

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

NATIONAL SCHOOL

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

Lunch Program

February 2025 Monthly Newsletter

Local Food for Schools Office Hours

Next Local Food for Schools Office Hours: February 12, 2025, 3-3:30 p.m. CST

Join us for the February LFS office hours meeting to get the latest updates on the Local Food for Schools grant and learn how to make the most of your funds. To view recorded sessions and slides from previous office hours, please visit the [LFS webpage](#). If you are participating in the LFS grant and are not receiving communications, contact localfoodgrant@texasagriculture.gov.

Seamless Summer Option (SSO) Application in TX-UNPS

If you wish to participate in SSO for PY2025, the application is NOW OPEN in TX-UNPS. Technical Assistance for completing the SSO application is available by contacting your local Educational Service Center (ESC).

The deadline for SSO application submittal is **May 31, 2025**. Please submit early to avoid delay in service.

Buy American Provisions USDA Webinar

This [webinar](#) reviews the Buy American provision, including information related to new regulations, the recently published memo, Buy American Provisions Related to the Final Rule Titled, Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent With the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, and the optional Buy American exceptions tracker.

TANS Update

The Texas Automated Nutrition System (TANS) will replace TX-UNPS for administration and management of all programs beginning with Program Year 2026 applications. Timelines, resources, and updates are available now on the [Systems Hub](#).

Healthy Meals Incentives Recognition Awards - Apply Today!

Visit our [SquareMeals page](#) to see our Texas HMI awardees so far! There is still time to apply for this national recognition. Visit the [HMI website](#) for an overview video of each award. The application deadline is June 30, 2025. Apply today!

CEP Eligibility Reporting Begins March 1st!

Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) Reporting for School Year 2024-2025 begins in TX-UNPS on March 1! Prepare now by reviewing the timeline, requirements, and tips on [SquareMeals.org](#).

NSLP USDA Foods Ordering Updates

School Year 2025-2026

TDA has distributed the initial Planned Assistance Level (PAL) in WBSCM for PY26. The current rate of assistance published by USDA is .45 cents per meal.

If you opted into the DoD Fresh Fruit and Vegetables program you will also see your allocation in WBSCM. TDA will load these funds into FFAVORS in late June.

USDA Foods team is accepting reductions to DoD Fresh Program entitlement. Increasing the allotted amount is not an option and all requests to opt-in to DoD have been finalized and will not be adjusted at this time.

USDA Foods will be closing catalogs for PY26 in WBSCM, February 28, 2025, end of day.

Refer to the Resources page on [www.squaremeals.org](#) Food Distribution Program for NSLP for helpful information regarding ordering USDA Foods.

Please note when sending 110381 Pinto Beans dry tote intended for Basic American Foods. The Ship-to in WBSCM is GOLDEN WEST BEAN & SEED.

School Year 2024-2025

DoD Fresh FFV Program Participants:

Please remember to complete receipts in FFAVORS for each delivery within 2 business days from the date of delivery.

TDA monitors monthly utilization of DoD funds in FFAVORS to ensure proper use of entitlement. To maximize your DoD entitlement SFAs should be spending a minimum of 10% per month. SFAs who have not been utilizing funds may be at risk of redistribution.

All ordering is complete for SY25. RAs can validate with a Requisition Status Report in WBSCM and checking the "Requisition Status" for "Approved by SDA".

Please check your user accounts in WBSCM to validate that appropriate SFA staff are active, have the correct roles assigned, and that their emails are up to date.

Sales Orders that are in "Order Received" status are available at your contracted warehouse and must be placed on a delivery schedule as soon as possible.

Please check with your contracted warehouse if you need any available surplus.

TX-UNPS Weekly Commodity Bulletin will no longer track entitlement allocations and balances for SY25. RAs must utilize a combination of reporting from WBSCM, FFAVORS and distributor systems.

For questions regarding USDA Foods, please contact your respective Education Service Center Child Nutrition representative for guidance, training, and technical assistance in WBSCM.

WEBINAR: 2025 Summer Non-Congregate Feeding

On February 27, 2025, at 2 pm CST, TDA will host an in-depth webinar on the requirements, flexibilities, and best practices related to rural non-congregate summer feeding.

To attend the webinar, click [here](#). The link will also be posted on the [Summer Non-Congregate Feeding page](#).

RELEASE: Summer 2025 Non-Congregate Request Form and Associated Monitoring Forms

The Summer 2025 Non-Congregate Request Form for sites wishing to operate rural SFSP or SSO non-congregate sites this summer is now available on the [Summer Non-Congregate Feeding page](#). The following associated resources are also available on that page:

- Summer Non-Congregate Site Eligibility Map
- SFSP Pre-Operational Review Form Prototype
- SFSP First Two Week Site Visit Form Prototype
- SFSP Onsite Monitoring Form Prototype
- SSO Onsite Monitoring Form Prototype

Final Rule Resource Survey

Visit [USDA](#) for more information on the Final Rule and upcoming changes. Let us know what kind of resources would best support you in implementing these new meal standards – [Click here!](#)

[New Ramadan Non-Congregate Feeding Waiver Available!](#)

TDA has posted the new Ramadan Non-Congregate Feeding Waiver Request Form to TX-UNPS Download Forms (SNP-000 SNP Waiver Portal for school districts, CACFP-113 for CACFP CEs). This waiver allows eligible operators in good standing to offer meals that participants in attendance and observing Ramadan can take off-site and consume after fasting. Note that per USDA guidance, this waiver is only available to Contracting Entities operating NSLP, SBP, CACFP At-Risk sites, CACFP Emergency Shelters, CACFP Outside-School-Hours Care Centers, and CACFP Adult Day Care Centers.

