



THE OUTLOOK

A Monthly Newsletter for School Nutrition Programs

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Sign Up for In-Person Verification Trainings

School food authorities (SFAs) participating in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program are required to verify income for a small percentage of households approved for free or reduced-price meals each school year.

ISBE staff want to help prepare you as a sponsor with HEAs to understand Verification steps and process.

We are offering in-person trainings at several locations throughout the state. Please register to attend a training in your area.

Meeting space is limited so we request you send a limited number of staff and register early to attend.

The trainings are set for three hours, 8:30-11:30 a.m. Here are the scheduled locations and registration links:

Attention District-Wide CEP Sponsors

PLEASE NOTE: Sponsors that are district-wide Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) do not need to complete the Verification process or the VSR.

- [Sept. 7 in Mt. Vernon](#)
- [Sept. 12 in Edwardsville](#)
- [Sept. 19 in Champaign](#)
- [Sept. 21 in Dixon](#)
- [Sept. 26 in Chicago](#)
- [Sept. 27 in Joliet](#)
- [Sept. 28 in Springfield](#)

Sponsors are expected to be familiar with the [SNP Administrative Handbook](#), which includes a [section on Verification](#).

NEWS BITES

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Registration is under way for a fall trainings offered by the



University of Illinois Extension as part of the ABCs of School Nutrition initiative. [Go to their website](#) and click “Events” for a list of upcoming offerings. The ISBE Nutrition Department partners with the U of I Ext. to provide free resources and trainings to support School Nutrition Programs in Illinois.

DIETARY GUIDELINES

The U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services and Agriculture invite the public to provide oral comments to the **2025 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee** virtually during its third meeting on Sept. 12-13, 2023. Meeting registration is required. Visit the [Dietary Guidelines for Americans website](#) for more information.

ONLINE TRAININGS

In case you missed them or need to review, recordings of our recent webinars on [Direct Certification](#) and [Household Eligibility Applications](#) are available online. Sponsors should be familiar with the [School Nutrition Programs Administrative Handbook](#), which includes [Section F. Electronic Direct Certification](#) and [Section G. Certification of Eligibility – Processing Household Eligibility Applications](#).



REMINDER: LFS Funding Available

All School Food Authorities (SFAs) that participate in the National School Lunch and/or School Breakfast Program are eligible to receive Local Food for School (LFS) funding to purchase local unprocessed or minimally processed foods to serve as part of the NSLP and/or SBP reimbursable meals. The funding is available from August 2023 through January 2025.



[Instructions on how to sign up are](#)

[available on our website](#). You may confirm that your submission is complete by verifying that the term “Accepted” displays on your 2024 homepage under “Sponsor Tasks”

next to the Local Food for Schools (LFS) Agreement link.

For more information, visit the ISBE Nutrition Department’s [Farm to Child Nutrition Programs webpage](#). Resources under the “Funding Opportunities” section include an [introductory webinar](#).

ILLINOIS FARM TO SCHOOL NETWORK

Sign Up for the Illinois Great Apple Crunch!

[Registration is under way online](#) for the Illinois Great Apple Crunch, which is set for Thursday, Oct. 12 (or any day you choose in October).

The annual event, which is organized by the Illinois Farm to School Network, celebrates National Farm to School Month. The Illinois Farm to School Network helps participants locate local orchards and provides promotional tools and educational supplements that teach students all about Illinois apples.

The Illinois Crunch is part of the Midwest Great Apple Crunch, which is also celebrated in the neighboring states of Iowa, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin.

Farm to School Procurement Day at Janie’s Mill

The [Illinois Farm to School Network](#) and [Seven Generations Ahead](#) are promoting a Farm to School Procurement Day at Janie’s Mill. The event is set for 2-4 p.m. Sept. 28 at Janie’s Mill, located at 405 N. Second St. in Ashkum, Ill. The event will include a mill tour and a farm to school procurement conversation. [Click here to register](#).

School Nutrition Programs

Sy 2023-24 Checklist



- Bookmark the main ISBE Nutrition Department webpage, www.isbe.net/nutrition. The What's New? section is a great way to stay up-to-date.
- Reference the [School Nutrition Programs Administrative Handbook](#) for guidance on program requirements and procedures.
- Use the [A to Z Index of School Nutrition Programs](#) to find the topic you're looking for on the website. A link is under "Resources" at www.isbe.net/nutrition.
- Check the [Illinois Commodity System \(ICS\)](#) and be sure to spend all of your Food Distribution Program money!
- Update contact information in the [Web-Based Illinois Nutrition System \(WINS\)](#) and the [Entity Profile System \(EPS\)](#).
- Subscribe for updates on the U.S. Department of Agriculture's [Recalls & Public Health Alerts website](#).
- Keep our email and phone numbers handy for questions: cnp@isbe.net, (800) 545-7892, (217) 782-2491. Include your RCDT number in messages.
- Double check your [annual application](#) for Program Year 2023. If it isn't completed and approved, you will not be able to submit meal claims.





**Illinois State
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Nutrition Department**

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Events, Meetings, and Deadlines

- Sept. 21 – [Healthy Meals Incentives Recognition Awards for SFAs webinar](#)
- Oct. 9 – ISBE offices closed for Columbus Day
- Oct. 10-14 – [National School Lunch Week](#)
- Oct. 12 – [Illinois Great Apple Crunch](#)

Please note this is not a complete list of Nutrition Department events, meetings, and deadlines. Visit us online at www.isbe.net/nutrition.

What's New?

- [Register for Upcoming ABCs of School Nutrition Events](#)
- [Important Direct Certification and HEA Announcements](#)
- [Review and Sign Up for the Latest Recalls and Safety Alerts From the FDA](#)
- [Check Out Our Recipe for Success Toolkit for Menu Item Inspiration](#)
- [School Lunch Menu e-poster Available for Download](#)
- [Reimbursement Rates for Fiscal Year 2024](#)
- [Sign Up for Local Food for Schools \(LFS\) Funding](#)

Watch for our latest news and posts under What's New? at www.isbe.net/nutrition.

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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 at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf>, 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; or
2. **fax:** (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. **email:** program.intake@usda.gov

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