

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

NATIONAL SCHOOL

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

October 2024 Monthly Newsletter

[The Farm Fresh Challenge Has Begun!](#)

The Farm Fresh Challenge is taking place all month long. The pledge form is available until October 31. The attestation form will open October 31 and remain available until November 30. Visit [SquareMeals.org/FarmFresh Challenge](https://SquareMeals.org/FarmFreshChallenge) for more information. Don't forget to tag your social media posts with #FarmFreshChallenge and/or #TexasFarmFresh.

[Training "By You, For You, With You"](#)

Help shape the future of TDA training! Join the new Training Work Groups and share your insights to make an impact! The TDA Training Team is seeking to collaborate with School Food Authorities (SFAs) to develop tailored training programs, created 'by you, for you, with you.' We invite you to join us in this exciting initiative. If you're interested, please click the headline for more information!

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

- TX-UNPS will not be used for SY25 orders. It is currently closed for all State Contracted Warehouses.
- Your State Contracted Warehouse inventory system will be the inventory system used for SY25, so it is highly important that training has been completed. Ask system questions directly to their 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 6 months on hand to maintain compliance with NSLP for SY25.
 - Ensure all invoices are paid within 30 days of receiving your inventory/private storage fees.
 - TDA is currently reviewing SY25 Private Storage reports from all FDP Regions and may have State Contracted Warehouses force ship some inventory to your sites.
 - If you have any questions regarding your WBSCM reports, contact your Education Service Center representative for assistance.
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FSMC New RFP/Contract and Renewal Contract Timeline

SFAs looking to begin a contract with a Food Service Management Company (FSMC) or renew an existing FSMC contract must adhere to TDA timelines. Visit SquareMeals.org/FSMC and look for Important Dates.

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](#).

Attachment B Upload

The Attachment B Upload module is found under the "Applications" tab in TX-UNPS. To complete the Attachment B Upload, the SFA must:

- Indicate whether they are using the TDA template school meal application,
 - Upload the school meal application used by the SFA during School Year 24-25
 - Upload the instructions to the school meal application
 - Certify the Attachment B Upload module in TX-UNPS
 - Submit the Attachment B Upload module.
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Verification Report Timeline

- October 1, 2024: SFA counts approved school meal applications on file.
- October 31, 2024: SFA counts the number of students with approved school meal applications on file.
- November 1, 2024: 2024 Verification Report opens via jot form: <https://form.jotform.com/241276986330159>. SFAs without school meal applications may begin submitting the Verification Report.
- November 15, 2024: Federal verification deadline. The verification process must be completed by this date. SFAs with school meal applications may begin submitting the Verification Report.
- November 26, 2024: Due date for the SFA's submission of the Verification Report.

TDA Launches the 2024 USDA Foods Challenge!

The Texas Department of Agriculture will launch the 2nd Annual USDA Foods Challenge! All schools who receive USDA Foods entitlement dollars will be automatically registered.

What is the USDA Foods Challenge?

The 2024 USDA Foods Challenge recognizes school nutrition teams for maximizing their USDA Foods entitlement. Schools utilizing at least 95% of their allocated entitlement will earn special TDA recognition. TDA is holding this challenge to recognize your commitment to achieving excellence in school nutrition.

Timeframe

- SY 2024-2025
- Winner Announcement: MegaCon 2026

For more information, visit [SquareMeals](#) or contact us at nutrition@texasagriculture.gov.

Congratulations to our Texas HMI Awardees!

Visit our [SquareMeals](#) page to check out how schools across Texas are improving the nutritional quality of their school meals! Visit the [HMI website](#) for an overview video of each award. The application deadline is June 30, 2025. Apply today!

[Arrrgh you Ready for National School Lunch Week 2024?](#)

It's not too late to celebrate National School Lunch Week 2024 with the theme "School Lunch Pirates: Find Your Treasure"! Visit our [SquareMeals](#) page for digital resources to use during your adventures. Explore our 1-Day Themed Menu, Morning Announcements, Activity Booklet, Digital Images, and more! Send photos to nutrition@texasagriculture.gov

[2024 Turnip the Beet](#)

Thank you for serving nutritious summer meals to children across the Lone Star State and participating in Turnip the Beet to gain national recognition of your programs! We appreciate your feedback and want to know how to best support you next year during the application process – Please fill out this [survey](#) today!

[USDA Crediting in the Child Nutrition Programs Tip Sheet](#)

The Crediting in the Child Nutrition Program Tip Sheets have been updated to reflect the changes with the Final Rule, "Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent With the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans." [Click here](#) to check them out for quick tips on the meal components and share with staff!

[Resource: Increasing Breakfast Participation at Middle and High Schools](#)

Need ideas on increasing your breakfast program participation among middle and high schoolers? This [resource](#) contains strategies from No Kid

[Texas Action for Healthy Kids Virtual Summit](#)

Texas Action for Healthy Kids will hold a free virtual summit for school staff. It consists of two half day agendas - October 22 - 11:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. and October 23 - 8:45 a.m. to noon.

Agenda will include:

- How School Health Impacts Student Success
- SHAC 101/ Wellness Policies/WSCC for Administrators
- How Local Foods can Improve Your Program
- The Youth Voice - Hear from some of our active, engaged youth how they are coping and helping their peers.
- Mental Health/SEL – Student and Staff
- Physical Education, Physical Activity and the Whole Child

[Register Here!](#)

[USDA Foods Ordering Updates](#)

School Year 2024-2025

DoD Fresh FFV Program Participants:

- Please remember to complete receipts in FFAVORS for each delivery within 7 calendar days from the date of delivery.
 - TDA monitors monthly utilization of DoD funds in FFAVORS
 - We are reaching the end of the first quarter of this school year. If you have not successfully logged into FFAVORS to begin placing orders, please start utilizing the program. If you need login assistance, please contact your Education Service Center representative who can provide further guidance.
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National Farm to School Network's Movement Meeting

Join the [National Farm to School Network](#) and parents, educators, early care providers, school nutrition directors, and policy leaders for the annual farm to school Movement Meeting. Don't miss this opportunity to connect with others, reflect on the progress made, and set a course for the future. [Register today](#) and be part of the growing movement to bring nourishing, local food to schools across the country.



TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
COMMISSIONER SID MILLER



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