

The OUTLOOK

Nutrition Programs

Illinois State Board of Education

Administration

Summer Food Service Program

The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) is designed to provide nutritious meals during summer months to children from areas where at least 50 percent are eligible for free or reduced-priced meals during the school year through the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. Does your area meet this criterion? If so, consider becoming a sponsor to help bridge the gap for children in your community. All sponsors will be required to submit the program application and monthly Claims for Reimbursement via the Internet.

If the responsibilities of sponsorship in the SFSP are not possible, you can still participate in the program by operating as a site under a different sponsor, being a vendor, or volunteering your time. Visit our website at <http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/summer.htm> to learn more about this vital program and how you can help.

Training Workshops

Training workshops for the Summer Food Service Program will be held at the locations listed below for organizations interested in sponsoring the SFSP during the summer of 2007. To register for the workshops, visit our website at <http://www.isbe.net/nutrition>.

SFSP Training Workshop Schedule

- Thursday, March 1 Carterville
- Tuesday, March 6 Decatur
- Thursday, March 8 Fairview Heights
- Wednesday, March 14 Alsip
- Tuesday, March 27 Galesburg
- Tuesday, April 3 Rockford
- Tuesday, May 22 Springfield

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bulletin board

Important Dates

- Local on-site review completion deadline (keep file at school)—February 1, 2007
(<http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/requirements.htm>)
- Annual Commodity Order Form deadline—February 2, 2007
(<http://www.isbe.net/business.htm>)
- Breakfast Survey Due Date—February 9, 2007
(<http://isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/breakfast.htm>)
- Legislative Action Conference, Washington, D.C.—March 4–7, 2007
(<http://www.schoolnutrition.org/LAC2.aspx?id=2179>)
- National School Breakfast Week, *A World of School Breakfasts*—March 5–9, 2007
(<http://docs.schoolnutrition.org/meetingsandevents/nsbw2007/>)

February 2007 Outlook

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Summer Food Service Program (continued)

The training sessions are designed to provide a complete overview of the SFSP including the Illinois State Board of Education's (ISBE's) Internet-based program application and claim system. All sponsors are required to attend training.

For additional information, contact Amy Bianco at 800/545-7892 or email cnp@isbe.net.

Consider Serving Seamlessly With the Seamless Summer Option



The Seamless Summer Option combines features of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), and Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). This option reduces paperwork and administrative burden, making it easier for schools to feed children from low-income areas during the traditional summer vacation periods, for year-round schools, and for long school vacation periods (generally exceeding two to three weeks). School districts participating in NSLP or SBP are eligible to apply for the Seamless Summer Option.

NOTE: If you contract with a food service management company or vendor for meal services, all summer programs, including the Seamless Summer Option, must be included in your contract.

For additional information, contact Debbie Collins at 217/782-2491 or 800/545-7892 or visit our website at <http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/summer.htm>. Information can also be found on the USDA website at <http://www.summerfood.usda.gov>.

USDA's Exemptions List Updated

A link on our website (<http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/pdf/exemptions.pdf>) has been updated with the USDA's list of exemptions under the Competitive Foods Regulation issued December 1, 2006. Many new products have been added and one company and its products have been removed. Please make sure you review this list for the most up-to-date information.

The exemption of the products listed above means they are no longer considered foods of minimal nutritional value and can therefore be sold during the meal period in a school food service area. This does not mean these products are approved or endorsed by the Food and Nutrition Service. Nor does an exemption indicate these products have significant nutritional value. In addition, the exemptions should not be perceived as guidance or encouragement to school food authorities concerning their possible purchase.

In addition, the beverages listed are allowable beverages at participating schools with grades eight and below under the State of Illinois' School Food Service Rules Part 305.

As always, please be aware several companies with exempted foods produce similar products that are not exempted and are therefore still considered foods of minimal nutritional value. The exemption of one product does not mean similar products or a family of products are exempted unless specifically stated in an exemption letter and included on the exemption list.

Child Nutrition Labeling Program Violations

IMPORTANT, PLEASE NOTE—USDA Food and Nutrition Service occasionally alerts this office of Child Nutrition (CN)

Labeling Program violations. A current list of the violations will be maintained on our website at www.isbe.net/nutrition.

