

Check in with CANS

Sept. 3, 2026, 2:30 p.m. CT/ 1:30 p.m. MT

CANS Phone: (605) 773-3413
CANS Website: doe.sd.gov/cans
CANS Email: DOE.SchoolLunch@state.sd.us

Welcome!

All Program Reminders or Updates:

State Office Closure

State offices are closed on Monday, September 7 in observation of Labor Day.

CANS Staffing Updates

- Gina Schuetzle – email: Gina.Schuetzle@state.sd.us – phone: 605-773-8072
- Janel Hettich – email: Janel.Hettich@state.sd.us – phone: 605-773-4600

Pathways Survey – Coming Soon!

We're planning for our annual Pathways to Child Nutrition Success Conference in 2027, and we'd love your input! A short survey will be sent out next week in the CANS News, so please be on the lookout for that.

Farm to Child Nutrition Reminders or Updates:

Where are you serving local food right now?

There are so many opportunities right now to serve some of South Dakota's tastiest food! Don't miss your opportunity!

- Swap out one of your fruit servings for apples, melons, or cantaloupe
- Use South Dakota grown onions in a recipe
- Those meaty South Dakota tomatoes would love to be in your salad bar—available in lots of different varieties and colors

Farm to School Crunch Off

The crunch off begins September 14 and concludes October 31. Postcards were sent out from our office this week to both CACFP and SNP program operators. Use the QR code to access resources for planning and carrying out your Crunch Off activity. If your postcard hasn't arrived yet, go to the [F2S Crunch Off](#) page and you'll find a whole list of crunch off food ideas, a promotion poster to help advertise your event, a fun photo frame or sign kiddos can hold when they are biting down or crunching their local food item, plus a toolkit and guidebook if you're new to the Crunch off or looking for added inspiration!

Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Reminders or Updates:

CACFP iCAN Applications

Applications for Program Year (PY) 2026–2027 are now open, and all completed, approved applications must be submitted by October 16, 2026. The [CACFP iCAN Sponsor User Manual](#) is available on the CANS CACFP webpage under the iCAN section under Application Manuals, and applicants should use this manual to complete their application in order to avoid delays, as it provides answers to common questions and helpful tips for preventing frequent errors.

Please remember that when submitting your August and September claims, you will need to switch back to Program Year 2025–2026 because iCAN will automatically default to the 2026–2027 year.

CACFP Annual Training Reminder – Due Sept. 30, 2026

All agencies are required to participate in annual training each program year (October 1- September 30). If your agency has not met the annual training requirements (see table below for requirements) for this program year, you have until September 30 to complete the training. As a reminder, failure to complete the annual training will result in your agency being declared Seriously Deficient. These trainings can be found on our [DOE Professional Learning Platform website](#) or download our printable [Professional Learning Platform Guide](#). For more information regarding training, please see the [CACFP Annual Training Requirements](#).

School Nutrition Program (SNP) Reminders or Updates:

House Bill 1082 – Reduced Price Meals Updates

For additional information on how to implement these changes, you can view a copy of the [recorded webinar](#), view the [slides](#), or read through the [frequently asked questions](#).

Next Steps:

- If you have less than 10 operating days in August, we strongly urge you to consider combining your August and September claims together.
- The iCAN system updates needed to pay out this reimbursement have passed our testing phase and we are in the process of moving the changes from our test system into our live production system.
- On September 28, **CANS** will modify every SFA'S iCAN site applications to implement these new changes. There is a box that we will need to check in the internal use only.
 - The Authorized Representative listed in your iCAN application will receive an email from notice from iCAN that the application has been submitted and then approved due to these changes.
 - This will allow your state and federal reimbursement to be processed as normal along with your September claim in October.
- No action is required from the SFA at this time.

