

School Nutrition Update

July 24-28, 2023



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Program Operations Information

Access the 2023-24 Reimbursement Rates

The reimbursement rates for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), Special Milk Program (SMP), and the After School Snack Program (ASSP) for the period July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024 were released and published in the Federal Register on Friday July 7, 2023 by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). [Download SY 2023-2024 Reimbursement Rates](#).

The temporary higher per-meal reimbursement rates for the NSLP and SBP provided as a part of the Keep Kids Fed Act of 2022 expired on June 30, 2023. If you have any questions, please contact your Zone Consultant or Jacquelyn McGowan, Compliance Specialist, jacquelyn.mcgowan@dpi.nc.gov.

Complete the Quarterly Supply Chain Assistance Report

As a reminder, the Supply Chain Assistance (SCA) Reports are to be completed *quarterly* by all School Food Authorities (SFAs) that received Supply Chain Assistance funds in 2022 and 2023. This is a U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) requirement and continues until all the SCA funds are exhausted. The reporting is done electronically, is short and simple, with only a few questions, and must be completed for each quarter in which funds remain. Upcoming reporting dates for 2023 are listed below:

- April, May, June 2023 – **Report due by Monday, July 31, 2023**
- July, August, September 2023 – **Report due by Tuesday, October 31, 2023**

USDA requires that SCA funds be used exclusively for the purchase of domestic food products that are unprocessed or minimally processed. One of the simplest unprocessed foods to purchase with the SCA funds would be fluid milk and other dairy foods such as cheese and yogurt. Foods that are in a minimally processed state could also include 100% juices and produce that is cut, pureed, canned, frozen, or dried. Foods that are generally understood to be significantly processed or prepared and which may not be purchased using SCA funds include baked goods, chicken nuggets, and pre-packaged sandwiches or meals. Find links below to an SCA funds Q&A, quarterly report guidance, and the quarterly report survey. If you have any questions, please contact your Zone Consultant.

- [NCDPI SCA Q&A](#)
- [How to Complete SCA Quarterly Report Survey for SFAs](#)
- [SCA Quarterly Report Survey](#)

School Nutrition Spotlight

Hooked on Local Produce

On July 11, the Edenton Chowan School Nutrition Program partnered with Chowan County Cooperative Extension to celebrate Rocky Hook Cantaloupe Month. Chowan County kids were able to eat locally grown produce. The cantaloupe was a hit with both students and staff. What a great way to celebrate #NCFarmtoSummer! [Learn more.](#)



Follow/Like Us on Social Media

Did you know you could find the NCDPI, Office of School Nutrition on social media? Follow or like our pages - @NCSchoolMeals and @Ray4NCKids on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

Share Your School Nutrition Photos

The NCDPI, Office of School Nutrition wants to highlight the appealing, wholesome, quality meals our School and Summer Nutrition Programs across the state offer to students. Share your beautiful photos of serving lines and complete school or summer meals with us. Please send to Tracey Bates, NCDPI School Nutrition Promotion Specialist, at tracey.bates@dpi.nc.gov. Make sure to include the school and district or organization info so we can aim to credit the source. Be on the lookout for photos of meals from across the state on social media.



Union County Public Schools

Send in Articles or Topics of Interest for the School Nutrition Update E-letter

If you have a resource, grant, job opportunity, continuing education event, award announcement, shout out or other news item for the School Nutrition Update, please send a brief article (250 words or less) to Tracey Bates, tracey.bates@dpi.nc.gov, by 12 pm on the Wednesday prior to when the SN Update is sent out the following week. Please include “**SN Update**” in the email subject line. If there are topics of interest you would also like to see included, please share as well.

Nutrition Education & Promotion

Keep Celebrating N.C. Farm to Summer

Kids, teens, families, Summer Nutrition Program Sponsors, and communities can celebrate N.C. Farm to Summer all summer long!



- Serve local foods as part of meals and/or snacks.
- Teach and learn about agriculture, nutrition, and local food through farm to summer activities.
- Post about farm to summer activities on social media using #NCFarmtoSummer, #NCSummerMeals, @NCSchoolMeals, @Ray4NCKids, and @F2SCoalitionNC.
- Sign up for the [North Carolina Crunch](#) to celebrate farm to school in October.



There are so many benefits to participating in farm to summer! Learn more, sign up to take the #NCFarmtoSummerChallenge, and find a toolkit, social media graphics, and more free resources on the NCDPI, Office of School Nutrition [website](#).

