



Tips for Successful Summer Meal Sponsors

Summer meal sponsors are the key to ensuring that the Nation's children and families do not face a summer of hunger. As sponsors of the Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) or National School Lunch Program (NSLP) Seamless Summer Option (SSO), you serve at the frontline in our battle to fight childhood hunger during the summer.

Your summer meals program benefits not only your organization, but your community as well. To aid in your efforts this summer, below are simple steps to expand participation in your program. USDA also has many resources that can help. By working together, we can ensure that no child is hungry this summer!

Program Basics

When starting a summer meal program, the first step is to understand the program requirements. Below are tips and resources to help you comply with the Federal requirements so you can be sure to receive the full reimbursement for the meals you serve. Your State agency can also provide training and technical assistance to ensure your success.

1. Provide appropriate training to supervisory staff and volunteers to ensure program requirements are understood. Be sure everyone understands that all children who come to your open sites have equal access to services and facilities.
2. Monitor all your sites throughout the summer. For tips on monitoring and technical assistance, see <http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/MonitorsGuide.pdf>.
3. Regularly confirm that all site staff understands the proper way to count and record meals everywhere they are provided. Other tips on meal service operations are available at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Summer/library/Meals.pdf>.
4. Provide copies of the USDA Site Supervisor's Guide in both [English](#) and [Spanish](#) to ensure all Program requirements are met and your sites are reimbursed for every meal you serve. The Guides are available at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/summer/library/handbooks.html>.

Highlight Your Program

5. Contact schools and afterschool programs in your community and ask them to work with you to inform families about the locations of your sites or to serve as a site. Provide them materials on sites serving children in their area and request they distribute these to families and children before the school year ends.



6. Share USDA's free Public Service Announcements with your local radio stations. PSAs, available at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/e-updates/how-play-summer-food-psas-your-local-radio-station>, provide free advertising for your sites.
7. Distribute banners to all your sites and ask them to display them in strategic locations to publicize to the community that meal service sites are open. Check with your State agency and local anti-hunger advocacy groups for free banners.
8. Ask elected leaders in your community and State to highlight your program in the media or State newsletters. This will give you free press and ensure that more families know summer meals are available for their children.
9. Coordinate with other local agencies and organizations interested in the health and safety of low-income children. Creative partnerships can result in new advertising resources and funding sources. For more tips on developing partnerships in your community, see <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Summer/library/Partners.pdf>.
10. Overcome transportation challenges in rural communities with creative and innovative partnerships. Mobile feeding models can be strategic in the location of sites to maximize participation. For more tips for rural programs, see http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Summer/library/Rural_Sites.pdf.
11. Explain your program to tenants, security staff, and other clients of the facilities where your sites are located, so they can direct children to the areas where meals are served.

Keep Them Coming Back

12. Announce to children, at each meal service, the time and location of the next available meal service. Have a 'bring-a-buddy' program at your sites. Tell children in attendance that they will be recognized if they bring a friend with them the next day.
13. Ask the children at your sites how they like their meal. Adjust menus to serve more popular meals, to keep the kids coming back. For tips on serving nutritious summer meals, see <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Summer/library/Nutrition.pdf>.
14. Offer activities at the meal sites to keep children engaged and excited to come back. Get creative; the activities do not have to cost you anything! If your site serves multiple age groups, ask the older teens to teach the younger children a sport. Ask the local fire or police department to provide a safety demonstration or set up a cooking lesson with a community college or local chef. For more creative ideas, see the Innovative Strategies below.
15. Engage parents and grandparents. Inform them about the meals and the enrichment that children receive at your sites. Invite them to volunteer or to help promote summer meals to their neighbors. Recruit more volunteers through [United We Serve](#) or [AmeriCorps Vista](#).



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More USDA Resources

The USDA, Food and Nutrition Service has many resources to assist sponsors in administering USDA summer meals programs. Some current resources include:

- **Summer Food Rocks!** Download and distribute Program flyers in your community in both [English](#) and [Spanish](#).
- **National Hunger Hotline.** Make sure your State agency has registered all of your sites with the National Hunger Hotline by visiting <http://www.whyhunger.org/findfood>. Families use the hotline to find meal sites.

