



CONNECTICUT STATE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

TUESDAY TIDBITS

August 2014

Tuesday Tidbits is the CSDE's weekly e-mail for Connecticut school nutrition sponsors. It provides simple suggestions, reminders, resources and advice to help run a successful school nutrition program. Previous editions are available on the CSDE's [Tuesday Tidbits](#) Web page.

August 5, 2014: Recipes from Chef Cyndie Story

Check out these "made for schools" recipes from Chef Cyndie Story! You may remember Chef Cyndie from the Procurement Training held in March 2014 prior to the Connecticut USDA Foods Show. Chef Cyndie has worked in school meals for many years and is a well-respected trainer for the USDA and NFSMI. She is a trained chef and a registered dietitian who really understands school meals programs.

Ten new recipes were developed, tested, and standardized by Chef Cyndie Story to assist schools with incorporating more dark green, orange/red vegetables, legumes, and whole grains into school meals.



<http://healthymeals.nal.usda.gov/chef-cyndie-story-recipes>

August 12, 2014: Pricing Non-Program Foods Properly

How do you determine if you are charging the correct amount for adult meals and a la carte items? When a student receives a lunch or breakfast at school, the School Food Authority (SFA) receives federal and state funding for each reimbursable meal served. These funds must be taken into account when pricing adult meals since these monies are not received when adults are fed.

When items are sold a la carte (outside of the school meals program), the SFA must ensure that the full cost of that item is recovered in the sale. The actual cost of a food item must be considered when setting a la carte prices. It is the decision of the SFA regarding how much to mark up an item, and determining the desired food cost percentage is often used. Typically the food cost can range from 30-60% of the price charged in school meals programs.

These pricing strategies should be used each year to set the appropriate price for non-program foods. The SFA cannot use money made from the service of reimbursable meals to offset losses in non-program food sales (e.g., a la carte items, adult meals, catering).

Attached is a worksheet that can be used when to assist school food service programs in determining the correct pricing.

TUESDAY TIDBITS, continued

August 19, 2014: Crediting Pureed Fruits and Vegetables in School Meals

The USDA emphasizes the importance of the nutrition education aspect of school nutrition programs, which includes the goal of helping children easily recognize the key food groups that contribute to a healthy meal. Pureed foods made from **one vegetable** or **one fruit** are **recognizable** creditable foods, e.g., applesauce, tomato sauce, split pea soup, mashed potatoes and pureed butternut squash. They can count toward the appropriate meal pattern component if the serving size is **at least 1/8 cup** (the minimum creditable amount).

Combination foods with **unrecognizable** pureed vegetables or fruits contribute to the meal pattern requirements if the dish that contains them also provides an adequate amount of **recognizable** creditable vegetables or fruits. For example, macaroni and cheese that contains 1/8 cup of diced butternut squash (recognizable) and 1/8 cup of pureed carrots (unrecognizable) credits as 1/4 cup of red/orange vegetable.

Pureed vegetables and fruits do not credit toward the meal pattern components when used to improve the nutrient profile of a food, such as applesauce used to replace the oil in brownies or a spice cake made with pureed beans.

For more information, see “Pureed Fruits” and “Pureed Vegetables” in the CSDE’s [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals](#).

August 28, 2014: Crediting Commercial Entree Products

When schools use commercially prepared foods such as pizza, chicken nuggets, ravioli and breakfast burritos, **the menu planner must ensure that each product provides the actual amount of the meal pattern component being credited.** For example, if the menu includes a commercially prepared burrito to meet the meat/meat alternates and grains components, the menu planner must know the specific amount of meat, beans, cheese and tortilla shell in one burrito.

Commercially prepared foods that are processed or contain added ingredients must have either:

- an original **Child Nutrition (CN) label** from the product carton if the food is a main dish entree product or a grain, fruit or vegetable that is part of a main dish entree product such as crust in cheese pizza or vegetables in a chicken stir-fry; or
- a **product formulation statement** signed by an official of the manufacturer.

Schools must keep this documentation on file to document meal pattern compliance for auditing purposes. For more information, see “Meat/Meat Alternates” in section 2 of the CSDE’s [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals](#).

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September 2, 2014: How Can School Nutrition Embody *Health At Every Size* Principles? Free Webinar, with Dayle Hayes, MS RD, Tuesday, September 9, 2014 at 1 p.m.

Rhetoric surrounding “childhood obesity” has led to unprecedented media scrutiny of school nutrition programs like the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). Michelle Obama’s Let’s Move Initiative has spearheaded legislation and regulation of foods in school, including the 2010 Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act (HHFKA) and Smart Snacks in School. There are many questions about the resulting narrow and negative focus on weight and BMI tracking. There are also opportunities for introducing positive *Health At Every Size*® principles in education programs at federal, state and local levels. Dayle will review the state of nutrition programs in American schools and highlight ways for parents, professionals and other community members to become involved. **Register for this powerful webinar at <http://gowoa.me/i/cc6>.**

September 9, 2014: National School Lunch Week, October 13-17, 2014

Celebrate National School Lunch Week (NSLW) 2014 with the theme of “*Get in the Game with School Lunch*.” It’s about encouraging kids to find a balance between healthy eating and physical activity. Get started planning your celebration with [free tools and resources](#).



Recognizing NSLW in your district can help you:

- increase student participation for your program;
- spread the message to parents that you’re serving healthy and tasty meals;
- earn media coverage from local papers, blogs and TV stations; and
- connect with teachers and administrators at your school or in your district to spread the word that school meals are healthy.

