

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

NATIONAL SCHOOL

3E'S OF HEALTHY LIVING
EDUCATION, EXERCISE AND EATING RIGHT *Lunch Program*

March 1, 2021

Embedded attachments with this issue

Refer to the COVID Page for Updates

Your Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) newsletter has returned, but [SquareMeals.org/CVNSLP](https://www.squaremeals.org/cvnslp) will still be your source for all COVID-19-related regulatory information. The most current information regarding program operations that has been modified due to COVID-19 will continue to be found on our Coronavirus page to ensure that TDA shares updates from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) in a way that is timely and consistent.



[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

2021 School Breakfast Week

School Breakfast Week (SBW) begins next week on **March 8th!** Promotional items ordered online such as cafeteria posters, participation charts, stickers, floor decals and tri-a-rama ceiling display systems should be arriving or have arrived at the location address provided at the time of ordering. Make sure your school's front office knows you are expecting packages. These materials were available on a first come first serve basis, so later orders may not be filled in full.

If you missed the order deadline, you can download and print all of the materials by visiting [SquareMeals.org/SBW](https://www.squaremeals.org/SBW). Additional digital SBW materials are also available on our website including website graphics, social media posts, and even zoom backgrounds. Thank you for partnering with the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) and encouraging students to *Blast Off with a Healthy School Breakfast!* Don't forget to share your experience with pictures of what your school is doing to celebrate at #TXSBW.

Policy Updates

2020-2021 School Data Released

TDA must, on an annual basis, publish a list of schools participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) in which at least one-half of the children enrolled are certified eligible for free or reduced-price meals. The report for 2020-2021, based on February 2020 claims data, has been posted to SquareMeals in the following locations:

<http://www.squaremeals.org/Programs/ChildandAdultCareFoodProgram/CACFPAdministrationamp:Forms.aspx>

<http://www.squaremeals.org/Programs/SummerFeedingPrograms/SummerFeedingAdministrationamp:Forms.aspx>



New Emergency or Sole Source Purchase Process

We are excited to announce a new and consolidated process for requesting approval of an Emergency or Sole Source Purchase. All F&N Contracting Entities (CE) who are required to receive approval on these non-competitive purchases can do so by submitting a JotForm. Instructions below are incorporated within the form.

How does a CE submit an emergency or a sole source purchase request to TDA for approval?

- Go to www.squaremeals.org. On the right side of the landing page, you will see section identifying the various Nutrition Assistance Programs.
- Click on the Food Program that you are operating.
- Click the link in the gold box titled "Emergency and Sole Source Request" to submit a request.
- The link will open a jot form and allow the CE to upload documentation and submit the information for the request.

Items to remember:

- When submitting the form please be mindful to **provide a complete description of the circumstances** that have occurred to justify the purchase request.
- **Be specific** on the specification (what needs to be purchased) and the **total cost or range of cost** based on estimates to support the price is reasonable.
- F&N cannot approve an **open ended request**.
- If TDA requires additional information to approve the request, an email will be sent to the person who submitted the JotForm.

The Emergency Procurement JotForm link can be accessed [here](#).

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Nutrition Service recently updated its Civil Rights webpage resulting in changes to the internal hyperlinks within the Nondiscrimination Statement (NDS) as well as the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form. As a result, the full NDS must be updated to reflect the correct website hyperlinks. No other changes have been made to the NDS. If you have not done so already, please update the electronic versions of the NDS with the English and/or Spanish versions.. Any printed materials that include the full NDS should be updated prior to the next revision or scheduled printing. Additional information, including downloadable WORD file with the NDS, is available on [TDA's website](#).

Texas Farm Fresh Initiative

Registration Now Open for the 2021 Spring Farm Fresh Challenge

All program operators are invited to participate in a special spring Farm Fresh Challenge during April 2021. Operators that meet the Eat Local, Teach Local, and Be Social parameters can get access to new resources and earn recognition for bringing local foods to meals for kids. Whether you are operating digitally or in person this spring, please visit [Squaremeals.org/FarmFreshChallenge](https://squaremeals.org/FarmFreshChallenge) to learn more about how to participate in the Spring Farm Fresh Challenge.



[Register here](#)

Opportunity to be Featured in Farm Fresh Video Series

The TDA Farm Fresh Initiative is seeking school districts and Texas food producers to feature in a video about local purchasing for school meals. The purpose of the video is to demonstrate how producers can strengthen their relationships with child nutrition departments in ways that are beneficial to both the producer and child nutrition. If your district regularly works with a local producer and you would like to share your story with a statewide audience, or if you would like to learn more about this opportunity, please contact FarmFresh@TexasAgriculture.gov by March 15, 2021. For examples of similar projects, watch TDA's *We Made it Happen* videos from [Balch Springs Middle School](#) and [Henderson ISD](#).

Resources

Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs

Team Nutrition has been working behind the scenes to make the Food Buying Guide (FBG) Interactive Web-based Tool and Mobile App even better! User feedback has driven recent updates to the Web-based Tool and Mobile App as part of the ongoing process aimed at improving the FBG.

