

# SchoolMealsNews Bulletin 1819-20

Announcements from the WI DPI School Nutrition Team (SNT)

June 11, 2019

- Updates from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)
- Updates from the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) School Nutrition Team
- Other Available Information

## Updates from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

### **SP 29-2019: Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program: Allocation of Funds for Fiscal Year 2020**

The Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP), under Section 19 of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (NSLA) is a nationwide program that operates in select elementary schools in the 50 States, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. The purpose of this memorandum is to provide funding allocation amounts for all State agencies for fiscal year (FY) 2020; to provide information on funding requirements and deadlines; and to serve as a reminder of important program requirements. Wisconsin has been allocated \$3,602,124.

### **Now Available! The Exhibit A Grains Tool!**

The Exhibit A Grains Tool, a new enhancement to the [Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs Interactive Web-Based Tool](#), is now available. This new tool will allow users to search their grain product (as listed on Exhibit A) and enter in the serving size as listed on the product label. The tool will determine the ounce equivalent (oz eq) grains or grains/bread serving(s) for the grain product. Stay tuned for the second part of the Exhibit A Grains Tool in the following months which will include the capability to determine the number of servings a program needs to serve in order to obtain a specific meal pattern contribution.

**The Professional Standards Training Database has a new look!**

Check it out! In May 2019, the Professional Standards Training Database launched a new platform and received a makeover. The interactive site features tools to assist you in locating trainings to meet your professional development needs.

New features of the site:

- Easy filtering options when searching for trainings,
  - (e.g., search by state, cost, key area, and training topic)
- Statistics regarding the listing of trainings available,
  - (e.g., number of state developed trainings, number of total trainings, number of free trainings)
- Links to the most popular trainings, on the home page for direct access, and
- Upcoming events
  - (e.g., upcoming Food and Nutrition Service led webinars and trainings and Institute of Child Nutrition led trainings).

Visit the [Professional Standards Training Database](#) for a great new experience and to locate a training today to take your professional development to the next level!

## **The Farm to School Census is Coming!**

The [Office of Community Food Systems](#) is excited to announce that the third [Farm to School Census](#) will launch this September! The Farm to School Census (the Census) is the only national survey that examines school districts' farm to school activities, such as local food purchasing behaviors, the number and use of school gardens, and the frequency of agricultural education. The Census surveys all School Food Authorities (SFAs) participating in the USDA [National School Lunch Program](#) in all 50 states, Washington D.C., the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, Northern Mariana Islands, and Puerto Rico.

USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) has contracted with the research firm [Abt Associates](#) to administer the 2019 Farm to School Census. Abt will start contacting state agencies and school districts later this summer.

The Census is a valuable measure of the effectiveness, scope, and reach of farm to school activities, nationwide, over time. It is important to participate in the Census, regardless of

your current level of farm to school participation. A strong response rate helps ensure that USDA, states, and partners have a clear understanding of the scope of farm to school activities, best practices, and challenges across the country. USDA uses Census data to develop new resources, tools, and policies that help strengthen and grow farm to school programs nationwide.

#### *What Counts as a Farm to School Activity?*

Farm to school encompasses an array of activities, such as the procurement of local or regional foods and educational activities involving food, agriculture, or nutrition. These activities include, but are not limited to:

- Serving or promoting local food products in the cafeteria, in the classroom, or elsewhere at school (For example, through programs such as the School Breakfast Program, the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, the Summer Food Service Program, afterschool snacks or suppers through the Child and Adult Care Food Program and NSLP, and through food distribution programs such as USDA Foods and USDA Department of Defense Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program);
- Conducting educational activities related to local foods, including bringing farmers and producers to the schools, taste testing local foods, hosting farmers' markets at schools, including agricultural lessons in classroom curricula, and culinary education focused on local foods;
- Taking field trips to farms, farmers' markets, or local food processing facilities;
- Educational sessions for students, parents, and community members focused on local foods and agriculture; and/or
- Creating, tending to, or harvesting from school gardens, or conducting education lessons in and about the school gardens.

#### *How Should I Prepare?*

The 2019 Census will primarily examine farm to school activities that occurred during the 2018-2019 school year. Districts can begin preparing for the Census by organizing their local purchasing and farm to school data.

