



upLIFT Summer Edition: Utilizing USDA Foods to Your Advantage for Summer!

May 20, 2025

1:30 PM - 2:00 PM

Professional Standards Learning Codes: 1170



Meet Your Host



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HEALTH AND NUTRITION SERVICES SPECIALIST

Welcome!



upLIFT was designed specifically for child nutrition professionals like you. It offers resources to help you LEARN about nutrition, get INSPIRED on meal choices for your participants, FEED students healthy meals, and TEACH others in your community about your programs.

You can look forward to materials and monthly webinars featuring unique upLIFT content showcasing Arizona child nutrition professionals, and providing ongoing inspiration throughout the year. This will empower you to upLIFT your programs in your own unique way!

Overview

1. Introduction to USDA Foods
2. Supplementing Your Summer Menu with USDA Foods
3. Planning Tips for Utilizing USDA Foods During the Summer

Introduction to USDA Foods

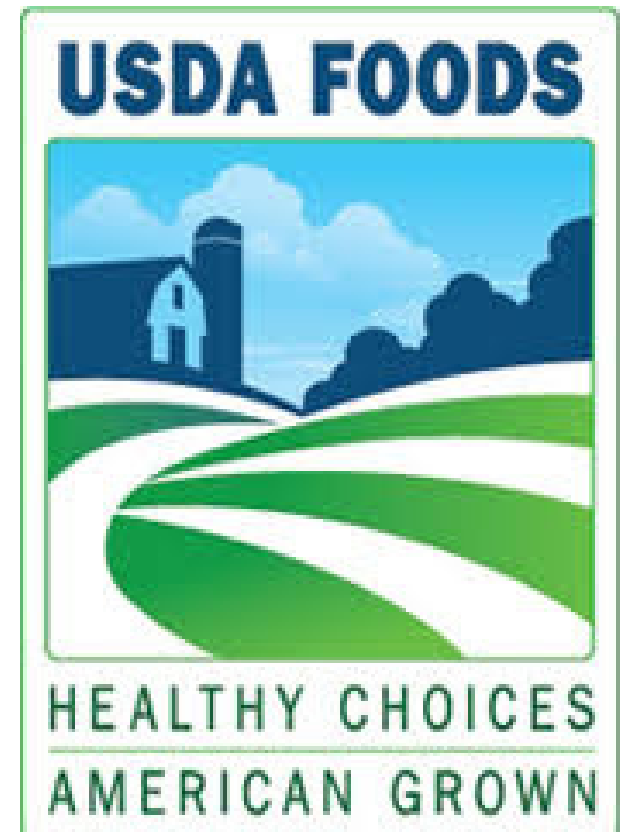
Program Overview

USDA Foods in Schools

Also referred to as "commodities."

This program supports domestic nutrition programs and American agricultural producers by facilitating the purchase of local agricultural products for schools and institutions.

States receive entitlement funds, enabling schools to acquire these products effectively.



USDA Foods Entitlement

USDA Foods Entitlement

USDA Foods in Schools Program

Each year, Recipient Agencies (RAs) receive entitlement funds to purchase USDA Foods and DoD Fresh produce.

The amount of funding allocated to each school is determined by the number of lunches claimed for reimbursement in the NSLP during the previous completed year.

Calculating Entitlement

Number of NSLP lunches served in the last completed program year

X

Current cost per meal (value of donated foods)

