

## Check in with CANS

### Oct. 1, 2026, 2:30 p.m. CT

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

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## Welcome!

### All Program Reminders or Updates:

#### 2027 Pathways to Child Nutrition Success Planning Survey

We are preparing for our 2027 Pathways to Child Nutrition Success Conference and would appreciate your input! Please take a few moments to complete this brief 5-question [survey to assist us in planning a training experience](#) that effectively supports your program needs. Deadline to complete this survey is October 2.

#### Promoting Real Food in Child Nutrition Programs

USDA's Team Nutrition announced the release of nutrition education and training resources designed to help Child Nutrition Program operators to promote the clear, common-sense message of the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2025-2030*: Eat real food. These resources focus on eating whole, nutrient-dense foods. These foods include protein foods, dairy, healthy fats, vegetables, fruits, and whole grains. Additionally, it highlights the importance of limiting the intake of highly processed foods, added sugars, and refined carbohydrates.

#### Resources for Schools

- [Real Food Guide to School Lunch for Families](#)
- [Real Food Guide to School Breakfast for Families](#)
- [Stronger With School Meals Activity Booklet](#)

#### Resources for Child Care Organizations

- Serving Vegetables in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) [Training Worksheet](#), [Recorded Webinar](#), and [Training Slides](#)
- Nibbles for Health: Nutrition Newsletters for Parents of Young Children
  - [Healthy Meals with the Real Food Pyramid](#)
  - [Developing a Taste for Less Sodium](#)
  - [Limiting Added Sugars for Healthier Habits](#)
  - [Prioritize Protein Foods](#)

### Farm to Child Nutrition Reminders or Updates:

#### Farm to School Crunch Off

Crunch Off is in full swing! Use the [F2S Crunch Off](#) page to 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! You can register crunches multiple times...just make sure you are crunching on different days. Crunch off ends October 31.

## **Farm to School Month**

October is Farm to School Month, and to celebrate, we're sending out Harvest of the Month resource packets. Each packet includes fact sheets, recipes, coloring activities, trivia questions, and talking points for all 25 featured foods. The materials come organized in a binder, with each set in its own clear page protector.

We hope these simplified, ready-to-use resources make it easier to feature Harvest of the Month items in your menus—and to have fun promoting them!

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

### **CACFP Program Year 2026-27 iCAN Applications**

Applications are open for program year (PY) 2026-2027. Complete approved applications are due on October 16, 2026. The CACFP iCAN Sponsor User Manual is on the [CANS webpage](#) in the iCAN section under Application Manuals. Follow this manual when filling out your application to help avoid delays. It has answers to common questions and tips to avoid common errors.

### **2027 CACFP (and SFSP) Area Eligibility Data Available**

The FNA has updated the 2027 Area Eligibility Data and interactive mapping tool. I would encourage you to check the updated information using the [2027 Area Eligibility Mapper](#).

## **School Nutrition Program (SNP) Reminders or Updates:**

### **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 October 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. Deadline to register is Friday October 2. Register today at: [School Meals 101: Essential Training for New Child Nutrition Professionals](#)

### **Financial Management for School Nutrition Professionals. October 27-28, 2026 in Pierre, SD Registration NOW OPEN!**

CANS is excited to welcome the Institute of Child Nutrition to provide an in-person training on Financial Management in the School Nutrition Program. Business managers and food service directors are encouraged to attend together! This training will cover practical strategies for managing finances, controlling food and labor costs, developing budgets, and evaluating your program's financial health. Participants will gain useful tools and strategies to support informed financial decisions and strengthen the success of their school nutrition program. Register today at: [Financial Management for School Nutrition Professionals](#)

## **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!



## **Verification Reporting Reminders**

Your verification activities should be underway! The Verification Process presentation is now available on the [DOE Professional Learning Platform](#), under School Nutrition Programs. All free and reduced applications on file, as of Oct. 1 should be counted and utilized toward determining your verification sample. All schools must submit a verification report by Nov. 15, 2026, regardless of if they are required to conduct verification activities. CANS will present a Verification Reporting webinar on Oct. 20, 2:30-3:30 p.m. (CT) via Zoom Meeting [Verification Reporting](#)

## **Meal Modernization of the Dakotas – In Person Culinary Training**

Join North Dakota’s Team Nutrition for this year’s [Culinary Training, Meal Pattern Modernization: Seasoning Without the Shaker](#), on Friday, November 6, in Colton, SD. This hands-on training will cover the latest USDA meal pattern updates and practical techniques for reducing sodium while maximizing flavor. Participants will explore seasoning alternatives, sharpen culinary skills, and prepare recipes that meet school nutrition dietary specifications. There is no cost to attend.

## **Food Safety Training Requirement (Susan)**

All School Nutrition Program Directors (or those managing daily food service operations) must complete 8 hours of food safety training:

- Within 5 years prior to their start date
- Within 30 days after their start date
- Every 5 years, regardless of start date

Training may be completed either in a single session or spread out over a five-year period. Schools are not licensed foodservice establishments; therefore, state and federal law does not require a certified foodservice manager. However, staff may still take certified trainings such as ServSafe®.

Food Safety Training opportunities are available through the [DOE Professional Learning Platform](#) and the [Institute of Child Nutrition](#). Be sure to keep up with tracking and documentation and save all certificates of completion you receive.

## **House Bill 1082 - Reduced-Price Meal Reimbursement Updates**

Payments already made for July and August claims have now been recalculated to include the Reduced-Price Meal Reimbursement portion paid by the State per HB 1082. If your district has already received a payment for a July and/or August claim, the additional funds for the state reimbursement will be included with your October payment – this was a one-time process to recalculate claims already paid. Please login to iCAN to review the revised claim(s) for July and/or August. The amended claims are already submitted, please do not click the submit button again, as that will knock the claim out of submitted status. All future claims will include the state reimbursement. If you notice any errors, please reach out to CANS as soon as possible.

## **Grant Opportunity**

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced this week a new \$32.5 million initiative Developing Evidence for Programs to Ensure Nutrition for Development (DEPEND). Awards are expected to range from \$75,000 to \$2.5 million, depending on the scope of the proposal. Public schools, public school districts, public charter schools and School Food Authorities (SFAs) are eligible to apply. The deadline to apply is **Oct. 13, 2026**.

Note: no cost sharing or match are required.

Through one-time investments, DEPEND will support School Food Authorities, school districts, and individual schools pursuing innovative approaches in four key areas:

1. Food Purchasing & Supply.
2. Workforce & Food Production
3. Student Demand & Meal Economics
4. Transforming Operations & Infrastructure

Schools and districts can learn more about DEPEND by visiting the newly launched HHS [Real Food in Schools](#) website. This grant is not administered by SD DOE CANS.

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

### **DoD Fresh/FFAVORS Reminder**

Please be sure to receipt your DoD Fresh/FFAVORS orders within two days of your delivery.

### **Strawberry Cup Update**

USDA is cancelling all Strawberry Cup orders due to the shortage. There may be a load and ½ delivered but this is not confirmed, yet. There won't be any replacement items ordered in place of the Strawberry Cups.

### **USDA Foods Product Information Sheets**

Product information sheets can be found on the [USDA Food Distribution for Child Nutrition Programs webpage](#). These sheets provide you with information that you may need for ordering and crediting the various items.

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

No updates for SFSP and SSO.

## **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

- You can register for [Check in 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, Nov. 5

### **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.

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