

Summary of School Lunch Tray Topics for 2025

This document summarizes the School Lunch Tray topics for 2025. The School Lunch Tray is the Connecticut State Department of Education’s (CSDE) weekly e-newsletter for Connecticut sponsors of the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) school nutrition programs, including the [National School Lunch Program \(NSLP\)](#), [School Breakfast Program \(SBP\)](#), [Afterschool Snack Program \(ASP\)](#) of the NSLP, [Seamless Summer Option \(SSO\)](#) of the NSLP, and [Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program \(FFVP\)](#).

Click the link in the “Link” column to access a PDF of the School Lunch Tray and, if applicable, the corresponding Table Talk webinar.

Date	Link	Topics
12-24-2025	SLT Newsletter 12-24-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USDA Foods Available List (FAL) for School Year 2026-2027: Feedback by January 14, 2026 • Warm Holiday Wishes and Gratitude • Support with Federal Local Food for Schools Incentive Funds • Last School Lunch Tray for 2025 • New England Dairy MyPlate Placemat Resources
12-17-2025	SLT Newsletter 12-17-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reminder: USDA Foods at Hartford Provision Company (HPC)
12-10-2025	SLT Newsletter 12-10-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FNS 742 Verification Summary Report and S-EBT Reporting • Final Reminder: Unpaid School Meal Debt Due December 12, 2025
12-03-2025	SLT Newsletter 12-03-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unpaid School Meal Debt Due December 12, 2025 • Planning for Local Foods • Resource Roundup: USDA Policy for Food Donations from the Child Nutrition Programs • Southington Public Schools Teams Up with Local Food Pantry to Feed Students
11-26-2025	SLT Newsletter 11-26-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important Reminder: Receipt Invoices in the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Ordering and Receipting System (FFAVORS) Before End of Day Wednesday, November 26, 2025 • Final Reminder: Healthy Food Certification (HFC) for Public Schools Due November 30, 2025 • Resource Roundup: Crediting Nuts and Seeds in the School Nutrition Programs

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11-19-2025	SLT Newsletter 11-19-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reminder: Healthy Food Certification (HFC) for Public Schools Due November 30, 2025 • Need to Know • Updated Training Modules for School Year 2025-26: Preschool Meal Pattern Training for the School Nutrition Programs • Reminder About Requirements for Co-Mingled Preschool Meals or Afterschool Snacks • Resource Roundup: Child Nutrition Staff and Responsibilities
11-12-2025	SLT Newsletter 11-12-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • Office Hours for School Child Nutrition Programs (CNPs) • 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 • Food Research & Action Center Webinar: Fueling Minds and Bodies: The Transformative Impact of School Breakfast, November 13, 2025
11-05-2025	SLT Newsletter 11-05-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Reminder: CSDE Virtual Procurement 101 Training (November 12 and 13, 2025): Register by November 9, 2025 • Reminder to Thank Farmers Who Contributed During Farm to School Month • Operational Memorandum No. 01-26: Schedule for Submitting Child Nutrition Programs (CNP) Monthly Claims for Reimbursement in Fiscal Year 2026 • Announcement of CT Fresh Ed Great Plates Contest Fall 2025 Winners • Resource Roundup: Resources and Guidance on Food Allergies • Culinary Institute of Child Nutrition (CICN) Webinar: Training Staff for Scratch Cooking in Schools, November 6, 2025 • Recap of School to Farm Field Trips in October

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10-29-2025	SLT Newsletter 10-29-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reminder: CSDE Virtual Procurement 101 Training (November 12 and 13, 2025): Register by Friday, October 31, 2025 • CSDE Virtual Office Hour on November 3, 2025 • Resource Roundup: CSDE’s Addendum A: Sharing Information with Other Programs
10-15-2025	SLT Newsletter 10-15-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule for Fall 2025 CSDE Office Hours • Final Reminder: Last Week to Enter CT Fresh Ed Great Plates Contest, Due October 20, 2025 • Reminder About Students’ Unpaid Meal Charges • CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 13-25: CT Fresh Ed Brand Launch • Updated Start with Half a Cup Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Portioning Guides for Schools • Resource Roundup: Institute of Child Nutrition's (ICN) Manager’s Corner Lesson Plans • Common Ground’s Annual Farm and Garden Conference, Saturday, November 8, 2025 • Reminder: School to Farm Field Trips in October • New England Dairy School Breakfast Survey on Lowering Added Sugars: Due October 31, 2025
10-08-2025	SLT Newsletter 10-08-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reminder: Plan to Reduce Excess Operating Balance due October 15, 2025 • CSDE Virtual Office Hour on October 21, 2025: How to Complete and Submit the Plan to Reduce Excess Operating Balance • Reminder: Submit Photos for the CT Fresh Great Plates Contest by October 20, 2025 • CSDE Procurement 101 Webinar Series: November 12 and 13, 2025, Register by Friday, October 31, 2025 • Summer EBT (S-EBT) Expungement Period Begins in Late October • Resource Roundup: Recalls and Public Health Alerts • School to Farm Field Trips in October

