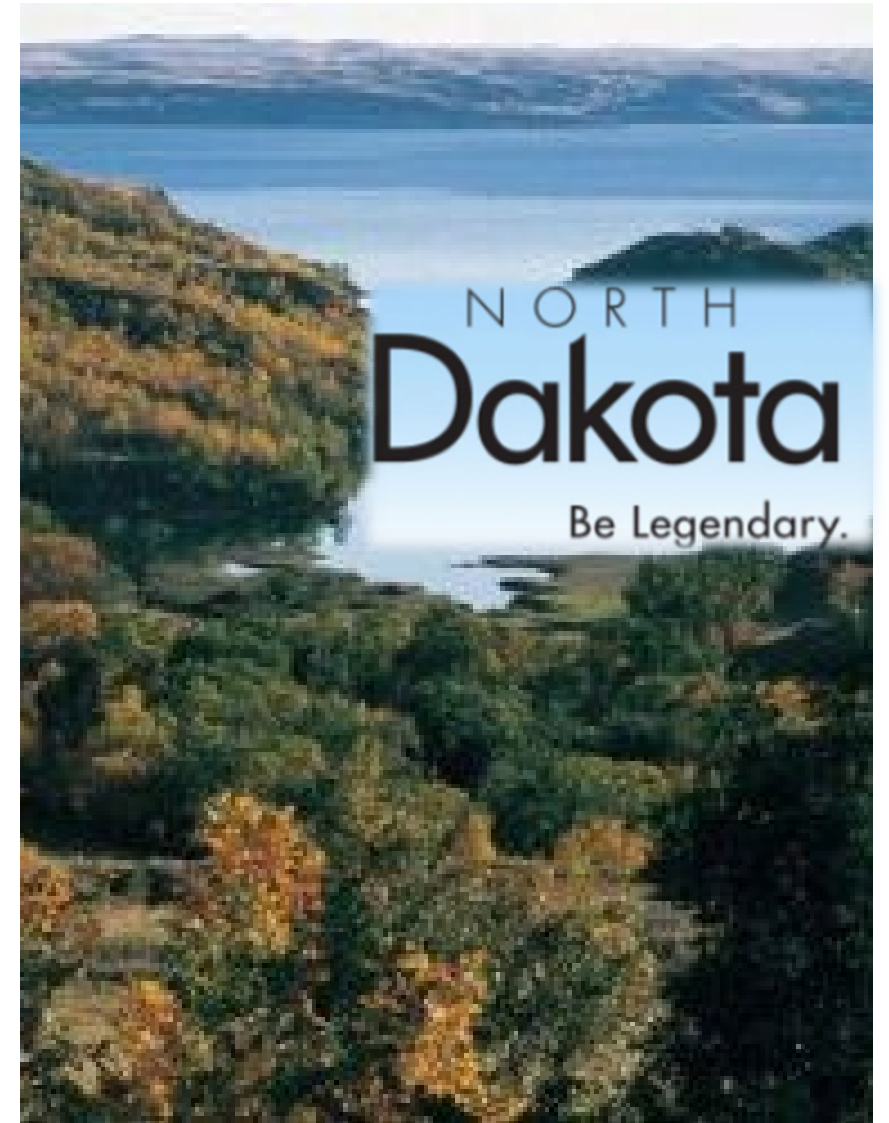




ACROSS THE DESK

January 2026



Lake Sakakawea

AI Bot Rules for NDDPI Hosted Meetings/Webinars



"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."

Agenda

- Policy Updates & Reminders
- Procurement
 - Policy
 - Forecasting/Cost Analysis
 - Types
 - Equipment



- Happy New Year!
- Halfway through the School Year!

Reminder

February 2026

January 2026							March 2026						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
25	26	27	28	29	30	31	29	30	31				

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

February 16 Washington's Birthday

© wikidates.org

- On-site Review DUE
 - February 1st.
 - Required for Multi-site districts
 - Encouraged for all
 - Review all Lunch programs
 - 50% of Breakfast programs