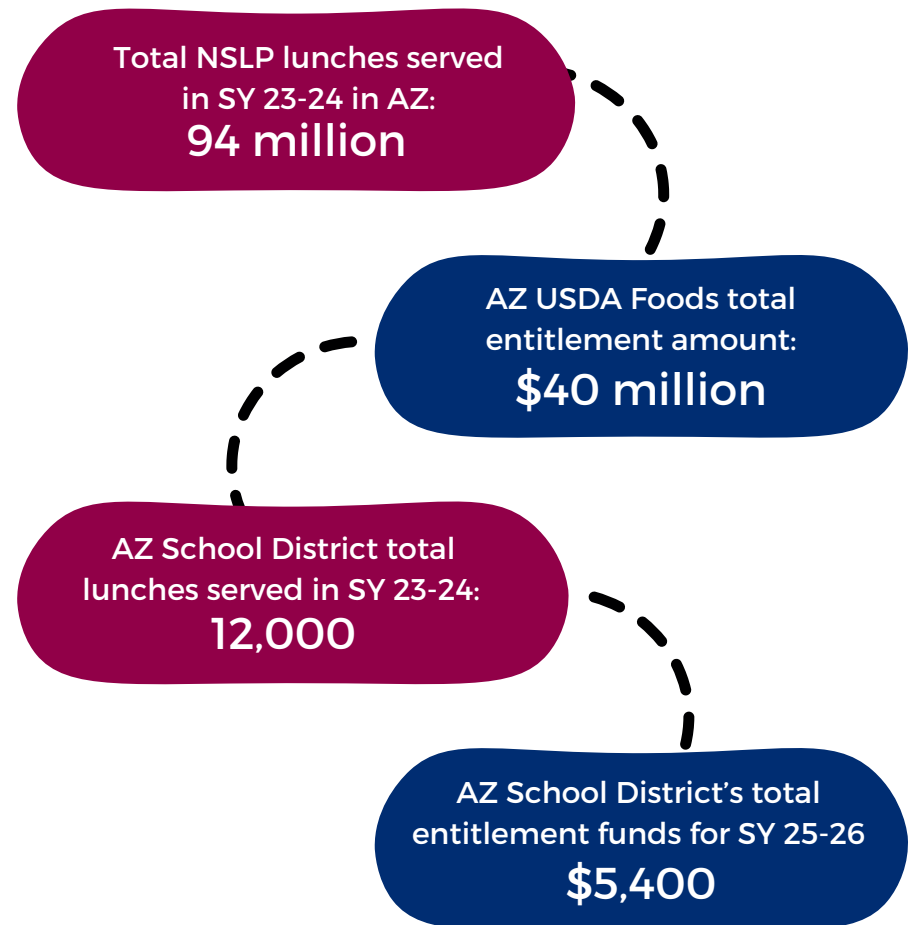
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Entitlement dollars allocated to RAs/states

USDA Foods Entitlement

A Closer Look

Arizona receives entitlement dollars from USDA based on the lunch counts from the latest full school year for each school participating in NSLP. This amount is then multiplied by the current per-meal value. Once Arizona obtains this entitlement amount, each SFA will receive their specific allocation, which is determined by their own lunch count divided by the same current per-meal value.



Planning Entitlement

Entitlement Planning

Once issued entitlement funds, participating RAs may use them to purchase foods in three ways:

01

Direct Delivery/Brown Box*

Cases of a variety of food items (canned, frozen, dry, etc.)

02

Processing*

Raw products purchased in bulk for further processing (e.g. chicken for chicken nuggets)

03

DoD Fresh**

Seasonal fresh fruits and vegetables

*From the USDA Foods Product Catalog (Administrative fees apply)

**No administrative fees apply for these food items

Planning Entitlement

Understanding Planning Options

PRE-ORDERING ACTUAL FOOD ITEMS

Direct Delivery/Brown Box and Processing

- What you order: Cases and bulk food items
- Administrative fees apply

RESERVING FUNDS

DoD Fresh

- What you reserve: Funds from your entitlement for seasonal fresh fruits and vegetables
- No administrative fees

myFOODS
Food & Operations Online Distribution System

User Name:
Password:

☒ Remember Me

[Change Password](#)
[Forgot User Name](#)
[Forgot Password](#)

[ADE School Food Programs](#)

FFAVORS:
Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Order Receipt System



Customer Ordering Manual


Administrative Fees

Additional Fees for Brown Box and Processing

Administrative fees may include:

- Shipping Fees
- Restocking Fees
- Excess Storage Fees
- Diverted Process Foods Fee

Entitlement dollars cannot be used on administrative fees.

