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INDIANA
DEPARTMENT of
EDUCATION

Mike Braun, Governor
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School Nutrition Programs

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

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

Office Closure

State of Indiana government offices will be closed Monday, September 7, in observance of Labor Day.

Important Updates

New USDA Memo

USDA Food and Nutrition Administration (FNA) has announced the release of [TA 01-2026 Resources for Procuring Local Foods in School Year 2026-2027](#). This memo reminds schools, sponsors, and institutions participating in any USDA Child Nutrition Program (CNP) of the various resources available to help CNP operators procure local foods.

Updated: Real Food Guides for School Breakfast and Lunch

USDA Team Nutrition has updated its Real Food Guides for families for the school year 2026-2027. Both the [school breakfast](#) and [school lunch](#) guides focus on simple, nutrient-dense foods that reflect the updated Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2025–2030.

America's Healthiest Schools 2026

This year, 29 Indiana schools were recognized as part of America's Healthiest Schools, a national program from Healthier Generation that highlights schools supporting student and staff well-being across multiple areas of whole-child health. Schools can apply for recognition in up to nine topics related to nutrition, health, wellness, and overall school environment.

Indiana districts with schools receiving recognition include Portage Township Schools Corporation, Tippecanoe School Corporation, Indianapolis Public Schools, and the Metropolitan School District of Pike Township. See Indiana's awardees [here](#).

Farm to School

Culinary Skills for Farm to School Training

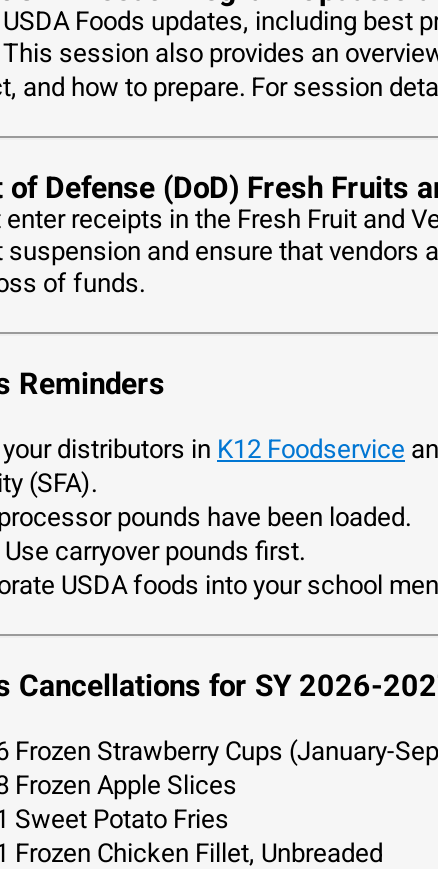
Gain hands-on culinary skills to incorporate more local foods into school meals. This training will cover farm to school basics, using fresh and local herbs, making common vegetable substitutions, and practicing several kid-friendly recipes. Sessions will be held in the afternoon in Logansport on Tuesday, September 22, and Wednesday, September 23, and in Daviess County on Thursday, September 24, and Friday, September 25. Space is limited, and applications will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. Click [here](#) to register.

School Garden Grant Opportunity

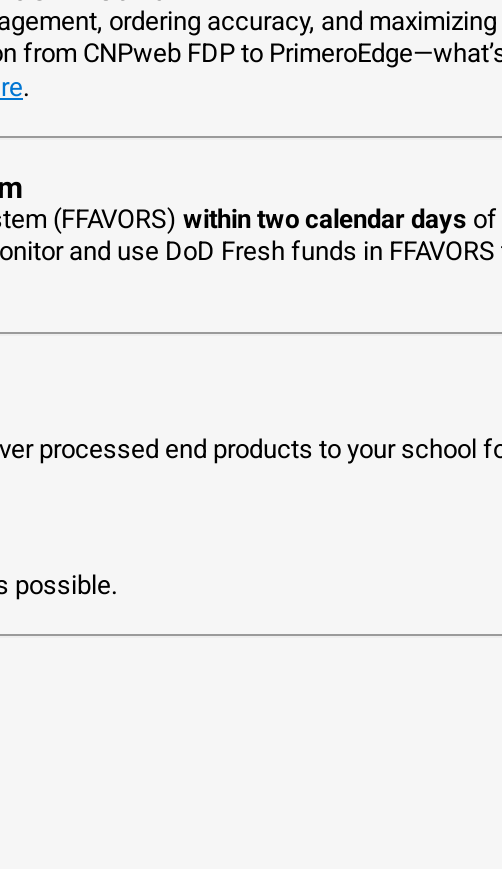
The Indiana Thriving Schools Challenge is offering another round of funding this year for student-led sustainability projects, including school gardens. This grant provides up to \$5,000, and is open to all K-12 schools in Indiana. Click [here](#) to apply by Thursday, September 13.

