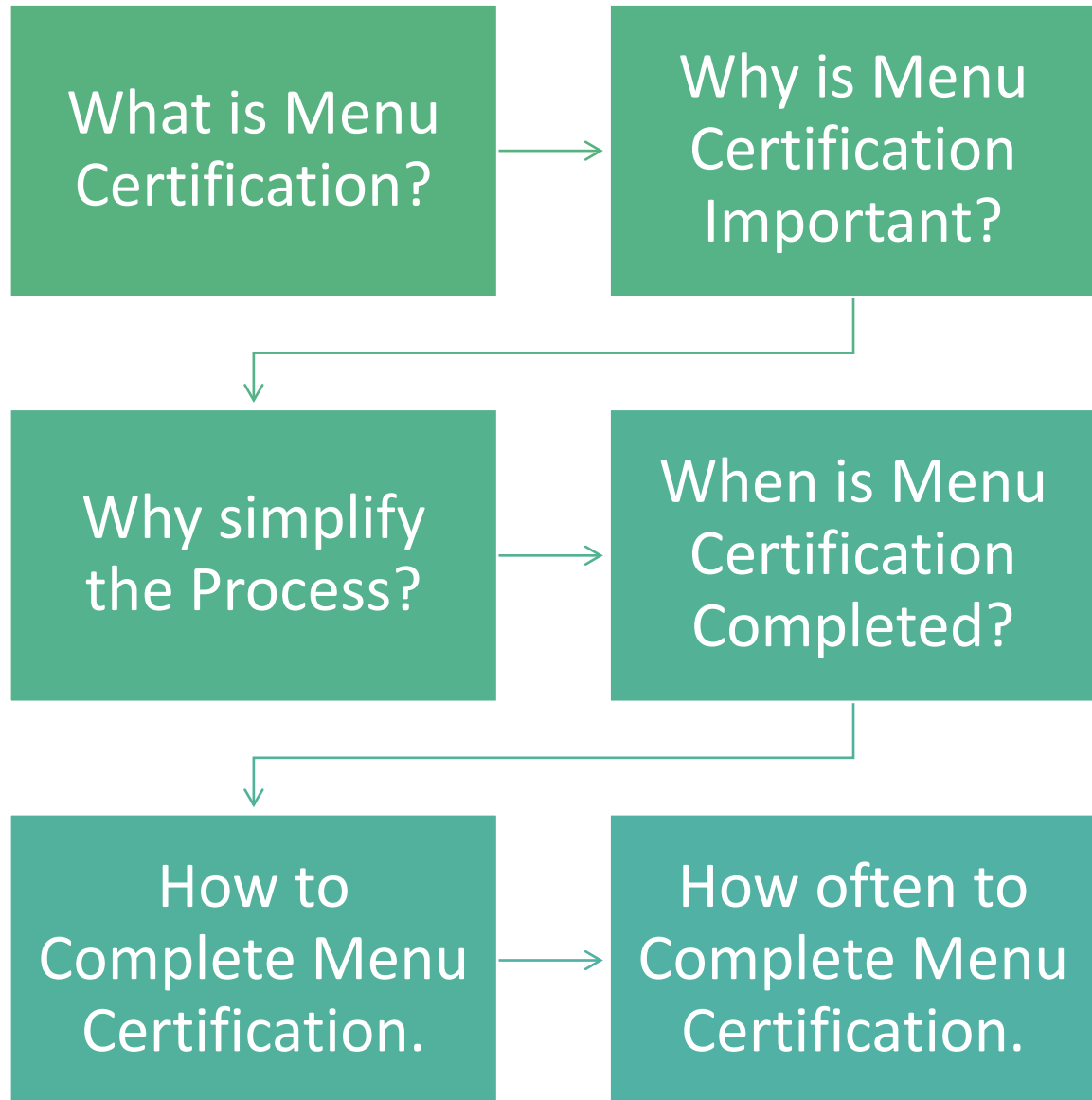


The What, Why, When and How of Menu Certification

An Introduction to the New Simplified Menu Certification Process in North Carolina

Presentation Agenda



What is Menu Certification?



