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**INDIANA
DEPARTMENT of
EDUCATION**

**Mike Braun, Governor
Katie Jenner, Secretary of Education**

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

Breakfast Notification

USDA requires sponsors participating in the School Breakfast Program to provide breakfast service notifications multiple times throughout the year. Each notification should include the breakfast location and serving times. These notifications can be shared through social media, newsletters, TV screens throughout the school, daily announcements, or other communication channels. Sponsors must keep proof of each notification for Administrative Review purposes. Helpful breakfast promotional graphics can be found [here](#).

Important Updates

Prepare for October Certification Sign-Off

Each year, public and charter school administrators must sign off on data submitted to IDOE for the Pupil Enrollment (PE) Report. This data includes the number of free and reduced eligible students at each school building. These numbers are used to qualify the school for other federal and state funding opportunities, as well as potential grants and programs. School food service administrators may share this data with their data team to ensure accurate numbers are submitted.

Once the school administrator has signed off on the data, no revisions are allowed. For more information, reach out to your school's data specialists.

Program Year (PY) 2026 Annual Financial Report (AFR)

The PY 2026 AFR was due on Friday, September 4. Sponsors that have not completed and submitted the 2026 AFR for approval should do so as soon as possible to avoid a potential hold on claim payments. If additional time is needed, extension requests may be sent to SCNfinance@dcoe.in.gov.

CNPweb Renewal Application Updates

CNPweb renewal applications are now being reviewed and approved by IDOE staff in the order they were submitted. IDOE staff may reach out to sponsors if clarification or additional information is needed during the review process. Sponsors that operated in July and still do not have an approved application by Tuesday, September 22, should submit a [CNPweb Help Form](#) to ensure there is no delay in claim processing.

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.

USDA Foods

ProcessorLink Training to Indiana School Districts

[ProcessorLink](#) will offer virtual training for Indiana school food authorities (SFAs) to familiarize Indiana school districts with key features and workflows. Participants will learn basic navigation, essential tasks, and best practices to ensure accurate and efficient use of the system. The training is scheduled for Tuesday, October 20, from 1 to 2:30 p.m. ET. Join the webinar using [this link](#).

K12 Foodservice On Target Forecast Planner Virtual Training

For SFAs with processors that report pound and balance information through K12 Foodservice, IDOE is hosting a virtual training for Recipient Agencies (RAs) on Wednesday, October 21, from 10 to 11 a.m. ET. [K12Foodservice.com](#) now offers a commodity planner that helps RAs identify needs, collaborate with partners, and track progress. The K12 On Target Planner provides real-time updates to improve entitlement use. Join the webinar using [this link](#).

Presentation Available: USDA Foods Program Updates and PrimeroEdge Transition Webinar

The [presentation slides](#) are available from the live webinar on Thursday, September 3. Catch up on the latest USDA Foods updates, including best practices for inventory management, tips to improve ordering accuracy, and strategies to maximize your USDA Foods utilization.

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. Funds must be used in full by June 30, 2027 and will not rollover.

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?

SFAs that use USDA Foods in their meal programs benefit through both a Return on Investment (ROI) and a Return on Objective (ROO). ROI is achieved through cost savings, improved menu quality, greater supply-chain stability, and stronger compliance support—helping SFAs deliver meals that are more nutritious, reliable, and operationally efficient. ROO reflects the added value of USDA Foods by offsetting commercial food costs, supporting American agriculture, ensuring products are 100% domestic, and strengthening student meal participation. Overall, USDA Foods help SFAs stretch their school food budgets, reduce vulnerability to market fluctuations, and provide consistent, high-quality meals for students.

USDA Foods Recipe Resources

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](#)

Procurement

Noncompetitive Procurement – Public Exigency or Emergency

In the case of a public exigency or emergency preventing an SFA from conducting competitive procurement, the SFA may utilize the noncompetitive procurement method as outlined in [2 CFR 200.320\(c\)](#). Public exigencies or emergencies are declared by governing authorities such as the President of the United States, a state governor, tribal chief executive, or local government official. Local governments and nonprofits may use their own judgment when determining whether these conditions have been met but must document the rationale. SFAs do not need to request a waiver or receive state agency approval to utilize the emergency noncompetitive procurement method and may use this method as long as the supply chain disruption occurs. Once the exigency or emergency ends, SFAs are expected to procure competitively.

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

Training and Webinar Opportunities

Culinary Skills for A+ School Meals: Fall 2026 Virtual Training Series

Join for free, interactive sessions featuring live chef demonstrations, practical recipes, efficient techniques, and nutritional insights. Each class earns one training hour and includes exciting giveaways!

Enhance your culinary skills and learn tips and tricks from school nutrition pros. Classes are held Thursdays, from 2 to 3 p.m. ET. For more details, click [here](#) to register.