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10-01-2025	SLT Newsletter 10-01-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reminder: Food Safety Inspection Report for School Year 2024-25 Due October 31, 2025 • Reminder: Register for SNACT's 2025 Fall Conference at Foxwoods: October 28-29, 2025 • Need to Know • September Claims for Reimbursement and CSDE Approval of Child Nutrition Programs (CNP) Online Agreements • Updated CSDE Resource: Addendum C: Information on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) • Fiscal Year 2026 CACFP and SFSP Area Eligibility Data Now Available • Federal LFSIP Sponsor Remaining Balances & Platform Update for SY 2025 26 • Milk Made from Reconstituted Milk Powder Cannot be Sold as Part of Reimbursable Meals and Snacks or A La Carte in Connecticut Child Nutrition Programs • Resource Roundup: Recipe Ideas for Schools • Good to Know • Educational Opportunities for Students and Staff from the Yellow Farmhouse Education Center: Please Share with Teachers and Administrators • Dairy Grant Opportunity for School Meals: Deadline November 17,2025
9-24-2025	SLT Newsletter 9-24-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Register for SNACT's 2025 Fall Conference at Foxwoods: October 28-29, 2025 • Need to Know • Reminder to Receipt USDA DoD Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Orders in FFAVORS Within Two Days • New Video: Tips for Taking a Fabulous Photo for the CT Fresh Ed Great Plates Contest • Announcing Farm to School Live! • Applications Now Open for USDA's FY 2026 Patrick Leahy Farm to School Grant Program: Due December 10, 2025 • Resource Roundup: Resources for Reducing Added Sugars in the School Nutrition Programs

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9-17-2025	SLT Newsletter 9-17-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verification Starts October 1 and Must be Completed by November 15, 2025 • CT Grown for CT Kids Week: Mark your calendars for October 6–10, 2025 • Enter the CT Fresh Great Plates Contest! • Need to Know • National School Lunch Week: October 13-17, 2025 • Height of the Harvest for Local Foods • Using Free/Reduced Price Meal (FRPM) Eligibility for State Education Programs • Resource Roundup: Determining Foster Children’s Eligibility for Free Meals or Milk in the School Nutrition Programs and Summer Food Service Program
9-10-2025	SLT Newsletter 9-10-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Reminder: Triennial Assessment (Due June 30, 2025) and Reporting Form Due September 15, 2025 • Final Reminder: Annual Financial Report for School Nutrition Programs Due September 15, 2025 • New Training for School Year 2025-26: Determining Eligibility in the School Nutrition Programs, Summer Food Service Program, and S-EBT • New Training for School Year 2025-26: Verification Procedures for School Nutrition Programs • New CSDE Resource: Crediting Guide for the School Nutrition Programs • Reminder: Request Alternate Lunch Time Outside the Timeframes of 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. • Correction: Afterschool Snack Program (ASP) Daily Snack Count and Production Record for Grades K-12 in Site/Area Eligible Schools • Resource Roundup: Key Information for Connecticut School Business Officials about School Nutrition Programs • New Food Yields in the Food Buying Guide • Upcoming Training Webinars from the Institute of Child Nutrition • New Team Nutrition Trainings for Successful School Menu Planning • New Resource from the Food Research & Action Center (FRAC): Summer EBT: Strategies for Communications and Outreach

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Date	Link	Topics
9-03-2025	SLT Newsletter 9-03-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reminder: Triennial Assessment (Due June 30, 2025) and Reporting Form Due September 15, 2025 • Reminder: Annual Financial Report for School Nutrition Programs Due September 15, 2025 • CSDE Virtual Office Hour: How to Complete and Submit the Annual Financial Report on September 9, 2025 • Submit a photo for the CT Fresh Great Plates Contest by October 20, 2025 • Connecticut Department of Agriculture (CT DoAG) announces Connecticut Grown for Connecticut Kids (CTG4CTK) Grant Program • Need to Know • Summer EBT (S-EBT) Application Period Concluded for Summer 2025 • Office Hour Addressing the Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer (S-EBT) Program: September 5, 2025 • USDA Foods Cancellations Update • Reminder: Regional Farm to School Coordinators Available to Support Schools • Resource Roundup: The School Nutrition Association's 2025–2026 Celebration Calendar

Summary of School Lunch Tray Topics for 2025

Date	Link	Topics
8-27-2025	SLT Newsletter 8-27-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Triennial Assessment (Due June 30, 2025) and Reporting Form Due September 15, 2025 • Reminder: Annual Financial Report for School Nutrition Programs Due September 15, 2025 • CSDE Virtual Office Hour: How to Complete and Submit the Annual Financial Report on September 9, 2025 • Important Reminder: Disaster Preparedness for School Food Authorities (SFAs) • Reminder: Virtual Office Hour Tomorrow (August 28, 2025) Addressing the Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer (S-EBT) Program • Two New Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer (S-EBT) Program Parent Notification Letters • Checking the Direct Certification Website • Reminder: New Product-based Limits for Added Sugars for School Year (SY) 2025-26, Effective July 1, 2025 • Reminder: New Requirements for ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12 as of July 1, 2025 • Operational Memorandum No. 12-25: Federal Meal Reimbursement Rates for School Year (SY): July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026 • Reminder Calendar of School Nutrition Program Requirements and Activities for School Year 2025-26 • Back to School Trainings with the CT Fresh Ed Team • Resource Roundup: Meal Pattern and Crediting Resources for the School Nutrition Programs