Celebrate National Berry and Blueberry Month

Did you know July is both National Berry Month and National Blueberry Month? The Blueberry is the North Carolina State Blue Berry and the Strawberry is the North Carolina State Red Berry. The NCDPI, Office of School Nutrition offers [fact sheets](#) on blueberries and strawberries. In addition, there are fact sheets on blackberries and raspberries, which are actually not berries but aggregate fruits. The N.C. Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services offers [storybooks, activity guides and posters](#) that follow strawberries and blueberries from the field to school meal. NCDA&CS worked with the N.C. Farm Bureau Ag in the Classroom to develop an [Ag Mag](#) and [lesson plans](#) on strawberries. Learning about these fruits is a great way to celebrate #NCFarmtoSummer!



Continuing Education

Learn More About Local Food Systems

Are you interested in learning more about local food systems? Do you work with local food projects, but are unsure of the research about their impacts or the resources available to support you? If you answered yes to any of these questions, you might be interested in the N.C. Cooperative Extension Local Food Program's [Overview of Local Food Systems Online Professional Development Training](#). The Training Program consists of three courses.

- [Register](#) starting 7/18 for the first course in the series: **Foundations in Local Food Systems Development**, 20 hours (*prerequisite to Courses 2 and 3*): Price = \$250 (Course begins **8/15**.) Registration for *Foundations* will

be open from **July 18 to August 15**, and participants will have **four months (from August 15 to December 15)** to complete the course at their own pace.

- Registration for the other two courses in the course series, *Farm to Fork: Foundations in Local Food Supply & Value Chains* (15 hours, \$200) and *The Bottom Line: Economic Realities and Other Considerations of Local Food Systems* (15 hours, \$200), will open in **late fall** and will run in **early 2024 (January 15 - April 15)**.

This online training program is designed for those who are just getting started in their local food systems career or for those who have experience but want to gain a broader or more complete perspective. The training program is housed at N.C. State University and is a partnership between N.C. Cooperative Extension, Clemson Cooperative Extension, and Virginia Cooperative Extension. Upon successful completion of each course, participants will receive a Certificate of Completion from N.C. State University.

N.C. Cooperative Extension is continuing to offer four *optional* synchronous sessions while courses are running (held this fall via Zoom on 8/29, 9/26, 10/31, and 11/28 from 12-1:30 pm ET), led by course instructors and featuring guest speakers, to help participants network while expanding their knowledge of current local food issues. This year, we are also adding evening virtual office hours (days/times TBD).

For more information, including registration, please visit www.localfoodcourses.org, or contact the course coordinators at localfoodncce@ncsu.edu.

Fostering Creativity and Innovation in School Meal Planning – 7/27, 3 pm ET

Join the Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN) on July 27 at 3 pm ET for a STAR Back to School webinar focused on providing School Nutrition professionals with effective techniques and strategies to foster creativity and innovation in their school meal planning. The strategies and techniques shared will empower School Nutrition professionals with new ideas for providing nutritious and appealing meals to students, improve student engagement, and drive student participation in the school meal program. [Learn more and register.](#)

Boosting Student Engagement in Gardening and Cooking Classes

The [Edible Schoolyard Project](#) Virtual Summer Training features interactive workshops throughout the month of July, all with a focus on boosting student engagement in gardening and cooking classes. The virtual summer training is designed to serve educators and program leaders who are seeking to provide joyful and engaging learning experiences in gardening and cooking classes. All workshops are open to the general public. They are pleased to offer the training at no cost, and there is no cap on the number of attendees who can participate in the workshops. All workshops will be held over Zoom. A recording of the workshops will be made available after the training is complete. [Learn more and register.](#)

Access Virtual Training Opportunities

The Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN) has compiled [resources to help prevent the spread of the Coronavirus](#). Online food safety/HACCP training is available on the NCDPI, School Nutrition [website](#) and the ICN [website](#). Additional continuing education resources are available on the School Nutrition [website](#) from NCDPI, ICN, the School Nutrition Association and other agencies and organizations. The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

offers [continuing professional education resources](#) for Registered Dietitians/Nutritionists (RDNs) and Dietetic Technicians, Registered (DTRs).

Questions

If you have any questions regarding these updates, please reach out to your [regional consultants](#).

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- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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