

# School Nutrition Update

September 18-22, 2023



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## Program Operations Information

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### ***Learn about Healthy Meals Incentives Awards – 9/21, 3 pm ET***

As part of a cooperative agreement to implement the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Healthy Meals Incentives Initiative, Action for Healthy Kids (AFHK) has launched the Healthy Meals Incentives Recognition Awards to celebrate School Food Authorities (SFAs) that have made significant improvements to the nutritional quality of their school meals. The awards will spotlight innovative practices, student and community engagement activities, and strategies that SFAs have used to provide meals that are consistent with the 2020-25 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. SFAs can apply for one or more of the following award categories:

- Breakfast Trailblazer
- Small and/or Rural SFA Breakfast Trailblazer
- Lunch Trailblazer
- Small and/or Rural SFA Lunch Trailblazer
- Innovative School Lunch Makeover
- Innovation in the Cultural Diversity of School Meals
- Innovation in the Preparation of School Meals
- Innovation in Nutrition Education

SFAs are eligible to apply for the Recognition Awards if they participate in the National School Lunch Program and/or School Breakfast Program. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis over a two-year application period ending June 30, 2025.

On September 21, 2023, AFHK will host an informational webinar, 3:00-4:00 pm ET, about the Recognition Awards. [Register](#) to attend. A recording will be archived on the AFHK website. To find more information about and the application for the Healthy Meals Incentives Awards, visit [www.healthymealsincentives.org](http://www.healthymealsincentives.org).

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### ***Register for a Charter School Boot Camp***

The N.C. Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI), Office of School Nutrition is thrilled to provide two upcoming workshops, the “Boot Camp for School Nutrition Personnel in Charter Schools: How to Effectively Manage the Risks and Navigate the Regulatory Waters of the Federal School Nutrition Programs”.

- October 17, 2023 - Hickory Metro Convention Center, 1960 13th Ave Dr SE #5186, Hickory
- October 18, 2023 - NCSU McKimmon Conference and Training Center, 1101 Gorman St., Raleigh

Sign-in starts at 8:30 am. The workshop runs from 8:45 am-4:00 pm. [Register](#) by Tuesday, October 10. The same content will be provided at each workshop, so please register for and plan to attend only one workshop. Participants are responsible for all travel expenses including breakfast, lunch, beverages, snacks, lodging, and mileage.

This intensive course was designed specifically for Charter School personnel who administer and/or operate School Nutrition Programs. The day-long workshop will provide valuable information about the complex rules and regulations of the Federally-assisted School Nutrition Programs and your responsibilities for implementing the rules as a program administrator or manager. Some questions answered during the workshop include:

- How do you know what to prioritize when managing School Nutrition Programs?
- How do you maintain program compliance with the regulations to avoid costly findings and required corrective actions?
- How do you minimize the risk of non-compliance which may result in the reclaim of funds and adversely impact the status of your charter?
- What strategies help Charter Schools comply with program regulations while simultaneously providing nutritious, appealing meals to students?

Participants will review the basic requirements for operating a successful and compliant School Nutrition Program. The topics chosen for this workshop are cited as the most challenging for Charter Schools to correctly implement. The following topics are often cited as “findings requiring major corrective actions” in eighty percent of Charter Schools participating in the School Nutrition Programs:

- Meal pattern
- Offer versus Serve
- Accuracy and accountability in meal counting, claiming, and consolidation
- Cash management procedures
- Standardized recipes
- Production records as the legal basis to substantiate reimbursable meals
- Purchases using school nutrition funds
- Succession plans to train new Charter School personnel in the event of staff turn over

Upon completion, the workshop will provide 6 hours of credit for professional development as required by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in the learning code 3000 Administration. Charter Schools’ personnel are required to participate in a minimum number of professional development workshops annually to achieve and maintain good standing in the School Nutrition Program.

This is a terrific opportunity to strengthen your knowledge and skills in the management of the School Nutrition Programs while minimizing the risks which may, unintentionally, undermine the integrity of your program. If you have general questions about the workshop, please contact Katrina Perry at [katrina.perry@dpi.nc.gov](mailto:katrina.perry@dpi.nc.gov). We look forward to seeing you for this important professional development opportunity!

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# School Nutrition Spotlight

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## *Celebrating N.C. Farm to Summer Week in Buncombe County Schools*

Buncombe County Schools (BCS) took the challenge by celebrating N.C. Farm to Summer Week, July 17-23. The BCS School Nutrition Program served locally sourced foods through their summer feeding programs that week. Summer meals featured Brasstown Beef and fruits and vegetables from Marvin's Produce. The BCS School Nutrition Program also shared nutrition education facts via social media.



What a great way to celebrate N.C. Farm to Summer! Learn more from the BCS School Nutrition Facebook [page](#).

