

Summer Meals Newsletter

FEBRUARY 2015

IT'S COLD OUTSIDE,
BUT YOUR SUMMER PLANS ARE HEATING UP!



What's New?

EXCLUSIVE! State Agency Staff Webinar

SFSP Waivers - Process and Protocol

Join our discussion outlining the appropriate use of waivers in SFSP, how to correctly request one, and how they are intended to permit Program flexibilities and increase administrative efficiency without impeding access.

Thursday, February 19 - 2:00 pm – 3:30 pm EST
[Invitation Posted to PartnerWeb](#)



Upcoming Public Summer Meal Webinars

www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/2015-summer-meals-webinars

The 2015 Summer Meals Webinar series is still going strong! Share these dates with your sponsors and partners. FNS directs webinar participants to their State agency for further assistance, so tune in to see who we are sending your way.

[SFSP 101 and How to Be A Summer Meals Champion](#)

- Wednesday, FEB 24th 2015 – 1:30pm – 2:30pm EST

[Best Practices for Tackling the Transportation Challenge](#)

- Tuesday, FEB 10th 2015 – 3:00pm - 4:00pm EST

[Incorporating Local Foods](#)

- Thursday, February 12th 2015 – 2:00pm to 3:00pm EST

[Using Partnerships to Enhance Your Program](#)

- Tuesday, MAR 10th 2015 – 2:30pm - 3:30pm EST

[Transitioning from CACFP Afterschool Meals](#)

- Wednesday, MAR 25th 2015 3:00pm - 4:00pm EST

View previously recorded FNS webinars here:

www.fns.usda.gov/fns-webinars#sfsp.

Resources for State Agencies

Proactive planning is key this time of year. The sooner you get the ball rolling, the more effective your efforts will be this spring and summer. Here are some resources to help!

USDA Mapping Tools

The **FNS Capacity Builder**, www.fns.usda.gov/capacitybuilder, helps identify unserved and underserved areas and potential sponsors and sites. Use this tool to aid with your targeted expansion efforts.

The **Area Eligibility Mapper**

www.fns.usda.gov/areaeligibility, can be used to determine eligibility of open sites using census data. The tool can also be used for census weighted averaging.

Management and Administrative Plans (MAPs)

Due Feb 15th!

This year, make your plan a true planning resource! State agencies are required to submit their plan for the year to their FNS Regional Office. FNS has updated the MAP Toolkit page to assist States with the development of a more comprehensive plan, that includes expansion activities planned for the year. To access the new MAP toolkit page, visit: www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/cnd/SMT-MAP.pdf.

Summer Meals Toolkit Updates

www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/summer-meals-toolkit

This web-based toolkit is being updated weekly with new resources featured in the seven 'mini-toolkits' targeting specific audiences and topics. Check it out, share with your sponsors, and let FNS know if you have a best practice or resource that should be added!

Proactive Planning - What to do this Month

Now that the plan for 2015 is set, it is time to think about **capacity**.

- Sponsor trainings are scheduled, but does your office have enough staff lined up to host those sessions?
- If your expansion plans succeed, can your office handle the influx of new sponsor and site applications?
- Can all those new sites be monitored in time to be approved for operations when summer begins?

If the answer to any of these questions is 'no,' look to your partners! They can take on some of the heavy lifting with your other efforts, so that you can focus staff time on ensuring the integrity of the Program is maintained with strong and informed sponsors. Partners can help host information sessions for prospective sponsors, lead the planning for the State kick-off event, and even coordinate outreach efforts to families for summer. They are here to help, so remember to think about them when considering your capacity. Contact the FNS Regional Office for assistance on partner collaboration.

Governor Engagement - Virginia Spotlight

In 2014, **Virginia Governor** McAuliffe and the First Lady made a commitment to expand participation of Summer Meals in their State. With their support, staff from the Virginia Department of Health and sponsors in the State increased the number of meals served by more than **22 percent** over the previous year. Factors which helped increase participation included **a partnership with the Library of Virginia**, which linked the feeding program with its summer reading program in local libraries, and the robust efforts of First Lady of Virginia, Dorothy McAuliffe.



Governor engagement makes a huge impact on summer meals. USDA Secretary Vilsack has personally written to every Governor about the importance of this Program, and the National Initiative to expand. Contact the FNS Regional Office for assistance engaging your Governor!