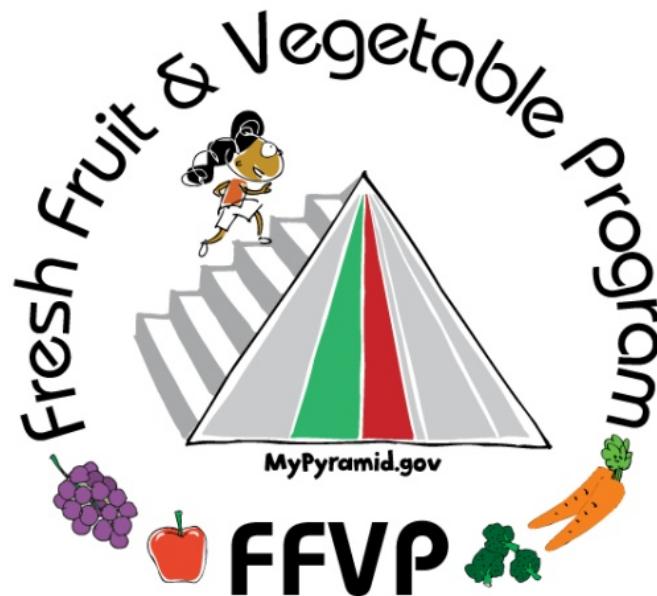


# Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Program

## Handbook



## Making the Best Decisions for Introducing Fruits and Vegetables to Students



Food and Nutrition Service

August 2008

The contents of this manual are based on Section 19 of the National School Lunch Act

# Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Program

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## Handbook

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# FRESH FRUIT & VEGETABLE PROGRAM

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## Handbook

### Introduction

The Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) provides all children in participating schools with a variety of free fresh fruits and vegetables throughout the school day. It is an effective and creative way of introducing fresh fruits and vegetables as healthy snack options. The FFVP also encourages community partnerships to support the schools when they offer free fruit and vegetables to children during the school day.

#### The goal of the FFVP is to:

- Create healthier school environments by providing healthier food choices.
- Expand the variety of fruits and vegetables children experience.
- Increase children's fruit and vegetable consumption.
- Make a difference in children's diets to impact their present and future health.



This program is seen as an important catalyst for change in efforts to combat childhood obesity by helping children learn more healthful eating habits. The FFVP introduces school children to a variety of produce that they otherwise might not have had the opportunity to sample.

# PROGRAM HISTORY

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## **Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002**

The Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program initially began as a pilot project authorized by Congress in 2002. The pilot provided funds to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables in four States and an Indian Tribal Organization (ITO) for School Year 2002-2003. The purpose of the pilot was to determine the best practices for increasing fruit (both fresh and dried) and fresh vegetable consumption.

## **Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004**

The success of the pilot led to the enactment of legislation in 2004 to expand the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program and to make it a permanent program under the National School Lunch Act. The law added four additional states and two ITOs for School Year 2004-2005.

## **The Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2006**

This Act appropriated a one-time funding of \$6,000,000 to further expand the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program in six additional States.

## **Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2008**

The 2008 Consolidated Appropriations Act expanded the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program nationwide and provided approximately \$9.9 million to begin program operations for School Year 2008-2009.

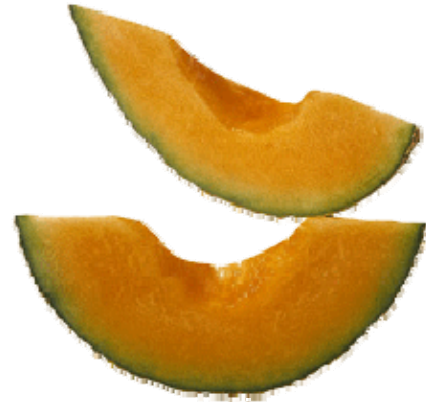
## **The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Farm Bill)**

The Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 amended the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act by adding section 19, *the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program*. Section 19 permanently authorized the program nationwide, consolidated all prior operations under Section 19 and provided a significant funding increase, beginning with \$40 million in FY 2009.

## PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

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The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) administers the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) at the federal level. At the State level, the FFVP is administered by the State agency that administers the National School Lunch Program. In administering the program, States must keep in mind direction from Congress which provides that the purpose of the program is to make available free fresh fruits and vegetables to children.



Under the FFVP, selected schools receive reimbursement of the cost of making free fresh fruits and vegetables available to students throughout the school day. These fresh fruits and vegetables must be provided separately from the lunch or breakfast meal, in one or more areas of the school during the official school day.

All selected schools that participate in the FFVP are required to widely publicize within the school the availability of free fresh fruits and vegetables.

### **FFVP Funds for State Agency Administration**

The law permits State agencies to retain a portion of their total FFVP grant allocation for State administrative costs. The amount of funds retained for State administrative costs is the lesser of: 1) 5 percent of the State agency's total grant for the school year, or 2) the amount required to pay the costs of one full-time coordinator for the FFVP in the State. Each State agency should identify the appropriate level and resulting salary for an FFVP coordinator within the State personnel structure.

This provision does not require the State agency to employ a full-time coordinator for the FFVP. Rather, it sets a cap on the amount of funds available for State administration based on salary rates of individual States. It is up to each State agency to determine how best to manage administration of FFVP within its existing personnel structure, workload considerations, and other factors.

While States are not required to retain these funds, if they do, the amount retained for State administrative costs must be determined up-front, since States must subtract funds used for State administrative costs prior to determining school allocations. State administrative funds are subject to the same cost accountability and management principals applied to State Administrative Expense funds.

## School Selection Criteria

To be selected for the FFVP, your school must:

- Be an elementary school
- Operate the National School Lunch Program
- Submit an application for participation (see *School Applications* below)
- Have 50 percent or more of its students eligible for free/reduced price meals
- Be chosen based on the percentage of free/reduced price students with the highest priority given to schools with the highest percentages of low-income students, *to the maximum extent practicable*. Except that, States may select a school with a lower percentage over a school with a higher percentage to either effectively manage the per-student allocation requirements of \$50-\$75, or if there are significant concerns about a schools ability to properly implement and operate the FFVP.

The total enrollment of all schools selected in the State must result in a per-student allocation of \$50-\$75 per year.

## Outreach to Low-Income Schools

State agencies are required to inform elementary schools with the highest proportion of free/reduced price enrollment, including Native American schools, of FFVP participation eligibility. At a minimum, States must provide information to all elementary schools with free/reduced price enrollment at or above 50 percent.

In addition, from the 50 percent or higher group, States must further identify and inform schools likely chosen to participate in FFVP because the schools have the highest free/reduced price percentages. To identify the schools, States would first calculate the total student enrollment in schools needed in the State to meet the \$50-\$75 per student requirement. States would then determine both how many and which of the schools could be selected within this range. The outreach must be conducted before the State agency selects schools for participation in the program.

## Transition of Existing Schools to the New FFVP

### School Year 2008-2009

Section 19 of the National School Lunch Act contains provisions to facilitate the transition of the program in previously participating States to the new requirements under Section 19. Any elementary or secondary school already selected for participation for School Year 2008-2009 as of May 21, 2008, may be permitted to participate, at State agency discretion, regardless whether the school meets the new selection criteria.

### School Year 2009-2010

Beginning in School Year 2009-2010, all schools must meet the school selection criteria; however, State agencies may permit previously participating secondary schools to continue to participate for School Year 2009-2010, provided the school(s) meets the rest of the new selection criteria. School Year 2009-2010 is the final school year secondary schools may participate.

All schools must follow allocations of \$50-\$75 per student beginning July 1, 2008.

## School Applications

State agencies must solicit applications from interested elementary schools within the State. Each school interested in participating in the FFVP must submit an application that includes, at a minimum, the following information:

- The total number of enrolled students, and the percentage eligible for free/reduced price meals
- A certification of support for participation in the FFVP signed by the:
  - school food manager, (2) school principal, *and* (3) district superintendent (or equivalent position)
- A program implementation plan that includes efforts to integrate the FFVP with other efforts to promote sound health and nutrition, reduce overweight and obesity, or promote physical activity.

It is recommended that each school include a description of partnership activities undertaken or planned. Schools are encouraged to develop partnerships with one or more entities that will provide non-Federal resources, including entities representing the fruit and vegetable industry.

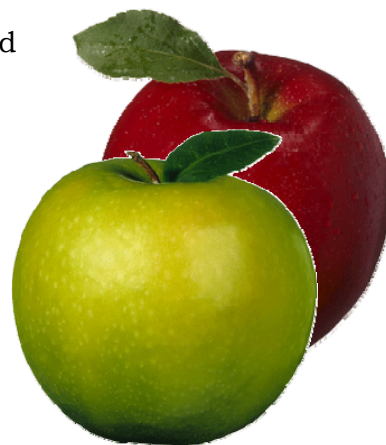
The application process must be conducted by the State agency every year.



## HOW IT WORKS

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Reimbursement for the FFVP is the same as with other Child Nutrition Programs. Schools must submit a monthly claim and are reimbursed by the State agency for purchases of fresh fruits and fresh vegetables served free to children during the school day. Within basic requirements, the FFVP gives your school flexibility to develop your own implementation plan, involve your teachers and other school staff, work out problems, and reach your own solutions. Your school decides when, where, and how you want to implement the FFVP, and what mix of fresh fruits and vegetables you want to offer your children.



### **To be selected for the Program your school must:**

- Agree to make free fresh fruits and vegetables available to all enrolled children
- Provide fresh fruits and vegetables during the school day
- Widely publicize within the school the availability of free fresh fruits and vegetables
- Have documented support of the food service manager, principal, and district superintendent
- Serve a high number of low-income children. The schools selected must have the highest percentage of low-income children (at least over 50%), except as noted on page 4 of this handbook, under *School Selection Criteria*.

