

Child Nutrition Thursday Update

In this week's Thursday Update

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Welcome to this week's edition of the Child Nutrition Thursday Update! The Thursday Update is your one stop to stay informed about all the updates, changes and exciting things happening in the National School Lunch Program.

USDA Annual Order

Action Required

Electronic POS

Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program

SFSA Supply Chain Survey

Child Nutrition Training

Shout Out!

USDA Annual Order

**LAST
CHANCE**

The SY2025 Annual Order is OPEN. The orders are due by **Friday, March 8, 2024**, no extensions!

Please visit the USDA Foods page of our website for these helpful resources for completing your Annual Order.

How to place your SY2025 USDA Foods Annual Order Instructions
Important things to keep in mind when placing your Annual Order
Food being offered on the Annual Order

Thank you to those of you who have placed your Annual Order!!

New Meal Rate

The NSLP SY2025 meal rate is .45.
All PAL entitlements will increase this year.

!Action Required!

The following Districts have not completed their SY2025 Annual Order.

The orders are due by Friday, March 8, 2024, no extensions!

Glenn Stratton Learning Center
Lewiston Public Schools
Maine Academy of Natural Sciences
RSU 05
RSU 15/MSAD 15
RSU 34
Veazie Public Schools

Contact Terri Fitzgerald should you have questions or need assistance with your SY2025 Annual Order.

terri.fitzgerald@maine.gov or 624-6882

Electronic POS Systems

With the addition of Medicare Free and Reduced being added to the Direct Certification list, information is needed about electronic POS systems. The State would like to reach out to these companies to ask questions about their ability to use Medicare Free and Reduced.

Please respond using the following MS Forms [link](#).

The survey also asks for the student information system used. When completing the survey if an area is not applicable please enter n/a.

The survey closes on March 14th at 11:00am.

We appreciate your timely response.

Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program Applications Open!

Applications to participate in FFVP in School Year 2025 are now open! To access the applications, log into CNP web, select “SNP” then Program Year 2025.

Under the “Forms” tab an application will show up for each eligible school. Read the table below for more information and common questions we receive:

Which schools are eligible to participate?	Elementary schools, or any school with a combination of grades PreK-8
How are schools awarded?	Priority must be given to schools with the highest percent of free/reduced eligible students; however, all eligible schools are welcome to apply.
When are applications due?	A complete FFVP application is due on Friday, April 26th . A “pending approval” application in CNP web means it is complete!
Is this the same as the DoD Fresh Program?	No, this is a separate program and funding source to provide fresh fruits and vegetables outside of breakfast and lunch times.
If I have questions on FFVP who do I contact?	Stephanie Stambach stephanie.stambach@maine.gov #207-215-9437.

School Food Authority (SFA) Survey on Supply Chain Disruption and Student Participation

The 2023-24 School Food Authority (SFA) Survey on Supply Chain Disruption and Student Participation is coming to a close! Remember, it is important that all SFAs – public, charter, and private – fill out the Survey. Your participation is vital to providing FNS with information they need to support school districts. Please take advantage of this opportunity to share your experiences from this school year and communicate the specific issues you are facing in your community directly to FNS.

If you haven't already completed the 2023-24 Survey, please do it as soon as possible! We are trying to complete all data collection by March 11, 2024.

Decision Information Resources, Inc. (DIR) sent your SFA's personalized survey link by email from noreply@qemailserver.com. If you need your link sent to you again or if you have any questions about this survey, please [submit an inquiry](#) to the survey team at DIR.

For additional information, please review the [“Frequently Asked Questions”](#) document.

Thank you in advance for your support of the 2023-24 Survey and your participation in this important effort.

Child Nutrition Training

It is a Department of Education policy that the only allowable form of payment for training is a credit card.

When registering for an in person training that requires payment please be sure that all of the information you have entered, for your credit card is correct.

Errors occur when the information you have entered does not match the information linked to the card.

For example, the address that the card is connected to.

Every time you attempt to register and enter your credit card information, a charge will be pending on your credit card statement.

Child Nutrition does not manage the registration program.

To avoid registering more than once, please be sure to mark your calendars as a reminder of the upcoming training.

