

Staying on Track

September 2025



Health and Nutrition Services
Arizona Department of Education

School Year
2025-2026



Intended Audience

This training is intended for **School Food Authorities (SFAs) operating the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) in Arizona.**



TRAINING HOURS

Information to include when documenting this training for Professional Standards:

Training Title: September Staying on Track

Key Areas: 1000 - Nutrition, 2000 - Operations, 3000 - Administration

Learning Codes: 1100, 2200, 3100, 3200

Length: 1 Hour

Presenter: Jennifer Blankenship



Disclaimer

This training was developed by the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) Health and Nutrition Services Division (HNS). The content in this training is intended for professionals operating one or more United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Child Nutrition Programs (CNP) in Arizona under the direction of ADE. The information in this training is subject to change. Attendees are encouraged to access professional development materials directly from the training library to prevent the use of outdated content.

OBJECTIVES

- ✓ Review monthly communication distributed from HNS to ensure vital emails were not overlooked;
- ✓ Provide detailed training on important topics and deadlines;
- ✓ Provide directors an opportunity to submit questions, that ADE can expand on in later communications.

HNS is here to
help!

We are here to provide assistance and help you make the very best of your program.



Questions

- Questions can be submitted in the Q&A at any point, and HNS will respond in the follow-up document that will be released after the webinar.
- Once the webinar concludes, HNS will compile all the questions received and create a follow-up Q&A document that will address all questions.
- If you require additional assistance following HNS's communication, please reach out to your HNS Specialist through HelpDesk.



Agenda

Section 1: HNS Communications Recap

Section 2: Communication Hot Topics

Section 3: Last Month's Training Opportunities

Section 4: Upcoming Deadlines and HNS Communications

SECTION 1
**August HNS
Communications
Recap**



Announcements



HEALTH AND NUTRITION SERVICES WANTS TO WELCOME YOU BACK FOR SCHOOL YEAR 2025-2026!

As you all know, Health and Nutrition Services (HNS) is here to help your school year start off on the right foot!

We formally welcome you back to School Year 2025-2026 (SY26)! While we have released a few memorandums so far, you may still have questions. It's all here:

Funding Opportunity



HEALTHY SCHOOL FOOD PATHWAY FELLOWSHIP **2026 APPLICATION**

The Chef Ann Foundation presents the Healthy School Food Pathway Fellowship 2026. The Fellowship program helps experienced school food professionals realize their visions for healthier, more sustainable, and more equitable school food — both locally in their home districts and on a national scale. Applications for the 2026 Fellowship are now open. **Apply by September 10, 2025.**



Partner Event



THE LOCAL FOOD IN SCHOOLS COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

The Arizona Farm to School Network is kicking off the Local Food in Schools Community of Practice series this Wednesday at 2 pm! Join to learn more about connecting local produce with school cafeterias and classrooms. They will help you connect with local producers, provide educational materials for the classroom and community, and offer assistance for meal planning. Mark your calendars for their upcoming dates!



Arizona Farm to School Network Presents

LOCAL FOOD IN SCHOOLS

COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

Join our Fall Series!

WORKSHOP LINE-UP

- 06 AUGUST** What is the Farm Fresh Challenge?
- 03 SEPTEMBER** Getting Started
- 01 OCTOBER** Menu Planning for Local Procurement
- 05 NOVEMBER** Linking Cafeterias & Classrooms
- 03 DECEMBER** Building a Communication Plan

2pm on the First Wednesday of the Month
REGISTER HERE: <https://tinyurl.com/LFSCOP2526>



Announcements and Resources



BUY AMERICAN TRACKING AND TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION QUICK GUIDE

ADE HNS has released this quick guide to assist operators in tracking their non-domestic purchases and submitting the temporary Buy American accommodation (as needed) to ensure compliance with the updated Buy American regulations.



Access the Buy American Tracking
and Temporary Accommodation
Quick Guide by [clicking here!](#)



Announcements and Resources



COMPILED CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS REIMBURSEMENT RATES FOR PROGRAM YEAR 2025-2026 - UPDATED

USDA has released the Cash in Lieu of commodities for Program Year 2025-2026. For July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026, the value is \$.3050 per meal. As a result, HNS has updated the [Compiled Child Nutrition Programs Reimbursement Rates for Program Year 2025-2026](#) resource to reflect this value. This resource is located within each CNP webpage via the “Reimbursement Rates” button at the bottom of the page.

With the release of this additional information, claims are now able to be processed and released. Please proceed with claim submission. Once submitted, refer to your date of submission and allow up to 10 business days for receipt of payment.

Compiled Child Nutrition Programs
Reimbursement Rates for Program Year 2025-2026
 Effective July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026

National School Lunch Program

REGULAR		REGULAR + 9 CENTS		HIGH RATE		HIGH RATE + 9 CENTS	
Schools which served LESS than 60% Free and Reduced Lunches		Schools which served LESS than 60% Free and Reduced Lunches +9 Cents		Schools which served MORE than 60% Free and Reduced Lunches		Schools which served MORE than 60% Free and Reduced Lunches +9 Cents	
	RATES		RATES		RATES		RATES
Paid	\$0.44	Paid	\$0.53	Paid	\$0.46	Paid	\$0.55
Reduced-Price	\$4.20	Reduced-Price	\$4.29	Reduced-Price	\$4.22	Reduced-Price	\$4.31
Free	\$4.60	Free	\$4.69	Free	\$4.62	Free	\$4.71

School Breakfast Program

NON-SEVERE NEED		SEVERE NEED	
	RATES		RATES
Paid	\$0.40	Paid	\$0.40
Reduced-Price	\$2.16	Reduced-Price	\$2.64
Free	\$2.46	Free	\$2.94

Afterschool Care Snack Program		At-Risk Afterschool Meals		Special Milk Program	
	RATES		RATES		RATES
Paid	\$0.11	Breakfast	\$2.46	Paid	\$0.2675
Reduced-Price	\$0.63	Lunch/Supper	\$4.60	Free	average cost of a 1/2 pint of milk
Free	\$1.26	Snack	\$1.26		

Rates for Adult Meal Pricing

	RATES
USDA Food Value	\$0.3050
Performance-Based Reimbursement Rate	\$0.09

These figures will be used when determining Adult Meal Pricing using the Adult Meal Pricing Tool.