### **USDA suggests:**

- A variety of implementation strategies
- Complementary nutrition education

### **As a participating school you:**

- Receive funds allocated to your state, based on an allocation of \$50- \$75 per student
- Submit a monthly claim for reimbursement
- Must operate the NSLP
- May use no more than 10% of your school's total grant for administrative costs



- Receive reimbursement for the costs of purchasing, preparing, and serving fresh fruits and vegetables to children in your school

**To ensure the FFVP runs smoothly, your school must:**

- Establish an implementation or operational plan for your school that addresses “who does what and where?” to ensure that all operational guidelines are followed. In addition, your school must develop a monthly budget to track expenditures.
- Pay attention to program logistics, right from the start, to make sure food service and other school staff understand how the FFVP works
- Establish partnerships on a local level with grocers, Health Departments, or extension service. State or national level partnerships can also be very helpful.
- Incorporate nutrition education into the daily curriculum, preferably during the service of fresh fruits and vegetables
- Be familiar with the purchasing process of fresh produce and what is available locally, through *DoD-Fresh* (the Department of Defense’s Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program), or through the Farm to School Initiative
- Be familiar with proper handling and storage of fresh produce to prevent spoilage and loss
- Be familiar with all Food Safety and Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) principals for fresh produce
- Process reports on time, retain records, and comply with all other paperwork and reporting requirements

**Best Practices**

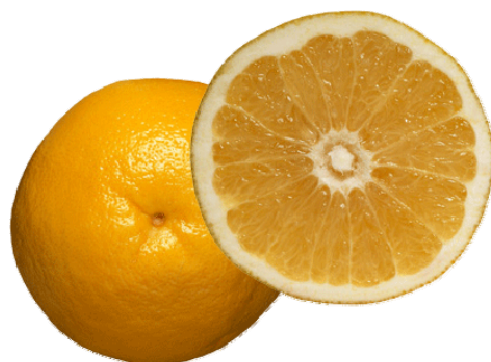
- Anticipate the need for staff to prepare and deliver food, and to process reports and other paperwork
- Coordinate efforts to inform principals, teachers, school staff, children, and parents about the FFVP
- Respond to reports from custodians about trash and messes
- Determine the appropriate types of produce to serve and the appropriate portion sizes. Keep in mind, the types of produce as well as the portion size depends on the ages and preferences of your students as well as the ways in which you offer the fruits and vegetables
- Identify with your stakeholders the best methods for distributing and promoting fruits and vegetables to your students
- Solicit free nutrition education materials from State, local and federal partners

# WHO CAN RECEIVE FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

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## Recipients

The FFVP is for all the children who normally attend your school. Any child who is considered a member of the school and who is present during the service of fruits and vegetables may participate. The FFVP is *not* intended for community residents, or adults who are attending school functions.



Free fruits and vegetables are intended for all children and cannot be used as gifts or rewards. You cannot withhold them to discipline children, either.

## Best Practices

All children who are enrolled in a Head Start program, a split-session kindergarten class, or a child care center located in your school are eligible for the FFVP.

Encourage teachers to participate with their students. Teachers model healthy eating by eating fruits and vegetables in front of the children. They can help monitor and direct the food distribution, and use the opportunity to talk with students about nutrition, health, hygiene and manners.

## THE BEST TIME TO SERVE FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

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Your school has the flexibility to schedule FFVP during the school day and at a school activity during the school day for the students of the participating school. Many schools serve fruits and vegetables multiple times during the school day so different groups of students have more access to fruits and vegetables.



Fruits and vegetables may only be served during the school day (i.e., not before school or during afterschool programs). This provides an opportunity to incorporate a nutrition lesson along with the service of produce.

The FFVP *cannot* be used to replace foods that are part of the reimbursable school meal. The FFVP cannot be served during the National School Lunch or School Breakfast Programs reimbursable meal service periods.

Multiple distribution times may be used and may be the best way to maximize participation.

# THE BEST PLACES TO SERVE FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

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The most successful distribution areas for the FFVP will be places where children can easily reach the fruits and vegetables.

The techniques you use to distribute fruits and vegetables will depend on a number of factors. Consider grade level, maturity of your students, time available to eat the fruits and vegetables, time required for preparation and service of fresh fruits and vegetables, extra clean-up, garbage concerns and staffing issues.

Schools can offer the FFVP to children through a variety of distribution methods.

- Inside classrooms
- In hallways
- Inside the nurse's and school's offices
- At kiosks
- In free vending machines
- As part of nutrition education activities

## Best Practices

Most schools use classrooms or a combination of classrooms and kiosks to deliver fruits and vegetables to children.

Offering fruits and vegetables to children in their classrooms helps you reduce messes, deal more effectively with disruptive behavior, and make the most of learning time. To minimize interruptions to learning time, find ways to balance eating with classroom activities, such as silent reading or a nutrition education lesson.

Serving from kiosks lets you offer more choices and allows easier access. Consider staggering access to lessen confusion in hallways. Be sure to serve fruits and vegetables that can be handled easily. Have enough so you do not run out of the children's favorites.

Vending machines may also provide an optimal method to distribute fruits and vegetables. Be sure to select fruits and vegetables that are suitable, and to allow adequate time and staff for restocking.

To help your school's FFVP run smoothly, you can develop guidelines to remind children of good manners for when they receive and eat their fruit and vegetable snacks, and to dispose of their trash. Setting policies on trash disposal and clean up will improve the fruit and vegetable service.

When you plan your program, try to create serving areas that will encourage children to enjoy eating their snacks, while lessening your concerns about the potential for messes.

Providing a nutrition education component while serving fresh fruits and vegetables is the ideal way to introduce and reinforce good eating habits.

## WHICH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

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The FFVP introduces children to new and different fresh fruits and vegetables, like kiwi, star fruit, pomegranate, rutabaga, and kohlrabi. Fruits and vegetables are good low-calorie, low-fat sources of vitamins, minerals, and fiber. The FFVP shows children that fresh fruits and vegetables are healthy and tasty alternatives to snacks high in fat, sugar, or salt.



The produce you serve should be presented in such a way that it will be easily identified or recognized for what it is. Children should be able to connect to fruits like juicy ripe peaches and tart crunchy apples, without additives (e.g., dips). Encourage children to enjoy fruits as they are. Slicing whole fruits and vegetables may make them easier for younger children to eat.

### **The FFVP does not allow:**

- Processed or preserved fruits and vegetables (i.e., canned, frozen, vacuum-packed or dried)
- Dip for fruit
- Fruit leather
- Jellied fruit
- Trail mix
- Nuts
- Cottage cheese
- Fruit or vegetable pizza
- Smoothies
- Most non-food items, except those allowed under administrative/operational costs

### **The FFVP limits:**

- Dips for vegetables
  - If you choose to serve dip with vegetables, opt for low-fat, yogurt-based or other low-fat or non-fat dips. The amount used should be what is commonly noted as a “serving size” for condiments, as shown on produce Nutrition Facts Labels: 1 to 2 tablespoons.
- Service of “prepared” vegetables
  - Fresh (not canned, frozen or dried) vegetables that are cooked, must be limited to once-a-week and always as part of a nutrition education lesson

If you have any questions about which fruits and vegetables to purchase for the FFVP, contact your State agency for guidance and technical assistance before making purchases.

### **What should you do in your school?**

- Adjust your selection of fruits and vegetables to purchase and serve more of your students’ favorites, but continue efforts to introduce new items
- Be sure fruits and vegetables are appealing and easy to grab. If necessary, pre-cut them so they are easier, more appetizing, and not as messy for children.
- If using dips for vegetables, use a “serving size” that provides only enough to encourage children to eat the vegetables. Consider using prepackaged items, which are not as messy as bowls of dip.
- Introduce children to different varieties of a fruit (e.g., Bartlett, Bosc, and Seckel pears) or a vegetable (bell, sweet banana, and poblano peppers)
- Consider more pre-cut fruits and vegetables and pre-prepared trays in order to control labor costs and handle lack of extra storage space
- Offer whole fruits on days when staff cannot prepare trays of pre-sliced fruits or vegetables

One goal of the FFVP is to expand the variety of fruits and vegetables your students consume. Try “sample sizes” to introduce new items and then adjust your ordering accordingly. To the extent possible, you should not limit the choices you offer. Find innovative and fun ways to encourage your students to try different foods.



# HOW SCHOOLS PURCHASE FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

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FFVP schools must follow proper procurement procedures. Produce must always be graded and inspected according to existing local, State and Federal guidelines. Finding suitable vendors or suppliers that provide a reliable supply of produce has been a challenge for a number of schools. Many schools purchase fruits and vegetables from food wholesalers or brokers. The vendors deliver shipments of fresh produce directly to the schools.

Local grocery stores and other retailers are not only good suppliers of fruits and vegetables, but also might be valued partners for nutrition education and promotion activities.

You can support local agricultural producers by buying fresh produce at farmers' markets, orchards, and growers in your community. Remember: produce purchased with FFVP funds is meant to be used in the FFVP only. It cannot be used as a replacement in the National School Lunch or School Breakfast Programs.

The recently enacted Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-246) amended the National School Lunch Act to allow institutions receiving funds through the Child Nutrition Programs to apply a geographic preference when procuring unprocessed locally grown or locally raised agricultural products (effective October 1, 2008).

- While the legislation permits institutions to apply a geographic preference to the maximum extent practicable and appropriate, it *does not require* institutions to purchase locally grown and locally raised agricultural products.
- States cannot mandate, through law or policy, that institutions apply a geographic preference when conducting these procurements. This decision is left to the discretion of each local institution.
- Geographic preference may only be applied to the procurement of unprocessed agricultural products, locally grown and locally raised
  - The term “unprocessed” does not preclude any necessary handling and preparation that provides the produce in a useable form such as washing vegetables, and bagging greens.
  - Please review FNS’ memorandum SP 30: *Applying Geographic Preferences in Procurements for the Child Nutrition Programs*, dated July 9, 2008, for additional information.

- As with other school meal programs, plan to reduce waste. Follow your local board of health/local public health department guidelines for handling leftovers. If you cannot easily use the leftovers in the FFVP, you may be able to use them in your school meal programs -- but only to avoid waste. Do plan, to the extent possible, to use the fruits and vegetables purchased with FFVP funds as part of the FFVP.

### **Proper Procurement Procedures**

The “Buy American” requirement in the National School Lunch Program (as provided in 7 CFR 210.21(d)) applies to purchases made with FFVP funds. Produce such as bananas, which are generally not available as a domestic product, may be purchased even though they are not domestic. Schools needing additional guidance on specific purchases and how an item would be affected by the Buy American provision should contact their State agency for assistance.