School Highlight: Shelbyville Central Schools

Shelbyville Central Schools celebrated an outstanding local food day on Thursday, August 27. The food service team partnered with Orem Family Farm and featured chuck roast that Chef Mark crafted into a fresh, grass-fed beef barbacoa for their burrito bar. They highlighted the farm on cafeteria screens and along the serving line, and even welcomed the farmers into the cafeteria to talk with students. It was a fantastic showcase of local food and community connection - great work to the Shelbyville Central Food Service team!



Grass-fed beef barbacoa on nachos.



Orem Family Farm display at the school.

USDA Foods

Upcoming: USDA Foods Program Updates and PrimeroEdge Transition Webinar

Get the latest USDA Foods updates, including best practices for inventory management, ordering accuracy, and maximizing USDA Foods usage. This session also provides an overview of the statewide transition from CNPweb FDP to PrimeroEdge—what's changing, what to expect, and how to prepare. For session details and to register, click [here](#).

Department of Defense (DoD) Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Program

Schools must enter receipts in the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Order Receipt System (FFAVORS) **within two calendar days** of delivery to avoid account suspension and ensure that vendors are paid. Schools should monitor and use DoD Fresh funds in FFAVORS to prevent sweeping or loss of funds.

USDA Foods Reminders

- Select your distributors in [K12 Foodservice](#) and/or [ProcessorLink](#) to deliver processed end products to your school food authority (SFA).
- Verify processor pounds have been loaded.
 - Use carryover pounds first.
- Incorporate USDA foods into your school menu as much and as often as possible.

USDA Foods Cancellations for SY 2026-2027

- 100256 Frozen Strawberry Cups (January-September 2026)
- 100258 Frozen Apple Slices
- 110721 Sweet Potato Fries
- 110921 Frozen Chicken Fillet, Unbreaded

Did You Know?

USDA Foods are not free. USDA Foods are purchased with federal funds instead of local dollars, it's important to manage them carefully through forecasting, menu planning, inventory reviews, and processor monitoring. Treating USDA Foods as a valuable part of your budget helps you avoid waste, protect your entitlement, and get the maximum benefit for your program.

When you plan well and forecast accurately, USDA Foods can replace a significant amount of commercial purchasing—saving your local budget. But they still represent real dollars, so using them wisely is essential

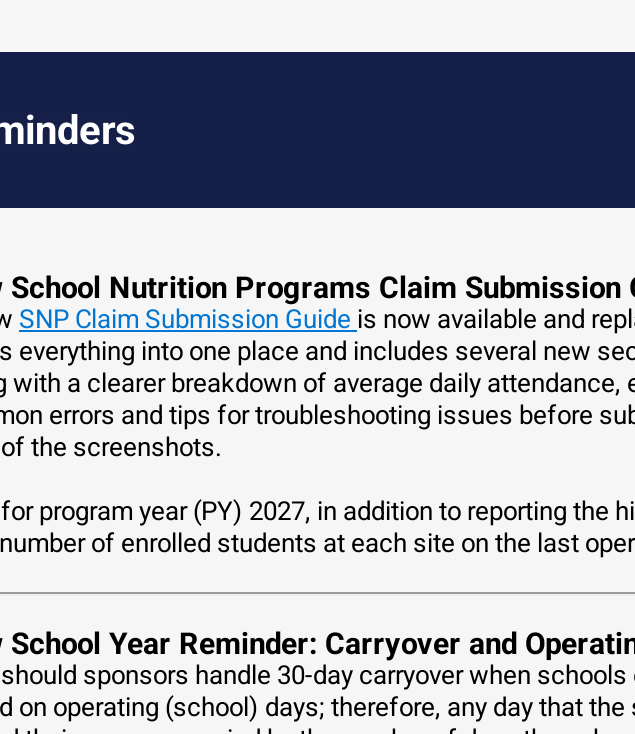
USDA Foods Recipe Spotlight

Discover new ways to incorporate USDA Foods into your menu this school year. Looking for recipes to use your USDA Foods? Check out these resources:

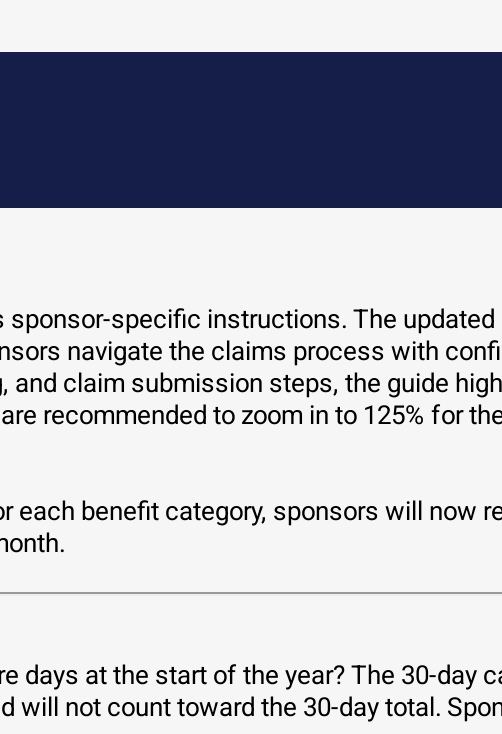
- [Nutrition.gov](#)
- [Smart Swaps Recipes](#)
- [Wild Blueberry Recipes](#)
- [Recipes for Healthy Kids](#)
- [Recipes for Schools - Child Nutrition Recipe Box](#)
- [Team Nutrition Recipes](#)

Featured Items: Simple Fruit Cobbler and Jello Fruit Cocktail Salad

Use your USDA [canned mixed fruit](#) in these [simple fruit cobbler](#) and [jello fruit cocktail salad](#) recipes. All recipes must follow and comply with USDA meal pattern requirements and program regulations.



Simple Fruit Cobbler



Jello Fruit Cocktail Salad

Procurement

Procurement Review Open Support Calls

IDOE's Office of School and Community Nutrition is pleased to announce a series of Friday support sessions for schools selected for a Procurement Review. These sessions are designed to help you prepare, ask questions, and ensure a smooth review process.

Session Details

- Dates: Every Friday through Friday, September 11
- Time: 10 a.m. ET
- Audience: Schools selected for the 2026-2027 NSLP Procurement Review
- Call Details: [Procurement Review Weekly Support Call with Q&A](#)

Each session will provide guidance, walk-throughs of required documentation, and time for individual questions. We encourage all selected schools to attend.

Maintain Clear Procurement Documentation

Please remember that everything from quotes, price comparisons, invoices, contracts, and awarding decisions should be documented. Keeping procurement documentation helps prepare for procurement reviews.

For more details on this and other procurement topics, see our [Procurement Information Sheet](#). Questions about procurement? Click [here](#) or contact the [SCN Procurement mailbox](#) for assistance.

Training and Webinar Opportunities

Speed Scratch Simplified Webinar

Join Chef Sam Cowens Gasbarro and Cathy Powers on Tuesday, September 29, from 2 to 3 p.m. ET for a free, interactive webinar on using core speed-scratch items to boost efficiency and menu flexibility. Learn practical ways to customize student-favorite recipes, add more vegetables and lean proteins, and create a restaurant-style experience in your cafeteria. Click [here](#) to register.

Upcoming Webinars

Check out the upcoming webinar list [here](#), as new events are added regularly. Two new webinars are scheduled for this summer. Click the links below for more details and to register.

- [USDA Foods Program Updates and PrimeroEdge Transition](#) - Thursday, September 3, from 2 to 3 p.m. ET
- [Maximizing Direct Certification \(DC\)](#) - Thursday, September 10, from 10 to 11 a.m. ET

If there is a specific topic you would like to see covered, let us know by filling out [this form!](#)

Farm to School

IDOE, in partnership with the Indiana Grown for Schools Network, hosts and shares several webinars and events to support school nutrition programs. Stay up to date on the upcoming events page [here](#).

- [Farm to School Office Hours](#) - Wednesday, September 16, from 4 to 5 p.m. ET
- [Farm to School Office Hours](#) - Wednesday, October 7, from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. ET
- [Farm to School Office Hours](#) - Wednesday, November 18, from 4 to 5 p.m. ET

Reminders

New School Nutrition Programs Claim Submission Guide

A new [SNP Claim Submission Guide](#) is now available and replaces the previous sponsor-specific instructions. The updated guide brings everything into one place and includes several new sections to help sponsors navigate the claims process with confidence. Along with a clearer breakdown of average daily attendance, eligibility reporting, and claim submission steps, the guide highlights common errors and tips for troubleshooting issues before submitting. Viewers are recommended to zoom in to 125% for the clearest view of the screenshots.

New for program year (PY) 2027, in addition to reporting the highest eligibility for each benefit category, sponsors will now report the total number of enrolled students at each site on the last operating day of the month.

