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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

Office Closure

State of Indiana government offices will be closed Tuesday, November 3.

Important Updates

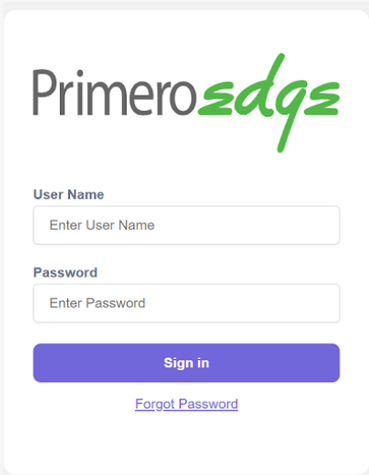
Apply by Saturday, October 31, for 2026 National School Lunch Program (NSLP) Equipment Assistance Grant

Indiana has received $443,185 from the USDA to award Equipment Assistance Grants to School Food Authorities (SFAs). To be eligible, an SFA must participate in the NSLP. Each SFA may request funding for up to three pieces of equipment, with a maximum award of $30,000. Applications will be accepted through Saturday, October 31, with announcement of awards by Friday, November 27. For more information, including the application, visit IDOE's School Nutrition Programs webpage.

Questions can be sent to SCNFinance@doe.in.gov. Please include "Sponsor Number/ Equipment Grant" in the subject line.

Action Needed: Complete the Healthier School Meals Pledge Survey

This summer USDA announced an opportunity for states to pledge their commitment to serving healthier school meals to students across the nation. This directly aligns with Governor Braun's Make Indiana Healthy Again initiative, which focuses on improving access to fresh local food, removing harmful additives, and giving Hoosiers the tools they need to live healthier. Governor Braun urges all Indiana schools to implement one or more of the recommended actions in preparation for the new nutrition standards. The six actions included in the pledge are allowable under current federal regulations and align with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2025-2030. Complete this short survey to share which actions you have already implemented or are able to implement during the 2026-2027 school year (SY).



Mark Your Calendar! PrimeroEdge Applications Open Soon

SY 2027-2028 application window runs Monday, November 9, to Wednesday, December 9, 2026. SFA users will complete this application each year, and future applications will conveniently pre-populate with the information you enter now. IDOE has made the PrimeroEdge Applications Training Slides available.

PrimeroEdge Reminders:

- **Accessing PrimeroEdge account**: If you are having trouble logging into PrimeroEdge, make sure you're using the correct site: PrimeroEdge. If you are still unable to login or need account access, submit a help form request . If you previously logged in, your account is already active. There is no need to sign up again.

- **Adding sites in PrimeroEdge**: Site setup will occur once the system opens applications in November for SY 2027-2028.
- **Ordering Direct Ship USDA Foods in PrimeroEdge**: Ordering will transition to PrimeroEdge in late September to early October in SY 2027-2028.
- **Surveys moving to PrimeroEdge**: Future USDA Foods surveys will be completed in PrimeroEdge beginning in February 2027 and are known as catalogs.
- **Exploring PrimeroEdge**: Feel free to navigate the system, but note the final information will appear when applications officially open on Monday, November 9.

Farm to School

Prepare for 2027 Farm to School Census

The USDA Food and Nutrition Administration (FNA) study team will be directly contacting SFAs participating in NSLP in Indiana, asking that they confirm their contact information for the 2027 Farm to School Census (Census). When contacted by the study team, please reply promptly. The Census is the most comprehensive source of farm to school data in the country, and it is a crucial tool in understanding and promoting local food procurement and food and agricultural education.

The Census will be conducted from May 3, 2027 to June 30, 2027. In addition to replying when contacted, SFAs can also use the FNA workbook to track relevant information throughout the year which should make completing the Census easier and less time intensive.

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.



School Highlight: Jay County Schools

Jay County Schools kicked off October with two Indiana Food Day 2026 celebrations and plans for more throughout the month! The school foodservice department partnered with Jay County FFA, speaking to students about tomatoes as a commodity and ways tomatoes are used in foods. There was also a demonstration of fresh blender salsa, made with tomatoes procured through the Department of Defense (DoD) Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Program, that students were able to sample.

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 SY 2026-2027

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?

Delivery periods = delivery weeks. Delivery periods in CNPweb are simply the scheduled weeks when your USDA Foods orders can be delivered. When placing an order, SFAs must select a delivery period from the dropdown menu to tell the warehouse *which week* they want their products delivered. The menu will show all the weeks your assigned warehouse is available to deliver Direct Ship USDA Foods.

Reminders:

- **Choose the week that works best for your site**. When you submit an order, you must select a delivery period before the system will accept it.
- **A delivery period must be chosen for each site**. If your district has multiple schools, you'll need to select a delivery week for each site separately.
- **Plan ahead**. Check school and personal calendars before selecting delivery periods to ensure school staff is available to inspect, verify and accept all USDA Foods deliveries.
- **Direct Ship Orders must be placed in CNPweb by Monday at 10 a.m. ET**. Orders not placed by Monday at 10 a.m. ET the week before the delivery period week the SFA wants it delivered, will default to the SFA's next available delivery period

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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

Questions About Procurement?

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 and to register, please visit the Culinary Skills for A+ School Meals flyer.

- 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.

Financial Management: A Course for School Nutrition Directors

This fall, in partnership with the Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN), IDOE will offer an in-person session 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. Join us on Tuesday, November 17, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. ET at Bedford North Lawrence Schools, Bedford, IN. Register now for the Financial Management: A Course for School Nutrition Directors.

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.

- Disruptions to School Foodserve - Tuesday, November 10, from 10 to 11 a.m. ET.
- Food Safety with IDOH for your Health Inspections - Thursday, November 12, from 10 to 11 a.m. ET.
- 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!

Reminders

Food Safety Plans

All 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.

Nutrition Nugget



Nutrient Rich Egg Yolks
The yolks of eggs are where all the fat soluble vitamins like vitamin D, E, and A are found. Eggs are one of the few foods to naturally contain vitamin D, which supports students' bones and muscles!

Image: istockphoto.com

Updates From Our Partners

Strengthening Farm to School Initiatives for Sustainable Success Webinar
Join ICN on Thursday, October 29, from 3 to 4 p.m. ET to learn practical strategies from LunchAssist speakers for strengthening and sustaining Farm to School initiatives. Register for the Strengthening Farm to School Initiatives for Sustainable Success webinar.

Upcoming Dates

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

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