Buy American Provision Reminder

School food authorities (SFAs) are reminded to adhere to the *Buy American* provisions found in federal regulations (7 CFR Part 250.23). SFAs are required to purchase, to the maximum extent practicable, domestic commodities or products for use in meals served under the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. Actions an SFA should take to comply with these requirements are as follows:

1. Include a *Buy American* clause in all procurement documents (product specifications, bid solicitation, purchase orders, etc.);
2. Monitor contractor performance;
3. Require suppliers to certify the origin of the product;
4. Examine product packaging for identification of the country of origin; and
5. Ask the supplier for specific information about the percentage of U.S. content in the food product.

While rare, there are two situations which do permit purchases of foreign products. These are:

1. The product is not produced or manufactured in the U.S. in sufficient and reasonable available quantities of a satisfactory quality; and
2. Competitive bids reveal the cost of a U.S. product is significantly higher than a foreign product.

For further information on the National School Lunch Act's *Buy American* provision, view our online questions and answers at http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/pdf/buy_american_Q&A.pdf.

Civil Rights Outreach

The USDA's Office of Civil Rights (OCR) regulates that each school food authority (SFA) must take reasonable steps to assure meaningful access to the information and services provided through their Child Nutrition Programs. Outreach is an important component of your Child Nutrition Program because you want to reach as many potentially eligible individuals for your Program(s) as possible. You can ensure access to your program(s) by reaching out to under-represented groups.

- Q.** What are *under-represented groups*?
- A.** *Through data collection, which was discussed in The Outlook November 2006, you can determine the under-represented individuals. For example, if you have a high percentage of a certain racial or ethnic group that attends your school, yet a very low percentage of that racial or ethnic group applies for your Child Nutrition Program, they may be under-represented. There may be several reasons why they are under-represented; the most common reason being a language barrier or limited English proficiency.*
- Q.** What is the school food authority's responsibility regarding outreach?
- A.** *The first step is data collection, in which the Child Nutrition Program collects racial and ethnic data of the total school population versus the racial and ethnic data of program applicants. If you determine a group is under-represented, you will want to determine ways to reach out to that under-represented group. Perhaps that means providing the household applications in multiple languages and/or having a language teacher available at registration to help with*

language barriers. Educational materials such as flyers, posters, etc. are the most popular way to reach out and educate others about the programs available. Educational training on civil rights is required each year for employees working in or with USDA Child Nutrition Programs. This training can be as simple as reviewing the brochure that is available on our website, to discussing scenarios where students' civil rights may be violated and the proper way to handle those situations.

- Q.** Where can we obtain civil rights materials that can help us to reach out?
- A.** Household Eligibility Applications are available in Spanish on our website at www.isbe.net/nutrition and additional languages are available on the USDA website. Providing information about available food and nutrition programs to parents in several different ways is another great way to reach parents. A couple of examples include providing information through school newsletters, on a school website, through the student handbook, and verbally are great ways to reach out and educate possible eligible individuals. Please remember in your materials to utilize graphics that include diversity and inclusion and any materials regarding USDA programs do need to include the non-discrimination statement, which at a minimum must include the following, "USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer."

Claim Common Cents

Funding & Disbursement Services Division
Phone: 217/782-5256
Fax: 217/782-3910



Know Your Agreement Number

Do you know your agreement number for the Child Nutrition Program(s)? Your agreement number is also known as your sponsor identification or your region-county district-type (RCDT) code. It is an eleven-digit number used by your organization for all types of reporting to ISBE. It is shown in the following format: 99-999-9999-99. The agreement number is comprised of all numbers, except for the 9th position which may be either a number or a letter.

PLEASE have your agreement number available when you call ISBE regarding claim or payment questions. We reference that number to look up all information and if you have it available when you call, we can assist you much faster.

If you have claim questions, please contact Carol Curto or Gladys Rothenberg in Funding and Disbursements at 217/782-5256.