Order produce through *DoD-Fresh*, the Department of Defense’s Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program. *DoD-Fresh* uses a large network of produce suppliers to distribute a wide variety of American-grown fresh produce directly to schools. Deliveries are frequent and on time, and the cost is reasonable.

Buy produce from your local grocery stores and farmers’ markets, or contact conventional and organic growers, and distributors.

Support farm-to-cafeteria projects by purchasing fresh fruits and vegetables from growers and farmers in your community. Farm to cafeteria projects are collaborations between farmers and schools that increase your access to fresh, local farm products, and expand market opportunities for family farms.

# NUTRITION EDUCATION IN THE FFVP

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The primary focus of the FFVP is to bring fresh produce into the school for distribution to the children. For too many children, the produce they see in school might be their first exposure to fresh fruits and vegetables, and the only ones they will see that day. That is why nutrition education is critical to the program's success.



## What should you do in your school?

- Develop nutrition education activities that fit your students
- Use the free resources and educational materials that are available to schools from USDA's Team Nutrition (e.g., *Fruits and Vegetables Galore*), State Fruit and Vegetable Coordinators, 5-A-Day, and other FFVP national partners
- Visit [TeamNutrition.usda.gov](http://TeamNutrition.usda.gov), [MyPyramid.gov](http://MyPyramid.gov), and [www.fns.usda.gov/cnd](http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd) for more information about the FFVP
- When possible, but no more than once a week, schedule the serving of prepared or cooked fresh vegetables in conjunction with classroom nutrition education activities
- Adapt lesson plans to include nutrition education
- Consult with FFVP partners to obtain no cost promotional items such as informational fliers, pamphlets, posters, banners, and buttons
- Have students create fruit and vegetable theme posters to decorate their classroom and serving areas
- Use student address systems and student broadcasts to share educational information about the importance of healthy eating
- Promote the FFVP on monthly menus that are sent to parents
- Add a monthly newsletter that addresses nutrition education and the benefits of fresh fruits and vegetables. Include the students by having them create and publish the newsletter.

## REIMBURSABLE COSTS

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Program costs are broken out into two categories: operating and administrative. However, the allowable costs under these categories may be *different* from those in the National School Lunch Program.

Please keep in mind that, to the extent possible, school FFVP funds must go toward purchasing fresh fruits and vegetables. All non-food costs must be carefully reviewed and deemed reasonable, given the extent of program operations (e.g., daily vs. twice a week).

### Operating Costs

Operating costs are the costs of running your FFVP service. These are your documented expenses for acquiring, delivering, preparing, and serving fruits and vegetables. They include the FFVP portion of the goods and services your school pays for:

- Buying fruits, vegetables, low-fat or non-fat dip for vegetables
- Buying nonfood items like napkins, paper plates, serving bowls and trays, cleaning supplies, and trash bags
- Value added services such as pre-cut produce, ready-made produce trays, and delivery charges
- Salaries and fringe benefits for employees who do such tasks as washing and chopping produce, preparing trays, distributing produce to classrooms, setting up kiosks, restocking vending machines, and cleaning up

### Administrative Costs

Administrative costs are limited to 10 percent of your school's total FFVP grant. Administrative costs are the documented expenses you have for planning the Program, managing the paperwork, obtaining the equipment you need, and all other aspects of FFVP that are not related to the preparation and service of fruits and vegetables.

### **Administrative costs include the FFVP share of**

- Purchasing or leasing equipment such as refrigerators, coolers, portable kiosks, carts, and portable food bars
- Salaries and fringe benefits for employees who compile and maintain claims for reimbursement and other financial reports, plan and write menus, order produce, track inventory, and coordinate nutrition promotion activities



### **What should schools do to ensure that the FFVP runs smoothly?**

- Prorate costs: only the FFVP portion of expenses can be charged to the FFVP
- Budget carefully to stay within the 10 percent limit on administrative costs
- Make sure your expenses are reasonable and support the Program's goals. For example, fruit baskets distributed to families, taken home by students during breaks or given to school personnel are not allowable expenses.

If you have doubts about whether a specific cost is allowable, contact your State agency to discuss it with them, prior to incurring such costs.

# PAPERWORK

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Participating in the FFVP requires you to follow reporting and record keeping requirements that are similar to those for the National School Lunch Program.

Here are some key points to remember:

- Wait to begin the FFVP until you have been told by your State agency that FFVP funds are available
- Participate in any training offered by your State agency. School staff must be trained on FFVP requirements and report forms before each new school year
- Complete and submit a monthly FFVP reimbursement claim form (or similar reporting mechanism from your State) to claim reimbursement. The claim form should identify monthly school purchase data for the FFVP.
- You are responsible for ensuring that all claims are correct and appropriate. Include only those costs related to the FFVP on your claim form. Reminder: claims should be filed on time.
- States should be following FNS 60/90 day guidance when approving claims (especially late claims)
- Maintain full and accurate FFVP records in your files. Your school must keep these for a period of ~~three~~ years (after the end of the fiscal year to which they pertain). Records must be kept longer if your school has any unresolved audit findings.

Arkansas requires records  
be maintained for 5 years.

## State Reporting

Financial reporting for the FFVP will be conducted via the Food Programs Reporting System (FPRS). SF-269As for the FFVP have been set up in FPRS for all States. The electronic submission of the SF-269A report must be done on a quarterly basis.

## Recordkeeping

The recordkeeping requirements for the FFVP are the same as with other Child Nutrition Programs.

## **Program Oversight and Monitoring**

It is critical that State agencies make every effort to ensure FFVP is operating properly in participating schools, especially those new to the program. State agencies should:

- Review FFVP claims for reimbursement submitted by participating schools to ensure that expenditures are appropriate prior to providing reimbursement
- Ensure that FFVP schools are reviewed as part of the Coordinated Review Effort (CRE) process, or other oversight or monitoring activity related to the National School Lunch or School Breakfast Programs
- Ensure that, to the maximum extent possible, FFVP funds go towards the purchase of fresh produce
- Ensure that schools follow operating and administrative cost-guidance as outlined in this handbook and technical assistance memorandums

## **Best Practices**

Keep an FFVP file that contains:

- Addendums
- Contact information
- Invoices
- Monthly claims
- Purchase order information
- Vendors/Local farmers



## ENCOURAGING SUCCESS

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Your State agency provides considerable support and encouragement to you in administering the FFVP.

Oversight refers to a variety of methods of monitoring your school's ability to successfully manage the program, both during and between reviews. State agency oversight includes:



- Keeping in contact with you about your school's operation of FFVP
- Holding training sessions and workshops on the FFVP, including workshops with partners and others who can assist you
- Conducting onsite visits to assist in implementing and running the FFVP
- Providing technical assistance to answer your questions and concerns
- Ensuring that you have received and reviewed the information you need to manage and monitor FFVP in your school
- Encouraging your efforts to collaborate with state and local affiliates of FFVP's national partners
- Encouraging your efforts to promote nutrition education as a daily feature in your school classrooms
- Reviewing claim forms
- Sharing information about your school's program among FFVP and financial management staff at the State agency
- Ensuring reports are submitted on time.

# WHY PARTNERSHIPS ARE IMPORTANT

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Outside support, collaboration, and partnerships have been essential elements of FFVP success. State, local, and private partners have helped schools better manage the FFVP, resolve logistical challenges of the program, and obtain educational materials for promoting nutritious food choices in and out of the classroom.

## **Collaborate with State and local affiliates such as:**

- State Fruit and Vegetable Coordinators (formerly 5-A-Day)
- Produce for Better Health

## **Encourage cooperation and commitment from school partners:**

- Administrators
- Teachers
- Food service staff
- School nurses
- Custodial staff
- Parents
- Parent Teacher Association
- Student government

## **Develop working relationships with outside partners:**

- State and National affiliates of the American Cancer, Diabetes, Dietetic and Heart Associations and School Nutrition Association
- Community Health Agencies
- County and State health and agriculture departments
- Dietitians and dietetic interns
- Extension agents
- Hospitals
- Local grocers and stores
- Vocational clubs
- Produce associations/commodity groups
- Nutrition trade associations
- Health associations
- Food distributors

# FOOD SAFETY IN THE FFVP

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Preventing or reducing the risk of food-borne illness or injury by contaminated fruits and vegetables is a priority in the FFVP.

## Best Practices

- Train food service employees who prepare or serve food on how to properly wash and store fresh fruits and vegetables
- Wash hands using the proper procedure
- Wash, rinse, sanitize, and air-dry all food-contact surfaces, equipment, and utensils that will be in contact with produce, including cutting boards, counter tops, knives, and sinks
- Follow manufacturer's instructions for the proper use of chemicals
- Wash all raw fruits and vegetables thoroughly before combining with other ingredients, including
  - Unpeeled fresh fruit and vegetables that are served whole or cut into pieces
  - Fruits and vegetables that are peeled and cut to use in cooking or served ready-to-eat
- Wash fresh produce vigorously under cold running water or by using chemicals that comply with the 2001 FDA Food Code. Packaged fruits and vegetables labeled as being previously washed and ready-to-eat are not required to be washed.
- Scrub the surface of firm-skin fruits or vegetables such as apples or potatoes using a clean and sanitized vegetable brush designated for this purpose
- Remove any damaged or bruised areas
- Label, date, and refrigerate fresh-cut items
- Serve cut melons within 7 days if held at 41 °F or below (see SOP for Date Marking, Ready-to-Eat, and Potentially Hazardous Food)
- Do not serve raw seed sprouts to highly susceptible populations such as preschool-age children
- Follow State and local public health requirements

## RESOURCES

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The following materials target elementary schools and promote fruit and vegetable consumption. Visit [TeamNutrition.usda.gov](http://TeamNutrition.usda.gov) to download these publications.



