

The School Lunch Tray: September 22, 2021

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.

- Updated Comparison Chart for the Milk Component for Grades K-12 and Preschoolers in the School Nutrition Programs
- Updated CSDE Crediting Resources for the School Nutrition Programs
- Turnip the Beet! on Summer Meals
- 5 Ways to Add Milk to Your Back-to-School Menus
- Institute of Child Nutrition Training Opportunity: Tools and Strategies for Emergency Preparedness in Schools
- Resource Roundup: CSDE's Calendar for Completing Verification

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



Updated Comparison Chart for the Milk Component for Grades K-12 and Preschoolers in the School Nutrition Programs

The CSDE has updated the resource, [Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for the Milk Component in School Nutrition Programs](#), for school year 2021-22. This document summarizes and compares the requirements for the milk component in the meal patterns for grades K-12 and preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), Seamless Summer Option (SSO) of the NSLP, Afterschool Snack Program (ASP) of the NSLP, and Special Milk Program (SMP). It also provides applicable resources for each meal pattern. School food authorities (SFAs) must ensure that all foods served in school meals meet the specific meal pattern requirements for each grade group.

The School Lunch Tray: September 22, 2021

This chart is also available under “C” on the CSDE’s [Program Guidance for School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

Updated CSDE Crediting Resources for the School Nutrition Programs

The CSDE has updated the crediting resources for the meal patterns for grades K-12 and preschoolers in the school nutrition programs. These resources are listed in the chart below.

- The crediting resources for the meal patterns for grades K-12 are available on the CSDE’s [Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage. Refer to the “[Documents/Forms](#)” section for the resources for each meal pattern components.
- The crediting resources for the preschool meal patterns are available in the “[Related Resources](#)” section of the CSDE’s Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs webpage.

Please discard any previous versions dated prior to September 2021 and replace with the updated versions.

Crediting resource	Applies to	
	Grades K-12	Preschoolers
<i>Product Documentation</i>		
• Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the NSLP and SBP	✓	✓
• Child Nutrition (CN) Labeling Program	✓	✓
• Product Formulation Statements	✓	✓
<i>Meat/Meat Alternates</i>		
• Crediting Commercial Meat/Meat Alternate Products in the NSLP and SBP	✓	✓
• Crediting Deli Meats in the NSLP and SBP	✓	✓
• Crediting Legumes in the NSLP and SBP	✓	✓
• Crediting Nuts and Seeds in the NSLP and SBP	✓	✓
• Crediting Yogurt for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP	✓	
• Crediting Yogurt for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP		✓
• Crediting Tofu and Tofu Products in the NSLP and SBP	✓	✓
• Requirements for Alternate Protein Products in the NSLP and SBP	✓	✓

The School Lunch Tray: September 22, 2021

<i>Vegetables and Fruits</i>		
• Crediting Juice for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP	✓	
• Crediting Juice for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP		✓
• Crediting Smoothies for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP	✓	
• Crediting Smoothies for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP		✓
• Crediting Soup in the NSLP and SBP	✓	✓
• Vegetable Subgroups in the NSLP	✓	
<i>Noncreditable Foods</i>		
• Noncreditable Foods for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP	✓	
• Noncreditable Foods for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP		✓

Turnip the Beet! on Summer Meals

The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is ready to celebrate excellence in Summer Meals! The USDA FNS has posted information and materials related to the Turnip the Beet award for high-quality summer meals for Program Year 2021. This award is open to Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and National School Lunch Program Seamless Summer Option (SSO) sponsoring organizations. Detailed award criteria, as well as a nomination form are available at: www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/turnip-the-beet.

If your organization would like to be considered for a Turnip the Beet! Award, please submit a completed nomination form and one-month menu to caroline.cooke@ct.gov no later than Tuesday, **September 28, 2021**.

Institute of Child Nutrition Training Opportunity: Tools and Strategies for Emergency Preparedness in Schools

On Thursday, September 30, 2021, from 3:00-4:00 p.m., the Institute of Child Nutrition is sponsoring a webinar focused on developing, implementing, and evaluating comprehensive emergency preparedness plans and procedures. The webinar will share strategies and tips on being proactive before an emergency occurs and will outline ways to evaluate plans to resume operations.

- *Objective:* Attendees will identify tools and strategies for effectively preparing for emergencies in schools and ways to evaluate emergency preparedness plans and procedures.
- *Registration:* Visit https://theicn.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_pjWDxKPAT3u-VJwv6bRbiQ.

5 Ways to Add Milk to Your Back-to-School Menus

The USDA Team Nutrition's [5 Ways to Add Milk to Your Back-to-School Menus](#) provides a few quick tips on ways to incorporate milk in school menus to improve meal service. Congratulations to Connecticut's own Thompson Public Schools for being featured in this resource!

For tips on vegetables, fruits, whole grain-rich foods, and meat/meat alternates, visit the USDA's [Back-to-School Meal Planning Tips](#) webpage.

Resource Roundup: CSDE's Calendar for Completing Verification

It is almost time to complete the annual verification process for school nutrition programs, Sponsors should refer to the CSDE's [Calendar for Completing Verification](#) for important information and timelines regarding the verification process. As a reminder, all sponsors (except Special Milk Program only sponsors) are required to conduct verification of a small percentage of newly approved applications on file as of **October 1**. For more information, refer to the USDA's [Eligibility Manual for School Meals](#) and the CSDE's webinar, [What You Need to Know about Verification](#).

The School Lunch Tray: September 22, 2021



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_09_22_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:

- (1) 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.