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## *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.

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## *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](mailto: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.



Chatham County Schools

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## *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](mailto: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.

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# Grant Opportunity

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## *Learn about the Farm to School Technical Assistance Cooperative Agreement – Deadline 10/10*

The Patrick Leahy Farm to School Program is proud to announce the release of the FY 2024 Farm to School Technical Assistance Cooperative Agreement Request for Applications (RFA). This RFA supports the Farm to

School Program’s ability to provide technical assistance to farm to school stakeholders; expand farm to school activity nationwide; and contribute to the accomplishment of three USDA priorities: Food System Transformation, Improving Child Health Through Nutritious School Meals, and Indigenous Food Sovereignty. USDA will fund up to four total applicants using three tracks: Supporting Community Engagement, Supporting Tribal Engagement, and Supporting Producer Engagement. Eligible applicants include 501(c)3 non-profit organizations and Indian Tribal Organizations (ITOs). USDA will award approximately \$3 million in Farm to School Cooperative Agreement funds. Applications are due October 10, 2023. [Learn more.](#)

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### ***Apply for N.C. Farm Bureau Going Local Grants – Deadline 11/15***

The N.C. Farm Bureau is happy to provide agricultural outreach grants to North Carolina teachers through their Ag in the Classroom Going Local program. These grants value up to \$500. Going Local Grants help educators provide Pre-K through collegiate-level students with valuable, real-world education and experiences directly related to the agricultural industry and the N.C. Standard Course of Study. Educators practicing in private and public North Carolina schools, colleges, and universities are encouraged to apply. [Learn more.](#)

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## **Nutrition Education & Promotion**

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### ***Recognize National Food Safety Education Month***

September is National Food Safety Education Month, the perfect time to remind School Nutrition staff, educators, families, and students about safe food handling and proper hand hygiene. The Partnership for Food Safety Education has provided a number of free education and promotional materials for outreach, including tip sheets, guides, webinars, videos, safe food cookbooks, activity sheets, coloring pages, placemats, and more. There is even a Food Safety BINGO activity with a chance to win great prizes! [Learn more.](#)



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### ***Level Up with School Lunch – 10/9-13***

National School Lunch Week, #NSLW, is October 9-13, 2023. Get ready to celebrate and promote how students and staff can “Level Up with School Lunch”! A variety of free promotional resources, including a toolkit, sample press release, proclamation, coloring and activity sheets, social media graphics, and more are available from the national School Nutrition Association. [Learn more.](#)



School Nutrition Programs can order free print materials to help celebrate NSLW from USDA Team Nutrition! Check out some examples below. Explore all print materials by visiting the [Team Nutrition Resource Order Form.](#)

- **Stickers:**
  - [Taste Test](#)
  - [I’ve Got Great Taste](#)

## [Make it a Try Day](#)

- **Decal Sets:**

- [Discover New Foods](#)

- [Fueling My Healthy Life](#)

- **Posters:**

- [Offer vs. Serve High School Lunch](#)

- [Offer vs. Serve Middle School Lunch](#)

- [MyPlate](#)

- [Be a Food Critic!](#)

- [Taste-Test](#)

- **Student Resources:**

- [Stronger with School Meals Activity Booklet](#)

- [MyPlate Guide to School Lunch](#)

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## Continuing Education

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### ***Engaging Families to Support Students' Social, Emotional, Behavioral, and Academic Well-Being and Success – 9/20, 3 pm ET***

On behalf of the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education's Office of Safe and Supportive Schools, the National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments (NCSSLE) invites you to join an upcoming webinar on September 20 at 3 pm ET on Strategies for Engaging Families to Support Students' Social, Emotional, Behavioral, and Academic Well-Being and Success. [Learn more and register.](#)

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### ***Participate in the Food Hub Feasibility Study Webinar Series***

The Saratoga Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) USDA Food Hub Feasibility Study Webinar Series will be of interest to all who are in any way connected to our food supply – farmers, farmers markets, supermarkets, food banks, etc. The Food Hub Feasibility Study webinar series explores the findings of a study conducted by Saratoga CCE, which was funded by the USDA's 2021 Local Food Promotion Program grant. Through research, analysis, and on-the-ground work, this study details available and potential markets for local foods. They offer recommendations to best service the local food system that considers farm to institution, distribution, infrastructure, food access, the emergency food system, and climate change.

- Distribution, Markets, and Emissions - September 20, 12 pm EST
- Infrastructure Expansion - September 27, 12 pm EST

Each webinar is designed to stand alone, but the full inter-disciplinary picture of the food system is best seen through the full series. Links will be emailed to registered participants. [Learn more and register.](#)

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## 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).

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## Questions

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

### USDA Nondiscrimination Statement

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

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To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained [online](#), from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted 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) (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

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