- 2008 Events Calendar
- Building Blocks for Fun and Healthy Meals
- Changing the Scene: Improving the School Nutrition Environment
- Community Nutrition Action Kit
- Connecticut Cycle Menu - CT Team Nutrition Program
- Connections, Volume 9
- Fact Sheets For Healthier School Meals
- Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs
- Food for A Day
- Food Service Equipment Guide
- Fruits & Vegetables Galore: Helping Kids Eat More
- Getting It Started and Keeping It Going, Team Nutrition
- How Much Do You Eat
- Making It Happen! School Nutrition Success Stories
- Menu Planner for Healthy School Meals
- *MyPyramid* Mini Poster
- *MyPyramid for Kids* Blast Off
- *MyPyramid for Kids* Classroom Materials
- *MyPyramid for Kids* Poster
- *MyPyramid for Kids* Tips for Families (English and Spanish)
- *MyPyramid for Kids* Worksheet
- Nibbles for Health
- Offer vs. Serve
- Popular Team Nutrition Events Book
- Recipes for Schools (USDA)
- Team Up at Home: Team Nutrition Activity Booklet
- yourSELF Middle School Nutrition Education Kit



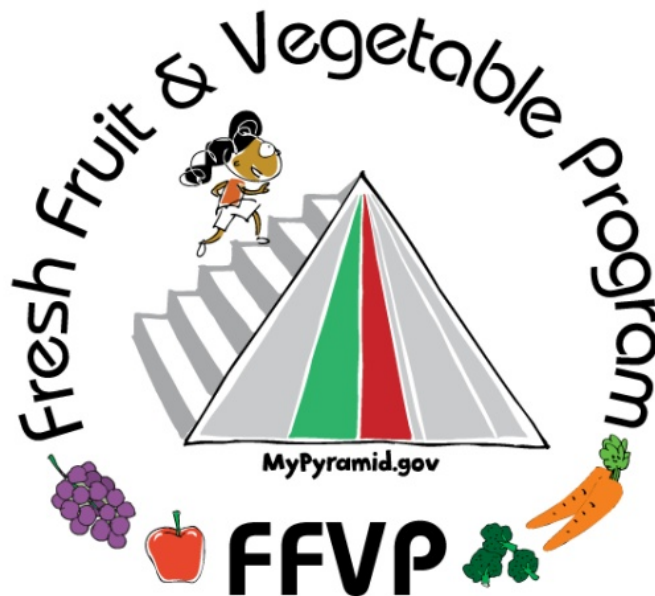
Food and Nutrition Service

August 2008



# FRUITS AND VEGETABLES A RESOURCE GUIDE

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Food and Nutrition Service  
Office of Research, Nutrition and Analysis  
November 2007



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## OVERVIEW

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This resource guide provides training and educational resources to promote the consumption of fruits and vegetables at school and in the home. Many of the resources are readily available on-line for review and downloading. The guide highlights materials that are consistent with the *2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans* and *MyPyramid* and lets you know where to find them.



# TRAINING MATERIALS

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## Fruits and Veggie Nutrition

### The Fruits and Veggies More Matters Campaign



[www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/](http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/)

This campaign provides a rich source of information on all aspects of fruits and vegetables. Check out available resources at:

[www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/?page\\_id=115](http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/?page_id=115)

Provides nutrition information for some of the most common fruits and vegetables and the sources of key nutrients which may play a role in reducing the risk of certain diseases. The web page stresses the need to aim for variety --- fresh, frozen, canned and 100% juice---all forms count and colors are important

## Storage 101

[www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/?page\\_id=129](http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/?page_id=129)

Provides guidelines for storing fruits and vegetables in all forms—fresh, canned, frozen and dried. Also, discusses availability of fruits and vegetables at various times of the year, meal planning and shopping for fruits and vegetables

## Diet and Exercise

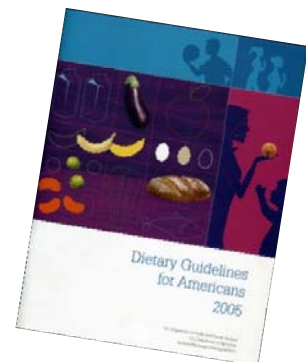
[www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/?page\\_id=48](http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/?page_id=48)

Provides information on role of fruits and veggies in maintaining a healthy weight and the importance of physical activity.

## The Dietary Guidelines for Americans and MyPyramid

[www.mypyramid.gov/guidelines/](http://www.mypyramid.gov/guidelines/) and [www.mypyramid.gov/](http://www.mypyramid.gov/)

Provide the primary source of dietary healthy information for policymakers, nutrition educators and health providers. For complete information, go to



## MyPyramid Education Framework

[www.mypyramid.gov/downloads/MyPyramid\\_education\\_framework.pdf](http://www.mypyramid.gov/downloads/MyPyramid_education_framework.pdf)

Provides key concepts of the MyPyramid food guidance system. These key concepts are not intended as direct consumer messages, but rather as a framework of ideas from which professionals can develop consumer messages and materials.



## MyPyramid Fruits Resources

[www.mypyramid.gov/pyramid/fruits.html](http://www.mypyramid.gov/pyramid/fruits.html)

Provides comprehensive information on fruits covering such topics as: What's in the Fruits Group, How much is needed, what counts as a cup, Health benefits and nutrients and Tips to help you eat fruits



## MyPyramid Vegetables Resources

[www.mypyramid.gov/pyramid/vegetables.html](http://www.mypyramid.gov/pyramid/vegetables.html)

Provides comprehensive information on vegetables covering such topics as: What's in the Vegetables Group, How much is needed, What counts as a cup, Health benefits and nutrients and Tips to help you eat vegetables



## Eat Smart. Play Hard. Lesson Plans

[www.fns.usda.gov/eatsmartplayhard/collection/collect\\_tools\\_3.html](http://www.fns.usda.gov/eatsmartplayhard/collection/collect_tools_3.html)

Provides interactive, behavior-focused lessons. These plans are ready-to-go, flexible, and easy to use. Just read the entire lesson, gather the materials, and go. Two lessons focusing on fruits and vegetables for kids—"Taste the Colors for ages 3-4 and "Snack Smart" for ages 5-7 and two lessons for adults--- "Grab Quick and



Easy Snacks” and “Start Smart! Eat Breakfast” are available



## **Loving Your Family, Feeding Their Future Discussion Sessions**

[www.nal.usda.gov/fsn/Loving/VegetablesAndFruits.pdf](http://www.nal.usda.gov/fsn/Loving/VegetablesAndFruits.pdf)

Provides interactive, participant-centered and behavior-focused discussion session on fruits and vegetables specifically targeting low-income women

## **Harvest of the Month**

[www.harvestofthemonth.com/EdCorner/index.asp](http://www.harvestofthemonth.com/EdCorner/index.asp)

Harvest of the Month is a tool kit and website that provides knowledge- and skill-based strategies that are standardized, cost-effective, replicable, and convenient. These strategies are designed to motivate and empower children to increase consumption and enjoyment of a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables and to engage in physical activity every day. Educators can access additional tools and resources to help students get even more out of Harvest of the Month



## **Team Nutrition Resources**

Nibbles for Health Leader's Guide and Newsletters were developed for parents of young children (ages 2-5). This kit offers program staff and 41 reproducible newsletters that staff can provide to parents to address many of the challenges they face, including topics on fruits and vegetables, like juice consumption. Developed in 2003, a revised version should be available in early 2008. Go to:

[teamnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/nibbles.html](http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/nibbles.html)



## **CDC Resources**

[www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/?page\\_id=71](http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/?page_id=71)

Provides helpful fact sheets including: Your Questions Answered and Test Your Fruit and Veggie IQ



# EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS

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## Handouts

### Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Resources

[www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/?page\\_id=71](http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/?page_id=71)

[www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov/publications/index.html](http://www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov/publications/index.html)

Provides more good information on how fruits and vegetables affect health—and more tips on getting them into your daily diet. Some topics of interest to WIC staff include: Three Simple Steps to Eating More Fruits & Vegetables, Choose Smart – Choose Healthy (for women), 10 Ways to Help Kids Eat More Fruits & Veggies, Entertain the Fruit & Veggie Way, Fruits & Veggies On the Go, and Save Time and Money. Some materials are available in Spanish.

### Loving Your Family Feeding Their Future Handouts

[http://foodstamp.nal.usda.gov/nal\\_display/index.php?info\\_center=15&tax\\_level=4&tax\\_subject=261&topic\\_id=1941&level3\\_id=6322&level4\\_id=10693](http://foodstamp.nal.usda.gov/nal_display/index.php?info_center=15&tax_level=4&tax_subject=261&topic_id=1941&level3_id=6322&level4_id=10693)

Provides handouts on fruits and vegetables designed for low-income women with low-literacy skills. Handouts are also available in Spanish and matched with available discussion sessions for educators

## Brochures

### Eat Smart. Play Hard. Brochures

[www.fns.usda.gov/eatsmartplayhard/collection/parent\\_broch.html](http://www.fns.usda.gov/eatsmartplayhard/collection/parent_broch.html)

Provides brochures focusing on fruits and vegetables “Grab Quick and Easy Snacks” and “Power Up with Breakfast.” Available in English and Spanish as downloadable materials.

## Guidebooks

### Loving Your Family Feeding Their Future Resources

[http://foodstamp.nal.usda.gov/nal\\_display/index.php?info\\_center=15&tax\\_level=4&tax\\_subject=261&topic\\_id=1941&level3\\_id=6322&level4\\_id=10693](http://foodstamp.nal.usda.gov/nal_display/index.php?info_center=15&tax_level=4&tax_subject=261&topic_id=1941&level3_id=6322&level4_id=10693)

Provides “*The Healthy Family Guidebook*” in English and Spanish that has chapters on fruits and vegetables, and 2-weeks of low-cost menus and recipes that meet the Dietary Guidelines

## **Menus and Recipes**

### **Eat Smart. Play Hard. Healthy Lifestyles Webpage**

[www.fns.usda.gov/eatsmartplayhardhealthylifestyle/](http://www.fns.usda.gov/eatsmartplayhardhealthylifestyle/)

Designed for parents and caregivers, the web page provides information on fruits and vegetables including quick, easy, and healthy recipes and menus that taste good



# EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS FOR CHILDREN AGES 2-5

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## **Eat Smart. Play Hard. Activity Sheets, Songs, and Accessories**

[www.fns.usda.gov/eatsmartplayhardkids/Library/actsheets.htm](http://www.fns.usda.gov/eatsmartplayhardkids/Library/actsheets.htm)

Provides two kids activity sheets on fruits and vegetables for ages 4-6: “Lets Go on a Snack Hunt” and “Power Panther’s Picnic”. Also available are Power Panther accessories---downloadable gloves, mask and shoes plus songs and “power moves” that could be used in conjunction with the activity sheets and lessons. Go to:

[www.fns.usda.gov/eatsmartplayhard/collection/collect\\_tools.html](http://www.fns.usda.gov/eatsmartplayhard/collection/collect_tools.html)

## **MyPyramid for Kids Coloring Page**

[teamnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/mypyramidcoloringpage.html](http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/mypyramidcoloringpage.html)

Provides a MyPyramid for Kids coloring page.

