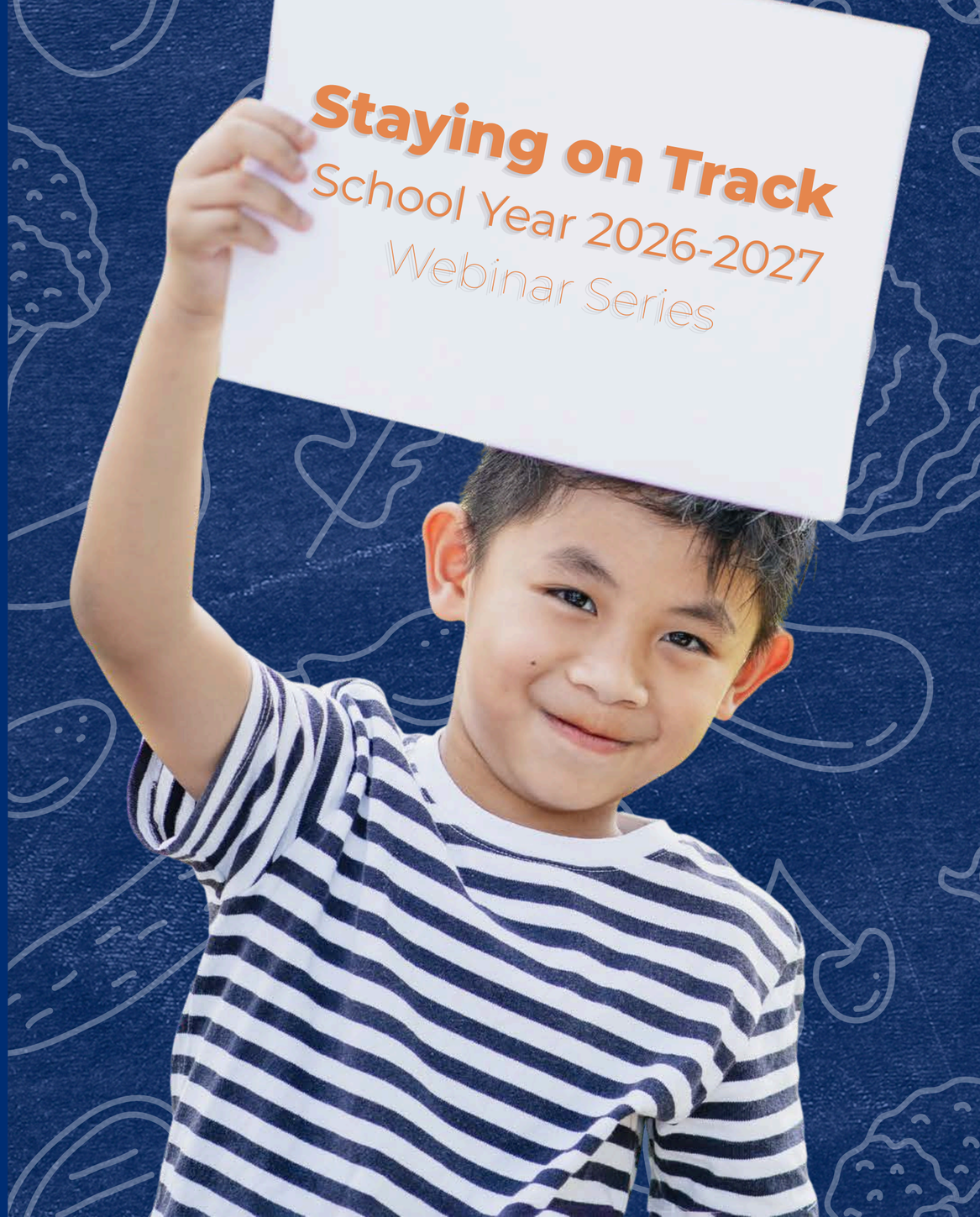
Staying on Track

October 2026

Health and Nutrition Services
Arizona Department of Education



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: October Staying on Track

Key Area: 1000 - Nutrition, 3000 - Administration, 4000 - Communications and Marketing

Learning Code: 1130, 1230, 1310, 3120, 3130, 3350, 4120

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are encouraged to access professional development materials directly from the training library to prevent the use of outdated content.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: Training Opportunities

Section 4: Upcoming Deadlines and HNS Communications

SECTION 1

September HNS Communications Recap



Memorandums

TA 01-2026: RESOURCES FOR PROCURING LOCAL FOODS IN SCHOOL YEAR 2026-2027

This resource was provided to remind Child Nutrition Program (CNP) operators of the various resources available to help them procure local foods.



SP 11-2026: FINAL RULE MEMORANDUM: SIMPLIFIED GEOGRAPHIC PREFERENCE PROCUREMENT IN CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS

This memorandum provides information on the direct final rule published by FNA on September 9, 2026, titled, Simplified Geographic Preference Procurement in Child Nutrition Programs (91 FR 57245) **effective November 9, 2026** with a **comment period ending October 9, 2026**. The rule does not change policy or implementation — it simply clarifies existing requirements to make the geographic preference option easier to understand and use in the Child Nutrition Programs. This rule also supports USDA's Harvest to Hallways Initiative to improve school meals and strengthen the connection between American agriculture and America's children.

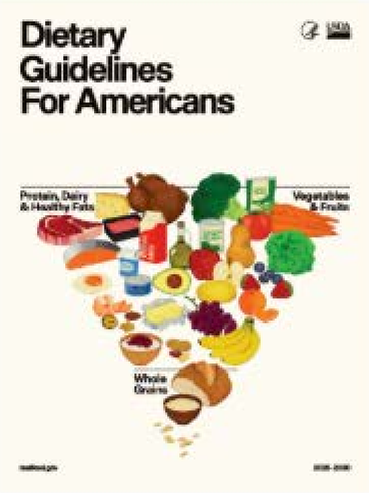
Announcements and Resources

NEW SBP AND NSLP FOOD GUIDE RESOURCES FROM TEAM NUTRITION

USDA's Team Nutrition announced the availability of two new resources. Help students make healthy choices in school year 2026-2027 with the Real Food Guides to School Breakfast and School Lunch for Families. These fact sheets were updated to showcase real, nutrient-dense foods that contribute to a balanced school breakfast and lunch and align with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2025–2030.







Program Alert

PROGRAM ALERT: PROGRAM YEAR 2026-2027 DIRECT CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

In order to meet annual direct certification compliance and prepare for verification activities, please log into CNP Direct Certification through ADEConnect to conduct direct certification on your School Year 2026-2027 student enrollment.
It is best practice to run direct certification on or around October 1 to remove any matched students from applications subject to verification and to conduct a search on October 31 for reporting the student count on the Verification Summary Report.