The **Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act (HHFKA)** was signed into law by President Barack Obama on **December 13, 2010**. Its mission? To tackle childhood hunger and improve the nutritional well-being of school children. New nutrition standards were set for school meals, which included increasing access to fruits, veggies, whole grains, and lean proteins.



The Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act initially provided an additional 6-cents per lunch reimbursement to school food authorities that were certified to be in compliance with the new meal patterns starting Oct. 1, 2012.



School food authorities that maintain compliance with meal requirements will continue to receive this performance-based funding which is adjusted annually if needed (this is attested to yearly during the application process and checked every 5 years during the AR). **The current performance-based reimbursement rate is 9-cents per reimbursable lunch.**

Why is Menu Certification Important?



Ensures compliance with the USDA meal pattern and nutrition standards.



Is necessary to continue to receive the performance-based reimbursement (additional 9 cents per reimbursable lunch meal).



What was the Menu Certification Process?



SFA's complete Meal Component and Quantity Worksheets (MCQW's) prior to Administrative Review's (AR's) to determine menu compliance to specific meal pattern (i.e: K-12 breakfast or 9-12 lunch).

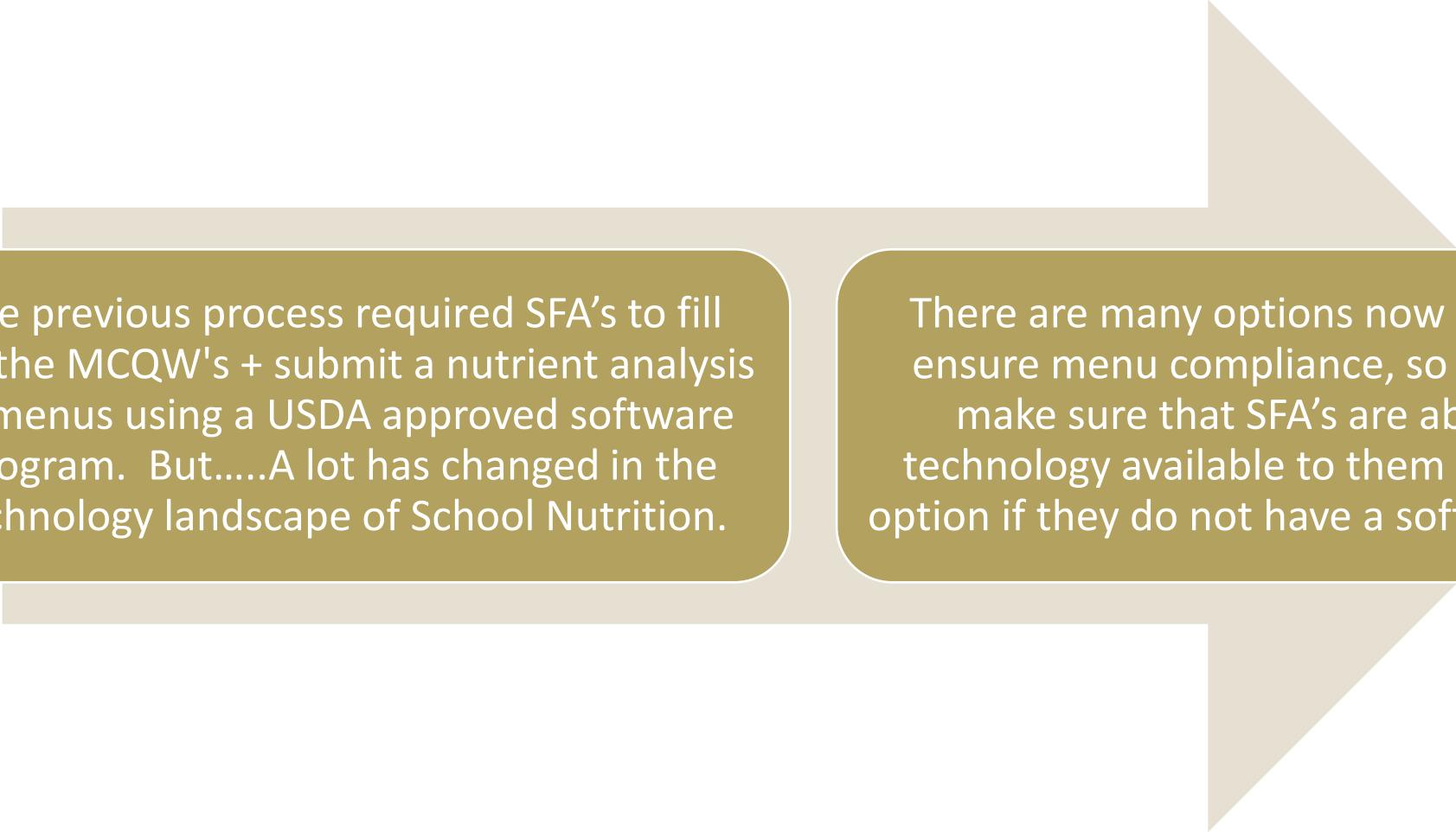


Potential new sponsors must have menus certified for compliance by submitting MCQW's and a nutrient analysis of each specific menu and meal pattern by a USDA approved software system.