Questions and Answers

1. **Q.** If an approved Household Eligibility Application indicates zero income and is selected for verification, what is acceptable documentation?
- A.** Based on a review of USDA materials, acceptable documentation for a zero income application is a brief note explaining how food, clothing, and housing for the household are provided, and when the household expects an income.
2. **Q.** A teacher's aide who works and is paid for nine months per year submitted an application for meal benefits. The application was subsequently approved for benefits and is now selected for verification. Is the teacher's aide to be treated as a seasonal employee? How is verification conducted in this instance?
- A.** A teacher's aide who works nine out of 12 months could be considered to "earn more in some months than in other months." Households must report "current income" which is income received by the household during the month prior to application. If this income does not fairly or accurately represent the household's actual circumstances, the household may project its annual rate of income based on the guidelines given on pages 34–35 of the Eligibility Guidance. Further USDA guidance states that households selected for verification may provide written evidence of income for any point in time between the month prior to application and the time the household is required to provide income documentation for verification. However, if this income documentation is not an accurate representation of the teacher's aide's circumstances, then he/she should submit documentation used to project his/her annual income and an explanation of how the annual income projection is calculated. If the prior year's income provides an accurate reflection of the household's current annual rate of income, the prior year may be used as a basis for the projected annual rate of income.
3. **Q.** Is degermed corn meal, corn meal that has had most of the germ and bran removed during the milling process, creditable in the Child Nutrition Programs?
- A.** No, degermed corn meal is not creditable in the Child Nutrition Programs. Just as hominy is not creditable, neither is degermed corn meal as the germ and bran are removed during processing.
4. **Q.** Are farmers required to report Individual Retirement Account (IRA) distributions as income?
- A.** On page 33, the Eligibility Guidance for School Meals Manual defines income as "any money received on a recurring basis." The guidance gives examples of what is included as income, such as annuities, dividend income, income from estates, trusts, and/or investments. The guidance describes special situations such as lump sum payments, which are not counted as income. However, if the lump sum payment is placed "into a savings account and the household regularly draws from that account for living expenses, the amount withdrawn is counted as income." On page 34, the guidance also notes that if "other income" is regularly available to pay for a child's meal, then it should be counted as income. An IRA distribution is considered a regularly available source of income.
5. **Q.** Why does the conversion of income provide different results depending on whether it is converted weekly or yearly?
- A.** The differences result from rounding. The published Income Eligibility Guidelines "are established by dividing annual income limits by the annual income frequency, and rounding up to the next whole dollar." In this instance, if you divide the published annual income limit of \$24,420 by the weekly frequency of 52, you get \$469.615, which rounds up to the next whole dollar of \$470, which is the published weekly income limit. But if you take that \$470 and multiply it by 52, you get \$24,440 which is \$20 more than the \$24,420. School food authorities have ample flexibility to avoid the problems created by the rounding up to the next whole

dollar. USDA guidance encourages SFAs “to work with their software vendors to update the conversion methods.” In other words, SFAs should not automatically use the published conversion factors such as 4.33 for weekly income. Annualization is the “preferred” method when the household reports income sources at more than one frequency. “Preferred” does not mean “required.” The USDA guidance says not to use conversion factors or annualization if the household has only one income source, or if all the sources are received with the same frequency.

6. Q. The guidance on the required local wellness policy states that nutrition guidelines should be established for all foods available during the school day with the objectives of promoting student health and reducing childhood obesity. Does “available” mean any and all foods, including those not necessarily sold such as student incentives in the classroom, birthday parties, and foods sold by entities other than a school, for example, PTAs?
- A. “Available” does mean all foods and beverages on the school campus, not necessarily just what is sold. However, it is up to the local wellness committee to develop policies for various occasions, such as birthday parties, and for student incentives in the classroom.
7. Q. When there is a special diet order required by a physician, is the SFA within its legal rights to charge the family for meals ordered but not consumed?
- A. In Appendix A of the guidance Accommodating Children With Special Dietary Needs in the School Nutrition Programs, FNS Instruction 783-2, Rev. 2 says, “There shall not be a supplementary charge for the substituted food item(s) to either a handicapped participant or to a participant with other special dietary needs.” Therefore, the SFA may not charge the family for meals ordered but not consumed.
8. Q. Can a local education agency (LEA) verify 100 percent of its approved applications each school year?
- A. No, according to USDA policy, an LEA must use the standard sample size for verification (or the alternate sample size if it qualifies for it). In addition, the LEA must verify any application for which there is cause. This would be the only reason to exceed the standard or alternate sample size.
9. Q. The term “standard sample size” and “basic sample size” have both been used in regards to verification. Is the term “standard sample size” the same as the term “basic sample size”?
- A. Yes, the two terms are equivalent. However, the term “standard sample size” is the one used now to refer to the sample size established by the 2004 Reauthorization Act, which is the lesser of 3 percent or 3,000 of the approved applications on file as of October 1, drawn from error-prone applications.

