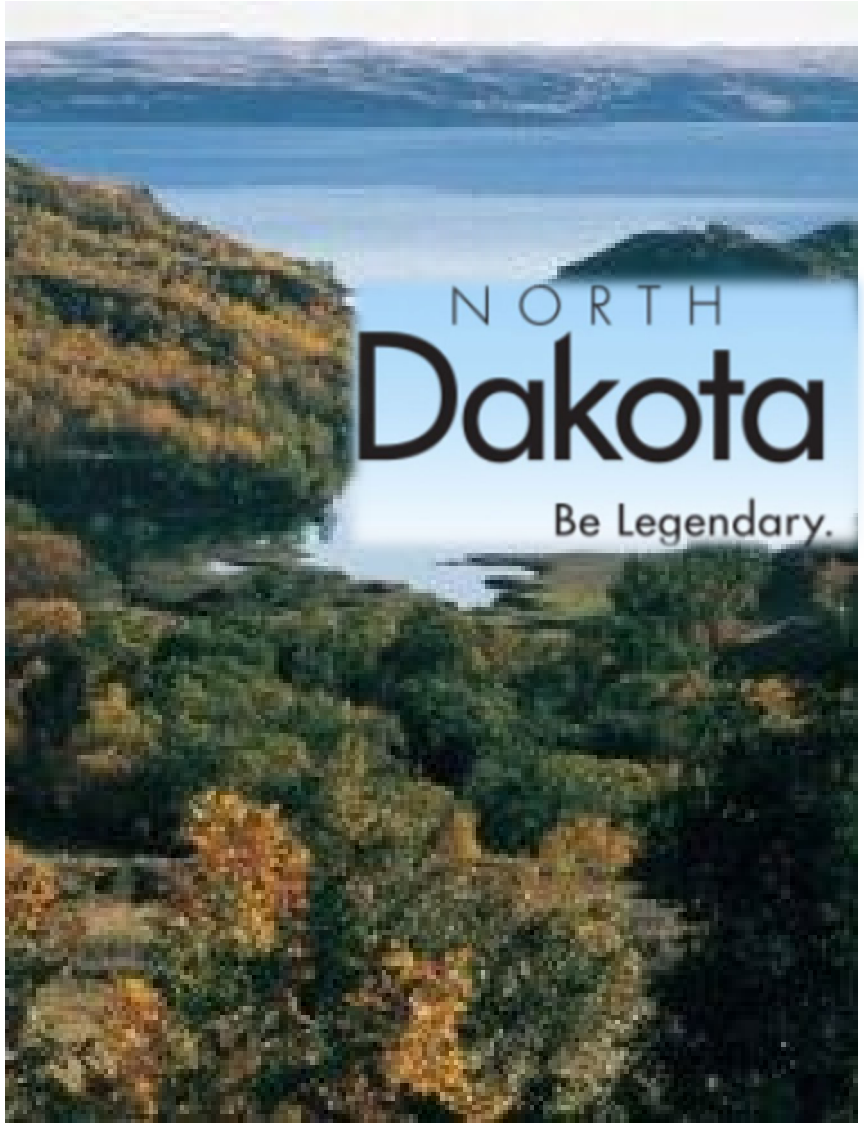
NORTH DAKOTA
DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