July 2025 | Health and Nutrition Services | Arizona Department of Education
 USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.

SECTION 2
Hot Topics



Administrative Reviews

- The School Year 2025-2026 Administrative Review list is now available on the HNS website!
- SFAs highlighted in Copper be receiving a Targeted (follow-up) Review that will focus on specific areas identified in their previous administrative review.
- SFAs that are up for review are encouraged to review the What to Expect: National School Lunch Program Administrative Review training and attend the in-person workshops in October and December.
- Reviewers are currently sending out introduction communications to establish/solidify a workable on-site observation date before an official Confirmation Memo & Checklists are issued.

Administrative Review Schedule: School Year 2025-2026

LEAs highlighted in **CRIMSON** will receive an administrative review of the National School Lunch Program as well as the Afterschool Care Snack Program, At-Risk Afterschool Meals, Special Milk Program, Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, and Seamless Summer Option of the Summer Food Service Program (if operating)

LEAs highlighted in **COPPER** will receive a targeted follow-up review only in the area(s) where high-risk findings were noted in the previous administrative review.

LEA Name	CTD
Academy of Mathematics and Science South, Inc.	07-82-42
Academy of Mathematics and Science, Inc.	10-87-13
Acorn Montessori Charter School	13-87-60
Agua Fria Union High School District	07-05-16
Altar Valley Elementary District	10-03-51
Amphitheater Unified District	10-02-10
Arizona Community Development Corporation	10-87-09
Arizona Cultural Academy	07-20-06
Arizona School for the Arts	07-87-22
Ash Creek Elementary District	02-04-53
Ball Charter Schools (Dobson)	07-89-88

What to Expect:

National School Lunch Program Administrative Review



Health and Nutrition Services
Arizona Department of Education



Verification Season

PHASE 1: PREPARING FOR VERIFICATION

Now-Oct 1: Start preparing for Verification!

- Begin counting the total number of applications on file.
- Begin counting and categorizing applications by case number, foster, free by income, and reduced by income.
- Review the [Non-Response Rate Report](#) to see if you are eligible for an alternate sampling method.
- Use available resources:
 - View the [Verification Best Practices Calendar](#) to avoid missing any steps!
 - View the [Online Course: Verification Review](#)
 - **Best Practice:** Conduct Direct Certification
 - **Best Practice:** Use the [Student Eligibility Checklist](#)

VERIFICATION BEST PRACTICES CALENDAR SCHOOL YEAR 2024-2025	
PHASE 1: Prepare SEPTEMBER – OCTOBER 1	PHASE 2: Calculate and Select Applications STARTS OCTOBER 1
<p>STUDY UP ON VERIFICATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend the Verification Review School Year 2024-2025 webinar. Review the Verification Review and the How-To Guide: How to Identify Error-Prone Applications. Review the USDA Student Eligibility Manual for School Meals (Section 6 begins Verification guidance). <p>PREPARE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete/Review the Student Eligibility Checklist and Why the IRD is Important. Conduct Direct Certification again (just to find all matches before Verification). Use Verification Counting Cheat Sheet and count number of error-prone applications on file as of October 1. Categorically free applications (Case number, Foster). Free by income applications. Reduced by income applications. Did NOT count any applications for students that were Directly Certified. Did NOT count any applications that have been copied. Did NOT count any applications that are incomplete (missing total household members, signature, etc.). Count the number of error-prone applications on file as of October 1. 	<p>CALCULATE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the Verification Non-Response Rate Report. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If your LEA is highlighted in copper, you can use any sampling method (Standard, Alternate 1, or Alternate 2). If your LEA is not highlighted in copper, (no highlight or red), must use Standard sampling method. Does your LEA qualify for use of Alternative Sample Size (copper)? _____ (yes or no) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standard or Alternate 1 or Alternate 2 Choose sampling method (Circle the method you plan to use): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standard or Alternate 1 or Alternate 2 Use the Verification Sample Size Calculator in CNP Verification Reporting (must have access in ADEConnect—see Phase 4) to determine how many applications need to be selected for Verification. (In the calculator, select a sampling method and enter the total number of applications on file as of October 1. The calculator will automatically round up to the correct sample size.) <p>SELECT APPLICATIONS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Randomly select the correct number of applications provided by the Verification Sample Size Calculator. Applications selected are error-prone (if Standard or Alternate 2). If you need assistance with calculating how many applications should be verified, contact your assigned Health and Nutrition Services Specialist.
PHASE 3: Verify OCTOBER – NOVEMBER 15	PHASE 4: Report NOVEMBER 16 – FEBRUARY 1
<p>VERIFICATION ACTIVITIES- October 1-November 15</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Print and attach a Verification Tracking Form for each application being verified. Follow the steps on the Verification Tracking Form for each application selected. Conduct Confirmation Review. Run Direct Certification. If household is not verified in DE households, review documents. Results (English/Spanish) Utilize the Sources of Accepted Documentation submitted by the: Count the number of students on file <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students and extended household <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SNAP TANF FDPIR Medicaid data (DC-AR) Students directly certified as free Students free by income application Students reduced by income application 	<p>END OF VERIFICATION- November 15</p> <p>All Verification Activities must be completed.</p> <p>Verification is complete when:</p>
<p>REPORT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contact your Entity Administrator and request the CNP Verification Reporting (documentation to be selected by you). 	

