

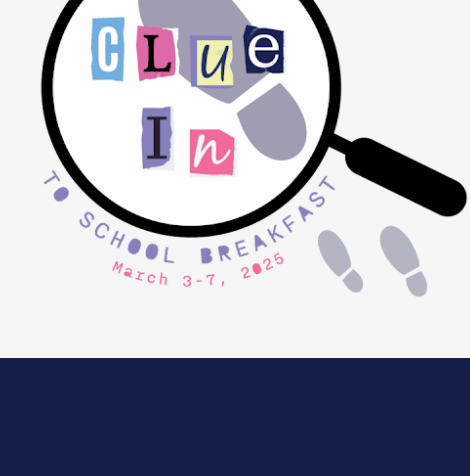
## School Nutrition Programs

This weekly newsletter from the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) is dedicated to providing education, training, and technical assistance opportunities to school nutrition professionals, helping to ensure seamless operations for those participating in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA's) Child Nutrition Programs. If you are the food service contact for your school or facility, please be certain that everyone on your team has access to this important information.

### Tip of the Week

#### Happy National School Breakfast Week!

Schools are invited to share photos of celebrations to be put into an Indiana School Breakfast Week scrapbook. Please remember that all photos shared with IDOE must be of children who have signed photo releases on file locally. Email photos to [Gretchen Huntzer](#) by Friday, March 14.



### Important Updates

#### Deadline Approaching: USDA Request for Information

Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) released two Requests for Information in December to solicit public input. Please see the upcoming deadlines for each below.

- [Child Nutrition Programs Tribal Pilot Projects](#): comments accepted through Monday, March 24.
- [Grain-Based Desserts and High-Protein Yogurt Crediting in Child Nutrition Programs](#): comments accepted through Wednesday, March 26.

### Farm to School

#### Office Hours

Indiana Farm to School Office Hours provide a space to connect, ask questions, and get expert advice on all things Farm to School. Whether you're just getting started or looking to take your program to the next level, our knowledgeable staff is here to help. Office hours occur every third Wednesday at 3:30 p.m. ET. Sign up [here](#), for our March office hours.

#### Indiana Grown for Schools Recognition Program

IDOE is seeking an experienced crediting trainer for a three-day Recipe Development and Crediting Training Workshop Tuesday, June 10, through Thursday, June 12, at Valparaiso High School. The trainer will develop three, two-hour sessions covering the School Nutrition Program meal pattern crediting and will work in coordination with a recipe development trainer. The timing of the crediting training portion of the day will be determined through the coordinated efforts of both trainers. Contact [Sophie Lindley](#) for Scope of Work and questions.

#### Food Day 2025 Kick-off Webinar

This year, for Food Day, we are celebrating corn! Join IDOE and the Indiana Department of Health for a kick-off webinar and information session on Wednesday, March 19, from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. ET. Register [here](#).

#### IDOE Seeks Crediting Trainer

IDOE is seeking an experienced crediting trainer for a three-day Recipe Development and Crediting Training Workshop Tuesday, June 10, through Thursday, June 12, at Valparaiso High School. The trainer will develop three, two-hour sessions covering the School Nutrition Program meal pattern crediting and will work in coordination with a recipe development trainer. The timing of the crediting training portion of the day will be determined through the coordinated efforts of both trainers. Contact [Sophie Lindley](#) for Scope of Work and questions.

#### School Highlight: School City of Hammond

The **School City of Hammond** is happy to be a part of the Local Food for Schools Program through Region Roots. Their staff members play an active role in the menu selection, and they beam with pride when they can serve dishes made from these locally sourced ingredients. Their students love exploring the seasonal produce and local meats and look forward to discovering what's new on the menu. Their menu isn't just about eating healthy—it's about building stronger minds, bodies, and communities. Their staff members are always reminded that they own the program and they are working to make a lasting impact on the region.



### USDA Foods

#### USDA Foods Annual Pre-Order Forecast Survey

The USDA Foods Annual Pre-Order Forecast Survey will close this Friday, March 7, at 4 p.m. ET. Once the survey closes, it cannot be reopened. School food authorities (SFAs) must complete the survey in [CNPweb](#) under the surveys tab, by the deadline, in order to receive USDA Foods for school year 2025-2026. For useful information and resources, please review the [Preparing for the Annual Pre-Order Forecast Survey guidance](#). The Maximize and Master the USDA Foods Survey Training: Plan, Prepare, Succeed recording can be accessed [here](#).

When completing the survey, respondents may see the following message:  
*You do not currently have a NSLP information sheet for program year 2026 in a "pending approval" or "approved" status. You must complete the enrollment process for the National School Lunch Program before your FDP information sheet can be certified and approved.* When completing the survey, please ignore it for now. Schools will need to complete this requirement at the beginning of school year 2026.

#### New USDA Foods Survey Offerings

There are three new USDA Foods offerings on the 2025-2026 annual pre-order forecast survey. They are [pulled chicken 111881](#), [frozen apple juice cups 111790](#) and a product that can serve as a vegetarian option, the [black bean burger patty 111860](#). All these items are frozen and are listed in the survey in CNPweb under the 2026 Surveys tab in the chicken, fruit and vegetable categories respectively.