## **Give Me 5 A Day! Florida Dept. of Health**

[www.doh.state.fl.us/](http://www.doh.state.fl.us/)

*Give Me 5 A Day* is a 27-page children’s book that emphasizes the importance of eating fruits and veggies. The book is written for preschoolers to 1<sup>st</sup> graders, in both English and Spanish.

# RESEARCH RESOURCES

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## Consumer Practices and Behaviors

[www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnppa/publications/#MMWR\\_Nutrition](http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnppa/publications/#MMWR_Nutrition)

CDC. Fruit and Vegetable Consumption among Adults, United States, 2005. MMWR Weekly March 16, 2007/56(10); 213-217.

[www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/AIB792/](http://www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/AIB792/)

Guthrie JF. Understanding Fruit and Vegetable Choices—Research Briefs Agriculture Information Bulletin No. (AIB792). November 2004. This series of research briefs provides information on the economic, social, and behavioral factors influencing consumers' fruit and vegetable choices.

[www.ers.usda.gov/publications/aer833/](http://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/aer833/)

Blisard N, Stewart H, Jolliffe D. Low-Income Households' Expenditures on Fruits and Vegetables. Agricultural Economic Report No (AER833) 30 pp, May 2004. This report analyzes fruit and vegetable expenditures by low-income households and higher income households, and compares the sensitivity of both groups' purchases to changes in income

[www.ers.usda.gov/publications/aib790/](http://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/aib790/)

Reed J, Frazao E, Itskowitz R. How Much Do Americans Pay for Fruits and Vegetables? Agriculture Information Bulletin No. (AIB790) 39 pp, July 2004. This analysis uses ACNielsen Homescan data on 1999 household food purchases from all types of retail outlets to estimate an annual retail price per pound and per serving for 69 forms of fruits and 85 forms of vegetables

[www.ers.usda.gov/publications/aib792/aib792-7/aib792-7.pdf](http://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/aib792/aib792-7/aib792-7.pdf)

Lin B-H. Fruit and Vegetable Consumption, Looking Ahead to 2020. Economic Research Service. Agriculture Information Bulletin Number 792-7, October 2004

[www.ers.usda.gov/publications/aib792/aib792-2/aib792-2.pdf](http://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/aib792/aib792-2/aib792-2.pdf)

Lin B-H, Reed J, Lucier G. U.S. Fruit and Vegetable Consumption: Who, what Where, and How Much. Economic Research Service, Agriculture Information Bulletin Number 792-2, October 2004

## **Effective Behavior Change Approaches**

[www.csupomona.edu/~jvgrizzell/best\\_practices/bctheory.html](http://www.csupomona.edu/~jvgrizzell/best_practices/bctheory.html)

Grizzell J. Theories and Models of Human Behavior. This web page reviews elements of behavioral and social science theories and models.

[www.aafp.org/afp/20000301/1409.html](http://www.aafp.org/afp/20000301/1409.html)

Zimmerman GL, Olsen CG, Bosworth DO. A “Stages of Change” Approach to Helping Patients Change Behavior.

[www.cellinteractive.com/ucla/physician\\_ed/stages\\_change.html](http://www.cellinteractive.com/ucla/physician_ed/stages_change.html)

UCLA Center for Human Nutrition. Prochaska and DiClemente’s Stages of Change Model.

## OTHER RESOURCES

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### **Fruits and Veggies More Matters Coordinators**

[www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov/health\\_professionals/coordinator\\_contact.html](http://www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov/health_professionals/coordinator_contact.html)

A listing of the national and State contacts for the Fruits and Veggies More Matters Campaign

### **Fruits and Vegetables Resources for Various Ethnic Groups**

<http://peaches.nal.usda.gov/pubs/ethnic/NativeAmericanResources.asp>

Provides a resource list for educators of nutrition education materials targeted to Native Americans, Africans, Latinos, Asians, Europeans and Southeast Asians. It should be noted that some of the resources were developed prior to the 2005 Dietary Guidelines; however, educators may find the background information helpful in working with these ethnic groups

### **National Fruit and Vegetable Retail Report – AMS, USDA**

[www.marketnews.usda.gov/portal/fv](http://www.marketnews.usda.gov/portal/fv)

Provides a snapshot of the week's retail market trends in pricing and advertising of fruits and vegetables. The survey reports results of more than 200 retailers.



**United States  
Department of  
Agriculture**

Food and  
Nutrition  
Service

3101 Park  
Center Drive  
Alexandria, VA  
22302-1500

DATE: July 11, 2008

MEMO CODE: SP 31-2008

SUBJECT: Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP): Nationwide Expansion and Program Operations Resulting from the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Public Law 110-234)

TO: Regional Directors  
Special Nutrition Programs  
All Regions

State Directors  
School Nutrition Programs  
All States

The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008, also known as the Farm Bill, became law on May 22, 2008 (P.L. 110-234). Section 4304 of P.L. 110-234 amended the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (NSLA) by adding section 19, the *Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program*. Under section 19 of the NSLA, beginning July 1, 2008, the FFVP becomes a nationwide program that will operate in selected schools in the 50 States, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. The previous FFVP authorization under section 18(f) of the NSLA was removed; funds already provided to the 11 permanent States and the six States originally funded through the 2006 Appropriations Act will continue to be available.

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide information to all State agencies regarding operations of the FFVP under section 19 of the NSLA beginning July 1, 2008 (school year 2008-09). Section 19 of the NSLA contains significant changes from the previous program, including funding amounts; the number of schools that can participate; allocation of funds to States and schools; use of funds for State administrative costs; and school selection criteria and requirements.

**Allocation of Funds to State Agencies**

Section 19 of the NSLA provides \$40 million for the FFVP for school year 2008-09, available as of October 1, 2008. In addition to these funds, the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-161) provided \$9.9 million for FFVP operations, which may be used for the FFVP for all State agencies except those in Guam, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

For funds accounting and reporting purposes, the FFVP will continue to operate on a fiscal year basis for State agencies. We will be providing two separate allocations to State agencies through their Letters of Credit for FFVP operations in school year 2008-09, as follows:

- Each State will receive \$184,100 from the remaining funds provided in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2008, on or about July 1, 2008. The funds will be available for obligation by schools through September 30, 2008, and must be closed out by December 30, 2008.
- Each State will receive its share of the \$40 million on or about October 1, 2008. The funds will be available for obligation by schools through June 30, 2009. State agencies must close out the funds by December 30, 2009.

In accordance with section 19 of the NSLA, the 11 permanent States will receive at least the same amount of funds that they received for FFVP operations in School Year 2007/08. Funds not expended by the due dates specified above will be recovered by FNS and made available for future program operations.

#### **Funds for State Administrative Costs**

The law permits State agencies to retain a portion of their total FFVP grant allocation for State administrative costs. The amount of funds retained for State administrative costs is the lesser of: (1) 5 percent of the State agency's total grant for the year; or (2) the amount required to pay the costs of one full-time coordinator for the FFVP in the State. Each State agency should identify the appropriate level and resulting salary for a FFVP coordinator within the State personnel structure.

This provision does not require the State agency to employ a full-time coordinator for the FFVP. Rather, it sets a cap on the amount of funds available for State administration based on salary rates of individual States. It is up to each State agency to determine how best to manage administration of FFVP within its existing personnel structure, workload considerations, and other factors.

The amount retained for State administrative costs must be determined up-front, since States must subtract funds used for State administrative costs prior to determining school allocations. State administrative funds are subject to the same cost accountability and management principals applied to State Administrative Expense funds.

### **School Selection Criteria**

Section 19 of the NSLA sets forth criteria for State agency selection of schools to participate in FFVP as follows:

- Only elementary schools may participate (note that this is a change from prior program operations);
- Selected schools must also operate the National School Lunch Program (NSLP);
- Each interested school must submit an application for participation in FFVP (see **School Applications** below);
- Each selected school must have 50 percent or more of its students eligible for free/reduced price meals;
- Highest priority must be given to schools with the highest percentages of low-income students, *to the maximum extent practicable*; and
- The total enrollment of all schools selected in the State must result in a per-student allocation of \$50 to \$75 per year.

As noted above, the law requires the highest priority for schools with the highest percentages of low-income students, to the maximum extent practicable. For example, States should select a school with 60 percent free/reduced price enrollment before selecting a school with 55 percent free/reduced price enrollment. States may select a school with a lower percentage of free/reduced price enrollment over a school with a higher percentage to either effectively manage the per-student allocation requirements of \$50 to \$75, or if there are significant concerns about a particular school's ability to properly implement and operate the FFVP. Once all interested and eligible schools at or above 50 percent have been selected, the law permits State agencies to select eligible schools below 50 percent.

### **Transition of Existing Schools to the New FFVP**

The Farm Bill contains provisions to facilitate the transition of the program in previously participating States to the requirements under section 19 of the NSLA. Any elementary or secondary school already selected for participation for school year 2008/09 as of May 21, 2008, may be permitted to participate, at State agency discretion, regardless whether the school meets the new selection criteria.

Beginning in school year 2009/10, all schools must meet the school selection criteria; except State agencies may permit previously participating secondary schools to continue to participate for school year 2009/10 provided the schools meet the rest of the new criteria. 2009-10 is the final school year secondary schools may participate.

All schools must follow allocations of \$50 to \$75 per student beginning July 1, 2008.