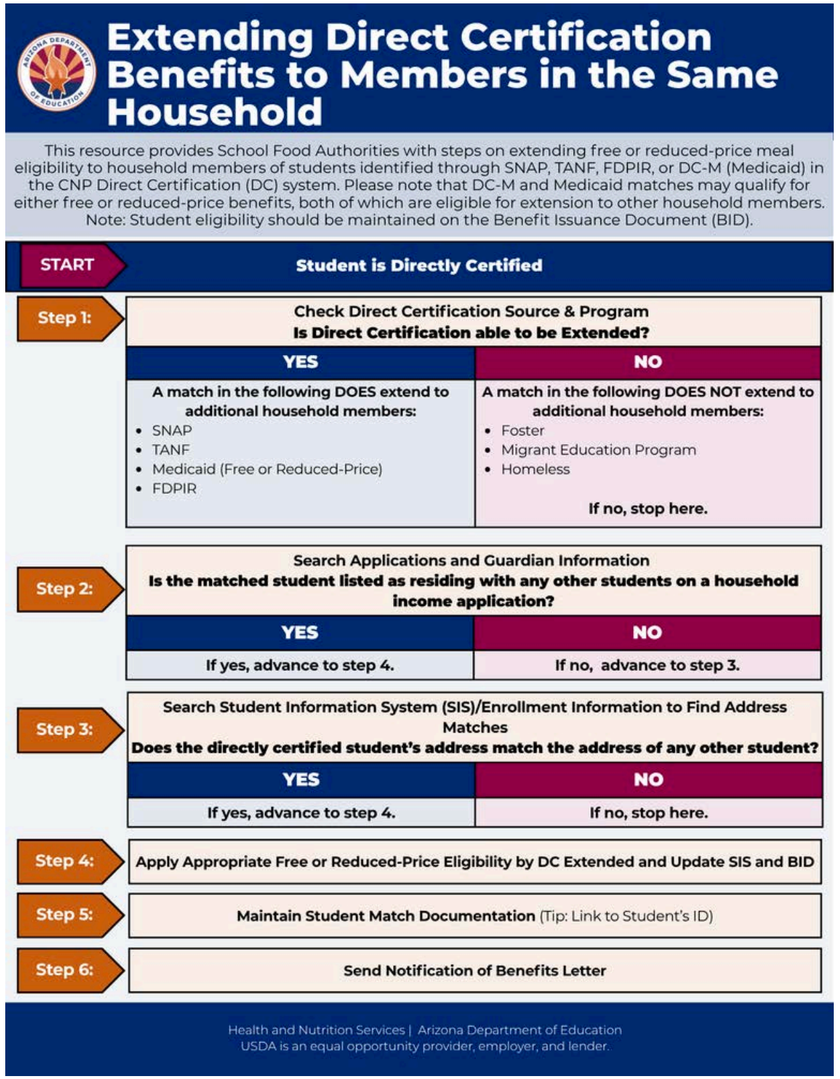
THE ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT (AFR) IS DUE

- **October 15, 2026:** AFR due for public schools and charters
- **November 15, 2026:** AFR due for non-public schools (private schools, residential child care institutions, Special Milk Program schools, and Bureau of Indian Education schools) **Please note this date was extended from October 1.*

Program Alert

NEW RESOURCE: EXTENDING DIRECT CERTIFICATION BENEFITS TO MEMBERS IN THE SAME HOUSEHOLD

This resource provides School Food Authorities with steps on extending free or reduced-price meal eligibility to household members of students identified through SNAP, TANF, FDPIR, or DC-M (Medicaid) in the CNP Direct Certification (DC) system. Please note that DC-M and Medicaid matches may qualify for either free or reduced-price benefits, both of which are eligible for extension to other household members. Note: Student eligibility should be maintained on the Benefit Issuance Document (BID).



Extending Direct Certification Benefits to Members in the Same Household

This resource provides School Food Authorities with steps on extending free or reduced-price meal eligibility to household members of students identified through SNAP, TANF, FDPIR, or DC-M (Medicaid) in the CNP Direct Certification (DC) system. Please note that DC-M and Medicaid matches may qualify for either free or reduced-price benefits, both of which are eligible for extension to other household members. Note: Student eligibility should be maintained on the Benefit Issuance Document (BID).

START — **Student is Directly Certified**

Step 1: Check Direct Certification Source & Program
Is Direct Certification able to be Extended?

YES	NO
A match in the following DOES extend to additional household members: • SNAP • TANF • Medicaid (Free or Reduced-Price) • FDPIR	A match in the following DOES NOT extend to additional household members: • Foster • Migrant Education Program • Homeless **If no, stop here.**

Step 2: Search Applications and Guardian Information
Is the matched student listed as residing with any other students on a household income application?

YES	NO
If yes, advance to step 4.	If no, advance to step 3.

Step 3: Search Student Information System (SIS)/Enrollment Information to Find Address Matches
Does the directly certified student's address match the address of any other student?

YES	NO
If yes, advance to step 4.	If no, stop here.

Step 4: Apply Appropriate Free or Reduced-Price Eligibility by DC Extended and Update SIS and BID

Step 5: **Maintain Student Match Documentation** (Tip: Link to Student's ID)

Step 6: **Send Notification of Benefits Letter**

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

Funding Opportunity

DEFINING EVIDENCE FOR PROGRAMS TO ENSURE NUTRITION FOR DEVELOPMENT (DEPEND)

This funding opportunity is designed to answer the overarching question: What procurement, infrastructure, workforce, operational, and student-centered strategies enable schools to provide healthier, appealing meals at scale within existing recurring school-meal resources?

DEPEND is designed to generate credible, transferable evidence about how schools can improve meal quality in ways that can be sustained over time. DEPEND will fund projects that test strategies to provide healthier meals that students choose and consume.

Applications are due **October 13, 2026** at midnight Eastern Daylight Time. Award decisions are anticipated by October 23, 2026.



