

School Nutrition Update

August 10, 2020



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Program Operations Information

Time Sensitive - Data Request – Meal Program Survey

Information is needed from all North Carolina School Food Authorities (SFAs) on plans to either continue the Summer Food Service Program through August 31st or switch to the National School Lunch Program as school starts back. In addition, the N.C. Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI), School Nutrition Services has been asked to prepare a “State of School Nutrition in North Carolina” report for the Superintendent, State Board of Education and N.C. General Assembly. In order to help with this data request, please respond to a brief [Meal Program Survey](#) by Tuesday, August 11 at 12 noon.

Opening Public Schools Guidance Updated July 24th

The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) has updated the #StrongSchoolsNC Public Health Toolkit and FAQs. Please review the updated toolkit, utilize this [guidance](#) in planning and share the guidance with staff. For questions, communicate with your school district administration and your local health department.



Q & A on School Opening from NCDPI, School Nutrition

The Q & A from NCDPI, School Nutrition COVID-19 Response Office Hours have been updated and are in the Downloads section of the School Nutrition Technology Systems (SNTS). If you have additional questions not addressed in the Q & A, please reach out to your regional consultants.

Transportation of Meals under Plans B or C upon Opening of Schools

In order to utilize yellow buses and transportation funds to operate yellow buses to transport meals when schools open for the 2020-21 school year, three conditions are required:

- Continuation of the Governor's Emergency Declaration that activates the General Statute 115C-242(6) for emergency use of yellow school buses (NOTE: Executive Order 116 declared the State of Emergency and authorizes the use of yellow school buses for emergency purposes until it is rescinded by the Governor.),
- Approval of each local Board of Education for emergency use, and
- Approval of Transportation funds (PRC-056) for emergency use. (Note: This item is still pending; a request has been made to the Office of the Governor to extend the budget flexibility for the use of transportation funds (PRC-056) to deliver meals to students as school reopens in August. We will inform you as soon as we receive a response.)

If you have questions regarding the use of yellow buses or transportation funds, please reach out to your Zone teams.

Legislative Update

Several bills have been introduced recently in Congress to support School Nutrition Programs and professionals. The Pandemic Child Hunger Prevention Act would make all students eligible for free school meals during SY2020-21 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Child Nutrition Relief Act of 2020 would grant waiver extensions and the option for meals at no cost. The Heroes Act would provide \$3 billion in emergency funding for Child Nutrition Programs and establish School Nutrition professionals as essential workers. For more information about these bills and other proposed legislation that could affect School Nutrition Programs, stay tuned to the School Nutrition Association [website](#) and [Action Network](#).

SY 20-21 Federal School Meals' Reimbursement Rates

On July 22, USDA issued reimbursement rates for the 2020-21 school year for the School Breakfast Program, National School Lunch Program, Special Milk Program and the Afterschool Snack Program. The chart of reimbursement rates is posted on the NCDPI, School Nutrition [website](#).

HACCP Plan Updates

The Commercial and Homestyle Kitchens, Transported Meals and Warehouse HACCP Plans and monitoring logs are updated and posted in the HACCP/Food Safety section of the NCDPI, School Nutrition [website](#).

Steps to Take if a Break in Meal Service May Occur

If your Summer Nutrition Program meal service may take a break or cease, immediately email Dr. Lynn Harvey, Lynn.Harvey@dpi.nc.gov. NCDPI must notify the N.C. Emergency Operations Center of any break or discontinuation of meal service. In addition, per protocol, reach out to your local Emergency Management. Together brainstorm and reach out to community partners to identify strategies to continue meal service. Also, work with vendors to explore alternative menu items/quantities for meal service.

Submit Your Data Daily

Please submit your daily counts for sites and meals by 3 pm via the [Non-Congregate Meal Service - Data Collection survey](#). The link to the survey is also available on the home page of the NCDPI, School Nutrition [website](#). If you encounter issues with submitting this data by the deadline, please contact Janet Johnson, janet.williamsjohnson@dpi.nc.gov.

Summer Nutrition

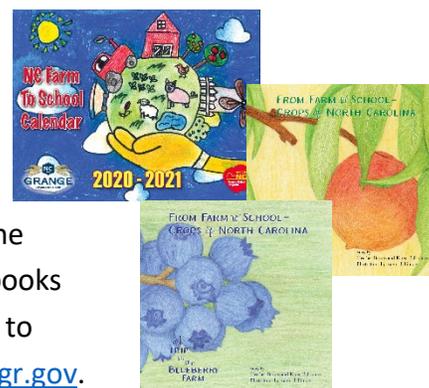
Technical Assistance Time Outs

NCDPI, School Nutrition will be offering a series of Technical Assistance Time Outs. These short, recorded webinars will provide clarification, reminders, and best practices to help your Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) operate safely, effectively, and in compliance. The first three episodes cover strategies to implement COVID-19 safety precautions, how to do meal counting and use the Cartwheel Meal Counter, and updating SFSP meal service applications. Links to all the Technical Assistance Time Outs will be emailed and posted to the Downloads section of the School Nutrition Technology System.

