

From: Bushong, Linda (MDE) **On Behalf Of** Leikert, Howard (MDE)
Sent: Wednesday, June 18, 2014 3:22 PM
To: MDE-SchoolNutrition
Subject: Howard's News from MDE 061814

Apologize this is going out later than I had wished. During our June Conference (THANKS to all that showed up and spent some time with us!!), I got sick so this has been sitting a few days. In any case, here is the latest:

- 1) Free and Reduced Application Error – This is IMPORTANT. If you uploaded the new application prior to the morning of Friday, June 6, you likely have the wrong free/reduced income guidelines. The information now online is correct. The “free” income column was originally wrong. Please be sure to download the corrected copy that is needed to approve applications and share with your community.
- 2) Whole Grain Pasta Waiver – Attached is a memo from USDA that will allow schools to use pastas that do not meet the whole grain rich criteria. In order to apply for the waiver, please click on the following link and complete the survey questions. We will email you when your waiver has been approved/denied. Thank you for your cooperation. <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/TQ5PS96>
- 3) Equipment Grant – Due to technical issues the grant deadline has been extended to June 27, 2014.
- 4) Water Access – As you may recall, students having access to potable water during lunch was one of the first regs we had to put in place ([SP 28-2011](#)). Here is a link with some ideas and resources to help you out - <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/npao/wateraccess.htm>.
- 5) Discover MyPlate – Here is a link to some USDA resources for our younger students. This is something you might want to share with your Kindergarten teachers. <http://healthymeals.nal.usda.gov/hsmrs/discovermyplate/>
- 6) SFSP Outreach – Before kids leave for the summer, remember you are required to let students know about the availability of summer meals. Here is a link you can include in your announcement – it is to a map with all of the summer meal sites included with addresses and times open. It’s a great tool that now works on Smartphones – this map will be updated weekly. <http://www.mcgi.state.mi.us/schoolnutrition/>
- 7) Recipes - As you plan your fall menus, consider National Dairy Council’s new recipes that offer menu solutions to meet new school meal regulations and also offer excitement to make school breakfast a whole new experience that can’t be missed! These on-trend quick-scratch breakfast recipes have been tested and approved by kids and SNDs. Each recipe includes a full or half serving of cheese or yogurt as a meat/meat alternative and a serving of whole grains. Many also include ½ cup of fruit. And, the recipes are quick-

scratch, easy to prepare, designed to meet school cost constraints, and are suitable for cafeteria service, grab-n-go and Breakfast in the Classroom. The recipes are included in the 2014-2015 Fuel Up to Play 60 Playbook as resources that support two Healthy Eating Plays:

- Grab and Go – Anytime! at <http://school.fueluptoplay60.com/playbook/play.php?id=75907950>.
- Healthy Breakfast, Healthy Lunch – BAR NONE at <http://school.fueluptoplay60.com/playbook/play.php?id=75907953>.

Please be sure to check out the recipes via the above links and consider adding them to your menu plan for the upcoming school year.

- 8) Farm to School Census - Final results from the USDA Farm to School Census are now available online at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/farmentoschool/census/#/>. The Census website is currently best viewed using Mozilla Firefox. These results include more than 1,500 new and updated responses bringing the response rate to 75%. The total dollars invested in local communities during the 2011-2012 school year increased to more than \$385 million and more than 23 million students are participating in farm to school programs as of the 2012-2013 school year. The Census website includes lots of new graphics and features. For example, a new data explorer tool allows users to run customizable searches. Want to know which school districts in Washington and Oregon would like to buy more local beef? Now you can run a search for precisely the information you need. A new media kit page offers downloadable infographics for each state so you can include Census results in your presentations, brochures, or newsletters. For your convenience, attached are two updated infographics summarizing national results to share with your colleagues and partners. We also hope you will help USDA promote the Census re-launch using Facebook and Twitter. Improved social media tools are located at the bottom of the national and state pages. We would encourage you to reach out to your USDA Farm to School Regional Lead as a great resource to help promote the Census and answer any questions.
- 9) Flavored Water - Further clarification from USDA on beverage accompaniments under the Smart Snacks rule: If a school wanted to sell a Crystal Light type of flavoring packet under the Smart Snacks rule, it must be sold with a bottle of water at the high school level only. In this case, it would be counted as an "other" beverage where portion size and calories would apply. The packet may not be sold alone (i.e., without the bottle of water) as they do not meet the general criteria under the Smart Snacks rule.
- 10) Team Nutrition – Please see the attached colorful resources for elementary and middle school age students.

