Outlook may not display this message well. To view this email as a web page, click here.

Want a colleague to get a copy of this email? Forward it to them by clicking here.

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

Water Availability

Per the USDA Policy Memo SP 49-2016 and the clarifying 2024 final rule, schools participating in Child Nutrition Programs must make "plain" potable water available to students at no charge during meal service.

Students must be able to access the water themselves or have an adult provide it to them. A readily accessible water fountain may satisfy this requirement if it is located within the meal service area. Please ensure that all staff and adults supervising students during breakfast and lunch are aware of this requirement.

Please note:

- Plain potable water must be available at no charge during meal service.
- Water offered for sale does not meet this requirement.
- Bottled water is not an allowable food service fund expenditure for the purpose of meeting this requirement.
- Schools may offer water infused with fruits, vegetables, or herbs; however, plain potable water must also be available.
- The availability of water cannot be used as a beverage substitution for special dietary needs without appropriate medical documentation from a licensed prescriptive authority.

Additional questions about this requirement can be directed to your assigned field specialist.

Important Updates

Financial Management: A Course for School Nutrition Directors

This fall, in partnership with the Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN), IDOE will offer two in-person sessions of Financial Management, a full-day course designed for school nutrition directors and business managers. This training provides practical tools, hands-on activities, and guidance to strengthen financial practices and support informed decision making within school nutrition programs.

Training dates and locations:

- **LIMITED AVAILABILITY LEFT** - Tuesday, October 27, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. ET at Kokomo Schools, Kokomo, IN
- Tuesday, November 17, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. ET at Bedford North Lawrence Schools, Bedford, IN

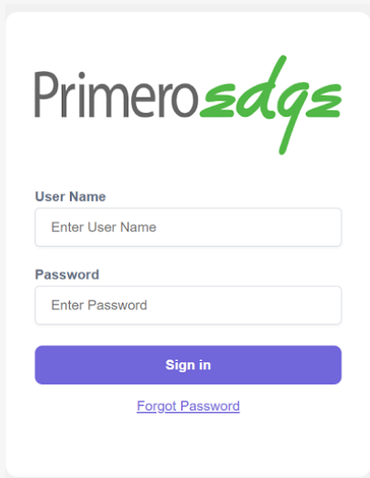
Register now for Financial Management: A Course for School Nutrition Directors.

Food Safety Plans

All school food authorities (SFAs) that operate the National School Lunch Program and/or School Breakfast Program must have a food safety plan based on Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) principles. An effective food safety plan helps identify and control potential food safety hazards

throughout every stage of the foodservice process, from receiving and storage to preparation and service. The written food safety plan should be specific to each individual school within the district taking into account the physical location, equipment, staff, menu, etc. of that site. Involve site managers in the process, and keep the food safety plan on hand for their implementation and reference.

Use the Food Safety Plan Development Resource as a guide to create your Food Safety Plan. Also, visit IDOE's Food Safety webpage for additional information and resources.



PrimeroEdge Applications Open in November

Schools are required to complete their PrimeroEdge application for the Food Distribution Program in order to receive USDA Foods for the 2027-2028 school year. The application window opens on Monday, November 9, and runs through Wednesday, December 9, on the PrimeroEdge website. IDOE has made the PrimeroEdge Applications Training Slides available.

Farm to School

Feedback Surveys

Food Day and Apple Crunch feedback surveys are now available! The Indiana Grown for Schools Network welcomes all schools that participated in Food Day and Apple Crunch to share: what was done to celebrate, procurement of local tomato products or apples, and what can be done to better support efforts next year! Participation and feedback is appreciated as sharing feedback helps us to develop and grow the initiatives for 2027.



Jasper County Schools Grow Their Own Tomatoes

At Jasper Elementary School the students planted, grew, and harvested their own tomatoes. Students enjoyed the freshly grown tomatoes on chef salads or as an extra vegetable during school lunch.

USDA Foods

USDA Foods Direct Ship (Brown Box) Reminders

- A minimum order of 10 cases per delivery site is required to avoid under-minimum case fees.
- Visit IDOE's State Assigned Warehouse and Ordering Information webpage for direct-ship (brown box) ordering instructions.
- Cross-check delivery periods listed on the Orders tab in CNPweb with your school and personal calendars to ensure personnel are available to inspect, verify, and accept all USDA Foods deliveries.