School Nutrition Consultant or AR lead evaluates submitted information to determine if the menu meets requirements for compliance and certification.

Why Simplify the Process?



The previous process required SFA's to fill out the MCQW's + submit a nutrient analysis of menus using a USDA approved software program. But.....A lot has changed in the technology landscape of School Nutrition.

There are many options now available to ensure menu compliance, so we want to make sure that SFA's are able to use technology available to them or have an option if they do not have a software system.

What will Change?



We will no longer use the MCQW's and will begin using the USDA Certification Worksheets starting the 2024-2025 School Year to demonstrate meal pattern compliance.

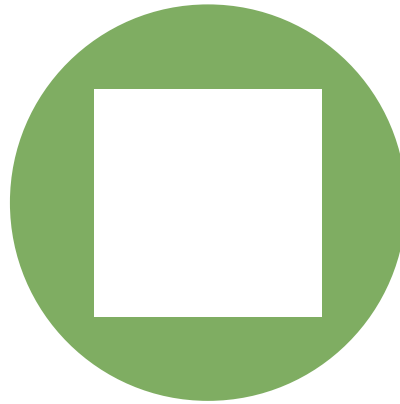


We will accept certification documentation from your USDA approved software program if it provides sufficient information (information does not have to necessarily be in the same format as the USDA Worksheets).

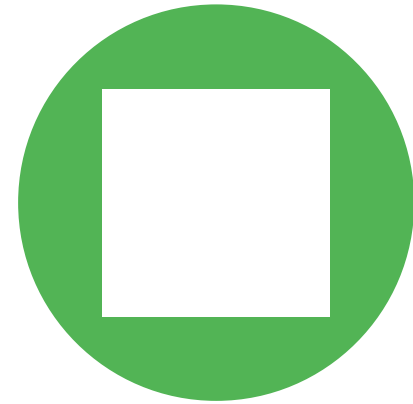
When are Menus Certified for Compliance by The State Agency?



WHEN A NEW SPONSOR APPLIES TO OPERATE
THE NSLP
OR THERE IS A CHANGE IN CATERING CONTRACTS



DURING AN ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW.



WHEN REQUESTED BY THE STATE AGENCY.

When Should SFA's Check Menus for Compliance?



Anytime there are significant changes in the menu or recipe ingredients.

Note: Compliance documentation does not need to be submitted to the State Agency unless requested



If requested during a Technical Assistance (TA) visit.