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8-20-2025	SLT Newsletter 8-20-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Triennial Assessment (Due June 30, 2025) and Reporting Form Due September 15, 2025 • Food Safety Inspection Report for School Year 2024-25 Due October 31, 2025 • CT Grown for CT Kids Week, October 6-10, 2025, Celebrating “Fresh Starts with CT Grown” • Update on Additional State Funding for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) or School Breakfast Program (SBP) for School Year 2025-26 • Two New Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer (S-EBT) Program Parent Notification Letters • Virtual Office Hours Addressing the Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer (S-EBT) Program, August 28, 2025 • CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 11-25: Healthy Food Certification (HFC) Payment for School Year 2024-25 • New School Year 2025-26 What’s in a Meal Training Modules for Staff Training • Offer versus Serve (OVS) Requirements for School Year 2025-26 • Resource Roundup: Key Information for Connecticut Claims Preparers for School Nutrition Programs
8-13-2025	SLT Newsletter 8-13-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Triennial Assessment (Due June 30, 2025) and Reporting Form Due September 15, 2025 • School Year (SY) 2025-26 Free and Reduced-Price Application Materials • New Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer (S-EBT) Codes in Direct Certification • Updated CSDE Civil Rights PowerPoint Presentation for School Year 2025-26 • Updated List of Acceptable Food and Beverages Dated August 13, 2025 • Resource Roundup: Fruits and Veggie Toolkit from Have a Plant® • Dairy Grant Opportunity for School Meals Deadline September 19, 2025 • Rooted Together: A Fall Gathering for Farm-Based Educators, September 19-21, 2025

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8-06-2025	SLT Newsletter 8-06-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Triennial Assessment (Due June 30, 2025) and Reporting Form Due September 15, 2025 • School Year (SY) 2025-26 Free and Reduced-Price Application Materials • Updated USDA Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool • Food Allergy Resource & Education's (FARE) Back-to-School Resource Hub • Food Allergy Management in Schools (FAMS): Expert Recommendations for K-12 • Resource Roundup: USDA Child Nutrition Dashboard
07-30-2025	SLT Newsletter 07-30-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Triennial Assessment (Due June 30, 2025) and Reporting Form Due September 15, 2025 • USDA Memo SP 18-2025: Guidance on Fees for Electronic Payment Services in the School Meal Programs • Culinary Institute of Child Nutrition (CICN) Webinar Series: How to Incorporate Fresh Produce into Scratch Cooking, Thursday, August 7, 2025 • Resource Roundup: Institute of Child Nutrition's (ICN) Upcoming Webinars Webpage
07-23-2025	SLT Newsletter 07-23-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Food Yields Added to Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs • Resource Roundup: USDA's Back to School Webpage
07-16-2025	SLT Newsletter 07-16-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reminder: USDA National School Lunch Program (NSLP) Equipment Assistance Grants Request for Proposals (RFP) Due July 25, 2025 • Calendar of School Nutrition Program Requirements and Activities for School Year 2025-26 • 2025 Summer EBT Program Reminder • Connecticut Foodshare: Summer Meals Outreach Partner • Resource Roundup: USDA Training on School Lunch Menu Flexibilities: Beans, Peas, and Lentils

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07-09-2025	SLT Newsletter 07-09-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
07-02-2025	SLT Newsletter 07-02-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federal Local Food for Schools Incentive Program (LFSIP) Reporting Requirements: Report of April, May, and June 2025 Purchases Deadline Extended to July 2, 2025 • Final Reminder: Introduction to School Nutrition Leadership Virtual Training on August 5, 12, and 19, 2025 • USDA National School Lunch Program (NSLP) Equipment Assistance Grants Request for Proposals (RFP) Due July 25, 2025 • Need to Know • Updated Five-day Preschool Lunch Menu Form for Ages 1-2 in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) • Updated Menu Planning Guides for the Preschool Meal Patterns of the School Nutrition Programs for School Year 2025-26 • Updated CSDE Production Records for Grades K-12 and Preschool in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) for School Year 2025-26 • Resource Roundup: USDA’s Summer Food, Summer Moves Resource Kit

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06-25-2025	SLT Newsletter 06-25-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Reminder: 2025-26 Healthy Food Certification (HFC) Statement: Due July 1, 2025 • Final Reminder: 2025-26 Full-service Interschool Agreements Due July 1, 2025 • Federal Local Food for Schools Incentive Program (LFSIP) Reporting Requirements: Report of April, May, and June 2025 Purchases Due July 1, 2025 • Table Talk on Break Until New School Year Begins • Updated Afterschool Snack Program (ASP) Handbook for School Year 2025-26 • Updated ASP Forms for School Year 2025-26 • Updated ASP Sample Menus for School Year 2025-26 • Updated Menu Planning Guidance Series for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs for School Year 2025-26 • Farm to School Trainings Offered by Regional Farm to School Coordinators for Food Service Staff Back to School Training Days • Resource Roundup: CSDE's Manuals and Guides for Child Nutrition Programs Webpage