Food Distribution

Check Your Diversions to Processors

Processors who had enough schools order products from them will be awarded contracts this month. What this means to schools—you need to check and see if the processor you diverted commodities to will be awarded a contract. If the processor to which you diverted commodities IS getting a contract, you do

not have to do anything. If the processor to which you diverted commodities is NOT getting a contract, you might want to switch the commodities to a processor who IS going to receive a contract. We will post a message on the Illinois Commodity System message board by February 9, 2007, listing which processors will be getting a contract and instructions on how to switch commodities. Schools will have until February 19, 2007, to switch their commodities. If a school does not switch their commodities, ISBE will “zero out” those pounds diverted to a processor NOT getting a contract.

Storage of Commodities Over Summer Break

ISBE will no longer allow “over summer” storage of prior year commodities at the Lanter warehouse. For example, we are currently in school year 2007. At the end of the 2007 school year, we will not allow 2006 school year commodities to be held in the warehouse. We are making this policy in an attempt to reduce/eliminate out of date commodities being shipped in the subsequent school year and to get the warehouse empty in case we have a new warehouse contractor for the next school year. If you have any 2006 commodities and you know you are not going to use them, please contact the Food Distribution Program as soon as possible so we can unallocate these items from you and allocate them to schools that can use them before the expiration date. You can find out what 2006 commodities you have been allocated by looking at your most recent monthly commodity bulletin on the Illinois Commodity System (ICS).

Again, we need to hear from you quickly. If we do not receive notice to unallocate commodities, we will deliver these commodities to schools with the April 2007 delivery unless you have taken delivery prior to then. You can call and talk with Food Distribution Program staff at 800/545-7892 or email jflentje@isbe.net. Please contact the Food Distribution Program soon so we can avoid unwanted commodities being delivered to your school.

Food Service and Nutrition

Celebrate National Agriculture Day March 21, 2007



March 21, 2007 is AG DAY. Did you know American Agriculture not only provides you food and clothing, but also helps meet needs around the world? Plus, American agriculture is not just producing more food, it is producing higher quality food. American agriculture is growing our tomorrows!

To help you celebrate National AG DAY this March, the 2007 Ag Day Planning Guide is available from the Agriculture Council of America. The Ag Day Planning Guide was developed to help you plan and host Ag Day events most effectively. It includes event ideas, planning, enlisting support, a checklist, agriculture facts, key contacts, media tips, and sample press releases and public service announcements.

To order your guide(s) online, visit, <http://payment.nama.org/agdayorder.htm>, or contact the Agriculture Council of America at 913/491-1895. You may also download the 2007 Ag Day Planning Guide at <http://www.agday.org/AgDayGuide2007.pdf>.

Do not hesitate; begin planning your AG DAY events today!

Grants, Awards, and Honors

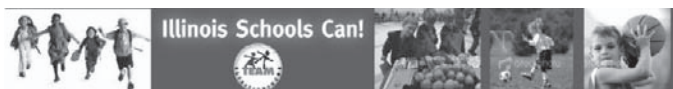
School Breakfast Program Start-Up Grant Funds Are Available—\$3,500 Per Eligible School

As schools across Illinois make plans to celebrate National School Breakfast Week next month, consider applying for a School Breakfast Program Start-Up Grant to join these schools. School Breakfast Program Start-Up Grants of up to \$3,500 are available to begin school breakfast programs.

The state-funded School Breakfast Program Start-Up Grant is designed to assist schools in overcoming some of the barriers associated with starting a new program and provides up to \$3,500 per school for eligible costs. A school food authority (SFA) may complete an application packet for schools that will start a School Breakfast Program during the 2006–2007 school year. ISBE will accept grant applications for the School Breakfast Program Start-Up Grant applications until monies are exhausted or through June 30, 2007.

The website containing the 2007 School Breakfast Program Start-Up Grant Agreement is located at http://www.isbe.net/nutrition/htmls/breakfast_state.htm. Please contact us at 800/545-7892 or 217/782-2491 if you have any questions.

Training, Tips, and Tools



Sign Up for the Free Electronic Illinois Schools Can! Newsletter

One product of the *Illinois Schools Can!* initiative is the free electronic *Illinois Schools Can!* newsletter. The purpose of the newsletter is to provide elementary schools with information on resources, training, and grant opportunities for meeting HealthierUS School Challenge criteria. The newsletter also highlights success stories from Illinois schools already striving to create school environments that support student wellness. Illinois schools that successfully meet the HealthierUS School Challenge Gold or Silver Certification will be featured in the newsletter as “best practice” models. Sign up for this newsletter today at <http://www.kidseatwell.org/IllinoisSchoolsCan.html>.