### **Outreach to Low-Income Schools**

State agencies are required to inform elementary schools with the highest proportion of free/reduced price enrollment, including Native American schools, of FFVP participation

eligibility. At a minimum, States must provide information to all elementary schools with free/reduced price enrollment at or above 50 percent.

In addition, from 50 percent or higher group, States must further identify and inform schools likely chosen to participate in FFVP because the schools have the highest free/reduced price percentages. To identify the schools, States would first calculate the total student enrollment in schools needed in the State to meet the \$50 to \$75 per student requirement. States would then determine both how many and which of the schools could be selected within this range.

The outreach must be conducted before the State agency selects schools for participation in the program.

### **School Applications**

State agencies must solicit applications from interested elementary schools within the State. Each school interested in participating in the FFVP must submit an application including, at a minimum, the following information:

- The total number of enrolled students, and the percentage eligible for free/reduced price meals;
- A certification of support for participation in the FFVP signed by all of the following: (1) school food manager, (2) school principal, and (3) district superintendent (or equivalent position);
- A program implementation plan including efforts to integrate the FFVP with other efforts to either promote sound health and nutrition, reduce overweight and obesity, or promote physical activity; and
- A description of partnership activities undertaken or planned. While optional, each school is encouraged to develop partnerships with one or more entities that will provide non-Federal resources, including entities representing the fruit and vegetable industry.

State agencies may choose to request additional information as part of the application process. This application process must be conducted by the State agency every year.

### **Program Evaluation**

The Farm Bill provides \$3 million in funds for FNS to conduct an evaluation of the FFVP. The evaluation will consider whether the FFVP resulted in increased consumption by children of



fruits and vegetables, and other dietary changes including decreased consumption of foods with less nutritional value. State agencies are required to maintain and provide information to assist FNS in completing the evaluation. Additional information on the evaluation will be provided at a later date. The Report to Congress on FFVP evaluation is due September 30, 2011.

### **General Program Parameters**

The FFVP operates through the NSLP, under an addendum to the State agency/School Food Authority agreement. Under the FFVP, selected schools receive reimbursement for the cost of making free fresh fruits and fresh vegetables available to students throughout the school day. The fresh fruits and vegetables should be provided separately from the lunch or breakfast meal, in one or more areas of the school. All selected schools that participate in the FFVP are required to widely publicize within the school the availability of free fresh fruits and vegetables.

In accordance with direction from Congress contained in the conference report that accompanying the Farm Bill, the intent of the FFVP is to provide children with free fresh fruits and vegetables. It is not the intent *“to allow this program to provide other products, such as nuts, either on their own or comingled with other foods, such as in a trail mix”*. It should be noted Congressional intent is to also to eliminate dried fruit from the FFVP, a departure from previous program operations.

Please note the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA number for the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program is 10.582

The attachment is an addendum to the permanent Federal/State agreement to reflect permanent FFVP authority and operations under section 19 of the NSLA. All State agencies should have the appropriate official sign and then return the addendum to the respective Regional Offices as soon as possible. Schools should not begin program operations until the Federal/State agreement addendum is executed. States must also amend their agreements with school food authorities.

FNS will (1) issue State-specific funding allocations for school year 2008-09 from the \$40 million provided by section 19; (2) provide technical assistance on transition and start-up procedures; and (3) schedule conference calls to review the memorandum and respond to questions. In addition, FNS will present a session on FFVP during the 2008 Annual National Conference of the School Nutrition Association in Philadelphia on July 20, from 12:00 to 1:00. A second informal session at the conference is scheduled for July 21, from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. to focus on questions and answers and information shared from experienced states. We ask currently participating States have an FFVP representative present at these two sessions to the extent possible.

We strongly encourage State agencies and selected schools to work closely with program partners at the State and local levels to facilitate successful implementation and operation of the FFVP. National, State and local-level partners have proven to be important resources to the FFVP. We encourage close coordination at the State level with your State's Fruit and Vegetable Program Coordinator (formerly called the 5-A-Day Coordinator). The FNS website lists additional potential partners.

State agencies with questions regarding FFVP should contact the respective Regional Offices. Regional Offices should contact Mara McElmurray of Child Nutrition Division.

**Original Signed**

CYNTHIA A. LONG  
Director  
Child Nutrition Division

Attachment

Addendum to Federal – State Agency Agreement  
Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program

This agreement is between the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service (USDA/FNS) and the \_\_\_\_\_ State Agency for operation of the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) set forth in section 19 of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act.

The undersigned has the authority to enter into this Agreement to participate in the FFVP. This letter serves as an official addendum to the Agreement between the USDA/FNS and the State agency. This addendum will remain in effect, subject to availability of funds and until such time as the State Agency no longer administers the FFVP.

It is mutually agreed between USDA/FNS and the State Agency that:

**GENERAL**

1. The FFVP period of performance is on a fiscal year basis, October 1 to September 30 of each year.
2. The State Agency agrees to abide by all of the requirements for administering the Program as set forth in section 19 of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, additional guidance, regulations and memoranda provided by USDA/FNS, and any subsequent laws pertaining to the FFVP.
3. The State Agency agrees to provide FFVP funds to the appropriate School Food Authority (SFA) for school(s) selected by the State Agency consistent with section 19 of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, guidance, regulations and memoranda provided by USDA/FNS, and any subsequent laws pertaining to the FFVP.

**REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

The State agency agrees to submit an electronic SF-269A on a quarterly basis. The State agency agrees to submit other reports as required by FNS.

**GENERAL CONDITIONS**

This Agreement is non-transferable.

Signatures

\_\_\_\_\_  
Food and Nutrition Service, USDA

\_\_\_\_\_  
State Agency

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

THIS ARRANGEMENT does not constitute the entire agreement between the parties with respect to subject matter thereof.



**United States  
Department of  
Agriculture**

Food and  
Nutrition  
Service

3101 Park  
Center Drive  
Alexandria, VA  
22302-1500

MEMO CODE: SP 33-2008

DATE: July 31, 2008

SUBJECT: Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) Technical  
Assistance Information on FFVP Operations

TO: Regional Directors  
Special Nutrition Programs  
All Regions

State Directors  
School Nutrition Programs  
All States

This memorandum provides clarification and technical assistance to State agencies and regional offices on the expanded nationwide FFVP. On July 11, 2008 we issued an FFVP memorandum which discussed the nationwide expansion of the FFVP as set forth in the Farm Bill. The issuance of the memorandum generated many inquiries given the complexities of the new requirements and previous FFVP operations under several funding sources.

Although the requirements for FFVP under section 19 of the National School Lunch Act are essentially the same for all State agencies, there are unique transition issues for States that have participated under each of the various funding authorities. There are 4 attachments included with this memorandum. We have attached technical assistance specifically geared toward the three groups; **Attachment 1** addresses the 11 permanent states and 6 appropriation states which operated under prior program requirements, **Attachment 2** is for the new states and **Attachment 3** addresses the 3 territories. **Attachment 4** is the funding chart which lists the July 1, 2008 allocation, the October 2008 allocation and the total for the 2008-09 school year for all states.

We will be holding conference calls with each regional office and their states to allow further opportunity to address concerns and inquiries regarding the program.

**Original Signed**

CYNTHIA LONG  
Director  
Child Nutrition Division

Attachments

## **ATTACHMENT 1**

### **Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) Implementation in the 11 “Permanent” States and the 6 States Originally Funded Through 2006 Appropriations**

- **Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Mississippi, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Washington, and State agencies in Arizona and South Dakota that administered schools on Indian Tribal Organizations (ITOs)(“permanent” States);**
- **Connecticut, Idaho, Texas, Utah, and Wisconsin (“appropriations” States); and**
- **New Mexico, which administered programs under both funding sources.**

#### **General**

Please note that schools operated by ITOs no longer participate in the FFVP independently of the rest of the schools in a State, including ITOs in Arizona, New Mexico, and South Dakota. Under section 19 of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (NSLA), such schools would be eligible for selection along with other schools in the State using the criteria set forth in the July 11, 2008 memorandum.

The FFVP continues to operate on a reimbursement basis. Schools are reimbursed based on their monthly submission of a claim for reimbursement. In no case should the State agency provide advance FFVP funding. Schools may continue to use their current claim form.

All of these States received funds in Fiscal Year (FY) 2008 for operation of the FFVP. We provided \$9 million in October 2007 to the 11 permanent States; the six appropriations States received \$3.4 million in January 2008. The section below provides instructions on how remaining funds from these allocations should be handled.

#### **Funds from Prior Program Operations**

##### ***Permanent States (including New Mexico Zuni)***

The authorization for all previously participating FFVP States under section 18(f) of the NSLA has been removed and superseded by new section 19 of the Act. The \$9 million in funds provided to the 11 States in October 2007 are only available for program operations that occurred during School Year (SY) 2007/08. Therefore, the 25 schools in each State and the 25 schools among three ITOs that received allocations for SY 2007/08, in October 2007, should only use these funds for FFVP obligations incurred through June 30, 2008. New obligations should not be made against these funds after June 30, 2008, and all obligations must be liquidated by December 30, 2008. Any unused funds will be recovered by FNS. State agencies should continue to submit reports on these funds as previously instructed.

### ***Appropriations States (including 25 schools in New Mexico)***

The \$3.4 million provided in January 2008 to continue program operations in the six Appropriation states are only available for program operations that occurred during SY 2007/08. Therefore, the 25 schools in each of these States should only use these funds for FFVP obligations incurred through June 30, 2008. New obligations should not be made against these funds after June 30, 2008, and all obligations must be liquidated by December 30, 2008. Any unused funds will be recovered by FNS.

### **Current Funding Review**

#### ***Consolidated Appropriations Act***

Approximately \$9.9 million was made available for FFVP expansion through the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2008. The funds were intended to expand FFVP to all 50 States and the District of Columbia starting July 1, 2008. Each State, including those currently participating in the FFVP, received approximately \$184,101 through this allocation. These funds are available for obligation by schools through September 30, 2008. They will be closed out December 30, 2008.

