



**United States  
Department of  
Agriculture**

Food and  
Nutrition  
Service

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SUBJECT: Transmittal of Guidance on the Summer Food Service Program

TO: Regional Directors  
Special Nutrition Programs  
All Regions

State Directors  
Child Nutrition Programs  
All States

Attached is guidance for FNS Regional Offices and State agencies on the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). The questions and answers included in this guidance were prepared in response to issues raised at the SFSP National Conference held in Arlington, Virginia, in December 2008.

States should direct questions to their Regional Office. Regional Office questions should be directed to Julie Brewer.

**Original Signed**

Cynthia Long  
Director  
Child Nutrition Division

Attachment

## Q&As Regarding the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)

### Site Approval

- 1. Question: May an institution that participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) during the school year switch to the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) for the summer?**

**Answer:** Generally, institutions that participate in CACFP may not claim reimbursement under SFSP [7 CFR 225.15(a)(2)]. However, CACFP institutions that have substantial changes in activities or enrollment, or develop a separate food service program for children who are not enrolled in the CACFP, and meet SFSP eligibility criteria, may be approved to participate in the SFSP. Institutions may not switch back and forth between participation in CACFP and participation in SFSP to serve the same children.

Institutions that are approved for both the CACFP and the SFSP must ensure that the same children are not served meals in both programs and separate records must be kept for each program [FNS Instruction 782-4, Rev. 2].

- 2. Question: May a CACFP institution establish a separate organization using a separate tax identification number to participate in the SFSP?**

**Answer:** Institutions may not establish separate entities using separate tax identification numbers to serve the same children under different child nutrition programs in order to avoid the program restrictions or to earn higher reimbursement. However, if there is a legitimate need for a separate organization and that organization has sufficient differences in activities and management, and serves children who are not enrolled in the CACFP, it may be approved to participate in SFSP if it meets SFSP eligibility criteria. The organizations must ensure that the same children are not served meals in both programs and keep separate records for each program [FNS Instruction 782-4, Rev. 2].

- 3. Question: What standards should be used in determining whether SFSP open sites are too close in proximity?**

**Answer:** When evaluating proposed summer food service sites, the State agency is required to ensure that the area the site proposes to serve is not or will not be served in whole or in part by another site, unless it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the State agency that each site will serve children not served by any other site in the same area for the same meal [7 CFR 225.6(d)(1)(ii)].

States have discretion, therefore, in determining whether sites are targeting the same area or children. To support the greatest summer meal participation and access it may be appropriate for States to allow sites in relatively close physical proximity to operate in the community, each serving its own participants. Sponsors should be able to explain why differences in the population of children they intend to serve require multiple sites in close proximity to each other. For example, an open site at an elementary school may attract elementary-age summer

school children and community children to the lunch served in the school cafeteria, while an open site at a nearby public park also serves lunch but attracts primarily teens. Therefore, the State may determine that even though these sites are in relatively close physical proximity they are attracting different groups of children who may not be otherwise served.

Sites also may be close in proximity, but separated by a physical barrier that limits access. For example, sites located on opposite sides of a busy highway may be close in proximity, but access to the sites is restricted due to the road. The State may determine that the sites are serving different children based on the physical conditions that restrict access. A possible solution for sites in close proximity is to have the same meal times at both sites or shorten the meal time to avoid the possibility of children traveling from one site to another.

**4. Question: When using school data to determine area eligibility for SFSP, is there a particular month that institutions must reference?**

**Answer:** For purposes of the SFSP, areas in which poor economic conditions exist are those areas where at least 50 percent of the children are eligible for free or reduced price school meals under the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and the School Breakfast Program [7 CFR 225.2].

To minimize administrative burden on the State education agency, existing school food authority (SFA) reporting requirements for the NSLP and CACFP (October data), or data from an alternate month designated by the State, should be used to determine SFSP area eligibility throughout the State. Once the month is established it must be used for all site eligibility determinations that year.

The data from other months may be used to determine SFSP area eligibility in specific cases when special circumstances exist. For example, a major event, such as the loss of a large employer or a significant natural disaster, might change the economic make-up of a community in a short amount of time and render the October or alternate-month data irrelevant to current conditions. In this situation, States may approve the use of enrollment data from a later month, on a case-by-case basis.

