



**OCTOBER 8, 2026**

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# The Federal Equipment Assistance Grant is Back!!

Applications are now available for the Equipment Assistance Grant and can be found on our [website](#).

- Funding requests must total \$1,000 and may include installation and transportation. Grants will be funded up to \$10,000. Any amount that exceeds \$10,000 is the responsibility of the SAU.
- Priority will be given to schools exceeding 50% or more free and reduced eligibility
- Funding is only for SFAs participating in the National School Lunch Program equipment. However, other Child Nutrition programs can benefit from it.
- Schools that receive a balance too high letter for SY25 are ineligible
- Priority will be given to schools that have not received Federal Equipment Assistance funds previously.
- At least two (prefer three) written price quotes for the same make/model of equipment. This can be for new equipment, equipment replacement, equipment renovation. Quotes may include delivery and installation costs.
- Completed application form. Please answer questions completely. One school and one piece of equipment per application.

**Application are due no later than October 30, 2026.  
Late/incomplete applications will not be accepted.**

**Email** applications to [michele.bisbee@maine.gov](mailto:michele.bisbee@maine.gov)

# October Survey Coming Soon

[jodi.truman@maine.gov](mailto:jodi.truman@maine.gov)

Plan on attending the [October Survey Webinar](#) on October 26th at 1:30pm to ensure that reporting is done correctly.

The October Survey is an additional edit check to monthly claims and FFVP eligibility; therefore, the accuracy of this report is extremely important. The report collects each school's student eligibility status by grade based on meal benefit applications and the Direct Certification and SUN Bucks list.

**CEP and Provision II NON-BASE YEAR**, meal benefit applications were not collected, therefore a calculation is used based on total enrollment times your base year eligibility status. Detailed instruction will be posted in the Help tab of CNPWeb. Please attend the webinar for instructions and a walk through of the process.

# Revised Professional Standards Resources

[adriane.ackroyd@maine.gov](mailto:adriane.ackroyd@maine.gov)

Team Nutrition recently revised three (3) [Professional Standards](#) resources which support school nutrition professionals as they successfully operate the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP).

The revised resources are the [Summary of Professional Standards Flyer](#), the [Guide to Professional Standards for School Nutrition Professionals](#), and the [Professional Standards Training Reward Badges packet](#). These were revised to include the most current Food and Nutrition Administration policy guidance, specifically hiring flexibilities for school nutrition directors in medium or large local educational agencies.

After you review the revised [resources](#), be sure to check out the [Professional Standards Trainings and Tracker Tool](#) (PSTTT) which helps school nutrition professionals search for relevant Professional Standards trainings and track their annually required training hours. Note: USDA does not approve nor require specific training programs for school nutrition professionals.

As you plan your professional standards training for the school year, consider aligning with the Harvest to Hallways initiative to highlight meal quality improvements and community engagement. Learn more: <https://www.usda.gov/harvest-to-hallways>.

# **FY2027CACFP & SFSP**

## **Area Eligibility Data Now Available**

[adriane.ackroyd@maine.gov](mailto:adriane.ackroyd@maine.gov)

USDA's Food and Nutrition Administration (FNA) is excited to announce that the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) Area Eligibility Mapper has been updated for fiscal year (FY) 2027.

At the beginning of each fiscal year, FNA releases a special tabulation of American Community Survey data provided by the United States Census Bureau, which can be used to establish area eligibility in CACFP and SFSP. To make the data easier to use, the data release is accompanied by an interactive mapping tool, which now reflects the FY 2027 update.

Explore the [Area Eligibility Mapper](#). The data set is also available for download on the [open data site](#). To learn more about using census data to establish area eligibility for CACFP and SFSP, please review this [policy memorandum](#).



## **Eligibility and Verification Manual and Resources**

[adriane.ackroyd@maine.gov](mailto:adriane.ackroyd@maine.gov)

As a reminder, resources are available to assist with processing meal benefit applications and completing the verification process. Applications must be processed within ten days of receipt and eligibility determinations inputted into the Point-of-Sale System. The following links are helpful to use when you have questions about applications and verification.