ACROSS THE DESK

November 2026

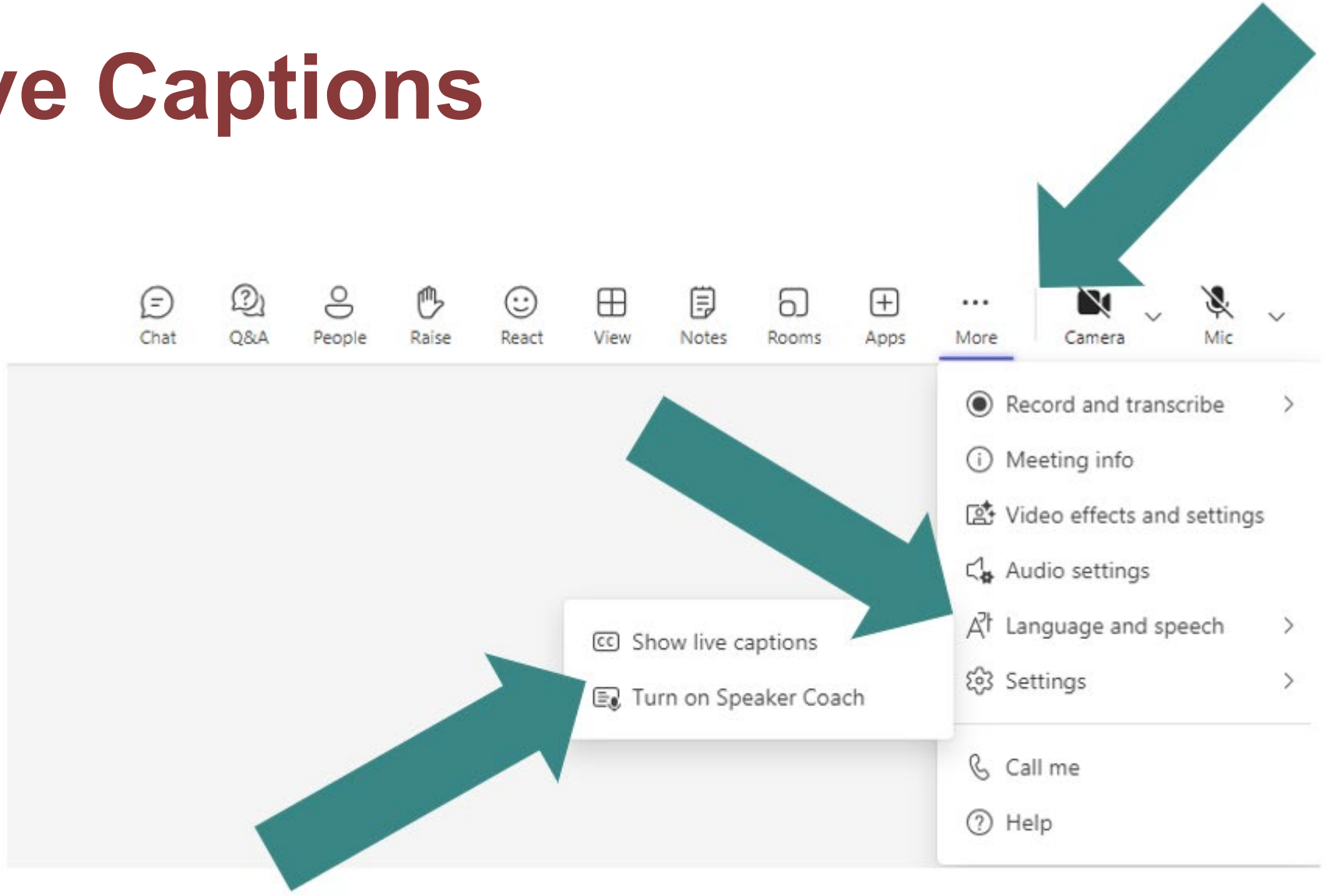


Lake Sakakawea

Chat Your Questions



Live Captions



Housekeeping - Website

NORTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Data | Districts/Schools | Educators | Education Programs | Policy/Guidelines | Families/Community

- Districts/Schools
  - Assessments
  - Child Nutrition and Food Distribution
    - Child & Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)
    - Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)
    - Farm to Child Nutrition
    - Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)
    - Fresh Fruits & Vegetables Program (FFVP)
    - School Nutrition Program (SNP)
    - School/Child Nutrition Food Program (SCH)
    - Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)
    - Team Nutrition
    - The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)
    - Updates

Home / Districts/Schools / Child Nutrition and Food Distribution / UPDATES

UPDATES

NEWSLETTERS

- **School Nutrition Newsletters**
- **USDA Foods in School Program Updates**
- **CACFP Round Up Newsletter**

WEBINARS

- **Kitchen Counter Conversa**
- **Across The Desk**
- **Other Webinars- 2025 Summer EBT / Medicaid Direct Certification**
- **Farm to School 2024 Series**

USDA MEMOS

July 14, 2026 Webinar

Slide Deck

- NSLP Program Renewal in NDFoods

May 12, 2026 Webinar

Slide Deck

- Updates on Whole Milk for Healthy Kids and Buy American
- Setting Meal Prices for next year
- Top 10 Administrative 'Oops' on 25-26
- End of the Year checklist
  - Top 5 Checklist Resource
- Renewal is Coming! Renewal is Coming!

March 10, 2026 Webinar

Slide Deck

- Free/Reduced Data Posted
  - Meals served data also available
- Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) essentials
- Buy American Reminders



Disclaimers

NDDPI Does Not Endorse Any Specific Brands or Products.

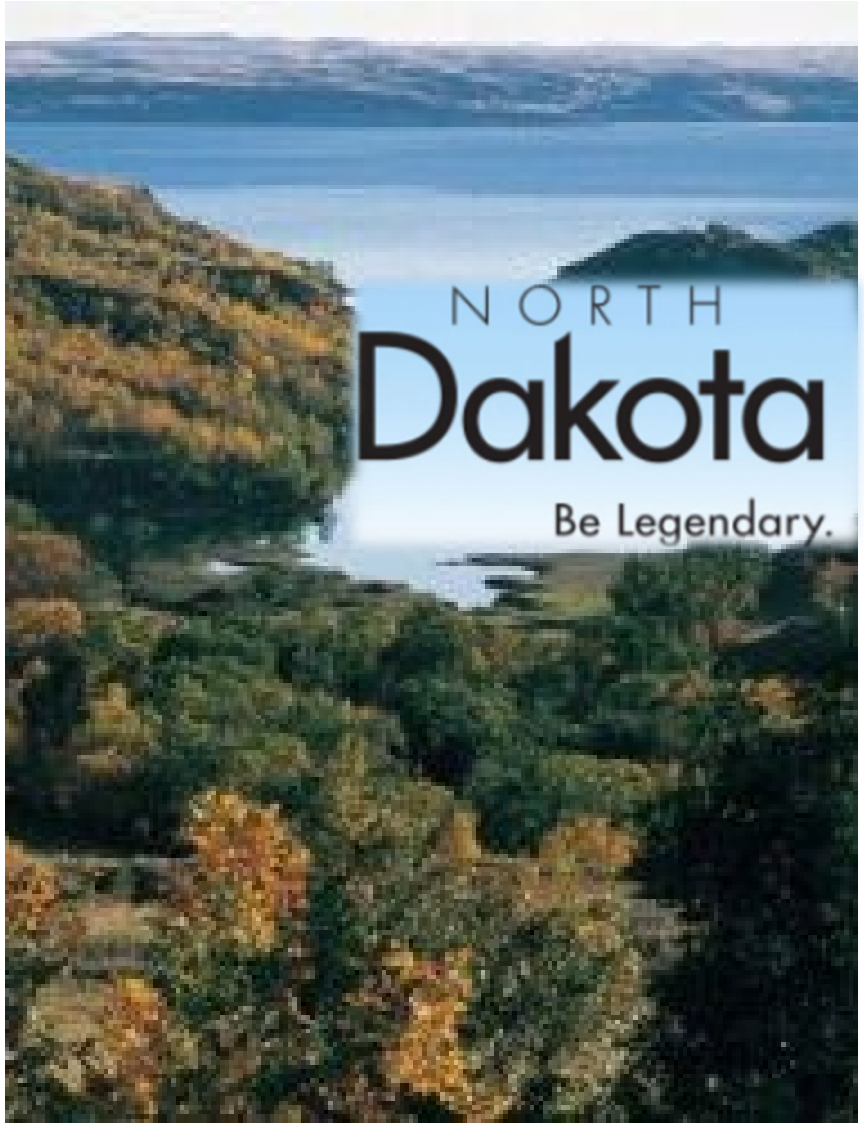
Topics Discussed Today are for General Information and to Generate Operational Discussions and Exploration. Please Seek the Guidance of Your State Agency for Specific Situations and Requirements.

