

The School Lunch Tray: September 23, 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

- CSDE Virtual Trainings – Getting Ready for Success: Preparing for the School Nutrition Program Administrative and Procurement Reviews
- Reminder: CSDE Virtual Procurement 101 Training 4 Part Series (October 15, 22, and November 5, 12 2026): Register by Friday, October 9, 2026
- Final Reminder: Food Safety Inspection Report for School Year 2025-26 Due September 30, 2026

Need to Know

- Updated CSDE Resource: Addendum C: Information on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- 3 C's Leadership Collective – An Opportunity for District Farm to School Coordinators, Due October 2, 2026 

Good to Know

- Webinar on Increasing Food Recovery in CT: Partnering with Unlikely Partners, September 28, 2026

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Action Items

CSDE Virtual Trainings – Getting Ready for Success: Preparing for the School Nutrition Program Administrative and Procurement Reviews

Part 3 of the *Getting Ready for Success: Preparing for the School Nutrition Program Administrative Review (AR) and Procurement Review (PR)* virtual training takes place September 24, 2026. Below is important information regarding the training.

Training

The virtual training session listed below is **mandatory for SFAs scheduled for a PR during SY 2026-27**. The session is also open to all SFAs, including those not selected for an PR. New school nutrition program directors are encouraged to attend.

This webinar will focus on the Procurement Review process, prepare required documentation, and identify key areas of focus before the PR. **Note: This training does not replace the required annual Procurement training requirements** (refer to “Reminder: CSDE Virtual Procurement 101 Training 4 Part Series (October 15, 22, and November 5, 12 2026): Register by Friday, October 9, 2026” below).

Required Attendance

This training is required for food service directors and business administrators who have been notified that they will receive a PR during SY 2026-27. For districts utilizing the services of a Food Service Management Company (FSMC), this review is focused on the procurement practices of the sponsor, which is the district, not the FSMC. Attendance is required for the business manager and any support staff in business office involved with handling the nonprofit school food service funds.

Training Date

September 24, 2026, 1:00–3:30 p.m., Overview of Procurement Review Process

Training Access Information

Microsoft Teams meeting

Join: <https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/282509131680015?p=oQrMXM7eblbtIpEtJe>

Meeting ID: 282 509 131 680 015

Passcode: aa6id6AR

[Need help?](#) | [System reference](#)

Dial in by phone

+1 860-840-2075,,189456618# United States, Hartford

[Find a local number](#)

Phone conference ID: 189 456 618#

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Reminder: 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.

Participants that have already registered should have received a calendar invite and do not need to register again. **Note:** All districts contracting with a FSMC must have their business official and anyone assisting them with the procurement of a FSMC register and attend this procurement series.

- **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.



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Final Reminder: Food Safety Inspection Report for School Year 2025-26 Due September 30, 2026

The Food Safety Inspection Report for school year (SY) 2025-26 must be completed in the [Connecticut Online Application and Claiming System for Child Nutrition Programs \(CNP System\)](#) by September 30, 2026. As required in section 9(h) of the National School Lunch Act (NSLA), 42 U.S.C. 1758(h), at least twice each year, schools must obtain a food safety inspection conducted by a state or local agency responsible for such inspections. As part of that requirement, the CSDE must annually collect the total number of inspections conducted at each SFA and report the number to the USDA Food and Nutrition Administration (FNA) by November 15, 2026. The food safety inspections requirement applies to all food preparation service sites and service-only sites.

Sponsors must complete the Food Safety Inspection Report for SY 2025-26 in the CNP System at the same time they complete and submit the annual sponsor application, but no later than September 30, 2026. Guidance begins on page 27 of the CSDE's guide, [Updating the Sponsor Application for School Nutrition Programs](#). The Food Safety Inspection Report can be completed by anyone who has access to the CNP System.

Food safety inspections for facilities not under the jurisdiction of the local or state health department: Some schools or facilities (such as schools or group homes operated by the Department of Children and Families) do not fall under the jurisdiction of the Department of Public Health (DPH) and therefore, will not be inspected by DPH or the local health department. **However, food safety inspections conducted by the state agency that licenses the facility qualify toward meeting the requirement of two food safety inspections annually.**

While the CSDE recognizes that there may be difficulty in obtaining the two food safety inspections, SFAs are responsible for requesting such inspections and documenting such efforts. When two health inspections are not conducted, each sponsor is responsible for requesting the inspections and documenting these efforts (refer to the CSDE's [Sample Letter for Food Safety Health Inspection for the National School Lunch Program \(NSLP\) and School Breakfast Program \(SBP\)](#)).

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Need to Know

Updated CSDE Resource: Addendum C: Information on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

The CSDE recently updated Addendum C: Information on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), to reflect the new guidelines issued by the Connecticut Department of Social Services as of October 1, 2026. The revised version is dated October 2026. This document is available in English and Spanish under “[Addenda](#)” in the “Application Forms” section of the CSDE’s Eligibility for Free and Reduced-price Meals and Free Milk in School Nutrition Programs webpage.

3 C’s Leadership Collective – An Opportunity for District Farm to School Coordinators, Due October 2, 2026



UConn Extension and the CSDE have an exciting opportunity for district-based Farm to School Coordinators *and* anyone serving in this capacity – as an organizer or leader for Farm to School efforts within a district. The 3 C’s *Leadership Collective* is a new statewide Farm to School focused *Community of Practice* to support, strengthen, and sustainably grow farm to school leadership across the state. This is a year-long experience with those who share a common role in farm to school and are seeking connection.

3 C’s Leadership Collective participants will:

- attend monthly meetings (mostly virtual, two in-person meetings);
- receive ongoing professional development tailored to farm to school leadership;
- access tools, resources, and strategies that can be directly applied;
- gain a deeper understanding of the school food system and how systemic challenges present in the day-to-day activities in kitchens and cafeterias;
- have access to a shared platform for informal communication and idea exchange; and
- contribute to statewide capacity-building, policy alignment, and shared learning

For more information and to sign up, please complete the [registration form](#) by October 2, 2026.

To ask questions and hear about the experience, join the [virtual Meet & Greet Office Hours](#) on September 29, 2026, at 3:00 p.m.

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Good to Know

Webinar on Increasing Food Recovery in CT: Partnering with Unlikely Partners, September 28, 2026

The Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (CT DEEP), Haven's Harvest, and Food Rescue US are sponsoring a webinar to learn about the opportunities of donating and recovering food. Food recovery efforts work to get food onto plates and not wasted! Hear from two food recovery organizations, Food Rescue US and Haven's Harvest and two of their unlikely partners, Greyston Bakery and Global Partners. There will be time for questions.

- **Date and time:** September 28, 2026, 1:00 - 2:00 p.m.
- **Registration:** [Increasing Food Recovery in CT Registration Link](#).

This webinar will be recorded and shared with anyone who registers.

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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_09_23_2026.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

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