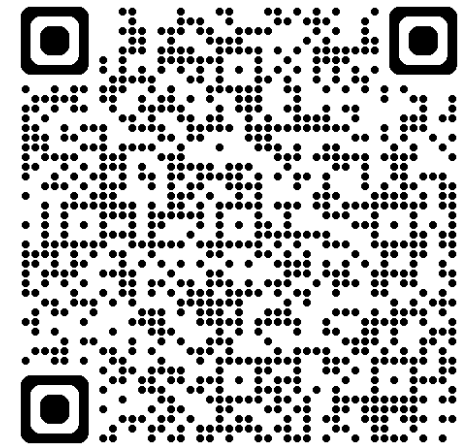
Whole Milk

- ND State: HB1132 -Allows whole milk dispensed from bulk machines in schools
- US Congress: "Whole Milk for Healthy Kids Act, 2025"
 - Not signed by President Yet
 - Only Lunch; Not Breakfast or Snack
- Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA) 2026-2030
 - Whole milk fat Dairy recommended
 - Limit added sugar to no more than 10 grams per meal

- **Whole milk is UNALLOWABLE in the current school meal patterns**
 - **Watch for NDDPI-CNFD Updates for more information.**

Annual Procurement Training

- **7 CFR 210.21(h)** – required for at least one person in each SFA annually
 - Food Service Director, Business Manager, and/or Superintendent
- 182/209 SFAs (87.1%) completed
- 27 schools still needed
 - Mail documentation to: dpicnfd@nd.gov



Policy: New Threshold Announcement

Change to 2 CFR 200
Effective Oct 1, 2025

- Received announcement: December 15th.

Federal micro-purchase threshold

- increased from \$10,000 to \$15,000 and;

Federal simplified acquisition threshold (formerly known as the Federal small purchase threshold)

- increased from \$250,000 to \$350,000.

STATE of ND has not been increased.

- Local threshold may be even lower.

Procurement

- Federal money has strings attached!
 - Procurement
 - Buy American Provision
 - Menu Documentation
 - Prove a Reimbursable meal was served

If School Food service Funds are used to Buy ____ (Any thing) ____,
then the procurement Process must be done.



Imagine if you are Dilbert and need a milk cooler.....



.... “Never mind, I’ll just keep stacking milk on the floor and call it ‘farm to table’.”

Procurement

- **Starts with YOUR Policy**
 - Review NOW!
- **Ensure all required information is included**
 - Threshold levels with WRITTEN procedures
 - Timelines
 - Documentation required for each type
 - Retention
 - Code of Conduct
 - Protest procedure
- **UPDATE**
 - Annual Procurement training