Howard Leikert, MBA, SMS

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DATE: May 20, 2014

MEMO CODE: SP 47-2014

SUBJECT: Flexibility for Whole Grain-Rich Pasta in
School Years 2014-2015 and 2015-2016

TO: Regional Directors
Special Nutrition Programs
All Regions

State Directors
Child Nutrition Programs
All States

This memorandum provides guidance to State agencies to address the issues that some school food authorities (SFAs) are experiencing in meeting the whole grain-rich requirements.

Whole Grain-Rich Requirements

Beginning July 1, 2014, federal regulations require that all grains offered in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program must be whole grain-rich. Foods that meet the whole grain-rich criteria for the school meal programs contain at least 50 percent whole-grain meal and/or flour. The remaining 50 percent or less of grains, if any, must be enriched. Foods that are 100 percent whole grain meet the whole grain-rich criteria; however, foods are not required to be 100 percent whole grain. Foods containing between 50 and 100 percent whole grains are allowable. For additional information on whole grain-rich requirements, including how to evaluate if a grain product meets the whole grain-rich criteria, see the *Whole Grain Resource for the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs: A Guide to Meeting the Whole Grain-Rich Criteria*, available at:
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/WholeGrainResource.pdf>.

Availability and Acceptability of Whole Grain-Rich Pasta

The updated standards, which meet the requirement of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (HHFKA) to reflect the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, are designed to ensure that school children receive nutritious meals while retaining flexibility for SFAs to offer meals that are appealing to children.

Pasta is a commonly served menu item popular with students. As such, it is particularly important that the updated standards maintain acceptability with students. Many types of whole grain-rich pasta, including those available through USDA Foods, are 100 percent whole grain. However, Program operators have indicated and our consultation with the pasta industry supports, that some of the available products degrade easily (e.g. lasagna and elbow noodles) during preparation and storage, and as a result are not accepted by students.

Whole grain-rich pastas made from blends of whole grain and enriched flours may maintain better consistency and be more acceptable to students, but these products are still emerging in the marketplace. Therefore, FNS recognizes that USDA Foods and industry may need additional time to develop a more expansive range of whole grain-rich pastas that are widely accepted by students.

Flexibility to Use Enriched Pasta During School Years (SY) 2014-2015 and 2015-2016

FNS appreciates that the progression to all whole grain-rich grains in school meals represents a significant transition for industry, Program operators, and students. FNS understands that during SYs 2014-2015 and 2015-2016, some SFAs may continue to struggle to secure a variety of whole grain-rich pasta products to incorporate into preferred menu items customarily served in previous SYs. As such, FNS is prepared to offer continued flexibility in this area for those SFAs that removed previously popular pasta menu items that, when produced with whole grain-rich pasta, did not hold well or were not accepted by students (meaning students no longer consumed or selected the popular item), and the SFA has demonstrated hardship in obtaining acceptable whole grain-rich pasta for that item. Accordingly, if acceptable products for previously offered items are not available or accepted by students, the State agency may approve the SFA's request to continue to serve enriched pasta during SY 2014-2015 and SY 2015-2016, if needed. However, this flexibility is available only until acceptable products are available and identified and while the SFA can demonstrate a continued negative impact.

In reviewing the SFA's request, State agencies should consider several factors. An SFA must provide evidence that they attempted to use the product in a previously popular menu item and that the SFA experienced significant challenges in achieving positive results. For example, an approvable request may state that the use of the new whole grain-rich pasta or the degradation of the new whole grain-rich pasta during the typical holding time negatively impacted the taste and texture of the product, and that the SFA received increased negative student or parent feedback as a result of this change. Based upon this information, the State agency should also work with the SFA to identify the challenge and provide technical assistance as needed. This explanation is particularly helpful as it will enable FNS to better identify any specific trends or patterns and tailor technical assistance or targeted solutions to mitigate challenges.

