

Child Nutrition Thursday Update

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Child Nutrition Website - <https://www.maine.gov/doe/schools/nutrition>

Child Nutrition List Serve Email - child.nutrition@maillist.informe.org



A healthier future for our country begins with our children. Unfortunately, many children face hunger during the summer when they lose access to school meals. Children need good nutrition to grow, learn, and thrive. There are new tools to address summer hunger, including Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer (Summer EBT), and a new flexible way to offer meals to children living in hard-to-reach, rural communities.

The Notice of Decision letters will be mailed tomorrow and delivered to households early next week. This letter will notify a family that they have been found eligible for this benefit, by participating in other DHHS programs (SNAP, TANF, FDPIR, MaineCare*) or by qualifying with a Free and Reduced Meal Benefit Application or by EPS Form (Alternate Income Data Form). It will tell them how they will get the benefit, and how they can use the benefit.

I have created a few documents to help you and other school staff answer questions about the program. This same [packet](#) will be sent to Superintendents and Principals tomorrow through a DOE Notice.

The letter to households is intended to be posted on the school's websites. If you can ask that all schools post this letter on their websites, I think it would be helpful.

The letter to school staff, is to share basic information about the program with all school staff. My hope is that the more that have the information, the more that can help.

The job aid, is just that, more information to assist families with knowledge about the program. I hope that this gets printed and hung in every office, in every school, with the contact information for DHHS highlighted.

I have hosted two webinars, and one of them was recorded and can be found on the [SUN Bucks](#) page of our website.

I will be holding OPEN OFFICE HOURS tomorrow, May 10th from 1-3, if anyone has questions about the benefit, the process, or the program. Please email me at jane.mclucas@maine.gov for a ZOOM link to access.

ServSafe

Kittery is interested in hosting a ServSafe class on June 10 & 11, 2024, this is a month away. If you have anyone that you would like to send to this class, email David at david.hartley@maine.gov by Monday, May 13th.

CEP

A reminder, to participate in CEP the Superintendent must notify David.hartley@maine.gov by June 30, 2024. Supporting documentation must be uploaded into CNPweb by June 30, 2024. This would be to begin operating under the Community Eligibility Provision.

The [Special Provisions](#) page of our website has a link to a pdf document, “CEP Eligible Districts”, this will show you if your District is possibly eligible to participate.

Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) Usage Report

We are close to the end of the school year- how much funds do your schools have left? The FFVP usage report can be used to track the balance of participating schools. Here are the steps to access the report:

1. Go to the Reports tab in CNP web, and click on “Accounting Reports”.
2. Click on FFVP Usage report, then select School Year 2024 and District Name
3. Refer to the Balance column, and Oct-Sept. This will show the balance that each school has available to spend.

Contact Stephanie at stephanie.stambach@maine.gov with any questions.

State Equipment Assistance Grant

The State Equipment Assistance Grant is now open!

This can also be used to cover food expenses due to meal accommodations.

Applications are available on the Equipment Assistance page of our website.

This grant is first come, first serve and is going fast. Do don't wait on this opportunity.

If you have any questions, email Michele at michele.bisbee@maine.gov

Summer Harvest of the Month

It is time to pledge for Summer Harvest of the Month (**July & August**)! Summer is the best and easiest time of year to source locally in Maine!

By pledging you agree to:

- Serve the local HOM product at least 2x per month

In return you receive:

- Toolkits for July & August including:

Posters

Fact and recipe sheets

Stickers

- Monthly Newsletter email

- Additional resources & support from Farm & Sea to School Coordinator

Please reach out to Katie with any questions at katie.knowles@maine.gov

Maine Regional Local Foods Project

Starting this fall, Child Nutrition will be piloting a two-year “Maine Regional Local Foods Project” that is funded by a USDA Farm to School State Formula Grant. The objective of this project is to expand and deepen the impact of the Department’s Farm & Sea to School programming in schools, by providing local foods coordinators to each superintendent region in the state of Maine.

The coordinators will be hired to work with and support school nutrition staff to implement new, and augment existing, programs that support schools in providing fresh, locally sourced foods in school meal programs while also facilitating projects and activities that enable students to learn about local agriculture and healthy eating. All schools will be encouraged to participate in Farm & Sea to School Programs, including Harvest of the Month, the Local Foods Fund, and other farm and sea to school opportunities in the state.