**5. Question: In determining area eligibility, may eligibility be based on NSLP participation rates or must it be based only on enrollment data?**

**Answer:** When relying on NSLP data, area eligibility must be based on the percentage of enrolled students eligible for free and reduced-price meals, not on participation data. NSLP enrollment data generate the percentage of students eligible for free and reduced-price meals based on the entire school population. The expectation is that the school enrollment data will reflect economic characteristics similar to that of the community from which the student population is drawn. Participation data, on the other hand, consider only the children who participate in the NSLP, resulting in a less complete and accurate snapshot of the economic characteristics of the school, and therefore the surrounding community.

**6. Question: Under what circumstances may summer schools participate in SFSP?**

**Answer:** Sponsors that administer SFSP at sites where an accredited summer school is in session must ensure that these sites are open to all children residing in the area served by the site, in addition to the children enrolled in the summer school program [7 CFR 225.14(d)(2)].

If the site is not open to the children of the community but provides meals only to enrolled summer school students, the site is not eligible to receive reimbursement for meals through SFSP or the Seamless Summer option. The National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs are available to any school that hosts an academic summer school where access to meal services is limited to children enrolled in the summer school program.

**Financial Management**

**7. Question: If a summer food program is administered by a nonprofit institution does it automatically meet the requirement to conduct a nonprofit food service under SFSP?**

**Answer:** No. The purpose of the SFSP is to assist States in conducting nonprofit food service programs for children during the summer months and at other approved times [7 CFR 225.1; 7 CFR 225.6(e)(1)].

The institution's status as public or private nonprofit cannot be used as evidence that the institution is operating a nonprofit food service. Nonprofit status is determined by the scope of the food service activities conducted by the institution and the use of the food service revenues.

An institution is operating a nonprofit food service if the food service operations conducted by the institution are principally for the benefit of participating children and all of the program reimbursement funds are used solely for the operation or improvement of such food service.

**8. Question: Are private nonprofit institutions required to have IRS tax-exempt status in order to be eligible to participate in the SFSP?**

**Answer:** Yes. Private nonprofit sponsors must be tax exempt under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 in order to be eligible to participate in the SFSP [7 CFR 225.2]. Additionally, all sponsors must maintain records and supporting documentation to permit reviewers and auditors to evaluate and verify that the sponsoring organization and the SFSP were operated on a nonprofit basis.

**9. Question: Are nonprofit food service programs required to break even or maintain a negative account balance?**

**Answer:** Managing a nonprofit food service does not require that an institution break even or operate at a loss. The nonprofit compliance is determined by the use of the nonprofit food service revenues. All income to the program must be retained and used for the sole purpose

of operating a nonprofit food service. The institution is limited to allocating costs to the program for allowable expenses of serving meals to eligible participants.

**10. Question: Must a sponsor maintain SFSP funds in a separate account?**

**Answer:** No. Sponsors are not required to maintain SFSP funds in a separate account. However, sponsors must be able to account for the receipt, obligation, and expenditure of all SFSP funds [OMB Circular A-110, Section 22(i)].

When an institution's total food service is not conducted principally for the benefit of its own SFSP participants, the nonprogram and program components of the food service operation must be tracked separately. Through this separation, the institution must ensure that the nonprofit food service program component does not support any nonprogram food service activities, such as vending or catering operations or adult meal services.

Unallowable support occurs when nonprogram costs are assigned to the nonprofit food service or when program revenues are used for unallowable expenses or not retained for use in the nonprofit food service. The institution must maintain accounting records documenting proper cost allocation between the program and nonprogram components of its food service operation and the State agency must ensure through the review process that all SFSP reimbursements are used solely for conducting nonprofit food service operations.

**11. Question: How should a State agency respond if it determines that a sponsor is using funds improperly?**

**Answer:** If a State agency finds that a sponsor is using funds for unallowable or nonprogram expenses, it should immediately require corrective action. If funds were used for unallowable costs, the State should require the sponsor to replenish the funds to the program. It should be emphasized that USDA funds may not be used to restore funds used for unallowable costs, but must come from another source of funding.

A State, however, should not automatically establish an "overclaim" unless the meal counts are invalid. If the sponsor is found to be seriously deficient and does not take appropriate corrective action, the State agency may consider termination of the agreement with the sponsor and recover funds used for unallowable costs [7 CFR 225.11].