 USDA Foods in Schools Program Administrative Fee Structure Effective July 1, 2024	
The following chart outlines the shipping and administrative fees that will be incurred by operators that order brown box and processed bulk product items. The Department of Defense Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (DoD Fresh) does not have any administrative or shipping fees. Shipping fees are in accordance with the operator's method of receipt of brown box and processed bulk products.	
SHIPPING FEE TYPES Brown box and processed end products	RATE PER CASE* effective July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025
Delivered by Shamrock Foods to Operator Prep Site 20 Case Minimum	\$6.64 Payment to Shamrock Foods
Delivered by Shamrock Foods to Operator Warehouse 100 Case Minimum	\$6.39 Payment to Shamrock Foods
Picked up by Operator at Shamrock Foods Warehouse 100 Case Minimum	\$4.14 Payment to Shamrock Foods
Directly Shipped by USDA to Operator 1/3 Truck Minimum	\$0.25 Payment to the Arizona Department of Education
OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE FEE TYPES	RATE PER CASE/UNIT* effective July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025
Shamrock Foods Warehouse Restocking Fee	\$1.50 per case Payment to Shamrock Foods
Shamrock Foods Warehouse Excess Storage Fee	\$1.50 per case Payment to the Arizona Department of Education for inventory held past 45 days
Processing Bulk Product Fee	\$0.02 per pound Payment to the Arizona Department of Education
* Please note, entitlement dollars cannot be used on administrative fees.	
January 2024 Health and Nutrition Services Arizona Department of Education This institute is an equal opportunity provider.	

USDA Foods in Schools Program Administrative Fee Structure*

Catalog Requisition Timeline

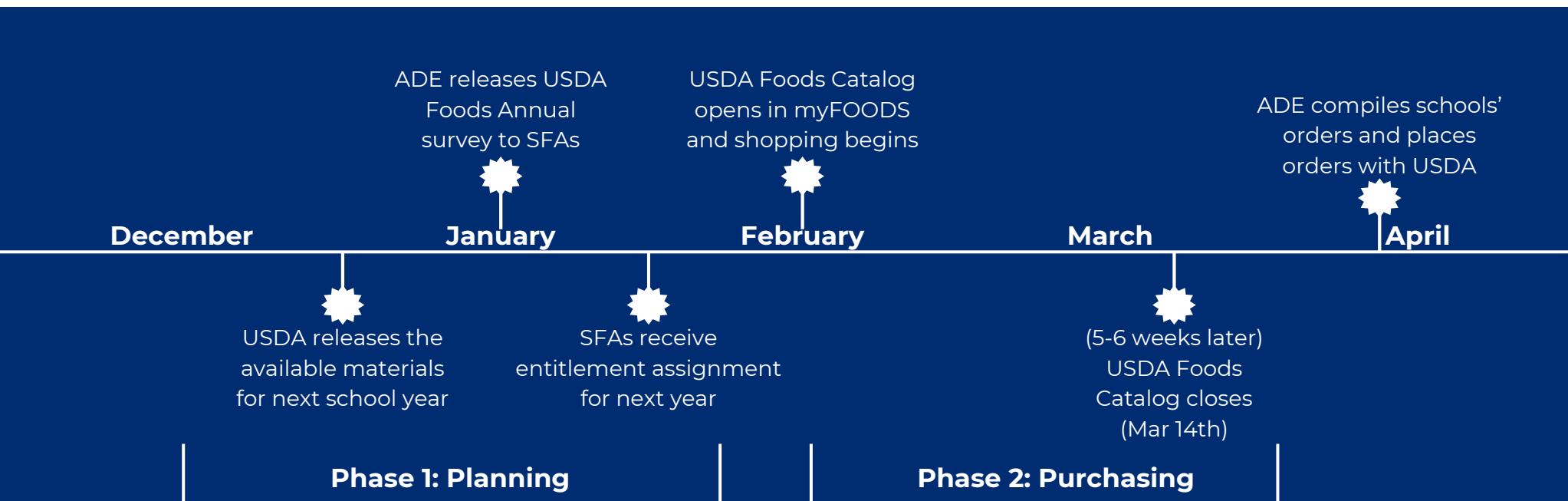
MANAGEMENT OF USDA FOODS ENTITLEMENT FUNDS

Phase 1: Planning

(Mid-December through Late January) Voting on what foods ADE should make available to purchase

Phase 2: Purchasing

(Mid-February through Mid-March) Selecting and scheduling the foods you want to purchase



Fulfillment Timeline

OBTAINING USDA FOODS

Phase 3: Administrative Duties

(Mid-May through Late July) Schools update all pertinent information in myFOODS and work with processors to divert pounds.