When entering a virtual meeting please be sure to use your first and last name. Due to the rules set in place by our IT Department, if we cannot tell who you are, you risk being removed from the meeting.

You will also risk not get credit for attending.

Child Nutrition Training Opportunities

Registration links are in the title or can be found on our website

ServSafe Exam Only

March 26, 2024

2:00pm



Child Nutrition Office
Deering Building
Room 101

90 Blossom Lane, Augusta

This is the last scheduled exam for SY2024, next exam opportunity offered by the Child Nutrition office will be in October.

Registration deadline is March 8, 2024

Edit Checks Webinar

March 25th @ 1:30pm

Edit checks are a required internal control measure where daily meal counts are compared to student enrollment. Prior to filing the claim for reimbursement, meal count edit checks must be performed. This webinar will review the requirements for counting and claiming reimbursable meals and completing daily edit checks.

Know Your Numbers

March 21st @ 1:30pm

Learn additional tools to help you calculate Operating ratios, Meal Equivalents, Meals per labor hour and Meal cost. Bring last year's Annual Financial Report for hands on activities.

Community Eligibility Provision (CEP)

USDA has changed the qualification to participate in CEP. It has gone from 40% to 25%.

This is the final webinar opportunity for Districts to learn:

***How to Participate in CEP**

***What you need to do for your District or group of schools within the District to participate.**

CEP removes the need for collecting applications and completing the Verification process for 4 years.

March 15, 2024 - 10:00am

In Person SFSP Training

Experienced Sponsor Training

March 28, 2024

9:00am-12:00pm

Child Nutrition Office

Deering Building

Room 101

90 Blossom Lane

Augusta

We have reached capacity for this training. Please contact Paula if you would like to be placed on a waiting list.

Experienced Sponsor Training

This training is for experienced Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) sponsors. In this session, sponsors will hear about updates to the SFSP and receive a refresher on SFSP requirements. There are many changes to 2024 operations. This training will offer an in-person opportunity to review them.

April 4, 2024

9:00am-12:00pm

Dennis Paper

Ron Dennis Conf. Ctr.

101 Mecaw Road

Hampden

New and Make-up Sponsor Training

May 9, 2024

9:00am-12:00pm

Child Nutrition Office

Deering Building

Room 101

90 Blossom Lane

Augusta

This training is for new Summer Food Service Program sponsors. It is also an opportunity for experienced sponsors to receive a more in depth training opportunity. In this session, sponsors will receive a comprehensive overview of the SFSP requirements in Maine. This training is required for new sponsors operating in 2024. There will be a break for lunch.

SHOUT OUT!!

CONGRATULATIONS RSU 89!

WASHINGTON, March 4, 2024 – Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack today announced that four school districts in Alaska, Iowa, Maine, and Ohio received awards for their trailblazing and innovative efforts to improve the nutritional quality of meals for their students. This announcement was made in front of nearly 850 school nutrition professionals at the School Nutrition Association Legislative Action Conference during National School Breakfast Week.

These school districts are the first winners of Healthy Meals Incentives Recognition Awards, jointly created by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Action for Healthy Kids as part of USDA's Healthy Meals Incentives Initiative, also known as HMI. These awards celebrate school districts who embrace opportunities to take their school meals to the next level. HMI is one of several ways that the Biden-Harris Administration is supporting schools to provide kids with nutritious meals that support their health and well-being.

Regional School Unit 89 (Maine) is receiving the "Innovation in Preparation of School Meals" award for incorporating more scratch cooking into menu items, such as homemade sub rolls using their oatmeal bread recipe, homemade croutons, pickles and roasted chickpeas. RSU 89 has also partnered with local farm Keep Ridge Farm in Benedicta to source produce like squash, onion, eggs, carrots and kale. They host monthly taste tests allowing the student body to determine what the next new menu item will be. "At our annual Thanksgiving meal, we featured Keep Ridge Farm roasted squash, local farmer Steve Crouse's potatoes that we boiled and mashed, and turkey from USDA Foods in our homemade gravy and homemade stuffing," said Denise Tapley Proctor, food service director at RSU 89. "The meal was well received by the community, and the reactions of our kids make us love the change in direction our school is making to more scratch cooking."