How to Check Menus for Compliance: Step 1

- Gather the following information:
 - 1-week menu (5 days) for each distinct meal pattern (i.e. K-8 lunch, 9-12 lunch)
 - Portion sizes for all reimbursable menu items
 - Contribution information for each menu item (CN Labels, USDA Foods Fact Sheets)
 - Standardized Recipes
 - Production Records (Planned Quantities)
- You may also need access to the following resources:
 - Food Buying Guide
 - Food Buying Guide Calculator
 - Vegetable Subgroups List





How to Check Menus for Compliance: Step 2

Choose your Certification Option:

- **OPTION 1**
USDA Certification Worksheet with Simplified Nutrient Analysis
- **OPTION 2**
USDA Certification Worksheet & USDA-Approved Nutrient Analysis
- **OPTION 3**
USDA-Approved Certification of Compliance Tool & Nutrient Analysis

OPTION 1

USDA Certification Worksheet with Simplified Nutrient Analysis

The SFA must submit:

- One week of menus for each meal type (i.e. breakfast and/or lunch) and grade group (i.e. K-5, 6-8, combined K-8, and/or 9-12)
- One [Excel USDA certification worksheet](#) for each meal type and grade group with the Simplified Nutrient Assessment tab completed

OPTION 2

USDA Certification Worksheet & USDA-Approved Nutrient Analysis

The SFA must submit:

- One week of menus for each meal type (i.e. breakfast and/or lunch) and grade group (i.e. K-5, 6-8, combined K-8, and/or 9-12)
- One [Excel USDA certification worksheet](#) for each meal type and grade group (without the Simplified Nutrient Assessment tab completed)
- Nutrient analysis from a [USDA-approved nutrient analysis software](#) for each meal type and grade group

OPTION 3

USDA-Approved Certification of Compliance Tool & Nutrient Analysis

The SFA must submit:

- One week of menus for each meal type (i.e. breakfast and/or lunch) and grade group (i.e. K-5, 6-8, combined K-8, and/or 9-12)
- One certification worksheet from a [USDA-approved certification of compliance tool](#) for each meal type and grade group
- Nutrient analysis from a [USDA-approved nutrient analysis software](#) for each meal type and grade group

A Closer Look at the USDA Certification Resources and Worksheets

[Certification of Compliance | Food and Nutrition Service \(usda.gov\)](#)



Weekly Report
Lunch, Grades 9-12

Cells shaded this color means the daily minimum for the component is NOT met

[Go to instructions](#)

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Weekly Total	Weekly Requirement (cups)	Weekly Requirement Check
Minimum Fruit (cups)	1	1	1	1	1	5	5	Yes

Weekly Fruit Juice Limit Check (no more than half of total fruit)	Total Weekly Fruit	Total Weekly Fruit Juice	Percent of total weekly fruit that is juice	Weekly requirement check
	5	1 1/2	30.00%	Yes

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Weekly Total	Weekly Requirement (cups)	Weekly Requirement Check
Minimum Vegetables	1	1	1	1	1	5	5	Yes
Cups of DARK GREEN	1/2	0	1/2	0	0	1	1/2	Yes
Cups of RED/ORANGE	3/4	0	0	0	1/2	1 1/4	1 1/4	Yes
Cups of BEANS/PEAS(Legumes)	0	0	0	1/2	0	1/2	1/2	Yes
Cups of STARCHY vegetables	1/2	0	1/2	0	1/2	1 1/2	1/2	Yes
Cups of OTHER (any other type of vegetable)	0	1/2	0	1/2	0	1	3/4	Yes

Weekly Vegetable Juice Limit Check (no more than half of total vegetables)	Total Weekly Vegetables	Total Weekly Vegetable Juice	Percent of total weekly vegetables that is juice	Weekly requirement check
	5	0	0.00%	Yes

Comments Section

Test

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Weekly Total	Weekly Requirement (oz equivalents)	Weekly Requirement Check
Minimum Meat/Meat Alternate	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	10.00	10	Yes
Maximum Meat/Meat Alternate	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	10.00	12	Yes