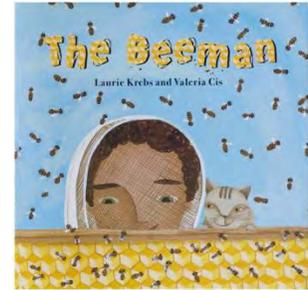
What if the timing doesn’t work for me? NSLW 2014 is officially scheduled for **October 13-17** by an act of Congress. However, if you have a student holiday or teacher work day during that week, and the timing doesn’t work, **you can still celebrate anytime!** The week before... the week after... it’s up to you.



TUESDAY TIDBITS, continued

September 16, 2014: REMINDER!! Connecticut Grown for Connecticut Kids Week, September 29-October 3, 2014

See the attached flyer that was first sent out in June, for a great way to celebrate great CT Grown foods. Books are still available, so contact monica.pacheco@ct.gov if you would like to host a reading event at one of your schools.



DID YOU KNOW.....? October is National Farm to School Month. You can celebrate CT Grown foods all month long! For help in finding local farmers or to find out what crops are available, contact Jane Slupecki at jane.slupecki@ct.gov, at the Connecticut Department of Agriculture.



September 23, 2014: Smarter Lunchrooms Self-Assessment

The Smarter Lunchrooms Movement has championed the use of evidence-based, simple low and no-cost changes to lunchrooms which can simultaneously improve participation and profits while decreasing waste. There is a new tool that can help you to evaluate your lunchroom, congratulate yourself for things you are doing well and identify areas of opportunity for improvement.

The self-assessment areas are as follows: Focusing on Fruit; Promoting Vegetables and Salad; Moving More White Milk; Entrée of the Day; Increasing Sales of Reimbursable Meals; and Creating School Synergies by examining signage, communication, lunchroom atmosphere, student involvement and the recognition and support of school food. The Smarter Lunchrooms Web site and the self-assessment form are available at <http://smarterlunchrooms.org/resource/lunchroom-self-assessment-score-card>.

September 30, 2014: Writing Your Menu Correctly

When composing your monthly menu make sure that ALL components offered to students are clearly identified on the menu. The Healthy Hunger-free Kids Act requires sponsors to clearly identify what makes a reimbursable meal both on the printed menu and through signage in the meal service area.

Many menu planners neglect to mention that each meal includes a choice of milk, as well as fruit and vegetable choices. Every specific item being offered does not need to be listed, but when a menu is reviewed it should be clear that along with the entrées being offered, all students also get the opportunity to select “one or two fruit choices, one or two vegetable choices, and a low fat or fat free milk” to complete their meal!

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October 7, 2014: Food Day

Food Day is a nationwide celebration and a movement for healthy, affordable and sustainable food. Join other schools, businesses and organizations throughout the state and country for the Apple Crunch Event on Friday, October 24, 2014. See the attached flyer for information about conducting an Apple Crunch Event

to celebrate fresh, local foods you are offering children in school every day. Let's help make the Apple Crunch become a nationwide event!



Crunch!

Also attached is a customizable poster for you to use to advertise your event to your school and community!



Putting CT on Your Plate

October 14, 2014: NEW HealthierUS School Challenge Applications

The new HUSSC applications for school year 2014-15 are now available online and can be found on the U.S. Department of Agriculture's [HUSSC Application Materials](#) Web site. The new application requirements have been simplified with the focus being on Smarter Lunchrooms, Wellness Policies, Nutrition and Physical Education, Criteria of Excellence and Professional Standards.



For more information, see the [Connecticut Team Nutrition](#) Web page and contact Allison Calhoun-White at allison.calhoun-white@ct.gov or 860-807-2008.

The new HUSSC applications for school year 2014-15 are now available online and can be found on the U.S. Department of Agriculture's [HUSSC Application Materials](#) Web site. The new application requirements have been simplified with the focus being on Smarter Lunchrooms, Wellness Policies, Nutrition and Physical Education, Criteria of Excellence and Professional Standards.

TUESDAY TIDBITS, continued

October 21, 2014: The Produce Lab



Announcing a **new** video series available on the National Food Service Management Institute's (NFSMI) **Produce Safety** resource page, "The Produce Lab."

This new video series features the following sections:

- Culinary Techniques – videos featuring Chef Cyndie Story demonstrating proper preparation of fresh carrots, broccoli, squash, melons, tomatoes and more.
- Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs) – videos containing valuable information on food safety for school gardens.
- Quality and Condition Demonstrations – videos highlighted what to ask for when ordering produce and what to look for when receiving fresh produce. Products featured include apples, kiwi, bananas, lettuce, cucumbers and several more.

These videos were based on feedback provided through Produce Safety University evaluations. They were developed in partnership with our partners at USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service and Great Kids Farm.

October 28, 2014: Sharing Student Eligibility Information

Friendly Reminder....As you ask other school food authorities or your state Child Nutrition Program consultant about questions pertaining to a student's free and reduced-priced eligibility status, please remember that student identifier information ***cannot be shared via e-mail*** unless both e-mail systems are secure. This includes student names, Connecticut State Department of Education state assigned student identifier (SASID) numbers, SNAP/TFA numbers, addresses, school locations, etc. Most e-mail systems are not secure and therefore, confidential information must not be shared via e-mail.

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November 4, 2014: Stickers Now Available for Your Team Nutrition Events!

Free nutrition stickers are now available to schools participating in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program. Use these colorful 2-inch stickers as part of your school breakfast promotion and taste-testing events. One roll has 200 stickers.

- Make Today a Try Day:
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/make-today-try-day-stickers>
- Launch Your Day with breakfast:
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/launch-your-day-breakfast-stickers>



See the **Team Nutrition Popular Events Idea Booklet** and **Elementary School Posters** for related resources. For other materials, see the **Team Nutrition Resource Library** and **Team Nutrition Order Form**.