New School Year Reminder: Carryover and Operating Days

How should sponsors handle 30-day carryover when schools experience closure days at the start of the year? The 30-day carryover is based on operating (school) days; therefore, any day that the school was closed will not count toward the 30-day total. Sponsors may extend their carryover period by the number of days the school was closed.

The same rule applies to the 10-day application processing window. That timeline also uses operating days only, meaning closed days are not included in the count. For additional information and best practices to prevent gaps in benefits, reference the [30 Day Carryover Fact Sheet](#).

Maximizing Direct Certification (DC) Training

Join IDOE's Office of School and Community Nutrition on Thursday, September 10, from 10 to 11 a.m. ET for a detailed dive into DC to ensure that all eligible students are being identified. Topics covered include using the DC lookup tool, uploading enrollment rosters in CNPweb, and processing possible matches. This session will help maximize DC just in time for the traditional verification period to start and for October certification sign off (the school's data office completes this annually). Click [here](#) to register.

PrimeroEdge Opening for USDA Foods is Postponed

The transition from CNPweb to PrimeroEdge has been postponed. For the 2026-2027 school year, CNPweb will continue to be utilized for the Food Distribution Program (FDP) and USDA Foods. SFAs should complete all required FDP steps in CNPweb for FDP approval. See below:

- The SFA's School Nutrition Program (SNP) application must be in Pending Approval status on the CNPweb SNP.
- Then in CNPweb FDP, on the RA summary page, click the Applications tab and then click the Edit button. Be sure you are in PY 2027.
- Verify and/or update the address and FDP contact sections are correct.
- Scroll down to section 29, the Verification section, and click the box to the left. If you see the message in red below, your school still has steps to complete in the SNP portion of CNPweb:

- If you do not see the above message, proceed and scroll down to the bottom of the page and click the submit button.
- Once submitted, IDOE will receive this information, review, and approve the application.

Questions or technical requests can be submitted through the [CNPweb Help Form](#). PrimeroEdge training will resume later in the school year and will be announced via this newsletter.

Annual Nonprogram Food Revenue Requirement

The nonprogram food revenue (NFR) tool for PY 2027 must be completed by sponsors selling nonprogram foods such as adult meals, a la carte items, and catered foods. SFAs must ensure all nonprogram food revenue goes to the Nonprofit School Food Service Account (NSFSA) and does not subsidize reimbursable meals.

If the NFR tool shows additional funds are needed, nonprogram food prices must be increased or non-federal funds deposited into the account to cover the difference. Administrative reviews can detect incomplete or inaccurate data entered into the NFR tool as well as missing price adjustments or transfers (when required). These findings require immediate corrective action, sometimes including mid-year price increases.

To view the recorded webinar on NPR, click [here](#). Policies and a basic NPR tool can be found here but it is recommended to utilize the [Five Day Reference Period Nonprogram Revenue Tool](#). Contact SCN finance or your field specialist for additional questions or assistance.

Updates from Our Partners

Adopt a Cow - Now for Cafeterias

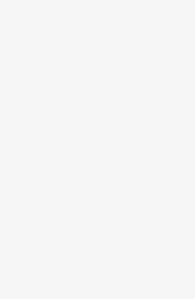
Discover Dairy's free Adopt a Cow program, a free program made possible by the American Dairy Association Indiana, is now open to cafeterias! Each cafeteria receives a kit with your cow's photo and story, nutrition facts, stickers, and a "Milk's Journey from Farm to Fridge" resource. It's an easy way to help students connect with the dairy foods you serve - no lesson planning required. To enroll, click [here](#) anytime through January 31, 2027.

Registration Open: National School District Wellness Convening (NSDWC)

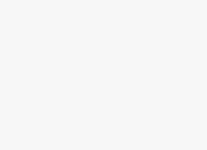
Action for Healthy Kids will host its NSDWC Wednesday, November 4 through Friday, November 6, in Memphis, TN. District wellness leaders are invited to connect with peers, share ideas, and bring practical strategies back to their schools. Early-bird pricing runs through Monday, September 14, with group discounts and limited scholarships available.

Visit the [NSDWC webpage](#) for more details and registration can be found [here](#). Unable to attend? Join the free [District Impact Network](#) to stay connected year-round with school wellness leaders nationwide.

Upcoming Dates



Friday, September 4	PY 2026 Annual Financial Report Due
Tuesday, September 29	Final Due Date for July Claim
Thursday, October 1	Verification Opens
Friday, October 30	Final Due Date for August Claim



Additional Resources

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

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