Online Course:
Verification
Review



Verification Phase 1: Prepare

Student Eligibility Checklist

Use this checklist to ensure your procedures for providing meal benefits are in compliance to help you prepare for Verification activities.

1. At least one person in our organization has access to ADEConnect and can use CNP Direct Certification/Direct Verification.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	
2. Ran CNP Direct Certification for our entire enrollment. Search method used:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	
a. Our site only extended eligibility benefits to siblings of students who matched on SNAP, TANF and/or FDPIR.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	
b. Our site did not extend eligibility benefits to siblings of students who matched on foster, migrant or homeless.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	
3. Printed or saved the CNP Direct Certification Match results.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	
4. Collected and reviewed documentation about which students are enrolled in the Head Start Program.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
5. Reviewed Notice to Provider document that was submitted for Foster children.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
6. Reviewed documentation submitted for children from a liaison for homeless, migrant or runaway status.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
7. Reviewed SNAP, TANF and/or FDPIR letters submitted by the household for children receiving assistance programs.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
8. Processed all applications checking for completeness:			
a. We utilized a date stamp to indicate when applications were received.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	
b. We ensured all case numbers were validated for assistance programs in Arizona (SNAP/TANF being 8 digits or less or FDPIR based on Indian Tribal Organizations).	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	
c. We ensured the total household members box was filled out and that there was Social Security Number information on all income applications.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	
d. We ensured all applications contained an adult signature.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	
e. We have only certified homeless, migrant, and runaway applications for free meal benefits if we received confirmation from the liaison.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	
f. We marked which applications were error-prone.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	
9. Entered all case numbers listed on case number applications through CNP Direct Certification.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	

Verification Season

NON-RESPONSE RATE REPORT

SFAs must review the [Verification Non-Response Rate Report](#) to determine which sampling method, Standard, Alternative 1 (Random Sampling), or Alternative 2 (Focused Sampling), they can use to calculate the number of applications that need to be verified. *This review also helps determine whether error-prone applications must be documented.*

- **COPPER:** SFAs may choose from any of the three sampling methods
- **RED** or **NO HIGHLIGHT:** SFAs with red or no highlight must use the Standard Sampling Method and determine Error-Prone applications.

Verification Non-Response Rate Report				
Important: For use in determining the allowability of an alternate sample size for Verification in SY 2023-2024				
Verification Non-Response Rate Report Key				
Sponsors highlighted in COPPER qualify for use of an alternative sample size during the 2023-2024 Verification reporting period.				
Sponsors highlighted in RED DO NOT qualify for use of an alternative sample size due to Verification reporting errors and must use the Standard Sampling Method for 2023-2024 Verification Reporting.				
Remaining Sponsors DO NOT qualify for use of an alternative sample size, due either to Verification reporting errors or to an insufficient response rate, and must use the Standard Sampling Method for 2023-2024 Verification Reporting.				
CTDS	Name	Form	Submitted	
07-21-22-000	A New Leaf	CNP Verification	Y	
11-87-20-000	A+ Charter Schools	CNP Verification	Y	
07-82-42-000	Academy of Mathematics and Science South, Inc.	CNP Verification	Y	
10-87-13-000	Academy of Mathematics and Science, Inc.	CNP Verification	Y	
07-82-70-000	Academy of Mathematics and Science, Inc.	CNP Verification	Y	
10-86-65-000	Academy of Tucson, Inc.	CNP Verification	Y	
07-21-64-000	ACCEL	CNP Verification	Y	
07-87-01-000	Acclaim Charter School	CNP Verification	Y	
13-07-03-000	Acclaim Montessori Charter School	CNP Verification	Y	
21-91-01-001	Adobe Mountain School	CNP Verification	Y	
07-05-16-000	Agua Fria Union High School District	CNP Verification	Y	
07-03-63-000	Agula Elementary District	CNP Verification	Y	
10-02-15-000	Ajo Unified District	CNP Verification	Y	
07-04-68-000	Alhambra Elementary District	CNP Verification	Y	
10-03-51-000	Altar Valley Elementary District	CNP Verification	Y	
10-87-94-000	American Charter Schools Foundation d.b.a. Alta Vista High School	CNP Verification	Y	
11-87-03-000	American Charter Schools Foundation d.b.a. Apache Trail High School	CNP Verification	Y	
07-89-50-000	American Charter Schools Foundation d.b.a. Creekside College Preparatory High Sc	CNP Verification	Y	
07-89-47-000	American Charter Schools Foundation d.b.a. Desert Hills High School	CNP Verification	Y	
07-89-48-000	American Charter Schools Foundation d.b.a. Estrella High School	CNP Verification	Y	
07-89-51-000	American Charter Schools Foundation d.b.a. Peoria Accelerated High School	CNP Verification	Y	
07-89-83-000	American Charter Schools Foundation d.b.a. South Pointe High School	CNP Verification	Y	
07-89-17-000	American Charter Schools Foundation d.b.a. South Ridge High School	CNP Verification	Y	
07-89-53-000	American Charter Schools Foundation d.b.a. Sun Valley High School	CNP Verification	Y	
07-89-56-000	American Charter Schools Foundation d.b.a. West Phoenix High School	CNP Verification	Y	
11-87-22-000	American Charter Schools Foundation dba Ridgeview College Preparatory High School	CNP Verification	Y	
07-87-25-000	American Leadership Academy, Inc.	CNP Verification	Y	
10-02-10-000	Amphitheater Unified District	CNP Verification	Y	
14-05-50-000	Antelope Union High School District	CNP Verification	Y	
11-02-43-000	Apache Junction Unified District	CNP Verification	Y	

[Verification Non-Response Rate Report](#)



[How to Identify Error-Prone Household Applications](#)

Verification Season

CONDUCTING DIRECT CERTIFICATION

Best Practice: Run Direct Certification (DC) Around October 1

- October 1 marks the start of Phase 2
- Potentially reduces the number of applications needing verification.
- If a student is matched in DC, the household application is **not** subject to verification.
- Check SNAP/TANF case numbers - if matched in DC, all students on that application are directly certified.

