



\* snacks, breakfast, dinner, milk and more



Food and Nutrition Service

## MDE Update

March 2014

Hello everyone! Several important pieces of guidance have come our way over the last few weeks. Please see the information below regarding *Smart Snacks*, *Wellness Policy Implementation* and the *Community Eligibility Provision*. Now is the time to be planning for next year's a la carte offerings. Also, in the next few weeks we will be sending out and gathering information about the Community Eligibility Provision. This provision provides free meals to all students at eligible school sites. If you are wondering about the details, please [read the guidance on the MDE website](#). Lastly, comment by April 28 on the proposed expanded local school wellness policy requirements per the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (HHFKA).

Hats off to all those who have worked so very hard on *proposed* state legislation to provide free lunches to students eligible to receive reduced-price meals. Governor Dayton supports this important initiative and the legislature continues to have hearings on this topic, so stay tuned!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Deb Lukkonen'.

Deb Lukkonen, Supervisor  
School Nutrition Programs

## Hot Topics

### Smart Snacks Standards

Is your snack a "Smart Snack?"

USDA's *Smart Snacks in School* standards will build on the advancements made in the school lunch and breakfast programs by ensuring that all other snack foods and beverages available for sale to students in school are tasty and nutritious.

Beginning July 1, 2014, a number of specific nutrition standards must be met.

[The Alliance for a Healthier Generation has a USDA approved Smart Snacks Product Calculator!](#) Simply enter the product information, answer a few questions and determine whether your snack, side or entrée item meets the new USDA Smart Snacks in School Guidelines.

## USDA Memos/Communication

### 1. Smart Snack Calculator

Through this [USDA memo](#), Food and Nutrition Service would like to make you aware of an important new tool to assist program operators with the July 1, 2014 implementation of the interim final rule titled, "National School Lunch and School Breakfast Program: Nutrition Standards for All Foods Sold in School as Required by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010." See the article in the side-bar to the left.

### 2. Q&A for Smart Snacks

Through this [USDA memo](#), is the first in a series of questions and answers related to the interim final rule for all foods sold in school as required by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010. This document will be updated periodically as additional questions arise.

### 3. Q&A for Community Eligibility Provision

Through this [USDA memo](#), guidance and questions and answers for the Community Eligibility Provision are provided.

### 4. Proposed Rule—Local School Wellness Policy Implementation

On February 26, 2014, USDA released proposed regulations on expanded local school wellness policy implementation. [View USDA's announcement and a link to the proposed regulations. Select to comment on the proposed rule by April 28, 2014.](#) USDA is especially interested in comments regarding proposed marketing of foods and beverages on the school campus during the school day.

## Menus, Marketing and More!

### White House Recipe Contest

#### ***The Healthy Lunchtime Challenge is back!***

First Lady Michelle Obama is again teaming up with the U.S. Department of Education, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Epicurious to host a nationwide recipe challenge to promote cooking and healthy eating among America's youth. Parents or guardians and their children, ages 8-12, are invited to submit an original lunch recipe that is healthy, affordable and tasty, with the opportunity to be invited to attend a Kids' "State Dinner" at the White House where a selection of the winning healthy recipes will be served. [Select for more information about the Healthy Lunchtime Challenge and to submit your recipe!](#)

### **School Grants for Healthy Kids**

Action for Healthy Kids welcomes schools to apply for 2014-2015 [School Grants for Healthy Kids](#). The grants will range from 500 to 5,000 dollars. The funding is designed to help schools create or expand school breakfast programs, pilot universal breakfast programs or enhance their physical activity programs.

If you're interested for your school, you can [register now](#). Once you have all the information you need, [start the application process](#) and submit before the **May 2, 2014** deadline.

## Hot Topics

### Salad Bars in the School Lunch Line

Food service directors across the nation are working hard to meet the HHFKA requirements for both breakfast and lunch. Many new salad bar options are being introduced to students across the state to encourage consumption of fruits and vegetables. Along with the new options comes new questions! USDA has prepared guidance that includes information about the use of salad bars—[guidance from 2012](#) and [guidance from 2013](#) that you might find helpful as you continue to build healthy menus for your students. Here are a few items from the guidances listed above to keep in mind when offering salad bars to students:

**Q: May a salad bar with fruits and vegetables that is offered as part of the reimbursable meal be located after the point-of-service (POS)?**

A: To ensure that each student's selections from the salad bar meet the required portions for an entrée or food/menu item, the POS must be stationed after the salad bar. If the salad bar cannot be prior to the POS, a staff person must be continuously stationed at the salad bar to ensure that a reimbursable meal has been selected and that the total of any fruit or vegetable item selected under Offer vs. Serve equals at least one-half cup.

**Q: Must specific size serving utensils be used?**

A: Schools are not required to use a specific serving size utensil, but may do so to encourage children to take appropriate food amounts. It is important to train cashiers to visually identify the correct portion size when students self-serve. It may be helpful to pre-portion some items.

**Q: May a school offer a daily salad bar line that offers multiple vegetable subgroups every day as a way to meet the weekly vegetable subgroups?**

A: Yes—this is acceptable if the salad bar is available to all children, from all lunch lines, each day and offers all of the required weekly subgroups over the course of the week.

**Q: Do the vegetable subgroups offered on a daily salad bar need to be itemized on the production records?**

A: Yes. Production records and menu records for the meals show how the meals offered contribute to the required food components and food quantities. These records will be reviewed by the state agency. This is your *proof* that you are serving reimbursable meals!

### **Michelle Obama, Will Ferrell and Jimmy Fallon talk about "Being Healthy"**

In celebration of the fourth anniversary of *Let's Move!*, the First Lady and comedian Will Ferrell hosted a *Let's Move!* "focus group" with young kids to talk about how they eat healthy and get active. [Preview the video here](#) - you won't want to miss it!

The First Lady wants you to [see how you move to be healthy](#) in another celebration of the *Let's Move!* anniversary. She announced last week during her appearance on [The Tonight Show with Jimmy Fallon](#) that if enough people get involved, the President and Vice President will show us how they move too.