



USDA Foods for School Nutrition Programs

USDA foods are American produced agricultural products. The USDA purchases food from producers and processors to strengthen American agriculture and improve the nutritional health of citizens participating in food programs.

USDA offers to each state a dollar limit (entitlement) that can be used to order certain USDA foods. The state orders the USDA foods that are preferred by ND schools. Schools then receive an entitlement for USDA foods, which is the dollar value of USDA foods that the school may receive for the year. Entitlement is calculated by multiplying your October Average Daily Participation (ADP) times the per meal value (currently 31.25 cents) times 180 days.

School USDA foods are ordered monthly through the Child Nutrition and Food Distribution Program's NDFoods online system. Schools are given a list of the foods available from which they can choose to have delivered.

DPI contracts for the warehousing and transportation of USDA foods for schools. DPI has received additional USDA administration funds for the past two years, which has been used to pay for the warehousing and transportation expenses on behalf of the schools.

How USDA Foods Have Improved to Support the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Program Meal Pattern Requirements

USDA Foods is the Right Choice for Our Schools

Helping ensure that North Dakota's children receive the healthy food they deserve, the USDA Foods program:

- Makes up approximately 15 to 20 percent of the food served in each school lunch.
- Provides a variety of healthy food choices, including fruits, vegetables, meat, fish, poultry, dairy and grains.
- Includes a selection of more than 180 nutritious food items including fresh, frozen, packaged, canned, dried and bulk.
- Meets rigorous food safety standards set by Federal regulatory agencies and USDA's two purchasing agencies – the Agricultural Marketing Service and the Farm Service Agency

Healthy Options for Schools

The USDA Foods program for schools helps improve the nutritional value of school meals by offering more fruits, vegetables, and whole grains than ever before. Not only do these healthy foods taste good, but they are also lower in sugar, salt, and fat.

Fruits and Vegetables:

Over \$1.1 million in canned, fresh, frozen and dried fruits and vegetables were purchased for North Dakota schools through the USDA food program for schools and the Department of Defense Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program in school year 2014-2015.

Whole Grains:

USDA offers many whole-grain options including brown rice, whole-wheat flour, and whole-grain pancakes, pastas, and tortillas. North Dakota purchased whole-grain rotini macaroni, tortillas and pancakes during school year 2014-2015.

Fat:

Low-fat meats and lean poultry products, as well as fat-free potato wedges, were made available to schools. Shortening and butter were eliminated long ago from school purchasing options. Over \$1.3 million was spent on purchasing low-fat meats and poultry products for North Dakota schools. Schools received fine ground beef (85/15), diced chicken, chicken fajita strips, turkey ham (95% fat free), turkey roasts, turkey deli and pork roast and sliced ham (97% fat free).