#### USDA Foods and DoD Fresh Orders and Deliveries

Schools should begin preparing for the end of the school year. Allocations end on Wednesday, April 30. USDA Foods deliveries (based on delivery periods) and USDA Foods for Processing and DoD orders end Monday, June 30. Schools should make plans for ordering and utilization. USDA Foods for Processing pounds remaining will carry over to school year 2026 depending on usage and availability. DoD Fresh funds will not carry over.

#### USDA Foods Recipes

Use your USDA Foods [shredded cheddar cheese](#) to prepare this variation of [vegetable frittata bites](#). This recipe must be adjusted to meet serving sizes and meal patterns.



### Training and Webinar Opportunities

#### Reducing Added Sugars at Breakfast

Per the 2024 final rule, [Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines](#), product-based limits for added sugar will be effective beginning July 1, 2025 for breakfast cereal, yogurt and flavored milk. Join us to learn about the requirements for limiting added sugar at breakfast, how to determine added sugars in products, and tips for reducing added sugars. Thursday, March 6, at 10 a.m. ET. Register [here](#).

#### Taking Policy from Paper to Action: Implementing the Local Wellness Policy Webinar

During this local wellness policy webinar on Tuesday, March 11, at 2 p.m. ET, participants will hear from Alliance for a Healthier Generation and discuss the six-step process of wellness policy implementation with a focus on forming the wellness committee and exploring resources to help take action. Register [here](#).

#### Culinary A+ for School Meals In-Person Training

School nutrition operations are transforming. School nutrition standards require schools to offer more fruits, vegetables and whole grains and students demand tastier, fresher and more contemporary menu items. While this brings some challenges it also brings many opportunities to add new, exciting items to your menu. This class will focus on basic culinary skills needed to prepare and serve more fruits, vegetables, whole grains and salads while enhancing flavors and meeting the demands of today's guests. These basic culinary skills will help schools offer foods and meals that support the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and school nutrition standards.

Training is Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. local time.

- Columbus on Monday, June 2, through Friday, June 6
- Charlestown on Monday, June 9, through Friday, June 13
- Michigan City on Monday, July 7, through Friday, July 11
- Indianapolis on Monday, July 14, through Friday, July 18
- Fishers on Monday, July 21, through Friday, July 25
- Crown Point on Monday, July 28, through Friday, August 1

Register [here](#).

### Reminders

#### Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) Application Now Available

The school year 2025-2026 FFVP application is now open to all elementary schools that wish to apply. FFVP is available as a reimbursable grant for kindergarten through sixth grade students. Students older than sixth grade are not eligible for this grant funding. While preference is given to those with the highest free and reduced rate, all elementary schools are welcome to apply. Applications are due by Friday, April 18. Each building must be submitted as a separate application. Apply [here](#). Contact [Gretchen Huntzer](#) with any questions.

#### Food Connects Us! is this year's theme for National Nutrition Month.

"Food Connects Us" is this year's theme for National Nutrition Month. Food connects us to our culture, family, and friends. Explore the ways that sharing a meal is an opportunity to learn about where your food comes from and how different ingredients, recipes, and cooking techniques can be used. Try new global flavors or include your favorite cultural foods and traditions. Download resources [here](#) from the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.



### Updates from Our Partners

#### Culinary Institute for Child Nutrition (CICN)

Join CICN featuring ICN's Applied Research Division lead researchers as they introduce the "Competencies, Knowledge, and Skills (CKS) for Chefs Working in Schools" resource. Developed through extensive research with school nutrition directors, administrators, chefs, and State agency professionals, this comprehensive tool outlines the essential knowledge and skills expected of both entry-level and advanced chefs in a school setting. In this session, you'll gain valuable insights into hiring, interviewing, and training strategies for new chefs, as well as practical ways to use this tool to mentor and support current chefs. Additionally, our speakers will share ways to identify opportunities for collaboration with local colleges and institutions offering chef programs. Thursday, March 6 at 3 p.m. ET. Register [here](#).

### Upcoming Dates



Thursday, March 6, at 10 a.m. ET	<a href="#">Reducing Sugars and Breakfast Webinar</a>
Thursday, March 6, at 2 p.m. ET	<a href="#">Rise and Dine: Discovering Global Breakfast Flavors</a>
Thursday, March 6, at 3 p.m. ET	<a href="#">CICN Webinar: Competencies, Knowledge, and Skills for Chefs Working in Schools</a>
Friday, March 7 at 4 p.m. ET	USDA Foods Annual Pre-Order Forecast Survey Deadline
Friday, March 14	Deadline to submit School Breakfast Week photos for Indiana Scrapbook to <a href="#">Gretchen Huntzer</a>
Wednesday, March 19	<a href="#">IASBO School Nutrition Seminar</a>
Wednesday, March 19 at 2:30 p.m ET	<a href="#">Food Day 2025 Kickoff Webinar</a>
Wednesday, March 19 at 3:30 p.m. ET	<a href="#">Farm to School Office Hours</a>

### Additional Resources

[School Nutrition Programs Calendar](#)  
[IDOE's Nutrition Webpage](#)  
[CNPweb](#)