- Thursday, October 1: Harvest to Lunchroom for Indiana Food Day
- Thursday, October 8: Prep Like a Pro: Knife Skills for School Kitchens
- Thursday, October 15: Slice, Dice & Serve: Vegetable Cutting Skills for School Meals
- Thursday, October 22: Mastering Fruit Prep: Cutting Techniques for K12 Foodservice
- Thursday, October 29: Making the Most of USDA Foods in School Kitchens
- Thursday, November 5: Stirring Up Success: Soups Kids Will Love

Questions? Contact [Cathy Powers](#) for additional information.

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.

Verification Series

This year's Verification Series provides focused sessions to support sponsors through each step of the verification process.

- Verification for Cause** - Join us on Thursday, September 17, from 10 to 11 a.m. ET, to gain an understanding of Verification for Cause, including when it applies and how to review questionable applications such as zero-income, SNAP/TANF, foster, and other cases needing additional documentation. Click [here](#) to register.
- Verification Preparation** - Join us on Thursday, September 24, from 10 to 11 a.m. ET to learn what verification is, review the annual timeline, and understand the different verification methods available to sponsors before Thursday, October 1. Click [here](#) to register.
- Verification in Action** - Join us on Thursday, October 1, from 10 to 11 a.m. ET, as we walk through a full verification scenario step-by-step from selecting the sample and completing confirmation reviews to requesting documentation and using direct verification. Click [here](#) to register.

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

National School Lunch Week (NSLW)

National School Lunch Week celebrates the importance of healthy school meals in helping students learn and thrive. This year's theme, "Cafeteria Circus: Where Healthy Choices Take Center Stage," highlights the creativity and dedication behind every school meal. While NSLW is observed Monday, October 12, through Friday, October 16, schools may celebrate any week that works best, including shifting festivities if fall break overlaps. Find promotional materials, graphics, activity ideas, and more from the School Nutrition Association [here](#).

Professional Standards

School Nutrition Program (SNP) staff must meet annual professional development requirements to ensure they have the knowledge and skills needed to operate the SNPs effectively. Training must align with each employee's job duties and level of responsibility.

Professional standard reminders:

- Track all staff training throughout the year using any manual or electronic tracker. School Food Authorities (SFAs) may use [IDOE's training tracker template](#).
- When conducting staff training, keep a dated agenda for each training that includes the name of the trainer, topics covered, a copy of any handouts provided, staff signatures, and the total time spent on the training. A training agenda template can be found [here](#).
- Non-food service staff with duties related to SNPs must receive annual training related to their responsibilities, including meal counting, free and reduced eligibility, offer vs serve, civil rights, etc. Though non-food service staff are not required to meet a specific number of annual training hours, training documentation must still be maintained.
- All professional standards training documentation will be reviewed by your field specialist during an administrative review.

Visit IDOE's [Professional Standards webpage](#) for more resources.

Field Trip Meals

Field trips add fun to the school day, and with a little preparation, meal service can stay simple. Here are a few reminders to help you prepare for field trip meals:

- Meals must meet all meal pattern requirements, including minimum component sizes, and should be documented on the daily production record.
- Field trip meals must be counted at the point of service (POS), which is when the student receives the reimbursable meal. Students may pick up meals before leaving, and can be counted through the regular POS procedures, or staff may distribute at the field trip location, and record counts on a simple paper roster.
- If offer vs. serve (OVS) is not used, students must take all required components, including milk, for the meal to be counted.
- Staff involved in field trip meal counting should be trained on POS procedures, reimbursable meals, and civil rights requirements.
- For multi-day field trips, only first-day meals may be reimbursable, so schools will need to plan alternative meal options for any additional days.

For more information, view the [Field Trip Meals Fact Sheet](#) and contact your assigned field specialist with any questions.

Updates from Our Partners

Food Safety Education In Focus: Supporting Informed Consumer Decisions

Join the International Food Information Council (IFIC) on Thursday, September 17, from 2 to 3 p.m. ET for a free webinar exploring emerging insights into how consumers engage with food safety information and how these findings can support clear, practical guidance that encourages confident, safe food-handling practices. This session is eligible for one continuing professional education unit (CPEU). Click [here](#) to register.

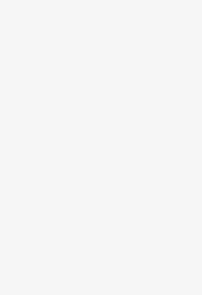
New Resource: Child Nutrition Programs Food Industry Toolkit

A new centralized toolkit is now available to help food industry partners easily access key Team Nutrition resources that support USDA child nutrition programs. The Food Industry Toolkit organizes guidance on Child Nutrition (CN) labels, Product Formulation Statements (PFS), crediting, and more, bringing information together in one convenient location. Explore the toolkit [here](#).

Upcoming Dates



Date	Event
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](#)