The School Lunch Tray: October 14, 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: Procurement 101 Day 1 Mandatory Training is Thursday, October 15, 2026
- Check SAM.gov Registration Expiration Date

Need to Know

- October is National Farm to School Month 
- 2025 Turnip the Beet Award Winners
- Happy National School Lunch Week (NSLW) 2026: October 12-16
- Revised CSDE Resource Lists

Good to Know

- None

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Action Items

Reminder: Procurement 101 Day 1 Mandatory Training is Thursday, October 15, 2026

The first of the CSDE's four-part **Procurement 101 training series** will be held on Thursday, October 15, 2026, from 2:00-4:00 p.m. This training series meets the mandatory annual training requirements as stated in 7CFR 210.21(h). Attendance is required for school nutrition program directors, management, and staff tasked with National School Lunch Program (NSLP) procurement responsibilities.

Please use the link below to join the training.

Microsoft Teams meeting
Join: https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/229657858330888?p=lpirJOQenlhqS0LM8u
Meeting ID: 229 657 858 330 888
Passcode: 6Ja6eQ3V

Need help? | System reference
Dial in by phone
+1 860-840-2075,,513782933# United States, Hartford
Find a local number
Phone conference ID: 513 782 933#

Check SAM.gov Registration Expiration Date

Sponsors of the USDA Child Nutrition Programs should check their organization's SAM.gov registration expiration date and coordinate with the person responsible for renewal. Entity registrations must be renewed every 365 days to remain active. Plan to begin the renewal process 60-90 days before expiration to allow time for validation and any needed corrections. A lapse can affect eligibility for federal awards and may interrupt payments. Renewal is free when completed directly through SAM.gov. Sponsors should monitor renewal notices and confirm that registration is active after submitting.

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Need to Know

October is National Farm to School Month

After an amazing week celebrating CT Grown for CT Kids Week, the fun can continue as the whole month of October is National Farm to School Month. Local CT Grown foods are still available in abundance and local farmers are ready to work with schools. School food authorities can contact their Regional Farm to School Coordinator for assistance.

Please continue submitting entries to the CT Grown for CT Kids Week Registration Form to share activities that took place last week. These submissions help highlight the great work being done and share accomplishments with everyone. This data supports the CSDE's efforts to continue to incorporate farm to school into the 3 Cs: cafeteria, classroom, and community.

2025 Turnip the Beet Award Winners

The USDA Food and Nutrition Administration (FNA) recently announced the recipients of the 2025 Turnip the Beet Awards. This honor celebrates outstanding sponsors of the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and the National School Lunch Program Seamless Summer Option (SSO) who exceed program standards, delivering exceptional, nutritious meals to children throughout the summer. This year, 170 sponsors distinguished themselves by earning a gold, silver, or bronze award. Congratulations to Watertown and East Hartford for having their efforts recognized! To learn more, visit the USDA's Turnip the Beet webpage.

Happy National School Lunch Week (NSLW) 2026: October 12-16

This week is NSLW, with the theme of Cafeteria Circus: Where Healthy Choices Take Center Stage. For more information and resources, visit the School Nutrition Association's National School Lunch Week webpage.

Revised CSDE Resource Lists

The CSDE's resource lists include resources and websites related to the operation of the USDA's Child Nutrition Programs and promoting healthy school nutrition and physical activity environments. Updated versions (October 2026) of the lists below are now available.

- Resource List for Child Nutrition Programs
- Resource List for Dietary Guidance and Nutrition Information
- Resource List for Food Safety in Child Nutrition Programs
- Resource List for Health and Achievement
- Resource List for Menu Planning and Food Production in Child Nutrition Programs
- Resource List for Nutrition Education
- Resource List for Obesity Prevention
- Resource List for Physical Activity and Physical Education
- Resource List for Special Diets in Child Nutrition Programs
- Resource List for Wellness Policies in Schools and Child Care

These lists are available in the "Documents/Forms" section of the CSDE's Resources for Child Nutrition Programs webpage.

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_10_14_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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