APPLY NOW

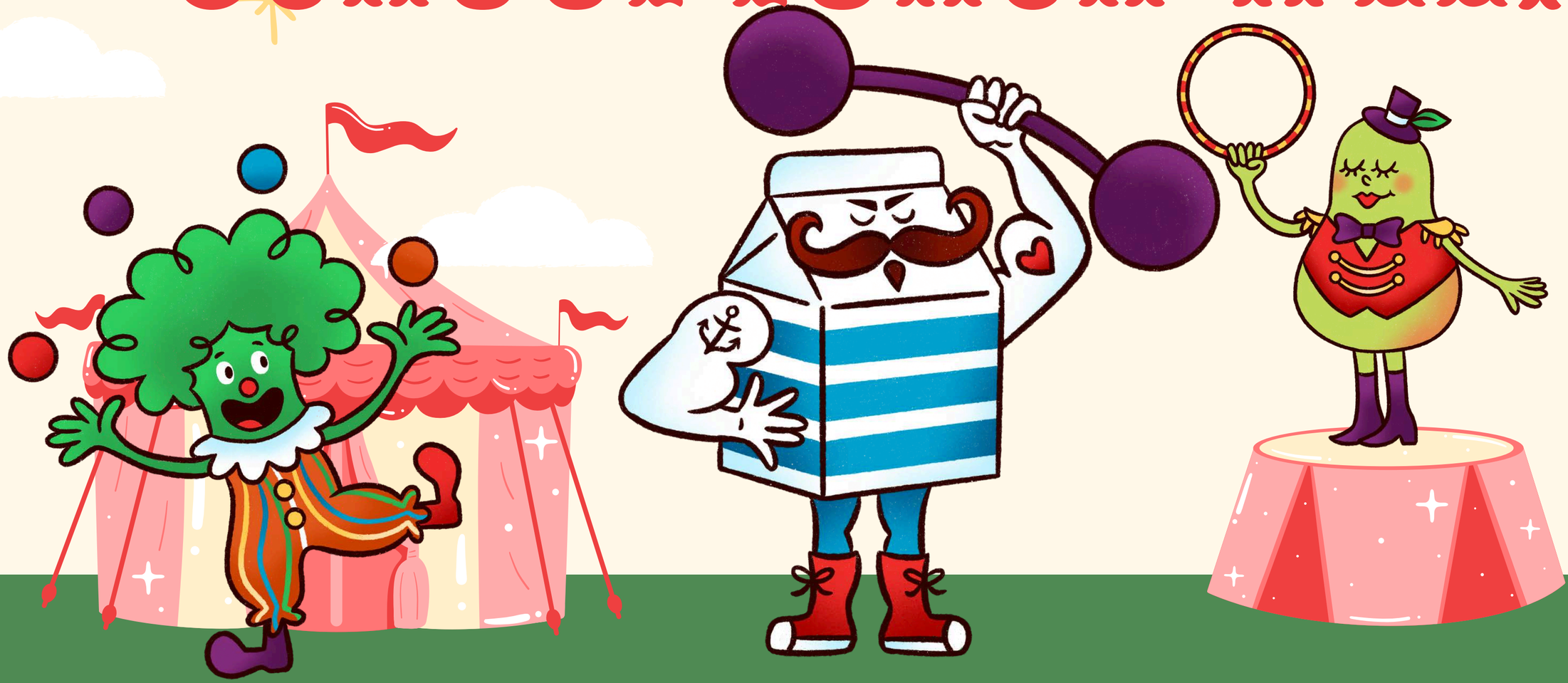
SECTION 2

Hot Topics



National

SCHOOL LUNCH WEEK



National School Lunch Week



CELEBRATE #NSLW26 OCTOBER 12-16, 2026!

Celebrate NSLW the second full week of October* every year! The theme this year is Cafeteria Circus!

On fall break? Pick another week to celebrate!

Send pictures of your decorated kitchens and recipes for National School Lunch week to your specialist via HelpDesk.

Get more information and marketing materials for National School Lunch Week by clicking here!

Farm to School Month

WAYS TO CELEBRATE

October is Farm to School Month, a time to celebrate the connections happening all over the country between children and local food.

What is Farm to School?

Farm to school enriches the connection communities have with fresh, healthy food and local producers by enhancing food purchasing and education practices at schools and early care and education sites.

Ways to Celebrate in AZ:

- Connect with local farmers. Serve local products.
- Implement the National Farm to School Network's Celebration toolkit.
- Spread the word with free stickers, posters, and bookmarks.













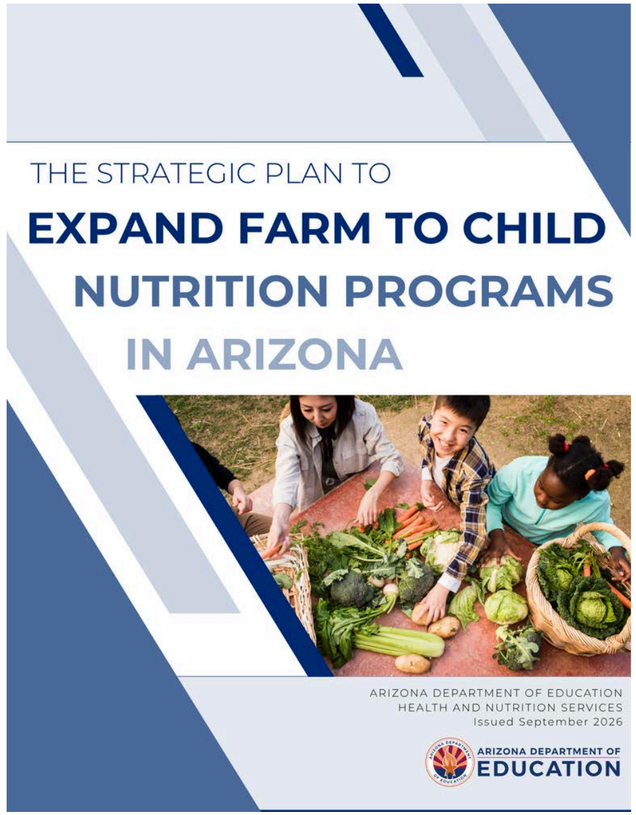
The Strategic Plan to Expand Farm to Child Nutrition Programs in Arizona

HNS shared The Strategic Plan to Expand Farm to Child Nutrition Programs in Arizona, which outlines priorities, goals, and strategies for advancing Farm to School and Farm to Early Childhood Education initiatives throughout the state.

The Strategic Plan highlights HNS's approach to increasing access to local foods, supporting nutrition education, and fostering partnerships among schools, communities, and local producers.

Please review the Strategic Plan and consider how Farm to Child Nutrition Program initiatives can support your goals and benefit the children and communities you serve.

Local food and hands-on learning support lifelong healthy habits.



THE STRATEGIC PLAN TO EXPAND FARM TO CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS IN ARIZONA

Understanding the AFR

The AFR is a required annual report that summarizes revenue and expenditures for each School Food Authority (SFA) participating in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP). It reflects **how federal, state, and local funds were spent** in support of school meal programs.