Also team up with call centers, like 2-1-1, in your State. 2-1-1 provides free and confidential information and referrals related to public services with food, housing, employment, health care, counseling and more. Ask them to include your site as a resource for families in your area. Learn more about your local 2-1-1 by checking out <http://www.211.org>.

- **USDA Guidance.** USDA handbooks for sponsors, monitors, and site supervisors (in English and Spanish) provide detailed guidance on program administration. Each handbook provides clear instruction at every level and is updated annually to reflect policy and program changes. The handbooks are available at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/summer/library/handbooks.html>.

* Be sure to subscribe to receive email updates whenever USDA issues new policy or resources related to Summer Meals. To subscribe, go to <https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/USFNS/subscriber/new?pop=t>.

- **Innovative Strategies.** Creative ideas for recruiting sites, increasing attendance at sites, and ensuring a successful summer program are available at http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/summer/states/best_practices.html.



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Strategies to Help Sponsors:

- Tips for Success – Recruiting Sites and Sponsors
- FNS SFSP Sponsor Page :
 - o <http://www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/sfsp-faqs-about-sponsors-0>
 - o http://frac.org/newsite/wp-content/uploads/2010/04/simplified_outreach_brochure.pdf
 - o <http://www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/sfsp-faqs-about-sponsors>
 - o <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1e5EtWsvfUA>
 - o <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W6UibtgsVUI>
 - o <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lzmzsBNhtRM>
 - o http://frac.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/04/sfsp_outreach_tips.pdf



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FRAC LETTER TO POTENTIAL SPONSORS

Summer Food Service Program

Feeding children during the summer has never been easier or more important

Dear **Potential Sponsor**:

Summer may seem a long way off, but now is the time to think about using the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) to serve healthy snacks and meals to children in your program. There are a number of improvements to SFSP making it easier for schools, local government agencies, and private nonprofit organizations to operate (commonly called “sponsor”) SFSP and feed children during the summer months.

- CACFP institutions may apply for SFSP using a simplified application process that eliminates the requirement to demonstrate financial and administrative capabilities for program operation.
- Sponsors sign a permanent agreement with the state SFSP agency.
- Private nonprofit sponsors can operate under the same rules as all other sponsors – the cap on the number of sites and children has been removed.
- Sponsors are no longer required to keep records and accounts separately for administrative and operating costs. Instead, sponsors simply follow a “meals times rates” formula that allows them to claim the maximum reimbursement. This change in accounting procedures dramatically reduces the paperwork involved in operating Summer Food. Now you can focus on what really matters, providing meals to hungry children.

The funding your program can receive adds up. A summer program serving both breakfast and lunch to 50 children for eight weeks could receive approximately \$10,160 over the course of the summer.



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SFSP provides reimbursement for meals served to children at sites throughout the community, such as schools, summer programs, parks, swimming pools, churches, apartment complexes, or anywhere children congregate. Most sites can serve up to two meals per day, and camps and sites serving predominantly migrant children are eligible to provide up to three meals per day.

A site qualifies either as an open or an enrolled site. An open site is located in a low-income area where 50 percent or more of the children are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals. The site is then open to all the children in the community (open restricted sites are open sites that limit or restrict participation for reasons of safety, security, or control). An enrolled site only provides meals to children enrolled in the program. An enrolled site qualifies if it is located in a low-income area or if at least half of the children enrolled in the program are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals.

If you have considered participating in SFSP in the past, recent changes make it easier to feed children during the summer. Start offering meals this summer. To participate in SFSP, contact **the state child nutrition agency at (000) 000-0000**. For additional information, **contact or visit (website)**.

Sincerely,

Name
Organization

SPONSOR CHECK LIST



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These are some of the forms needed to complete SFSP application. These needs may change; therefore remember to always check the online application page for current requirements.

- Pre-Application (for new sponsors only)
- Certificate of Authority (Fax Attn: SFSP to 501-682-2334) send immediately after Pre-Application approval*
- Tax Identification Number (TIN)
- Board Members Information (Name/Address/Birthdate)
- Press Release
- W9*
- Executive Disclosure Form*
- Direct Deposit Form*
- Copy of Voided Check
- Copy of Health and Safety Certification
- Copy of IRS Tax Exempt Letter (churches are exempt)
- Copy of Articles of Incorporation (churches are exempt)

*Copies of forms can be found at:

<https://dhs.arkansas.gov/DCCECE/SNP/PrintDocuments.aspx>

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