



Summer Meals Newsletter

OCTOBER 2015

SUMMER 2015 WAS A WIN!
TIME FOR NEXT YEAR'S PLANNING TO BEGIN!

Reaching Tribal Youth

States are required to identify tribal territories which qualify for the Summer Meals Program and to seek sponsors to serve them. USDA-FNS encourages State agencies to go above and beyond this requirement by building strong and meaningful partnerships with Tribal Nations:

- Work with Tribal Leaders to identify community agencies willing to sponsor sites.
- Coordinate outreach with other State agencies serving tribal communities.
- Provide ready-to-use outreach materials to Tribal Leaders and other stakeholders.
- Ensure open lines of communication exist between Tribal Leaders and State agency staff.

For more information, please see: http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/sfsp/SMT-Tribal_Youth.pdf

Upcoming USDA and Partner Events

October 1st, 1:00 PM EST

FRAC: Engaging Elected Officials

http://org2.salsalabs.com/o/5118/p/salsa/event/common/public/?event_KEY=78243%20

November 5th, 1:00 EST

FRAC: Building a Summer Meals Workgroup

http://org2.salsalabs.com/o/5118/p/salsa/event/common/public/?event_KEY=78245

Save the Date! November 19th, 11:00 EST

FNS Fall Policy Release Webinar

Engaging Public Officials

Elected officials play a role in supporting the Summer Meals Program. When working with public officials, it's important to ask for a commitment early - calendars fill up fast, especially during an election year! State agencies can ask elected officials to support the Program in a number of ways:

Motivate:

- Set a threshold for increasing Program participation.
- Issue a Summer Meals Proclamation.
- Send mailings to constituents to raise awareness.
- Start a "Summer Meals Challenge," encouraging other elected officials to support the Program.

Advocate:

- Speak at a Summer Meals Kick-Off Event.
- Promote the Program in public speeches.
- Write a Letter to the Editor or Op-Ed promoting the Program in the local newspaper.

Participate:

- Pledge to tour a number of Summer Meal sites.
- Participate in one or more Kick-Off events.



For more tips, check out the "Summer Meal Champions" section of the Summer Meals Toolkit:

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/summer-meals-toolkit>

Sponsor Outreach Strategies

State agencies know that planning for Summer is a year-round effort, and that October is a great time to start recruiting sponsors for next year. FNS has resources and tips available for States hoping to get a jump start on their sponsor recruitment efforts.

Build Partnerships

Networking with State and local hunger and poverty coalitions is one strategy State agencies can use to find new partners interested in working together towards a common goal. Advocacy organizations, food banks, afterschool associations, and other groups may be interested in signing up to sponsor a Program or run a site next year.

If a hunger coalition does not already exist in the State's expansion area, State agencies can use their sponsor outreach effort as an opportunity to bring together a new group of anti-hunger partners.

"Building a Summer Meals Coalition:" <http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/sfsp/SMT-Coalitions.pdf>



Find a Spokesperson

A spokesperson can help promote the Program and encourage new sponsors to get involved. Athletes, school superintendents, tribal leaders, and elected officials are all popular spokespeople.

Spokespeople can promote sponsor outreach through face-to-face meetings, by submitting Letters to the Editor in their local newspaper, or by marketing the Program to their followers on social media. Elected officials may also conduct outreach through traditional or e-newsletters, or by issuing public statements in support of the Program.

"Summer Meal Champions:" <http://www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/summer-meals-toolkit>

Use a Customer-Service Mindset

When conducting outreach, State agencies should emphasize that they will support new sponsors throughout the planning process, and continue to offer assistance once the Program is up and running. States can also explain existing flexibilities and the streamlined application process for At-Risk Afterschool Child and Adult Care Food Program sponsors that may be interested in transitioning to the Summer Meals Program. Reaching out to sponsors already familiar with FNS Child Nutrition Programs is a great place to start when conducting sponsor outreach.



Develop Mentorships

States can connect new sponsors to experienced sponsors who can serve as mentors. Experienced sponsors can provide an "on the ground" perspective to the Program and share best practices around operating sites in the new sponsor's community or region.

State agencies can also give new sponsors the option to operate as a site under an experienced sponsor during their first year, allowing them to become more familiar with the Program before they begin operating their own sites.