Phase 4: Fulfillment

(Early August through May) Schedule items to be delivered to sites within 45 days of arriving in Arizona.



Supplementing Your Summer Menu with USDA Foods

Understanding SSO and SFSP

NSLP Seamless Summer Option (SSO)

Schools involved in the NSLP/SBP can also implement the SSO. Here are some key points to consider:

- **Minimal Internal Monitoring:** The SSO requires less oversight and adheres to the same meal patterns as the NSLP/SBP, eliminating the need to modify menus or regular school-year operations.
- **Meal Reimbursement Rates:** Meals are reimbursed at the free rates for school lunches, breakfasts, and afterschool snacks, which are slightly lower than the SFSP rates.
- **Nourishing Children in Summer:** This option guarantees a smooth transition, ensuring that children continue to have access to nutritious meals throughout the summer.

Understanding SSO and SFSP

Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)

The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) is perfect for those sponsoring enrichment, recreational, or activity programs during the summer.

- The State Agency reimburses sponsors for free meals provided to children, including teenagers up to age 18, at approved meal sites located in low-income areas.
- This program allows sponsors to receive maximum reimbursement rates for the meals served, enabling them to utilize the funds to enhance food programs for children.
- It ensures that all children have access to nutritious meals throughout the summer.

Accessing USDA Foods

Availability of USDA Foods for Summer

School Food Authorities:

- SFAs have the option to utilize both funding sources: NSLP and SFSP DoD funding.
- Schools can use DoD Fresh funds from both NSLP and SFSP in FFAVORS by selecting the appropriate budget source.
- The “Budget Source” refers to the drop-down selection a school makes to indicate which funds will be used for a specific order.

Schools or Community Organizations that do not participate in NSLP will only have access to a single budget source (with an approved SFSP application), while some schools may have access to both (with approved applications for NSLP and SFSP).

Accessing USDA Foods

Availability of USDA Foods for Summer

Community Organizations

- Community Organizations can utilize SFSP DoD Funds exclusively after gaining access to FFAVORS.
- They must be capable of receiving shipments at the Sponsor's physical address and have the capacity to accept commercial food deliveries while adhering to storage guidelines set by health department regulations.

Planning Your Summer Menu with USDA Foods

Using USDA Foods to Supplement Your Menu

- USDA Foods can assist in extending food budgets, fulfilling meal pattern requirements, and adhering to the highest standards of safety and nutrition.
- A variety of healthy food options, such as fruits, vegetables, legumes, whole grains, and lean proteins like meat and poultry, are available through USDA via Brown Box/Direct Delivery and DoD Fresh.
- The selection of foods for summer meal programs is influenced by your staffing and facility capabilities. In reality, any food item could be suitable for the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), and it all begins with the menu, alongside the number of staff available to prepare, serve, transport, and hold the meals.

Planning Your Summer Menu with USDA Foods

Using USDA Foods For Summer Meals

- The majority of “grab ’n go” meals can be made using ingredients from DoD and USDA Brown Box materials.
- Furthermore, by maintaining consistent and clear communication with the DoD contracted provider, pre-packaged items can be acquired. The produce company simply requires time and information to create what may be necessary, allowing DoD funds to assist in purchasing these pre-packaged items.

Brown Box/Direct Delivery

Using Brown Box Inventory for Summer

- The goal of USDA Foods is to keep inventories below six months, so School Food Authorities (SFAs) should aim to utilize all remaining food stored in the warehouse. When planning summer menus, SFAs should incorporate USDA Foods as ingredients for various meal options, including breakfast and lunch.
- As the summer approaches, meal planning should be finalized. Menus should also take into account different serving models, such as parks, non-congregate settings, summer schools, and mobile sites like buses or food trucks. Once these elements are established, it's important to consider the timing for bringing in USDA Foods (from late April to May) to ensure shelves are stocked for summer service.

Accessing USDA Foods

Availability of Surplus for Summer

- ADE temporarily closes the Contracted Warehouse during the summer months to conduct the Year-End Inventory and Reconciliation, beginning in May.
- Surplus will not be available during the summer. However, it will reopen with the start of the new school year, coinciding with the arrival of new orders for the year.

