

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE



NATIONAL SCHOOL

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

Lunch Program

September 2025 Monthly Newsletter

National School Lunch Week 2025

National School Lunch Week 2025 showcases the theme “**Texas Taste Tour: Your School Lunch Passport!**” Visit [SquareMeals](#) for digital resources like our NSLW poster, participation chart, DIY Celebration Kits, and more! Don't forget to [let us know](#) if you'd be interested in a potential visit from TDA during your NSLW celebrations!

Pledge for the Farm Fresh Challenge now!

The Farm Fresh Challenge gives NSLP and CACFP operators the chance to show their dedication to serving Texas-grown and produced foods to their students throughout the month of October. Organizations who achieve set goals earn awards for serving Texas products, teaching students about Texas agriculture, and sharing their dedication on social media. Learn more about the Farm Fresh Challenge [here](#). [Pledge to participate](#) in the 2025 Farm Fresh Challenge now!

Help Us Recruit MyPlate Ambassadors!

The [MyPlate Ambassadors program](#) trains high school students to promote MyPlate education in Texas. Students can choose the MyPlate Influencer track and work on a nutrition change project in their school or community, or the MyPlate Educator track, where they teach younger students about MyPlate and healthy eating habits. Please encourage students who are interested in health, wellness, or community leadership to apply.

USDA Foods Ordering Updates

School Year 2025-2026

- Please be sure to attend the USDA Foods FDP Sessions. TDA FDP Regions for El Paso and San Antonio: Tuesday, September 23, 2025. US Foods and Gold Star Foods Regions: Thursday, September 25, 2025
- Mark your calendars that the PY27 DoD Fresh Program Opt-In Form will become available in October.
- USDA did not receive vendor bids for Turkey Roast item 100125. As result, no turkey roasts are arriving at any of the TDA Contracted Warehouse prior to January 15, 2026. A survey was sent out to all impacted recipient agencies to collect feedback with preference to keep or cancel the requested cases. USDA is going back out for the January solicitation to attempt procurement of this item for the remainder of PY26.
- USDA recently moved some sales orders back to later delivery periods for ground beef item 100158, beef patties item 110711, canned apple slices item 100206, and frozen strawberry cups item 100256. USDA is actively substituting some frozen strawberry cups to frozen diced peach cups per responses by impacted recipient agencies.
- Processing Recipient Agencies – Check your tracking systems, K-12 and ProcessorLink. Processors have completed loading PY26 pounds into their respective tracking systems. Please validate.
- Make sure your team logs into WBSCM to maintain active status. Please check your user accounts in WBSCM to ensure that appropriate SFA staff are active, have the correct roles assigned, and have up-to-date email addresses.
- Requests for USDA Foods can be tracked using the WBSCM Requisition Status Report. Pricing fluctuations will continue until items reach "Purchased" status.
- If you opted into the DoD Fresh Fruit and Vegetable program, this will be displayed on your WBSCM Entitlement/Bonus Summary report. Funds are loaded into FFAVORS. Unspent values in WBSCM cannot be moved to increase DoD Fresh program funds. Per USDA guidelines, participants must complete receipts in FFAVORS for each delivery within 2 business days of the delivery date. If there is a discrepancy, contact your Dept. Of Defense Support Representative for resolution.
- TDA monitors the monthly utilization of DoD funds in FFAVORS to ensure proper use of entitlements. To maximize your DoD entitlement, SFAs should spend, at a minimum, 10% of their funds per month. SFAs who have not been utilizing funds may risk redistribution.
- Refer to the Resources page on www.squaremeals.org, Food Distribution Program for NSLP, for helpful information regarding ordering USDA Foods. Round 2 Recap for direct delivery is posted on the Food Distribution for NSLP under the Resources Link

For questions regarding USDA Foods, please contact your respective Education Service Center Child Nutrition representative(s) for guidance, training, and technical assistance in WBSCM.

[Final Rule Resource Survey](#)

Visit [USDA](#) for more information on the Final Rule and upcoming changes. Let us know what kind of resources would best support you in implementing these new meal standards – [Click here!](#)

[Join us for the September "TANS Talk!"](#)

Mark your calendar for **Thursday, September 11 from 1 p.m. - 2 p.m. (CDT)!**

TANS Talk is an office hours session that will allow CEs to review TANS related updates. We are excited to share all of the new updates about this platform and answer any questions.

How to Participate in TANS Talk:

Use this **TANS Talk Feedback Form** to submit any TANS questions you would like to see reviewed during the call. Please note that the *Feedback Form will close on Wednesday, September 10 at 5 p.m. (CDT)* to give our team time to prepare for the meeting. Visit the **TANS homepage** and **Resources page** for access to past TANS Talks, updates, trainings, and more.

Requirement to Track Non-Domestic Food Purchases

School food authorities (SFAs) are required to track all non-domestic commercial food items, including commercial food exceptions. The SFA must develop a methodology to track these food items to ensure compliance. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) developed a tracking tool, but this specific tool is not required.

The USDA tracking tool can found **here**.

For more information regarding Buy American and the tracking requirements, please visit www.squaremeals.org and view the Buy American Webinar recorded in May 2025.

Attachment B Upload Module in TX-UNPS

The Attachment B Upload module in TX-UNPS opened on July 1, 2025 and closes on October 31, 2025.

SFAs must upload their template school meal application, application instructions, and template eligibility letters.

SFAs that must complete the Attachment B Upload module are:

- SFAs that operate Standard Counting and Claiming (free, reduced, paid).
- SFAs that operate Universal Free.
- SFAs that are operating Provision 2 in the base year.
- SFAs that operate CEP or Provision 2 in some but not all schools in their district.
- RCCIs with day students.

SFAs that do not need to complete the Attachment B Upload module are:

- SFAs that are CEP district-wide.
 - SFAs that are Provision 2 not in the base year district-wide.
 - RCCIs without day students.
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[RELEASE - Multiple Sections of the Administrator's Reference Manual \(ARM\)](#)

Several revised Administrator's Reference Manual (ARM) sections have been posted and released as follows. Most updates were made to incorporate elements of the final rule, Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent With the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, and to incorporate several recently released USDA policy memos. Further general updates were made to clarify various existing ARM guidance.

Policy plans to post a pre-recorded webinar explaining the updates in this release soon and will post in on the Policy page of www.SquareMeals.org.

Click the **headline title** to [learn more](#).

[Increase to the Formal Procurement Threshold](#)

On September 1, 2025, in accordance with Texas Senate Bill 1173, which raises the formal procurement threshold for school districts from \$50,000 to \$100,000, TDA is also raising the formal procurement threshold to \$100,000 for all nutrition and household programs. As such, beginning September 1, any single transaction over \$10,000 but below \$100,000 will require the small purchase method, and transactions of \$100,000 and over will require formal procurement. TDA is in the process of updating these thresholds in all program handbooks.

[RELEASE: PY 2025-2026 Meal Reimbursement Rates](#)

Program Year 2025-2026 meal reimbursement rates for the School Nutrition Programs and Child and Adult Care Food Program, including the cash-in-value value of USDA Foods and NSLP Rate of Assistance, have been published on the applicable programs' SquareMeals reimbursement rate pages.



TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
COMMISSIONER SID MILLER



square meals

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