

## The School Lunch Tray: December 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.

- Job Opening: Education Services Specialist for the Child Nutrition Programs: Application Deadline January 4, 2022
- Reminder: Receipt Invoices in FFAVORS before Holiday Break
- Onsite Monitoring Requirements for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), Afterschool Snack Program (ASP), Seamless Summer Option (SSO) and Districts with Food Service Management Company (FSMC) Contracts
- Seeking School Nutrition Directors to Join Innovation Cohort: Apply by January 4, 2022
- Connecticut Department of Agriculture's Farm Viability Grant: Due February 14, 2022
- New Feature Alert for the Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs Interactive Web-based Tool
- Share Your Child Nutrition Program Success Stories and Resources on the Institute of Child Nutrition's (ICN) Child Nutrition Sharing Site (CNSS)
- Dietary Guidelines for Americans: Handouts, Presentations, and Resources
- Resource Roundup: Updated CSDE's Resources for the Preschool Meal Patterns

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

For previous versions of the School Lunch Tray, visit the CSDE's [School Lunch Tray and Table Talk](#) webpage.

This is the last edition of the School Lunch Tray for 2021. The School Lunch Tray will resume on January 5, 2022. **Best wishes from all of us for a wonderful holiday season!**



### **Job Opening: Education Services Specialist for the Child Nutrition Programs: Application Deadline January 4, 2022**

The CSDE is currently accepting applications for an Education Services Specialist for the Child Nutrition Programs (CNP) unit within the School Nutrition Programs team. This position will assist in administering the USDA school nutrition programs including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), Food Distribution Program (FDP), Afterschool Snack Program (ASP), and Seamless Summer Option of the NSLP. For more information, refer to the [Job Opening: Education Services Specialist](#) at the Connecticut State Department of Administrative Services.

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### **Reminder: Receipt Invoices in FFAVORS before Holiday Break**

Be sure to receipt any invoices in FFAVORS before you leave the office for the holiday break. Invoices must be receipted within five days in FFAVORS to ensure prompt processing by the USDA.

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**Onsite Monitoring Requirements for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), Afterschool Snack Program (ASP), Seamless Summer Option (SSO) and Districts with Food Service Management Company (FSMC) Contracts**

The chart below summarizes the onsite monitoring requirements for school year 2021-22. The CSDE previously provided this information in the chart, [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](#). Sample monitoring forms are available in the “[Monitoring Forms](#)” section of the CSDE’s Forms for School Nutrition Programs webpage.

In addition to the onsite monitoring requirements below, districts contracting with a food service management company (FSMC) must also complete separate FSMC monitoring. The FSMC onsite monitoring must be done two times a year. The CSDE recommends that the first monitoring visit occurs by October 1 and the second visit occurs by February 1. A sample FSMC monitoring form ([Exhibit I: Sample School Food Authority \(SFA\)/Food Service Management Company \(FSMC\) Monitoring Form](#)) is available the “[Food Service Management Company](#)” section of the CSDE’s Forms for School Nutrition Programs webpage.

Topic	NSLP, SBP, and ASP	SSO
<p><b>Required monitoring by SFAs/sponsors</b></p>	<p><b>NSLP:</b> On-site * review of lunch counting and claiming system for all SFAs with more than one school site completed annually by February 1.</p> <p><b>SBP:</b> On-site * review of breakfast counting and claiming system for all SFAs with more than one school site. Must be completed annually by February 1 for 50 percent of sites operating the SBP. Each site operating the SBP must be reviewed once every two years.</p> <p><b>ASP:</b> Each ASP must be reviewed on-site * twice per year. The first review must be conducted within the first four weeks of operation. The second review must be conducted sometime during the remainder of the ASP operation.</p>	<p>Review of meal counting, claiming, and meal pattern and food safety compliance at least one on-site * during each site’s operation.</p> <p>The CSDE recommends following the monitoring requirements for the NSLP, SBP, and ASP and also recommends reviewing the sites the first four weeks of operation.</p>
<p>* SFAs must opt in to the applicable USDA waivers using the Connecticut Online Application and Claiming System for Child Nutrition Programs (CNP System).</p>		

## The School Lunch Tray: December 22, 2021

### Seeking School Nutrition Directors to Join Innovation Cohort: Apply by January 4, 2022

Do you have ideas about how to change your meal program to better meet the needs of kids, but little time or resources to try new approaches? The No Kid Hungry Program Innovation team is offering a unique opportunity for school nutrition directors to bring their ideas to life by joining an innovation cohort facilitated by the global design firm, [IDEO](#).