[Calling All School Food Directors and School Business Officials – We Need Your Input!](#)

The Urban School Food Alliance (USFA), as part of a cooperative agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), seeks your feedback on challenges and training opportunities around school food procurement. The anonymous survey will take approximately 10 minutes and will close on **Wednesday, February 26**. You will also have the chance to enter a drawing to attend a school food culinary training at the Culinary Institute of America.

Take the 10-minute survey [here!](#)

[NSLP-USDA Foods Inventory and Contract Management](#)

- Your State Contracted Warehouse inventory system is the inventory system used for SY25, so it is highly important that training has been completed for staff that place delivery orders and maintain inventory at your school sites. Please direct system questions to the State Contracted Warehouse staff.
- Ensure you are organizing your current storage space to make room for your SY25 USDA Foods and monitor your inventory in conjunction with your menu planning. If you have any questions regarding your menus and/or inventory, contact your Education Service Center representative.
- As a reminder, keep your USDA Foods inventory levels less than 6MOH to maintain compliance with NSLP for SY25. Monitor your Best-If-Used-By Dates, Expiration Dates, and Pack Dates to maintain inventory at optimum quality.
- Ensure all invoices are paid within 30 days of receiving your inventory/private storage fees.
- TDA has been reviewing the SY25 Private Storage reports from all FDP Regions and has instructed State Contracted Warehouses to force ship inventory that has been sitting over 45 days to your sites. Please place your delivery orders accordingly.

• As you are aware, the Weekly Commodity Bulletin is no longer available to schools in TX-UNPS. In previous years, TDA has utilized the below reports/resources to pull together the information presented within the Weekly Commodity Bulletin. Each school will need to review the following reports/resources to gather the necessary information:

1. Identify items received/used through the reports below:

WBSCM Reports

a. **Requisition Status Report** –

b. Value of Commodities Received – details products that have been shipped to your warehouse or processor:

- State Contracted Warehouse reports

- DOD Usage Reports

- ProcessorLink or K12 usage Reports

2. Once you have items used/received, you can use one of two tools on SquareMeals.org to determine value of commodities received:

a. Cost Comparison Tool – used to help you determine the value of commodities received to ensure that your school received the correct credit, rebates, or discounts.

b. **USDA Process Material Prices** – provides an average material price for all USDA Foods even though it references Processor Materials.

3. If you need additional support with these, please contact your Education Service Center Representative.

4. Connect with your ESC should you need assistance with any transfer requests. Ensure you are utilizing the H4529 Transfer Jotform for TDA approved transfers.

Processing Transfers

USDA Foods for Further Processing opened the **Annual Transfer Exercise** on January 1, 2025, and will close April 30, 2025. Please review the Transfer Flyer for criteria and transfer form link. **The Processor Dashboard** shows all school district accounts in the tracking systems to assist you in identifying excess inventory other school districts may be willing to transfer out. Visit the tracking systems often for your current balances – **Processor Link** and **K12 Foodservice**. Review the **Tracking System Reports Flyer** for available reports to generate.

WBSCM Requisitions and USDA Foods Ordering Labs

TDA offers technical assistance and support through guided WBSCM lab sessions at each regional Education Service Center. **Contact your local ESC** for an in-person and virtual schedule for February 2025.

Meal Talk: Reducing Sodium in School Meals Webinar

On Thursday, February 20, USDA's Team Nutrition Initiative will present a Meal Talk webinar on Reducing Sodium in School Meals to meet the Final Rule, "Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans." This webinar will be held from 2 to 3 pm Central Time. Click **here**

to register. Healthy Meals Incentives Lunch Trailblazer Awardees from Prescott School District 402-37 in Washington and Urbandale Community School District in Iowa will share innovative ideas and best practices in reducing sodium and engaging students in menu planning. In addition, participants will learn about USDA's Team Nutrition resources, the Institute of Child Nutrition's Shaking It Up! resources, and the Healthy Meals Incentives Recognition Awards.

Annual NSLP Financial Report

The 2025 NSLP Financial Report opened on January 6, 2025. The data used to complete the 2025 NSLP Financial Report will be financial information from school year 2023-2024.

The 2025 NSLP Financial Report is completed via Jot Form.

The 2025 NSLP Financial Report submittal due date deadline is March 28, 2025.

There are several resources available on our [SquareMeals website](#) to assist school food authorities (SFAs) in completing the 2025 NSLP Financial Report:



TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
COMMISSIONER SID MILLER



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