



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

Record Keeping Webinar Now Available

Did you know the State of Indiana has a longer retention length for most records than the USDA? All public schools are subject to the State of Indiana or USDA record keeping timelines (whichever is longer) as listed on the [Record Retention Fact Sheet](#). Non-public schools may elect to follow either schedule. Public schools must also ensure correct disposal of records that have passed the retention period. The May 7 Record Keeping webinar with guest speaker from the Indiana Archives and Records Administration outlines these requirements. The recorded webinar can be found [here](#).

Important Updates

Guidance for Paid Lunch Pricing for School Year (SY) 2025-2026

On May 14, USDA released [SP 12-2025 Paid Lunch Equity Guidance for School Year 2025-2026](#). The memorandum provides notice that any School Food Authority (SFA) with a positive or zero balance in its nonprofit school food service account as of June 30, 2024, is exempt from PLE pricing requirements found at [7 CFR 210.14\(e\)](#) for SY 2025-2026.

The PLE Tool is still in the approvals process at USDA. IDOE will post the tool as soon as it is available.

SFAs with a positive or zero balance in its nonprofit school food service account as of June 30, 2024, are exempt from PLE pricing requirements for SY 2025-2026. These SFAs will need to complete the [attestation statement](#).

Email questions to scnfinance@doe.in.gov (include PLE Tool in the subject line). Questions received will be answered within the PLE Tool Common Questions and Answers found on the [financial management webpage](#).

Final Reminder: Healthy Meals Incentives Recognition Awards

Action for Healthy Kids (AFHK) and USDA are recognizing and celebrating SFAs that have made operational changes to improve the nutritional quality of their school meals, as well as those engaging students and families in nutrition education and school meals. If you've made changes to your school recipes and menus or engaged students in menu planning and nutrition education, you may qualify for a [Healthy Meals Incentives Recognition Award](#). AFHK has made the application process easier and faster. Awardees will receive national and local recognition, including a stipend to attend an exclusive national Healthy Meals Summit in Las Vegas. This recognition award is ongoing until Monday, June 30.

Congratulations to Indiana school meal programs that have already received an award:

- LaPorte Community Schools
- New Albany-Floyd County Consolidated School District
- Noblesville Schools
- North Lawrence Community Schools
- Portage Township Schools
- Richland- Bean Blossom Schools

Read more about the awardees [here](#).

USDA Foods

New USDA Foods Policies

IDOE has new sweep, carryover and fair share policies. Please review these policies for implementation into your USDA Foods management program.

- [USDA Foods Sweep and Carryover Policy](#)
- [USDA Foods Fair Share Policy](#)

USDA Foods End of School Reminders

1. USDA Foods direct delivery (brown box) allocations have now ended as of Wednesday, April 30.
2. SFAs should check [CNPweb](#) under FDP in the Inventory tab to ensure that all USDA Foods are ordered and delivered to your school before leaving for summer break or by the last delivery period in June. Direct Delivered (brown box) USDA Foods remaining at the state assigned warehouses, Dilgard or Stanz will be swept from all SFA inventories as of July 1 for redistribution.
3. SFAs should make every effort to utilize their inventory by drawing down pounds as close to zero at the processing companies by Monday, June 30. Any remaining unused pounds will carry over to school year 2025-2026 unless needed to assist other schools.
4. The last day to place a produce order in FFAVORS for school year 2024-2025 is Tuesday, June 24. Schools must enter their Department of Defense (DoD) Program receipts into the Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Order Receipt System ([FFAVORS](#)) within two calendar days after the produce is delivered to your school. All USDA DoD receipts must be entered into ([FFAVORS](#)) by Monday, June 30, or before leaving for summer break. All DoD funds must be used by Monday, June 30. Any unused funds do not carry over to the next school year and will be lost.
5. USDA wants schools to use USDA Foods and DoD funds in the year allocated.
6. Summer break is a good time for a USDA Foods refresher or enhancing your USDA Foods knowledge by viewing some [training and webinars](#).

USDA Foods Recipes

Use your USDA Foods [canned](#) or [frozen](#) carrots for this [mashed carrots](#) recipe. This recipe must be adjusted to meet serving sizes and meal patterns.



Training and Webinar Opportunities

Free and Reduced Training Series

Free and reduced meal benefits processors must be trained annually. The following training series will meet the requirements. For details on each webinar and to register, visit [here](#).

- Free and Reduced Preparation on Thursday, June 19, at 10 a.m. ET
- Direct Certification (DC) Basics on Thursday, July 10, at 10 a.m. ET and Thursday, July 31, at 3 p.m. (Repeat session)
- Free and Reduced Application Processing on Thursday, July 10, at 1 p.m. ET and Tuesday, July 29, at 10 a.m. ET (Repeat session)
- **New day and time!** Processing Possible Matches on Thursday, July 17, at 10 a.m. ET
 - eDue to a schedule conflict, this session was changed.
- Eligibility Disclosure on Tuesday, July 22, at 2 p.m. ET
- **Verification for Cause on Thursday, July 24, at 10 a.m. ET**

Please note: Artificial Intelligence (AI) notetakers must be disabled when attending an online training webinar or meeting hosted by IDOE's School and Community Nutrition team. For more information, view our AI policy [here](#).

Reminders

Indiana Food Code Updated

Indiana's 410 IAC 7-24 Retail Food Establishment Sanitation Requirements was replaced by [410 IAC 7-26](#) (Modeled after the 2022 FDA Code) on April 16. The Indiana Department of Health (IDOH) has a phased enforcement plan.

- Wednesday, April 16, to Monday, June 30, is the inspector acclimation period. All areas of 410 IAC 7-24 will be enforced. The acclimation period allows inspectors to gain familiarity with new code sections, gain familiarity with new terms, and utilization of a new inspection report.
- From Tuesday, July 1, to Wednesday, December 31, 410 IAC 7-24 will be fully enforced and all newly added items in 410 IAC 7-26 will be talking points only on the inspection report.
- Beginning January 1, 2026, 410 IAC 7-26 will be fully enforced.

IDOH has provided an [At-a-Glance](#) resource to help understand newly added requirements. School food service departments are encouraged to reach out to the local health department food inspectors for help understanding the new food code.

Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) Election Period – Now through Monday, June 30

CEP Election period is open now through Monday, June 30. Reach out to your assigned school nutrition programs field specialist for any questions or for assistance in determining potential eligibility. CEP allows high-poverty schools to provide breakfast and lunch free to all students, ensuring that they are well nourished and able to learn throughout the school day. Additional information and the application for community eligibility is available on [IDOE's website](#). Determination of eligibility is made using the local school corporation's actual Direct Certification and enrollment data as of around April 1, 2025. The application deadline to participate in CEP for the 2025-2026 school is Monday, June 30.

Updates from Our Partners

The Institute of Child Nutrition Upcoming Live Webinars

Upcoming live webinars from the ICN include:

- Culinary Institute of Child Nutrition: How to Reduce Sugar at Breakfast on Thursday, June 5, at 3 p.m. ET

Register for one or all of these training sessions [here](#).

Upcoming Dates



Thursday, June 19	Free and Reduced Preparation webinar
Monday, June 23 through Wednesday, June 25	ISNL at Lebanon Community Schools (in-person)
Monday, June 30	CEP Application Final Due Date
Tuesday, July 8	IDOE Back to School Training (in-person)
Tuesday, July 15 through Friday, July 18	ISNL Online Option

Additional Resources

[School Nutrition Programs Calendar](#)
[IDOE's Nutrition Webpage](#)
[CNPweb](#)