#### Cohort Member Responsibilities

- Participate in three 90-minute virtual working sessions in January through March, scheduled based on the availability of the cohort members
- Pilot an approach from the toolkit in the district/school sometime in March - June
- Support ongoing learning and evolution of the toolkit by sharing staff, kids', and caregivers' experiences from pilot approaches

No Kid Hungry aims to assemble a geographically diverse cohort of five school nutrition directors. Participating directors will receive a personal stipend of \$1,000 to contribute their time and expertise during the design process, as well as a \$4,000 grant to pilot an approach from the toolkit in their schools.

For more information and the application process, refer to [Seeking School Nutrition Directors to Join Innovation Cohort](#). The application deadline is January 4, 2022.

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### Connecticut Department of Agriculture's Farm Viability Grant: Due February 14, 2022

The Farm Viability Grant (FVG) is a competitive matching grant program open to municipalities, regional planning organizations, associations of municipalities, and agricultural non-profits. It is authorized by [Section 22-26j](#) of the Connecticut General Statutes. The maximum grant award is \$49,999. The deadline is February 14, 2022

The FVG's focus areas that align with farm to school efforts are below.

1. Urban Agriculture: Projects that focus on establishing or expanding support and resources for urban agriculture.
2. Food Supply Chain: Projects that would make kitchen space available to process CT Grown farm products or propose plans/development for construction of meat processing facilities/food hubs, co-op operations or increase market opportunities for CT farmers.
3. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in Agriculture: Projects which directly impact farmers in one or more of the following classifications: limited resource, BIPOC, veterans, members of the LGBTQ+ community, or people with a disability.

For more information and a recorded webinar about the FVG, visit the Connecticut Department of Aquiculture's [Farm Viability Grant](#) webpage.

### **New Feature Alert for the Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs Interactive Web-based Tool**

A new feature is now available on the [Food Buying Guide \(FBG\) for Child Nutrition Programs Interactive Web-based Tool](#). Users can now view the meal pattern requirements per meal component for a selected Program and age/grade group while using the FBG calculator. This feature allows for easy access to helpful meal pattern guidance to assist in creating shopping lists.

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### **Share Your Child Nutrition Program Success Stories and Resources on the Institute of Child Nutrition's (ICN) Child Nutrition Sharing Site (CNSS)**

The CNSS is an online information center hosted by the ICN that provides Child Nutrition Programs (CNPs) with an avenue for sharing resources and best practices related to program operations. The ICN is inviting CNP operators to submit information about innovative strategies for recruiting and hiring staff for their Child Nutrition Program, or tools and resources that have been helpful in navigating supply chain disruptions.

To submit your success story article and resources to the CNSS, visit the ICN's [Submission Form](#). The ICN will vet and post this information to the [CNSS Resource Hub](#) for other program operators to access and download. This will help the ICN to build a reservoir of resources that will ensure child nutrition professionals have access to helpful tools, templates, training curriculums, videos, articles, and best practices that support CNP operations.

For more information, visit the websites below.

- CNSS Resource Hub:  
<https://theicn.org/cnss/resources>
  - CNSS Resource Submission Guide:  
<https://theicn.org/cnss/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/CNSS-Submission-Guide.pdf>
  - CNSS Resource Submission Form:  
<https://theicn.org/cnss/public-resource-submission/>
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### **Dietary Guidelines for Americans: Handouts, Presentations, and Resources**

The Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion has added five new consumer-friendly handouts based on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025 to the [Toolkit for Professionals](#). The new handouts take a life stage approach and reflect the science-based nutrition guidance in the current edition of the Dietary Guidelines.

[Presentation slides](#) on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and [Figures and Infographics](#) are also available. For more information and resources, visit the [Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025 and Online Materials](#) webpage.

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### **Resource Roundup: Updated CSDE's Resources for the Preschool Meal Patterns**

An updated version of the CSDE's [Resources for the Preschool Meal Patterns](#) is available. This document includes resources and websites to assist school food authorities (SFAs) with meeting the USDA's meal patterns and crediting requirements for preschoolers in the NSLP, SBP, SSO, and ASP. Resources are organized alphabetically by topic. A link to this document is also available in the "[Meal Patterns for Preschoolers](#)" section of CSDE's [Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

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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\\_22\\_2021.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/Training/TableTalk/SLT_12_22_2021.pdf).

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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](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

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