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<p>06-18-2025</p>	<p>SLT Newsletter 06-18-2025</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 10-25: Paid Lunch Equity Guidance for School Year 2025-26: PLE Request Due June 30, 2025 • Reminder: 2025-26 Healthy Food Certification (HFC) Statement: Due July 1, 2025 • 2025-26 Full-service Interschool Agreements Due July 1, 2025 • Reminder: Meal Pattern Changes Required by USDA final rule, Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, Effective July 1, 2025 • New Product-based Limits for Added Sugars for School Year (SY) 2025-26, Effective July 1, 2025 • New ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12 for SY 2025-26, Effective July 1, 2025 • Changes to Vegetable Substitutions in the SBP for Grades K-12 for SY 2025-26, Effective July 1, 2025 • Schools Must Accept Medical Statements from Registered Dietitians Effective July 1, 2025 • Updated NSLP and SBP Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 for SY 2025-26 • Updated Menu Planning Checklists for Lunch for Grades K-12 for SY 2025-26 • Updated CSDE Resources: Overview of Menu Planning for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP • Updated Preschool Meal Patterns for SY 2025-26: NSLP, SBP, and ASP • Updated Preschool Menu Planning Forms for SY 2025-26 • New CSDE Resource: Meal Pattern and Crediting Resources for the School Nutrition Programs • New CSDE Resource: Crediting Summary Charts for the School Nutrition Programs for SY 2025-26 • New CSDE Resource: Noncreditable Foods in the Meal Patterns for the School Nutrition Programs for SY 2025-26 • Updated CSDE Comparison Charts for the School Nutrition Programs for SY 2025-26 • Updated CSDE Crediting Resources for the School Nutrition Programs for SY 2025-26 • Coming Soon: Updates to the CSDE’s Recorded Training Modules for the NSLP, SBP, and ASP Meal Patterns • Coming Soon: Updates to the CSDE’s Recorded Training Modules, Preschool Meal Pattern Training for the School Nutrition Programs • Coming Soon: Updates to the CSDE’s Menu Planning Guidance Series for Grades K-12 and Preschool
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coming Soon: Updates to the CSDE’s Menu Planning Guidance Series for Grades K-12 and Preschool • Good to Know • Fourth Annual PK-12 School Staff Appreciation Digital Backpack Program
06-11-2025	SLT Newsletter 06-11-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reminder: 2025-26 Healthy Food Certification (HFC) Statement: Due July 1, 2025 • Reminder: Full-Service Interschool Agreements for School Year 2025-26: Due July 1, 2025 • Training on June 12, 2025: How to Complete the Local School Wellness Policy (LSWP) Triennial Assessment Summary Webinar • USDA Memo SP 11-2025, CACFP 09-2025, and SFSP 05-2025: Using Federal Funds to Purchase Local Foods • USDA Memo SP 13-2025, CACFP 10-2025, SFSP 06-2025: Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2025: Effect on Child Nutrition Programs • USDA Memo SP 14-2025: Enhancing Child Nutrition Program Meal Standards • USDA Memo SP 15-2025: Enhancing Child Nutrition Program Meal Standards • New CSDE Resource: Using Bulk Milk Dispensers in the School Nutrition Programs • Resource Roundup: USDA’s Team Nutrition School Lunch Materials Webpage

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06-04-2025	SLT Newsletter 06-04-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSDE Summer Meals Office Hours on June 5, 2025 • Connecticut Local Food for Schools Incentive Program (CT LFSIP) and Carryover of Funds • Reminder: Save the Date for the How to Complete the Local School Wellness Policy (LSWP) Triennial Assessment Summary Webinar: June 12, 2025 • USDA Foods Reminder • Request Alternate Lunch Time Outside the Timeframes of 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Due July 1, 2025 • School Year (SY) 2025-26 Meal Application forms • Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer (S-EBT) Program Contact Resources for Schools • Resource Roundup: Changes to Authorized Signers • Farm to School Field Trip at Veggiestock: June 7, 2025 <p>USDA Foods Update for SY 2025 - 2026</p>
05-28-2025	SLT Newsletter 05-28-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reminder: Federal Local Food for Schools Incentive Program (LFSIP) Reporting Requirements: Report of April and May 2025 Purchases Due May 30, 2025 • National School Lunch Program (NSLP) Required Sponsor Online Application Training - June 3, 2025 • Save the Date for the CSDE Training Session in Collaboration with the University of Connecticut Rudd Center - June 12, 2025 • Requests to Extend the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and/or School Breakfast Program (SBP) into the Summer Months (July and August) due June 13, 2025 • CSDE school nutrition programs Table Talk, Thursday, May 29, 2025 • Produce Safety University: The Produce Lab, live Webinar, June 3, 2025 • Introduction to School Nutrition Leadership - Upcoming Virtual Training - August 5, 12, and 19, 2025 • Resource Roundup: The Child Nutrition Recipe Box: <i>Healthy Recipes for Child Nutrition Professionals</i> • Chef Ann Foundation Bulk Milk Grants for Schools Due June 26, 2025

