

Monthly Update

Child & Adult Care Food Program



October 1, 2026

Distributed to CACFP Authorized Representatives and Home Sponsors via Listserv and posted at <https://cnw.ksde.gov>, CACFP, CACFP Monthly Updates

Important Updates, Reminders, & Deadlines

Happy Farm to CACFP Week! October 18-24

Farm to CACFP Week is a national education campaign hosted annually by the National CACFP Association (NCA). The campaign aims to raise awareness of the benefits of connecting child and adult care sponsors and operators with local foods. Through local food procurement, gardening activities, and agriculture education, Farm to CACFP leverages CACFP funding to help incorporate local foods in the nutritious CACFP meal pattern thus strengthening community food systems and supporting positive health outcomes for those in care. Find everything you need to celebrate, including resources, a webinar, and a social media challenge, on [NCA's Farm to CACFP Week website](#). Don't forget to share pictures of your celebrations using the hashtag **#FuelingKSKids** or by emailing photos to any member of our team.

October Town Hall – October 22

The October Town Hall will cover important reminders and updates for both SNP and CACFP. Farm to Plate Month will be celebrated with program updates, sponsor best practice sharing, and a “crunch off” event! Plan now to join the KSDE Child Nutrition & Wellness team on October 22 at 2 p.m. at this link: [Join the meeting now](#) (Meeting ID: 241 814 717 448 Passcode: hW7Wy3Ax). The link is also available on the [CNW Calendar](#).

8th Annual Mountain Plains Crunch Off – October 2026

Each October, the USDA Mountain Plains Region holds a Crunch Off in celebration of National Farm to School Month. The Crunch Off is a friendly competition between the Mountain Plains Region States (KS, MO, NE, CO, WY, MT, ND, SD) to see who can get the most “crunches” into local fruits and vegetables throughout the month of October. Participate in the Crunch Off and register your crunch here: [2026 Crunch Off](#)

CACFP Certification

Thank you to sponsors who have submitted their PY 2027 certification packets for approval. Consultants work through documents in the order received. If certification information has not been submitted, instructions are available on the [CNW website](#) under CACFP, [Program Certification](#). To participate in CACFP for PY 2027, which begins in October, sponsors must complete program certification requirements as soon as possible to allow sufficient time for review by KSDE. Sponsors cannot claim meals in PY 2027 until program certification is complete and approved by KSDE.

CACFP Reimbursement Claim Reminders

Original and upward claim revisions are due within 60 days of the end of the claiming month. As a reminder, 60-day deadlines are outlined on the resource titled “[Claim Deadlines – Program Year 2026](#).”



Please note that voucher dates are not dependent on or altered by claim due dates. Vouchers, including for Child & Adult Care Food Program Child Care Centers and Daycare Home Sponsors, are typically posted on the first and third Tuesdays of each month between 8 and 9:30 a.m. This allows direct deposit payments to be made on Fridays, as posting of vouchers is a four-business day process before payment is received via ACH direct deposit (if ACH is not set up, physical checks are mailed on Thursdays of the vouchering week). Center/Site and Sponsor Claims in “Approved” status by 8 a.m. on each applicable Tuesday will be batched and paid that corresponding Friday. Multiple claims can be paid in one batch. For questions regarding claims or meal reimbursement payments, please contact Dessa Gifford, Public Service Administrator for School Finance, at (785) 296-4965 or dessa.gifford@ksde.gov.

October Claim Reminder – Centers Only

Centers must report the number of free, reduced price, and paid participants on their October claims. The number of participants in each category is reported in the “*Center Income Eligibility Categories*” (IEC) section of the Center Claim. Sponsors are required to upload the IEC summary into KN-CLAIM in October and any other month that reported numbers are changed. An Excel version of the Income Eligibility Categories Summary template is available in [Chapter 12 of the CACFP Administrative Handbook](#).

When the claiming percentages are being established for the year, the IEC Summary must only include those participants who have complete and valid enrollment forms on file AND ate a meal/snack in the month of October.

The Determining Eligibility for CACFP training is available on the [KSDE Training Portal](#) under K12 Staff, Child Nutrition & Wellness: CACFP. The training includes a refresher on completing the IEC Summary.

USDA Updates

Final Rule: Simplified Geographic Preference Procurement in Child Nutrition Programs

On September 9, 2026, the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Food and Nutrition Administration (FNA) published the direct final rule with comment period, [Simplified Geographic Preference Procurement in Child Nutrition Programs](#) (91 FR 57245) effective November 9, 2026.

The rule does not change policy or implementation — it simply clarifies existing requirements to make the geographic preference option easier to understand and use across the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, Special Milk Program for Children, Child and Adult Care Food Program, and Summer Food Service Program, collectively known as USDA’s Child Nutrition Programs. This rule also supports [USDA’s Harvest to Hallways Initiative](#) to improve school meals and strengthen the connection between American agriculture and America’s children.

FNA will follow up soon with a memorandum that provides information about the direct final rule to Child Nutrition Program Regional Offices and State Agency Directors.



On-Demand CACFP Halftime: Thirty on Thursdays Webinar “Using the Nutrition Facts Label in the Child and Adult Care Food Program”

USDA’s Team Nutrition is excited to announce the release of a new, on-demand Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Halftime Thirty on Thursdays webinar and the related CACFP meal pattern training slides and worksheet titled Using the Nutrition Facts Label in the Child and Adult Care Food Program.

