

The School Lunch Tray: October 2, 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

- Federal Local Food for Schools Incentive Program (LFSIP) Reporting Requirements: Report of September 2024 Purchases Due October 15, 2024
- Reminder Plan for Reducing Excess Operating Balance Due October 15, 2024
- Next Week is Connecticut Grown for Connecticut Kids Week, October 7-11, 2024

Need to Know

- CSDE Procurement 101 Webinar Series: October 23 and 24, 2024
- Updated USDA Resource: Whole Grain Resource for The National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs
- Updated Version of CSDE's Addendum A: Sharing Information with Other Programs
- Revised USDA Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs
- Resource Roundup: Key Information for Connecticut School Business Officials about School Nutrition Programs

Good to Know

- UConn Sustainability Survey: Assessing School Nutrition Sustainability Efforts in CT 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.



Action Items

Federal Local Food for Schools Incentive Program (LFSIP) Reporting Requirements: Report of September 2024 Purchases Due October 15, 2024

Districts that would like to receive reimbursement from their LFSIP funds allocation for purchases of locally grown or produced foods for the month of September 2024 must submit the [Monthly Local Foods for Schools Incentive Program \(LFSIP\) Reporting Form - Phase 1](#). Purchases made in September 2024 should be reported on the form by Tuesday, October 15, 2024.

Reminder Plan for Reducing Excess Operating Balance Due October 15, 2024

SFAs must complete the Annual Financial Report in the [Connecticut Online Application and Claiming System for Child Nutrition Programs \(CNP System\)](#). SFAs that exceed three months' average expenditures must also submit a [Plan for Reducing Excess Operating Balance](#) to the CSDE. This plan will indicate how the excess balance will be spent to maintain the SFA's nonprofit status. Expenditures must make improvements to the USDA school nutrition programs such as improving food quality and replacing or purchasing necessary equipment. For information on allowable and unallowable costs, refer to the [CSDE's Managing an Excess Operating Balance in the School Nutrition Programs](#). The CSDE's [Instructions for Submitting the Financial Report for School Nutrition Programs](#) provides step-by-step guidance on how to complete this report.

Next Week is Connecticut Grown for Connecticut Kids Week, October 7-11, 2024

With Connecticut Grown for Connecticut Kid week right around the corner, now is the time for SFAs to think about celebrating and sharing as students enjoy healthy, local, Connecticut grown foods. Plan some time for photo opportunities and have a phone or camera available to capture those great moments throughout the week when kids are discovering and enjoying these foods. (Make sure to check for student photo releases.) The [CT Farm to School](#) website has a great [Social Media Toolkit](#) to help SFAs promote and share their program, and let the community know about their great work.

Need to Know

CSDE Procurement 101 Webinar Series: October 23 and 24, 2024

The CSDE is pleased to present Procurement 101 Training. This virtual training will provide a comprehensive overview of the procurement requirements for the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program. All school personnel with procurement responsibilities associated with the child nutrition programs are now required to attend annual procurement training per 7 CFR 210.21(h). The training will be conducted over two days on October 23 and 24, 2024 from 1:00-4:00 p.m. each day. Attendance at both sessions is required to complete the training.

Registration: Registration is required. Use the [CSDE Procurement 101 Training Registration Link](#) or QR code below to register by **Friday, October 18, 2024**.



Questions: Contact Andy Paul at andrew.paul@ct.gov or Monica Pacheco at monica.pacheco@ct.gov.

Updated USDA Resource: Whole Grain Resource for The National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs

The USDA recently updated their [Whole Grain Resource for The National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs](#) to reflect the Final Rule, [Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#). This resource provides important and comprehensive information on how to identify and offer foods that meet the whole grain-rich criteria for the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program, and to assist in implementation of the meal pattern requirements for grains. A Spanish version, [Recurso de granos integrales para el Programa Nacional de Almuerzo Escolar y el Programa de Desayuno Escolar](#), is also available.

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Updated Version of CSDE's Addendum A: Sharing Information with Other Programs

The CSDE's Addendum A: Sharing Information with Other Programs is an optional document created to assist school food authorities (SFAs) with obtaining permission from parents/guardians to share their child's eligibility information for specific purposes outlined by the SFA. Addendum A was recently revised to clarify that a child's direct certification determination may also be shared with parental permission. The revised document is dated September 2024. English and Spanish versions are available in the [Addenda](#) section of the CSDE's Eligibility for Free and Reduced-price Meals and Free Milk in School Nutrition Programs webpage.

Revised USDA Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs

The USDA recently revised the [Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs](#) (FBG) to reflect the Final Rule, [Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#). This important resource assists CNP operators, food manufacturers, and other stakeholders with purchasing the correct amounts of foods for CNP and determining the contribution that each food makes toward meal pattern requirements. The FBG is available as a Web Tool, Mobile App, and downloadable PDF.

Resource Roundup: Key Information for Connecticut School Business Officials about School Nutrition Programs

Looking for an overview of the information that business officials need to know about the school nutrition programs? The CSDE's resource, [Key Information for Connecticut School Business Officials about School Nutrition Programs](#), can help. This document provides an overview of important information and key resources for Connecticut school business officials regarding the oversight of the USDA's school nutrition programs operated by the district's school food authority (SFA). Please share this information with your school business officials.

Good to Know

UConn Sustainability Survey: Assessing School Nutrition Sustainability Efforts in CT Schools

Ellen Shanley, the Dietetics Director in the Department of Allied Health Sciences at the University of Connecticut, is working with UConn Graduate students to conduct a research study to determine how CT schools are improving their carbon footprint. UConn is asking food service directors to participate in this study by filling out the [Assessing School Nutrition Sustainability Efforts in CT Schools questionnaire](#). The questionnaire should take less than 30 minutes to complete. Please direct any questions to ellen.shanley@uconn.edu.

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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_10_02_2024.pdf.

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