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**INDIANA**  
**DEPARTMENT of**  
**EDUCATION**

**Mike Braun, Governor**  
**Katie Jenner, Secretary of Education**

## School Nutrition Programs

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

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

#### Meal Charge Procedures and Bad Debt Policy Review

School food authorities (SFAs) are reminded to review local meal charging procedures and the bad debt policy to ensure any necessary updates can be approved by the local board (as needed) and implemented for the school year (SY) 2026-2027. All policy and procedures must be followed as written. Households must receive written notification outlining the meal charging procedures. SFAs are welcome to utilize resources developed by USDA, including the [Charging Procedures Checklist](#) and [Bad Debt Policy Development worksheet](#), to assist with these procedures. Additional information can also be found on IDOE's [Financial Management webpage](#).

### Important Updates

#### Breakfast in the Classroom (BIC) Reminders

Meal counts should be taken at the point of service (POS) by the classroom teacher or staff. The POS is the location where meal counts can be accurately confirmed to have provided all required components of a reimbursable meal. Meal counts cannot be based on student attendance, the number of meals sent to the classroom, or the number of meals returned from the classroom.

Classroom teachers and staff must receive proper training on reimbursable meal requirements, including Offer Versus Serve (if applicable), the established process for taking meal counts, and Civil Rights training. Students are not permitted to take meal counts. Visit IDOE's [School Breakfast Program webpage](#) for more information.

#### Accessing Certificates in the Nutrition Hub

To download certificates in the [Nutrition Hub](#), start by selecting Profile. This page displays growth points and hours, along with all completed webinars, resources, and quizzes. Use the Download option next to each completed item to obtain certificates for recordkeeping. The Filter Resources menu can be used to organize completed training.

When preparing documents for renewal in CNPweb, download the collection certificates, which confirm completion of all required training components. Click [here](#) for the Nutrition Hub Instruction Guide which provides more detailed information for users.

### Farm to School

#### School Garden Grant Opportunity

Indiana Thriving Schools Challenge is offering another round of funding for student-led sustainability projects, including school gardens. All K-12 schools in Indiana are eligible to [apply](#) for grants up to \$5,000. Applications are open through Thursday, September 13.

#### Hydroponics Webinar Presenter Callout

IDOE is seeking hydroponic growers for a share-and-learn webinar. Several schools are experiencing success with their hydroponic units, while others are facing some challenges. To support collective learning and growth, IDOE aims to bring all growers together in one virtual webinar. Anyone interested in presenting lessons learned about hydroponic or aquaponic growing may contact [f2s@doe.in.gov](mailto:f2s@doe.in.gov).

#### Food Day Registration

Registration is now open for Indiana Food Day! Food Day offers a great opportunity for schools or districts to celebrate this year's local food: tomatoes. For celebration ideas, watch the recording of the kick-off webinar and explore the Food Day 101 Toolkit on the website. The registration link, promotional posters, a swag ordering portal, and additional toolkits with resources for schools can be found [here](#). Posters are going fast, so register today!

#### Apple Crunch Registration is Here!

The Indiana Apple Crunch is a fun way to celebrate National Farm to School Month. Each October, Indiana schools, businesses, youth organizations, and groups purchase local apples, educate participants about apples, and CRUNCH together. Hosts of Crunch sites organize the Big Crunch along with other apple-themed activities. Pick a day in October, plan where apples will be purchased, and start thinking about how to create a CRUNCHTASTIC event! Registration and more information can be found [here](#).

#### Culinary Skills for Farm to School Training

Gain hands-on culinary skills to incorporate more local foods into school meals. This training will cover farm to school basics, using fresh and local herbs, making common vegetable substitutions, and practicing several kid-friendly recipes. Sessions will be held in the afternoons in Logansport on Tuesday, September 22, and Wednesday, September 23, and in Daviess County on Thursday, September 24, and Friday, September 25. Space is limited, and applications will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. Attendees from the summer 2024 training will be placed on a waitlist to allow new participants priority. Click [here](#) to register.

### USDA Foods

#### Department of Defense (DoD) Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Program

Schools must enter receipts in the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Order Receipt System (FFAVORS) **within two calendar days** of delivery to avoid account suspension and ensure that vendors are paid. Schools should monitor and use DoD Fresh funds in FFAVORS to prevent sweeping or loss of funds.

#### USDA Foods Reminders

- Select your distributors in [K12 Foodservice](#) and/or [ProcessorLink](#) to deliver processed end products to your SFA.
- Verify processor pounds have been loaded.
  - Use carryover pounds first.
- Incorporate USDA foods into your school menu as much and as often as possible.

#### USDA Foods Cancellations for SY 2026-2027

- 100256 Frozen Strawberry Cups (January-September 2026)
- 100258 Frozen Apple Slices
- 110721 Sweet Potato Fries
- 110921 Frozen Chicken Fillet, Unbreaded

#### Did You Know?

SFAs should track deliveries immediately. The recordkeeping should happen as soon as the USDA Foods arrive at your school. Record quantities, ensure case contents are correct, verify the product condition, and any delivery discrepancies. Report damage or shortages right away to IDOE and the vendor. Make sure all team members know how to inspect truck deliveries, check temperatures, confirm quantities, and store items correctly.

