



School Nutrition Programs

This weekly newsletter from the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) is dedicated to providing education, training, and technical assistance opportunities to school nutrition professionals, helping to ensure seamless operations for those participating in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA's) Child Nutrition Programs. If you are the food service contact for your school or facility, please be certain that everyone on your team has access to this important information.

Tip of the Week

Disclosure Access
USDA prohibits the disclosure of a student's free and reduced eligibility status to anyone who does not have a "need to know" [7 CFR Part 245.6(f)]. When the eligibility status of a child is requested for a reason other than meal benefits, there may be a requirement to obtain parental approval for the disclosure of the household's status. Please review IDOE's Disclosure webpage before granting permission to eligibility information. There are several points where overt identification of a child's status should be controlled including Point of Sale Software, Student Information Systems, and databases that are visible or shared with those not considered "need to know."

Important Updates

Healthy Meals Incentives Recognition Awards
Hoosier Awardee Spotlight: Richland-Bean Blossom Community School Corporation

Small or Rural School Food Authority Breakfast Trailblazer Award
Richland-Bean Blossom Community School Corporation reduced added sugars at breakfast by over 600 grams per week by offering fewer grain-based desserts, switching to fresh fruit instead of dried fruit with added sugars, and opting for reduced sugar cereals. Additionally, they incorporated new scratch made menu items such as baked blueberry oatmeal, peanut butter overnight oats, apple cinnamon sheet pancakes, sweet potato parfait, cauliflower-mushroom sausage gravy over a jalapeno cheddar drop biscuit, and frozen yogurt bark, which the students love!



Farm to School

Now Available: Food Day Registration
Food Day registration is now available. We are celebrating corn this year! Food Day is a promotional event that focuses on a different food item every year. We pick the product; you pick when and how to celebrate. This year, we are expanding the months of participation as a "food-of-the-year" celebration. We will provide seeds in the spring semester, and the learning begins there. Procure local corn or corn products at any point in the year to take part in the celebration! Additional information, including registration, can be found here.

Season Your Summer
Join us for the second Farm to Summer celebration called Season Your Summer! The theme for this year's educational initiative focuses on exploring different locally grown herbs that spice up daily meals. Participation in this initiative is voluntary, easy, and open to anyone operating a summer child nutrition program. All learning activities listed in the Toolkit are geared toward elementary-age students and provide different educational opportunities for young minds. The nutritional component of the initiative will teach students how to grow herbs at home and use them in preparing easy and fresh recipes. Sign up here today and request free seed packets for your summer sites, while supplies last!

USDA Foods

Expire Dates in CNPweb
Did you know that your USDA Foods must be delivered to your school by the expire date under the inventory tab to avoid your school being charged excess storage fees on a per case, per month basis? Please place orders in ample time for USDA Foods to be delivered before the expire date. Click here for USDA Foods Program fees.

USDA Foods and DoD Fresh Orders and Deliveries
Schools should begin preparing for the end of the school year. Allocations end on Wednesday, April 30. USDA Foods deliveries (based on delivery periods) and USDA Foods for Processing and DoD orders end Monday, June 30. Schools should make plans for ordering and utilization. USDA Foods for Processing pounds remaining will carry over to school year 2026 depending on usage and availability. DoD Fresh funds will not carry over.

USDA Foods Recipes
Use your USDA Foods peanut butter to prepare this variation of peanut butter toast and/or peanut butter and jelly french toast. These recipes must be adjusted to meet serving sizes and meal patterns.



Training and Webinar Opportunities

Calculating Non-Program Food Cost Webinar
Join IDOE to discuss the process of completing the Non-Program Foods Revenue Tool. Completion of the tool ensures compliance with and accurate tracking of non-program food costs. This webinar will cover cost calculations, pricing considerations, and USDA requirements to help manage non-program food expenses effectively. Thursday, April 10, at 10 a.m. ET. Register here.

Special Dietary Needs Webinar
Every sponsor needs to know the importance of ensuring access to meal benefits and understand their obligation to provide reasonable accommodations for children with disabilities. This webinar will provide an overview of special dietary needs requirements, reminders, and best practices. Wednesday, April 23, at 2 p.m. ET. Register here.

Reminders

Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) Application Now Available
The school year 2025-2026 FFVP application is now open to all elementary schools that wish to apply. FFVP is available as a reimbursable grant for kindergarten through sixth grade students. Students older than grade six are not eligible for this grant funding. While preference is given to those with the highest free and reduced rate, all elementary schools are welcome to apply. Applications are due here by Friday, April 18. Each building must be submitted as a separate application. Contact Gretchen Huntzer with any questions.

Updates from Our Partners

Culinary Institute of Child Nutrition Webinar: Setting Up Your Kitchen for Scratch and Speed-Scratch Success
Scratch and speed-scratch cooking in school kitchens require strategic planning, efficient workflows, and the right equipment to support a successful transition. In this session, our speakers will share key steps on how they successfully transitioned to scratch and speed-scratch cooking, along with practical tips on optimizing workflow, utilizing kitchen equipment efficiently, implementing culinary assembly line techniques, and more. Join us to hear valuable insights on how you can set up your kitchen for scratch and speed-scratch success. Thursday, April 3, at 3 p.m. ET. Register here.

Indiana Department of Health (IDOH) Training with Leah's Pantry
IDOH invites you to a training opportunity facilitated by Leah's Pantry, a national leader in trauma-informed nutrition. This unique training will bring a fresh perspective to school staff with the objective of increasing the health and resilience of the children, families, and communities you serve. While this training is intended for teachers, administrators, and classroom support staff, other school staff are also welcome to attend. If you would like to learn more, we encourage you to visit the link to register here!

American Dairy Association Fuel Up Equipment Grant
The Fuel Up Equipment Grant application is open through Tuesday, April 8. Schools can apply for equipment that is designed to support innovative school meal solutions proven to increase student participation in school meals. This grant is designed to help increase student participation in, and access to, nutritious school meals. To qualify, schools must participate in the National School Lunch Program. Find more information on the Fuel Up Grants webpage.

Upcoming Dates



Thursday, April 3, at 3 p.m. ET	CICN: Setting up Your Kitchen for Scratch and Speed-scratch Success
Tuesday, April 8	Fuel Up Equipment Grant Deadline
Thursday, April 10 at 10 a.m. ET	Calculating Non-Program Food Costs Webinar
Friday, April 18	FFVP Application Deadline
Wednesday, April 23, at 2 p.m. ET	Special Dietary Needs Webinar
Tuesday, April 29	February Final Claim Due Date

Additional Resources

School Nutrition Programs Calendar
IDOE's Nutrition Webpage
CNPweb