**12. Question: If reimbursements are made based on "meals times rates" how does a State have authority to collect funds that were used improperly?**

**Answer:** Although under the simplified summer rules reimbursements are now based on meals times rates, sponsors still must comply with program requirements. This means that the sponsor must operate a nonprofit food service, must use program funds only for allowable expenses, and must comply with all program regulations and policy guidance [FNS Instruction 796-4, Rev. 4, 4-14-94].

Sponsors that violate program requirements may be assessed an overclaim if meal claims were determined to be inaccurate. Additionally, where it is determined that program funds were used for an unallowable expense, sponsors may be required to repay the portion of the reimbursement that was attributable to the program violation. Requiring a sponsor to repay program funds is an appealable action [7 CFR 225.13].

**13. Question: What should a sponsor do if it receives more reimbursement than it spends?**

**Answer:** It is the sponsor's responsibility to closely monitor its reimbursement and expenditures throughout its administration of the SFSP. If a sponsor receives more reimbursement funds than it uses for the program, the sponsor must use the "excess" funds in a way that benefits SFSP services to children.

Because most sponsors operate the SFSP for a short time each year, it is critical for the State to closely monitor each sponsor's funding and program expenditures. If the State identifies an excessive gap between a sponsor's reimbursements and expenditures, the State must require corrective action, such as improvement of the meal service.

**14. Question: May State agencies collect excess funds from a sponsoring organization by assessing an overclaim?**

**Answer:** No. State agencies may not collect excess funds if they are earned based on the meals times rates formula and the sponsor is properly managing the program. Such funds are not an overclaim subject to recovery. However, the State agency must require the sponsor to use the excess funds in a way that benefits SFSP services to children, such as improving the quality of the food provided and enhancing monitoring and oversight.

**15. Question: What should a sponsor do with excess funds after the program ends for the year?**

**Answer:** Sponsors with SFSP funds remaining upon the completion of the program for the year should use the funds for SFSP allowable expenses, such as improving feeding sites or food preparation facilities, as start-up funds for the next year, or for improving the food quality for the following summer.

**16. Question: What if a sponsor has excess funds but does not intend to participate in the SFSP the following year?**

**Answer:** When a State agency is notified that a sponsor does not intend to participate in the SFSP the following year, the State agency should conduct appropriate close-out activities.. If the sponsor has excess funds, the sponsor should apply the SFSP excess funds to any other child nutrition programs it operates. If the sponsor does not operate other child nutrition programs, the State agency should collect the excess funds [Subpart D of 7 CFR 3016 and 3019 ].

**17. Question: What should the State agency do if sponsors have excessive SFSP fund balances?**

**Answer:** Each State agency must determine what constitutes an excessive nonprofit food service program balance and monitor the steps an institution takes to reduce an excessive balance. The State agency may not reduce future reimbursement payments or recover excess funds as a means of reducing high balances, but must ensure institutions reduce excessive food service account balances through improvements or expansion of the nonprofit food service for program participants. The institution may not transfer excess funds to nonprogram operations or use excess funds to increase salary or fringe benefit costs when the sole purpose of the increase is to reduce a nonprofit food service program balance.

**18. Question: Since sponsors are no longer required to report costs to receive reimbursement under the simplified procedures, may a State require that institutions report actual costs?**

**Answer:** No. Sponsors must be reimbursed under the revised program requirements. Under the simplified summer program, sponsors do not have to report their costs to the State agency, although they must maintain records for the State agency's review (SFSP Policy, January 2, 2008; Nationwide Expansion of Summer Food Service Program Simplified Cost Accounting Procedures).

**19. Question: How should a State calculate advances under the simplified cost accounting procedure?**

**Answer:** The State agency should continue to calculate advances as outlined in the regulations. Sponsors that request advances are required to provide estimated operating and administrative costs [7 CFR 225.9(c)].

**20. Question: May a sponsor request an advance for operating and administrative costs combined?**

**Answer:** No. Because State agencies are still required to calculate operating and administrative advances separately, a sponsor must demonstrate a practical division of financial resources to ensure that:

- appropriate resources are used to provide healthy meals to children;
- the sponsor has a basis to use in estimating operating and administrative costs; and
- the sponsor has a basis for requesting operating and administrative advances.

**21. Question: Should a State take excess funds into consideration when determining an advance for the upcoming summer?**

**Answer:** Yes. When processing requests for advances, State agencies should ask returning sponsors if they had excess of revenues over expenses from the previous year. If so, these funds must be used to support the current year's SFSP nonprofit food service. Since money earned through SFSP reimbursement must be used for SFSP purposes only, excess funds should be used to support the SFSP food service operation or administration. Therefore, the State agency may reduce the advance to reflect the amount of funds carried over from the previous year.

