



SUMMER MEALS PROGRAM

Resources to Help You Help Them!



AMERICAN DAIRY
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SUMMER MEALS PROGRAM

School Nutrition Champions

Dear School Nutrition Director,

Thank you for your unconditional support to our nation's children. As the summer approaches, we want to continue to support you in your efforts to provide meals to your students and community.

The American Dairy Association North East has developed a selection of promotional materials in this user-friendly toolkit. The entire **Summer Meals Toolkit** is presented online in a convenient magazine-style format at www.nutritionconnection.org. You can easily download all of it at once, or select individual items to download, including:

- **Successful Strategies to Increase Meal Participation**
- **Fun "Theme Day" Ideas for June, July and August**
- **A Library of Great Recipes**
- **Successful Practice Tips**
- **Tools to Promote Program Awareness:**
 - **Parent/Guardian Sample Letter** (*ask your principals to send it*)
This sample letter informs families of availability and locations for summer meals in their community. **Your principals can copy and paste the message onto school letterhead**, customize however they prefer, and send whenever they disseminate important information.
 - **Administrator Letter** (*for you to send to Principals and Superintendents*)
This sample letter will help you gain administrator support to promote summer meals and assist with increasing meal participation. **It's ready for you to copy and paste onto district letterhead, and customize however you like.**
 - **Public Service Announcements** – Sample scripts to help spread the word. Share via your school's communication system and send to local radio stations. Be sure to include your website and phone number where indicated.
 - **Social Media** – Use these sample posts as inspiration to create your own custom posts to reach students 13 and up, and their parents.
 - **Resources** – This page includes a summary of materials with links to updates on USDA waiver extensions, meal distribution strategies, bulk milk calculator, milk best practices and more.
 - **Digital Ads** – Download and use these on district websites to promote the program.

We're still here for you... American Dairy Association North East's ongoing communications support campaign includes traditional and digital media outreach to families with children, advertising, virtual events and so much more.

Thanks for continuing to be our partners in preventing hunger.

American Dairy Association North East



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Strategies to Increase Meal Participation

Accessibility	Awareness	Adaptability
<p>Diversify Your Distribution: Use school buses or food trucks to drop off meals at bus stops or homes, or find local partners with trucks for distribution.</p>	<p>Communicate with Stakeholders: Our template letters help inform families, principals, and superintendents of the importance and availability of meals.</p>	<p>Create Variety with Temperature: Offer a hot meal or hot chocolate milk at service, even if the rest of the meal contains cold menu items.</p>
<p>Extend Meal Service: Offer extended meal service times to increase accessibility and make social distancing easier.</p>	<p>PSAs and Social Media: Use our sample scripts and social media posts to ensure that students and families know how to access meals.</p>	<p>Recipes and How-To Videos: For take-home meal boxes, share a 1-pager or video of suggested recipes like fruit & yogurt smoothies using box contents.</p>
<p>One-Stop Shop: Partner with local food banks or organizations that provide groceries for families. Partner organizations help with outreach, too!</p>	<p>Local Partners Can Help: Anti-hunger organizations, government officials, pediatricians, and other trusted messengers can help spread the word.</p>	<p>Innovative Packaging: Bento boxes or multi-compartment trays create interactive meals like build-your-own parfaits, walking tacos, or pizza kits.</p>
<p>Combined Celebrations: Special themed events like book bag giveaways or festive school orientation events can be combined with meal service.</p>	<p>Build Hype with Events: Hosting monthly themed events can promote meal availability and incentivize participation.</p>	<p>Safe Delicious Food: Provide a food safety information sheet to help families store and reheat foods properly for the best quality and safety.</p>
<p>Try Different Serving Locations: Alternate spaces like a school courtyard or playground can be used for visible, accessible meal service. Streamlined serving lines can speed up meal service too.</p>	<p>Live Cooking Demos: Enlist school chefs or administrators to cook a featured menu item on Facebook Live or other social media platforms. Remember to share meal service info.</p>	<p>Eat with Your Eyes: Make your menu come to life by sharing photos, a video, or a TikTok of your summer meals menu offerings.</p>
<p>Open More Sites: In addition to serving at schools, establish sites in the community with local partners like Boys & Girls Clubs, recreation centers, faith-based organizations, and housing developments.</p>	<p>Cross-Promotion: Food suppliers, vendors, or other organizations offer free promotional items, like school supplies or activity kits, during meal service times.</p>	<p>Picture Pages for Staff: Staff can serve meals easily with visual instructions showing service expectations and food safety best practices.</p>
<p>Provide a Hot Meal: Try offering hot meals, like pizza on Fridays, when families are picking up meals for the week.</p>	<p>Banner Ads: Post a banner ad on virtual learning platforms and district websites to advertise menus, meal service times, featured recipes, and more!</p>	<p>Find New Revenue Streams: Consider offering a family meal kit, birthday bundles, or prepackaged à la carte items for purchase at meal pick-up.</p>

Be sure to check with your State Agency before implementing any changes to your program.