Note: Use of Brown Box items during the summer should be planned so that items are already in school's inventory prior to the end of May, (when warehouses shut down for the year) for use during the summer months.

USDA Foods Available List

USDA Foods Catalog

- The USDA Foods Product Catalog is a resource developed by ADE to help entities with their requisitions for the school year.
- Once the entitlement amounts are allocated for brown box items, processing, and the DoD Fresh set aside, entities can choose the foods they wish to receive and specify their desired delivery times.
- This catalog serves as an excellent tool for planning meals, especially those intended for summer programs.



SCHOOL YEAR 2025-2026

USDA FOODS PRODUCT CATALOG

BROWN BOX AND BULK FOR FURTHER PROCESSING ITEMS

RELEASED FEBRUARY 2025 | ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

DoD Fresh

Using DoD Fresh for Summer

- If the intention is to incorporate DoD Fresh into the Summer Feeding program, allocating additional funding for DoD Fresh would be beneficial.
- For Community Organizations, we recommend establishing an account in FFAVORS to help supplement their produce expenses with SFSP DoD Fresh. Once their FFAVORS account is active, they will need to receive commercial deliveries at the Sponsor's physical address and ensure that they store, prepare, and serve the food safely, in accordance with County Health Services guidelines.

Planning Tips for Utilizing USDA Foods During the Summer

Planning Tips

Using Up Inventory

- In many situations, integrating summer planning with the school year can be challenging. However, as the year draws to a close, opportunities often emerge when ADE releases a variety of Brown Box Materials (Surplus Catalog) and DoD Funding (Single State Bank).
- Schools that capitalize on these chances consistently succeed in stocking up on food supplies for Summer Feeding programs.

Planning Tips

Funding Sources

- In addition, the Department of Defense (DoD) operates from July 1st to June 30th or until funds are exhausted. Consequently, DoD spending continues until either the funds are depleted or the 30th arrives, whichever occurs first.
- On the other hand, SFSP DoD funding is available from June 1st to September 30th or until funds run out. There is some overlap between these two periods, which is beneficial for those who have both accounts set up in FFAVORS (access for NSLP and SFSP).

Best Practice

Food Safety

Food safety practices—practicing good health and hygiene, checking, and documenting food temperatures, and ensuring proper cleaning and sanitizing—are essential to successful SFSP operations in congregate and non-congregate settings.

Resources:

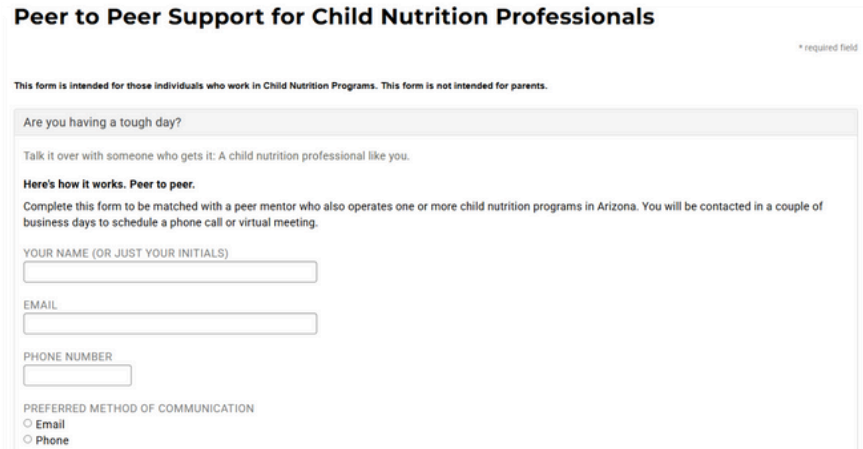
- [ICN Summer Meal Food Safety Training Guide](#)
- [USDA SFSP Nutrition Guide](#)



Peer to Peer Form

Helpful Resources

- The Peer-to-Peer form available on the ADE Website can connect individuals with others who may have valuable best practices to share. Additionally, FANS is always ready to assist! Furthermore, schools can utilize the Peer-to-Peer form on the ADE Website to exchange best practices among themselves.



Peer to Peer Support for Child Nutrition Professionals

* required field

This form is intended for those individuals who work in Child Nutrition Programs. This form is not intended for parents.

