

# School Nutrition Update

December 14, 2020



## *In this Issue:*

### **Program Operations Information**

- Comment NOW on Proposed Rule about Restoration of Flexibilities - Due 12/28
- Prepare for Holidays and Winter Weather
- Submit Meal Counts Daily

### **School Nutrition Spotlight**

- Celebrate Bladen County Schools Reaching 1 Million Meals Milestone
- Recognize Robeson County Schools for Food Box Outreach
- Submit a School Nutrition Spotlight

### **Farm to School**

- Encourage Teams to Enter the 2020-21 N.C. Jr. Chef Competition

### **Grants**

- Check out the FY 2021 USDA Farm to School Grants RFA - Due 1/8
- Apply for the 2020 NSLP Equipment Assistance Grants - Due 1/8
- Apply for the 2021 SNF Equipment Grants - Due 1/31

### **Continuing Education**

- Webinar: Healthier School Community 2020 Virtual Forum - 12/15, 3 pm ET
- Webinar: Winter School Garden Programming with COVID-19 - 12/16, 2 pm ET

- SNA Webinar: School Nutrition, Food Allergies & Food Insecurity in the Pandemic - 12/16, 3 pm ET
- SNA School Nutrition Industry Conference - 1/12-14/21
- Apply for SN Foundation Scholarships - Due 1/31/21
- Access Virtual Training Resources

---

## Program Operations Information

---

### ***Comment NOW on Proposed Rule about Restoration of Flexibilities - Due 12/28***

You have the opportunity to comment through December 28 on the [Proposed Rule - Restoration of Milk, Whole Grains, and Sodium Flexibilities](#) the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) published in the Federal Register on November 25. The Proposed Rule seeks to reinstate vacated milk, whole grains, and sodium flexibilities and make them available once again to schools and institutions participating in Child Nutrition Programs. Please review the Proposed Rule and submit comments on how it impacts your program via [regulations.gov](#). Guidance on how to submit comments is included in the Proposed Rule. [Tune into the COVID-19 SFA Weekly Briefing on Wednesday, December 16, 2020, 2-3:30 PM ET to learn more.](#)

---

### ***Prepare for Holidays and Winter Weather***

With more winter weather and holidays approaching, now is the time to plan and work with families and partners to ensure that kids have the food they need. A new No Kid Hungry [resource](#) outlines the program options and waivers available this year and also offers tips and thought-starters for advance planning. Please ensure that you communicate any changes in meal service to families.

---

### ***Submit Meal Counts Daily***

North Carolina remains in a state of emergency related to COVID-19. As such, the N.C. Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) must report daily meal counts to the N.C. Emergency Operations Center. Please use the survey [link](#) to submit meal count data daily by 6 pm. If you have questions or issues submitting the data, please reach out to [Janet Johnson](#).

---

## School Nutrition Spotlight

---

### ***Celebrate Bladen County Schools Reaching 1 Million Meals Milestone***

Bladen County Schools held a surprise celebration last week to recognize their School Nutrition Team for preparing, packing, serving and delivering one million meals since the COVID-19 shutdown began on March 16, 2020. "I am especially proud, and thankful, for the many child nutrition staff that have prepared, packed, served, and helped deliver meals to our students and other children in our community," said Amy Stanley, Child Nutrition Director. [Read more here.](#)



## ***Recognize Robeson County Schools for Food Box Outreach***

Robeson County Schools was recently recognized in *The Robesonian* for their outreach to children through the Emergency-Meals-to-You program. The School Nutrition Program distributed 17,556 boxes to 2,672 children. The boxes provided 14 days of non-perishable food and were delivered to the children's doorstep through the United Parcel Service, U.S. Postal Service and Federal Express. The initiative was made possible through a partnership among USDA, NCDPI, School Nutrition Services, Robeson County Schools, the Baylor University Collaborative on Hunger and Poverty, and the Carolina Hunger Initiative. [Read more.](#)

---

## ***Submit a School Nutrition Spotlight***

We love lifting up our #NCSchoolNutritionHeroes! If you know of a North Carolina School Nutrition professional that has received an award, honor or other recognition or should be spotlighted, please share for an upcoming School Nutrition Spotlight. Please send details to Tracey Bates, [tracey.bates@dpi.nc.gov](mailto:tracey.bates@dpi.nc.gov).

