

# North Carolina School Nutrition Weekly Update

February 4, 2015

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## ***In This Issue:***

- ***Equipment Assistance Grants 2015***
- ***2015 USDA Best Practice Awards***
- ***More than 3 Months Operating Balance?...***
- ***2014-15 Lunch Meal Prices***
- ***Growing Roots in Farm to School Webinar Series***
- ***2015 NC Healthy Learning Summit***
- ***February is National Sweet Potato Month!***
- ***Important Dates***

## ***Equipment Assistance Grants 2015***

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The NC Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) is pleased to notify all School Food Authorities (SFA) of a grant opportunity specifically intended to help SFAs purchase commercial equipment for use in storing, preparing and/or serving nutritious meals to students that participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). The one-time appropriation of \$1,165,000 has been made available to the 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.

The Request for Applications/Proposals is attached along with the forms required to complete the application/proposal process. SFAs eligible to apply for grants include those operating in compliance with current Federal Regulations (no outstanding corrective actions from an Administrative Review) with fewer than three months operating balance. In order for schools or sites to be eligible for an Equipment Assistance Grant, fifty percent of students enrolled in the school/site must be eligible for free or reduced price meals OR the school must participate (with a relatively high Identified Student Percentage) in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP). While schools/sites must justify the need for the equipment grant, priority will be given to

schools with (1) limited access to other resources to support the purchase of equipment, (2) the need for replacement equipment as a result of old equipment that no longer effectively nor efficiently serves the program, and (3) for schools that have not been awarded an Equipment Assistance Grant in the past.

Grants will be awarded for commercial equipment that is defined as “*nonexpendable, tangible property with a useful life of more than one year and a per unit acquisition cost of \$5,000*”. Grants will only be awarded for equipment valued at \$5,000 or more. Given the limited amount of funds available to the agency and the commitment to distribute these funds as equitably as possible, we encourage SFAs to be realistic in their requests. Based on this recommendation, if an SFA would like to request a “partial grant” with the plan of using other SFA funds to purchase a larger piece of equipment, you may do so. For example, a single request for \$40,000 is unlikely to be successful, but a partial grant in the amount of \$20,000 is much more likely to be successful and that amount can defray the overall cost of the equipment.

SFAs must use their individual School Nutrition Procurement Plan to determine whether a formal or informal purchasing method is indicated and all procurement documents, including the solicitation and the vendor’s bid/quote must be submitted with the application/proposal packet. All funds must be fully expended by September 1, 2015. Funds not fully paid to the vendor by this date will be returned to the USDA. Applications are due to the NCDPI by 5:00 PM, Tuesday, March 10, 2015.

As you may know, the 2015 Federal Budget Act (formally known as the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act of 2015) authorized an additional round Equipment Assistance Grants for SFAs. USDA is still analyzing the language of the act and will provide guidance to State Agencies about the additional Equipment Assistance Grant funds along with the two other important provisions (flexibility in whole grain-rich foods and a delay in the sodium requirements pending further research to substantiate the requirements) in the near future. So, if you are unable to apply for this round of grants, another will be forthcoming in this fiscal year.

**CLICK HERE** for EAG Announcement Letter

**CLICK HERE** for EAG Grant Application/Proposal

Should you have questions please contact:

Tara Tyson at [tara.tyson@dpi.nc.gov](mailto:tara.tyson@dpi.nc.gov) or Stephanie Tatum at [stephanie.tatum@dpi.nc.gov](mailto:stephanie.tatum@dpi.nc.gov)

## **2015 USDA Best Practice Awards**

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The US Department of Agriculture has announced the Twenty-second Annual Best Practice Awards in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP) and Food Distribution Program (FDP). The purpose of this program is to encourage and reward outstanding practices in schools and in School Food Authorities (SFAs) in the Southeast Region Please review the attached Best Practice Awards information for 2015. **All nominations are due on or before 5:00 p.m. on Monday, March 30, 2015.** Electronic documents or

fax transmissions will not be accepted. Please review the attached document for entry details and criteria along with the nomination entry forms.