Farm to School/Summer

N.C. Farm to School Program Updates

The N.C. Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services (NCDA&CS) is excited to announce several new products for the N.C. Farm to School Program for the 2020-21 school year: local green beans, tri-color tomato medley, individually quick-frozen berries and beef. In addition, the new N.C. Farm to School Program Calendar is available along with storybooks and activity guides on blueberries and peaches. For more info, reach out to Heather Barnes, NCDA&CS Marketing Specialist, at heather.barnes@ncagr.gov.



N.C. Farm to Summer Challenge

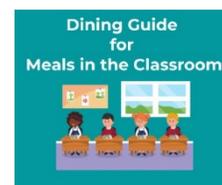
If you have been serving locally sourced foods with meals and snacks, offering farm to school education and posting about your activities on social media, please sign up for the N.C. Farm to Summer Challenge so that we can celebrate your efforts. It's not too late to participate. The N.C. Farm to Summer Challenge runs

through August 14. [Register](#) and complete all four tasks (Serve, Teach, Post and [Sign up for the #NCCrunch2020](#)). Challengers who complete all four tasks will be recognized at the 2020 SummerPaloozas! For more information on Farm to Summer and resources, check out the [N.C. Farm to Summer Toolkit](#). Please contact McCamy Holloway at mccamy.holloway@dpi.nc.gov with any questions or comments.

Nutrition Education & Promotion

Dining Guide for Meals in the Classroom

As schools reopen following COVID-19 closures, districts will utilize different scenarios for feeding students. The School Nutrition Association recently released the [Dining Guide for Meals in the Classroom](#), a suite of customizable resources designed to help School Nutrition professionals easily communicate district procedures for serving meals in the classroom (MIC) to key stakeholders within their school community. MIC could refer to breakfast, lunch, supper and/or snacks.



Connect and Promote through Social Media

We would love to highlight your efforts to provide nutritious meals and nutrition education to children. Remember to tag and follow us on social media (#NCSummerMeals, @Ray4NCKids, and @NCSchoolMeals) on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

Continuing Education

Training Series – Racial Equity in Farm to School

The Farm to School Coalition of NC and We Are together are hosting a free training series on Racial Equity in Farm to School. The remaining webinars in the series are scheduled for 3-4:30 pm ET on August 11, August 18 and September 1. Find out more and register from the [F2SCNC website](#).

Webinars – Produce Safety University

As a supplement to the 2020 Produce Safety University Program, the USDA's Food and Nutrition Service Office of Food Safety, USDA Agricultural Marketing Service and Chef Cyndie Story, PhD, RDN, CC, of Culinary Solutions, LLC have developed a webinar series for School Nutrition professionals addressing the most popular Produce Safety University topics. Each webinar is an individual learning opportunity with separate registration for each. All webinars begin at 2 pm CST every Tuesday in August.

- [Register](#) for **Writing Produce Specifications** - August 11
- [Register](#) for **Good Agricultural and Good Manufacturing/Handling Practices for Fresh and Fresh Cut Produce** - August 18
- [Register](#) for **The Produce Lab: Quality, Condition, and Safe Handling and Preparation** - August 25

Webinar - Track Training Like a Star with the Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool!

Join USDA and the Institute for Child Nutrition for a webinar on August 12, 2-3 pm ET to learn how to use the Professional Standards Training Tracker Tool. [Register here](#).

Webinar - Feeding Students in a Pandemic: Celebrate and Learn from School Nutrition Heroes

Join the School Nutrition Association for a webinar August 13, 2-3 pm ET, to hear strategies from School Nutrition experts across the country that will help you assess your own school district's potential for innovative, out-of-the-box approaches to meal delivery during a pandemic and utilize best practices to provide meals to students in the school building and off-site. [Register here](#).

COVID-19 Management for School Nutrition Online Course Now Available

[Count on Me](#) is an educational program developed by N.C. State University (NCSU) Extension, NCDHHS, Visit NC, and N.C. Food and Lodging to assist restaurants with their reopening plans earlier this summer. NCSU Extension has now adapted this information to incorporate the NCDHHS school guidance for reopening and the [COVID-19 Management for School Nutrition course](#) is now active. From the link, click on the course name. You will be directed to a log in page. If you have completed another Moodle course, log in with your username and password. If you are new to Moodle, you will need to create an account. It takes about 30 minutes to complete the course and provides a professional development certificate.

Available Virtual Training Opportunities from ICN, SNA and NCDPI

The Institute for Child Nutrition (ICN) has compiled videos, fact sheets, posters and other [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](#). Document all continuing education in which your staff participates.

Grants

A variety of grants are available to assist with COVID-19 response. See below for more info:

- [Action for Healthy Kids – Emergency Meal Distribution Equipment Grants](#)
- [Assistance for Church Food Programming Affected by COVID-19](#) (Please reach out to Michelle Osborne at michelle@rafiusa.org or 919-704-6920 with any questions.)
- [Farm to School COVID-19 Related Funding](#)
- [Grant Station List of COVID-19 Related Funding for Nonprofits](#)

- The Dairy Alliance Mini-Grants - Interested School Nutrition directors should contact Health and Wellness Program Manager Cami Lewis at clewis@thedairyalliance.org or 678-822-2868.

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](#). Contact information for the Summer Nutrition Program Regional Consultants can be found [here](#).

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

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