National School Lunch Week is Oct. 12-16, 2026

“Cafeteria Circus!” is the theme for National School Lunch Week this year. This annual event was established by President Kennedy in 1962 to highlight the importance of healthy school meals. Visit the [School Nutrition Association's website](#) to explore promotional materials, activity ideas, marketing resources, and more to bring the excitement of the big top to your school community. Please let us know how you plan to celebrate and send us pictures!



New Team Nutrition 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](#).

Fresh Fruit and Vegetable

The first allocation of your FFVP award must be fully spent or obligated by September 30th. Remaining funds cannot be rolled over into the second allocation cycle starting October 1st. This is a great time of the year to purchase fresh local produce from your area producers. There are SO many delicious South Dakota grown melons, cantaloupe tomatoes, apples, carrots, and many other seasonal items that you can serve in your FFVP right now.

Eligibility Webinar

Join us on Sept. 10 at 2:30 p.m. (CT) for a practical, easy-to-follow session for school staff who review and approve free and reduced-price meal applications. We'll cover the basics of helping families' complete forms, walk through eligibility guidelines, and break down what happens during processing and approval. Join the Eligibility webinar via [Zoom](#) Meeting ID: 741 710 0063

Verification of Free and Reduced Applications

You can begin verification now. You must begin verification activities no later than October 1. Although you can start the process early, your Verification sample pool must include all approved Free and Reduced Applications on file as of Oct. 1. CANS will present a Verification Process webinar on Sept. 17 at 2:30 p.m. (CT) via [Zoom](#) Meeting ID: 969 0871 2496

October Training: Register Today! School Meals 101: Essential Training for New School Nutrition Professionals

CANS is hosting an in-person School Meals 101: Essential Training for New School Nutrition Professionals in Pierre on Oct. 21-23, 2026. This 2½-day interactive training is designed for new or newer (3 years or less in a lead or supervisory role) child nutrition professionals. Participants will gain a comprehensive introduction to the USDA School Breakfast and National School Lunch Programs, including program requirements, best practices, and essential school nutrition topics. This session is designed to provide the knowledge and practical guidance needed to build confidence and support success in their role.

October Training: Financial Management for School Nutrition Professionals. Registration Coming Soon!

CANS is welcoming the Institute of Child Nutrition to assist in providing an in-person training on Financial Management in the School Nutrition Program. This training will be in Pierre, SD and will be the last week in October. Learn practical strategies for managing finances, controlling food and labor costs, developing budgets, and analyzing your program's financial health. This training will provide tools to help you make informed financial decisions and strengthen the success of your school nutrition program. More details coming soon!

North Dakota September Kitchen Counter Conversations

Join this one-hour Dietary Specifications webinar on Sept. 15, 2026, at 2:00 p.m. CDT. This webinar will review USDA meal pattern requirements, including updates to sodium and added sugar limits, documentation requirements, and helpful resources such as the weighted averages spreadsheet. This is a great opportunity to refresh your knowledge and make sure your program is prepared for the new school year.

Field Trip Meal Service Requirements

All lunches that are claimed for reimbursement must meet the daily meal pattern requirements. Students must have access to all five required food components. If students self-select field trip lunches in the cafeteria line just prior to leaving for a field trip, offer versus serve may be implemented. Meals must be counted at the point of service, the place at which students receive the meal. Schools may have a teacher check off names on a list as each student receives a meal. This list must then be returned to food service so the meals can be entered into the meal counting system and properly recorded for claiming. Another option for schools is for students to select a bag lunch at the cafeteria and enter their PIN before leaving on the field trip. Counts of bag lunches sent or returned or field trip attendance counts may not be used as a meal count. Check out the [USDA resource guidance on keeping "bag" lunches safe](#).

Meal Patterns for Preschoolers

Schools may follow the NSLP/SBP K–5 meal pattern for preschoolers who are co-mingled with K–5 students, meaning they are served in the same service area at the same time. If preschoolers are served at a different time or in a different service area than K–5 students, they are not considered co-mingled and must follow the preschool meal pattern. The preschool meal pattern has different requirements for milk, juice, grain-based desserts, and OVS, so be sure staff understand which meal pattern applies to their meal service. For additional information on preschool meal pattern

requirements, refer to [USDA Memo SP 37-2017, Flexibility for Co-Mingled Preschool Meals: Questions and Answers](#), and the [USDA Food Buying Guide Preschool Meal Pattern charts](#).

