

# The School Lunch Tray: April 29, 2026


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. 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

- Register by May 1, 2026, for the CT Farm to School Conference on May 13, 2026 
- Reminder: School Lunch Hero Day is May 1, 2026
- No Table Talk on Thursday, April 30, 2026

## Need to Know

- CSDE Recorded Training Modules Updated to Resolve Technical Difficulties with Sound Quality
- 2025-26 Connecticut Nutrition Standards (CNS) Worksheets Updated

## Good to Know

- None

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## Action Items

### Register by May 1, 2026, for the CT Farm to School Conference on May 13, 2026



Join the CSDE for a day of learning, connection, and inspiration—all centered around Farm to School. Generate ideas, make plans, and learn from peers how they are deepening their efforts through cafeteria, classroom, and community. Workshops are designed for a range of school roles, including foodservice directors, business managers, educators, and cafeteria managers.

This event counts toward professional standards requirements. Morning refreshments and lunch are included with the \$25 registration fee.

- **Date and time:** Wednesday, May 13, 2026, 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
- **Location:** Environmental learning Centers of CT, 501 Wolcott Rd, Bristol, CT 06010
- **Registration:** Register by May 1, 2026, at [2026 CT Farm to School Conference Registration](#).

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### Reminder: School Lunch Hero Day is May 1, 2026

School Lunch Hero Day is on May 1, 2026, and is quickly approaching. Join schools across the country in recognizing the vital role these team members play every day — nourishing students, supporting learning, and making a difference for every child who walks through the cafeteria doors. For more information, visit the School Nutrition Association's [School Lunch Hero Day](#) webpage.

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### No Table Talk on Thursday, April 30, 2026

Table Talk will not be held this week. Watch the School Lunch Tray for the next scheduled Table Talk date.

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## Need to Know

### CSDE Recorded Training Modules Updated to Resolve Technical Difficulties with Sound Quality

The Bureau of Child Nutrition recently learned about some technical difficulties with sound quality and out-of-sync narrative for some of the CSDE's online recorded training modules for the school nutrition programs. This occurred due to discrepancies with how the CSDE's video host platform handles different file types. The file type has been updated, and all training modules are reformatted to resolve these issues. The following updated training module series and individual modules have been reposted.

- [Buy American Requirement for the School Nutrition Programs](#) (1 module)
- [Completing the Application Process for Healthy Food Certification](#) (1 module)
- [Complying with Healthy Food Certification](#) (6 modules)
- [Determining Eligibility in the School Nutrition Programs, Summer Food Service Program, and S-EBT](#) (6 modules)
- [Preschool Meal Pattern Training for the School Nutrition Programs](#) (9 modules)
- [Summer Meals Training](#) including SFSP Meal Patterns, Crediting Foods in the SFSP Meal Patterns (5 modules), Crediting Documentation for Summer Meals, Meal Service Requirements for Summer Meals, and Offer versus Serve (OVS) in the SFSP
- [Verification Procedures for School Nutrition Programs](#) (1 module)
- [What's in a Meal: Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs](#) (20 modules)

If participants experience any future issues with video quality, please email [susan.fiore@ct.gov](mailto:susan.fiore@ct.gov). Include the name of the module with a description of the issue and approximate time in the video.

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## Updated 2025-26 Connecticut Nutrition Standards (CNS) Worksheets

The [CNS Worksheets](#) help schools that participate in Healthy Food certification (HFC) to evaluate foods for compliance with the CNS. The CSDE recently updated these worksheets for formatting, links, and clarification. The updated versions are dated April 2026. Please discard any previously downloaded versions.

The CSDE reminds HFC schools that the completed CNS Worksheets are required to verify CNS compliance before any foods made from scratch may be sold to students separately from reimbursable meals. The selling entity must ensure that the recipe's serving (including any added accompaniments like condiments, cream cheese, and sauces) complies with the applicable CNS food category. The following documentation is required for all foods made from scratch: 1) a standardized recipe with the nutrition information per serving for the food with its accompaniments; and 2) the appropriate completed [CNS Worksheet](#) indicating that the standardized recipe's serving with its accompaniments complies with the CNS. This documentation must be maintained on file for the [annual HFC documentation](#) due in November of each year.

For additional guidance on how to evaluate standardized recipes for CNS compliance, refer to the resources below and visit the [Evaluating Foods for CNS Compliance](#) section of the CSDE's CNS webpage.

- [Guidance on Evaluating Recipes for Compliance with the CNS](#)
  - [How to Evaluate Foods Made from Scratch for Compliance with the CNS](#)
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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/2026/slt\\_04\\_29\\_2026.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/slt/2026/slt_04_29_2026.pdf).



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1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
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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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