November 11, 2014: Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) Program Guidance Web page

The CSDE's **Program Guidance** Web page provides an alphabetical list of topics with information on federal and state requirements and guidance for the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) school nutrition programs. **Bookmark this page** for easy access to relevant information and resources for school nutrition programs.

TUESDAY TIDBITS, continued

November 18, 2014: Fruit and Vegetable Nutrition Education Resources

Many people were interested in some of the resources that were at the CSDE Child Nutrition Program booth at the recent SNACT Food & Industry Show. Please note the following resources and the applicable links.

- **5 Minutes Fruit and Vegetable Activities** is a collection of short activities that are targeted for preschool, elementary and middle/high school aged students. There are fifty activities that can be used to introduce lessons, reinforce earlier learning or be used to conclude lessons. Each activity can be a creative and fun learning experience for students to think about fruits and vegetables. Available through the SNA Emporium, <http://emporium.schoolnutrition.org/product.php?productid=16770>. Cost is \$29.95.
- **The Great Garden Detective Adventure** is a series of investigations and fun experiences connecting the school garden to the classroom, school cafeteria and home. This eleven-lesson curriculum for 3rd and 4th grades includes bulletin board materials, veggie dice, fruit and vegetable flash cards, and ten issues of Garden Detective News for parents/caregivers. This may be found on the USDA Team Nutrition website <http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/great-garden-detective>. Note that Team Nutrition print materials are available only to schools that participate in the federal Child Nutrition Programs. All others are welcome to download the materials from the Team Nutrition website at teamnutrition.usda.gov.

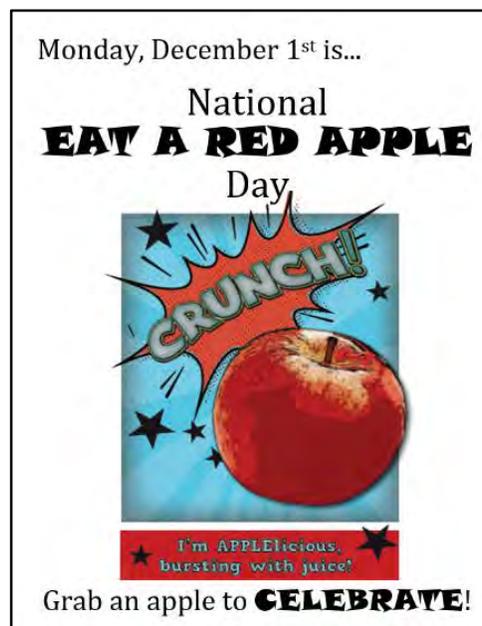
November 25, 2014: Start with Half a Cup

Look how one Connecticut district is using the new resources from the [Start with Half a Cup Web site!](#)

Kariann Sadlon, Food Service Director for the Mansfield Public Schools is using the “Appleticious” graphics from the Start with Half a Cup initiative to promote red apples on December 1. Check out the Web site to see what great ideas you can borrow from your Connecticut school nutrition colleagues!

Kariann is also printing out the apple “CRUNCH” stickers from the Web site to give to each child that takes a red apple that day. Thanks for sharing Kariann!

If you use any of these resources in your school nutrition program, please let us know so we can continue to share these great ideas to help all school nutrition programs in Connecticut promote fruits and vegetables! Send your ideas, along with any photos or fliers, to Jackie Schipke at jackie.schipke@ct.gov.



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December 2, 2014: Connecticut Grown Store!



Looking for a unique gift this holiday season? Check out the new "[Connecticut Grown Store](#)" for apparel and gift items that are sure to please your favorite locavore.

The Connecticut Grown Store is the official online store of the Connecticut Department of Agriculture. We promote the farmers and producers in our state who consistently produce the very best, as well as the lifestyle of those who live here and love knowing where their food comes from. We strive to provide products that reflect and enhance the lifestyle of you, our customer.

December 9, 2014: Outreach for the School Breakfast Program

The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (the Act), Public Law 111-296, establishes requirements for conducting outreach in the School Breakfast Program (SBP). [Operational Memorandum #26-11](#), from June 2011, provided guidance on the implementation of the provision requiring schools to conduct outreach on the availability of the SBP.

The USDA has materials available to help schools meet this requirement, including letters to parents, newsletter articles for each month and fliers about the benefits of school breakfast. You can find these USDA school breakfast marketing resources here:

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/sbp/marketing-resources>

TUESDAY TIDBITS, continued

December 16, 2014: Flavor Station

Have you considered adding a “Flavor Station” to your school meals program? With the reduction in sodium limits for school meals, some students may be looking for something more to spice up their meal selections. But menu planners must always consider the sodium content of the condiments offered to stay within the required dietary specifications for sodium in the new meal patterns. One solution some school nutrition programs have embraced is a “Flavor Station” that offers various spices and seasonings to enhance any meal.

Replace high-sodium condiments with lower-sodium alternatives:

High Sodium

- Barbeque sauce
- Salt, sea salt, garlic salt
- Canned salsa
- Catsup
- Pickles, olives, relish
- Seasoning mixes containing salt
- Commercial salad dressings
- Soy sauce
- Worcestershire sauce

Lower-Sodium

- Flavored vinegars
- Fresh or dried herbs
- Fresh salsa
- Lemon or lime juice/fresh lemon or lime wedges
- Pepper sauce
- Salt-free seasoning mixes
- Seasoning powders (onion powder, garlic powder)
- Simple salad dressings (such as vinegar and oil)
- Spices



Photos courtesy of *School Meals that Rock*

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TUESDAY TIDBITS, continued

December 23, 2014: Crediting Juice in School Meals

Juice must be pasteurized **100 percent full-strength** fruit juice, vegetable juice or a combination of both. The name of the full-strength fruit juice as it appears on the label must include the words “juice” or “full-strength juice” or “100 percent juice” or “reconstituted juice” or “juice from concentrate.”