#### ***Section 19 of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (NSLA)***

As amended by the recently enacted Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Farm Bill), the NSLA provides \$40 million for the FFVP and is allocated through a formula prescribed in the Act. Funds will be available on or about October 1, 2008. The formula allocation is as follows:

- (1) Minimum Grants: 1% minimum grant to each of the 50 States and D.C. (\$400,000 to each; total of \$20.4 million)
- (2) Federal Administrative Funds: Set aside \$500,000 for Federal administrative costs
- (3) Proportional Allocation based on Population: Proportionally allocate the remaining funds (\$19.1 million) to each of the 50 States, D.C., Guam, Puerto Rico and Virgin Islands based on population of the State compared to the U.S. population.
- (4) Funding Maintenance for Previously Participating States: Compare the resulting allocations for each of the previously participating States to the amounts received by these States in SY 2007/2008 to determine the total amount of funds needed to provide these States the same amount they received in SY 2007/2008 (i.e., the shortfall). The shortfall is funded by proportionally adjusting the allocations of the remaining States.

These funds will be available for obligation by schools through June 30, 2009. State agencies may not make any obligations against these funds after September 30, 2009. State agencies must close out the funds by December 30, 2009.

## **Allocation of Funds to Schools**

Even though funds are being provided by FNS to State agencies in two separate allocations for SY 2008-09, State agencies should administer one unified program for selected schools under the requirements of section 19 of the NSLA as described in this memorandum. As noted in our July 11, 2008 memorandum, there is no longer a limit of 25 schools per state. Instead, each State agency must ensure that the selected schools have a total enrollment which results in a per-student allocation of \$50 to \$75 per year.

Each State agency should perform the following calculation to determine the *range of total school enrollment needed* to achieve the per-student allocation of \$50 to \$75:

1. Add together the two allocations that will be provided in July and October (see Attachment 4 for State-by-State amounts).
2. Subtract the amount of funds that will be retained for State administrative costs from the total arrived at in #1. (Refer to July 11, 2008 memorandum for determining State administrative costs).
3. Divide the remaining funds (from #2) by 50. The resulting number is the maximum end of the *range of total school enrollment needed*.
4. Next divide the remaining funds (from #2) by 75. The resulting number is the minimum end of the *range of total school enrollment needed*.

### **Example:**

\$184,101	July allocation
<u>\$500,000</u>	October allocation
\$684,101	Total
<u>-\$25,000</u>	Administrative funds
\$659,101	Available to schools

### **Range**

$\$659,101 / \$50 = 13,182$  students

$\$659,101 / \$75 = 8,788$  students

The resulting *range of total school enrollment needed* (#3 and #4 above) would be used by State agencies, in conjunction with the other school selection criteria, to make school selections. The total enrollment of all selected schools must fit into this range. Using the example above, the maximum number of students that can participate is 13,182 and the minimum number is no less than 8,788 students.

For the schools selected under the authority of the previous FFVP, the State agency would need to determine the total enrollment of such schools, and then compare this number to the *range of total school enrollment needed* (#3 and #4 above). Based on the results of this comparison,



States would select additional new schools using the criteria set forth under **School Selection Criteria** in the July 11, 2008 memorandum, to reach a total enrollment level within the *range of total school enrollment needed*.

Once all schools are selected, the State agency should calculate the per-student allocation. States should then inform each selected school of its total allocation prior to the schools beginning program operations. This will allow schools to most effectively plan and manage the FFVP. We recognize that States may not have completed school selection in time for all schools to begin program operations at the beginning of the SY. We recommend that schools which are prepared to begin operations at the beginning of the SY be provided an initial budget upon which to draw their reimbursement based on the minimum level, \$50 per student, to start the program until the final amount can be determined.

This approach assumes that a State provides the same per dollar amount to each student in all the selected schools. However, in order to address the varying needs of schools, States may choose to vary the per student amount in several or all of their schools provided the per student amount does not go below \$50 and does not exceed \$75 dollars as required by law.

### **Reporting**

Financial reporting for the FFVP will be conducted via the Food Programs Reporting System (FPRS). SF-269As for the FFVP have been set up in FPRS for all States.

The ITOs in South Dakota, Arizona, and New Mexico that received funds in October 2007, will continue to submit a separate SF-269(A)s for their FFVP ITO schools (**CN-FFVP-ITO**) until the end of the FY September 30, 2008. At that time the **CN-FFVP-ITO** form in FPRS will no longer be available.

### **Record-keeping**

The recordkeeping requirements for the FFVP are the same as with other Child Nutrition Programs.

### **Program Oversight and Monitoring**

It is critical that State agencies make every effort to ensure the FFVP is operating properly in participating schools, especially those that are new to the program. State agencies should review FFVP claims for reimbursement submitted by participating schools to ensure that expenditures are appropriate, prior to providing reimbursement. In addition, State agencies should ensure that FFVP schools are reviewed as part of the Coordinated Review Effort (CRE) process, or any other oversight or monitoring activity related to the National School Lunch or School Breakfast Programs.

## **ATTACHMENT 2**

### **Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) Implementation in New States**

- **34 New States, and**
- **the District of Columbia**

#### **General**

While some requirements for program operations have changed with the new legislation, we strongly encourage new States to work or partner with States that have operated under prior program operations. These States have valuable FFVP experience and insight that is pertinent under the new requirements of section 19 of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (NSLA). Additionally, all regional offices have experience in FFVP operations and States should also work closely with the regions for assistance in program implementation.

#### **Reimbursement for FFVP Expenditures**

The FFVP operates on a reimbursement basis. Schools are reimbursed based on their monthly submission of a claim for reimbursement. In no case should the State agency provide advance FFVP funding. A prototype claim form/*FFVP Performance Report* is available on our website. Schools must provide the State agency, at a minimum, the information in the Report.

#### **Current Funding Review**

##### ***Consolidated Appropriations Act***

Approximately \$9.9 million was made available for FFVP expansion through the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2008. The funds were intended to expand FFVP to all 50 States and the District of Columbia starting July 1, 2008. Each State, including those currently participating in the FFVP, received approximately \$184,101 through this allocation. These funds are available for obligation by schools through September 30, 2008. They will be closed out December 30, 2008.

##### ***Section 19 of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (NSLA)***

As amended by the recently enacted Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Farm Bill), the NSLA provides \$40 million for the FFVP and is allocated through a formula prescribed in the Act. Funds will be available on or about October 1, 2008. The formula allocation is as follows:

- **(1) Minimum Grants:** 1% minimum grant to each of the 50 States and D.C. (\$400,000 to each; total of \$20.4 million)
- **(2) Federal Administrative Funds:** Set aside \$500,000 for Federal administrative costs

- (3) Proportional Allocation based on Population: Proportionally allocate the remaining funds (\$19.1 million) to each of the 50 States, D.C., Guam, Puerto Rico and Virgin Islands based on population of the State compared to the U.S. population.
- (4) Funding Maintenance for Previously Participating States: Compare the resulting allocations for each of the previously participating States to the amounts received by these States in School Year (SY) 2007/2008 to determine the total amount of funds needed to provide these States the same amount they received in SY 2007/2008 (i.e., the shortfall). The shortfall is funded by proportionally adjusting the allocations of the remaining States.

These funds will be available for obligation by schools through June 30, 2009. State agencies may not make any obligations against these funds after September 30, 2009. State agencies must close out the funds by December 30, 2009.

### **Allocation of Funds to Schools**

Even though funds are being provided by FNS to State agencies in two separate allocations for SY 2008-09, State agencies should administer one unified program for selected schools under the requirements of section 19 of the NSLA as described in this memorandum. As noted in our July 11, 2008 memorandum, there is no longer a limit of 25 schools per State. Instead, each State agency must ensure that the selected schools have a total enrollment which results in a per-student allocation of \$50 to \$75 per year.

Each State agency should perform the following calculation to determine the *range of total school enrollment needed* to achieve the per-student allocation of \$50 to \$75:

5. Add together the two allocations that will be provided in July and October (see Attachment 4 for State-by-State amounts).
6. Subtract the amount of funds that will be retained for State administrative costs from the total arrived at in #1. (Refer to July 11, 2008 memorandum for determining State administrative costs).
7. Divide the remaining funds (from #2) by 50. The resulting number is the maximum end of the *range of total school enrollment needed*.
8. Next divide the remaining funds (from #2) by 75. The resulting number is the minimum end of the *range of total school enrollment needed*.

Example:

\$184,101	July allocation
<u>\$500,000</u>	October allocation
\$684,101	Total
<u>-\$25,000</u>	Administrative funds
\$659,101	Available to schools

Range

$\$659,101 / \$50 = 13,182$  students  
 $\$659,101 / \$75 = 8,788$  students

The resulting *range of total school enrollment needed* (#3 and #4 above) would be used by State agencies, in conjunction with the other school selection criteria, to make school selections. The total enrollment of all selected schools must fit into this range. Using the example above, the maximum number of students that can participate is 13,182 and the minimum number is no less than 8,788 students.

On January 16, States were advised to begin school selection for the FFVP based on the funding provided in the Consolidated Appropriation Act. States need to determine the total enrollment of such schools, and then compare this number to the *range of total school enrollment needed* (#3 and #4 above). Based on the results of this comparison, States would select additional new schools using the criteria set forth under **School Selection Criteria** in the July 11, 2008 memorandum, to reach a total enrollment level within the *range of total school enrollment needed*.

Once all schools are selected, the State agency should calculate the per-student allocation. States should then inform each selected school of its total allocation prior to the schools beginning program operations. This will allow schools to most effectively plan and manage the FFVP. We recognize that States may not have completed school selection in time for all schools to begin program operations at the beginning of the SY. We recommend that schools which are prepared to begin operations at the beginning of the SY be provided an initial budget upon which to draw their reimbursement based on the minimum level, \$50 per student, to start the program until the final amount can be determined.

This approach assumes that a State provides the same per dollar amount to each student in all the selected schools. However, in order to address the varying needs of schools, States may chose to vary the per student amount in several or all of their schools provided the per student amount does not go below \$50 and does not exceed \$75 dollars as required by law.

### **Reporting**

Financial reporting for the FFVP will be conducted via the Food Programs Reporting System (FPRS). SF-269As for the FFVP have been set up in FPRS for all States.