Please be advised that due to privacy concerns and potential legal implications, the use of external AI transcription tools is strictly prohibited in NDDPI meetings. If you wish to record a meeting for transcription purposes, please submit your request to the meeting organizer.

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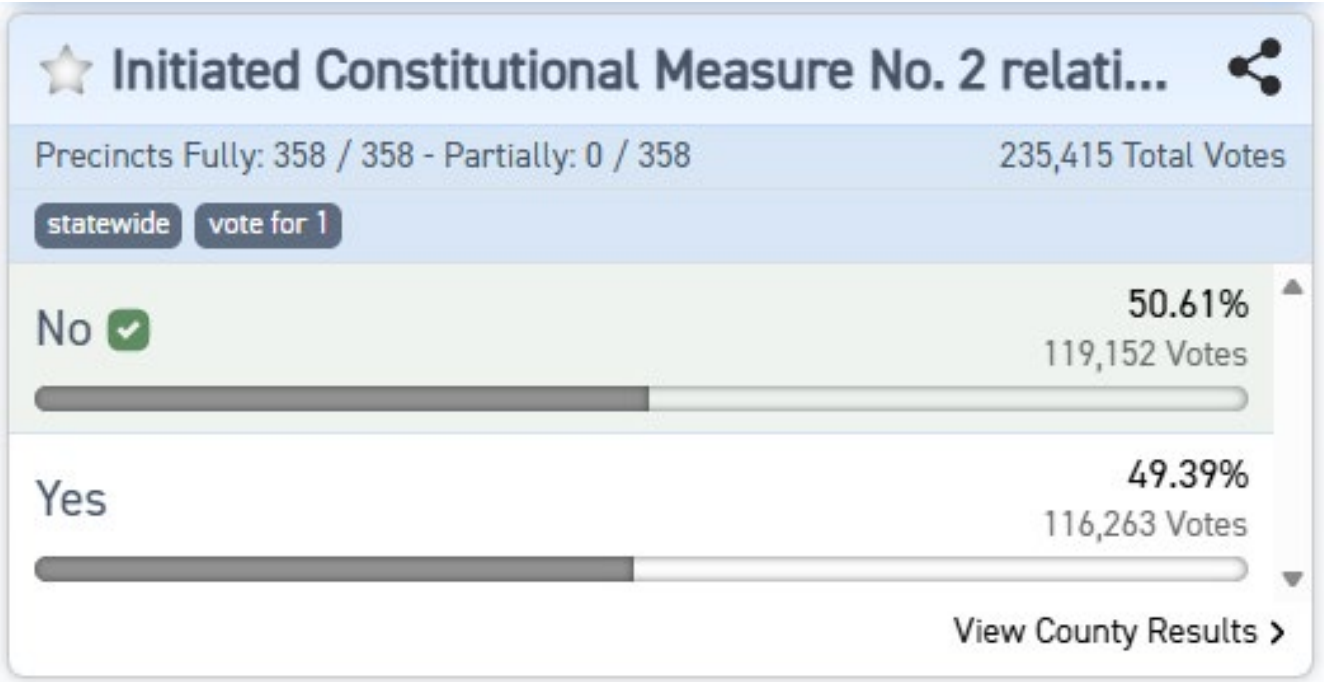
ACROSS THE DESK

- Ballot Results
- Verification Process wrap-up
- Buy American & Geographic Preference



Lake Sakakawea

Ballot Results



- Did not pass;
- Free meals will not be mandated or added ND Constitution
- School Meals may still be a topic during the 2027 Legislative Session
  - Meal Debt, Expanded Eligibility
  - Encourage Legislators to experience School Meals!

Grant Opportunities coming



- A) Equipment grants
  - 2 rounds of grants
- B) Culinary Training grants

Web Grants access required

Verification Report (FNS 742)



School Food Authority (SFA) Verification Collection Report

Review

General Information

State Agency Name:
North Dakota

SFA ID#:
07014

Type of SFA:
Public

School Year:
2026-2027

SFA Name:

- Located in ND Foods
- Opened last Monday
- Due December 15, 2026

- *CNFD compares Verification Report with last day of October counts and STARS for accurate reporting to USDA*

Applications and fill them into the corresponding blanks on the School Food Authority (SFA) Verification Collection Report

Section 3: Students Approved as Free eligible Not subject to verification

*Check the box only if all schools and/or RCCIs in the SFA were not required to perform direct certification with SNAP (i.e. NON BASE year Provision 2/3 for all schools)

Total number of students who were directly certified through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Include children who are extended free eligibility because they are living within a household that is receiving SNAP:

 # DC SNAP Students

Total number of students directly certified through other programs (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations, foster, homeless, migrant, runaway, Head Start or even star, or non-applicant but approved by local officials). Do not include SNAP students already reported in previous question:

 # DC TANF, FDPIR + Students

Students directly certified FREE through Medicaid:

 # DC Medicaid Free Students

Students directly certified REDUCED PRICE through Medicaid:

 # DC Medicaid Reduced Students

Total number of applications approved as State Free 225 based on household size and State Income Eligibility Guidelines:

 # State 225 Applications

Total number of students approved as State Free 225 based on household size and State Income Eligibility Guidelines:

 # State 225 Students

Section 4: Household applications and students approved as Free or Reduced Price eligible through an application

Please enter the number of approved application forms on file for the following eligibility determinations:

Total number of applications approved as categorically Free eligible based on those providing information on an application form i.e. SNAP or TANF case number:

 # Free Case Number Provided Applications

Total number of applications approved as Free eligible based on household size and income information:

 # Free Income Applications

Total number of applications approved as Reduced Price eligible based on household size and income information:

 # Reduced Income Applications

Please enter the number of students approved as Free or Reduced Price by the following eligibility determinations

Total number of students approved as categorically Free eligible based on those providing information on an application form i.e. SNAP or TANF case number:

 # Free Case Number Provided Students

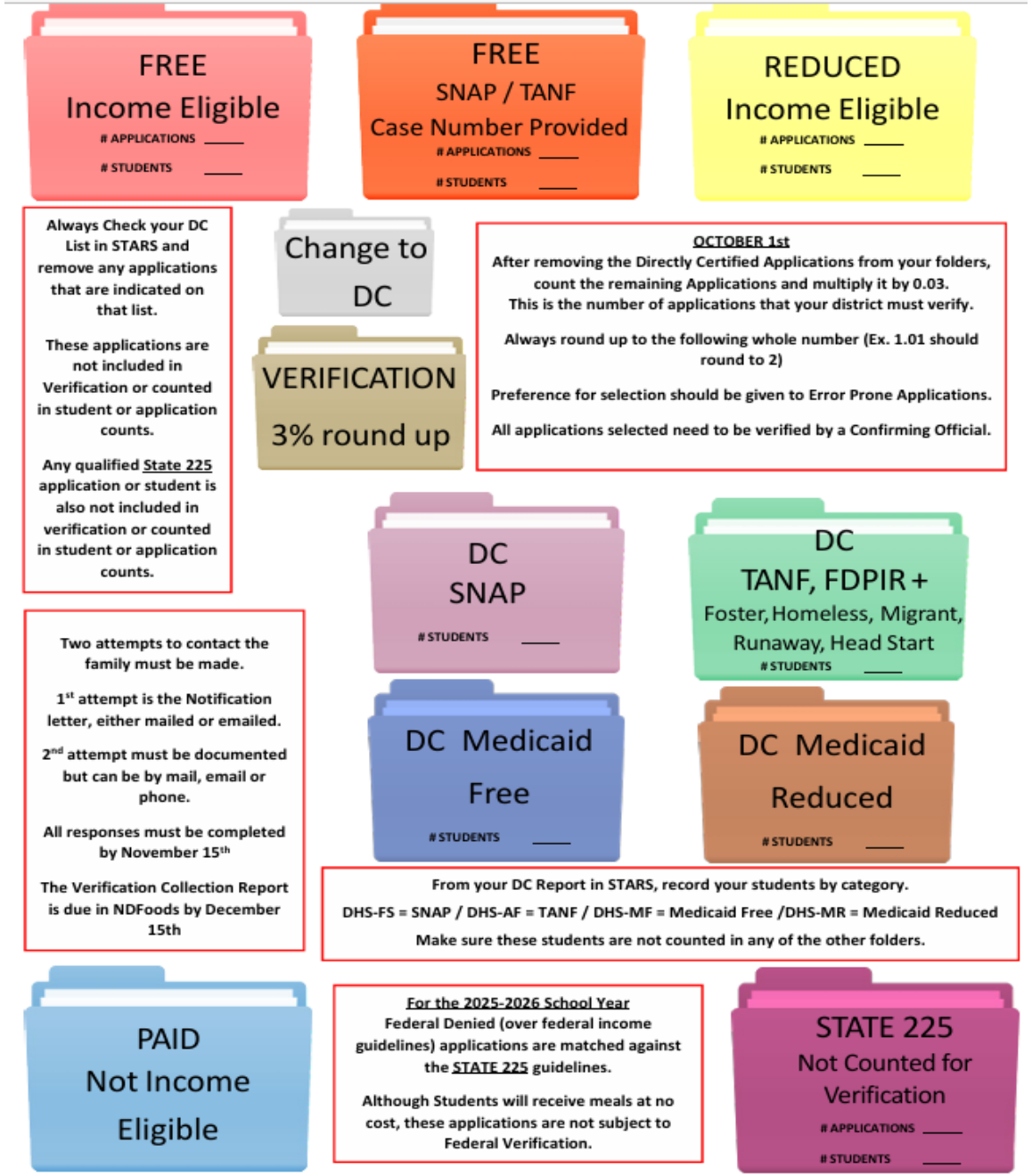
Total number of students approved as Free eligible based on household size and income information:

 # Free Income Students

Total number of students approved as Reduced Price eligible based on household size and income information:

 # Reduced Income Students

Total FREE Eligible Students Reported: **CALCULATED** Total REDUCED PRICE Eligible Students Reported: **CALCULATED**



This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

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Buy American

- **Do you think that the School Nutrition Program should support American farmers and United States business by purchasing domestic products?**

Question



SCHOOL NUTRITION ASSOCIATION



History of School Lunch

National School Lunch Program (NSLP)

President Harry S. Truman signed the National School Lunch Act on June 4, 1946. Though school foodservice began long before 1946, the Act authorized the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). The legislation came in response to claims that many American men had been

Why the Buy American provision is important

School lunch program, 1946

The federally assisted meal program was established as "a measure of national security to

1. *safeguard the health and well-being of the Nation's children and* 1. Feed the Kids
2. *to encourage the domestic consumption of nutritious agricultural commodities."* 2. Support OUR farmers

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What Counts as Domestic?

A. **Domestic Product**

1. Agricultural commodity produced in the United States
2. A processed product that contains at least 51% ag products grown/ raised/harvested in the United States.

B. **Processed** in the United States





Item 1. Rice

Is this a Domestic Product or sourced from a Nondomestic supply?



Item 2. Olives

Is this a Domestic Product or sourced from a Nondomestic vendor?

