

## The School Lunch Tray: February 5, 2025

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**

- Final Reminder: Required Webinar on Rudd Center's New Wellness School Assessment Tool (WellSAT) Website, February 6, 2025
- Federal Local Food for Schools Incentive Program (LFSIP) Reporting Requirements: Report of January 2025 Purchases Due February 14, 2025

### **Need to Know**

- USDA 2024-25 School Food Authority (SFA) Survey on Supply Chain Disruption and Student Participation: Due March 10, 2025
- Reminder: Proper Procurement of Capital Expenditures and Equipment
- Reminder: Daily Alternate Lunch Choices for Grades K-12 Cannot Include Grain-based Desserts
- Updated CSDE Webpage: School Wellness Policies
- Resource Roundup: School Breakfast Outreach

### **Good to Know**

- Upcoming Farm to School Workshop: Culinary and Knife Skills Training, February 13, 2025

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

#### **Final Reminder: Required Webinar on Rudd Center's New Wellness School Assessment Tool (WellSAT) Website, February 6, 2025**

On February 6, 2025, from 2:00- 3:00 p.m., the University of Connecticut Rudd Center for Food Policy and Health will conduct a webinar on their new WellSAT website. Every NSLP sponsor is obligated to have someone attend.

As a reminder, the USDA's final rule, [Local School Wellness Policy \(LSWP\) Implementation Under the HHSFKA of 2010](#), requires that each local LEA must complete an assessment of their LSWP at least once every three years. The second triennial assessment is due June 30, 2025, and is conducted using WellSAT.

This webinar will occur during the Table Talk time slot. Registration is not required. Please use the link below to join Table Talk on Microsoft Teams.

#### **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

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Phone Conference ID: 920 756 855#

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#### **Federal Local Food for Schools Incentive Program (LFSIP) Reporting Requirements: Report of January 2025 Purchases Due February 14, 2025**

Districts that would like to receive reimbursement from their LFSIP funds allocation for purchases of locally grown or produced foods for the month of January 2025 must submit the [Monthly Local Foods for Schools Incentive Program \(LFSIP\) Reporting Form - Phase 1](#). Purchases made in January 2025 must be reported on the form by Friday, February 14, 2025. As a reminder- the following items are not allowable for reimbursement: fluid milk, baked goods including bread, rolls, or items that cannot be attributed to a specific farm or producer.

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### Need to Know

#### **USDA 2024-25 School Food Authority (SFA) Survey on Supply Chain Disruption and Student Participation: Due March 10, 2025**

The USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is conducting the 2024-25 SFA Survey on Supply Chain Disruption and Student Participation, a web survey of all school food authorities (SFAs) that operate Child Nutrition Programs. Like prior similar surveys, the survey seeks to collect information on key challenges SFAs are currently facing, including those related to school food procurement, program administration, and program finances.

FNS has contracted with Decision Information Resources, Inc. (DIR) to conduct the survey with all public, charter, and private SFAs nationwide. **The survey was e-mailed to SFAs on Monday, January 27, 2025.** Note that this survey is legitimate and sponsored by FNS. Below is additional information regarding the survey:

- The survey SFAs received on January 27 should have come from [noreply@gemailserver.com](mailto:noreply@gemailserver.com). SFAs can add this email address to their approved senders list so that they don't miss the email or subsequent reminders.
- SFAs are asked to complete the survey by **March 10, 2025**. SFA participation is vital to providing FNS with information they need to support school districts, and we encourage all SFAs to take advantage of this opportunity to share their experiences from this school year and communicate the specific issues they are facing in their communities directly to FNS.
- If SFAs have questions about the survey, they may contact the DIR study team at 844-632-9019 or e-mail [SFASupplyChainSurvey@dir-online.com](mailto:SFASupplyChainSurvey@dir-online.com). SFAs can also review the "[Frequently Asked Questions](#)" document for more information.

The USDA thanks SFAs for their understanding and support in maximizing participation in the 2024-25 SFA Survey on Supply Chain Disruption and Student Participation.

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#### **Reminder: Proper Procurement of Capital Expenditures and Equipment**

As a reminder, SFAs must properly procure all capital expenditures and equipment according to [2 CFR 200](#), [7 CFR 210](#), and local procurement policies. Local procurement policies are often more stringent than these federal requirements. For more information and required forms, visit the "[Capital Expenditure Requests and Equipment Approvals](#)" in the "[Allowable Expenditures](#)" section of the CSDE's Financial Management for School Nutrition Programs

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### **Reminder: Daily Alternate Lunch Choices for Grades K-12 Cannot Include Grain-based Desserts**

The lunch meal pattern for grades K-12 requires a limit of no more than 2 ounce equivalents (oz eq) of grain-based desserts per week. SFAs cannot include grain-based desserts (like graham crackers or animal crackers) as the grains component of a daily alternate lunch choice. An example is an alternate lunch menu for grades 9-12 that includes 1 cup of yogurt, 1 cup of fresh fruit, 1 cup of fresh vegetables, 2 oz eq of graham crackers, and 1 cup of milk. While this menu meets the NSLP meal pattern, the high school cannot offer this lunch as a daily choice because offering 2 oz eq of graham crackers each day exceeds the weekly limit of 2 oz eq. For more information on grain-based desserts, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Crediting Grain-based Desserts in the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs](#).

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### **Updated CSDE Webpage: School Wellness Policies**

The CSDE's [School Wellness Policies](#) webpage has been updated for easier access to relevant information. The left navigation bar topics now include the following sections: Overview, Develop and Implement, Triennial Assessments, Related Resources, Contact, and Laws/Regulations.

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### **Resource Roundup: School Breakfast Outreach**

As a reminder, SFAs are required to inform families of the availability of breakfasts offered under the School Breakfast Program (SBP). Outreach should be conducted at the beginning of each school year, when free and reduced-price meal applications are sent to households, as well as **multiple times throughout the school year**. For information regarding SBP outreach, refer to USDA's [School Breakfast Program Outreach and Nutrition Education](#) website.

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## The School Lunch Tray: February 5, 2025

### Good to Know

#### **Upcoming Farm to School Workshop: Culinary and Knife Skills Training, February 13, 2025**

This training is developed for SFAs or school kitchen leads/managers to learn key skills that they can bring back to teach their kitchen staff. Learn two easy farm to school recipes and gain confidence and experience with prepping local products from scratch.

- *Date, time, and location:* February 13, 2025, 3:00 pm – 5:30 pm, East Hartford Public High School
  - *Registration:* [Culinary and Knife Skills Training](#)
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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/2025/slt\\_02\\_05\\_2025.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/slt/2025/slt_02_05_2025.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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