential declaration, HPC Foodservice will have priority to assist the State of Connecticut.

The [USDA's The Food Safety Emergency Response Pocket Guide](#) (also available in Spanish) supports school food service professionals in their response to food safety emergencies caused by disasters and weather-related events. Additional resources include Fact Sheet, [USDA Foods During Disaster](#) and the USDA webinar, [Use of USDA Foods in Disasters](#).

SFAs may be called upon by town officials or the Red Cross to serve food to the public through congregate feeding. SFAs that use USDA Foods must keep records of the USDA Foods used and any transportation costs. If there is a Presidential declaration, the CSDE FDP will work with SFAs on the USDA application process for replacement and reimbursement. The USDA provides replacement in situations of distress only to the extent that Food and Nutrition Service funds are available. Please keep the CSDE FDP informed if your district opens shelters that involve congregate feeding by emailing Monica Pacheco at monica.pacheco@ct.gov or Allison Calhoun-White at allison.calhoun-white@ct.gov.

Resource Roundup: USDA's Farm to School Website and Resources

The USDA's [The Patrick Leahy Farm to School Program](#) website has a wealth of resources to help Child Nutrition Programs incorporate local foods in menus. The USDA's [Farm to School Menu Planning Toolkit](#) includes a recorded webinar on Farm to School Menu Planning, which highlights ways to incorporate local products into your cycle menus.

Good to Know

Food Research & Action Center Webinar: The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) in Schools, Thursday, September 5, 2024

Across the country, anti-hunger advocates are partnering with school districts to strengthen households' food security through SNAP outreach. By linking eligible families to SNAP benefits, schools combat food insecurity, while increasing students' access to school breakfast, lunch, and Summer EBT. Connecting eligible students to SNAP streamlines meal application processes, reduces the administrative burdens of processing applications, and increases schools' ability to implement the Community Eligibility Provision. 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:** Thursday, September 5, 2024, 3:00 p.m.
- **Registration:** [registration link](#)

New Resources from the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion: Food Sources of Select Nutrients

The Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion recently released a set of new tools that help consumers and nutrition professionals identify sources of key nutrients in foods and beverages, including calcium, potassium, fiber, vitamin D, and iron. Visit [Food Sources of Select Nutrients](#) section of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans webpage to access these resources.

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For more information, visit the Connecticut State Department of Education's [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_28_2024.pdf.

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