At lunch, juice cannot count for more than **half** of the weekly fruits component or half of the weekly vegetables component. At breakfast, effective July 1, 2014, vegetable juice together with fruit juice cannot count for more than half of the weekly fruits component at breakfast.

Juice blends are creditable if they are a combination of full-strength fruit juices, full-strength vegetable juices or full-strength fruit and vegetable juices. At lunch, fruit and vegetable juice blends credit based on the first ingredient.

- If the first juice ingredient is **fruit juice**, it contributes to the **fruits** component.
- If the first juice ingredient is **vegetable juice**, it contributes to the “**other**” or the “**additional**” **vegetables** requirement, depending on the needs of the menu planner.

The crediting of juice blends containing two or more different vegetable juices depends on whether the vegetables are from the same or different subgroups.

For more information, see the CSDE’s [Crediting Juice](#) handout and “Fruit Juice” and “Vegetable Juice” in the CSDE’s [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals](#).

Due to the upcoming Holiday Break, Tuesday Tidbits will not be issued December 30.

Happy Holidays from the School Nutrition Team at CSDE!

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January 6, 2014: Health Inspections Required

USDA regulations require **each** site participating in the National School Lunch or School Breakfast Program to receive **at least two health inspections each school year**.

If you have not received the first inspection by now, you should write to your local health department to remind them of this requirement. While the CSDE recognizes that there may be difficulty in obtaining the two food safety inspections, we would like to stress that you are responsible for requesting such inspections and documenting such efforts. When two health inspections are not conducted, each sponsor is responsible for requesting the inspections and documenting these efforts. Retain a copy of the letter sent to the health department to document your attempt to comply with this regulation. A sample letter requesting a health inspection is attached to this e-mail.

Sample Health Letter

Date:

To: _____ (*Name of Local Health Department Director*)

The purpose of this letter is to request that a food safety health inspection be conducted at the school(s) listed below. As you know, section 111 of the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-265) amended section 9(h) of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act requires that at least two food safety inspections be conducted at each school participating in the National School Lunch or School Breakfast Programs.

As of the date of this letter, _____ (*Name of School(s)*) located at _____ (*Address*) has not received the required two food safety inspections. Therefore, we respectfully request that your office conduct such inspection at your convenience, but no later than _____ (*Last Serving Day*).

Thank you for your consideration of this request. If you have any questions, please contact me at _____ (*Telephone Number*) or via electronic mail at _____ (*Email Address*).

Sincerely,

Name
Position

TUESDAY TIDBITS, continued

January 13, 2014: National School Breakfast Week (NSBW) March 2-6, 2015

Start planning now to make this the BEST School Breakfast Week ever!

Celebrate NSBW 2015 with the theme of “Make the Grade with School Breakfast.” It highlights how eating a nutritious breakfast helps students achieve success in the classroom and beyond. Get started planning your celebration with free tools and resources. More information about NSBW and free celebration tools are now available on the SNA Web site.



January 20, 2014: Useful Menu Planning Tools from Kansas SDE

The Kansas State Department of Education School Nutrition Programs has developed a wonderful resource for menu planners. They have developed spreadsheets in Excel that simplify the execution of your weekly menus and accompanying production records. Menu planners type in the weekly menu on the first tab. This information automatically fills into a production record form on the second tab. On this second production record tab, the menu planner adds specific product information, recipes, portion sizes, etc. The final tab fills this information into a spreadsheet that evaluates compliance with the meal pattern requirements.

Breakfast Menu Planning Tools with Production Record Forms

---	---	◆	K-5, 6-8 and 9-12 (4 days) - 9/19/14
---	---	◆	K-8 and K-12 (4 days) - 9/19/14
---	---	◆	K-5, 6-8 and 9-12 (5 days) - 9/19/14
---	---	◆	K-8 and K-12 (5 days) - 9/19/14
---	---	◆	K-5, 6-8 and 9-12 (7 days) - 9/19/14
---	---	◆	K-8 and K-12 (7 days) - 9/19/14

Lunch Menu Planning Tools with Production Record Forms

---	---	◆	K-5, 6-8 and 9-12 (4 days) - 1/10/14
---	---	◆	K-8 and 9-12 (4 days) - 1/10/14
---	---	◆	K-5, 6-8 and 9-12 (5 days) - 9/17/14
---	---	◆	K-8 and 9-12 (5 days) - 1/10/14
---	---	◆	K-5, 6-8 and 9-12 (7 days) - 1/10/14
---	---	◆	K-8 and 9-12 (7 days) - 1/10/14

Follow the link below to access these worksheets.

http://www.kn-eat.org/SNP/SNP_Menus/SNP_Guidance_Menu_Planning_M2_Forms.htm

TUESDAY TIDBITS, continued

January 27, 2014: FoodCorps Application

The FoodCorps application is now open. FoodCorps is seeking up to 210 leaders to help kids in their communities grow up healthy through our three-ingredient recipe for change: food and nutrition education that gives kids the information they need to make smart choices; hands-on activities like gardening and cooking that foster skills and pride around healthy food; and lunch trays filled with nutritious meals from local farms. Connecticut is fortunate to have 15 FoodCorps members in service this school year!