FNS anticipates that State agencies and SFAs will actively collaborate to identify, evaluate, and incorporate acceptable whole grain-rich pasta products into school menu(s). While working with State agencies, SFAs that have been approved to offer non-whole grain-rich pastas should be considered compliant with the whole grain-rich requirements during an Administrative Review or a performance-based certification review.

FNS expects State agencies to continue to work closely with SFAs and provide technical assistance to support their efforts to comply with whole grain-rich requirements as they apply to pasta and other food items. At the national level, FNS will continue to support States and SFAs and collaborate with industry partners to expand the selection of whole grain-rich pastas available to schools, and develop technical resources to assist Program operators with

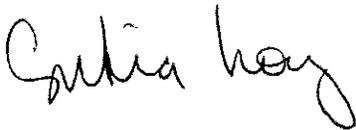
Regional Directors
State Directors
Page 3

preparation methods for whole grain-rich pasta. FNS will continue to communicate this information through PartnerWeb and on the FNS public website.

The *Whole Grain Resource for the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs*, referenced earlier, provides information to help Program operators identify foods that meet the whole grain-rich criteria and offers suggestions for incorporating whole grain-rich foods into school menus. In addition, for a current list of available whole grain-rich pasta products, SFAs may search the USDA Foods available at:

http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/SY15_Foods_Available_List_3_27_14.pdf, CN Labeling authorized list available at: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnlabeling/authorized-manufacturers-and-labels> and the Alliance for A Healthier Generation website available at: https://schools.healthiergeneration.org/resources__tools/

FNS is committed to working in partnership with State agencies and SFAs as they make these important changes in their communities. State agencies are reminded to distribute this memo to Program operators immediately. SFAs should contact their State agencies for additional information. State agencies may direct any questions concerning this guidance to the appropriate FNS Regional Office.



Cynthia Long
Deputy Administrator
Child Nutrition Programs



The United States Department of Agriculture

BRINGING THE FARM TO SCHOOL

Growing healthy children & communities

\$385,771,134

in school food dollars was invested in local communities in the 2011-2012 school year.

40,328 schools

are buying local foods for the school cafeteria.

Money invested in agriculture has a positive economic impact on rural *and* urban communities.

That's a lot of lunch money!

We love local farmers!

56% of schools

Say they will buy more local food in the future.

Expect growth in these product categories in the future: **plant-based proteins, herbs, meat or poultry, eggs, and grains/flour.**

78%

Fruit

75%

Veggies

37%

Fluid Milk

22%

Baked Goods

18%

Other Dairy

Local foods span the school meal tray

Start your tractors!

23,513,237 students

are learning to make lifelong healthy eating choices.

With farm to school programs, kids are more likely to eat their fruits and vegetables and try new, healthy foods.

Healthy habits take root

Beyond serving local foods at mealtime, schools are planting gardens, visiting farms and turning the cafeteria into a classroom.

Local farmers make the grade, A+!

THE FARM to SCHOOL CENSUS

To determine the prevalence of farm to school programs, USDA surveyed an estimated 13,133 public school districts across the country. Approximately 9,887 districts responded for a total response rate of over 75%.

HUNGRY FOR MORE?