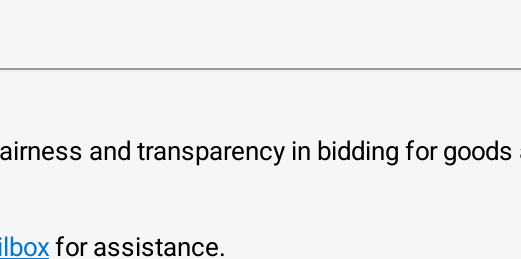
#### USDA Foods Recipe Spotlight

Discover new ways to incorporate USDA Foods into your menu this school year. Looking for recipes to use your USDA Foods? Check out these resources:

- [Nutrition.gov](#)
- [Smart Swaps Recipes](#)
- [Wild Blueberry Recipes](#)
- [Recipes for Healthy Kids](#)
- [Recipes for Schools - Child Nutrition Recipe Box](#)
- [Team Nutrition Recipes](#)

#### Featured Item: Broccoli Bites

Use your USDA [frozen broccoli](#) and [shredded cheddar cheese](#) in this [broccoli bites recipe](#). All recipes must follow and comply with USDA meal pattern requirements and program regulations.



### Procurement

#### Procurement Review Notification

On Monday, August 17, IDOE will send notification to SFAs selected for a procurement review. If your school is chosen, the school food service director, executive contact, and finance contact listed in CNPWeb will receive an email containing detailed instructions, required documents, and next steps for completing the review.

Please, watch your inbox for this communication and be sure it reaches the appropriate staff responsible for procurement. Completing the included steps promptly will help ensure compliance with National School Lunch Program (NSLP) procurement requirements and support a smooth review process.

For schools under review, IDOE will host weekly support calls beginning on Friday, August 21, at 10 a.m. ET. Details for the call will be included in the notification. If you have any questions after receiving your notification, feel free to reach out to [scnprocurement@doe.in.gov](mailto:scnprocurement@doe.in.gov) for assistance.

#### Full and Open Competition

SFAs must follow federal procurement regulations ([2 CFR 200.319](#)) to ensure fairness and transparency in bidding for goods and services.

Questions about procurement? Click [here](#) or contact the [SCN Procurement mailbox](#) for assistance.

### Training and Webinar Opportunities

#### Upcoming Webinars

Check out the upcoming webinar list [here](#), as new events are added regularly. Several new webinars are scheduled for this summer as well as AFR help sessions and office hours for the CNPweb application renewal process. Click the links below for more details and to register.

- [Free & Reduced Processing \(Repeat\)](#) - Thursday, August 13, from 10 to 11 a.m. ET
- [PY 2026 AFR Walkthrough \(Repeat\)](#) - Tuesday, August 18, from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. ET
- [Direct Certification \(DC\) Overview \(Repeat\)](#) - Thursday, August 20, from 10 to 11 a.m. ET
- [PY 2026 AFR Walkthrough \(Repeat\)](#) - Tuesday, August 25, from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. ET
- [Maximizing Direct Certification \(DC\)](#) - Thursday, September 10, from 10 to 11 a.m. ET

#### AFR Help Sessions:

- Thursday, August 13, from 1 to 1:30 p.m. ET- Register [here](#).
- Thursday, August 20, from 1 to 1:30 p.m. ET - Register [here](#).
- Thursday, August 27, from 1 to 1:30 p.m. ET- Register [here](#).

#### CNPweb Application Renewal Office Hours:

- Tuesday, August 18, from 2 to 2:45 p.m. ET- Register [here](#).
- Tuesday, August 25, from 2 to 2:45 p.m. ET- Register [here](#).

If there is a specific topic you would like to see covered, let us know by filling out [this form](#)!

#### Farm to School

IDOE, in partnership with the Indiana Grown for Schools Network, hosts and shares several webinars and events to support school nutrition programs. Stay up to date on the upcoming events page [here](#).

- [Farm to School Office Hours](#) - Wednesday, August 19, from 4 to 5 p.m. ET
- [Farm to School Office Hours](#) - Wednesday, September 16, from 4 to 5 p.m. ET
- [Farm to School Office Hours](#) - Wednesday, October 7, from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. ET
- [Farm to School Office Hours](#) - Wednesday, November 18, from 4 to 5 p.m. ET

### Reminders

#### Direct Certification (DC) Troubleshooting

Some sponsors have been reporting lower than average DC matches for this time of year. There are two troubleshooting tips that sponsors are recommended to implement:

- For the data manager at the school, those who report enrollment data in IDOE's Data Exchange (DEX), ensure that the 2027 Student School Association (SSA) record has been submitted.
- For the DC processor, upload the most current enrollment file directly into DC to manually match records. For instructions, click [here](#).
  - Please note, each site's enrollment will have to be uploaded separately. Sponsors can only upload enrollment files within the sites listed in CNPweb. So, if there are two school buildings that share a cafeteria and they are set up as only one site in CNPweb, upload both school's enrollment files under the one site listed in CNPweb.
  - If "no matches found" pops up after the upload, double check that the report was filled out correctly. The most common issue is the District Use Only column. This should be the student's individual STN or other unique identifier – any blanks or repeated numbers will cause an error and the report will not run.