All entries should be sent or delivered to:

**North Carolina Department of Public Instruction School Nutrition Services**  
**301 N. Wilmington Street**  
**6324 Mail Service Center**  
**Raleigh, NC 27699-6324**  
**Attention: Pat Brafford**

Should you have any questions please contact your Regional Consultants.

### ***More Than 3 Months Operating Balance?...***

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Please review your June 2014 FC-1A report and determine if your district is in excess of three months operating balance. If so, please submit a corrective action plan (spend-down plan) for reducing the excess funds by **February 15, 2015** to the state agency. Corrective action plans should be in sufficient detail to enable the State Agency to determine:

1. The type, quantity, and unit cost of food service equipment to be purchased.
2. The value of repairs to existing equipment.
3. Salary and benefit cost for new food service workers.
4. Value of the decrease in the student meal prices.
5. Projected amounts to be spent to otherwise improve the school fund service.

Please submit the Corrective Action Plan to Tara Tyson at ([tara.tyson@dpi.nc.gov](mailto:tara.tyson@dpi.nc.gov)) or by mail at:

**School Nutrition Services**  
**NC Department of Public Instruction**  
**6324 Mail Service Center**  
**Raleigh, NC 27699-6324**

### ***2014-15 Lunch Meal Prices***

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The SY 14-15 lunch meal prices are available on the SN website at:

<http://childnutrition.ncpublicschools.gov/information-resources/financial-management/14-15-lun-meal-prices.xlsx> . If any corrections are needed, please email those to Janet Johnson at [janet.williamsjohnson@dpi.nc.gov](mailto:janet.williamsjohnson@dpi.nc.gov).

## ***Growing Roots in Farm to School Webinar Series***

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USDA Farm to School staff and guest speakers have just what you need to start or expand your farm to school program. This webinar series will help you build your farm to school skills and develop new strategies for bringing local foods into the lunchroom. Join them for tips and insights on topics like building a team, menu planning, program sustainability, and more! *New this year: earn SNA Continuing Education Units for each webinar attended.*

To keep up-to-date on all things farm to school, be sure to [sign up for the USDA Farm to School newsletter](#)

To join the live webinar, register at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/YMTTVNK>. All times listed are EST.

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|-----------------------|--|
| *January 15           | <b>Farm to School Planning and Building a Team</b><br>(*webinar recording will be added to the USDA Farm to School <a href="#">website</a> soon)           |
| *January 28           | <b>Setting Goals and Establishing an Evaluation Baseline</b><br>(*webinar recording will be added to the USDA Farm to School <a href="#">website</a> soon) |
| February 5 (2:00 pm)  | <b>Finding and Buying Local Foods</b>  |
| February 19 (2:00 pm) | <b>Farm to School Menu Planning</b>  |
| March 5 (2:00 pm)     | <b>Food Safety</b>   |
| March 19 (2:00 pm)    | <b>Promoting Your Farm to School Program</b>   |
| April 2 (2:00 pm)     | <b>School Gardening</b>  |
| April 16 (2:00 pm)    | <b>Curriculum Integration</b>  |
| April 30 (2:00 pm)    | <b>Program Sustainability</b>  |
| May 13 (2:00 pm)      | <b>Evaluating Your Program</b>   |
| May 28 (2:00 pm)      | <b>Tying it All Together and Digging In</b>  |

## ***2015 NC Healthy Learning Summit***

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The North Carolina AFHK team, the North Carolina PTA, and the Southeast United Dairy Industry Association will once again team up to bring you a day of learning. Join us for a day of interactive fun! Our focus this year will be School Health Teams. Bring your entire wellness team or join us on behalf of your school. Parents, teachers, school administrators, central office administrators, wellness coordinators, school nurses, child nutrition directors, after school care professionals, community members, and anyone passionate about school wellness are invited. We want you on our team!

Topics include:

- Making the Case for School Wellness
- Wellness Policies 101
- Fuel Up to Play 60
- Creating a Healthier School Food Culture
- Adding More Activity in the School Day
- Assessing Your School's Wellness Environment
- Developing and Implementing an Action Plan

When: Saturday, February 7, 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM

Where: Panther Creek High School  
6770 McCrimmon Parkway  
Cary, NC

Fee: **\$10**

Find out more at:

[www.actionforhealthykids.org/events/trainings-and-conferences/event/238](http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/events/trainings-and-conferences/event/238)

## ***February is National Sweet Potato Month!***

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It is National Sweet Potato Month and as many of you know North Carolina is the No. 1 sweet potato producer in the United States. The following websites are great sources for information, resources and recipes to help you celebrate National Sweet Potato Month in your districts.



