

## The School Lunch Tray: November 12, 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

- Reminder: Verification Must be Completed by November 15, 2025,
- FNS 742 Verification Summary Report Due December 15, 2025
- Healthy Food Certification (HFC) for Public Schools Due November 30, 2025

### Need to Know

- Office Hours for School Child Nutrition Programs (CNP)
- Updated List of Acceptable Food and Beverages Dated November 7, 2025
- Managing USDA Direct Delivery Foods from Hartford Provision Company (HPC)
- Reminder: Next Week's Sessions of Farm to School — Live 
- Resource Roundup: Crediting Beans, Peas, and Lentils in the School Nutrition Programs

### Good to Know

- Food Research & Action Center Webinar: Fueling Minds and Bodies: The Transformative Impact of School Breakfast, November 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.

# The School Lunch Tray: November 12, 2025

## Action Items

### Reminder: Verification Must be Completed by November 15, 2025

This is a reminder that the verification process, which began on October 1, must be completed by November 15. For additional information, refer to [The School Lunch Tray from September 17, 2025](#).

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### FNS 742 Verification Summary Report Due December 15, 2025

Regardless of whether verification was required, all sponsors of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) must complete the FNS 742 Verification Collection Report (VCR) in the Connecticut Online Application and Claiming System for Child Nutrition Programs (CNP System). This includes residential child care institutions with no day students, private schools, and schools participating in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP).

For guidance on completing this report, refer to the CSDE's document, [Completing the Verification Collection Report \(FNS 742\)](#), in the "[Verification Collection Report FNS 742](#)" section of the CSDE's Verification Procedures for School Nutrition Programs webpage. The deadline for completion is December 15, 2025.

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### Healthy Food Certification (HFC) for Public Schools Due November 30, 2025

The annual HFC documentation for school year 2025-26 is due by November 30, 2025. All HFC districts must submit the online HFC Compliance Survey. In addition, the districts listed in the document below must also submit lists of foods and beverages from all sources.

- [Districts Required to Submit Food and Beverage Lists for School Year 2025-26](#)

For detailed guidance on the HFC documentation requirements, refer the CSDE email from November 7, 2025, which was sent to the district's HFC contact person, food service director, and business manager. For more information, visit the "[Annual HFC Documentation](#)" section of the CSDE's HFC webpage and refer to the guidance below.

- [Guidance for Completing the HFC Compliance Survey](#)
- [Guidance for Submitting Lists of Foods and Beverages for HFC Documentation](#).
- [Completing the Documentation Requirements for HFC](#) (CSDE training module): This training is 9 minutes for districts that are not required to submit lists of foods and beverages and 24 minutes for districts that are required to submit lists of foods and beverages.

For questions, please contact [susan.fiore@ct.gov](mailto:susan.fiore@ct.gov)

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## The School Lunch Tray: November 12, 2025

### Need to Know

#### Office Hours for School Child Nutrition Programs (CNP)

Office hours will not be held on Monday, November 17, 2025. The next scheduled office hour for the school CNPs will be held on Monday, November 24, 2025. Please mark your calendars.

Date	Topic
November 24	Civil Rights, Professional Standards, Local School Wellness Policy, Smart Snacks, SBP and SFSP Outreach
December 1	Food Safety, Storage, Buy American
December 8	Preschool Meals, Meals in the Classroom
December 15	Afterschool Snack, Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program and the Special Milk Program
December 22	On-site Monitoring, On-site Checklist

#### Updated List of Acceptable Food and Beverages Dated November 7, 2025

Updated lists of foods that comply with the Connecticut Nutrition Standards (CNS) and beverages that comply with the state beverage statute are now available on the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#) webpage.

- **New products** on the lists are indicated by pink highlighting on the manufacturer and product name.
- Items that have been **added or deleted** since the last update are listed on the CSDE's [Summary of Updates to Approved Food and Beverages](#). **Note:** This summary includes only the changes since the last update; it is not a complete listing of all allowable products. For the complete list, visit the CSDE's [List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages](#) webpage.