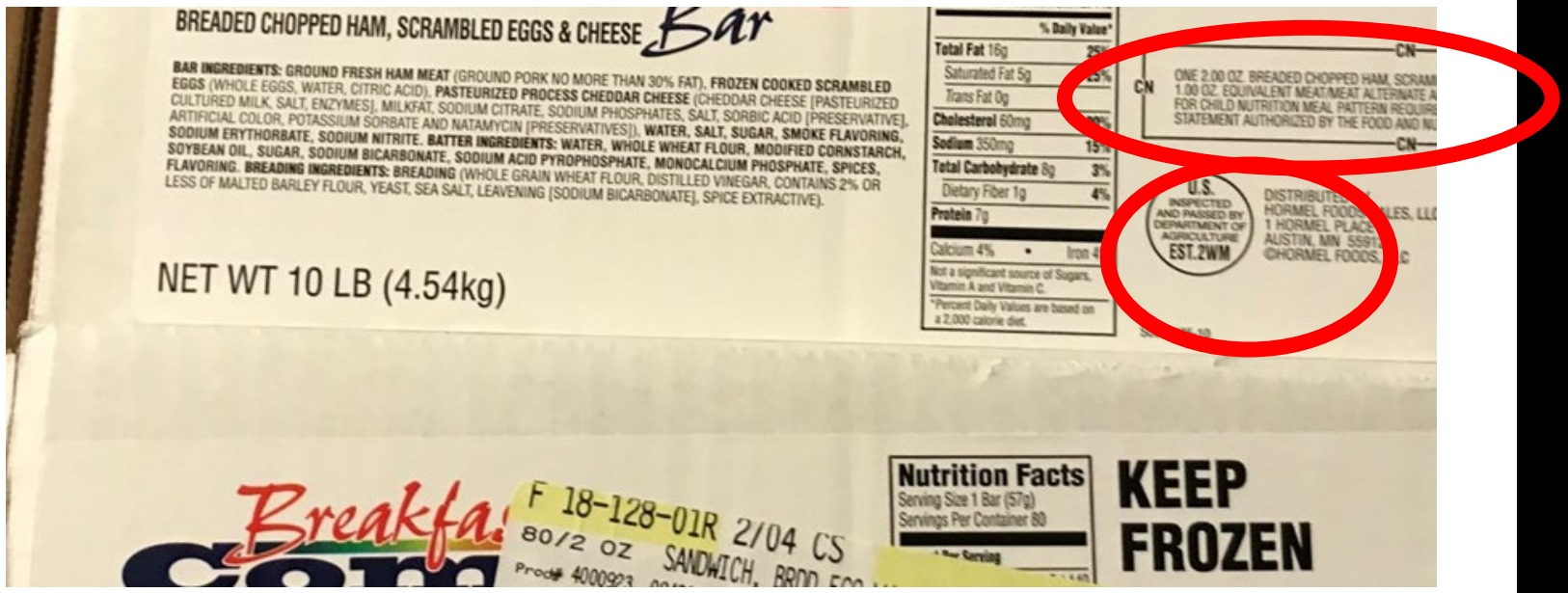


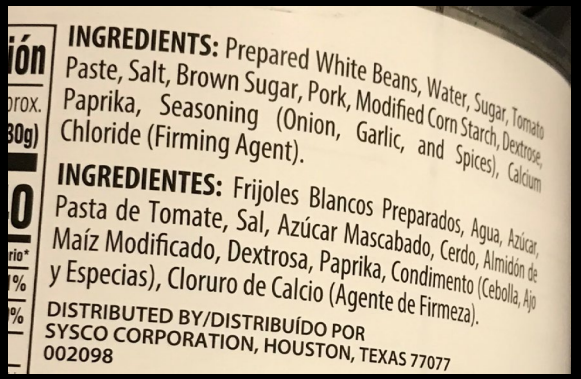
Item 3. Spaghetti Sauce

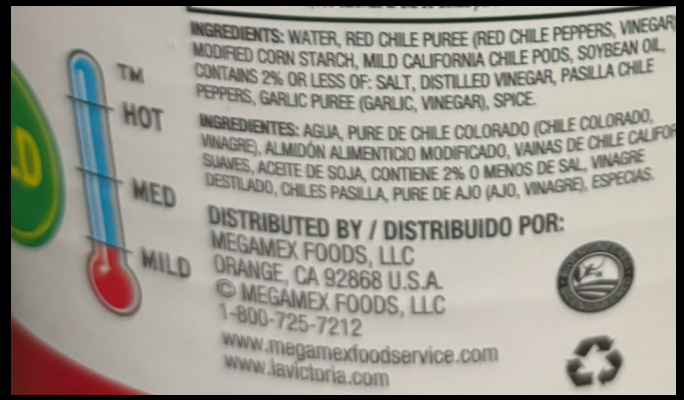
Is this a Domestic Product or sourced from a Nondomestic vendor?

More Documentation Needed

"Processed in the USA"
"Distributed by…."
"U.S. Inspection"







How should SFAs track products with unknown county of origin?

1. Use your contract to ensure the product is domestic. If the contract states that a product needs to be domestic and the vendor says it is – USDA says that is good enough.

Exemptions for Buying in Nondomestic:

A. Non-available list at FAR 25.104

B. Domestic product costs significantly more or is significantly less in quality.

√Document bid or quality issue



√ **2027:**10% of total food cost cap

FAR 25.103(b)(1)(i):

Food Items
(2) Bamboo shoots.
(3) Bananas.
(6) Brazil nuts, unroasted.
(7) Capers.
(8) Cashew nuts.
(9) Chestnuts.
(11) Cocoa beans.
(12) Coconut
(13) Coffee, raw or green bean.
(18) Grapefruit sections, canned.
(24) Oranges, mandarin, canned.
(25) Pineapple, canned.
(31) Spices and herbs, in bulk.
(33) Tapioca flour and cassava.
(34) Tartar, crude; cream of tartar in bulk.
(35) Tea in bulk.
(37) Vanilla beans.
(39) Water chestnuts.

Justify Purchases

Page 52 – Lunch Production Records

Page 168 – Administrative Records

Buy American Provision for School Meals:

What the law says:

Schools must buy **domestic food products** to the **maximum extent possible**.

- A **domestic product** means:
  - Grown in the U.S., and
  - Processed in the U.S. using mostly U.S.-grown ingredients.