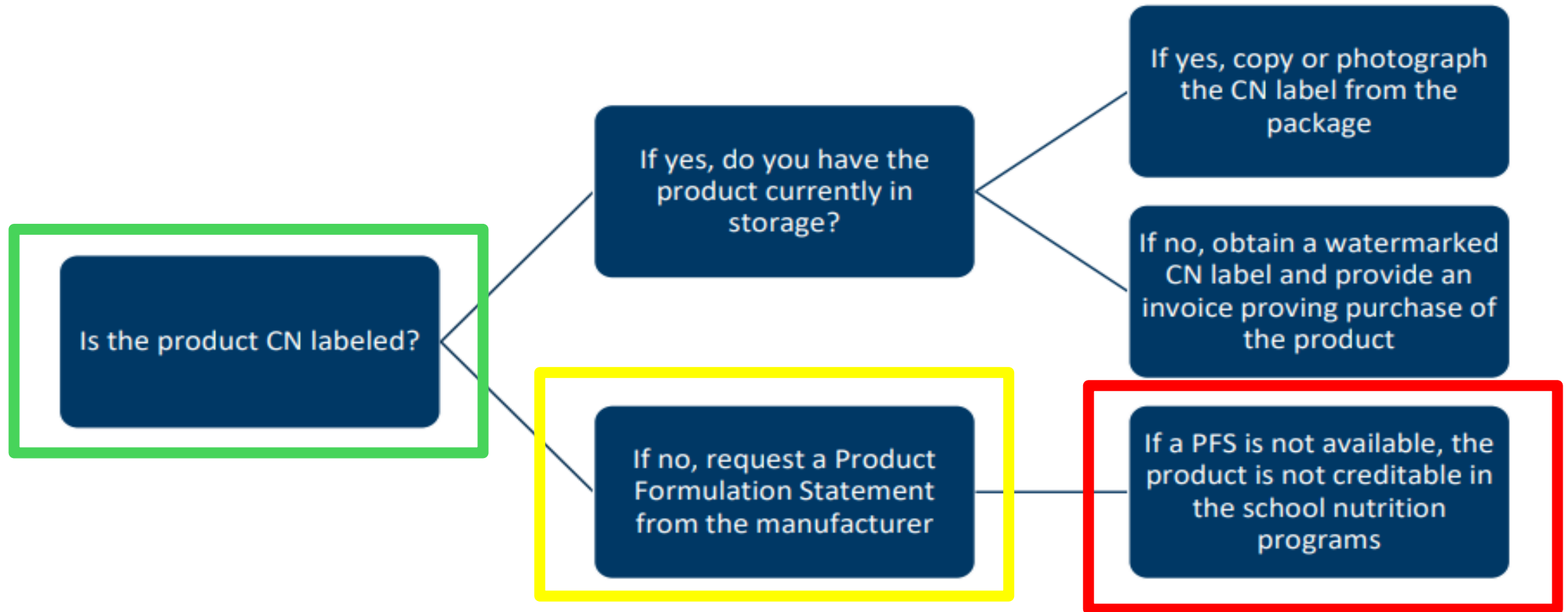
Forecasting

- Easy for equipment; food is challenging
- Volume is your negotiating tool
- Data is power
 - Velocity Reports
 - Menu for next year
 - USDA Foods tracker
- Write/Update specifications at this time



Documenting Convenience Foods

- Commercially-prepared food products that contribute to the meat/meat alternate meal component and commonly also contribute to the grain meal component
- May be served individually or as an ingredient in a recipe
- Examples include: pizza, breaded chicken, corn dogs, deli meats, hamburger patties, and beef crumbles



Cost Analysis

- Required Step by 2 CFR 200.324(a)
- Conducted after Forecasting Volume
- Purpose
 - Determine reasonableness of cost
 - Select procurement method (Micro, Small, Formal)
- Must include
 - Independent estimate before bids
 - Documentation of method used
 - Price lists
 - Prior contracts
 - Request For Information (RFI)
- Multiply & Total:
 - Forecasted volume x Estimated price = Total Purchase price

	A	B	C	D
		Yr Cases Needed	Estimated Cost	Total cost for the year
1				
2	Ground beef, 96/4, 40 lb	92	\$ 240.95	\$ 22,167.40
3	Green beans, 6/#10 cans	45	\$ 27.32	\$ 1,229.40
4	Pizza, 1 slice= 2oz m/ma, 2oz grain, CN label/PFS	22	\$ 38.88	\$ 855.36
5				
6	Total Solicitation			\$ 24,252.16

Procurement Methods & Documentation

- Micro Purchase
 - Threshold: ND State up to \$10,000
 - No quotes if price is reasonable
 - Documentation: Receipt/Invoice
- Small Purchase
 - Threshold: ND State: \$10,000-\$49,999
 - Requires quotes from at least 2 vendors
 - Documentation: Quotes, purchase invoice(s)
- Formal Procurement
 - Threshold: ND State: over \$50,000
 - Requires sealed bid (IFB) or competitive proposals (RFP)
 - Documentation: Full bid packet, solicitation, evaluation criteria, all responses, award notice, contract
- All methods require
 - Written procurement procedures
 - Buy American provision
 - Record retention

Purchasing Equipment

- State Agency Approval needed for anything that costs ~~\$5,000~~
- **\$10,000 or more**
- **Not on the Pre-approved list for ND School Foodservice equipment**

Proper Procurement is required.



Do you need the Buy American Provision clause in a solicitation or contract for a piece of equipment?



- Yes

- No

The Buy American Provision is for School Food only.

NSLP Equipment, 2025

- State Agency will NOT receive the NSLP Equipment Grant funding for this year
- The FY25 NSLP grants are being combined with the FY26 NSLP grants
- **Grant applications will be out Fall of 2026**

Proper Procurement is required.



As seen in Review

Common Mistakes

- No Procurement Policy
- Ignoring the most restrictive thresholds
- Not including the Buy American Provision in all documents
- Not requesting menu documentation in the solicitation

Best Practice

- Review/Update Annually
- Check local/state/federal thresholds annually
- Add Buy American language to policy/solicitation/contract
- Write specifications to require CN labeled or PFS to prove crediting to the menu



Questions?



Tray of the Month

Let's celebrate the creativity and hard work happening in your cafeterias! Tray of the Month is a fun, optional activity designed to highlight the delicious meals you serve every day.

How to Enter

Submit a 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.