### **Record-keeping**

The recordkeeping requirements for the FFVP are the same as with other Child Nutrition Programs.

### **Program Oversight and Monitoring**

It is critical that State agencies make every effort to ensure the FFVP is operating properly in participating schools, especially those that are new to the program. State agencies should review FFVP claims for reimbursement submitted by participating schools to ensure that expenditures are appropriate, prior to providing reimbursement. In addition, State agencies should ensure that FFVP schools are reviewed as part of the Coordinated Review Effort (CRE) process, or any other oversight or monitoring activity related to the National School Lunch or School Breakfast Programs.

## **ATTACHMENT 3**

### **Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program Implementation (FFVP) in Guam, Puerto Rico and Virgin Islands**

#### **General**

While some requirements for program operations have changed with the new legislation, we strongly encourage new States to work or partner with states that have operated under prior program operations. These States have valuable FFVP experience and insight that is pertinent under the new requirements of section 19 of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (NSLA). Additionally, all regional offices have experience in FFVP operations and States should also work closely with the regions for assistance in program implementation.

#### **Reimbursement for FFVP Expenditures**

The FFVP operates on a reimbursement basis. Schools are reimbursed based on their monthly submission of a claim for reimbursement. In no case should the State agency provide advance FFVP funding. A prototype claim form/*FFVP Performance Report* is available on our website. Schools must provide at a minimum the information in the Report.

#### **Current Funding Review**

##### ***Section 19 of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (NSLA)***

As amended by the recently enacted Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Farm Bill), the NSLA provides \$40 million for the FFVP and is allocated through a formula prescribed in the Act. Funds will be available on or about October 1, 2008. The formula allocation is as follows:

- **(1) Minimum Grants:** 1% minimum grant to each of the 50 States and D.C. (\$400,000 to each; total of \$20.4 million)
- **(2) Federal Administrative Funds:** Set aside \$500,000 for Federal administrative costs
- **(3) Proportional Allocation based on Population:** Proportionally allocate the remaining funds (\$19.1 million) to each of the 50 States, D.C., Guam, Puerto Rico and Virgin Islands based on population of the State compared to the U.S. population.
- **(4) Funding Maintenance for Previously Participating States:** Compare the resulting allocations for each of the previously participating States to the amounts received by these States in School Year (SY) 2007/2008 to determine the total amount of funds needed to provide these States the same amount they received in SY 2007/2008 (i.e., the shortfall). The shortfall is funded by proportionally adjusting the allocations of the remaining States.

These funds will be available for obligation by schools through June 30, 2009. State agencies may not make any obligations against these funds after September 30, 2009. State agencies must close out the funds by December 30, 2009.

### **Allocation of Funds to Schools**

As noted in our July 11, 2008 memorandum, there is no longer a limit of 25 schools per state. Instead, each State agency must ensure that the selected schools have a total enrollment which results in a per-student allocation of \$50 to \$75 per year.

Each State agency should perform the following calculation to determine the *range of total school enrollment needed* to achieve the per-student allocation of \$50 to \$75:

9. Determine the allocation to be received (see Attachment 4 for State-by-State amounts).
10. Subtract the amount of funds that will be retained for State administrative costs from the total arrived at in #1. (Refer to July 11, 2008 memorandum for determining State administrative costs).
11. Divide the remaining funds (from #2) by 50. The resulting number is the maximum end of the *range of total school enrollment needed*.
12. Next divide the remaining funds (from #2) by 75. The resulting number is the minimum end of the *range of total school enrollment needed*.

#### **EXAMPLE:**

<u>\$10,000</u>	October allocation
<u>-\$ 500</u>	Administrative funds
\$ 9,500	Available to schools

#### **Range**

$\$9,500 / \$50 = 190$  students

$\$9,500 / \$75 = 126$  students

The resulting *range of total school enrollment needed* (#3 and #4 above) would be used by State agencies, in conjunction with the other school selection criteria, to make school selections. The total enrollment of all selected schools must fit into this range. Using the example above, the maximum number of students that can participate is 190 and the minimum number is no less than 126 students.

Once all schools are selected, the State agency should calculate the per-student allocation. States should then inform each selected school of its total allocation prior to the schools beginning program operations. This will allow schools to most effectively plan and manage the FFVP. We recognize that States may not have completed school selection in time for all schools to begin program operations at the beginning of the SY. We recommend that schools which are prepared to begin operations at the beginning of the SY be provided an initial budget upon which

to draw their reimbursement based on the minimum level, \$50 per student, to start the program until the final amount can be determined.

This approach assumes that a State provides the same per dollar amount to each student in all the selected schools. However, in order to address the varying needs of schools, States may choose to vary the per student amount in several or all of their schools provided the per student amount does not go below \$50 and does not exceed \$75 dollars as required by law.

### **Reporting**

Financial reporting for the FFVP will be conducted via the Food Programs Reporting System (FPRS). SF-269As for the FFVP have been set up in FPRS for all States.

### **Record-keeping**

Please follow the same recordkeeping requirements for the FFVP as with other Child Nutrition Programs.

### **Program Oversight and Monitoring**

It is critical that State agencies make every effort to ensure the FFVP is operating properly in participating schools, especially those that are new to the program. State agencies should review FFVP claims for reimbursement submitted by participating schools to ensure that expenditures are appropriate, prior to providing reimbursement. In addition, State agencies should ensure that FFVP schools are reviewed as part of the Coordinated Review Effort (CRE) process, or any other oversight or monitoring activity related to the National School Lunch or School Breakfast Programs.





**United States  
Department of  
Agriculture**

Food and  
Nutrition  
Service

3101 Park  
Center Drive  
Alexandria, VA  
22302-1500

MEMO CODE: SP 35-2008

DATE: August 8, 2008

SUBJECT: Frequently Asked Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program Questions

TO: Regional Directors  
Special Nutrition Programs  
All Regions

State Directors  
Special Nutrition Programs  
All States

The new FFVP began operations under the authority and provisions set forth in The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008, (P.L. 110-234), the Farm Bill on July 1, 2008. The Farm Bill amended the National School Lunch Act to add a new section 19, the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP). The purpose of this memorandum is to provide answers to some of the frequently asked questions gleaned from our conference calls which address key program operation issues.

Q. What are the FFVP hours of operation?

A. The program is available only during the school day, not before or after regular school hours.

Q. Can the fresh fruits and vegetables be served at the same time as the breakfast or lunch program but in a separate part of the cafeteria?

A. No. The FFVP can not be provided at the same time as the service of the breakfast or lunch program.

Q. How many times during the school week must fresh fruits and vegetables be offered?

A. We expect schools to offer fresh fruits and vegetables as many times as possible during the school week.

Q. Must fresh fruits and vegetables be offered the entire school year or can schools choose to offer the program a limited number of months.

A. We expect that the Program be offered through the entire school year and not limited to certain months. One goal of the program is to effect a change in eating habits and a continual exposure to fresh fruits and vegetables is necessary/beneficial in making this change

Q. Can RCCI's participate in the FFVP?

A. RCCI's can participate provided they operate an elementary school program during the day, and participate in the NSLP.

Page 2

## Frequently Asked Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program Questions

Q. Can FFVP funds be used to purchase Nutrition Education Materials?

A. No, we suggest that schools find other methods to fund the cost of nutrition education materials.

Q. Can schools use FFVP funds for promotional costs?

A. No, costs associated with promotional activities can not be funded by the FFVP.

Q. Can we use trail mix, nuts or dried fruit?

A. No. Only fresh fruit and vegetables can be purchased.

Q. Can fruit smoothies, veggie pizzas and fruit pizzas be provided under the FFVP?

A. No.

Q. Are dips allowed?

A. Dips may not be used for fruits. However, in the interest of promoting the consumption of vegetables, the judicious use of *low fat* and *non-fat* dips for vegetables in a “serving size” quantity is allowed.

Q. Can cooked vegetables be provided and reimbursed in the FFVP?

A. Schools may only cook fresh vegetables (These vegetables should be ones not normally eaten raw) as part of a nutrition education lesson not more than once a week. The vegetables must be fresh; not frozen, canned or dried. Schools may not claim any additional ingredients that are part of the cooked fresh vegetable dish.

As an example, a class may study nutrition, and part of the lesson may be to learn about specific vegetables and their nutritional value.

Q. Do schools have to submit all supporting documentation with their claim for reimbursement?

A. No, however they must maintain this information for review.

Q. Are schools required to have separate purchase orders/invoices for the FFVP?

A. No provided they can demonstrate on the orders which purchases pertain to the FFVP.

Q. What are the FFVP funds obligation timeframes on a fiscal year or school year basis?

A. For **Schools**:

July FFVP funds: must be obligated by September 30 of that year.

October FFVP funds: must be obligated by the following June 30.

Frequently Asked Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program Questions

For **States**:

July FFVP funds-States that choose to receive a proportional share for State administrative expenses must obligate these funds by September 30 of that year. The normal fiscal year closeout timeframes apply with funds expensed by December 30.

October FFVP funds-The October obligation timeframe differs for FFVP State administrative funds than those for schools in that the State's funds may be obligated until September 30. The normal fiscal year closeout timeframes apply with funds expensed by December 30.

As States are aware, they must determine their total FFVP administrative funds allowed under the formula before funds are allocated to schools. We recommend that the State agency take their portion for State administrative expenses from the October allocation in order to allow schools sufficient funds to start-up the program.

Q. When will the new FFVP guidance manual be available?

A. We are in the process of drafting new guidance and will notify all State and Regional Offices as soon as the new manual is available on our web site. We hope to have the manual available by early September, 2008. The revised manual will incorporate the FAQs contained in this memorandum and the recently issued implementation memorandums, SP-31 dated July 11, 2008 and SP-33 dated July 31, 2008. The online manual will serve as the resource for the program and will be managed electronically to provide updates as needed.

The FFVP guidance manual that was used for prior program operations is no longer a reflection of current program operations under the authority and provisions of the new section 19 of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act. Therefore, we ask that the States or schools not use this "old" version. We have removed the FFVP Guidance Manual from the FNS website because it is no longer accurate.

**Original Signed**

Robert Eadie for  
CYNTHIA LONG  
Director  
Child Nutrition Division