Since September, the current crop of 182 service members has **reached over 100,000 kids** in limited resource communities around the country, introducing them to sweet potatoes, teaching them how to make hummus, bringing them out into the garden to grow seedlings into hardy greens, and giving them a shot at a healthier future. At the same time, through their service, our members are learning new skills and paving the way towards their future careers as educators, farmers, chefs, and public health advocates. Learn more here: <https://foodcorps.org/become-a-service-member>

Do you know of leaders who would be a great fit? Forward this email to them!

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February 3, 2015: Promoting Fruits and Vegetables

Looking for ways to promote fruits and vegetables to your students? Check out this video for ideas!

In this video, the fourth in a five-part series, farm to school practitioners from across the country talk about how they get kids excited about eating healthful, local foods. From taste tests, to farm visits, to culinary competitions, there are lots of ways to help children engage with, and get excited about, local products!



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=545SzEmgJZI&x-yt-ts=1422579428&feature=player_detailpage&x-yt-cl=85114404

February 10, 2015: School Field Trips

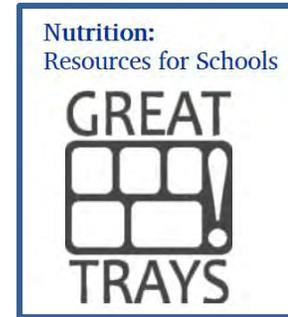
Plan ahead for school field trips this spring! As a best practice, school food service operations should offer meals to students on field trips to prevent a loss in participation and revenue. Fewer student meals reduce the funding the school receives in student payments, federal reimbursement, state funding, and commodity allocations. This loss of revenue really adds up over the course of the school year. In addition, it is difficult for the school food service operation to appropriately adjust labor hours when there are occasional dips in participation so productivity is negatively impacted. Field trip meals are also a great convenience to busy parents.

The Child Nutrition office of the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction has an informative [Meals on Field Trips](#) handout outlining options and requirements for field trip meals. The following templates are also available: Bag Meal Order Request Form, Bag Meal Packing Slip, List of Students Receiving Reimbursable Meals and SOPs. You can find the templates at http://fns.dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/fns/doc/field_trip_templates2014.doc.

TUESDAY TIDBITS, continued

February 17, 2015: Great Trays Resource

The Minnesota Department of Health has some wonderful resources available to assist districts in promoting their school nutrition program. Their [Great Trays](#) Web page has wonderful ideas to “WOW your community by sharing news and information about the school meals program. Monthly menus, the district website, school newsletters and parent events can help get the word out. Use Great Trays resources to make sharing easy, fun and successful.”



February 24, 2015: NSFMI Online Training



The National Food Service Management Institute (NFSMI) now offers “[Orientation to School Nutrition Management](#),” a free online training for new or aspiring school nutrition program directors. This training is targeted to new and aspiring school nutrition program directors with five years or less experience. Lessons provide an overview of school nutrition programs, define the role and responsibilities of a director, and review the relationship between local policies and state/federal regulations. Management topics include:

- Meal Pattern/HealthierUS School Challenge
- Food Production and Operation Management
- Program Accountability and the Role of the School Nutrition Director
- Procurement and Inventory Management
- Special Needs
- Work Place Safety and Emergency Preparedness
- Human Resource Management
- Marketing and Communication
- Financial Management

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March 3, 2015: Letters to Households

Double check the letters generated by your POS system! During Administrative Reviews, the CSDE consultants are finding that many school districts are using letters generated by their point-of-sale (POS) system to notify households of their meal benefits. While this is a great tool to use, the language in the letters to households must meet USDA requirements. Consultants are finding that districts often are not reviewing the content of the letter generated by the POS for compliance, resulting in findings during the Administrative Review.

Each school year, the CSDE provides sample letters that include all required language. These letters should be used to ensure compliance with changing USDA requirements. The **best practice** is to copy these letters when they are issued **every year** and insert them into the POS generated letter or onto your district letterhead. The 2014-15 sample letters are available on the CSDE's [Forms for School Nutrition Programs](#) Web page.

March 10, 2015: A La Carte Breakfast

Do you sell a la carte breakfast items at your high school? Why not "bundle" the required components of a reimbursable breakfast together and offer a well-balanced nutritious start to the day to your student body? If you already have the staff and student customers in place, it is simple to combine some foods to offer a reimbursable breakfast to benefit ALL students in your school.

Many secondary schools in Connecticut offer breakfast items for sale but do not participate in the USDA School Breakfast Program (SBP). The SBP is available for **all schools** providing nutritious, balanced breakfast choices to all students regardless of need.

If you would like assistance in adding a reimbursable component to your a la carte program, the Connecticut Breakfast Expansion Team (CBET) can help! CBET can provide assistance where you need it, including planning, promoting, financing and advocating for the SBP in your school. Just e-mail Jackie Schipke at jackie.schipke@ct.gov if you'd like someone from CBET to come help you bring a reimbursable breakfast to your students or if you have any questions about the School Breakfast Program.

TUESDAY TIDBITS, continued

March 17, 2015: Tools for Recipe Compliance

Do you have a standardized recipe but find each school prepares the Chef Salad differently? Consistency in the production and presentation of food items is important to your customers, but sometimes school staff are not well informed about the expectations for a particular recipe.



A great way to ensure better compliance with a standardized recipe and to make sure you get the end product you want is to take photos of the process! The Start with Half a Cup (SWHAC) Web site has a great PowerPoint template and some examples of how to create a photo recipe template for key items on your school menus. The recipe template is available on the SWHAC [Recipe PowerPoints](#) Web.