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Theme Day Ideas!

Related recipes and more can be found at www.nutritionconnection.org

June 2021 – National Dairy Month

Be sure your students get their 3 servings a day of milk, yogurt and cheese. Dairy foods like milk, yogurt and cheese provide high-quality protein, calcium, vitamin A, B vitamins and more! For strong bones and muscles, students need the 13 essential nutrients – such as calcium, protein and vitamin D – found in every serving of milk. Studies show that students who eat school lunches drink more milk than those who don't and are much more likely to meet their recommended daily intake of calcium.

June 1st: World Milk Day

Begin your Dairy Month celebration with a thank you to your local dairy farmers who produce milk 365 days a year by posting a thank you message on your social media platforms. Milk is an important component of a healthy dietary pattern, so be sure to remind your students about the benefits of milk at every meal and kick off the day by enjoying a glass of white or flavored milk!

June 4th: National Cheese Day

Celebrate this day on your menu by offering **Cheese Stuffed Breadsticks** with a marinara cup, seasoned green beans, fresh apple, and marvelous milk!

June 7th: National Chocolate Ice Cream Day

Nothing better than topping off a **HOT** June day with a **COLD** chocolate ice cream cup!

June 21st: National Peaches and Cream Day

Cool off your breakfast menu with our **Asteroid Peach and Yogurt Parfait!** Sure to please the students by adding a wholesome grain, and marvelous milk!

June 25th: National Strawberry Parfait Day

Celebrate the end of school with strawberry parfaits featuring bananas for breakfast or lunch.



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July 2021 – Celebrate the Red, White, and Blue

July 4th: Independence Day

All American Smoothie - Let's go Red, White, and Blue Parfaits! Layer Vanilla Yogurt, Blueberries, and Strawberries in a parfait cup! Top off with low fat granola for an all-around delicious and nutritious lunch!

July 10th: Pick Blueberries Day!

Beautiful day in July to make Blueberry Yogurt Smoothies for breakfast!

July 14th: National Mac and Cheese Day

Delight your students with this golden and cheesy all-time favorite. For great taste and added nutritional value sprinkle some shredded cheese across the top.

July 23rd: National Vanilla Ice Cream Day

Can you say... Dairylicious! Celebrate this day with a cool vanilla ice cream cup with lunch!



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August 2021 - Beat the Heat Month!

August 3rd: National Watermelon Day

Slice up this summer fruit and top off with vanilla yogurt for a cool refreshing snack!

August 7th: National Raspberries N' Cream Day

Enjoy fresh raspberries sprinkled over your favorite yogurt cup!

August 10th: National Banana Split Day

Did someone say Banana Split for breakfast! Vanilla yogurt, fresh bananas, strawberries, and blueberries topped with low fat granola is a protein packed breakfast.

August 12th: National Julienne Fries Day

Fries done your way with rich and creamy cheese sauce to top them off! Great summer treat!



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Great Recipe Ideas!

Find these and many other fun recipes at nutritionconnection.org/menu-recipe-ideas/

YOGURT MUFFIN PARFAIT
Ingredients:
• 6.25 lbs. of vanilla yogurt

SWEDISH MEATBALLS WITH CHEESE SAUCE OVER PASTA
Ingredients:
• 100 turkey meatballs
• 4 lbs. + 11 oz. white cheese

PEACHES-N-CREAM WAFFLE DUNKERS
Ingredients:
• 200 oz. vanilla yogurt

CRUNCHY FISH TACOS
Ingredients:
• 72 breaded cod fish sticks (1 oz. each)

MEGA CHEESE MUFFIN
Ingredients:
• 96 oz. whole wheat muffin mix, prepared

FIESTA PARFAIT
Ingredients:
• 12 1/2 cups pinto beans, canned, drained

Servings:
1 Serving
2 1/4 oz. G
Prepar

DELICIOUS RECIPES INSIDE!

So many ways to enjoy dairy!

Grab & Go Meal Recipes
Resources to Help You Help Them!



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SUMMER MEALS PROGRAM

Successful Practices from the Field

Whether you're offering summer meals to go or serving children in person, we've got you covered.