PUBLIC AND CHARTER SCHOOLS REQUIREMENTS

- Public Schools and Charters
- Submitted to ADE by:
  - **October 15th** for public schools and charters



For school year 2025-26 the deadline for non-public schools is extended to November 15th.

NON-PUBLIC SCHOOLS REQUIREMENTS

- Private schools, Residential Child Care Institutions, Special Milk Program schools, and Bureau of Indian Education schools
- Submitted to ADE by:
  - **November 15th** for non-public schools

Annual Financial Report for Non-Public Schools

NOW LOCATED IN CNPWEB

Non-public schools will no longer be able to access Common Logon to submit the Annual Financial Report (AFR). This report is now located in CNPWeb. Public and Charter schools will still submit the AFR via the AFR Portal located in the Arizona Auditor General website. The AFR report that is now located in CNPWeb is speciific to Non-Public schools ONLY.

NEW

FOR NON-PUBLIC SCHOOL AFR REPORTING ONLY!



REVISED RESOURCE: CNP ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT TRAINING MANUAL FOR NON-PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Locating SY 2026 USDA Foods Reports for the AFR

LEGACY MYFOODS

USDA Foods valuation and delivery reports used for the AFR will be located in the Legacy myFOODS system. The AFR is based on financial data from School Year 2025-2026 (SY 26), and data for the USDA Foods in Schools Program for SY 26 is maintained within the legacy myFOODS system and the DoD Fresh FFAVORS system. ADE launched CNP MyFoods for School Year 2026-2027 (SY27) announcing the new system through the HNS 01-2026 memo. As a reminder, the legacy myFOODS system must be accessed for this data and will remain accessible for the next five years to support your reporting needs.



HTTPS://CNPMYFOODS.AZED.GOV

Verification Season



PHASE 2: OFFICIALLY BEGAN OCTOBER 1!

PHASE 1: PREPARE - COMPLETE!

- count the total number of applications on file
- count and categorize applications by case number, foster, free by income, and reduced by income

PHASE 2: CALCULATE & SELECT APPLICATIONS - HAPPENING NOW!

- determine which sampling method your SFA qualifies for based on the Verification Non-Response Rate Report
- locate the ADE Verification Sample Size Calculator
- calculate how many applications will need to be verified
- select verification applications



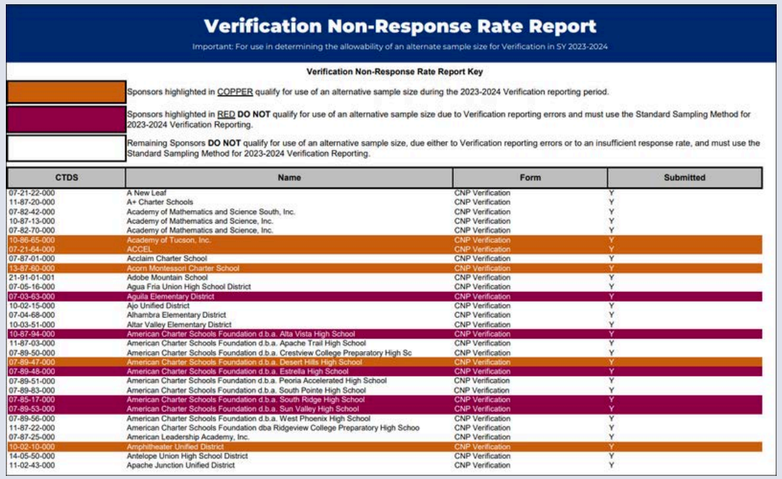
Follow along with the steps in the Verification Best Practices Calendar to ensure accurate and timely verification outcomes.

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.

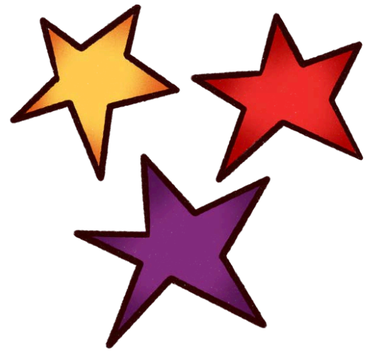
CTDS	Name	Form	Submitted
07-21-22-000	A New Leaf	CNP Verification	Y
11-87-20-000	A+ Charter Schools	CNP Verification	Y
07-82-42-000	Academy of Mathematics and Science South, Inc.	CNP Verification	Y
10-87-13-000	Academy of Mathematics and Science, Inc.	CNP Verification	Y
07-82-70-000	Academy of Mathematics 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
13-87-80-000	Acorn 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	Aguila 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. Crestview 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
07-85-17-000	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 Schoo	CNP Verification	Y
07-87-25-000	American Leadership Academy, Inc.	CNP Verification	Y
10-03-10-000	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

Adult Meal Pricing



PRICING NON-PROGRAM ADULT MEALS

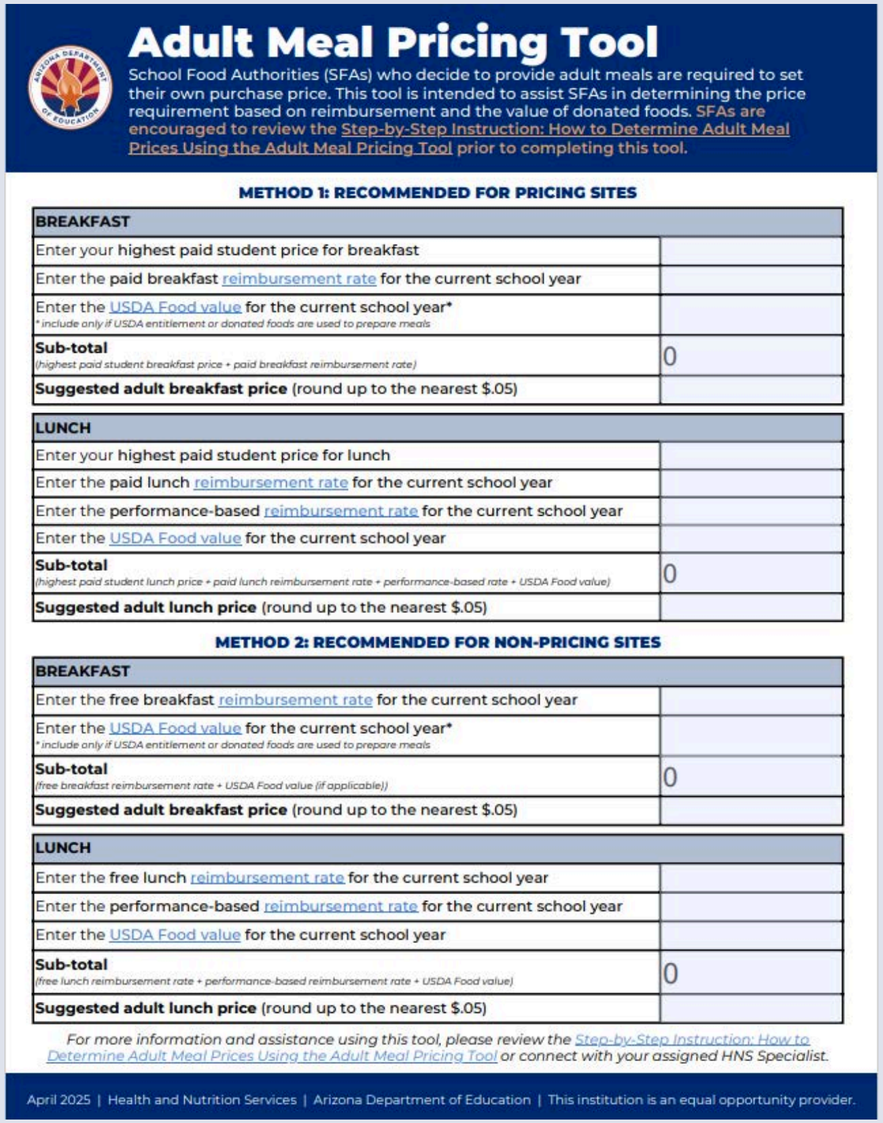
- SFAs must price adult meals so that adult payments cover the overall cost of meals, including the value of donated foods (USDA Foods) used in the production of adult meals.
- The minimum adult payment should reflect the price charged to students paying full price, plus the reimbursement rate received for a full-price meal and the value of donated foods.
- In **non-pricing programs** (e.g., Special Assistance Provisions), the adult meal price should be at least the amount of reimbursement received for a free meal, plus the value of donated foods.