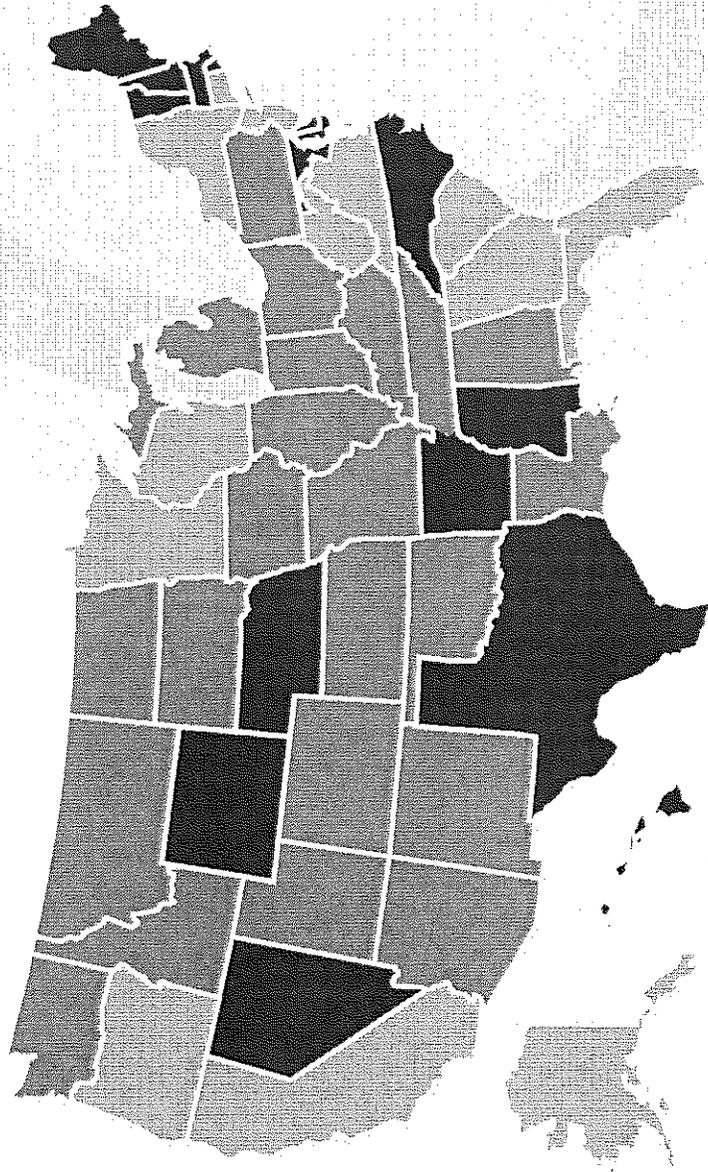
www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool/census/





The United States Department of Agriculture

HEALTHY HABITS TAKE ROOT

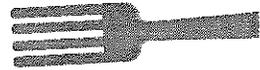


THE FARM ^{to} SCHOOL CENSUS

USDA estimates that as of the 2012-2013 school year, **4,322 districts**

operating approximately **40,328 schools** with **23,513,237 students**

in attendance are **buying local products** and teaching children where their food comes from.



HUNGRY FOR MORE?

www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool/census/



Make Today a Try Day!

NUTRITION

**New Team Nutrition
Elementary School Posters!**
[http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/
elementary-posters](http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/elementary-posters)

Use these kid-tested posters to encourage elementary school children to make healthy food choices. See the **Team Nutrition Popular Events** Idea Booklet for activity ideas connected to these posters.

Poster Themes:

- Launch Your Day with Breakfast!
- It's Launch Time (Fruits & Veggies)
- Make Today a Try-Day
- Try New Foods (Be Brave)

Ordering Information: Schools, child care centers, and summer meal sites that participate in the USDA Child Nutrition programs (e.g., National School Lunch Program, School Food Service Program, etc.) **may request free print copies of these posters.** All 4 posters come together as a set. More than one copy of the posters may be ordered. See our order form for more information at: <http://tn.ntis.gov/>



<http://www.fns.usda.gov/team-nutrition>  @TeamNutrition
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New Team Nutrition Middle School Posters!

Use these free kid-tested posters to encourage tweens to make healthier food choices.

Poster Themes:

- You Control You (Girl, Milk)
- You Control You (Boy, Breakfast)
- Power Up! (Sports)
- Power Up! (Video Game)

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/middle-school-posters>

Ordering Information: Schools, child care centers, and summer meal sites that participate in the USDA Child Nutrition programs (e.g., National School Lunch Program, School Food Service Program, etc.) **may request free print copies of these posters.** All 4 posters come together as a set. More than one copy of the posters may be ordered. See our order form for more information at: <http://tn.ntis.gov/>



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