Submit any DC questions in the [CNPWeb Help Form](#).

#### Indirect Cost

The indirect cost de minimis rate (15%) option, for non-public sponsors who do not report their financial information to IDOE's Office of School Finance, has returned. Public schools may only charge indirect costs to the Nonprofit School Food Service Account with an approved indirect cost rate. The 2026 approved indirect cost rates can be found [here](#). The 2027 approved indirect cost rates can be found [here](#).

Non-public sponsors may calculate and charge indirect costs for school year (SY) 2025-2026 using the 15% de minimis indirect cost rate. Sponsors must submit the indirect cost calculation and proof of transfer in the expense lines of the Annual Financial Report (AFR). The indirect cost calculation is as follows:

$$\text{Indirect Cost} = \text{Total Allowable Direct Expenses} - (\text{Food Cost} + \text{Equipment more than 5K}) \times \text{Indirect Cost Rate}$$

Indirect costs must be charged within 90 days of Tuesday, June 30, for SY 2025-2026. Indirect costs may not be charged retroactively for a previous school year.

Indirect costs are reported on the AFR as follows:

- If indirect costs were calculated and charged on or before Tuesday, June 30, the indirect costs charged should be reported on the 2026 AFR.
- If indirect costs were calculated and charged after Tuesday, June 30, but before Monday, September 28, the indirect costs charged should be reported on the 2027 AFR.

For questions regarding indirect costs, please contact [SCNFinance@doe.in.gov](mailto:SCNFinance@doe.in.gov), including your sponsor number in the subject line.

#### Turnip the Beet Awards – Nominations Open for Summer 2026!

Indiana Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and Seamless Summer Option (SSO) sponsors are invited to participate in USDA's Turnip the Beet award program for summer 2026.

Turnip the Beet awards recognize outstanding summer program sponsors across the nation who work hard to offer high-quality meals that are appetizing, appealing, and nutritious. These awards are aligned with USDA's priorities to create new opportunities to connect America's farmers to nutrition assistance programs, infuse the federal nutrition programs with new energy and vision, and strengthen strategies to encourage healthy choices, healthy outcomes, and healthy families. This is an excellent way to recognize staff and acknowledge the hard work that contributes to the success of the program.

To participate, sponsors must submit the [PY 2026 Nomination Form](#) and include a one-month SFSP or SSO menu that meets all USDA program regulations. Completed nomination packets should be emailed to Tina Skinner at [tskinner@doe.in.gov](mailto:tskinner@doe.in.gov) by Friday, September 4. For additional tips for completing the nomination packet, click [here](#).

### Updates from Our Partners

#### Back-to-School Letter Announcement

USDA's Food and Nutrition Administration (FNA) shared a "Welcome Back to School" letter for distribution to NSLP and SBP Program operators. The letter can be accessed using this [link](#). FNA expresses appreciation for ongoing collaboration that helps strengthen school meal programs across the state.

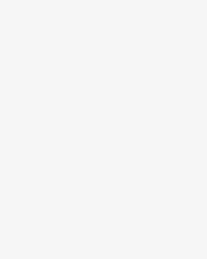
#### "Level Up with Dairy" Mobile Yogurt Parfait Bar Grant – Apply Now!

American Dairy Association Indiana (ADAI) knows the power of meeting students where they're at, not just with trending food and beverage options, but with meal service that reaches students as it relates to their location. The "Level Up with Dairy" Grant gives schools the chance to win a Mobile Yogurt Parfait Bar Kit that doubles as a versatile mobile meal cart, helping boost participation by making meals more nutrient-dense and more accessible. When the cart isn't serving yogurt parfaits, it can be used for Second Chance Breakfast or other on-the-go dairy offerings. Schools across Indiana are encouraged to apply [here](#). For questions, contact Sheri Shipp, Youth Wellness Manager, at [shipp@winnersdrinkmilk.com](mailto:shipp@winnersdrinkmilk.com).

### Upcoming Dates



|                       |                                                          |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Friday, August 14     | <a href="#">Order Team Nutrition Materials</a>           |
| Monday, August 31     | <a href="#">SNP Applications Due to Pending Approval</a> |
| Monday, August 31     | <a href="#">Final Due Date for June Claim</a>            |
| Friday, September 4   | <a href="#">PY 2026 Annual Financial Report Due</a>      |
| Tuesday, September 29 | <a href="#">Final Due Date for July Claim</a>            |



### Additional Resources

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

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