For Year 1 (SY 2024-2025) we will be piloting the program with four coordinators in the following regions:

- Western ME (Oxford, Androscoggin, Franklin)
- York
- Washington/Hancock
- Aroostook

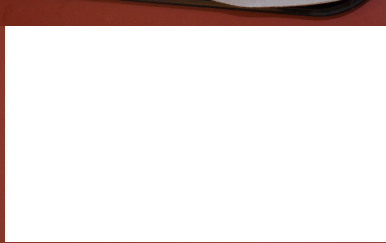
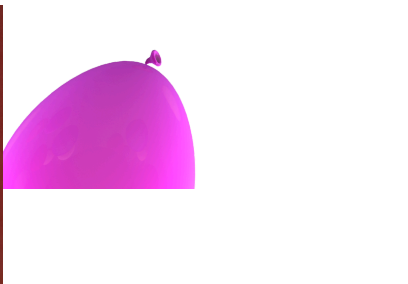
Over the coming months, we will be seeking feedback from districts. Feel free to reach out to Katie, Katie.Knowles@maine.gov) or Stephanie, Stephanie.Stambach@maine.gov for more information!

Cook-off Results!

We thank the following teams for participating in the 2024 Farm to School Cook-off: RSU 75, Auburn Public Schools and Lewiston Public Schools. The three teams squared off on May 7th at Central Maine Community College in Auburn. They came prepared making vegetarian and meat-based meals, using local tofu and chicken. RSU 75 made BBQ lime tofu kabobs and a Nashville style honey chicken sandwich, Auburn made tofu parmesan with whole grain penne and a chicken shawarma, and Lewiston made a tofu ramen bowl with tofu meatballs and a hot honey chicken sandwich. All teams showed great teamwork, creativity, and execution of ingredients throughout the competition.

Congratulations to RSU 75, new to the competition this year, who walked away with the grand prize, and meat-based meal winner. Lewiston walked away as the vegetarian meal winner. Thanks to all who were involved in the competition- we will see you next year!





Child Nutrition Training Opportunities

Registration links are in the title or
can be found on our website

Annual Financial Report Webinar

May 16th @ 1:30pm

This webinar will include updates on the Annual Financial Report that must be completed by September 1st 2024. Please send any questions you have regarding Annual Financial to jodi.truman@maine.gov before May 8th. All questions submitted will be addressed in the webinar.

Reducing Sugar Limits in Schools Webinar

May 20th @ 1:30pm

This webinar will provide more information about the new rule on reducing sugar limits. Learn about the timeline for implementation and strategies to make the transition seamless for your staff and students.

Culinary Training - Tempeh

Registration
closes May 10th

May 15, 2024

9:00am-1:00pm

Child Nutrition Culinary Classroom

90 Blossom Lane, Augusta

Farm & Sea to School Coordinator Katie Knowles is hosting her first local foods training in our culinary classroom in Augusta alongside Sarah Speare from Tootie's Tempeh! This training will highlight recipes and different ways to prepare Tootie's tempeh, which is eligible for reimbursement through the state and federal local foods funds!

Produced right in Biddeford, Tootie's Tempeh is a versatile plant-based protein source made from 3 simple ingredients: soybeans, vinegar, and starter culture. Tempeh is considered a superfood; it has 16 grams of protein per serving, along with high calcium, iron, b-vitamins, and fiber!

Tempeh is very easy and versatile to cook with. It can be cut into shapes for stir-frying, grilled for sandwiches and salads, baked, marinated, and crumbled like ground meat for kid-friendly meals like chilis, spaghetti sauce, buffalo bites, pizza, tacos, sloppy joes, "chicken" salad. It's a great way to get healthy nutrients and high protein into school meals while supporting a local producer and Maine farmers!



SCHOOL LUNCH HERO DAY



Falmouth Elementary, Middle and High School Lunch Heroes were shown a ton of appreciation from students and staff. Food Service Director Paul Milliken is proud of his team and their hard work and dedication and said they deserve every bit of this recognition.



Thank you for sharing, Paul





Lunch Heroes in Kittery were also treated to well deserved appreciation for all that they do for the students in their district.



Thank you for sharing, Wendy!