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Weekly Total	Weekly Requirement (oz equivalents)	Weekly Requirement Check
Minimum Grain	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	10.00	10	Yes
Maximum Grain	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	10.00	12	Yes
Grain Based Dessert Total for all weekly meals						0.00	No more 2 oz equivalents	Yes
Whole Grain Rich Weekly Amount	Weekly Grains Total: 22.00		Weekly Whole Grain Rich Total: 22.00		Percent of Whole Grain Rich	100.00%	80% whole grain rich	Yes

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Weekly Total	Weekly Requirement (cups)	Weekly Requirement Check
Minimum Fluid Milk	1	1	1	1	1	5	5	Yes
Variety: Skim/fat-free unflavored, Skim/fat-free flavored, Low-fat (less than 1%), unflavored, Low-fat (less than 1%), flavored	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes			
Reduced fat (2% fat) or whole, unflavored and flavored								



Weekly Report
Lunch, Grades 9-12

Cells shaded this color means the daily minimum for the component is NOT met

Go to instructions	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Weekly Total	Weekly Requirement (cups)	Weekly Requirement Check
Minimum Fruit (cups)	1	1	1	1	1	5	5	Yes

Weekly Fruit Juice Limit Check (no more than half of total fruit)	Total Weekly Fruit	Total Weekly Fruit Juice	Percent of total weekly fruit that is juice	Weekly requirement check
	5	1	20.00%	Yes

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Weekly Total	Weekly Requirement (cups)	Weekly Requirement Check
Minimum Vegetables	1	1	1	1	1	5	5	Yes
Cups of DARK GREEN	1/2	0	1/2	0	0	1	1/2	Yes
Cups of RED/ORANGE	0	0	1/4	0	1/2	3/4	1 1/4	No
Cups of BEANS/PEAS(Legumes)	0	0	0	1/2	0	1/2	1/2	Yes
Cups of STARCHY vegetables	1/2	1/2	1/2	0	1/2	2	1/2	Yes
Cups of OTHER (any other type of vegetable)	0	1/2	0	1/2	0	1	3/4	Yes

Weekly Vegetable Juice Limit Check (no more than half of total vegetables)	Total Weekly Vegetables	Total Weekly Vegetable Juice	Percent of total weekly vegetables that is juice	Weekly requirement check
	5 5/8	0	0.00%	Yes

Comments Section

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Weekly Total	Weekly Requirement (oz equivalents)	Weekly Requirement Check
Minimum Meat/Meat Alternate	2.00	0.00	0.00	2.00	2.00	8.00	10	No
Maximum Meat/Meat Alternate	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	10.00	12	Yes

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Weekly Total	Weekly Requirement (oz equivalents)	Weekly Requirement Check
Minimum Grain	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	10.00	10	Yes
Maximum Grain	3.00	2.00	4.00	3.00	2.00	14.00	12	No
Grain Based Dessert Total for all weekly meals						0.00	No more 2 oz equivalents	Yes
Whole Grain Rich Weekly Amount	Weekly Grains Total: 24.00		Weekly Whole Grain Rich Total: 20.00		Percent of Whole Grain Rich	83.33%	80% whole grain rich	Yes

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Weekly Total	Weekly Requirement (cups)	Weekly Requirement Check
Minimum Fluid Milk	1	0	1	1	1	4	5	No
Variety: Skim/fat-free unflavored, Skim/fat-free flavored, Low-fat (less than 1%), unflavored, Low-fat (less than 1%), flavored	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes			
Reduced fat (2% fat) or whole, unflavored and flavored								

What's Next?

There will be further training on the USDA Certification Worksheets during the Fall Administrators Conference.

Contact your Area Nutrition Consultant if you need help deciding which menu certification option to use.

[Continuing Education / Professional Development](#)
[| NC DPI](#)

The background of the slide is a dense field of dark grey, three-dimensional dollar signs (\$). In the center-right of the image, a single, bright orange, three-dimensional question mark (?) stands out prominently. The lighting creates highlights and shadows on the 3D shapes, giving them a sense of depth and texture.

Questions