Please note, case numbers that do not match in DC are still free applications that are subject to verification, as long as the case numbers appear to be valid.

Certification and Benefit Issuance		
How-To Guide	Step-by-Step Instruction: How to Process Household Applications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity Application #1 • Activity Application #2 • Activity Application #3 • SY 22-23 Income Eligibility Guidelines 	1.5 hour
How-To Guide	Step-by-Step Instruction: How to Identify Household Applications That Are Error-Prone	0.5 hour
How-To Guide	Step-by-Step Instruction: How to Create a Benefit Issuance Document (BID) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sample BID • Enrollment Handout 	1.0 hour
How-To Guide	Step-by-Step Instruction: Introduction to CNP Direct Certification in CNP Direct Certification/Direct Verification	0.5 hour
How-To Guide	Step-by-Step Instruction: How to Directly Certify a Partial Match	0.5 hour
How-To Guide	Step-by-Step Instruction: How to Conduct Direct Certification using State Match	0.25 hour
How-To Guide	Step-by-Step Instruction: How to Conduct Direct Certification using File Upload	0.5 hour
How-To Guide	Step-by-Step Instruction: How to Conduct Direct Certification using Individual Student Lookup	0.5 hour
How-To Guide	Step-by-Step Instruction: How to Conduct Direct Certification Using Other Documentation	0.5 hour
How-To Guide	Step-by-Step Instruction: How to Complete Direct Certification Using Medicaid Data	0.25 hour
Webinar	Direct Certification Best Practices (Recording) (Slides) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worksheet, Answer Key 	0.5 hour

[Training for the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs](#)



Verification Season

CONFIRMATION REVIEW WAIVER

Confirmation Review: Process of reviewing applications that were selected for verification to ensure they were certified correctly.

The confirmation review requirement can be waived if the SFA uses a technology-based system with a high level of accuracy in processing initial eligibility determinations.

For more information about the Confirmation Review Waiver, including what must be submitted to HNS to request the waiver, please review [How to Submit a Verification Confirmation Review Waiver](#).

REQUESTING A WAIVER

To apply for a confirmation review waiver, SFAs must submit a request to their assigned HNS Specialist on school/district letterhead **before beginning the verification process**.

The request must include:

- the name of the software system the SFA uses to process household applications;
- an explanation of how the software demonstrates a high degree of accuracy;
- supporting documentation that shows the software's IEGs and Error-Prone Guidelines match USDA's for the current year; and,
- a signature from an authorized representative.

Verification Season

VERIFICATION REVIEW FOR SY 25-26

Join us for our webinar on Verification Review for School Year 2025-2026.

SEPTEMBER 18, 1:30 - 2:30 PM

This webinar will include:

- Discussing the details for each phase of Verification.
- Reviewing all the important deadlines to remember.
- Helping you be prepared for when it comes time to submit the Verification Summary Report.



[Register here!](#) 



SFAs with all sites on an active Provision 2/3 non-base year or CEP cycle are prohibited from collecting school meal applications and do not conduct verification activities. This training does not apply to these operators.

Quiz Time

Verification begins on September 1.

A True

B False

Quiz Time

Verification begins on September 1.

A True

B False

Verification begins on October 1. The month of September should be spent preparing for verification.

Updated SY 2025-2026 AZEDS

STUDENT SCHOOL FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM REPORTING

Public districts and charters that participate in the NSLP/SBP and report student data to ADE via the district/charter student information system are required to complete the following data fields for free or reduced-price eligible students:

- **Record Begin Date:** Enter the date free or reduced-price was established; do not report free/reduced rollover statuses
- **Record End Date:** Enter date of any change of eligibility status or withdrawal date
- **Eligibility Source:** Direct Certification, USDA Income Application and Other Source Categorically Eligible
- **Eligibility Status:** Free or Reduced-Price; [Full Pay Optional]



Please submit any questions about this update to [School Finance](#) using [HelpDesk](#).

AZEDS

SCHOOL FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM REPORTING

NEW AZED REPORT: FSP10 will display the food service program data that was successfully submitted into the AzEDS. SIS vendors were provided the USE Case information 10.0.

- Note, if the USE CASE updates are not completed by the SIS vendor, the data will not be able to be submitted to ADE.

SFA ROLE: Please work with the person responsible for reporting AzEDS student data to ADE to ensure the NSLP/SBP eligibility information is reported accurately. CEP and Provision 2 and 3 non-base year schools must report free or reduced-price eligibility for students **using Direct Certification only**.

- This requirement is separate from Title 1 reporting.



Please submit any questions about this update to [School Finance](#) using [HelpDesk](#).

SY 25-26 upLIFT

INTRODUCING PLATE TO PALATE: TRANSFORMING SCHOOL MEAL PERCEPTIONS!

Join us for an exciting webinar as we introduce the upLIFT initiative for this year: Plate to Palate: Transforming School Meal Perceptions! We are thrilled to invite you to this engaging series, which will focus on reshaping how school meals are perceived. Through compelling storytelling, we will illustrate the journey of ingredients from local farms to students' plates, fostering a sense of community and encouraging a greater appreciation for the meals provided. Don't miss this opportunity to be part of a transformative movement in the way school meals are viewed and valued.

