

The School Lunch Tray: July 9, 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

- None

Need to Know

- None

Good to Know

- Now Posted: Updated Afterschool Snack Program (ASP) Handbook for School Year 2025-26
- Updated Menu Planning Guides for the Preschool Meal Patterns of the School Nutrition Programs for School Year 2025-26
- Correction to Overview of Menu Planning for Grades K-12 in the School Breakfast Program
- Food Research & Action Center (FRAC) Webinar: A Deep Dive into Community Eligibility in the 2024–2025 School Year, July 10, 2025
- Resource Roundup: USDA's Road to Successful Menu Planning for School Meals



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: July 9, 2025

Good to Know

Now Posted: Updated Afterschool Snack Program (ASP) Handbook for School Year 2025-26

The June 25, 2025, edition of the School Lunch Tray announced the updated [Afterschool Snack Program Handbook](#) for school year 2025-26, but it was not posted. It is now available on the ASP webpage.

The updated version is dated June 2025. Please discard any previous versions and replace them with this revised version.

Updated Menu Planning Guides for the Preschool Meal Patterns of the School Nutrition Programs for School Year 2025-26

Updated versions (dated June 2025) of two guides in the CSDE's menu planning guidance series for the preschool meal patterns are now available for school year 2025-26.

- Guide to Meeting the Preschool Meal Patterns for the School Nutrition Programs
- Guide to Meal Service Requirements for Preschoolers in the School Nutrition Programs

The updates reflect the meal pattern changes implemented by the USDA final rule, [Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#) effective July 1, 2025, and include updated content, resources, and links. These guides are located in the [Menu Planning Guidance Series](#) section of the CSDE's Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs webpage.

Correction to Overview of Menu Planning for Grades K-12 in the School Breakfast Program

The CSDE corrected a typo on page 4 of the [Overview of Menu Planning for Grades K-12 in the School Breakfast Program](#).

- **Incorrect:** Breakfast menus must offer at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits daily for grades K-5 and 6-8, and at least 1 cup daily for grades 9-12.
- **Correct:** Breakfast menus must offer at least 1 cup of fruits daily for all grades.

The revised version is posted (dated July 2025). Please discard any previous versions and replace them with this revised version.

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Food Research & Action Center (FRAC) Webinar: A Deep Dive into Community Eligibility in the 2024–2025 School Year, July 10, 2025

Join the FRAC for a deep dive webinar detailing the findings from their latest report, [Community Eligibility: The Key to Hunger-Free Schools — School Year 2024–2025](#). The Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) is a powerful tool in combatting childhood hunger by increasing students' access to healthy school meals. CEP has been shown to strengthen food security, improve children's diet, and bolster school meal participation, all while reducing administrative and operational burdens for school nutrition departments. The 2024-2025 school year saw significant increases in CEP adoption nationwide.

- **Date and time:** July 10, 2025, 3:00 p.m.
- **Registration:** [Registration link](#)

Resource Roundup: USDA's Road to Successful Menu Planning for School Meals

The USDA's [Road to Successful Menu Planning for School Meals](#) training series includes short, on-demand trainings designed to provide school nutrition professionals with quick tips, tools, and knowledge needed to meet the nutrition standards for school meals.

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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_07_09_2025.pdf.

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