Adult Meal Pricing

PRICING NON-PROGRAM ADULT MEALS

School Food Authorities (SFAs) who choose to offer meals to adults are required by Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Instruction 782-5 REV. 1 to price adult meals so that adult payments are sufficient to cover the overall cost of meals, including the value of donated foods used in the production of adult meals. Annually, prior to the start of each program year, adult meal prices must be assessed to ensure they are up-to-date, compliant, and cover the cost of adult meals.

To assist operators in pricing adult meals, the Arizona Department of Education Health and Nutrition Services has created the following resource, which is available now.



Adult Meal Pricing Tool

School Food Authorities (SFAs) who decide to provide adult meals are required to set their own purchase price. This tool is intended to assist SFAs in determining the price requirement based on reimbursement and the value of donated foods. SFAs are encouraged to review the Step-by-Step Instruction: How to Determine Adult Meal Prices Using the Adult Meal Pricing Tool prior to completing this tool.

METHOD 1: RECOMMENDED FOR PRICING SITES

BREAKFAST	
Enter your **highest paid student price for breakfast**	
Enter the **paid breakfast** reimbursement rate **for the current school year**	
Enter the USDA Food value **for the current school year*** * include only if USDA entitlement or donated foods are used to prepare meals	
Sub-total *(highest paid student breakfast price + paid breakfast reimbursement rate)*	0
Suggested adult breakfast price (round up to the nearest $.05)	

LUNCH	
Enter your **highest paid student price for lunch**	
Enter the **paid lunch** reimbursement rate **for the current school year**	
Enter the **performance-based** reimbursement rate **for the current school year**	
Enter the USDA Food value **for the current school year**	
Sub-total *(highest paid student lunch price + paid lunch reimbursement rate + performance-based rate + USDA Food value)*	0
Suggested adult lunch price (round up to the nearest $.05)	

METHOD 2: RECOMMENDED FOR NON-PRICING SITES

BREAKFAST	
Enter the **free breakfast** reimbursement rate **for the current school year**	
Enter the USDA Food value **for the current school year*** * include only if USDA entitlement or donated foods are used to prepare meals	
Sub-total *(free breakfast reimbursement rate + USDA Food value (if applicable))*	0
Suggested adult breakfast price (round up to the nearest $.05)	

LUNCH	
Enter the **free lunch** reimbursement rate **for the current school year**	
Enter the **performance-based** reimbursement rate **for the current school year**	
Enter the USDA Food value **for the current school year**	
Sub-total *(free lunch reimbursement rate + performance-based reimbursement rate + USDA Food value)*	0
Suggested adult lunch price (round up to the nearest $.05)	

For more information and assistance using this tool, please review the Step-by-Step Instruction: How to Determine Adult Meal Prices Using the Adult Meal Pricing Tool or connect with your assigned HNS Specialist.

April 2025 | Health and Nutrition Services | Arizona Department of Education | This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Adult Meal Pricing Tool

Adult Meal Pricing

PROGRAM VS NON-PROGRAM ADULT

Funds from the non-profit school food service account may not be used to provide free or discounted meals to adults unless the individual meets the definition of a **program adult**.

Program Adult: may be served a meal at no charge, but may not claim the meal for reimbursement

- directly involved in the operation and administration
- food service directors, kitchen managers, cooks, servers, cashiers, etc.

Non-Program Adult: must be charged a sufficient amount to cover the overall cost of the meal

- not directly involved in the operation and administration
- school administrators, custodians, teachers, etc.



More detailed guidance is available in **Step-by-Step Instruction: How to Determine Adult Meal Prices Using the Adult Meal Pricing Tool**

Quiz Time

True or False: Custodians are considered a Program Adult.

A True

B False



Quiz Time

True or False: Custodians are considered a Program Adult.

A True

B False

Although custodians work in the cafeteria around school food service, this is not a school food service staff who is performing Program requirements that require training through the School Nutrition Programs.

These types of adults are considered Nonprogram Adults.



Quiz Time

True or False: Funds from the nonprofit school food service account may be used to provide free or discounted meals to non-program adults.

A **True**

B **False**



Quiz Time

True or False: Funds from the nonprofit school food service account may be used to provide free or discounted meals to non-program adults.

A True

B False

Funds from the nonprofit school food service account can only be used to cover meals for adults who work directly with the school food service and are considered program adults.

Non-program adults are required to be charged for meals.



Quiz Time

Which HNS resource walks SFAs through the Verification timeline and provides all needed forms and resources?

A **Verification Non-Response Rate Report**

B **Verification Tracking Form**

C **Verification Best Practices Calendar**



Quiz Time

Which HNS resource walks SFAs through the Verification timeline and provides all needed forms and resources?

A **Verification Non-Response Rate Report**

B **Verification Tracking Form**

C **Verification Best Practices Calendar**

The Verification Best Practices Calendar provides all steps, forms, and resources to Phases 1-4 of Verification.