- North Carolina Sweet Potatoes ([www.ncsweetpotatoes.com](http://www.ncsweetpotatoes.com))
- NC Department of Agriculture (<http://www.ncagr.gov/agscool/commodities/sweetkid.htm>)
- NC Farm to School ([www.ncfarmtoschool.com](http://www.ncfarmtoschool.com))
- USDA (<http://healthymeals.nal.usda.gov/features-month/february/national-sweet-potato-month>)

### ***and Remember...***

The January NC Farm to School newsletter included information about:

- the series of “Procuring Local Foods” workshops that will be held across the state in January and February;
- produce available from the NC Farm to School Program this month; and
- a local sweet potato grower and the Sweet Potato Month contest that NCDA&CS is sponsoring along with the NC Sweet Potato Commission.

To view/download the January newsletter visit: [www.ncfarmtoschool.com/htm/newsletter/index.htm](http://www.ncfarmtoschool.com/htm/newsletter/index.htm)

## Sweet Potato Month

The Sweet Potato Month contest entry form, informational flyer and a list of suggested activities are located at: [www.ncfarmtoschool.com/htm/promotions/index.htm](http://www.ncfarmtoschool.com/htm/promotions/index.htm).

## NC Farm to School Calendar Contest

The deadline for entries in the NC Farm to School calendar contest is approaching! Please help us promote this contest by sharing information with your elementary schools. Details can be found at [www.ncfarmtoschool.com/htm/downloads/artcalrules.htm](http://www.ncfarmtoschool.com/htm/downloads/artcalrules.htm).

For questions about the newsletter or the NC Farm to School Program, please contact:

Heather Barnes, Marketing Specialist, NCDA&CS

919-707-3127

[heather.barnes@ncagr.gov](mailto:heather.barnes@ncagr.gov)

## Important Dates .....

### February

February 2015 ..... National Sweet Potato Month  
February 7 ..... 2015 NC Healthy Learning Summit  
February 10 (Tuesday) ..... Deadline for Submitting Claim for Reimbursement (for January 2015)  
February 15 (Sunday) ..... Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Claim for Reimbursement Deadline (for January 2015)  
February 24 ..... Region 6 Spring Policy Update  
February 25 ..... 2015 NC Child Hunger Leaders Conference

### March

March 2 ..... FC1-A Semi-Annual Report Due  
March 2 ..... Paid Lunch Equity Due to the State Agency  
March 4 ..... Region 1 Spring Policy Update  
March 6 ..... Region 3 Spring Policy Update for Charters & RCCIs  
March 10 (Tuesday) ..... Deadline for Submitting Claim for Reimbursement (for February 2015)  
March 15 (Sunday) ..... Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Claim for Reimbursement Deadline (for February 2015)  
March 16 ..... Region 5 Spring Policy Update for Charters and RCCIs  
March 19 ..... Region 7 Spring Policy Update  
March 20 ..... Region 2 Spring Policy Update  
March 20 ..... Region 3 Spring Policy Update for Traditional Public Schools

March 26 ..... Region 8 Spring Policy Update  
 March 30 ..... Deadline for submitting USDA Best Practice Awards Nominations  
 March 31 ..... Region 4 Spring Policy Update

**April**

April 1 ..... Deadline for Completing Self-Assessments for RCCI/Charter/Non-Public SFAs (File at SFA)  
 April 3 ..... Good Friday (State Offices Closed)  
 April 10 (Friday)..... Deadline for Submitting Claim for Reimbursement (for March 2015)  
 April 15 (Wednesday) ..... Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Claim for Reimbursement Deadline (for March 2015)  
 April 15 ..... March Nutrient Analysis Reports Due (Submit to Regional Nutrition Specialist)  
 April 30 .....3<sup>rd</sup> Quarterly Financial Analysis Worksheet Due (for Traditional Public School SFAs only)

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If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), found at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html) or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339; or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish).

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