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05-21-2025	SLT Newsletter 05-21-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reminder: 2025-26 Healthy Food Certification (HFC) Statement: Due July 1, 2025 • Reminder to Receipt USDA DoD Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Orders in FFAVORS within Two Days • Need to Know • New CSDE Resource: Guide to Required Policy for Unpaid Meal Charges in the School Nutrition Programs • Recording Available for CSDE Webinar on May 15, 2025: Afterschool Snack Program (ASP) Meal Pattern Updates for School Year 2025-26 and ASP Operational Requirements • Resource Roundup: Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN)'s Nutrition Standards for Added Sugars Fact Sheets
05-14-2025	SLT Newsletter 05-14-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Reminder to Attend the CSDE May 15, 2025, Training Session: Afterschool Snack Program (ASP) Meal Pattern Updates for School Year 2025-26 and ASP Operational Requirements • Need to Know • USDA Memo SP 11-2025, CACFP 09-2025, SFSP 05-2025: Using Federal Funds to Purchase Local Foods • USDA Foods Timely Payment for Deliveries • Final Deliveries for USDA Foods for School Year 2025 • Resource Roundup: Farm to School • Farm to School Conference a Fresh Success

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05-07-2025	SLT Newsletter 05-07-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Reminder: CSDE Summer Meal Program Interest Survey Due May 8, 2025 • CSDE Summer Meals Training on May 8, 2025 • Final Reminder: Next CSDE Office Hour for Triennial Assessment Using the WellSAT Website: Monday, May 12, 2025 • Reminder: Save the Date for CSDE Training Session: Afterschool Snack Program (ASP) Meal Pattern Updates for School Year 2025-26 and ASP Operational Requirements, May 15, 2025 • Updated List of Acceptable Food and Beverages Dated May 7, 2025 • Recording Available for CSDE Webinar from May 1, 2025: Overview of the Final Rule Meal Pattern Changes for the School Nutrition Programs • Recording Available for CSDE's Summer EBT Information Session on May 5, 2025 • Resource Roundup: Summary of Provisions in the Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent With the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans Final Rule
04-30-2025	SLT Newsletter 04-30-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Reminder: Registration Deadline is April 30, 2025, for University of Connecticut Rudd Center Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCC) Academy on May 21, 2025 • Final Reminder: Attend CSDE's Training Session, Overview of the Final Rule Meal Pattern Changes for the School Nutrition Programs, on May 1, 2025 • Final Reminder: Attend CSDE's Information Session: Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer (S-EBT) Program: May 5, 2025 • Agenda for the Connecticut Farm to School Conference on May 7, 2025 • CSDE Summer Meal Program Interest Survey Due May 8, 2025 • Next CSDE Office Hour for Triennial Assessment Using the WellSAT Website: Monday, May 12, 2025 • School Lunch Hero Day: May 2, 2025 • Resource Roundup: Requirements for Classroom Meals in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program

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04-23-2025	SLT Newsletter 04-23-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Next CSDE Office Hour for Triennial Assessment Using the WellSAT Website: Monday, April 28, 2025 • Save the Date for CSDE Training Session: Overview of the Final Rule Meal Pattern Changes for the School Nutrition Programs, May 1, 2025 • Save the Date for CSDE Information Session: Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer (S-EBT) Program: May 5, 2025 • Reminder: Attend the Connecticut Farm to School Conference on May 7, 2025 • Reminder: 2025-26 Healthy Food Certification (HFC) Statement: Due July 1, 2025 • Resource Roundup: Start with Half a Cup Portion Guides for Fruits and Vegetables • Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN) STAR Webinar: Strategies for Navigating Bids and Vendor Selections in School Nutrition, April 24, 2025 • Free Workshop: Teaching in Your School Garden, April 29, 2025 • Culinary Institute of Child Nutrition (CICN) Webinar: Reducing Sodium with Scratch Cooking in School Meals, May 1, 2025 • ICN Recorded Webinar: STAR: Strategies for Incorporating Plant-Based, Minimally Processed Standardized Recipes for All Students
04-16-2025	SLT Newsletter 04-16-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operational Memorandum No. 07-25: Interschool Agreements for School Year 2025-26: Due July 1, 2025 (Full Service) or August 30, 2025 (Vended) • Reminder: Save the Dates for CSDE Office Hours: Triennial Assessment using the WellSAT website • Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) Annual Notification of Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) for school year 2025-26 • Operational Memorandum No. 08-25: Payment of Fiscal Year 2024-25 State Funds for the National School Lunch Program • Resource Roundup: Instructions for Completing the Authorized Signatures Change Form • Application Available for The New England Food Vision Prize 2025