For Grab and Go Meal Service

- **Hot Now, Cold to Go!** Some districts provide a hot meal at the time of pick-up. The rest of the meals provided are shelf-stable or cold meals, so families do not have to reheat at home. This combination helps schools to use their inventory of hot meals while keeping meal prep simple for families at home.
- **Provide bulk meals.** Issued on April 11, 2020 in question 18 of memo SP13-2020, the USDA's nationwide child nutrition program waivers permit the distribution of bulk items in conjunction with non-congregate feeding situations in which multiple meals are provided at one time. These bulk foods, including milk, must include the proper minimum amount for each reimbursable meal being claimed.
- **Include menus with clear directions** for the proper use and portion size for bulk foods. Instruct families on what belongs in each meal, when to serve it, and how to properly store and reheat the food if necessary. Translate as needed to provide instructions in the languages commonly spoken by families in the district.
- **Consider household appliances & storage.** Families without refrigeration, ovens, and/or microwaves may not be able to safely store and properly reheat certain menu items.
- **Keep it simple.** Send home foods that only require minimal preparation. Families should not have to chop, mix, or bake ingredients for recipes.
- **Share food safety tips.** Include a printed card or sheet with essential food safety instructions, like this sample found on Department of Education websites:

Keep Hot and Cold Foods Safe

- Consume hot foods within 2 hours.
- Consume or refrigerate cold foods within 2 hours.
- Foods for other days should be stored in the refrigerator until eaten or reheated. If re-heating foods, ensure they are cooked to an internal temperature of 165 °F.
- Discard all refrigerated foods after 7 days of receiving it.

For Meal Service in Person

- **Follow CDC Guidance.** Enforce all federal, state, and local guidance around social distancing, food safety, and masking.
- **Use signage.** Banners, lawn signs, posters, and other signage can help increase program visibility and to communicate important information. Translate as appropriate in your community.
- **Streamline your serving line.** Improve your efficiency and make it easy for children to safely navigate through the service area.
- **Have a little fun!** Creative promotions like theme days on Fridays can help boost meal participation and give students an incentive to attend your summer meals site. Try reintroducing fan-favorite menu items that had not been offered in take-home format.





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SUMMER MEALS SAMPLE LETTER

Dear Parents and Guardians,

The health and wellness of our students is always our key focus. Free meals for children 18 and under will continue to be available at many sites throughout the community this summer.

Please check the school district's website or communication from your school's principal and teachers for information on where to receive nutritious and delicious meals.

- **Free Summer Meals** will help ease families' tight food budgets
- **Food served is healthy** and follows USDA nutrition guidelines
- **No application or proof of income needed.** You can pick up meals at a site in your community and bring them home to your children. For your convenience, where available, bulk meal packs may be obtained.

To find local free meals this summer, go to www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/household or text "SUMMER MEALS" to 97779.

Thank you for participating in the Summer Meals program which continues to support and nourish your children.

Sincerely,



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SUMMER MEALS SAMPLE LETTER

Dear **School Administrator Name**,

As we continue to grow together in this rapidly changing environment, the school nutrition department wants to assure you that we are here to support your efforts to provide our community with valuable information and services. The coronavirus has greatly impacted how we provide the meals that students depend on throughout the school year. Your leadership can make certain that those same children do not go hungry during summer months. Let's continue to work together to promote awareness of free meals available throughout the summer.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) operates Summer Meal Programs to address food insecurity, and we are requesting your help to make access to meal participation a priority.

Here are some suggestions on how you can promote summer meals, expand participation, and make a difference in the lives of children so they are ready to learn when they return to school:

- **Provide children in our community with meals at schools in your district.** Children and parents are familiar with local schools, and schools are known for providing nutritious food in a safe environment. Even if a school will not be offering summer programming, it can serve as a meal site and fill the nutrition gap for your students this summer.
- **Place a Summer Meals Banner Ad on your district and school websites.** Messaging to parents the importance of children having access to nutritious meals during the summer months.
- **Encourage teachers and staff to share information about Summer Meals availability and sites** on their digital communication platforms (Google Classroom, Clever, etc.) to parents and students. Messaging the importance of healthy nutrition during the summer is the first building block for preparedness when they return to school.
- **Utilize sample public service announcements, social media posts and press releases to raise awareness about Summer Meal Programs.** Schools are a trusted community resource. A message from the leaders in education can help parents know that these meal programs are useful resources for their families.

Summer meal programs need champions. Please help us feed more children in our community when school is not in session by becoming a champion for **Summer Meals**. Thank you, as always, for your dedication and commitment to our children.