March 24, 2015: Free Resources from Team Nutrition

Do your serving lines need a new look? Are your posters old and faded? Have you taken advantage of the many FREE resources available to any school operating the National School Lunch Program? The [Team Nutrition Order Form](#) includes all of the wonderful posters, stickers, lesson plans and more that are available to you at no cost from Team Nutrition! You can see these resources in the [Team Nutrition Resource Library](#).



TUESDAY TIDBITS, continued

March 31, 2015: Earth Day

EARTH DAY will be held on April 22, 2015. Earth Day promotes environmental awareness and calls for the protection of our planet.

How will your school “Reduce, Reuse, Recycle”? *Consider having a waste reduction day in the cafeteria.* Learn how to maximize school food resources through proven best practices in procurement, menu planning, marketing, and food safety as well as utilization of any excess food items through donation and/or recycling.

Best Practices for Maximizing Your School Food Resources FREE Webinar.



Register your school as a participant in the [U.S. Food Waste Challenge](#). Work with your teachers and friends to find ways to encourage everyone in your community to make waste reduction a part of their everyday lives. Other resources for Earth Day and beyond:

- [Make A Difference Campaign for Middle School Students](#)
- [Pack a Waste-Free lunch](#)
- Share this great resource from the CDC, [Increasing Access to Drinking Water in Schools](#)

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CONNECTICUT STATE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

TUESDAY TIDBITS

April 2015

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April 7, 2015: Are You *Buying American*?

You may *think* you are because your bid contract requires it, however, as our consultants visit school meals programs throughout the state, we continue to find foreign food products on school storeroom shelves, resulting in findings during an Administrative Review.

We commonly see products clearly labeled "*Product of China.*" Often the brand is a domestic company, but the product in the can is from China. If you find products of foreign origin, contact your distributor to let them know you cannot accept this product. **Train your staff to refuse non-domestic items at the loading dock**, sending non-American products back on the truck.

Another consideration for your program is the current social media environment. Today, the media is focused on school nutrition more than ever before. A food item from China in your storeroom could possibly end up being a public relations nightmare for your program! We encourage you to pay attention to this requirement.

Section 104(d) of the William F. Goodling Child Nutrition Reauthorization Act of 1998 (Public Law 105-336) requires School Food Authorities to purchase domestically grown and processed foods, to the maximum extent practicable. Purchases made in accordance with the Buy American provision must still follow the applicable procurement rules calling for free and open competition.

For questions and answers regarding the **Buy American** provision, see the USDA's memo from April 17, 2006 ([SP 20-2006](#)), *Procurement Questions Relevant to the Buy American Provision*.

TUESDAY TIDBITS, continued

April 14, 2015: Firecracker Popsicle?

Are you selling the approved Firecracker Jr? We have found several schools serving a “Firecracker” Popsicle in their schools that is NOT allowed since it contains only water, sugar, and flavorings. Only the “Firecracker Jr” frozen juice stick meets the Smart Snacks and Connecticut Nutrition Standards. Double check your product to be sure you have the correct one! Popsicles (water and sugar-based) have never been allowed in Child Nutrition Programs. See the information on the approved 1.6 oz. Firecracker Jr. (Popsicle brand, Unilever Foods) below:

PRODUCT NAME: Popsicle Firecracker Jr.

DESCRIPTION AND MANUFACTURING PROCESS:

Popsicle Firecracker Jr. is a Cherry, White Lemon, and Blue Raspberry flavored juice ice pop.

INGREDIENT LIST (in descending order of predominance by weight):

Pear Juice (from concentrate), Water, Sugar, Corn Syrup Solids, High Fructose Corn Syrup, Raspberry Juice (from concentrate), Lemon Juice (from concentrate), Cherry Juice (from concentrate), Natural & Artificial Flavors, Guar Gum, Carbohydrate Gum, Locust Bean Gum, Citric Acid, Malic Acid, Ascorbic Acid, Beet Juice Concentrate (for color), Turmeric (for color), Blue 1.

April 21, 2015: School Lunches that Rock

Wouldn't you love to visit other school cafeterias to see what they are serving and to “steal” some of their great ideas? Are you looking for new menu ideas or new ways to present your great school food to your students? Are you full of good intentions BUT very short on free time?

Take a virtual tour of school lunches from around the country by visiting the Pinterest page operated by Dayle Hayes called “School Lunches that Rock!” Here you will see many photos of beautiful lunch and breakfast trays sent in from your contemporaries from throughout the US. There are many links to more information as well. To see all the great things happening with school meals at any time and from any place, go to <https://www.pinterest.com/schoolmealsrock/school-lunches-that-rock/>.

We also encourage you to submit photos of the great food you're serving in your schools so folks can see the great school meals programs operating in Connecticut schools!



TUESDAY TIDBITS, continued

April 28, 2015: Summer Meals Outreach

Schools communicate regularly and effectively with the families of children in your community. You can help reach out and connect these families with Summer Meals before the school year ends and continue to make a difference in the lives of your students all summer long. ***It is the expectation that every school participating in the National School Lunch Program provides information to their community on the availability of Summer Meals, even if they are not a sponsor or site for Summer Meals.***

Childhood food insecurity remains at unacceptable levels across the country and children are most acutely at risk in the summer when they do not have access to school meals. In summer 2014, there were 600 sites across Connecticut offering free meals to children 18 years and younger, yet only one out of four of Connecticut's children who qualify for free or reduced meals are being reached.

PLEASE NOTE: Even if you do not have a Summer Meals program in your town, children ages 18 and younger may visit Open Summer Meals sites anywhere in the state to receive a meal. Please take the time to share this valuable information with the families in your community.

We urge you to get your Summer Meal sites submitted and approved early. Advertising specific meal locations and times prior to CSDE approval can leave families confused, frustrated and reluctant to participate if changes are made after advertising of specific details has already gone out. **Please send the information below home to families, include on your June menu and post on your Web site.** The Web button codes are attached.