- [Eligibility Manual for School Meals- Determining and Verifying Eligibility](#)
- [Maine Eligibility Quick Guide](#)

# USDA Foods

[terri.fitzgerald@maine.gov](mailto:terri.fitzgerald@maine.gov)

## October Monthly Order

The USDA Monthly Order is open from the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 15<sup>th</sup>

- If the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month is a *Saturday or Sunday*, the monthly order will open on *Monday* at 8:00am
- If it is not, the opening date is simply the 1st at 8:00am.
- If the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month is a *Saturday or Sunday*, the monthly order will close on *Friday* at 4:00pm.
- If it is not, the closing date is simply the 15<sup>th</sup> at 4:00pm.

Step by step directions on how to complete your order can be found on the [USDA Foods](#) page of our website.

# Understanding the Annual Survey Columns

[terri.fitzgerald@maine.gov](mailto:terri.fitzgerald@maine.gov)

When the **Fill** column is showing **zeroes**, it means the truck has not yet arrived and the order has not been filled with the number of cases requested from that truck.

If you see **zeroes across all three columns — Adj., Fill, and Balance** — this means you **will not be receiving that item**. Any **PAL entitlement used for that item has been refunded back to your account**.

| Product Code     | Product Desc                        | Ent Value | Processing Fee | Total Requested | Adj | Fill | Bal |
|------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------|----------------|-----------------|-----|------|-----|
| Category: Fruits |                                     |           |                |                 |     |      |     |
| 100242           | BLUEBERRIES, UNSWEETENED, WILD, FRZ | \$74.04   | \$0.00         | 2               | 2   | 0    | 2   |
| 100256           | STRAWBERRIES, DICED, CUPS, FROZEN   | \$0.00    | \$0.00         | 8               | 0   | 0    | 0   |



## Net Off Invoice (NOI)

[michele.bisbee@maine.gov](mailto:michele.bisbee@maine.gov)

There are currently multiple districts that have not used any allocated pounds across many processors.

If these pounds are not being used, they are at risk of being transferred to another school later in the year.

Please go into K12foodservice and ProcessorLink to check your balances!

- Do you have the correct distributor assigned?
- Are you receiving your discount?
- Are you ordering NOI eligible products?

NOI does not roll over from year to year, and your PAL is not credited back for transferred or unused pounds.



# Maine Apple Crunch Day!

Join the **2nd Annual Maine Apple Crunch** on **Wednesday, October 14, 2026**, to celebrate Maine farmers, healthy kids, and strong communities!

Participating is simple: purchase, serve, and **CRUNCH** into locally grown Maine apples.

Register your Crunch today to:

- Add your participants to the statewide Crunch count
- Request FREE Apple Crunch Day posters & stickers for your event!
- Get information about purchasing and serving local apples
- Receive updates, activities, and resources leading up to the event

The official Maine Apple Crunch will take place at noon on **Wednesday, October 14**, but you are welcome to hold your Crunch at any time throughout October. No event is too small to register!

Register your Crunch: <https://forms.cloud.microsoft/g/ENBJY3Hj2Y>

Questions? Contact Katie Knowles, Farm & Sea to School Coordinator, at [katie.knowles@maine.gov](mailto:katie.knowles@maine.gov).

# Child Nutrition Training

- *The links to register are in the training titles - unless otherwise noted.*
- *Pay attention to registration deadline dates. Deadlines must be adhered to.*
- We are unable to hold virtual and in person training simultaneously.
- All of our webinars are recorded and put on our website within a week of the training.
- Be sure to register to ensure that we have enough space for everyone.
- If there is a registration fee - Per Maine DOE policy, payment is due by credit card at the time of registration.
- Mark your calendars once you have registered.
- If State offices are closed, webinars/trainings will be rescheduled. Anyone who has already registered will be notified of the new date and time.
- All of any kind will be removed from the virtual training



## **October Survey**

October 26, 2026

1:30pm

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This webinar will provide instructions and a walk through of the process.

# SHOUT OUT!!

## WORLD SCHOOL MILK DAY!!



World School Milk Day was celebrated in Old Orchard Beach  
on September 30th

School Nutrition Director, Leah Botko wore the cuddly cow costume and  
Principal Ben Harris put on some cow spots to celebrate.

Katie Hoffman....thanks for sharing!!

# Harvest Lunch Week in RSU 19!!

All schools served pizza featuring The Good Crust, Maine Marinara, and local ground beef from Circle A Family Farms in Saint Albans. Elementary students enjoyed house salads with local greens and local apples, while middle and high school salad bars were packed with local fruits and vegetables. The high school also featured local marinated tofu!

Thank you to the RSU 19 school nutrition team for bringing Maine's harvest to students' trays and supporting local farmers and food producers!

