

The School Lunch Tray: August 5, 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

- Share Plans for Celebrating CT Grown for CT Kids Week and Receive a Free CTG4CTKW Kit 

Need to Know

- CSDE Virtual Procurement 101 Training 4 Part Series (October 15, 22, and November 5, 12 2026): Register by Friday, October 9, 2026

Good to Know

- New USDA Resource: Farm to School State Formula Grant Dashboard

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Action Items

Share Plans for Celebrating CT Grown for CT Kids Week and Receive a Free CTG4CTKW Kit



The CSDE encourages sponsors to complete the [CT Grown for CT Kids Week Registration Form](#) with any activities being planned for CTG4CTKW. Sponsors who submit the form by September 1, 2026, will receive a free kit for each school celebrating CTG4CTKW. Help CSDE showcase the amazing work happening across Connecticut, inspire others, and celebrate the impact of bringing local food and food education to students. Every activity counts —highlighting local on menus, holding taste tests, hosting farmer talks, or anything in between.

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Need to Know

CSDE Virtual Procurement 101 Training 4 Part Series (October 15, 22, and November 5, 12 2026): Register by Friday, October 9, 2026

The CSDE's virtual four-day Procurement 101 Training provides a comprehensive overview of the procurement requirements for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP). Section 7 CFR 210.21(h) of the NSLP regulations requires that all school personnel (this may also include municipal procurement staff) with procurement responsibilities associated with the Child Nutrition Programs must attend annual procurement training. Attendance at all four sessions is required to complete the training. Registration is required.

- **Required attendance:** All school personnel with procurement responsibilities associated with the Child Nutrition Programs (may include municipal procurement staff)
- **Dates and times:** October 15 and 22; November 5 and 12, 2026, from 2 p.m. – 4 p.m. each day
- **Registration:** Register by Friday, October 9, 2026, at [CSDE Procurement 101 Training Registration Link](#) or use the QR code below.



Questions: Contact Andy Paul at andrew.paul@ct.gov or Monica Pacheco at monica.pacheco@ct.gov

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Good to Know

New USDA Resource: Farm to School State Formula Grant Dashboard

The USDA's Food and Nutrition Administration (FNA) recently announced the launch of the [Farm to School State Formula Grant Dashboard](#), a new tool designed to showcase outcomes from the noncompetitive [Farm to School State Formula Grant Program](#). The program funds state agencies to coordinate farm to school efforts and provide technical assistance to institutions as they build and expand their capacity to procure and use local foods in program meals, as well as offer agricultural education opportunities for participating children.

FNA collected data featured in the dashboard from annual progress reports submitted by state agencies beginning in fall 2023. The dashboard highlights the ongoing development of a wide range of statewide farm to school activities, such as the promotion of local foods and agricultural education, the creation of databases to connect local producers with child nutrition program (CNP) operators, and the replication of Farm to School Institutes, which is a farm to school professional learning program for whole-school and early childhood education teams pioneered by Shelburne Farms. The dashboard elevates innovative projects and best practices that strengthen regional supply chains and inspire the next generation of American producers.

Using this tool, stakeholders can see exactly how state agencies utilized grant funds to connect local producers with CNP meals. This dashboard supports USDA's commitment to encourage healthy choices, healthy outcomes, and healthy families, and it highlights the role of states as innovative collaborators and incubators. The Farm to School State Formula Grant Dashboard is publicly available on the FNA's [Data Visualization](#) website.

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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_08_05_2026.pdf.



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