

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

NATIONAL SCHOOL

3E'S OF HEALTHY LIVING *Lunch Program*
EDUCATION, EXERCISE AND EATING RIGHT

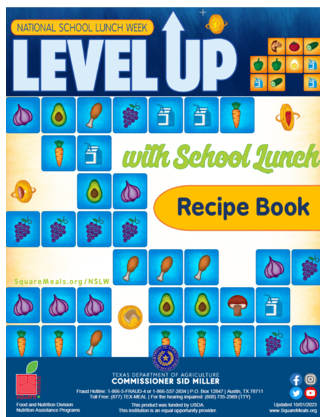
August 2023 Monthly Newsletter



Join the October 2023

Farm Fresh Challenge

Pledge now to participate in the Farm Fresh Challenge in October. The Challenge is open to NSLP and CACFP operators and all are encouraged to Eat Local, Teach Local, and Be Social throughout the month of October and beyond! Pledge by September 13 to receive a pledge toolkit with items such as buttons, stickers, or static clings. Click [here](#) to join.



Get Ready for 2023

National School Lunch Week

Get ready to “Level Up with School Lunch” and start planning your menus and celebrations for NSLW 2023 today! Check out all-new materials, like our menu templates, digital artwork, and taste testing toolkit. Order your NSLW materials from TDA at no cost. Items are available for a limited time, **so order yours here!** Don’t forget to take **our survey** to let TDA know about your NSLW plans!

Level Up Those Taste Buds!

Participate in a statewide National School Lunch Week (NSLW) taste testing event by serving “Beta Bake”, baked batatas and **October’s Harvest of the Month** – Gala apples! Visit SquareMeals.org/NSLW for the recipe and new taste testing resources!



Healthy Meals Incentives Recognition Awards for School Food Authorities

As part of a cooperative agreement to develop and implement USDA Food and Nutrition Service's (FNS) Healthy Meals Incentives Initiative, Action for Healthy Kids is offering Recognition Awards to celebrate school food authorities (SFAs) that have made significant improvements to the nutritional quality of their school meals. The Recognition Awards will spotlight innovative practices, student and community engagement activities, and strategies schools have used to provide meals that are consistent with the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Click the headline for information.

Reimbursement Rates for School Year 2023-2024

New reimbursement rates for 2023-2024 have been published [here](#). The rates are effective July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024. Note: The additional reimbursements previously authorized by the Keep Kids Fed Act expired June 30, 2023.

Verification begins in October!

Prepare for the 2023-24 school year by accessing [Verification Reporting Resources](#).

Verification Resources include the following:

- SY24 Verification Reporting Timeline
- SY24 Verification Reminders
- SY24 Verification Reporting Tips
- Verification Reporting - Common Errors
- SY24 CE List of Approved Sample Size Methods
- SY24 Sample Size Calculator

Self-Certification Option to Increase Micro-Purchase Threshold

Beginning in the 2023-24 school year, approved CEs participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) may self-certify a micro-purchase threshold of up to \$49,999.99. CEs may complete the self-certification process August 1 - October 31 of each year by submitting the SmartSheet form posted at [SquareMeals.org/Programs/National-School-Lunch-Program](#). All information is required during submission and will be verified during an Administrative Review. If the submitted information is not accurate, a finding will be issued, and fiscal action will apply. Upon approval, the CE must update applicable procurement procedures.

New School Nutrition Program FAQs Published for SY 2023-2024

TDA has published a new set of Frequently Asked Questions for NSLP. The FAQs are published under the Policy News and Updates Module on the NSLP Policy/ARM page: [SquareMeals.org/Programs/National-School-Lunch-Program/Policy-ARM](#) (Hint: Click the + button next to "Policy News and Updates" to expand the module). Note the FAQs are now only available on this page. TDA will pin this entry to the top of this Policy Updates and News module and update as required. Please bookmark this page and check back frequently.