Handbook for Children With Special Food and Nutritional Needs Available NEW!

The National Food Service Management Institute has recently released a helpful resource, *Handbook for Children with Special Food and Nutritional Needs*. It includes definitions of disabilities, descriptions of selected disabilities, food allergies and food sensitivities, and guidance on how to implement all the

changes each may require in your food service program. To view or print a copy of your own handbook, visit http://www.nfsmi.org/Information/sp_needs_handbk.pdf.

Register Now for Regional Local Wellness Policy Implementation Workshops

Illinois Schools Can! Putting School Wellness Policies Into Action is a full-day workshop offering five continuing professional development unit (CPDU) credits to K–12 school staff sponsored by the Illinois Soybean Association and presented by the Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools and the Illinois Nutrition Education and Training Program.

This workshop, funded in part through a USDA Team Nutrition grant, focuses on putting your school wellness team members and school staff in touch with strategies and resources to move policy into action. Attendance at these workshops will also provide elementary schools who want to apply for the *Illinois Schools Can!* grants of up to \$2,500 with extra credit points!

Following are the sites and dates for the workshops. Your registration must be postmarked in early February and space is limited so do not delay in registering your team today!

Thursday, February 22	Highland Community College—Freeport
Friday, February 23	Holiday Inn—Elgin
Wednesday, February 28	Holiday Inn—Urbana
Thursday, March 1	Wildlife Prairie State Park—Peoria (Hanna City)
Wednesday, March 7	Microtel Inn—Carlyle
Thursday, March 8	Southern Illinois University—Carbondale

Visit <http://www.kidseatwell.org> for more information and to download a registration form.

Mark Your Calendar for the School Nutrition Association's Annual National Conference 2007, July 15–18

My Kind of Conference is this year's theme for the School Nutrition Association's Annual National Conference. And what venue is it, but of course, CHICAGO! Touted as the premier professional development event for child nutrition professionals, over 3,500 persons attend. The conference includes numerous sessions on a variety of topics covering the following topics:

- Child nutrition
- Foodservice administration and operations
- Leadership
- Legislation and policy development
- Marketing and communication
- Nutrition education
- School environment
- Technology
- Wellness

In addition, an exhibit hall features new products, numerous exhibits and is considered one of the most valuable assets of the event. For further information and online registration, visit <http://docs.schoolnutrition.org/meetingsandevents/anc2007/>.

Additions to the National Food Service Management Institute's Website (October Through December 2006)

The National Food Service Management Institute (NFSMI) website has been updated to include new materials available to download. These materials include:

- Newsletter, NFSMI Update Vol. 11, Summer 2006
 - Research on the *Identification of Resources and Practices That Increase Accountability in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) Snack Service Provided to Afterschool Care Programs—Executive Summary*
 - Resources such as USDA Recipes for Schools
 - Satellite Seminar, *Developing a Food Safety Program Using the Process Approach* (webcast and print materials)
 - Video links have been added to the numerous resource pages.
- Visit www.nfsmi.org to view and download these resources.

Research Report Summaries Available

Do you like to keep up with current research related to school nutrition and foodservice but have limited time to do Internet searches and heavy reading? The National Food Service Management Institute has provided a solution to this challenge. They are now posting quarterly research report summaries at www.nfsmi.org. To access this information, either visit their website regularly or subscribe online to receive their e-newsletter.

Calendar of Events—MARCH



National Nutrition Month, *100% FAD FREE*
Complete the Meal Count Edit prior to submission of the Claim for Reimbursement

- 1 Summer Food Service Program Training Workshop—Carterville (John A. Logan College)
- 4–7 School Nutrition Association's Legislative Action Conference—Washington, D.C.
- 6 Summer Food Service Program Training Workshop—Decatur
- 6–10 National School Breakfast Week, A World of School Breakfasts
- 8 Summer Food Service Program Training Workshop—Fairview Heights
- 10 Submit Claim for Reimbursement
- 13–20 Make changes, if needed, for April commodity deliveries
- 14 Summer Food Service Program Training Workshop—Alsip
- 17 St. Patrick's Day
- 27 Summer Food Service Program Training Workshop—Galesburg
- 31–April 4 American Commodity Distribution Association (ACDA) Annual Conference—Orlando, Florida



Illinois State Board of Education

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