Users now have the ability to:

- Access their Favorite foods list from the Homepage
- Create folders to organize Recipe Analysis Workbooks (RAW) on the Web-based Tool and view them on the Mobile App



the Web-based Tool*.

Looking for FBG training? Check out the [FBG Training Resources webpage](#) where you will find:

- A training module series hosted through the Institute of Child Nutrition's [eLearning portal](#)
- Four recorded webinars to assist the user in utilizing the innovative features of the tool, including the Exhibit A Grains Tool and the FBG Calculator.

New Resources on TDA Online Training Page

The Verification of Eligibility in NSLP & SBP web-based training module is complete and has been posted on SquareMeals.org. This module explains the duties and responsibilities of the Verifying Official as part of processing Free & Reduced-price Meal applications. It will provide .5 hours of Professional Standards Credit.

Information for CE's Contracting with Vended Meals/Catering Companies for the further processing of USDA Foods" has been posted to Squaremeals.org\Online Training\USDA foods. This resource provides guidance to those CEs who contract with other entities for the further processing of USDA Foods with vended meal service and catering services.

2021/2022 CACFP Input Workgroup – Applications Open March 1, 2021

Applications for the 2021/2022 CACFP Input Group are now open. Every other month, Input Workgroup members meet virtually to gather input and discuss the current challenges and opportunities for CACFP in Texas. The input and feedback from these meetings help guide TDA as we work to provide the resources and trainings CACFP CEs need to successfully operate the CACFP in Texas. Since its inception, the collaboration between Input Workgroup members and TDA has yielded many tangible results not least of which is increased understanding between TDA and CACFP sponsors. If selected, Workgroup Members should be prepared to represent the perspective of their CACFP colleagues with TDA.

Additional information and the Input Workgroup application for membership can be found at [SquareMeals.org/CACFPWorkgroup](#). The application for membership is also available in the Applications section of the Texas Unified Nutrition Programs System (TX-UNPS) under Download Forms (CACFP-106).. Applications are due **Friday, April 23, 2021**. Membership selection is based on criteria such as sponsorship size, location, sponsor type, and response to the application questions. TDA's goal is to ensure that the group represents a broad and diverse range of CACFP sponsors and perspectives.

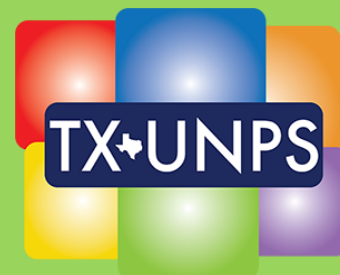
Important Reminders

Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) Reporting

The CEP Report is due in TX-UNPS on March 20, 2021. Please note that March 20th is a Saturday; however, TX-UNPS is available 24/7. The Texas Department of Agriculture **is not** granting due date extensions.

The TX-UNPS CEP Site Eligibility For School Year 2020-2021 will be accessible on **March 1, 2021**. All CEs must complete the CEP Site Eligibility For School Year 2020-21 (commonly called the CEP List) in TX-UNPS. The CEP list reporting screen in TX-UNPS can be found by first navigating to the [Applications tab](#). Once in the Applications tab, select [Community Eligibility Provision](#). Select [Add](#) under the Action column for School year 2020-2021 located within the CEP Site List.

Please ensure accurate data entry, as the data will have a direct impact on claims for those that participate in CEP. The data entered is also reported to USDA and to the public.



For additional information on the CEP Report, see the *Administrator's Reference Manual (ARM)*, Section 5, *Special Provision Options*.

Financial Report

The NSLP Financial Report is due **March 15, 2021**. This report must be completed by Contracting Entities (CEs) who participate in the NSLP, School Breakfast Programs (SBP), School Milk Program (SMP) or At-Risk CACFP programs and must be completed by an authorized representative. The NSLP Financial Report will not be available in TX-UNPS. An email with a jot form link for the Preparing for the Financial Report form has been sent to the Child Nutrition Director on the SNP Application.

The Preparing for the Financial Report form has been provided to prepare the CE in completion of the NSLP Financial Report. It contains a list of documents, terminology, object codes, and additional pertinent information related to the NSLP Financial Report.

Once the CE has completed review of this form and gathered the necessary documents, the CE will submit and will be directed to the NSLP Financial Report jot form.

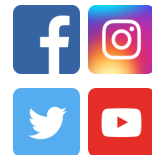
CEs may also find PDF copies of the Preparing for the Financial Report, NSLP Financial Report, and Excessive Fund Balance Plan, the recording on the [NSLP Financial Report training](#), and slide deck for the training presentation located on SquareMeals.

CEs may refer to Section 16 of the *Administrative Reference Manual (ARM)* on SquareMeals for compliance guidance on financial systems information.

All other inquiries regarding the NSLP Financial Report may be sent to School.Operations@TexasAgriculture.gov.



TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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