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Summer Meals Button Instructions

What is a Summer Meals button?

A Summer Meals button is an image you can add to your website (see above) that promotes the free, federal Summer Meals Program for kids 18 years old and younger in Connecticut. The image is hyperlinked to the Summer Meals Location Finder at www.CTSummerMeals.org/location-finder. The Location Finder is a search engine that uses an address, town, or zip code to locate Summer Meals sites where any kids 18 years old and younger can enjoy healthy meals at no cost to them and displays the results in both a Google Map and a list with all of the pertinent information (location, hours, meals served, etc.).

How do I add a Summer Meals button to my website?

Copy the html code below and paste it into your website's html coding. Or, copy the image above and include a hyperlink with the image to www.CTSummerMeals.org/location-finder.

Image 75 pixels high

```
<a href="http://www.ctsummerfood.org/location-finder">  
  
</a>
```

Image 100 pixels high

```
<a href="http://www.ctsummerfood.org/location-finder">  
  
</a>
```

Image 150 pixels high

```
<a href="http://www.ctsummerfood.org/location-finder">  
  
</a>
```

Image URL:

<http://www.ctsummermeals.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/summerbutton177x277.jpg>

Location Finder URL:

<http://www.ctsummermeals.org/location-finder>

Contact:

Shannon Yearwood, Connecticut No Kid Hungry Campaign Manager

End Hunger Connecticut!

(860) 560-2100 Ext. 309

syearwood@endhungerct.org



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TUESDAY TIDBITS

May 2015

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May 5, 2015: Chef Designed School Meals

Check out this two week cycle of school meals designed by a chef and dietitian; tested and approved by students in Idaho. The menus have been planned to meet the new USDA meal patterns for grades K-8 and 9-12, and use three to ten USDA Foods in each meal. *Meal equivalents may vary depending upon the brand of product used. Use the product label or the USDA Food Buying Guide to determine exact quantities needed for your school's brand.*

Many districts choose to implement one chef meal each week and market it directly to students. For example, a "Chef Tuesday" special to get students excited about upcoming meals.

<http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/cnp/chef/chefDesign.htm>



May 12, 2015: Mealtalk

Are you preparing meals for field trips in your school? If so, you want to make sure that you are implementing good food safety practices! Attached is a sample field trip form that was shared on [MEALTALK](#), an e-mail discussion group intended as a communication tool to link the professionals who are operating the Child Nutrition Programs, such as the National School Lunch Program and the Child and Adult Care Food Program, so that they can share resources, information and innovative solutions to common day-to-day problems.

- [Join Mealtalk](#)
- [Search the archives, change your subscription settings, or leave the list](#) (external link)
- [Mealtalk Purpose and Procedures](#)
- [E-mail the Mealtalk Listowner](#)

TUESDAY TIDBITS, continued

May 19, 2015: Signage on Serving Line



The Healthy Hunger-free Kids Act requires that all schools have clear signage posted explaining Offer versus Serve to students. Schools are required to identify reimbursable meals to students to reduce the unintended purchase of a la carte items AND to help student make healthy food choices. During Administrative Reviews we have found that many schools are lacking such signage.



Signage should be posted along the serving line to direct students to choose all items available with the reimbursable meal. For example, if vegetables are offered in ½ cup portions to students, there must be clear and visible signage notifying students that they may take TWO vegetables with their meal, since the meal pattern requirement is for ¾ or 1 cup of vegetables, depending upon the age group.



Also, any a la carte item must be clearly marked and the price posted.

Signage can be easily created at the district level to direct children to choose all the healthy components available with their meal. Attached are some examples of simple signage created with Microsoft Word that could be printed on heavy paper, laminated and posted on the serving line. The links below show other examples of signage for your line:

- http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/nslp/lunchposter_components.pdf
- http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/nslp/lunchposter_OVS.pdf
- [Breakfast and Lunch Editable Signage](#) from Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
- [School Breakfast Signage](#) from Iowa Team Nutrition

TUESDAY TIDBITS, continued

May 26 2015: USDA Foods Recipes by Chef Deanna Olson

Chef Deanna Olson worked with the Iowa USDA Foods Advisory Council to develop and standardize ten new recipes for schools utilizing USDA Foods, as part of a Team Nutrition grant. The recipes can help schools offer tasty whole grain options, dark green and red/orange vegetables, and savory legumes that students will choose to eat. The recipes were tested and sampled by students at several Iowa schools.



The recipes include: • Rockin Caesar Salad • Savory Black Beans • Berry Cherry Power Bar • Strawberry Romaine Salad • Tangy Chicken Parmesan • Perfect Pinto Beans • Honey Cinnamon Sweet Potatoes • Zesty Tex Mex Pasta Salad • Crunchy Bonzo Beans • Italian Try-Me Beans.

They can be found at www.educateiowa.gov, under “Team Nutrition.” You may also want to try some of these Flavor Shaker recipes from Iowa Team Nutrition:

Flavor Shakers

The following low-sodium herb/seasoning mixtures can be mixed together and offered to students in a shaker to season their food as desired. Chef DeeDee created the mixture combinations to appeal to students.