The on-demand webinar, training slides, and worksheet support CACFP operators in choosing foods that meet current CACFP meal pattern requirements and demonstrate how these standards align with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2025–2030 and the accompanying Real Food Pyramid. These resources explain how to use the Nutrition Facts label to check serving sizes, added sugars, and sodium, so program operators can select cereals, yogurts, and other foods that meet CACFP meal pattern requirements. The webinar also includes a frequently asked questions section addressing common questions related to Using the Nutrition Facts label in the CACFP.

Visit the [Using the Nutrition Facts Label in the CACFP](#) webpage to get the training worksheet, recorded webinar, and training slides. The National CACFP Association (NCA) is offering the opportunity to submit and track this training for continuing education credits. Additional information on this opportunity is available on [NCA’s website](#).

Promoting Real Food in Child Nutrition Programs

USDA’s Team Nutrition is pleased to announce the release of nutrition education and training resources designed to help Child Nutrition Program operators to promote the clear, common-sense message of the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2025-2030*: Eat real food. These resources focus on eating whole, nutrient-dense foods. These foods include protein foods, dairy, healthy fats, vegetables, fruits, and whole grains. Additionally, it highlights the importance of limiting the intake of highly processed foods, added sugars, and refined carbohydrates.

- Are you real food-savvy? Test your knowledge with the [Eat Real Food Web Quiz!](#)
- [Serving Vegetables in the Child and Adult Care Food Program \(CACFP\) Training Worksheet, Recorded Webinar, and Training Slides \(.pptx\)](#)
- Nibbles for Health: Nutrition Newsletters for Parents of Young Children
- [Healthy Meals with the Real Food Pyramid \(.pdf\)](#)
- [Developing a Taste for Less Sodium \(.pdf\)](#)
- [Limiting Added Sugars for Healthier Habits \(.pdf\)](#)
- [Prioritize Protein Foods \(.pdf\)](#)

Professional Development & Training

Training Opportunities

Many opportunities for learning are available to CACFP sponsors. Go to <https://cnw.ksde.gov>, Training, CNW Calendar to access the schedule of live classes with dates, times, and links or registration information. Upcoming trainings include:

- **Is This Meal Reimbursable? CACFP** on October 20 from 1-3 p.m.
- **Food Safety Basics** on October 21 from 2-5 p.m.
- **CACFP Administrative Review Training** on October 27 from 1-2 p.m.
- **CACFP Jump Start for Centers (in-person)** on October 28 in Wichita
- **Food Service Fund Fundamentals** on November 4 from 2-3 p.m.



On-demand training is offered 24/7 on the [KSDE Training Portal](#). Detailed instructions on creating an account are available on the [CNW website](#) under Training, [How to Create Online Account](#). On-demand training is also available on the Institute of Child Nutrition's (ICN) [iLearn](#) platform.

If you would like to schedule an in-service, culinary coach session, or have questions about professional development, contact Holly Steinlage at holly.steinlage@ksde.gov.

Culinary Coaches Training Program

This training opportunity allows sponsors to request in-person, hands-on culinary training conducted at their site. **Sponsors can choose from five training topics: Critical Culinary Skills, Knife Basics, Cooking Basics, and Baking Basics: Quick Breads or Yeast Breads.** The sessions are led by trained culinary coaches and focus on developing culinary skills that will better enable child nutrition program sponsors to prepare scratch and speed scratch recipes. If interested in scheduling a culinary coach session, please contact Holly Steinlage at holly.steinlage@ksde.gov.

REQUIRED Training: CACFP Annual Administrative Training

At least one representative from each sponsor must complete CACFP Annual Administrative Training annually. Sponsors who were unable to attend a live virtual session must take the training online. The training is now available on the [KSDE Training Portal](#) under K12 Staff, Child Nutrition & Wellness: CACFP.

Is This Meal Reimbursable? CACFP – October 20

This training will provide participants practice identifying reimbursable CACFP meals and snacks. It will be held on October 20 from 1-3 p.m. The training link is available on the [CNW Calendar](#).

CACFP Administrative Review Training – October 27

This training is recommended for sponsors who will have a CACFP Administrative Review conducted by KSDE in PY 2026-27. The review process, best practices, resources, and frequently asked questions will be covered. It will be held on October 27 from 1 to 3 p.m., and the link is available on the [CNW Calendar](#).

CACFP Jump Start for Centers (in-person) – October 28

Join KSDE Child Nutrition & Wellness for this free six-hour training on October 28 in Wichita.

- **The Business of CACFP** will be held from **9 a.m. to 12 p.m.** and provide information on enrollment and income eligibility forms, meal counts, and claims.
- **Meal Planning for CACFP** will be held from **1 to 4 p.m.** and provide information on recordkeeping requirements for menu planning and meal documentation. Individuals can register for the morning, afternoon, or both sessions.

Both sessions are recommended for authorized representatives of centers and support staff who provide assistance to the authorized representative. To register, contact Pam Rosebaugh at Pam.Rosebaugh@ksde.gov.

Food Service Fund Fundamentals – November 4

This training will provide an introductory overview of how to manage a child nutrition program food service fund, covering topics such as revenue requirements, allowable costs, and financial recordkeeping. It will be held on November 4 from 2 to 3 p.m. The training link is available on the [CNW Calendar](#).



If you have questions or need technical assistance, please contact your child nutrition consultant or call the Child Nutrition & Wellness office at (785) 296-2276.



For more information, contact:

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