**22. Question: How does a State agency reconcile an administrative advance to a combined rate?**

**Answer:** The State agency determines the amount of the administrative advance in accordance with the criteria established in 7 C.F.R. 225.9(c)(2). The advance should be reconciled against the meals times rates reimbursement earned to determine if excess advances need to be returned. Because the amount available is based on the estimated need rather than specific rates, it is doubly important that the sponsor budgets have sufficient detail to allow the State to make the best possible estimate. States retain the right to deny or reduce the advance amount if the budget items seem unreasonable or if the estimates are not realistic. We encourage States to work closely with sponsors when determining appropriate advance amounts.

**23. Question: Are there any plans to streamline the reporting elements or the way pass-through dollars are reported on the FNS-269?**

**Answer:** No. There are presently no plans to streamline the reporting elements because the reports collect information that continues to be of importance to program administration. As we gain more data in operating under the simplified cost accounting procedure, FNS may review the reports and consider suggested adjustments.

**Camps**

**24. Question: What is a nonresidential camp and how is it different from a closed enrolled site?**

**Answer:** In order to participate in SFSP, a nonresidential camp must offer a continuous schedule of organized programming and a meal service for enrolled children [7 CFR 225.2]. The program should consist of predetermined hours of operation that do not include 24 consecutive hour care to any one participant.

A nonresidential camp is similar to a closed enrolled site in that it serves an identified group of children and offers an organized program of activities. However, to establish eligibility to receive reimbursement for eligible meals served to all children, closed enrolled sites (along

with open and restricted open sites) may use area free and reduced price data for the location of the site or document that at least half of the enrolled children are eligible for free and reduced price meals. Camps, on the other hand, may not use area eligibility data to qualify for reimbursement. Institutions participating as a nonresidential camp must collect documentation of individual income eligibility for participating children and may be reimbursed only for meals served to eligible children who meet the program's income standards [7 CFR 225.6(b)(8); SFSP Policy Memorandum, SFSP Waiver for Closed Enrolled Sites, November 17, 2002].

Additionally, camps may be reimbursed for up to three meals or two meals and one snack per day. Closed enrolled sites, however, may only be reimbursed for up to two meals each day [7 CFR 225.16(b)].

**25. Question: What is a residential camp?**

**Answer:** A residential camp is one that offers a regularly scheduled food service as part of an organized program for enrolled participants [7 CFR 225.2]. In a residential camp, the same participants spend the duration of the organized program in a 24-hour supervised care setting. Residential camps are a distinct category of eligible service institutions and are not considered "closed enrolled" sites. In residential camps, all children served meals for which program reimbursement is claimed must be eligible for free or reduced-price meals. (see also questions #29 and #30 below).

**26. Question: May a residential or nonresidential camp charge a fee to its participants for meals?**

**Answer:** Meals must be provided at no charge to any eligible child in attendance at the site. Camps may charge non-eligible children a fee for meals [7 CFR 225.6(e)(4)]. As part of the application process, sponsors of camps must submit a statement of nondiscrimination in its policy for serving meals to children. Additionally, camps that charge separately for meals must include:

- a statement that the camp uses the USDA's eligibility standards for family size and income levels at the level of reduced-price school meals;
- a description of how the camp accepts income eligibility applications from campers and assures that children whose families receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (Food Stamp), FDPIR, or TANF benefits are automatically eligible for free meals;
- a description of how the camp will collect payments from children who must pay the full price for their meals;
- an assurance that the camp has a hearing procedure for families who want to appeal a denial of eligibility for free meals;

- an assurance that if a family requests a hearing, the child will continue to receive free meals until a decision is made by the hearing official; and
- an assurance that there will be no overt identification of free meal recipients and no discrimination against any child on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability [7 CFR 225.6(c)(4)].