Specifically, SFAs should begin gathering data on:

- Their definition of local;
- The grade levels that participated in farm to school activities;
- The number of schools that participated in farm to school activities;
- The number of schools that provided agricultural education;
- The number of schools that had edible school gardens;
- The number of salad bars within the district;
- The number of salad bars that served local foods;
- The top five local foods purchased in 2018-2019;
- The total amount of money spent on food;
- The amount of money spent on local foods;
- The sources of local products; and,
- The number of full- and part-time staff dedicated to farm to school efforts.

#### *Why Should I Complete the Census?*

The Census is very popular! The information gathered through the Census helps improve farm to school efforts at all levels. Schools, state agencies, researchers, advocates, and community partners all use Census data to better understand the extent and impact of farm to school efforts within their community and across the country.

- USDA utilizes Census data to design new resources, develop trainings, and inform the Farm to School Grant Program.
- Researchers use Census data to analyze the state of farm to school nationwide. Their analysis helps identify trends and best practices that can be replicated in your own school!
- Decision makers use Census data at the Federal, state and local levels to identify gaps in programming and develop policies and programs that encourage growth.
- Non-profits partners use Census data for marketing, promotion, program planning, resource development, and funding purposes.
- Producers use the Census to find districts interested in buying local foods.

- Families use Census data to better understand how their school teaches healthy eating habits and supports their local ag-economy!

## **Updates from the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) School Nutrition Team**

### **Food Safety Guidance**

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction School Nutrition Team has developed an updated resource that provides guidance for donating food to eligible local food banks or charitable organizations. This guidance document was developed in response to requests from school food authorities following a recent article about a food rescue initiative from a school in a Midwestern state. This guidance document is now available on the Food Safety webpage under the Food Waste and Donations section. Further questions on this topic can be directed to the School Nutrition Team food safety specialists.

### **REMINDER: Payment of Year End Claims**

Each year in June the processing of claims is shut down in order for the State to perform year-end wrap up and rollover into the new fiscal year. Please be aware of the following information when filing claims for any federal or state Child Nutrition Program.

Any claims for reimbursement submitted between the afternoon of June 11 and July 2 will be processed on July 3. Only one claim per program may be entered during this time per agency, including adjustments. Only if your claim is close to the 60-calendar day cutoff, please fax the claim to: Federal and State Grants Program - Attn. Jacque Jordee, fax number (608) 267-9207.

Listed below is the schedule for the reimbursement claim payments during the end of the fiscal year.

**NOTE:** Starting with the week of June 30, payments will be seen in your account earlier. The processing will be one week instead of two weeks.

Week Covered	Voucher Processing Date	EFT Deposit date
May 26	May 28	June 10
June 2	June 4	June 17
June 9	June 11	June 24
June 16	Process Package will not be run this week	
June 23	Process Package will not be run this week	
June 30	July 3	July 8
July 7	July 9	July 15

If you have any questions or concerns please contact Jacque Jordee at [jacqueline.jordee@dpi.wi.gov](mailto:jacqueline.jordee@dpi.wi.gov) or by phone (608) 267-9134. More information about [Claim Submission Deadlines](#) can be found on our “Online Services” webpage at <https://dpi.wi.gov/nutrition/online-services/claim-submission-deadlines>.

**Important Reminders**

- The Paid Lunch Equity (PLE) Exemption Form  
 State agencies are required to demonstrate oversight of the PLE provision and maintain documentation that includes a record showing each SFA implementing the exemption had a positive or zero balance in the nonprofit school food service account as of December 31, 2018.

All SFAs **are required** to complete the online [Paid Lunch Equity Survey](#), and we have structured the PLE Survey to also act as your SFA’s PLE Exemption Form, depending on your response (<https://goo.gl/forms/m3YAS34LPQreq5Ei1>). If you know your nonprofit school food service account balance as of December 31, 2018, you should be able to complete and submit the online form in less than 5 minutes.

Once you submit the PLE Survey/Exemption Form, you will be sent a copy of your responses via email for your records.

- Online Contract Renewal for School Year (SY) 2019-20

Just a reminder that the online contract renewal deadline is June 7, 2019. Please make sure this is completed in a timely fashion so our staff has time to get all contracts approved. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

- Direct Certification Program

The online direct certification (DC) portal will be closed for rollover the first week in July to get ready for the SY 2019-20. You will not be able to run DC during this timeframe. The portal should be ready for you to run your enrollment starting the week of July 8.