

# The School Lunch Tray: June 3, 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

- Reminder for Healthy Food Certification (HFC) Statement for School Year 2026-27: Due July 1, 2026
- Reminder for Interschool Agreements in HFC Schools for School Year 2026-27: Due July 1, 2026
- USDA Foods Reminder: All Foods Must Be Out of State Warehouse by End of June
- USDA Foods Reminder: Receipting Orders in FFAVORS Before End of School Year

## Need to Know

- Revised CT Fresh Ed: Buy Local Program Questions and Answers 
- USDA Foods Cancellation: Applesauce Cans, Sales Order Number 5000972034-100
- Requirements for Field Trip Meals in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program

## Good to Know

- None

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## Action Items

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### Reminder for Healthy Food Certification (HFC) Statement for School Year 2026-27: Due July 1, 2026

All public school sponsors of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) must submit the 2026-27 HFC Statement and upload their final board-approved minutes by July 1, 2026. [Operational Memorandum No. 03-26: Requirements for Submitting the HFC Statement for School Year 2026-27](#) provides the required motion language and summarizes the **steps that districts must take now** to ensure the accurate and timely submission of the 2026-27 HFC Statement by the **July 1** deadline.

As a reminder, **only the district's authorized signer 1 or 2 is authorized to certify and submit the HFC Statement** in the Connecticut Online Application and Claiming System for Child Nutrition Programs (CNP System). Food service directors can see "Healthy Food Certification" in the CNP System's list of options but cannot access the current year's HFC Statement or enter any information. Once the district's authorized signer 1 or 2 completes the HFC statement, the food service director can view it.

The "[Annual HFC Application](#)" section of the CSDE's HFC webpage provides information on the required steps for submitting the annual HFC Statement. The CSDE's 21-minute video, [Completing the Application Process for HFC](#), provides detailed guidance on the HFC application process.

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### Reminder for Interschool Agreements in HFC Schools for School Year 2026-27: Due July 1, 2026

Full-service Interschool Agreements for schools that choose the healthy food option of Healthy Food Certification (HFC) must be submitted to the CSDE by **July 1, 2026**. [CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 04-26 Interschool Agreements for School Year 2026-27](#) provides guidance on the requirements and deadlines for submitting interschool agreements to the CSDE. Sponsors that vend or satellite meals to another district are required to submit and receive approval of an annual interschool agreement to the CSDE. This form must be signed by the authorized representative for the providing sponsor and the recipient site.

The interschool agreement forms are available under "1" on the CSDE's [Forms for School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage. Operational Memorandum No. 04-26 is available on the CSDE's [School Nutrition Operational Memos 2026](#) webpage.

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## USDA Foods Reminder: All Foods Must Be Out of State Warehouse by End of June

As a reminder, please take delivery of all final USDA Foods orders from HPC by the end of June. Recipient agencies that need to arrange an earlier delivery in June may contact Matt Ramos at HPC at [mramos@hpcfs.com](mailto:mramos@hpcfs.com).

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## USDA Foods Reminder: Receipting Orders in FFAVORS Before End of School Year

The Food Distribution Staff reminds school food authorities (SFAs) that **all invoices** in FFAVORS must be receipted before leaving for summer break. The USDA requires receipting within 2 business days of delivery, so plan accordingly if orders will be received close to the end of school.

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## Need to Know

### Revised CT Fresh Ed: Buy Local Program Questions and Answers



A revised version of the Connecticut [CT Fresh Ed: Buy Local Program Questions and Answers](#) is now available. This updated document addresses common questions and provides additional guidance to support program participation and implementation.

The CSDE encourages any sponsors that have not yet applied to participate in the CT Fresh Ed: Buy Local Program to sign up using the link below.

- [CT Fresh Ed: Buy Local Program SY 2025-2026 Application](#)

For additional information on program requirements, funding, and implementation, please review CSDE [Operational Memorandum No. 2-26: CT Fresh Ed: Buy Local Program](#). For questions, please contact [Fionnuala.brown@ct.gov](mailto:Fionnuala.brown@ct.gov) for assistance.

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## **USDA Foods Cancellation: Applesauce Cans, Sales Order Number 5000972034-100**

Deliveries of USDA Foods Applesauce Cans (material code 110541) were expected in January 2026. After many months of rescheduled deliveries, this product is now canceled due to vendor constraints. Please make any menu changes necessary. The Food Distribution Program apologizes for the last-minute notice.

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## **Requirements for Field Trip Meals in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program**

Meals served on field trips must meet specific requirements to be reimbursable. SFAs must ensure that all school staff involved with field trips (including food service staff and non-food service staff such as teachers, teacher aides, and other applicable staff) understand and implement these requirements for off-site reimbursable meals. The CSDE's [Requirements for Field Trip Meals in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program](#) provides guidance on allowable meal service methods for field trips and important tips for food safety and ensuring that meals are reimbursable, including point-of-service meal counts. This document is updated to reflect the allowable types of milk effective June 8, 2026, based on the USDA final rule, [Expanding Fluid Milk Options in Child Nutrition Programs](#).

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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\\_06\\_03\\_2026.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/slt/2026/slt_06_03_2026.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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