Exceptions are allowed – ONLY when necessary

You may use a non-domestic item **only if**:

1. It's **not available** in the U.S. in the quantity or quality you need.
2. A **U.S. product costs significantly more** than the imported version. 'Significantly' is understood to mean that the domestic product is at least 25% higher in price.

Before requesting an exception, ask yourself:

- Can I find this product from another domestic supplier?
- Is there a U.S. product I could substitute?
- Am I buying at the right time of year for the best pricing?

Requesting an Exception

To use a non-domestic item, submit a **written request in advance**. Include:

1. **Domestic substitutes you tried** (with pricing and availability)
2. **Why is an exception needed** (check one):
   - Not available domestically
   - Domestic item is too expensive

   Include prices of both the domestic and non-domestic products.

Items Automatically Allowed (as of June 11, 2025)

These foods are considered **non-available** and don't require exception documentation:
Bananas, Brazil Nuts, Cashews, Coconut, Coffee, Grapefruit, Canned Mandarin Oranges, Canned Pineapple, Spices and herbs, Water chestnut.

Tracking Worksheet: Non-Domestic Purchases Justification

List any additional foods not on the list above that the school purchases non-domestically and the reason why they cannot be procured domestically:

Food	Country of Origin	Justification: *Price of Domestic product too high; Domestic product not available*	Check Documentation on file	Date
Grapes	*Mexico*	*Pricing from distributor shows US US-grown grapes are double in price at this time*	√	*12/1/2025*

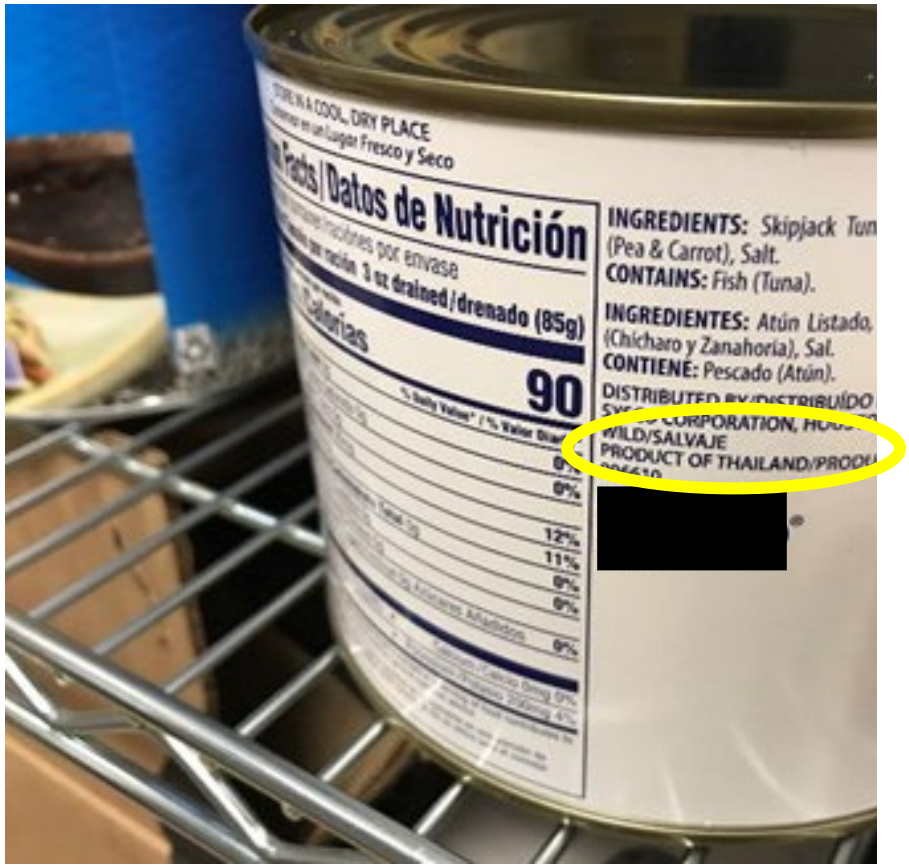


NEW: 10% cap on Nondomestic Purchase

JULY 1, 2025

Congress has mandated that no more than 10% of school foodservice funds can be used to purchase nondomestic products each year.

This cap will decrease in 2028 (8%) and 2031 (5%).



Item 1. Tuna

Should we consider this as an Exception?



Item 2. Beef

Should we consider this as an Exception?



Item 3. Canned Pineapple

Should we consider this as an Exception?



Item 4. Canned Pears

Should we consider this as an Exception?

Track ALL Nondomestic Products

#	SCHOOL NAME	INVOICE NUMBER	INVOICE DATE	SOURCE	PRODUCT DESCRIPTION	FOOD COMPONENT	NON-DOMESTIC	EXCEPTION TYPE	UNIT	PRICE PER UNIT	NUMBER OF UNITS	TOTAL AMOUNT
Count.	*If relevant.*	*If relevant.*	*(MM/DD/YYYY)*	*What is the origin of the invoice?*	*(e.g., lettuce mix, applesauce, whole wheat rolls, ground beef, etc.)*	*Select the most appropriate food component label for the product purchased.*	*Was this product produced in one of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, or any U.S. territory? If not, confirm by selecting "Non-domestic".* *Does this product consist of more than 51 percent of domestically grown food by weight or volume? If not, confirm by selecting "Non-domestic".*	***Exception 1.** The product is listed on the Federal Acquisitions Regulations Nonavailable articles list found at 48 CFR 25.104 and/or is not produced or manufactured in the U.S. in sufficient and reasonably available quantities of a satisfactory quality.* ***Exception 2.** Competitive bids reveal the cost of a U.S. product is significantly higher than the non-domestic product.*	*Optional (e.g., case, dozen, pound, bunch).* *If you prefer not listing items by unit, you can leave this column blank or enter "N/A".*	*Optional.* *If you prefer not listing items by unit, you can leave this column blank or enter zero.*	*Optional.* *If you prefer not listing items by unit, you can leave this column blank or enter "N/A".*	*Enter the total cost for this line.* *If you choose to include price per unit and number of units, you can use this column to calculate the total by multiplying price per unit by number of units.*
1	Montlake School	1200AT6B	8/15/2025	Fresh Food Hub	Tomatoes, diced, #10 can	Vegetables	Non-domestic	Exception 2	Case	$ 40.00	25	$ 1,000.00
2	Lakemont School	1459AT6B	8/20/2025	Star Food	Bananas, whole, fresh	Fruits	Non-domestic	Exception 1, listed on the Nonavailable articles list	N/A	$ -	N/A	$ 300.00
3										$ -		$ -
4										$ -		$ -
5										$ -		$ -
6										$ -		$ -
7										$ -		$ -
8										$ -		$ -
9										$ -		$ -
10										$ -		$ -
11										$ -		$ -