**27. Question: How many meals may camps be reimbursed for serving each day?**

**Answer:** With State agency approval, residential and nonresidential camps may claim reimbursement for serving up to three meals or two meals and one snack to eligible children each day [7 CFR 225.16(b)(1)(i)]. Therefore, a camp may not claim reimbursement for snacks on days that it claims reimbursement for breakfast, lunch, and supper. Alternatively, a camp may not claim reimbursement for a third meal on days that it claims a snack for reimbursement. However, if camps are serving different combinations of meals to identified groups of children, they may be reimbursed for three meals and a snack each day. For example, if a morning group at a day camp receives breakfast, lunch, and snack, and an afternoon group receives lunch, snack, and supper, the camp could be reimbursed for all of the meals served as long as individual children are not served more than three meals or two meals and one snack per day.

**28. Question: Are there time restrictions that apply to meal services at camps?**

**Answer:** Sponsors of nonresidential day camps must ensure that three hours elapse between the beginning of one approved meal service (including snacks) and the beginning of another. Also, four hours must elapse between lunch and supper when a day camp site serves lunch and supper with no afternoon snack between the two meals. Further, supper must begin before 7:00 p.m. and end by 8:00 p.m.

While meal service time restrictions do not apply to residential camps, the serving period for lunch and supper must not exceed two hours and the serving period for breakfast and snacks must not exceed one hour for all camps. Additionally, all camps must ensure that the service period of the different meals does not coincide or overlap [7 CFR 225.16(b)(1); (c)].

**29. Question: How must a camp document meal reimbursement eligibility?**

**Answer:** Unlike open, restricted open, and closed enrolled sites, camps may not establish area eligibility. Sponsors of camps are reimbursed only for those meals served to eligible children. Meal reimbursement to camps participating in SFSP is based on the household income of each child participating in the program. Residential camps may not use area eligibility to determine a child's or group of children's eligibility for meals. Documentation of individual eligibility from appropriate sources, such as school data or individual eligibility forms submitted by families of children enrolled to participate at the site, is required prior to site approval [7 CFR 225.16(b)(1)].

**30. Question: Are camps required to collect income forms for participating children, or may they use certification information from the child's school?**

**Answer:** Camps may use either method. Parents or guardians of children participating in camps or enrolled programs may complete an *Income Eligibility Form* (IEF) providing family size and household income data. Based on the IEF, sponsors will make individual eligibility determinations for all enrolled children since camps are reimbursed only for the SFSP meals served to those children eligible for free or reduced price school meals [7 CFR 225.6(b)(8)]. Sponsors of camps must maintain the original approved forms for all eligible children in separate files for each camp session. In addition, the forms must be available for review by the State agency [7 CFR 225.16(b)(1)].

An SFSP participating institution that is a camp also may consult with a school to use existing free and reduced price lunch certification for individual children [7 CFR 225.15(g)]. The school may provide sponsors certification of individual children's eligibility for free and reduced price meals. The certification must be signed and dated by the appropriate authorizing official. The camp may claim only meals served to children who are certified eligible for free or reduced price meals.

**Miscellaneous Questions**

**31. Question: What is the difference between an open and a restricted open sites?**

**Answer:** In SFSP, there are three common types of sites: open sites, closed enrolled sites, and camps (residential and nonresidential).

Open sites are those where meals are made available to all children in the area on a first-come, first-served basis. Both open and restricted open sites must serve children in geographical areas where 50 percent or more of the children residing in the area are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals. This percentage must be documented by data provided by public and non-profit private school officials, census data, welfare or education agencies, zoning commissions, or other appropriate sources.

An open site becomes a restricted open site when a sponsor chooses to restrict or limit the feeding site's attendance for reasons of security, safety, or control. A site that would normally be approved as a traditional open site may not be approved as a restricted open site as a matter of preference or convenience; the sponsor must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the State agency that a legitimate reason exists to limit access to the site [7 CFR 225.2].

**32. Question: Do sponsors have an obligation to ensure that neighborhood children have access to open sites?**

**Answer:** Yes. Sponsors of sites that are open to all children must take the necessary steps to allow children residing in the area served by the site access to the meal service. If a sponsor that would normally operate an open site must restrict the site's attendance (for reasons of security, safety, or control), the sponsor must make it publicly known that the site will be

open on a first-come, first-served basis to all community children and that the meal service will be limited. State agencies may develop procedures requiring sponsors to ensure site access. FNS encourages sponsors of open or restricted open sites to:

- display banners to publicize to the community that meal service sites are open;
- provide appropriate training to supervisory staff and volunteers so that they understand that community children have equal access to services and facilities at the site;
- explain the availability of the program to tenants, security staff, and other clients of the facility where the site is located, so that they allow community children access to the area where the meals are served;
- announce to children, at each meal service, the time and location of the next available meal service; and
- work with other local organizations and schools to publicize the program.

