



USDA Foods Fact Sheet

Food Distribution Program

United States Department of Agriculture, USDA Foods Option

Administered by the Illinois State Board of Education, Nutrition Department

Eligibility

- Participants in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) are eligible to participate in the Food Distribution Program.
- USDA Foods (commodities) are one of three spending options for Food Distribution Program entitlement funds.
- Participants may choose to designate a portion or all their funds to USDA Foods.

USDA Foods

- USDA offers a variety of foods based on market availability, cost, and participant preferences.
- USDA offers more than 200 products, taking into consideration the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* recommendations for reduced fat, sugar, and salt.
- USDA Foods available include high quality 100% American-grown and American-produced vegetables, fruits, dairy, whole grains, lean meats, and other protein options.
- From the 200+ products offered by USDA, ISBE determines which to include on the annual order form. Participants then make their selections from the annual order form.
- Bonus USDA Foods are available at times.

Illinois Commodity System (ICS)

- ICS is used to manage entitlement funds, order USDA Foods, view and/or modify monthly allocations/deliveries, and stay informed.
- A login and password are required for ICS. Users may be added by submitting the [ICS New User Registration Form](#).
- Follow Step 6 of the [ICS Instructions](#) to order USDA Foods.
- Refer to the Bonus Orders section of the [ICS Instructions](#) to order Bonus USDA Foods.
- Each month, from August through April, ISBE allocates USDA Foods to participants based on warehouse inventory. The allocation is displayed in ICS as a Delivery Request.
- Participants may view and/or modify the Delivery Request between the 13th and 20th of each month, in the month prior to delivery.
- USDA Foods orders can be adjusted throughout the school year, but accommodations are dependent upon order deadlines, inventory, and budget considerations.

Delivery

- ISBE contracts with a warehousing and delivery company to store and ship USDA Foods.
- For the purposes of menu planning and district level storage needs, check out the [Anticipated USDA Foods Chart](#) to know which month(s) to expect deliveries of particular USDA Foods.
- For school year 2020-21, there is a delivery fee of \$4.54 per case.
- Participants may add, remove, or change delivery sites by submitting the [ICS Delivery Site Change Form](#).

For all questions concerning USDA Foods, please contact ISBE at fdp@isbe.net.