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04-09-2025	SLT Newsletter 04-09-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reminder: Federal Local Food for Schools Incentive Program (LFSIP) Reporting Requirements: Report of March 2025 Purchases Due April 18, 2025 • Attend the Connecticut Farm to School Conference on May 7, 2025 • Save the Date for CSDE Training Session: Overview of the Final Rule Meal Pattern Changes for the School Nutrition Programs, May 1, 2025 • Save the Date for CSDE Training Session: Meal Pattern and Implementation Updates for the Afterschool Snack Program for School Year 2025-26, May 15, 2025 • Reminder: University of Connecticut Rudd Center Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCC) Academy, May 21, 2025: Registration Deadline is April 30, 2025 • Save the Date: National School Lunch Program (NSLP) Sponsor Online Application Training, June 3, 2025 • Operational Memorandum No. 06-25: State Severe Need School Breakfast Program Grant for School Year 2024-25 • USDA Foods Direct Delivery Inventory at HPC • USDA Foods Orders for School Year 2025-26 • Resource Roundup: Requirements for Field Trip Meals in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program • Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN) STAR Webinar: Strategies for Navigating Bids and Vendor Selections in School Nutrition: April 24, 2025 • ICN Recorded Webinar: STAR: Strategies for Incorporating Plant-Based, Minimally Processed Standardized Recipes for All Students • ICN iBites Podcast • ICN iBites Digest

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Date	Link	Topics
04-02-2025	SLT Newsletter 04-02-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Reminder: CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 05-2025, Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) Annual Notification Requirement for all Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) Participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and/or the School Breakfast Program (SBP) Due April 7, 2025 • CSDE Summer Meals Training on April 3, 2025: Seamless Summer Option Regulations • 2025-26 Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) Grant Announcement: Applications Due April 30, 2025 • Paid Lunch Equity (PLE) Exemption Request for Unpaid Meal Charges Due April 30, 2025 • CNP System Now Open to Submit 2025-26 Healthy Food Certification (HFC) Statement: Due July 1, 2025 • Important Update: Deadline Extended for Federal Local Food for Schools Incentive Program (Federal LFSIP) • Save the Dates for CSDE Office Hours: Triennial Assessment using the WellSAT website • Save the Date: Farm to School Conference, May 7, 2025 • Resource Roundup: Finding Previous Editions of School Lunch Tray • FoodCorps' 17 Children's Books We Love All About Food
03-26-2025	SLT Newsletter 03-26-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 05-2025, Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) Annual Notification Requirement for all Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) Participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and/or the School Breakfast Program (SBP) Due April 7, 2025 • CSDE Summer Meals Training on March 27, 2025: Summer Meal Programs Outreach • Save the Dates for CSDE Office Hours: Triennial Assessment using the WellSAT Website • Updates to What's in a Meal Training Modules for School Year 2024-25: Module 13 Ounce Equivalents • Updated CSDE Resource: Professional Standards Topics and Training Hours for the What's in a Meal Training Modules • Resource Roundup: Summary of Final Rule Updates to the Meal Patterns for the School Nutrition Programs, Effective July 1, 2025 • CT Grown for CT Kids Culturally Appropriate Culinary Training: April 3, 2025

Summary of School Lunch Tray Topics for 2025

Date	Link	Topics
03-19-2025	SLT Newsletter 03-19-2025 Table Talk 03-20-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operational Memorandum No. 04-25, State Transition Assistance for Reduced-price (STAR) Funds for School Year 2024-25 Attestation Addendum (Due April 4, 2025) • New CSDE Resource: Considerations for Farm to School Forward Contracting • USDA Resource: Procuring Local Foods for Child Nutrition Programs • Updates to What's in a Meal Training Modules for School Year 2024-25: Module 12 Whole Grain-Rich Requirement • Reminder: Comment Period Closes March 26, 2025, for USDA's Request for Information: Grain-Based Desserts and High-Protein Yogurt Crediting in Child Nutrition Programs • University of Connecticut Rudd Center Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCC) Academy, May 21, 2025: Registration Deadline is April 30, 2025 • Resource Roundup: Worksheet to Calculate the Weekly Percentage of Whole Grain-rich Menu Items in School Lunch and Breakfast Menus for Grades K-12

Summary of School Lunch Tray Topics for 2025

Date	Link	Topics
03-12-2025	SLT Newsletter 03-12-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Reminder: Introduction to School Nutrition Leadership Training Survey: Due March 14, 2025 • Reminder: Federal Local Food for Schools Incentive Program (LFSIP) Reporting Requirements: Report of February 2025 Purchases Due March 14, 2025 • CSDE Office Hours on the Triennial Assessment using the Wellness School Assessment Tool (WellSAT) Website: Monday, March 17, 2025 • Need to Know • Termination Notice for Agreement No. AM25CPLFS000C010 for the Project Titled, Local Food for Schools and Child Care Cooperative Agreement (LFSCC) • USDA Memo SP 09-2025: Buy American Accommodation Process for School Year 2025-2026 • Schedule of Program Year 2025 Summer Meal Programs Trainings • Registration for Program Year 2025 Summer Meal Program Trainings • How to Check Funding Status of Federal and State Reimbursements • Resource Roundup: Summary of Final Rule Updates to the Meal Patterns for the School Nutrition Programs • Good to Know • Food Research & Action Center (FRAC) Webinar: A Deep Dive into the Community Eligibility Provision: March 20, 2025 • ICN STAR Webinar Recording: Mastering Scratch Cooking in Schools