**33. Question: Are SFSP sponsors required to meet children’s special dietary preferences, including providing vegetarian meals?**

**Answer:** Sponsors are not required to accommodate dietary preferences, but are encouraged to do so within the existing meal patterns. However, sponsors are required to make substitutions or modifications to the meal patterns for participants with disabilities who are unable to consume the regular program meals when such substitutions are supported by a statement from a recognized medical authority that includes the required alternate foods [7 CFR 225.16(f)(4); FNS Instruction 783-2, Rev. 2, 10-14-94].

Additionally, substitutions may be made if individual children are unable, because of medical or other special dietary needs, to consume the foods required by the meal patterns. Such substitutions may be made only when supported by a statement from a recognized medical authority that includes recommended alternate foods [7 CFR 225.16(f)(4)].

Variations in the meal patterns may be approved where there is evidence that the variations are nutritionally sound and are necessary to meet ethnic, religious, economic, or physical needs [7 CFR 225.16(f)(5); FNS Instruction 783-13, Rev. 2, 12-3-92; FNS Instruction 783-14, Rev. 1, 1-14-93].

**34. Question: What are “backpack” programs and may SFSP funds be used to pay for them?**

**Answer:** The BackPack Program is a network program of Feeding America. The program provides backpacks filled with food that children take home with them on weekends and during school vacations when they do not have access to free or reduced price school meals. The backpacks allow children to easily carry shelf-stable, kid-friendly foods home for

themselves and their siblings. Backpack Programs operate and receive funding through Feeding America. They operate independently of the child nutrition programs that are administered by FNS. Although SFSP reimbursement, which is designed to support food services for children in supervised congregate meal settings, may not be used to pay for backpack programs, sites participating in Backpack Programs may distribute the backpacks at the site.

**35. Question: What is a closed enrolled site?**

**Answer:** Closed enrolled sites serve only an identified group of children enrolled at the site. To qualify as a closed enrolled site, at least 50 percent of the enrolled children must be from households that meet the income eligibility guidelines. Sponsors can document an enrolled site's eligibility by:

- Obtaining lists by name and eligibility status of enrolled children for free and reduced-price meals from schools where the children receive school lunch or breakfast. Parental consent forms are not required in order for the local school food authority (SFA) to provide this information to SFSP sponsors;
- Asking the parent or guardian of each enrolled child to complete an income eligibility form.
- Using school data for the location of the site, rather than using the income eligibility form to document that at least half of the enrolled children at each site are eligible for free or reduced-price meals; or
- Using census data to document that at least half of the enrolled children at each site are eligible for free or reduced-price meals, when the site is located outside of an eligible area based on school data [7 CFR 225.2; SFSP Memorandum, Closed Enrolled Sites, November 17, 2002].

**36. Question: How many reimbursable meals may be served?**

**Answer:** Open, restricted open, and closed enrolled sites may be reimbursed for up to two reimbursable meals or a meal and a snack each day. The meals may be of any combination except lunch and supper. Camps and migrant sites may be approved for reimbursement of up to three meals, or two meals and a snack daily [7 CFR 225.16(b)].

There also are limits on the total number of meals that may be served each day. School food authorities and public agencies may not serve more than an average of 50,000 children per day. However, the State agency may approve exceptions if the sponsor can demonstrate that it has the capability of managing a larger program. Further, private nonprofit agencies may serve not more than an average of 300 children at any one site for an approved meal service. However, a waiver may be granted by the State agency for service of up to 500 children [7 CFR 225.6(b)(6)].

**37. Question: May an SFSP site charge a fee to participate in the activity portion of its program?**

**Answer:** Yes. Access to meal service at open sites, however, must be free. Although it is common for enrolled programs to charge for items such as t-shirts, bags, and other identifying items that are unallowable State administrative funds expenses, State agencies should ensure that any fees are reasonable and do not restrict access by low-income children.

**38. Question: May institutions participating in SFSP provide meals to children on the weekends?**

**Answer:** Yes. The regulations do not restrict SFSP meal service to weekdays and States may not prevent institutions from offering weekend meals. As with all sites, State agencies and sponsors must ensure that sites offering weekend meals are subject to site monitoring as required by the regulations [7 CFR 225.7(d); 225.15(d)].