Healthy Food Certification (HFC) schools must check that commercial foods and beverages are listed before they are sold to students. For additional guidance, refer to the CSDE's resource, [How to Evaluate Commercial Food Products for Compliance with the Connecticut Nutrition Standards](#), and visit the "[Evaluating Foods for CNS Compliance](#)" section of the CSDE's CNS webpage.

### Managing USDA Direct Delivery Foods from Hartford Provision Company (HPC)

Two reports assist Recipient Agencies (RAs) with management of USDA Direct Delivery Foods. The first is the Requisition Status Report, which can be found in Web-Based Supply Chain Management (WBSCM) under Reports. This report should be run monthly until all items are in purchased, delivered, or canceled status. For assistance running the Requisition Status Report, refer to page 77 of the [WBSCM Training Guide](#). This report provides updates on USDA Foods orders and indicates when to expect product at the HPC warehouse.

The second report is the weekly allocation report that is emailed from HPC to the ordering contact at each district. If RAs are ordering USDA Direct Delivery Foods from HPC and are not receiving a weekly allocation report, please contact Matt Ramos at [mramos@hpcfs.com](mailto:mramos@hpcfs.com). As a reminder, **USDA Foods must appear on the weekly allocation report before RAs can place an order for the item.**

Direct Delivery cancelations or late arrivals will be announced in the School Lunch Tray.

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### Reminder: Next Week's Sessions of Farm to School – Live



Tune into the virtual Farm to School – Live! hosted by each [Regional Farm to School Coordinator](#). Farm to School - Live! is a monthly informal opportunity to connect with colleagues about farm to school within local regions. November's topic is planning for local purchasing and utilizing forward contracts. Bring ideas, experiences, and challenges to share and discuss. Refer to the Regional Farm to School Coordinator's email reminder for instructions on how to join.

- Southeastern: November 18 from 2:00-3:00 p.m.
- Northwest: November 18 from 2:00-3:00 p.m.
- South Central: November 18 from 2:00-3:00 p.m.
- Southwest: November 8 from 2:00-3:00 p.m.
- Northeast: November 19 from 2:00-3:00 p.m.

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### Resource Roundup: Crediting Beans, Peas, and Lentils in the School Nutrition Programs

Beans, peas, and lentils credit as either the meats/meat alternates (MMA) component or the vegetables component but one serving cannot credit as both meal components in the same meal or afterschool snack. The CSDE's resource, [Crediting Beans, Peas, and Lentils in the School Nutrition Programs](#), provides guidance on crediting these foods in the meal patterns for grades K-12 and preschool. Topics include crediting beans, peas, and lentils as MMA; include crediting beans, peas, and lentils as vegetables; crediting hummus and bean dips; crediting roasted or dried beans, peas, and lentils; crediting pasta products made of bean, pea, and lentil flours; and how to credit beans, peas, and lentils in standardized recipes.

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### Good to Know

#### Food Research & Action Center Webinar: Fueling Minds and Bodies: The Transformative Impact of School Breakfast, November 13, 2025

The School Breakfast Program plays a vital role in supporting both student health and academic success by ensuring that every child starts the day with the nutrition they need to learn and thrive. Grounded in science-based nutrition standards, school breakfasts promote healthy growth and development, while also supporting school attendance, improving classroom behavior, and enhancing academic performance. Join the Food Research & Action Center and a panel of school breakfast champions for an engaging discussion on the powerful impact of school breakfast programs and strategies to ensure every child begins the day well-nourished and ready to learn.

- **Date and time:** Thursday, November 13, 2025, 3:00 p.m.
  - **Information and Registration:** [Registration Link](#)
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## The School Lunch Tray: November 12, 2025

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\\_11\\_12\\_2025.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/slt/2025/slt_11_12_2025.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](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

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