

The School Lunch Tray: December 1, 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.

- USDA Foods Mozzarella String Cheese
- USDA Foods from Farm to Plate: Spotlight on Schools
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) COVID-19 Guidance for Operating Early Care and Education/Child Care Programs
- New Team Nutrition Meal Components Web Quiz
- Team Nutrition's Photo Collection for Child Nutrition Programs
- U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) Releases Updated Advice About Eating Fish
- Resource Roundup: USDA's Guide to Professional Standards for School Nutrition Programs

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



USDA Foods Mozzarella String Cheese

All current inventory of USDA Foods String cheese must be ordered in HPC net by **Tuesday, December 7, 2021**, for delivery by the week of December 20. As a reminder, this product can be frozen for future use. Any string cheese that is not on order by December 7 will be removed from inventory so it can be moved to Recipient Agencies that can use it. As supply chain shortages continue, it is important for Connecticut schools to order and use USDA Foods appropriately. Please contact the [FDP staff](#) with any questions.

USDA Foods from Farm to Plate: Spotlight on Schools

The [November 2021 edition](#) of the USDA Foods monthly electronic newsletter, **USDA Foods from Farm to Plate: Spotlight on Schools**, features information about the topics below.

- Product Information for USDA Foods in Schools Coming Soon
- USDA Foods Provides Access to Local Food for Schools Across the Country
- USDA DoD Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program
- Planning for a Dynamic School Environment in School Year 2021-2022: Supply Chain Issues
- Children Ages 5-11 Are Now Eligible for the COVID-19 Vaccine
- Technology Synopsis: Browser Change for WBSCM Coming in 2022

The “How to Stay in the Know with USDA Foods” section at the end of the newsletter provides information about how to subscribe.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) COVID-19 Guidance for Operating Early Care and Education/Child Care Programs

The CDC recently updated its [COVID-19 Guidance for Operating Early Care and Education/Child Care Programs](#). Updates to the guidance emphasize the importance of universal masking for everyone ages 2 and older, regardless of vaccination status. Additionally, this guidance provides more information on screening testing and updated guidance for fully vaccinated staff. Early Care Education (ECE) programs can promote vaccinations among staff and families, including pregnant women, by providing information about COVID-19 vaccination, encouraging vaccine trust and confidence, and establishing supportive policies and practices.

The updated version of the guidance outlines strategies for ECE programs to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and maintain safer operations. ECE programs include childcare centers, home-based programs and family child care, Head Start, and other pre-kindergarten programs.

While fewer children have been sick with COVID-19 compared with adults during the pandemic, children can be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19, get sick, and spread the virus to others. CDC’s [science brief on transmission in schools](#) includes scientific evidence about the spread of the virus among children and in school and ECE settings.

New Team Nutrition Meal Components Web Quiz

USDA's Team Nutrition initiative recently released the Meal Components web quiz at fns.usda.gov/tn/quizzes/meal-components. This quiz focuses on the meal components and meal pattern requirements for all Child Nutrition Programs. It is the latest addition to the collection of Team Nutrition web quizzes that cover a variety of nutrition topics, available at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/quizzes>. Team Nutrition will release additional quiz topics throughout 2021-22.

These 10-question quizzes can be used at trainings and other nutrition events as a fun learning activity. Upon completion of each quiz, quiz takers receive a score with a link to resources that can help expand their knowledge on the topic and build their nutrition skills. Quiz takers can also view a printable version of the questions and answers upon quiz completion.

Team Nutrition's Photo Collection for Child Nutrition Programs

[Team Nutrition's photo collection](#) includes almost 300 original photographs that can be used in nutrition education and training materials for the school nutrition programs, Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and summer meals. The topics include Child Care Recipes, Food Portions, Handwashing, Infant Nutrition, Kids Cooking, Meal Service Training, MyPlate Meals, Nutrition Education, School Breakfast, School Lunch, Smart Snacks, and Summer Meals. Each digital image can be downloaded in a variety of sizes.

U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) Releases Updated Advice About Eating Fish

The FDA recently issued updated [Advice About Eating Fish](#) for those who might become or are pregnant or breastfeeding, and children ages 1 to 11 years. This update incorporates the recommendations of the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans and is available in English and Spanish.

Resource Roundup: USDA’s Guide to Professional Standards for School Nutrition Programs

The USDA’s [Guide to Professional Standards for School Nutrition Programs](#) is now available to [order in print](#) from Team Nutrition. This resource provides state and local school nutrition professionals a comprehensive guide to all Professional Standards topics. It also provides useful information regarding available trainings in the Professional Standards Training Database and tracking annual training using the Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool (PSTTT).

The guide also introduces training reward badges – a fun way to promote training and recognize staff who have completed their annual training. Sticker pages of the new training reward badges are included with the printed version of the guide. Additional badge stickers are available by [ordering](#) the accompanying resource, [Professional Standards Training Reward Badges](#).



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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_12_01_2021.pdf.

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Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
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Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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