Summary of School Lunch Tray Topics for 2025

Date	Link	Topics
03-05-2025	SLT Newsletter 03-05-2025 Table Talk 03-06-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Reminder: USDA Foods for School Year 2025-26: Orders due March 7, 2025 • New USDA Foods Office Hours Session on March 5, 2025 • Introduction to School Nutrition Leadership Training Survey: Due March 14, 2025 • Product-based Limits for Added Sugars in Breakfast Cereals and Yogurt, Effective July 1, 2025 • Product-based Limits for Added Sugars in Flavored Milk, Effective July 1, 2025 • Updated List of Acceptable Food and Beverages Dated March 4, 2025 • Connecticut School Recycling and Composting Laws: Effective July 1, 2026 • Recording Now Available for Rudd Center's Webinar, Introduction to the Wellness School Assessment Tool (WellSAT) • Resource Roundup: Reminder About Rudd Center's 2022 LSWP Triennial Assessment Report • Connecticut DEEP Webinar: Complying with School Recycling and Composting Laws in Connecticut

Summary of School Lunch Tray Topics for 2025

Date	Link	Topics
02-26-2025	SLT Newsletter 02-26-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Reminder: Required Webinar on Rudd Center's New Wellness School Assessment Tool (WellSAT) Website, February 27, 2025 - <i>USDA Triennial Assessment due June 30, 2025</i> • Reminder: USDA Foods for School Year 2025-26: Orders due March 7, 2025; New Office Hours Session on March 5, 2025 • Operational Memorandum No. 03-25: Requirements for Submitting the Healthy Food Certification (HFC) Statement for School Year 2025-26 • New Federal LFSIP Reimbursement Request Form (Phase 1 and/or Phase 2) • Operational Memorandum No. 03-25: Process for Submitting the HFC Statement for School Year 2025-26: Due July 1, 2025 • USDA Memo SP 07-2025 and CACFP 07-2025: Requirement to Accept Medical Statements from Registered Dietitians for Schools and Child and Adult Care Institutions and Facilities • Updated "Medical Statements" Section of CSDE's Special Diets in School Nutrition Programs Webpage • Data on HFC Participation for SY 2024-25 • Updated CSDE Webpage: Competitive Foods in Schools • Updated CSDE Resources on State and Federal Laws for Competitive Foods • Resource Roundup: Resources for Meeting the Federal and State Requirements for Competitive Foods in Schools
02-19-2025	SLT Newsletter 02-19-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reminder: Required Webinar on Rudd Center's New Wellness School Assessment Tool (WellSAT) Website, February 27, 2025- <i>USDA Triennial Assessment due 6/30/2025</i> • Need to Know • Now Available: CSDE's List of Area Eligible Schools and List of Site Eligible Schools for School Year 2024-25 • CSDE Summer Meal Programs Training on Area Eligibility: Thursday, February 20, 2025 • Updated Connecticut Nutrition Standards (CNS) for School Year 2025-26 • Updated CSDE Webpage: Competitive Foods in Schools • Posting of USDA Webinar on Request for Information: Grain-Based Desserts and High-Protein Yogurt Crediting in Child Nutrition Programs • Resource Roundup: Foundation for Fresh Produce Have a Plant Influence Toolkit: Seasonality

Summary of School Lunch Tray Topics for 2025

Date	Link	Topics
02-13-2025	SLT Newsletter 02-13-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Reminder: Federal Local Food for Schools Incentive Program (LFSIP) Reporting Requirements: Report of January 2025 Purchases Due February 14, 2025 • Instructions for Ordering USDA Foods for School Year 2025-26: Orders due March 7, 2025 • New Date for Required Webinar on Rudd Center's New Wellness School Assessment Tool (WellSAT) Website, February 27, 2025 - USDA Triennial Assessment due 6/30/2025 • Serving Breakfast on Days with Delayed Openings • Resource Roundup: USDA On-Demand Training: Identifying Top Sources of Added Sugars and Simple Swaps • Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN) ICN Recorded Webinar: USDA: Menu Planning for NSLP Afterschool Snack Service • ICN Recorded Webinar: STAR: Reading and Understanding Food and Nutrition Facts Labels • The Road to Successful Menu Planning for School Meals Training Series • FRAC Webinar: Summer Meals: Serving Kid-Friendly, High-Quality Meals: February 20, 2025
02-05-2025	SLT Newsletter 02-05-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • 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 • Upcoming Farm to School Workshop: Culinary and Knife Skills Training, February 13, 2025