Overview | Exceptions Tracker | Exceptions Summary

Total: $1,300

[Buy American Exceptions Tracking Tool for Food Costs.xlsx]

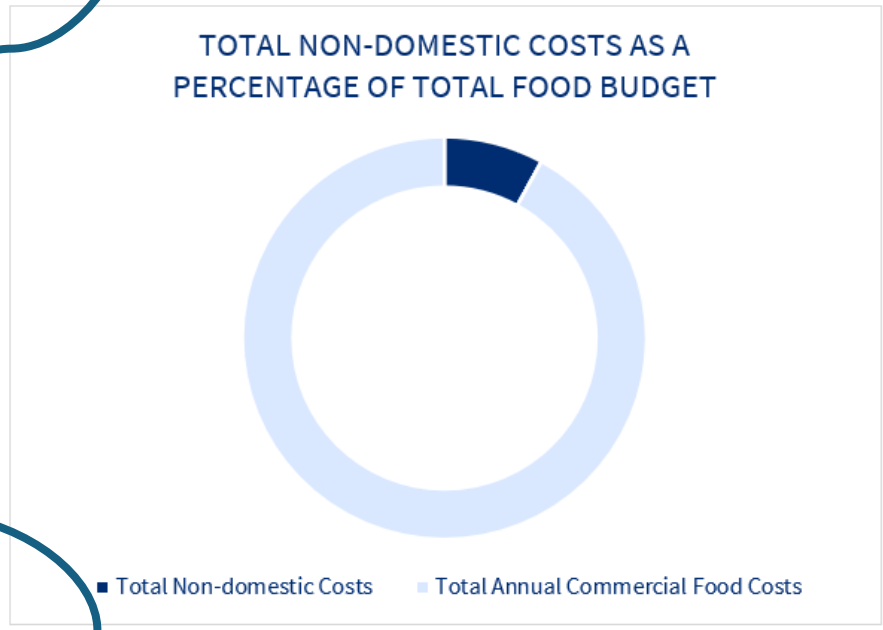
Exceptions Summary

Automatically fills in from Tracker

Buy American

Exceptions Summary

Total Non-domestic Costs	$ 1,300.00
	This will be automatically calculated.
Total Annual Commercial Food Costs	$ 15,000.00
	Please enter the SFA's total annual commercial food costs here.
Percentage of Commercial Food Costs from Non-domestic Foods	9%
	This field will highlight green, yellow, or red depending on the percentage calculated.



Use only food purchased for use in Breakfast and Lunch programs…

Not included: USDA Food commodities
Fresh Fruit & Veg program
Ala carte

Automatically calculates percentage

Exceptions Tracker | Exceptions Summary

There’s a waiver for that….

Our Website > SNP > Procurement > Buy American

Must have a plan before the waiver will be approved….

(How will you lower your purchases of nondomestic items)

1. Develop menus around domestic products
   - Change of product to domestic
   - Change the number of times a nondomestic item is used
   - Eliminate the nondomestic food item from the menu
2. Fully use USDA Foods in your menu
3. Participate in the Farm to School programs
4. Work with vendors through Procurement and Contracts.

Geographic Preference

Final Rule: Simplified Geographic Preference Procurement in Child Nutrition Programs

November 9, 2026

- Can use:
  - "Locally grown"
  - "Locally raised"
  - "Locally caught"

    - In solicitation specification for preference
    - And award credits/points in bid scoring
- '*Local*' is defined by operator
- Must be unprocessed ag products

What's Working with West Fargo

Date	Invoice number	Product	Orgin	Case	Cost	Total
12/1/2025	395058453	Tomato	Mexico	3		
12/1/2025	395058453	Banana	Guatamala	7		
12/1/2025	395058453	Cuties	Chile	12		
12/1/2025	395058453	Cucumbers	Mexico	16		
12/1/2025	395058453	Cucumbers	Mexico	3		
12/1/2025	395058453	Romas	Mexico	4		
12/1/2025	395058453	Grape Tomato	Mexico	18		
12/1/2025	395058453	Bell Peppers	Mexico	25		
12/1/2025	395058453	Cocoa Powder		1		
12/3/2025	395061483	honey	USA, Canada, Argentina,Ukrane, India	3		
12/8/2025	395064702	Cucumbers	Mexico	16		
12/8/2025	395064702	Bell Peppers	Mexico	12		
12/8/2025	395064702	Cuties	Chile	11		
12/8/2025	395064702	Banana	Guatamala	7		
12/10/2025	395066058	Bell Peppers	Mexico	4		
12/15/2025	395069165	Bell Peppers	Mexico	21		
12/15/2025	395069165	Cuties	Chile	6		
12/15/2025	395069165	Cucumbers	Mexico	8		
12/15/2025	395069165	Grape Tomato	Mexico	17		
12/15/2025	395069165	Banana	Guatamala	4		
12/22/2025	395073126	Cuties	Chile	6		
12/22/2025	395073126	Bell Peppers	Mexico, canada	9		
12/22/2025	395073126	Romas	mexico	1		
12/22/2025	395073126	Grape Tomato	mexico	3		
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August | September | October | November | December | January | February | March | April | May | June | End Year

Non-Domestic Produce

School

Week Date

Date	Product	Orgin	Case Qty	Cost

This form needs to completed entirely and returned to Sam through inner school mail weekly.