HNS created this resource to assist SFAs through Verification to ensure accurate and timely reporting.



USDA Foods Delivery Site Approval Requirements for SY 2026-2027

To complete approval of a USDA Foods delivery site, the following must occur:

A Purchase Order (PO) or signed letter of Responsibility (LOR) received by Shamrock Foods Co.

Please route those letters to Accounts Manager: Vanessa_Anderson@shamrockfoods.com

Once all requirements have been satisfied and approval is finalized, ADE will distribute a communication of approval to the SFA, and the delivery site will be activated and approved for USDA Foods ordering.

For districts with a delivery site in Pending status in CNP MYFoods for School Year 2026-2027, please be advised that site activation in CNP MyFoods requires either a Purchase Order (PO) or a Letter of Responsibility (LOR) to be on file with Shamrock Foods Co. This letter serves as acceptance of responsibility for applicable delivery fees.



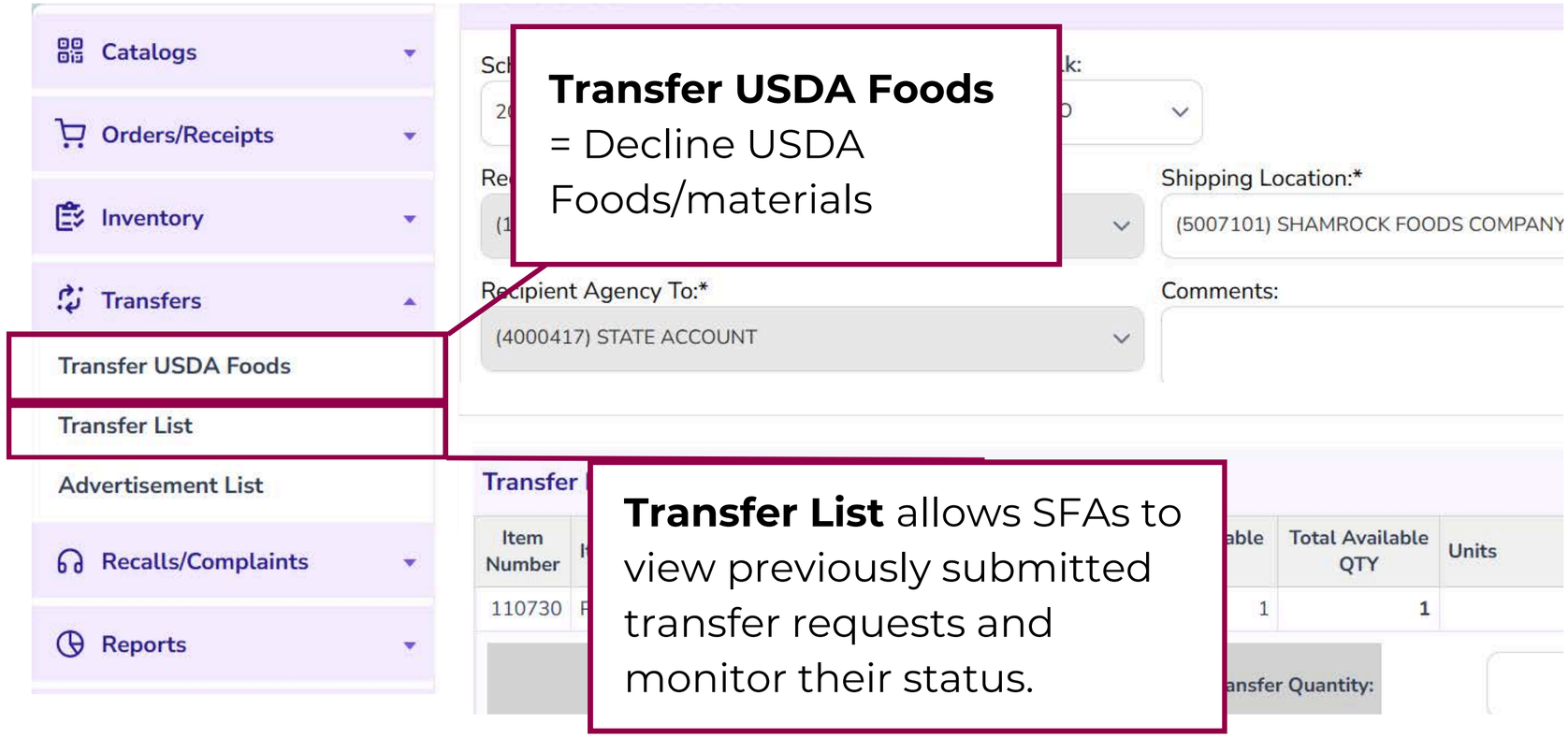
To help avoid delays, agencies may copy USDAFoods@azed.gov when submitting the Letter of Responsibility to Shamrock Foods Co.

CNP MyFoods

DECLINING USDA FOODS HAS CHANGED IN CNP MYFOODS

Submitting a USDA Foods Transfer Request in CNP MyFoods indicates that your district wishes to surrender and transfer its USDA Foods inventory to the State Inventory.

Once transferred, the inventory will be moved to the State account and made available through the Advertisement List for other districts to request.



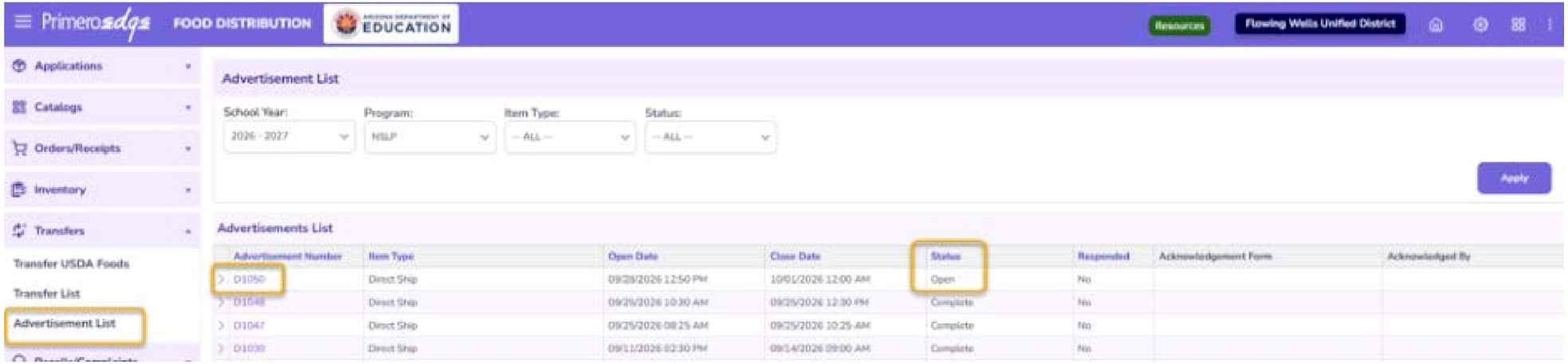
In the myFOODS legacy system, under the available materials list, the "Decline" button was used.