Summary of School Lunch Tray Topics for 2025

Date	Link	Topics
01-29-2025	SLT Newsletter 01-29-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reminder: Webinar on Rudd Center's New Wellness School Assessment Tool (WellSAT) Website • New CSDE Resource: County Assignments for Summer Meals • Updated CSDE Webpage: Eligibility for Free and Reduced-price Meals and Free Milk in School Nutrition Programs • Updated CSDE Webpage: Menu Planning for Child Nutrition Programs • Updated CSDE Webpage: Food Safety for Child Nutrition Programs • Updated CSDE Webpage: Professional Standards for School Nutrition Professionals • Resource Roundup: Handwashing • Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025 Continuing Professional Education Self-Study Modules
01-22-2025	SLT Newsletter 01-22-2025 Table Talk 01-23-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required Webinar on Rudd Center's New Wellness School Assessment Tool (WellSAT) Website, February 6, 2025 • Updates on USDA's "And Justice for All" (AJFA) Posters • Updated USDA Foreign Translation Free and Reduced Applications • Updates to What's in a Meal Training Modules for School Year 2024-25: Module 6 Meal Pattern Documentation Part B - Crediting Commercial Processed Foods and Module 11 Grains Component • Updated CSDE Menu Planning Guidance Series for the Preschool Meal Patterns • Updated CSDE Crediting Handouts for K-12 and Preschool • USDA Product Information Sheet and USDA Foods Database Survey: Deadline April 18, 2025 • Resource Roundup: Reducing the Risk of Choking in Young Children at Mealtimes • USDA Team Nutrition Webinar: Reducing Sodium in School Meals, February 20, 2025 • 2025-26 Connecticut Farm to School Institute: Application Deadline is February 12, 2025 • March is National Nutrition Month • New England Dairy Webinar: Dairy Allergy versus Lactose Intolerance Webinar, February 27, 2025

Summary of School Lunch Tray Topics for 2025

Date	Link	Topics
01-22-2025	SLT Newsletter 01-22-2025 Table Talk 01-23-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required Webinar on Rudd Center's New Wellness School Assessment Tool (WellSAT) Website, February 6, 2025 • Updates on USDA's "And Justice for All" (AJFA) Posters • Updated USDA Foreign Translation Free and Reduced Applications • Updates to What's in a Meal Training Modules for School Year 2024-25: Module 6 Meal Pattern Documentation Part B - Crediting Commercial Processed Foods and Module 11 Grains Component • Updated CSDE Menu Planning Guidance Series for the Preschool Meal Patterns • Updated CSDE Crediting Handouts for K-12 and Preschool • USDA Product Information Sheet and USDA Foods Database Survey: Deadline April 18, 2025 • Resource Roundup: Reducing the Risk of Choking in Young Children at Mealtimes • USDA Team Nutrition Webinar: Reducing Sodium in School Meals, February 20, 2025 • 2025-26 Connecticut Farm to School Institute: Application Deadline is February 12, 2025 • March is National Nutrition Month • New England Dairy Webinar: Dairy Allergy versus Lactose Intolerance Webinar, February 27, 2025
01-15-2025	SLT Newsletter 01-15-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Onsite Monitoring for School Year 2024-25 Must be Completed by February 1, 2025 • Direct Certification Web Application is Not Operating • Local Food for Schools Incentive Program (LFSIP) Phase 2 • Save the Date: Webinar on Rudd Center's New Wellness School Assessment Tool (WellSAT) Website • Updated CSDE Webpage: Special Diets in School Nutrition Programs • Updated CSDE Webpages: Claim Submission Schedule, Income Guidelines, and Reimbursement Rates • Resource Roundup: CSDE's Laws and Regulations for Child Nutrition Programs webpage • USDA Webinar: Request for Information: Grain-Based Desserts and High-Protein Yogurt Crediting • Chill Out with Cold Milk Cooler Giveaway Deadline: February 28, 2025

Summary of School Lunch Tray Topics for 2025

Date	Link	Topics
01-08-2025	SLT Newsletter 01-08-2025 Table Talk 01-09-2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSDE 2025-26 Annual Food Service Management Company (FSMC) Request for Proposals (RFP) Process Training for School Food Authorities (SFAs), January 30, 2025 • Federal Local Food for Schools Incentive Program (LFSIP) Reporting Requirements: Report of December 2024 Purchases Due January 17, 2025 • CSDE 2025-26 Annual Food Service Management Company (FSMC) Request for Proposals (RFP) Process Training for SFAs, January 30, 2025 • Federal Local Food for Schools Incentive Program (LFSIP) Reporting Requirements: Report of December 2024 Purchases Due January 17, 2025 • Table Talk, Thursday, January 9, 2024: Focus on USDA Foods Available List for School Year 2025-26 • Introducing the CSDE’s New Connecticut Regional Farm to School Coordinators and Required Webinar on January 13, 2025 • Important Update for USDA Department of Defense (DOD) Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program • Updates to CSDE’s Webpages for Child Nutrition Programs • Updated CSDE Webpage: Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs • New CSDE Webpage: Crediting Documentation for the Child Nutrition Programs • Updates to What’s in a Meal Training Modules for School Year 2024-25: Module 6 Meal Pattern Documentation Part A - School Menus • Request for Proposal (RFP) for Chefs to Schools: Application Deadline February 5, 2025 • Resource Roundup: Using Cycle Menus in the School Nutrition Programs • School Nutrition Association of Connecticut (SNACT) peer Mentorship Program

Summary of School Lunch Tray Topics for 2025

For more information, visit the CSDE'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/summary_slt_topics_2025.pdf.



Summary of School Lunch Tray Topics for 2025

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1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. fax: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
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