New Waiver Allowing Non-Congregate Summer Feeding in Extreme Heat

TDA has received a waiver allowing for non-congregate service at SFSP or SSO outdoor sites experiencing extreme heat. Sites with no alternative, temperature-controlled locations at which to provide congregate summer service must request a waiver for each day the waiver is used, and TDA will verify that a Heat Advisory, Excessive Heat Warning, or Excessive Heat Watch was issued for the area. Click the headline for more information.

Remaining COVID-19 Flexibilities and Keep Kids Fed Act Provisions Expired June 30, 2023

All waivers and flexibilities associated with the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency and the Keep Kids Fed Act (KKFA) of 2022 expired June 30, 2023. These include the end of higher KKFA reimbursement rates, the end of area eligibility waivers for Tier II day care home providers, waivers of onsite monitoring requirements, non-congregate flexibilities tied to COVID-19 outbreaks, Local Wellness Policy triennial assessment deadline extensions, and TDA's discretion to not issue fiscal action in the event of a supply chain disruption. Click the headline for details.

Attachment B Uploads

Opened July 1, 2023, and closes October 31, 2023.

To complete the Attachment B Upload in TX-UNPS, CEs must answer Question 1, upload the school meal application, application instructions, and template notification letters notifying the household of their eligibility and check the attestation statement. CEs must complete and submit the Attachment B Upload module in TX-UNPS no later than October 31, 2023.

RESOURCES

FRAC School Meal Participation Webinars

Join the Food Research & Action Center (FRAC) in the webinars below to learn about practices and strategies to increase school breakfast and lunch participation!

- [Boosting Breakfast Participation in Grades 6-12](#) -Thursday, August 3 at 2 p.m. CST
- [School Lunch: Practices & Policies that Promote Participation](#) Thursday, August 10 at 2 p.m. CST

Now Available! New Food Yields Added to the Food Buying Guide and FBG Mobile App

New yields are now available in the [Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs](#) Interactive Web-based (FBG) Tool and FBG Mobile App! New yield data is available for individually quick-frozen red beans; frozen diced potatoes; frozen cubed sweet potatoes; brown lentils; and canned black turtle beans. Stay tuned for additional yield data releases coming soon.

Made with School Lunch - New Resource!

The School Nutrition Association has partnered with the National Dairy Council to create an educational awareness campaign, *Made with School Lunch*. [Click here to explore](#) free digital posters and social media posts that highlight the impact of a nutritious school lunch on the potential of student success! Available in English and Spanish.

ICN - Read All About It!

Check out this opportunity and these resources from the Institute of Child Nutrition!

- Join an Exploratory Task Force! Consider applying to share your thoughts and experiences in ICNs training resources to help build a more user-friendly website

- [Apply here!](#)
- Check out the [Child Nutrition on Demand](#) series and hear the experiences of child nutrition professionals on different topics like Financial Management, Inventory Management, Marketing, and more!

Policy Updates

Now Available! Child Nutrition Database Release 26

The Child Nutrition (CN) Database, [Release 26 \(CN26\)](#), is now available. The CNDB is a required database for nutrient analysis software approved by USDA for use in school meals.

Updated Household Application Documents, Media Templates

The School Nutrition Programs (SNP) Household Applications, Instructions Application Letters, Media Release Templates, and Eligibility Letters have been revised and reposted to include new updates to the USDA Nondiscrimination Statement. Additionally, the letter templates notifying households of CEP or P2 availability have been added to the consolidated Letter to Household Prototypes document. All documents can be found in the [Forms table](#). Click the headline for more information.

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USDA Foods Updates

WBSCM - Attention All RAs

Be on the lookout for the August 2023 Optional Web-based Supply Chain Management Pre-Training Webinars for RA users. CEs should have received an email with links to the 12 training sessions available through August 31.



Don't Forget to Turnip the

Beet!

Last chance to apply for the USDA summer program recognition award! Use [TDA's Turnip the Beet Application Tips](#) and [Best Practices](#) to learn how you can win national recognition with this USDA award for an outstanding summer meal program! The submission deadline is September 1, 2023.



Deadlines

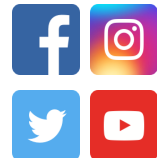
[Review This Month's Program Calendar Due Dates](#)

For upcoming deadlines, see the Program Year Calendar.



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