---

## **Farm to School**

---

### ***Encourage Teams to Enter the 2020-21 N.C. Jr. Chef Competition***

Calling all high school student chefs to enter the 2020-21 N.C. Jr. Chef Competition! This year's competition will be virtual. Teams of 2-4 high school Career and Technical Education (CTE) students can work with their Family and Consumer Sciences Teacher and local School Nutrition Program to create a recipe for a school lunch entrée that features at least 2 North Carolina grown ingredients and 1 USDA Foods item, adheres to federal nutrition guidelines and meets student taste preferences. Intent to compete forms are due 12/18 and submission forms with application and recipe, recipe photo, and permission forms are due 2/1. Eight finalist teams will be selected for a virtual cook-off. Teams will be evaluated for their skills in recipe development, food safety and sanitation, food preparation and presentation. Sullivan University scholarships are available to the student members of the top three teams. Please share [competition info](#) with prospective teams.



## **Grants**

---

### ***Check out the FY 2021 USDA Farm to School Grants RFA***

The fiscal year (FY) 2021 USDA Farm to School Grant Program Request for Applications (RFA) is now available through grants.gov. Be sure to visit the Grant Applicant Resources [page](#) to access other helpful resources, including links to webinars that provide specific assistance on applying for a Farm to School Grant. Submit a Farm to School Grant application at [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov).

---

### ***Apply for the 2020 NSLP Equipment Assistance Grants - Due 1/8***

NCDPI is pleased to announce the availability of the 2020 NSLP Equipment Assistance Grants, specifically intended to help School Food Authorities (SFAs) purchase commercial equipment for use in preparing and/or serving nutritious meals to students that participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). The one-time appropriation of \$905,285.00 has been made available to NCDPI for sub-grants for equipment purchases in eligible schools and sites in traditional, charter and non-public schools and residential child

care institutions operating the NSLP. Applications are due to NCDPI by 5:00 pm, January 8, 2021. All funds must be fully expended by September 30, 2021. Please reference the November 6 email to School Nutrition administrators for more information and related documents. Should you have questions, please contact Jacquelyn McGowan at [jacquelyn.mcgowan@dpi.nc.gov](mailto:jacquelyn.mcgowan@dpi.nc.gov).

---

### ***Apply for the 2021 SNF Equipment Grants - Due 1/31***

The School Nutrition Foundation (SNF) is teaming up with industry partners to provide new kitchen equipment to deserving districts. Apply for the 2021 SNF Equipment Grant Program, featuring applications for four grants (the Winston Equipment Grant, the Vulcan Equipment Grant, the Hobart Equipment Grant, and the Collection Grant). The application period ends January 31, 2021. [Learn more and apply.](#)

---

## **Continuing Education**

---

### ***Webinar: Healthier School Community 2020 Virtual Forum - 12/15, 3 pm ET***

We learned a lot this year when COVID-19 turned U.S. schools into epicenters for addressing food insecurity in America. And it appears far from over. But now it's time to look forward and embrace best practices to make schools the whole child and whole health environments they need to be. Join GENYOUth and the School Superintendents' Association for a unique convening of luminaries and top minds in school leadership, public health, media and communication. [Registration is free, but space is limited.](#)

---

### ***Webinar: Winter School Garden Programming with COVID-19 - 12/16, 2 pm ET***

Since last spring we've seen innumerable examples of how educators have adapted their teaching practices in light of the unique challenges posed by COVID-19. As temperatures get colder and many school gardens are put to bed for the winter months additional adjustments will likely be needed to continue providing garden- and food-based learning opportunities to students. This virtual gathering hosted by the School Garden Support Organization Network will share creative ideas for tackling winter programming during COVID-19 whether you're engaged in remote, hybrid, or in-person learning. [Learn more and register.](#)

---

### ***SNA Webinar: School Nutrition, Food Allergies & Food Insecurity in the Pandemic - 12/16, 3 pm ET***

In this session, speakers will review the basics of food allergy management during the pandemic based on expert guidance, the intersection of food insecurity and food allergies, and the School Nutrition Team's role. [Learn more and register.](#)

---

### ***SNA School Nutrition Industry Conference - 1/12-14/21***

Join the School Nutrition Association for a premier virtual conference for operators and industry partners, reimagined to equip you for the challenges of leading in today's uncertain times. [Learn more and register.](#)

---

### ***Apply for SN Foundation Scholarships - Due 1/31/21***

Achieve your educational dreams with a scholarship from the School Nutrition Foundation! Professional Development Scholarships provide School Nutrition Association members with funding for tuition and books for the following school year. [Learn more and apply here.](#)

---

## ***Access Virtual Training Opportunities***

The Institute for 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 [COVID-19 professional resources](#) for Registered Dietitians/Nutritionists (RDNs) and Dietetic Technicians, Registered (DTRs), and [continuing professional education resources](#).

---

## Questions

---

If you have any questions regarding these updates, please reach out to your regional consultants. Contact information for your Zone teams can be found [here](#).

### **USDA Nondiscrimination Statement**

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at: [How to File a Complaint](#), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (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) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.