Join as we kick-off this year's monthly upLIFT webinar series on **Tuesday, September 16!**

- [Click here to register!](#)



USDA Foods in Schools in SY 25-26

MYFOODS SYSTEM UPDATES

The myFOODS system has rolled to the new school year. All system dates will default to SY 25-26.

Need Help? Refer to the [myFOODS Systems Manual](#) for system functions.

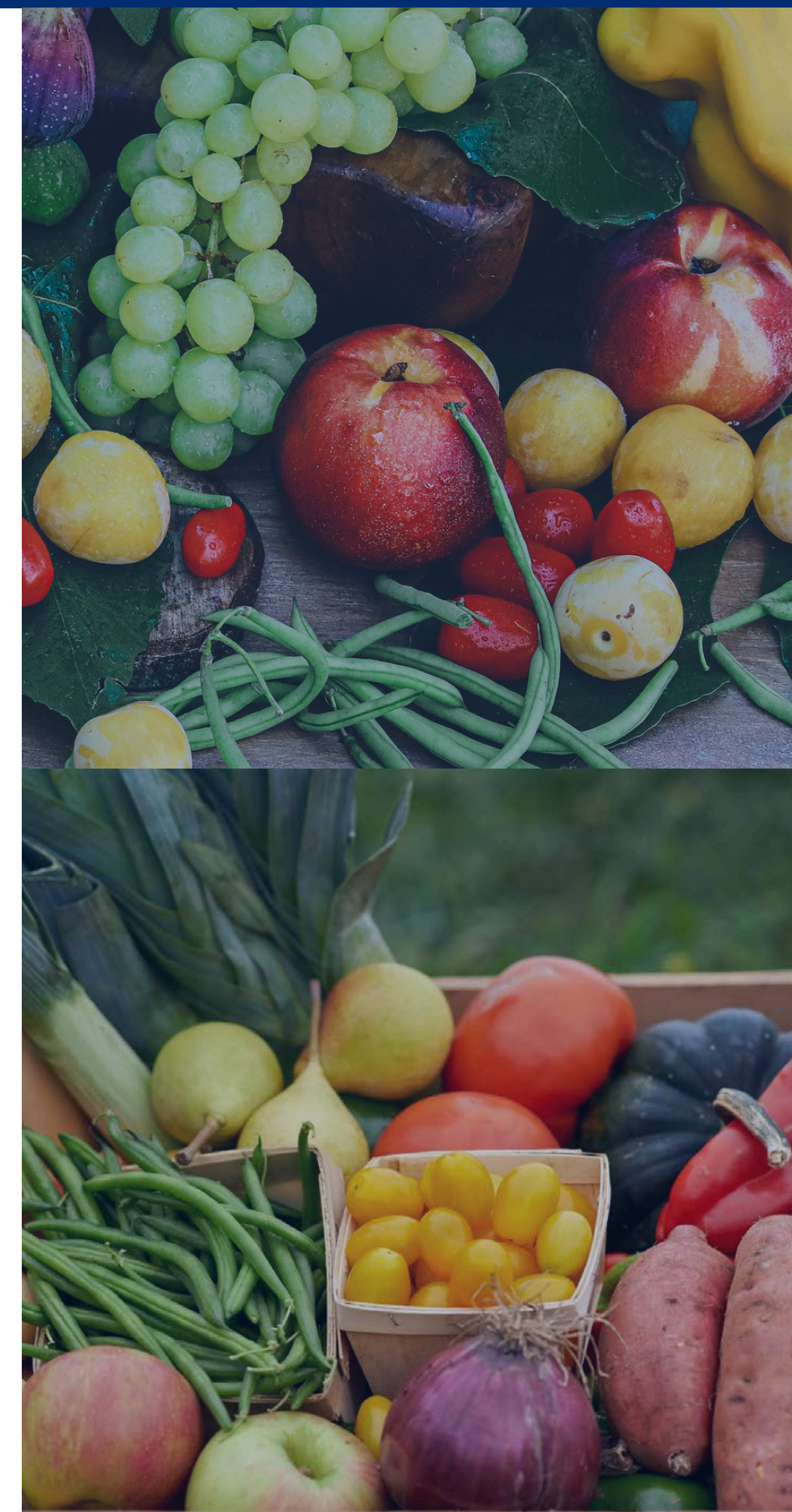
ACTION ITEMS

- Existing users must update any contact and site information within the system.
- New users of the myFOODS system must contact ADE for access by emailing USDAFoods@azed.gov or calling 602-542-8729.
- To receive Direct Delivery material shipments from Shamrock Foods, SFAs must first submit a valid Purchase Order or Letter of Responsibility to Shamrock Foods for delivery fees published in [2025-2026 USDA Foods in Schools Program Administrative Fee Structure](#).
- All catering sites are being verified with approved CNPWeb applications and will remain in unapproved status pending verification. If you are contracting with a caterer and having foods delivered to the caterer, please email USDAFoods@azed.gov.

USDA Foods in Schools in SY 25-26

REMINDERS

- ✔ Processing Carryover Planners are due **September 30, 2025** to ADE at USDAFoods@azed.gov.
- ✔ Shipments from **Shamrock Foods must be 20 cases or more**. Any shipments not meeting the 20 case minimum will be deleted and products recycled back into accounts. Either use your available materials and/or use materials from the surplus catalog.
- ✔ Orders from **DoD Fresh** must be a **minimum of \$150.00**.



Try it Local! Local Food for Schools

ARE YOU PARTICIPATING?

- **86** Districts and Charter Schools have submitted School Interest Forms.
- **2357** reimbursement requests have been received.