Sincerely,



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Sample PSA Scripts

Note: Following are 30-second and 60-second template public service announcement (PSA) scripts that you can customize and share with schools via Robocall, Robotext, Listserv E-Blasts, Digital Learning platforms and radio stations.

30-Second Script

General:

FREE meals are available throughout your community this summer to help children get the nutrition they need. Call the National Hunger Hotline at **1-866-3-HUNGRY** to locate a meal site near you.

Localized:

Throughout the summer all children can continue to enjoy free, healthy meals with milk regardless of income, and there's no paperwork. To find a program near you, visit **YOURWEBSITE.com** or www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/household, call **INSERT YOUR ORGANIZATION'S NUMBER** or text **"SUMMER MEALS"** to **97779**.

60-Second Script

General:

Together we can make sure all children are getting the nutrition they need all summer long by continuing to take advantage of free meals throughout your community. The program provides nutritious and delicious meals with milk and other healthy foods. All children can continue to enjoy these meals during the summer months. Call the National Hunger Hotline at **1-866-3-HUNGRY** to find a Summer Meals Program near you. That's 1-866-348-6479.

Localized:

Throughout the summer, healthy eating continues. We can help make sure all children enjoy healthy meals including milk at safe locations without paperwork. All meals are free, plus they are delicious and nutritious. To find a location in your area, go to **WEBSITE.com** or www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/household, call **INSERT YOUR ORGANIZATION'S NUMBER** or text **"SUMMER MEALS"** to **97779**.

Localized:

Summer is here and that means free meals are available in your community. All children can continue to enjoy delicious and nutritious meals all summer long. No paperwork is required. To find a program near you, visit **YOURWEBSITE.com** or www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/household, call **INSERT YOUR ORGANIZATION'S NUMBER** or text **"SUMMER MEALS"** to **97779**.



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Social Media Posts

Social media can be an important tool to help promote your meal program. Not only can it help your site raise awareness around the continued meal service, but it can also help participants find information on how, when, and where they can receive meals this summer.

Please feel free to personalize the social media posts below to suit your communities by including your site locations, organization, or state's site location finder information. Sharing a picture or video enhances the message – Instagram, Facebook, Twitter.

Facebook Posts:

- Free, delicious, and nutritious meals are available to children throughout your community this summer! To find a site near you, text "**SUMMER MEALS**" to **97779**. Learn more by calling 866-348-6479 or visit www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/household
 - School may be out, but children can still get delicious, nutritious, and free meals all summer long at locations in your community. Text "**SUMMER MEALS**" to **97779** to find a site near you. Learn more by calling 866-348-6479 or visit www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/household
-

Twitter:

- This summer, there are free, delicious, and nutritious meals available to children in your community. Text "**SUMMER MEALS**" to **97779** to find a location near you! #SummerMeals
- Lunch is on us! Nutritious meals are still available this summer by visiting your local summer meals location where all children get a delicious, nutritious, and free meal all summer long. Text "**SUMMER MEALS**" to **97779** to find a location near you! #SummerMeals www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/household
- Schools are closed, but hunger never takes a vacation. We are serving all children with free nutritious meals this summer! Text "**SUMMER MEALS**" to **97779** to find a site near you. #SummerMeals www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/household



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Resource Page

Free Downloadable Promotional Materials via the websites below:

- **American Dairy Association North East Nutrition Connection:**
www.nutritionconnection.org
 - **United States Department of Agriculture Waiver**
<https://nutritionconnection.org/usda-extends-school-meal-program-waivers/>
 - **Partner Resources**
<https://nutritionconnection.org/summer-meals-resources>
 - **Promotional Materials**
 - Letter Templates (Administrators, Parents)
 - Program Flyer - English and Spanish
 - Sample Social Media Posts and PSAs
 - Downloadable Signage is Available
 - **Program Planning Materials**
 - Link to USDA Waivers
 - Best Practices for Serving Milk During Closures
 - Bulk Milk Calculator
 - New Recipes
 - Sample Menus
- **Center for Disease Control and Prevention**
https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/nutrition_resources.html





SUMMER MEALTIME INFORMATION

Nutrition never takes a vacation, and it never closes down. Throughout these summertime months, we're providing **FREE** meals for children and teens.

Dates & Times:

Meal Service Locations:

Meal Service Details:



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NO REGISTRATION REQUIRED.



DETALLES DE LA COMIDA DE VERANO

La nutrición nunca se toma vacaciones, y nunca se cierra. Durante estos meses de verano, proporcionamos comidas gratis para niños y adolescentes.

Fechas y Horarios:

Ubicación del servicio de comidas:

Detalles del servicio de comidas:



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NO SE REQUIERE REGISTRO.