Are you having a tough day?

Talk it over with someone who gets it: A child nutrition professional like you.

Here's how it works. Peer to peer.

Complete this form to be matched with a peer mentor who also operates one or more child nutrition programs in Arizona. You will be contacted in a couple of business days to schedule a phone call or virtual meeting.

YOUR NAME (OR JUST YOUR INITIALS)

EMAIL

PHONE NUMBER

PREFERRED METHOD OF COMMUNICATION
☐ Email
☐ Phone

Summary

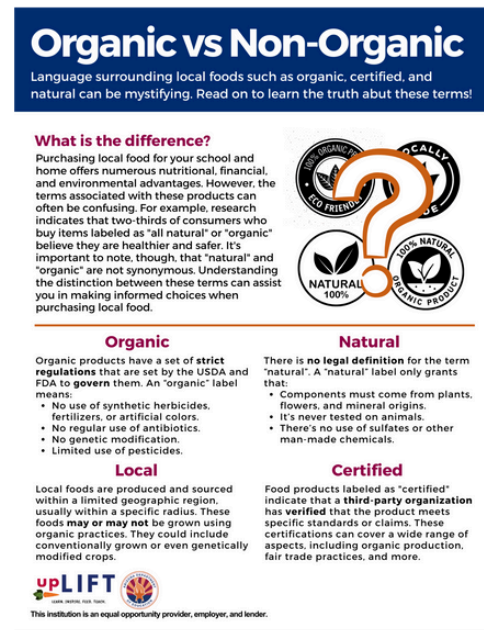
Using USDA Foods for Summer Meal Service

- SFAs already participating in USDA Foods can either pre-plan their catalog requisitions to ensure inventory for summer meals, set aside DoD funds for purchasing fresh produce for SFSP, or both!
- Community Organizations can choose to participate in USDA Foods by creating a FFAVORS account and use DoD Fresh funds set aside for SFSP. These funds would be available from May/June to September 30 or the funds run out.
- ADE encourages participation and utilization of USDA Foods for all CNPs whenever possible, all it takes is proper planning and a willingness to incorporate USDA Foods (Brown box if purchased, or DoD fresh produce) into their existing menu!

Resources



One in a
Melon



Nutrition Knowledge
Fact Sheet

<https://www.azed.gov/hns/nslp/uplift/>

Looking Ahead

Join us next month!

upLIFT Webinar Series Summer Edition: All about Summer Farm Fresh Challenge and Turnip the Beet!

June 17, 2025

1:30-2:00 pm

Join us next month for an engaging informational webinar highlighting two fantastic opportunities for summer operators to gain recognition and be awarded for their commitment to providing high-quality summer meals! We will cover USDA's Turnip the Beet Award and ADE's Summer Farm Fresh Challenge. Both of these award-based initiatives celebrate exceptional programs that excel in serving summer meals. Discover more about these awards and learn how easy it is for YOU to be acknowledged for the incredible work you're already doing! Don't miss out!



Thank you!

Any questions?
Please type them into the Q&A now.

If you are attending the live webinar, you will receive an email once attendance has been completed. Once you have received this email, your training certificate will be available in Arizona Professional Learning Development (APLD).

If you are watching the recorded webinar, you can access the survey link and certificate of completion at the end of the webinar slides.



Congratulations!

You have completed the recorded webinar: upLIFT Summer Edition: Utilizing USDA Foods to Your Advantage for Summer!

To request a certificate, please go to the next slide.

In order to count this training toward your Professional Standards training hours, the training content must align with your job duties.

Information to include when documenting this training for Professional Standards:

Training Title: upLIFT Summer Edition: Utilizing USDA Foods to Your Advantage for Summer!

Please Note:

- Attendees must document the amount of training hours indicated regardless of the amount of time it takes to complete it.

Congratulations!

Requesting a Training Certificate

Please click on the link below to complete a brief survey about this webinar. Once the survey is complete, you will be able to print your certificate of completion from Survey Monkey.

*This will not appear in your ADE Professional Learning Development (APLD) Account.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/upliftrecordedwebinar>

The information below is for your reference when completing the survey:

- Training Title: upLIFT Summer Edition: Utilizing USDA Foods to Your Advantage for Summer!

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