[How to Receive Try it Local Funding for Eligible Food Purchases](#) step-by-step instruction.

Join these operators and get reimbursed for minimally processed local and regional foods used in school meals.

azed.gov/hns/nsfp



Procuring Local Workshop

IN-PERSON WORKSHOP



This workshop will cover various topics such as the benefits of sourcing ingredients locally and strategies for establishing successful partnerships with local producers. By the end of the workshop, attendees will have a solid understanding of how to support local producers while providing nutritious meals for students. Join us to learn how you can make a difference in your school's procurement process!

Registration is available in the [ADE Professional Learning and Development \(APLD\)](#).

PHOENIX

- 9:30 am - 12:00 pm **9/25/2025**
- Location: [100 N. 15th Ave, Phoenix AZ 85007](#)
Conference Room B12
- Registration Link:
<https://azed.geniussis.com/Registration.aspx?aid=10335>

Taste AZ Promotion

MONTHLY HIGHLIGHT OF LOCALLY SOURCED FOOD AVAILABLE FOR SCHOOL NUTRITION PROFESSIONALS



WHAT IS IT?

This promotion showcases Arizona's very own locally grown produce and available food options.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Each month, HNS highlights a locally sourced food that is easily available by providing an informative resource. This includes fun facts, availability timelines, and unique recipes. For August, the spotlight is on **SUMMER SQUASH!**

WHY TASTE AZ?

HNS is thrilled to facilitate connections between SFAs and the farmers and producers who can incorporate these Arizona foods into school meals! This promotion will draw parallels to the Farm Fresh Challenge and will include the logos for Taste, Teach, and/or Connect when the information complements the challenge criteria.

TASTE AZ September Highlight: SUMMER SQUASH





SUMMER SQUASH

FIND LOCAL SUMMER SQUASH IN ARIZONA:

HARVEST MONTHS: JUNE - OCTOBER

Farms to get the local produce:

- Aguiar Farm, Paulden
- Blooming Reed Farm, Paulden
- Double Adobe Farm, Double Adobe
- Mortimer Farm, Dewey
- Larry's Veggies, Marana
- Whipstone Farm, Paulden

 Connect with Local Producers!
[SCHOOL INTEREST FORM](#)

ARIZONA HARVEST FACTS!

- Summer squash is native to the Americas and was a staple in Native American diets.
- The most common summer squashes are crookneck, zucchini, scallop, or patty pan.
- Squash belongs in the Cucurbitaceae family, which also includes cucumbers and melons.
- Summer squash is considered easy to grow and requires minimal maintenance to harvest.
- Summer squash grows quickly and is harvested during the summer months. It can be ready to pick just 50 to 65 days after planting
- For all varieties of summer squash, choose squash that are glossy, small-to-medium-sized, and heavy for their size. Choose squash that is firm and free of blemishes and damage.
- It is best not to peel the squash before cooking since vitamins and minerals are found mainly in the skin.
- Summer squash is high in vitamin C, vitamin A, potassium, and magnesium.

TASTE LOCAL RECIPE:

Calabacitas Casserole Recipe

Serving size: 1 cup, Yield 6 servings
 NSLP Vegetable Crediting Information:
 ½ cup Other, ¼ cup Starch, ¼ cup Red/Orange.

- 4 cups zucchini, sliced
- 2 cups corn kernels
- 1 cup shredded cheese
- 1 cup diced tomatoes
- 1 cup onion, chopped
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp salt
- 0.5 tsp black pepper

This Calabacitas Casserole is a hearty mix of zucchini, corn, tomatoes, and cheese. It's easy to make, bursting with flavor, and makes the perfect side dish for many entrees.

To ensure food safety with summer squash always thoroughly wash them under running water before cutting, eating and/or cooking. 

QUICK MATH:

Summer Squash



Zucchini	Yellow Squash
1 pound as purchased yields approximately 13, ¼ cups, raw sliced)	1 pound as purchased yields approximately 15, ¼ cups, raw sliced)
1 pound as purchased yields approximately 10, ¼ cups, cooked sliced)	1 pound as purchased yields approximately 8, ¼ cups, cooked sliced)




September 2025 | TASTE AZ | The Arizona Department of Education
 USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

Food Program Permanent Service Agreement

(FPPSA)

Check your FPPSA. Are all the signers still with your organization? If yes, you are all set! If not, this document should be updated and resubmitted!

- Electronic FPPSA (complete initiation form, agreement is emailed to signers directly by AdobeSign, electronic signature) [FPPSA Initiation Form for AdobeSign](#)
- [Manual FPPSA](#) (print, sign 1 original, mail to ADE for approval)