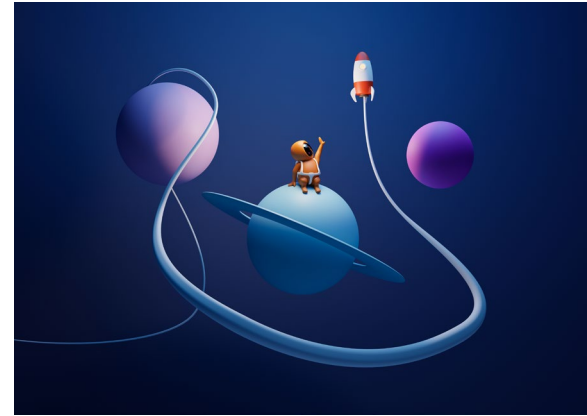
Submit your photo to Amanda Olson at amolson@nd.gov

January – Outer Space Adventure

Create meals and trays inspired by NASA, stars, planets, galaxies or even aliens. Think cosmic colors, outer space menu names, or shapes if possible.

Due: January 30

December Update : We didn't receive any submissions for December's Tray of the Month, so no winner will be featured. We can't wait to see your creativity in the months ahead!



November Winner -
Central Cass School
District

2026 Tray of the Month Themes

February – Soup & Stew Month

Share your favorite soup or stew—bonus points if you share your school recipe with us.

Due: February 27

March – Royal Breakfast Celebration

For National School Breakfast Week, go royal! Think queens, kings, princesses, and knights.

Due: March 31

April – Soybean & Soy Foods Month

Feature soy-based foods like yogurt, milk, edamame (crunchy or fresh), soy sauce, tofu, and more.

Due: April 30

May – Beef Month & School Lunch Hero Day

Show off your favorite beef dish (extra points for local beef!) or your School Lunch Hero Day décor.

Up to 2 submissions allowed.

Due: May 29

USDA Food Annual Food Survey Training

Two Sessions on Friday, Jan 16

1:45 p.m. – 2:45 p.m. Repeated at 2:45 p.m. - 3:45 p.m.

Training Agenda

Overview of the Annual Food Survey for SY 2026–2027

Forecasting to support full utilization of USDA Foods entitlement

Updated planning tool walkthrough

Sneak peek of USDA Foods for SY 2026–2027

 (701) 328-2294

Kitchen Counter Conversation

3rd Tuesday of each Month

2 p.m. Central Time

Registration for each KCC is in the last Newsletter

Next: Tuesday, January 20, 2025

Building a Menu with Procurement in Mind



Jarrett J. Krosoczka's "Lunch Lady"



Food Safety Certification

SERV SAFE

DICKINSON, February 10th
-Registration Due by Jan 16th

ICN "Food Safety in Schools"

Registration
due by Jan 16.

NDDPI - BRIDGE Transition

BRIDGE – Building Reports Informing Data-driven Growth in Education

- PowerSchool Data Replication Request
 - Submit a ticket to NDIT to request a weekly backup of PowerSchool database
 - A key step in the transition to Infinite Campus

Reminder: HB 1013
Online App needed by
July 1, 2026

Getting Ready for:

- POS Module
- Free/Reduced eligibilities
- Online applications



Across the Desk

2nd Tuesday of each Month
2 p.m. Central Time
Registration for each KCC is in
the last Newsletter

FEBRUARY 10TH

INTERDEPARTMENTAL COMMUNICATION
FOOD SERVICE MANAGEMENT COMPANIES
SUMMER-EBT

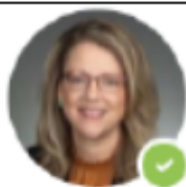
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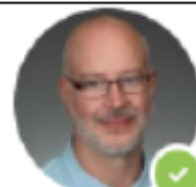
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**Kayla Ekart**

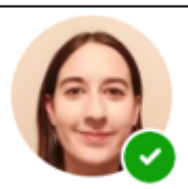
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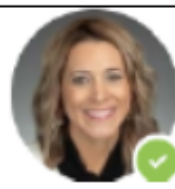
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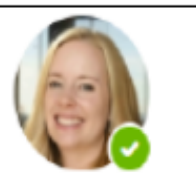
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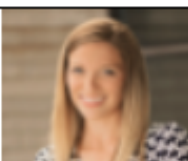
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Website:

www.nd.gov/dpi/SchoolStaff/ChildNutritionFoodDistributionNORTH DAKOTA
**DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**



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Questions & Discussion

WWW.ND.GOV/DPI



DPICNFD@ND.GOV



(701) 328-2260



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