TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

NATIONAL SCHOOL Lunch Program

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

September 2026 Monthly Newsletter

Register for the September School Call!

The **Monthly School Call meetings will return to Zoom**, starting this month! Only a single registration will be required to join the ongoing monthly School Call series. Once registered, simply click the link up to 15 minutes before the call and be prepared to receive TDA updates and ask questions.

The invitation link for each month will be available on:

• The **SquareMeals homepage** under "**Quick Links**"

• The **Program Year Calendar page** under the **September table**

• The **NSLP Resources page** on SquareMeals under the "**Webinars**" section towards the bottom of the page.

Click here to **register for the Monthly School Call series**. This is a one-time registration and will allow you to join the School Calls every month.

Resources for Procuring Local Foods in School Year 2026-2027

USDA Food and Nutrition Administration (FNA) is pleased to announce the release of memo TA 01-2026, Resources for Procuring Local Foods in School Year 2026-2027, located on this **website**.

This memo reminds schools, sponsors, and institutions participating in any USDA Child Nutrition Program (CNP) of the various resources available to help CNP operators procure local foods.

This initiative is part of a new Harvest to Hallways campaign and supports USDA's commitment to supporting local food procurement and efforts to Make America Healthy Again.

Midweek Webinar Series – New Session Added!

USDA Foods are a vital part of your program - but are you reporting them correctly? In this session, we will show you the key steps for reporting non-monetary USDA Foods in your district's financial records, so everything is accurate, clear, and compliant.

Training Best Practices: Common Pitfalls and How to Avoid Them
October 7, 2026 | 2 p.m. – 3 p.m. (Central Time) via Microsoft Teams Webinar

Register Here

2027 Farm Fresh Culinary Workshop Application

TDA is once again partnering with The Culinary Institute of America to bring hands-on training to school nutrition professionals across Texas. This hands-on workshop began last school year and was a great success; we are bringing it back for another round. This training builds real kitchen skills - from knife technique to roasting, pickling, and flavor-building with fresh, local ingredients - so your team can serve meals that students enjoy and that meet USDA standards! Be prepared for submission applications to go live this month! To learn more, please visit **SquareMeals**!

Final Rule: Simplified Geographic Preference Procurement in Child Nutrition Programs

USDA recently published the Direct Final Rule: Simplified Geographic Preference Procurement in Child Nutrition Programs, which provides clarifying guidance related to local procurement. The rule does not change current policy; rather, it clarifies existing regulations to include implementation guidance related to local procurement and geographic preference previously issued via policy memos.

Click the headline title to view the **full article**.

Attachment B Uploads

Attachment B Uploads opened in TX-UNPS on July 1, 2026, and close on October 31, 2026.

Click here to view the **full article**.

Contact and Site Information in TX-UNPS

School food authorities (SFAs) are responsible for ensuring that the information in the Application module in TX-UNPS is accurate and current.

SFAs should review and update contact information, program participation details, and other data as changes occur.

It is crucial that the information is correct for the Administrative Review (AR) and Procurement Review (PR).

Attachment B, Meal Count/Collection Procedures

SFAs must update their Attachment B, Meal Count/Collection Procedures in TX-UNPS to include meal counting and collection procedures for points of service (POS) for all sites operating the programs. If meal counting is conducted outside of the POS (i.e., field trips, breakfast in the classroom), the SFA must describe the process in its Attachment B.

USDA Foods Ordering Updates

September's important USDA Foods updates for schools include FFAVORS login, material shortfalls, and Squaremeals resources, along with ESC support.

Make sure to attend the September FDP Webinar for your region.

Sessions will be via TEAMS for each servicing TDA Contracted Warehouse region:

• El Pasoans Fighting Hunger: Sept. 24, 2026, at 9 a.m. - 10 a.m.

• US Foods: Sept. 22, 2026, at 2 p.m. - 3p.m.

• San Antonio Food Bank: Sept. 24, 2026, at 2 p.m. - 3 p.m.

• Gold Star Foods: Sept. 22, 2026, at 10 a.m. - 11 a.m.

Coming Soon! Be on the lookout for the October DoD Fresh Program Opt-In Link for PY28 and the USDA Foods Feedback Survey to let TDA know what products you like.

Click the headline title to view the **full article.**

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
COMMISSIONER SID MILLER

Fraud Hotline: 1-866-5-FRAUD-4 or 1-866-537-2834 | P.O. Box 12847 | Austin, TX 78711
Toll Free: (877) TEX-MEAL | For the hearing impaired: (800) 735-2989 (TTY)

This product was funded by USDA. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Manage your preferences | Opt Out using TrueRemove™
Got this as a forward? Sign up to receive our future emails.
View this email online.

1700 North Congress 11th Floor | Austin, TX 78701 US

This email was sent to .
To continue receiving our emails, add us to your address book.

Subscribe to our email list.