DoD Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Program: Enter Receipts

Schools must enter receipts in 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. Funds must be used in full by June 30, 2027 and will not rollover.

USDA Foods Cancellations for School Year (SY) 2026-2027

Material Code	Item Description	Order Cancellation Date

Material Code	Item Description	Order Cancellation Date
100256	Frozen Strawberry Cups	January-March 2027
100258	Frozen Apple Slices	Entire School Year - All Warehouses
110721	Sweet Potato Fries	Entire School Year - All Warehouses
110921	Frozen Chicken Fillet, Unbreaded	Entire School Year - All Warehouses
100309	Canned Carrots	Entire School Year - Gordon Food Service (GFS) Brighton and Clay only
100313	Canned Corn	Through December 2026 - All Warehouses
110846	Whole Strawberries (Frozen)	Entire School Year - All Warehouses
110860	Strawberry Slices (Frozen)	Entire School Year - All Warehouses
111881	Pulled Chicken (Frozen)	Entire School Year - All Warehouses

Did You Know?

SFAs are encouraged to regularly review their USDA Foods inventory to identify opportunities for cross-utilization. Using products across multiple menu items and programs helps reduce waste, improve forecasting, and ensure full use of USDA Foods and entitlement dollars. Be sure to monitor inventory levels in CNPweb and adjust menus or ordering plans as needed to maximize the value of USDA Foods.

USDA Foods Recipe Resources

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

Procurement

Good Procurement Made Simple

Procurement is about getting what your district needs at a good price. Planning ahead makes the process easier, helps you follow the rules, and supports fair competition. Below are positive steps to good procurement.

- Use the right procurement method.
- Act ethically and know what stakeholders expect.
- Plan your menu and choose the right products.
- Estimate how much you need and allow enough lead time.
- Write clear requirements and share your solicitation.
- Award and manage the contract.

The National Food Service Management Institute published a document entitled Procurement in the 21st Century which contains valuable information and resources. For more details on procurement topics, see the Procurement Information Sheet. Questions about procurement? Visit IDOE's Procurement webpage or contact the SCN Procurement mailbox for assistance.

Training and Webinar Opportunities

Culinary Skills for A+ School Meals: Fall 2026 Virtual Training Series

Join for free, interactive sessions featuring live chef demonstrations, practical recipes, efficient techniques, and nutritional insights. Each class earns one training hour and includes exciting giveaways!

Enhance your culinary skills and learn tips and tricks from school nutrition pros. Classes are held Thursdays, from 2 to 3 p.m. ET. For more details, visit Culinary Skills for A+ School Meals flyer to register.

- Thursday, October 22: Mastering Fruit Prep: Cutting Techniques for K12 Foodservice
- Thursday, October 29: Making the Most of USDA Foods in School Kitchens
- Thursday, November 5: Stirring Up Success: Soups Kids Will Love

Questions? Contact Cathy Powers for additional information.

Upcoming Webinars

Check out the upcoming webinar list, as new events are added regularly. Please use the Microsoft Teams event links below to find more details and to register.

- VSR - Verification Summary Report - Thursday, November 19, from 10 to 11 a.m. ET.
- VSR - Verification Summary Report (Repeat) - Thursday, December 17, from 10 to 11 a.m. ET.

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 on the Indiana Grown webpage.

- Farm to School Office Hours - Wednesday, November 18, from 4 to 5 p.m. ET

Food Distribution Program (FDP)

Below is a list of upcoming training opportunities on FDP. Please use the links below to register.

- The Future is in Forecasting - Wednesday, November 18, from 9 to 11 a.m. ET.
- Making the Most of Your USDA Foods - Wednesday, December 9, from 9 to 10:30 a.m. ET.
- PrimeroEdge Catalog Refresher Training - Wednesday, January 13, from 9 to 10:30 a.m. ET.
- FDP Office Hours for the Catalog - Wednesday, February 17, from 10 to 11 a.m. ET.
- FDP Office Hours for the Catalog - Wednesday, March 17, from 10 to 11 a.m. ET.
- End of Year Reminders - Wednesday, April 7, from 10 to 11 a.m. ET.