Common items to check:

- Banana
- Cucumber
- Bell Peppers
- Tomato - all varieties
- Cuties

Tracking each delivery
- Prices change
- Origin changes

Form for schools with direct delivery

<u>Tips:</u>

- Utilize DoD Fresh!
- Consider a seasonal salad bar!
- Buy American & Juice!

Crunch Off Results!



New Rockford/Sheyenne



Drayton

2026 Award Winners

Big Apple Award
Divide County School District
Awarded for the highest participation rate based on enrollment (per capita rate).
100% of students and staff participated!

Community Grower Award
NDSU Extension Stutsman County
Recognized for outstanding community collaboration and impact.
31 Crunch Off events held across the county
More than 2,000 participants engaged



Apple Spark Award
Wilton Public School District
Awarded for creatively introducing local foods to students.
Featured locally grown produce
Invited a local producer to educate students about the vegetables
100% student and staff participation



Wilton



Strasburg

Total Participants: 11,485

Tray of the Month

November's theme: Tomatoes!

Submit photo of full lunch tray :

- all components + milk
- Doesn't have to be locally sourced.
- amolson@nd.gov





SUBMIT PHOTOS TO AMOLSON@ND.GOV

Tray of the Month

CAFETERIA CIRCUS
NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH WEEK
OCT 12TH-16TH • 2026

Tray of the Month is a fun, optional activity to highlight the delicious meals you serve every day.

- Submit a high-resolution photo of a full lunch tray (all components + milk).
- Make sure the photo is well-lit and focused.
- Students and staff may be included—just ensure photo release forms are handled through your district's process.

September - Corn: Kernels, cobs, popped, roasted or in your favorite casserole or menu item. Snap a pic of your corn creation by September 30.

October - Farm to School Month & NSLP Week: "Cafeteria Circus" is the theme for NSLP week. Celebrate Farm to School Month with local foods—2 submissions allowed for the two themes. Pictures are due October 30.

November - Tomatoes: Serve them your way! Fresh, roasted, or in salsas, soups, and sauces. Pictures due November 25.

December - Potatoes: America's favorite food! Show us how you serve potatoes in your school. Submit by December 18.

January - Salad Bar: Showcase your salad bar. Can be on the tray or of your whole salad bar. Pictures due January 29.

February - It's Soup and Stew Month! Share your favorite soup or stew, and bonus points for recipes! Pictures due February 26.

March - Celebrate National School Breakfast Week: Encourage staff to join the photo and showcase your favorite breakfast meal. Theme to be announced soon. Pictures due March 31.

April - Bowls! Capture your trendy bowl creations! Ramen, grain, taco, chicken, salad, breakfast, and more ways to create this trendy and delicious menu item. Pictures due April 30.

May - Celebrate Beef Month and School Lunch Hero Day: Share your favorite beef dish (extra points for local beef) or your School Lunch Hero Day decor. Staff and students are encouraged in the photos. 2 submissions allowed. Pictures due by May 28.

NDDPI
NORTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

Pride of Dakota Local Foods Grant Program



$20,000 total available for ND schools and districts

- Grants ranging from $2,000-$4,000
- Applicants must provide 50% in matching funds
- Applications close on November 30 at 4 p.m.



Kitchen Counter Conversation

3rd Tuesday of each Month
2 p.m. Central Time

November 17th: Nutrient Analysis and Weekly Weighted Averages

Registration for each KCC is in the last Newsletter

Across the Desk

2nd Tuesday of each Month
2 p.m. Central Time

December 8th: Planning for Procurement

This Across the Desk will also fulfill the annual Procurement training requirement

Registration for each AtD is in the last Newsletter





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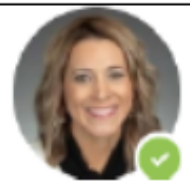
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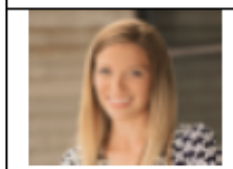
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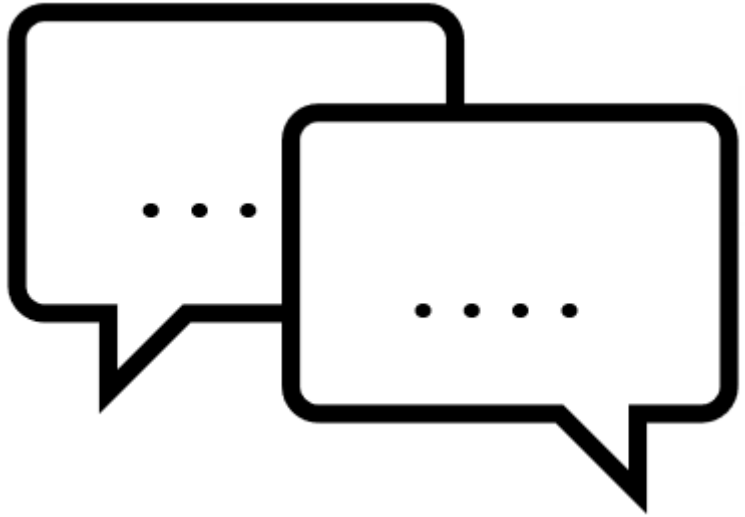
Amanda Olson
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Emily Karel
Team Nutrition Grant Coordinator
Email: ekarel@nd.gov
Phone: 701-451-7497

Department Email: dpicnfd@nd.gov
Phone: 701-328-2294
Website:
www.nd.gov/dpi/SchoolStaff/ChildNutritionFoodDistribution

NDDPI NORTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION



Questions & Discussion

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