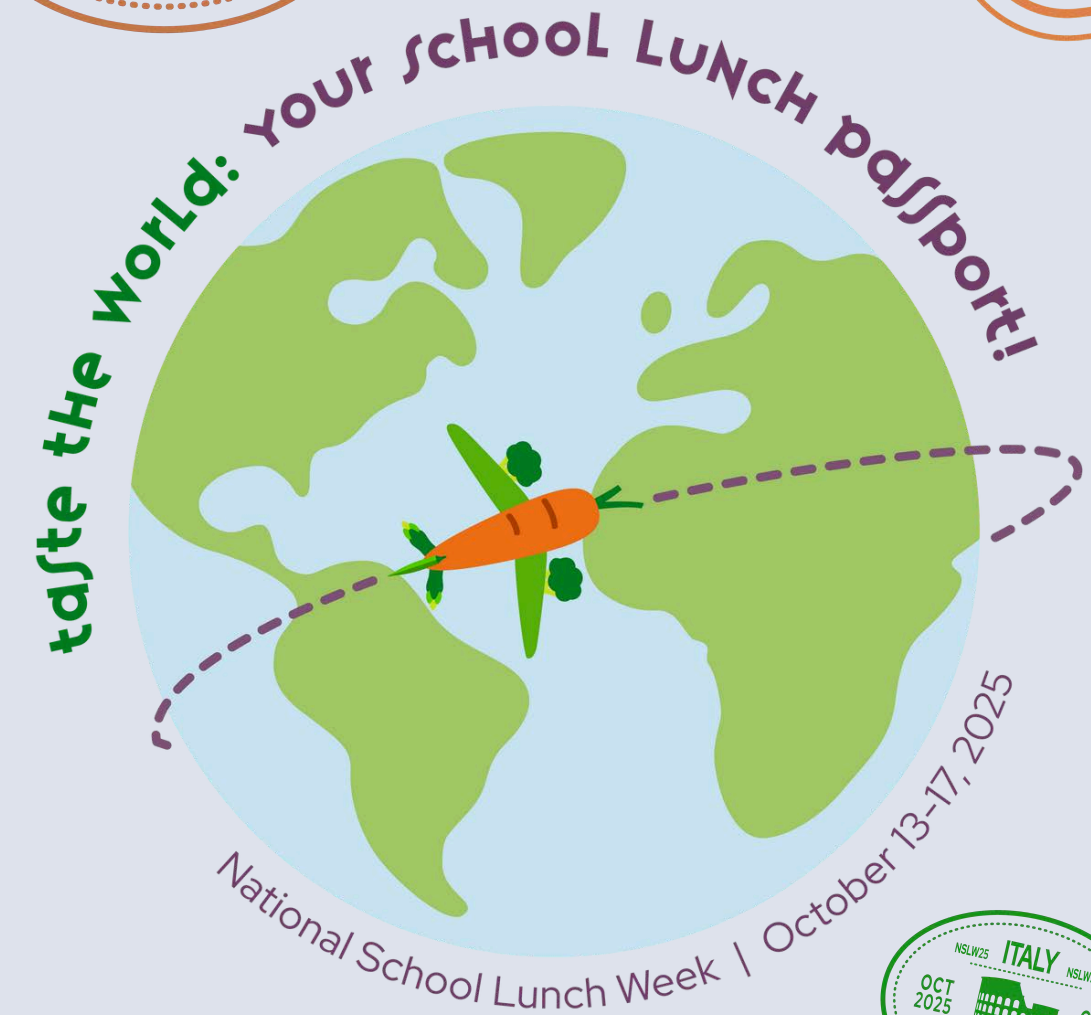
ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION	
 <p>Health and Nutrition Services 1535 West Jefferson Street Phoenix, Arizona 85007</p>	
<p>FOOD PROGRAM PERMANENT SERVICE AGREEMENT Revised Summer 2019</p>	
<p>SIGNATURE PAGE</p>	
<p>AGREED TO AND SIGNED:</p>	
1.	<p>_____</p> <p>(Print or Type Name and Title)</p>
	<p>_____</p> <p>(Signature of Designated Official if applicable) [Same as item (6) on Certification Page]</p>
	<p>_____</p> <p>(SFA)</p>
	<p>_____</p> <p>(Date)</p>
<p>Address _____</p>	
<p>OTHER AUTHORIZED SIGNERS</p>	
2.	<p>_____</p> <p>(Print or Type Name and Title)</p>
	<p>_____</p> <p>(Signature)</p>
3.	<p>_____</p> <p>(Print or Type Name and Title)</p>
	<p>_____</p> <p>(Signature)</p>
4.	<p>_____</p> <p>(Print or Type Name and Title)</p>
	<p>_____</p> <p>(Signature)</p>
<p>FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY</p> <p>STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION</p>	
<p>(Superintendent of Public Instruction or Designee) _____ (Date) _____ 1535 West Jefferson, Phoenix, Arizona 85007</p>	

National School Lunch Week

CELEBRATE #NSLW25 OCTOBER 13-17, 2025!

Celebrate NSLW the second full week of October* every year! The theme this year is **Taste the World: Your School Lunch Passport!**

*On fall break? Pick another week to celebrate!



Get more information and marketing materials for National School Lunch Week by [clicking here!](#)



National School Lunch Week

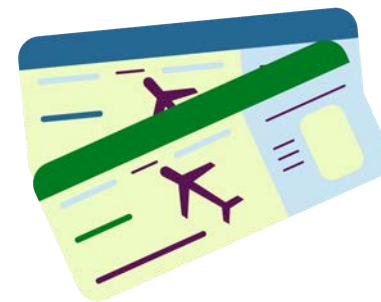
CELEBRATE #NSLW25 OCTOBER 13-17, 2025!

Ways to Celebrate:

- Deck out your cafeteria with NSLW posters and other artwork portraying nutritious lunch foods.
- Invite local personalities, the school mascot, or a volunteer in costume to stop by your cafeteria at lunchtime to eat with the students.
- Invite teachers, administrators, or even your school principal to stand in as guest servers for lunch one day.



spaghetti bolognese
italy



tacos
mexico



Get more information and marketing materials for National School Lunch Week by [clicking here!](#)



Poll Question

Are you planning to celebrate National School Lunch Week?

A Yes

B No



Poll Question

Are you planning to celebrate National School Lunch Week?

A Yes

B No

For those that answered yes, please include your plans in the chat!



SECTION 3
**Last Month's
Training
Opportunities**



August's Virtual Training Opportunities

To access webinar slides, recordings, and online trainings, visit HNS' webpage or refer to the HNS Communications Event Follow-up email.



[Staying on Track: August](#)



[How to Determine Adult Meal Prices Using the Adult Meal Pricing Tool](#)

Reviews the details of completing the Adult Meal Pricing Tool to ensure adult meals are priced correctly.