Great on Potatoes

2 tablespoons dill weed
1 tablespoon garlic powder
1 tablespoon onion powder
1 tablespoon paprika
1 tablespoon dried parsley
1 tablespoon dried sage

Great on Vegetables

2 tablespoons black pepper
1 tablespoon cayenne pepper
1 tablespoon paprika
1 tablespoon onion powder
1 tablespoon garlic powder

Great on Vegetables and French Fries

2 tablespoons chili powder
2 tablespoons cumin
1 tablespoon crushed red pepper
1 tablespoon onion powder
1 tablespoon granulated garlic

Great on Squash and Carrots

2 tablespoons cinnamon
1 tablespoon ground cloves
1 tablespoon ground ginger
1 tablespoon nutmeg

Additional Shaker Ideas

1. Low Sodium lemon pepper
2. Crushed red pepper flakes
3. Grated Parmesan cheese and dried parsley
4. Course ground black pepper and granulated garlic

Tip: You can buy shakers at discount stores for a \$1.

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TUESDAY TIDBITS

June 2015

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June 2, 2015: Whole Grain-Rich Exemptions for School Year 2015-16

Has your district requested a whole grain-rich exemption since June 2014? If so, you **MUST** submit a new request! The USDA recently issued new guidance addressing the whole grain-rich requirement. For details, refer to [Operational Memorandum 20-15](#) and the *WGR Exemption Request* form.

June 9, 2015: GimmeFive Stickers



#GimmeFive food groups at school lunch!

High Five Stickers Now Available! Limited quantities for **Team Nutrition** Elementary Schools

- Give these stickers to children you spot eating a healthy lunch.
- Give stickers to kids that choose foods from 5 food groups on the school lunch serving line.
- Encourage kids to make a MyPlate meal!

Request a roll of 200 stickers by emailing TeamNutrition@fns.usda.gov.

Share how your Team Nutrition school is celebrating #GimmeFive on **Twitter @TeamNutrition**.



<http://www.fns.usda.gov/team-nutrition> @TeamNutrition
USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



TUESDAY TIDBITS, continued

June 16, 2015: Authorized Signer Changes

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) must have current documentation on file for the two identified authorized signers for each sponsor. Many changes occur over the summer. Do not forget to submit a new Authorized Signature Change Form when you have new administrators.

It is expected that one or both of the authorized signers will change periodically. When this occurs, the local educational agency (LEA) or residential child care institution (RCCI) must amend the ED-099, the permanent agreement with the CSDE. The [Authorized Signatures Change Form \(instructions\)](#) must be executed whenever one of the two authorized signers changes. Authorized signers on file with the CSDE may only submit claims for reimbursement. To avoid reimbursement delay, the LEA or RCCI must arrange for board action to sign and submit the Authorized Signatures Change Form.

Authorized signers * are the two persons in each LEA or RCCI that are authorized to:

- sign the ED-099 Agreement for the Child Nutrition Programs (CNPs) – the ED-099 is the formal written agreement between the CSDE AND a LEA or RCCI to operate one or more of the USDA Child Nutrition Programs (CNP);
- review and submit the monthly online CNP claims for reimbursement; and
- sign-off on other state and federal forms requiring an official signature.

* There are two authorized signers. Signer number 1 must have the title of Superintendent of Schools, Mayor, Selectman, President or Chairperson of the Board, Pastor or Commissioner. Signer number 2 may be used in the absence or incapacity of the first designated signer. The title of signer number 2 must be one of the following: Assistant Superintendent, Business Official, Principal, Headmaster, City or Town Manager, Executive Director or Deputy Commissioner.

June 23, 2015: Update HACCP Plan

Did you know that HACCP is the acronym for Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points? The National School Lunch Act requires school food authorities (SFAs) to implement a school food safety program based on HACCP principles. The food safety program **must apply to every location where food is stored, prepared, or served for USDA Child Nutrition Programs offered through schools.** This means that the plan should contain standard operating procedures for safe food handling on school buses, in hallways, kiosks, classrooms or other locations outside of the cafeteria.

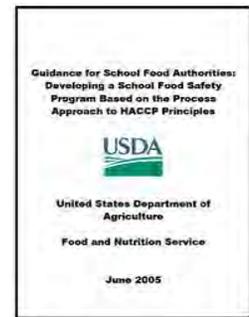
Don't forget to:

- individualize the plan for **each** school;
- refer to the [Food and Drug Administration \(FDA\) 2013 Food Code](#);
- be specific as to whether Connecticut or federal temperature requirements for cooking, cooling, reheating, hot holding, etc. are being followed; and
- review and revise your food safety program **at least annually or as often as necessary** to reflect any changes in each facility. Determine who will review the current plan, when it will be done, and document this within the plan.

TUESDAY TIDBITS, continued

Helpful Resources

- [Food-Safe Schools Action Guide](#)
- [Guidance for School Food Authorities: Developing a School Food Safety Program Based on the Process Approach to HACCP Principles](#)



June 30, 2015: Training Resource – *Nutrition 101: A Taste of Food and Fitness*



With the release of the new training video, *Nutrition 101: A Taste of Food and Fitness*, the Institute of Child Nutrition (formerly NFSMI) is providing the opportunity to bring a top-notch training and trainer directly to you, at your convenience. Taught and facilitated by a registered dietitian nutritionist, you will be guided through a basic overview of nutrition while learning the importance of nutrition in daily life. This video training offers tools to help guide food choices, gives basic nutrition information, and helps sort out the facts from fiction.

Attendees from the face-to-face training have said, “I love the children I serve, and having been to this training is going to help me serve them better!” Now with the Institute of Child Nutrition’s new training video, *Nutrition 101: A Taste of Food and Fitness*, you have the ability to offer and attend the training yourself, without ever leaving your district!

This 8-hour video training is divided into seven lessons that can be viewed concurrently or individually. This training is interactive and includes a required participant’s manual, which may also be downloaded from the link above. *Nutrition 101: A Taste of Food and Fitness* is available at <http://www.nfsmi.org/ResourceOverview.aspx?ID=531>.

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