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

Important Updates

USDA Food and Nutrition Administration Turnip the Beet Award

Nine Indiana Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) sponsors have been recognized with a USDA Food and Nutrition Administration 2025 Turnip the Beet (TUB) Award. Congratulations to the following awardees for their outstanding efforts!

Gold

- Monroe County Community Schools Corporation

Silver

- Bartholomew Consolidated School Corporation
- Danville Community School Corporation
- Indianapolis Public Schools
- Warrick County School Corporation

Bronze

- Fort Wayne Community Schools
- Merrillville Community School Corporation
- MSD of Decatur Township Schools
- Valparaiso Community Schools

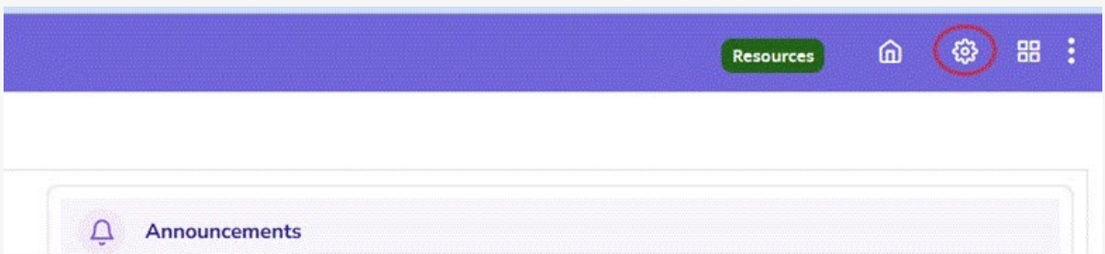
These awards support USDA Secretary Brooke Rollins' priorities to strengthen connections between America's farmers and nutrition programs, energize federal nutrition efforts, and promote healthy choices for children. They also advance the new Harvest to Hallways initiative, expanding access to nutritious meals and showcasing innovative practices.

IDOE thanks all the sponsors for their dedication—especially in ensuring children receive healthy meals during the summer! For a complete listing of TUB Awardees visit Turnip the Beet webpage.

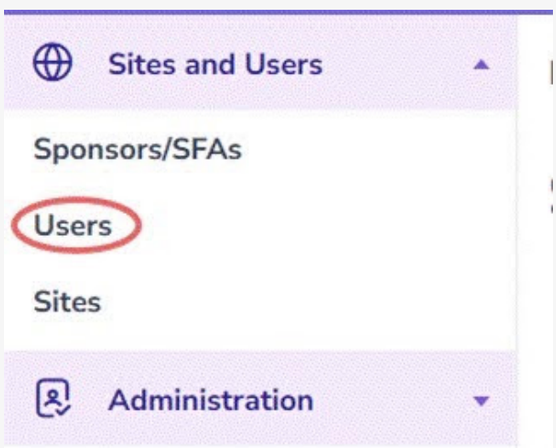
Viewing Users in PrimeroEdge

PrimeroEdge account holders can view which staff in their school corporation have PrimeroEdge accounts. Instructions to see the list of users are below.

1. Log into PrimeroEdge
2. On the home screen, click on the gear icon in the top right of the screen



3. Click on Sites and Users in the left hand menu
4. Click on Users



If a user no longer needs access to PrimeroEdge, please update their account access via the SCN help form. Likewise, when new users need to have accounts created, submit a request through the SCN help form. As a reminder, Food Service Management Company employees should have view only access, please note these individuals when submitting a request to the help form.

Nutrition Nugget



Grapes are Great!

Containing many health promoting compounds (over 1600!), grapes are rich in antioxidants like resveratrol and anthocyanins that support heart health, brain health and more!

Image: istockphoto.com

Upcoming Dates

Date	Event

Date	Event
Friday, October 30	**Final Due Date for August Claim**
Friday, October 30	**National School Lunch Week Submissions Due**
Sunday, November 15	**Verification Ends**
Monday, November 30	**Final Due Date for September Claim**



Additional Resources

School Nutrition Programs Calendar
IDOE's Nutrition Webpage
CNPweb

This email was sent by: Indiana Department of Education
100 N. Senate Ave., Indianapolis, IN, 46204 US

Privacy Notice

Manage Preferences Unsubscribe