Meal Modification Requirements

Schools and institutions in USDA school nutrition programs must provide reasonable meal modifications for children with disabilities that restrict their diet. If the modification does not meet USDA meal pattern requirements and the SFA claims the meal, families must provide a medical statement explaining how the child's condition limits a major life activity, the accommodations needed, and any foods to omit with suggested alternatives. USDA regulations do not require medical statements to be updated on a regular basis; however, families are encouraged to review meal modifications annually to ensure they are still accurate and needed. To help with this process, use [Meal Modification Request Form](#) to ensure compliance. For additional guidance, see FNS' [Modifications to Accommodate Disabilities in the School Meal Programs](#).

After School Snack Program

SFAs participating in the After School Snack Program must complete an On-Site Review at each site within the first 30 days of operation. A second On-Site Review must be completed at each site before the end of the school year. The monitoring form can be found on the [CANS webpage](#), and additional resources such as the [Snack Meal Pattern Chart](#) and [Frequently Asked Questions](#) are also available to support program compliance.

Hutterite Colony Free and Reduced-Price Applications

Per USDA Memo SP 95-04, each family in the colony must apply for meal benefits on a household application to receive free or reduced-price meals. Colony applications follow standard application rules. Additional documentation may be needed to support the individual household determinations. If you would like to read more about determining eligibility at Colony Schools, please reach out to DOE.SchoolLunch@state.sd.us for access to the memo or to ask specific questions.

USDA Foods in School/Food Distribution Program Reminders or Updates:

USDA Food October Order

The next USDA Food order opens on September 8, please make sure that your iCAN FDP information is up to date to ensure the appropriate individuals receive the order notification email.

DoD Fresh/FFAVORS

USDA has recently updated the DoD Fresh/FFAVORS website URL, resulting in technical difficulties when accessing the site. If you have previously bookmarked the [FFAVORS](#) page, please update your browser bookmark accordingly. Clearing your browsing data and cookies may help to access the site.

Please be advised that schools are required to receipt their DoD Fresh orders in FFAVORS within two business days.

September Delivery Reminder

September deliveries will commence on Monday, September 7. Despite the Labor Day closure for many schools, the trucking company must include that day to complete all deliveries for the week.

Strawberry Cup Shortage

There is currently a shortage of strawberries due to unexpected crop issues caused by adverse weather. As a result, vendors have been unable to submit bids. At this time, we are unsure whether strawberry cups will be available for the 2026–2027 school year.

Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and SNP Seamless Summer Option (SSO) Reminders or Updates:

Thank you for a great summer!

We'd like to thank all those who contributed and played a role in ensuring that children in our communities received nourishing meals! Please complete this short [survey](#) **TODAY** September 3, 2026. Only have three responses so far, would love to get more input from those who participated. By completing this survey, you are providing important information that will assist with plans for next summer.

Upcoming Trainings or Calls:

Check in with CANS Zoom Calls

These calls occur on the first Thursday of each month at 2:30 p.m. CT / 1:30 p.m. MT.

- You can register for the [CANS Zoom Calls](#).
- We are utilizing a different format this year, so you can register in advance for the calls, you will receive automated email reminders and automatic calendar invites by registering. The calls will still take place via Zoom.
 - The next call will be Thursday, October 1

On Demand Training From CANS

Current training videos are located on the [DOE online professional development platform](#). Use the categories drop down to select Child and Adult Nutrition Services to filter training options. Enroll in your selected training videos. If you are looking for old *Crash Course with CANS* training videos, they are all under Crash Course with CANS simply enroll to access the entire list of short training videos.

Thank you for joining us today and for your service feeding children across South Dakota!