[How to Complete the Medical Statement for Students with Special Dietary Accommodations](#)

Reviews the process of completing the medical statement.



[Local Wellness Policy: A Guide to Success](#)

Reviews the requirements of developing and implementing a local wellness policy.

Training for School Nutrition Programs

Because the trainings offered by HNS are vast in quantity, diverse in content, and is consistently being updated, ADE maintains specialized curricula based on job duties to help directors with their training plans.

Each curriculum includes a list of recommended trainings offered by HNS and the Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN) for specific roles, the format of each training, the Professional Standards hours each training provides, and where to access the training or registration.



TRAINING CURRICULUM

School Nutrition Programs

[Training Curriculum for Arizona Child Nutrition Professionals Operating the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Program](#)



SECTION 4
**Upcoming
Deadlines &
Communications**



Mark Your Calendars!

SEPTEMBER EVENTS & OPPORTUNITIES

HNS is dedicated to providing all Child Nutrition Program operators with training to support you and your teams' professional learning needs to fulfill annual training requirements, support program integrity, and elevate Child Nutrition Programs across Arizona.

- 9 Training opportunities for School Nutrition Professionals in September

For School Nutrition Professionals

	<p>Staying on Track - September September 3, 1:30-2:30 pm MST Webinar Register Here Professional Standards & Key Areas: 1500 Nutrition, 2000 Operations, 2002 Administration, 2003 Communication and Marketing</p>
	<p>Building a Better School Breakfast Together September 4, 10:00-11:00 am EST Webinar Register Here Professional Standards & Key Areas: 1500 Administration</p>
	<p>CICM: Getting Started with Menu Planning Using Scratch and Speed-Scratch Recipes September 4, 10:00-11:00 am EST Webinar Register Here Professional Standards & Key Areas: 1500 Nutrition, 2000 Operations</p>
	<p>State Nutrition Action Committee Summer Food Service Program Work Group September 11, 1:00-2:00 pm MST Webinar Register Here Professional Standards & Key Areas: Not Applicable</p>
	<p>upLIFT: Introducing Plate to Palate: Transforming School Meal Perceptions! September 16, 1:30-2:00 pm MST Webinar Register Here Professional Standards & Key Areas: 1500 Nutrition, 2000 Operations</p>
	<p>Verification Review for School Year 2025-2026 September 18, 1:30-2:00 pm MST Webinar Register Here Professional Standards & Key Areas: 1500 Administration</p>
	<p>Annual Financial Report Webinar September 22, 1:30-2:00 pm MST Webinar Register Here Professional Standards & Key Areas: 1500 Administration</p>
	<p>Procuring Local Workshop (Phoenix) September 25, 8:30-11:00 am MST In Person Register Here Professional Standards & Key Areas: 1500 Nutrition, 2000 Operations, 2002 Administration</p>
	<p>State Nutrition Action Committee Summer Food Service Program Work Group September 25, 1:00-2:00 pm MST Webinar Register Here Professional Standards & Key Areas: Not Applicable</p>

For Child and Adult Care Professionals

For more information and links to register, check your inbox for the [HNS Events Forecast: September 2025](#) from HNS Communications!

In Our Drafts

KEEP A LOOK OUT FOR THE FOLLOWING EMAILS THIS MONTH:

- Annual Financial Report (AFR) reminders
- TASTE AZ for October: Peppers
- Updated One-Time Exception Claims Policy Guidance
- 2026 Processing of USDA Foods in Schools



September Checklist

September 1 - September 10

Submit August reimbursement claims (best practice)

September 29

60-day deadline to submit July claims

September 30

Conduct direct certification (best practice to find all matches before Verification!)

Daily

- Complete Production Records (if applicable)
- Count meals at POS and complete Daily Edit Checks

This month...

- Start preparing for Verification! Print off the [Verification Best Practices Calendar](#).
- [Register](#) for the "Verification Review for School Year 2025-2026" Webinar.
- Review the [Online Course: Verification Review](#) and the [How-To Guide: How to Identify Error-Prone Household Applications](#).
- Complete/Review the [Student Eligibility Checklist](#) and [Why the BID is Important](#).



Join Us Next Month!

Staying On Track: October

October 7, 2025

1:30-2:30 pm

We will review recently released HNS Communications, policy memorandums, and relevant key tasks, deadlines, and action items.

Thank you!

PLEASE PUT QUESTIONS IN THE Q&A

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 Online Course:
Staying on Track: September 2025**

Information to include when documenting this training for Professional Standards:

Training Title: September Staying on Track

Key Areas: 1000 - Nutrition, 2000 - Operations, 3000 - Administration

Learning Codes: 1100, 2200, 3100, 3200

Length: 1 hour

Please note, attendees must document the amount of training hours indicated on the training despite the amount of time it takes to complete it.

Certificate

Requesting a training certificate

Please click the button to complete a brief survey about this online training. Once the survey is complete, you will be able to print your certificate of completion from Survey Monkey.



Information to include when documenting this training for Professional Standards:

Training Title: September Staying on Track

Key Areas: 1000 - Nutrition, 2000 - Operations, 3000 - Administration

Learning Codes: 1100, 2200, 3100, 3200

Length: 1 hour

Please note, attendees must document the amount of training hours indicated on the training despite the amount of time it takes to complete it.





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Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the state or local agency that administers the program or contact USDA through the Telecommunications Relay Service at 711 (voice and TTY). Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, [AD-3027](#), found online at [How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint](#) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

1. **Mail:** U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Mail Stop 9410, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
2. **Fax:** (202) 690-7442; or
3. **Email:** program.intake@usda.gov.

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