

School Nutrition Update

October 10-14, 2022



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Program Operations Information

Access USDA Foods Database

As of September 30, 2022, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Foods Database is available for States and school districts to access up-to-date, vendor-specific nutrition, allergen, and ingredient information for direct delivered USDA Foods for Child Nutrition Programs. The USDA Foods Database makes USDA Foods product information available in an easily accessible format. USDA currently provides this information through USDA Foods Product Information Sheets. The USDA Foods Database will inform the ordering decisions of FNS stakeholders and will help them manage menu planning, meet USDA meal pattern requirements and nutrition standards, and provide safe meals for students with food allergies and other special dietary needs. Access the [USDA Foods Database](#), instructions for use, and frequently asked questions.

Utilize USDA Resources

The USDA, Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) offers a variety of resources. State agencies, program operators, and sponsoring organizations that participate in the USDA's Child Nutrition Programs can request free printed copies of materials. Place an order today for fall activities!

- [A Guide to Smart Snacks in School](#)
- [Best Practices for Reducing Added Sugars at School Breakfast](#)
- (New!) [How School Lunch Is Made and How You Can Help](#)
- (New!) Local School Wellness Policy Refresh! Infographic in [English](#) and [Spanish](#)



Emergencies and disasters may disrupt operations and increase food safety risks. The [FNS Food Safety Emergency Response webpage](#) provides resources that can help FNS program operators to prevent foodborne illness during emergencies and disasters.

- The Food Safety Emergency Response Pocket Guide was published in April 2022 and is available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#). This resource supports School Nutrition professionals in their response to food safety emergencies caused by disasters and weather-related events. Emergencies addressed include power outages, water outages, water contamination, sewage issues, floods, and fires.
- The Assembling Emergency Food Safety Supply Kits poster was published in August 2022 and is available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#). This resource highlights key supplies to include in emergency supply kits that may be used in disaster that impact foodservice operations.



These resources can be bookmarked, downloaded, and printed. Additional food safety resources and information are available via the [FNS Food Safety webpage](#) and the [Institute of Child Nutrition \(ICN\) Food Safety Resources webpage](#).

School Nutrition Spotlight

Showing Support for School Meals and Farm to School

October is celebrated as Farm to School and Early Care and Education Month in North Carolina. Everyone is encouraged to participate in the N.C. Crunch, an opportunity to taste and learn about North Carolina-grown produce and thank all those involved in feeding our youth and communities and making farm to school happen, our #farmtoschoolheroes. October 10-14 is National School Lunch Week. The 2022 theme is “Peace, Love, and School Lunch”. Students, school staff, education leaders, and community partners are encouraged to share what they love about school lunch and show love for their local School Nutrition Programs.



During their October meeting, the N.C. State Board of Education (NCSBE) crunched into North Carolina-grown apples from Flavor Full Farms, a N.C. Farm to School Program grower, to show their support for farm to school and school meals. In addition, [State Superintendent Catherine Truitt](#) and [NCSBE Chair Eric Davis](#)



recorded video messages about the benefits of farm to school and school meals.

Check out the NCSBE N.C. Crunch photo and video messages from Superintendent Truitt and Chair Davis on the @NCSchoolMeals and @NCPublicSchools social media. Repost on social media to share with your school community. Encourage your local education leaders – superintendents, boards of education, and other school and district administrators to show their support for school meals and farm to school.



Share Your School and Summer Meal Photos

The NCDPI, School Nutrition Division wants to highlight the appealing, wholesome, quality meals our School Nutrition Programs across the state offer to students each day. Share your beautiful photos of serving lines and complete school breakfast or school lunch 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 info so we can aim to credit the source. Be on the lookout for photos of school meals from across the state on social media.



Wake County Public Schools

Send in Articles 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 SN 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. Include “**SN Update**” in the email subject line.

Grant Opportunity

Inspire Students with Budding Botanist Grant – Due 10/14

The Klorane Botanical Foundation is committed to supporting programs that teach respect for the environment and protect nature through the preservation of plant species and biodiversity. Designed to further their mission, the Budding Botanist Grant will help students learn about plants, explore their world, and inspire them to take care of the life they discover in their local ecosystems. In late 2022, twenty high-need schools across the United States will be awarded \$1,000 in grant funding to support their youth garden programs. [Learn more and apply.](#)



Apply for the Whole Kids Foundation Bee Grant – Due 10/15

The Whole Kids Foundation is offering two grants to support establishing or growing bee programs. The Traditional Bee Grant allows for K-12 schools or non-profit organizations that serve any grades K-12 to start a new or enhance an existing bee program hosting live bees on their campus. The traditional track is for new applicants only. The Renewal Bee Grant allows for K-12 schools or non-profit organizations that have previously received a Bee Grant to receive support to grow their programs. The renewal is for previous Bee Grant recipients only. [Learn more and apply.](#)



Farm to School

Proclaiming October as Farm to School and Early Care and Education Month

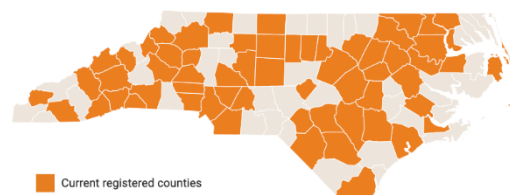
Governor Cooper has [proclaimed](#) October as Farm to School and Early Care and Education Month in North Carolina. The State of North Carolina joins the Farm to School Coalition of North Carolina, N.C. Farm to Preschool Network, early care and education sites, K-12 schools, and communities across the state in participating in the North Carolina Crunch to celebrate Farm to School and Early Care and Education Month, offer children, adolescents, and adults the opportunity to taste and learn about locally grown produce, and recognize our essential front-line professionals involved in feeding our children and communities.