CNP MyFoods

LOOKING FOR ADDITIONAL USDA FOODS?

Advertisement List is now available to order USDA Foods.

- To add USDA Foods to inventory, use the Advertisement List (formerly known as the Surplus Catalog).
- The Advertisement List is the appropriate location to request available foods.



Important Note: Once Advertisement List inventory has been approved and transferred to the Recipient Agency (RA), it will be visible in Inventory > Delivery Ordering, where the RA can review available inventory and manage Delivery Orders.

CNP MyFoods

MESSAGES AND NOTIFICATIONS

System updates and required actions:

To ensure you receive important and time-sensitive updates, please subscribe to Health and Nutrition Services email notifications on our homepage and regularly review Messages and Notifications on the CNP MyFoods Food Distribution Home Page. These communication channels provide critical program information, system updates, and required actions.

Thank you for your continued partnership and cooperation. Please contact USDAFoods@azed.gov with any questions.



Processing Pounds

CHECK PROCESSING POUND USAGE

Now that 25% of the year has passed, the processing pounds should be about 25% used. ADE will be reviewing Processing Pounds and Planners to assess the progress of Processing Pound Usage. ADE may reach out and inquire whether we could be of assistance or guidance.



Updates to the DoD Fresh Program and FFAVORS Ordering System

The FFAVORS team is aware that some users are currently experiencing timeout and connection issues and are actively working to resolve them. In the meantime, they recommend refreshing your screen or pressing the F5 key (or FN + F5 on a laptop) and then trying again.

FFAVORS Login URL Change REMINDER

Effective July 18, 2026, the FFAVORS login URL has changed. The recommended method for accessing FFAVORS is through the USDA Foods website: fna.usda.gov/usda-foods/ffavors.

Select the FFAVORS Login link on that page, which will direct you to the current login location. If you are unable to log in, please try the following troubleshooting steps:

- Use Google Chrome.
- Refresh your screen or press F5 (or Fn + F5 on a laptop).
- Clear your browser cache.
- Close all browser windows.
- Reopen your browser and try again.

For technical assistance, please contact the FFAVORS Help Desk at sm.fn.ffavors@usda.gov or use the Create HelpDesk Request link under HelpDesk/Incidents to submit your request.

FFAVORS Receipting Requirement

REMINDERS

- Receipts are considered past due if they have not been entered in FFAVORS by the end of the 2nd business day after the scheduled Received Delivery Date (RDD).

- When there are past due receipts, no orders can be placed by (or on behalf of) the customer. The order block is removed after these receipts are entered.





DoD Fresh Fruits and Vegetables

Keep an eye out in your FFAVORS catalog for these featured items for October 2026:
The new catalog is available every Sunday for the following week.

- Apples
- Broccoli
- Cabbage
- Carrots
- Cauliflower
- Celery
- Grapes
- Oranges
- Pears
- Romaine
- Salad Mix
- Spinach
- Strawberry
- Tomatoes



SECTION 3

Training Opportunities



September's Training Opportunities

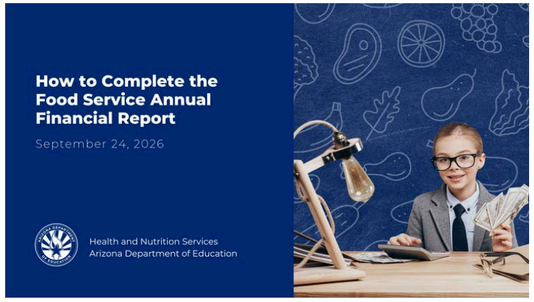
To access webinar slides, recordings, and online trainings, visit HNS' webpage or refer to the HNS Communications Event Follow-up email.



Staying on Track: September



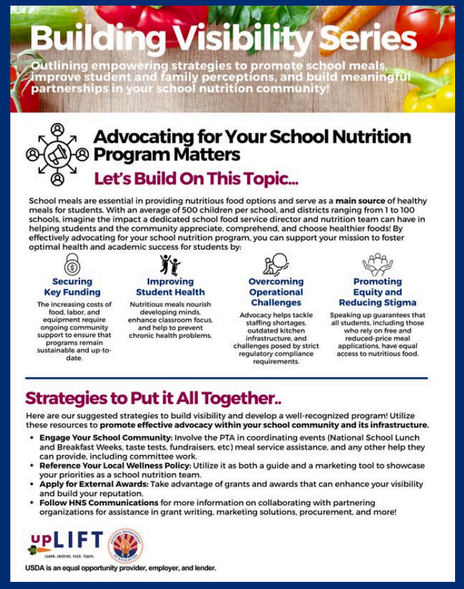
Verification Review for School Year 2026-2027
A review of verification activities



How to Complete the Food Services AFR
Support for operators when completing the required Annual Financial Report (AFR).



September upLIFT
Launching the SY 2026-2027 upLIFT initiative: Community to Cafeteria



SY 26-27 upLIFT

UPLIFT WEBINAR: CONNECTING WITH LOCAL FARMS & FARM TO SCHOOL

Join us on **October 20** where we will discover innovative ways to bridge the gap between local farms and educational institutions. This engaging session will feature insights from Pinnacle Prevention and ADE's newly appointed Farm to School Coordinator. Learn about successful strategies, hear inspiring stories from the field, and explore how these initiatives can benefit your community. Whether you're an educator, farmer, or simply passionate about sustainable food systems, this webinar promises to offer valuable perspectives and actionable ideas to help integrate farm-fresh produce into school cafeterias, enriching both students' diets and education.

Click here to register!

NSLP Fall 2026

IN-PERSON WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

HNS is excited to offer a variety of in-person workshops this fall to support sponsors in meeting program requirements and enhancing their knowledge of school nutrition operations. To help with planning and scheduling, HNS has provided a Fall Workshop Schedule outlining upcoming training opportunities throughout the season.

The schedule includes workshop dates, locations, and registration information so sponsors can plan ahead and incorporate these professional development opportunities into their training plans. We encourage sponsors to review the schedule early and register for workshops that best meet the needs of their staff and programs.



