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.

- Reminder: Comparison Chart: Operating the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and Seamless Summer Option (SSO) for School Food Authorities in School Year 2021-22 through June 30, 2022
- USDA Department of Defense (DoD) Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program Update
- Request for Information: Buy American
- American Commodity Distribution Association (ACDA) Webinar: Stronger with School Meals: Back-to-School Resources from USDA's Team Nutrition, Thursday, August 12, 2021
- Team Nutrition Webinar: Master the Professional Standards Training Tracking Tool (PSTTT), August 25, 2021
- Resource Roundup: Guidance for Notifying Parents of a Child's Eligibility for Free or Reducedprice Meal

Please review and share with appropriate staff members. Thank you.



Reminder: Comparison Chart: Operating the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and Seamless Summer Option (SSO) for School Food Authorities in School Year 2021-22 through June 30, 2022

In the near future, all sponsors will be required to identify if they will be operating the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) or Seamless Summer Option (SSO) for school year 2021-22. For information regarding the each program, please refer to the CSDEs resource, <u>Comparison of Operating the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and Seamless Summer Option (SSO) for School Food Authorities in School Year 2021-22 through June 30, 2022</u>. **Note:** The rates of reimbursement for the

SSO have been updated in the chart to include four decimal placements (\$4.3175 for lunch and \$2.4625 for breakfast).

#### USDA Department of Defense (DoD) Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program Update

HPC will resume the NSLP DoD Program on Monday, August 23, 2021. FFAVORS will be opened to all Recipient Agencies (RAs) for ordering on **Monday**, **August 16**, **2021**, to allow lead time to place orders for the following week. The contacts at Hartford Provision Company will remain the same this year: Sherry Brzostowski at <a href="mailto:sbrzostowski@hpcfs.com">sbrzostowski@hpcfs.com</a> and Matt Ramos at <a href="mailto:mramos@hpcfs.com">mramos@hpcfs.com</a>. As a reminder, any RA using the NSLP DoD Program over the summer must provide the Connecticut Food Distribution Program with the amount used during the summer if you would like the dollars returned for the upcoming school year.

#### **Request for Information: Buy American**

On August 4, 2021, the USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) published the Request for Information: Buy American in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program to gather feedback from stakeholders on:

- how the Buy American provision and guidance are currently implemented;
- · changes FNS should make to current regulations; and
- guidance and feedback on how FNS can better support local operators as they strive to purchase domestic foods and food products.

Please use this link to submit your responses. Responses are due by November 2, 2021.

# American Commodity Distribution Association (ACDA) Webinar: Stronger with School Meals: Back-to-School Resources from USDA's Team Nutrition, Thursday, August 12, 2021

Join USDA's Team Nutrition on Thursday, August 12, 2021 at 3:00 p.m. for an informative and interactive webinar on many multifaceted resources to help schools get off to the right start. This year, with schools transitioning back to normal, these helpful school meals resources may be just what you need.

#### Speakers:

- Sheldon E. Gordon, MS, RDN, Chief, Nutrition and Technical Assistance Branch, USDA Food and Nutrition Service's (FNS) Child Nutrition Programs
- Erica Smith, MS, RDN, Nutritionist, USDA FNS Child Nutrition Programs

This webinar is free to members of the American Commodity Distribution Association (ACDA) members. The fee for non-members is \$25. Registration is available at <a href="https://www.commodityfoods.org/event-4373759">https://www.commodityfoods.org/event-4373759</a>.

# Team Nutrition Webinar: Master the Professional Standards Training Tracking Tool (PSTTT), August 25, 2021

On Wednesday, August 24, 2021, from 2:00-3:00 p.m., this webinar will present the latest enhancements to the Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool (PSTTT). Since the PSTTT was first released in November 2017, Team Nutrition has continuously worked to incorporate feedback to streamline the user experience. This webinar will showcase the latest enhancements below.

- Updated Welcome dashboard where you can access your own certificates and training history
- Optional employee identification numbers that can be added to employee profiles
- Training duration logged in increments of 5 minutes
- Additional manager/director role features:
  - Deactivating employees
  - o Managing schools within their district
  - o Including employees with no logged training in Summary Report
  - Editing district information
  - Creating new district
  - Requesting enhanced access if responsible for managing multiple districts, including districts in different states
  - Uploading multiple new training titles and their training information at one time to be included on the PSTTT training list

The webinar will include a live demonstration of the PSTTT, as well as an overview of the Professional Standards resources. Participants will learn about the benefits of using the PSTTT and these new features which allow directors, managers and staff to prepare for the 2021-22 school year.

Registration is available at <a href="https://usda-fns.webex.com/usda-fns/onstage/g.php?MTID=e5afe6e404c1a9cded17512ced3242bob">https://usda-fns.webex.com/usda-fns/onstage/g.php?MTID=e5afe6e404c1a9cded17512ced3242bob</a>.

Professional Standards Learning Objectives:

Key Area: 3000 (Administration)

Training Topic: 3400 (Human Resources); 3200 Program Management

Learning Objective: 3430 (Develop and track employee training plans), 3210 (Staff Management)

# Resource Roundup: Guidance for Notifying Parents of a Child's Eligibility for Free or Reduced-price Meal

The CSDE's resource, <u>Guidance for Notifying Parents of a Child's Eligibility for Free or Reduced-price Meals</u>, provides sponsors with important information on the different ways (such as email, postal service, and verbally) that parents/guardians may be notified of the availability of applications, direct certification, and verification. It also provides information regarding the carryover of eligibility period, denying applications, and adverse action. Please share this resource with all determining officials and direct certification contacts.



For more information, visit the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) School Lunch Tray Table Talk webpage, or contact the school nutrition programs staff in the CSDE's Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841.

This document is available at https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/Training/TableTalk/SLT\_08\_04\_2021.pdf.

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: How to File a Complaint, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
  Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
  1400 Independence Avenue, SW
  Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

The Connecticut State Department of Education is committed to a policy of affirmative action/equal opportunity for all qualified persons. The Connecticut Department of Education does not discriminate in any employment practice, education program, or educational activity on the basis of age, ancestry, color, civil air patrol status, criminal record (in state employment and licensing), gender identity or expression, genetic information, intellectual disability, learning disability, marital status, mental disability (past or present), national origin, physical disability (including blindness), race, religious creed, retaliation for previously opposed discrimination or coercion, sex (pregnancy or sexual harassment), sexual orientation, veteran status or workplace hazards to reproductive systems, unless there is a bona fide occupational qualification excluding persons in any of the aforementioned protected classes.

Inquiries regarding the Connecticut State Department of Education's nondiscrimination policies should be directed to: Levy Gillespie, Equal Employment Opportunity Director/Americans with Disabilities Coordinator (ADA), Connecticut State Department of Education, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 505, Hartford, CT 06103, 860-807-2071, levy.gillespie@ct.gov.