



## Proactive Planning for States

Providing Summer Meals is a year-round effort! At any point throughout the year, there are activities your State agency can do to proactively approach Summer Meal Program expansion. Establishing State agency, sponsor, and partner timelines will ensure that your Summer Meal Programs run as smoothly as possible and keep sponsors in the Program from year to year.

Go to [Resources](#).

### State Agency Planning

#### FALL

- Identify unserved and underserved areas and reach out to potential sponsors.
- Compare participation from this year to that of prior years, as well as current participation in free and reduced-price meals in local schools.
- Reach out to sponsors and remind them of information and training session dates for the following year.
- Update the State Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) website and ensure all Program deadlines are accurately posted.
- Survey sponsors to note successes and challenges over the summer. Consider updating forms used by sponsors and sites based on sponsor feedback.
- Reach out to sponsors that had challenges operating their program over the summer and assign specific State agency staff members to provide support for the coming year.
- Consider hosting a community partner meeting to enable sponsors and partners to connect and discuss strategies for operating Summer Meal Programs. The sooner this happens, the better, as sponsors will have their summer memories fresh in their minds.
- Provide nonmonetary awards to recognize sponsors that excelled in their Summer Meal Program.
- Evaluate State agency staffing needs to ensure staff is adequate to meet the needs of an expanding Summer Meal Program.



10/31/16

#### Summer Meals Toolkit

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## DECEMBER

- Encourage all sponsors to sign up for the mandatory SFSP training classes and ensure they are aware of other deadlines that may apply.
- Connect with potential sponsors and determine what resources they need to get started. Offer to assist them with their applications or other concerns.

## JANUARY

- For sponsors that have not signed up for SFSP training classes, find out what challenges or barriers are preventing them from participating this year. To simplify this process, consider creating an *Intent to Participate* form due in January to find out which sponsors plan to return.
- Reach out to new sponsors to help them with the bid process.
- Let sponsors know that they may be asked to cover sites if other sponsors leave the Program.

## FEBRUARY

- **February 1:** State agencies must announce the purpose, eligibility criteria, and availability of summer meals throughout the State through appropriate means of communication.
- **February 15:** State agencies must submit a Program Management and Administration Plan (MAP) for approval to the appropriate Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Regional Office.

## MARCH/ APRIL

- Depending on the State, ensure State monitors are ready to visit sites.
- Get an idea of where and when sites in your State will be opening, and reach out to sponsors near underserved areas about expanding to these areas.
- Check if there are any potential sites lacking sponsors and reach out to nearby sponsors about including them in the Program.
- Reach out to note if any sites are still unsure about how the Program works.



**MAY/JUNE**

- Prepare to promote Summer Meal kick-off events in conjunction with your FNS Regional Office.
- Focus on Program outreach to families and children.
- **June 15:** All sponsor applications must be submitted to the State agency. Note that different States may have earlier deadlines.

**JULY/  
AUGUST**

- Check if sites are being underused and provide technical assistance in creating activities or conducting outreach activities to keep children coming back. Moving currently government-funded programming near a food site may be one way to help.
- Engage with partners and find out what else they need to support the project.
- Monitor sites and sponsors as required.

**Promising Practices**

The following examples highlight methods State agencies use to make it easy for sponsors and their partners to stay organized throughout the year.

**Kansas**

[http://www.kn-eat.org/SFSP/SFSP\\_Menus/SFSP\\_Calendar\\_of\\_Responsibilities.htm](http://www.kn-eat.org/SFSP/SFSP_Menus/SFSP_Calendar_of_Responsibilities.htm)

**Massachusetts**

[http://bestpractices.nokidhungry.org/sites/default/files/resources/MASS%20SFSP\\_sponsor\\_kit-FINAL-1.pdf](http://bestpractices.nokidhungry.org/sites/default/files/resources/MASS%20SFSP_sponsor_kit-FINAL-1.pdf)

**Montana**

[http://mfbn.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Guide-to-starting-a-Summer-Food-Site\\_Updated-Novemeber-2012.pdf](http://mfbn.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Guide-to-starting-a-Summer-Food-Site_Updated-Novemeber-2012.pdf)

**Ohio**

[http://www.ohiofoodbanks.org/sfspsummit/2013/5\\_SFSP\\_timeline.pdf](http://www.ohiofoodbanks.org/sfspsummit/2013/5_SFSP_timeline.pdf)

**Oregon**

<http://oregonhunger.org/files/Summer-Food-Sponsor-Timeline.pdf>





## Resources

### USDA

- *SFSP State Deadlines for Sponsors*  
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/deadlines.pdf>
- *Summer Meals Toolkit*  
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/summer-meals-toolkit>

### Food Research and Action Center

*Summer Nutrition Programs Implementation Calendars and Guide*

<http://frac.org/federal-foodnutrition-programs/summer-programs/summer-nutrition-programs-implementation-calendars-and-guide/>

### Share Our Strength

*Summer Meals Toolkit and Guides for Collaborative Meetings*

<http://bestpractices.nokidhungry.org/no-kid-hungry-summer-collaborative-planning-toolkit>

## For Additional Information

Review these ideas and adopt the strategies that seem reasonable to you and achievable for your Program. Do you have more questions? Sponsors and the general public should contact their State agency for answers. State agencies should contact their FNS Regional Office.

List of FNS Regional Offices: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns-regional-offices>

List of State Agencies: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/sfsp-contacts>

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