Have You Signed Up for the 2022 #NCCrunch?

Have you signed up to participate in the 2022 #NCCrunch? So far, early care and education sites, K-12 schools, agencies, organizations, and individuals have signed up to reach over 60 counties plus the Qualla Boundary, over 1,900 sites, and almost 95,000 youth and adults. We hope to see the 2022 N.C. Crunch numbers continue to increase throughout the month. Help us reach all 100 counties and at least 500,000 participants for the 2022 #NCCrunch! [Sign up](#) for the #NCCrunch to receive a free guide with tips, templates, and links to resources so that you are ready to crunch.

NC Crunch 2022 Participation



The N.C. Crunch, co-hosted by the Farm to School Coalition of North Carolina and N.C. Farm to Preschool Network, offers youth and adults an opportunity to taste and learn about North Carolina-grown produce with their schools, early care, and education (ECE) centers, community organizations, and/or families. Farm to School and Early Care and Education Month also offers an opportunity to recognize the importance of farm to

school/early care and education and honor all those who contribute to feeding our youth and communities and making farm to school activities happen, our #farmtoschoolheroes.

Make this a crunch heard across the state! Share photos of your #NCCrunch activities on social media and tag @NCSchoolMeals, @F2SCoalitionNC and @NCFarmtoPreschool.

Continuing Education

Planning for Culturally Diverse & Inclusive Menus – 10/11, 2:30 pm ET

One of the ways culture is expressed is through the foods we eat and that could include school meals. It is important for school meals to include foods that reflect the cultural and religious demographics of your school community. Offering more diverse and culturally appropriate school meals is a great way to connect with your students and show them you understand and celebrate who they are. It can also be a terrific way to increase participation. Focusing on cultural preferences can help to improve access by catering to the flavors of your audience.

Join No Kid Hungry on October 11 at 2:30 pm ET for a webinar featuring dynamic leaders who will share their experiences planning culturally diverse and inclusive menus by connecting with their school community first and often. The webinar will cover how to connect with students and families to learn what they like to eat, recipes that kids like, how to get started offering culturally diverse and inclusive menus; and more! [Learn more and register.](#)

Serving Latinx Students and Communities – 10/11, 4 pm ET

Join KidsGardening on October 11, 2022 at 4 pm ET for their Honoring Hispanic Heritage Month webinar which will address how to engage students and communities using gardens as regenerative spaces. The presenters have a wide range of experiences with garden education. They will share the principles and practices of garden education with a focus on pedagogy and partnerships to successfully serve Latina/o/x students and their communities. [Learn more and register.](#)

Learning Landscape Design for Youth Gardens – Starts 10/11

In this course starting October 11, KidsGardening will introduce participants to the basic steps and elements of landscape design that can be used to plan an interactive, fun, and sustainable youth garden. The goal is to provide design guidance to help participants plan a youth-friendly garden that is engaging while also appealing to a broader community audience. The focus will be on the practical application of basic design techniques to help new-to-youth gardening educators, community volunteers/leaders, and family members start a gardening journey with the kids in their lives. [Learn more and register.](#)

Meal Talk: Taste-Test Events – 10/12, 3 pm ET

In honor of National School Lunch Week, USDA's Team Nutrition initiative will present a Meal Talk webinar on Taste-Test Events. This webinar will be held October 12, 3-4 pm ET. Team Nutrition staff and guest speakers from the Pennridge School District in Pennsylvania and Kern County Superintendent of Schools in California will share tools, tips, strategies, success stories, and best practices related to hosting taste-test events with elementary and secondary school students. Attendees will hear about new ideas and tools for conducting taste-test events as well as strategies for incorporating taste-test results into menu planning. This webinar will

be recorded and made available at a later date at on the Team Nutrition website. All who register will receive an email when the recording is available. [Learn more and register.](#)

Celebrate NSLW Virtually – 10/13, 2 pm ET

Despite the many challenges across the past two years, School Nutrition professionals have gone above and beyond to ensure that students have access to delicious and nutritious meals. USDA remains committed to the success of School Nutrition professionals and wants to celebrate all that you do. School Nutrition Association (SNA) members are invited to join USDA and SNA as we celebrate National School Lunch Week and



show our gratitude to the professionals who help to foster the well-being and healthy eating habits of students across our nation, share updates on the latest USDA efforts to support schools, and highlight guest speakers sharing stories on utilizing USDA Supply Chain Assistance Funds and other supports from USDA.

[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 [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.

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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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