*2022-23 Letter of Announcement / Invitation for NC's Eligible Elementary Schools to Apply*

*NC School Nutrition Administrators:*

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) application season for the 2022-2023 school year (SY) is now open in North Carolina. May this e-mail provide easy access to program information and serve as the official "announcement with invitation" for **eligible** elementary schools interested in applying to participate in the FFVP for the coming school year. Please read this entire e-mail so expectations and deadlines can be *successfully* met.

**What is the FFVP and Why Apply?**

The FFVP is a federally-assisted program that provides “free” **fresh** fruit and vegetable snacks (a minimum of two days/week during the *instructional* school day) for which **eligible**elementary schools can apply annually. The goal of the FFVP is to create healthier school environments by providing healthier food choices to the enrolled students at a participating school. Expanding the variety of fruits and vegetables children experience, and children increasing their overall acceptance and consumption of fresh, unprocessed produce, will make a difference in children’s diets to impact their present and future health.

All FFVP purchases must be competitively procured to fulfill the requirement of free and open competition. Only allowable expenses will be reimbursed via submitting a monthly claim. It is **not** a requirement for an eligible elementary school to apply to participate in the FFVP. The program is *additional*work for School Nutrition administrators and staff; however, the opportunity for students to receive healthy snacks at no charge has numerous benefits. Form a FFVP team and if not already, become educated about the FFVP, discuss, and if all are interested and committed to success, strongly consider applying.

**FFVP Resources for Guidance**

To learn about FFVP administration, operation, and finances, click on the links below:

* [USDA Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Program: A Handbook for Schools](https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/resource-files/handbook.pdf)
* [USDA Fact Sheet: The Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program](https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/resource-files/FFVPFactSheet.pdf)

 **Deadlines for NC's 2022-2023 FFVP Application Process**

**Friday, April 1, 2022, 11:59 PM**Deadline for completing 2022-2023 FFVP online application housed in the School Nutrition Technology System (SNTS). Only School Nutrition administrators with "Application Entry" rights have access to NC's 2022-2023 FFVP online application. *Each* applying school must complete a FFVP online application.

**Friday, April 8, 2022, 11:59 PM**
Deadline for electronically submitting the 2022-2023 FFVP Signature Pages (with all 4 required signatures signed in **blue** ink) and "Number of Days the FFVP Operates Weekly" form. Scan and e-mail these required FFVP application documents to **zoe.mckaytucker@dpi.nc.gov** to complete the 2022-2023 FFVP application process. (Zoe McKay-Tucker is NC's FFVP Coordinator.)

**How to Apply for the FFVP for the 2022-2023 SY?**

NC's FFVP online application is housed in the School Nutrition Technology System (SNTS). Only School Nutrition administrators with "Application Entry" rights to the SNTS have access to the FFVP online application. To access, the School Nutrition administrator must login to the SNTS, click on Applications, FFVP Application Packet, then Details to view the school or schools **eligible** to apply. Then, the "2022-2023 FFVP Sponsor Application" and respective "2022-2023 FFVP Site Application" (for each **eligible**school that wants to apply) must be completed and "Saved" in the SNTS. Note: there is not a "Submit" tab; the FFVP application is stored in the SNTS.

The FFVP application information and guidance for the 2022-2023 SY is available on the NCDPI’s School Nutrition website. Please visit: <https://www.dpi.nc.gov/districts-schools/district-operations/school-nutrition/school-nutrition-programs/fresh-fruit-vegetable-program-ffvp> and note the section labeled "How to Apply (2022-2023 SY)" with easy access to the following documents:

* ***Questions for the FFVP School Proposal (Word document to electronically share the FFVP application questions with others)***
* ***Instructions for Accessing the NC FFVP Online Application***
* ***Guidance for Completing the NC FFVP Online Application***
* ***FFVP Signature Page (1 of 2 required application documents to be submitted electronically)***
* ***"Number of Days the FFVP Operates Weekly" form (2 of 2 required application documents to be submitted electronically)***
* ***Checklist for NC FFVP Application Process***
* ***SN Security Form (Technology System Access Application)***

**Need FFVP Application Assistance?**

If guidance is needed in completing the 2022-2023 FFVP online application or there are questions about the FFVP Signature Pages or the "How Many Days the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program Operates Weekly" form (both are required FFVP application documents to be submitted electronically), plan to register to join one of NCDPI's FFVP round table discussions hosted by Zoe McKay-Tucker, NC's FFVP Coordinator. Participating in a FFVP round table discussion is an option, **not a requirement.**There will be no formal presentation so **no** CEUs can be earned. The FFVP round table discussions are open to anyone with the reminder that registration is required for everyone. Please use the link(s) below to register and then forward to others who may be interested (and please remind them to register!):

**FFVP Roundtable Discussion Registration Links**

* **Thursday, March 17, 2022, 2:30 PM - 3:30 PM**

<https://ncgov.webex.com/ncgov/onstage/g.php?MTID=ed3a59f16210938b61c18c2d25f1e1b48>

* **Thursday, March 24, 2022, 2:30 PM - 3:30 PM**

<https://ncgov.webex.com/ncgov/onstage/g.php?MTID=ef18e9ecc6fa00846a922533fe745305c>

* **Tuesday, March 29, 2022, 2:30 PM - 3:30 PM**

<https://ncgov.webex.com/ncgov/onstage/g.php?MTID=e4230dc408c15205eaf7ebbe52172c0d0>

**FFVP Annual Grant Funding**

Every school selected to participate in the FFVP is expected to make a concerted effort to wisely utilize **all** its respective FFVP annual grant funding, so students receive the maximum benefits from the program. The more days the FFVP operates (minimum of 2 days/week; 3-5 days/week is optimal) on instructional school days for students, the more FFVP grant funding will be utilized with students benefitting from more fresh fruit and vegetable snacks. Planning is key to a successful operation and wise utilization to totally exhaust a participating school's FFVP annual allocation.

**FFVP School Selections for 2022-2023 SY**

Once USDA informs the State agency (May or June) of NC's FFVP annual grant allocation for the 2022-2023 SY, the NCDPI School Nutrition Division will select as many schools as possible in keeping with the requirement of $50-$75 per student allocation for the school year. Once the NC State Board of Education votes to approve NC's schools selected for the FFVP for the 2022-2023 SY, then NCDPI will notify the districts of the schools selected, and those not selected.

**Requirement for School Nutrition Administrators with a School or Schools Selected for the FFVP for the 2022-2023 SY**

NC's FFVP required, annual continuing education (required participation for designated School Nutrition administrator in a district with a school or schools, or a charter school selected for 2022-2023 SY), will be conducted virtually in late July 2022. Please stay tuned for the exact dates/times of NC's 2022-2023 FFVP webinars and how to register.

If you have FFVP application questions or need clarification (whether you participate in a FFVP round table discussion, or not), contact Zoe McKay-Tucker, NC's FFVP Coordinator, at **zoe.mckaytucker@dpi.nc.gov** or 919-961-0608 for assistance.

The NCDPI School Nutrition Division appreciates the consideration given for NC's **eligible** elementary schools to apply for the FFVP for the 2022-2023 SY so students can benefit from this nutritious opportunity!

As always, cheering for the FFVP and hoping your district's **eligible** elementary school(s) or your charter school will apply to participate in this*grrrrrrreat!* program.

*Zoe*

**Zoe McKay-Tucker**

***School Nutrition Consultant for Special Programs***

School Nutrition Division

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