Workshop Schedule

NSLP New Director Workshop

IN-PERSON WORKSHOP

This workshop will equip School Food Authorities with the essential knowledge and skills to successfully manage their National School Lunch Program. Participants will engage in interactive activities that enhance their understanding of how to effectively run their NSLP program. They will identify key documentation needed to ensure a smooth operation. Attendees will learn best practices and acquire strategies to meet all regulatory requirements.

Registration is available in the **ADE Professional Learning and Development (APLD)**. Please only register for one in-person session. We ask that only one attendee per entity register, as space is limited and is offered on a first-come first-served basis.

PHOENIX

- 9:00 am - 12:30 pm **10/21/2026**
- Location: 1535 W Jefferson St, Phoenix, AZ 85007
- Registration Link: https://azed.geniussis.com/PublicStudentSignUp.aspx?aid=11567



NSLP Food Production Workshop

IN-PERSON WORKSHOP

This workshop teaches kitchen managers and school nutrition staff how to accurately complete USDA-compliant food production records, including forecasting, meal count documentation, and recordkeeping for successful Administrative Reviews.

Registration is available in the **ADE Professional Learning and Development (APLD)**.

TUCSON

- 9:00 am - 12:00 pm **10/21/2026**
- Location: 416 W. Congress
  Tucson, AZ 85701
- Registration Link:
  https://azed.geniussis.com/PublicStudentSignUp.aspx?aid=11565



Suggested Trainings

Are you new to planning menus or returning and could use a refresher? Please review:

- **How to Plan a Lunch Menu for the National School Lunch Program**
- **How to Plan a Breakfast Menu for the School Breakfast Program**
- **Menu Planning Mastery: Creating Compliant and Nutritious School Meals**



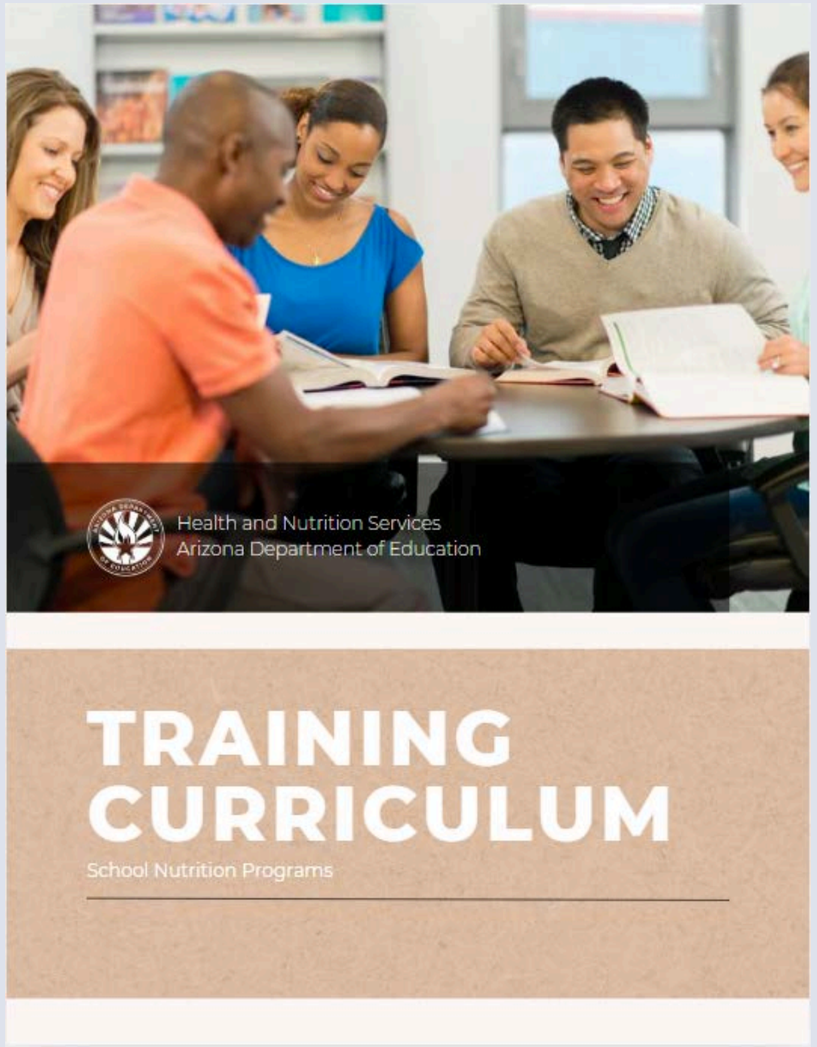




Training for School Nutrition Programs

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 for Arizona Child Nutrition Professionals Operating the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Program

SECTION 4

Upcoming Deadlines & Communications



Mark Your Calendars!

OCTOBER EVENTS & OPPORTUNITIES

Arizona Department of Education (ADE) Health and Nutrition Services (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.

13 live training and event opportunities await School Nutrition Professionals this October.



For more information and links to register, check your inbox for the HNS Events Forecast: October 2026 from HNS Communications!

In Our Drafts

KEEP A LOOK OUT FOR THE FOLLOWING EMAILS THIS MONTH:

- Honoring Native American Heritage Month
- Submitting the Verification Summary Report Webinars and Workshop
- Annual Financial Report Memorandum
- CNP MyFoods Application Training for Receiving Entitlement



October Checklist

October 1 - October 10
Submit September reimbursement claims (best practice)

October 1
Verification Begins
Conduct direct certification (best practice to find all DC matches before Verification!)

October 15
Deadline to submit the Annual Financial Report (Public schools and Charters)

October 20
upLIFT: Innovative Menu Design: Creating Tempting and Nutritious School Meals

October 30
60-day deadline to submit August claims

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

This month...

- **Begin verifying household income applications that were picked for verification.**
- **Celebrate National School Lunch Week!**
- **Celebrate Farm to School Month and serve local foods on your menu!!**
- **Complete the AFR.**
- **Ensure Adult Meal Prices are correct using the Adult Meal Pricing Tool.**



Join Us Next Month!

Staying On Track: November

November 3, 2026
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: October 2026

Information to include when documenting this training for Professional Standards:

Training Title: October Staying on Track

Key Area: 1000 - Nutrition, 3000 - Administration, 4000 - Communications and Marketing

Learning Code: 1130, 1230, 1310, 3120, 3130, 3350, 4120

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.

TAKE SURVEY

Information to include when documenting this training for Professional Standards:

- **Training Title:** October Staying on Track
- **Key Area:** 1000 - Nutrition, 3000 - Administration, 4000 - Communications and Marketing
- **Learning Code:** 1130, 1230, 1310, 3120, 3130, 3350, 4120
- **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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