



Letter to Food Service Directors

Dear:

We are writing to urge you to champion an important issue affecting children in your community. Childhood food insecurity in the summertime remains at unacceptable levels across the country and children are most acutely at risk during the summer, when they do not have access to school meals. As a school foodservice director, you understand the importance of children receiving nutritious meals. Your leadership helps ensure that the children you feed during the school year do not go hungry in the summer. The Department of Agriculture (USDA) operates summer meals programs to address this problem and we are requesting your help to make access to and participation in summer meals a priority.

The USDA Summer Meals Programs include the Summer Food Service Program as well as the Seamless Summer Option in the National School Lunch Program. These programs operate as a partnership between the Federal government, State agencies and local organizations to serve free meals to kids age 18 years and younger. The USDA provides reimbursement for meals, while State agencies administer the program. Local organizations – including schools, non-profits, parks and recreation departments, libraries and faith-based groups – serve the meals.

In 2013, about 3.5 million children received summer meals – far fewer than the 21 million children who receive free or reduced-price lunches through the National School Lunch Program during the school year. This means that during the summer we are not reaching the vast majority of children who rely on school meals to meet their nutritional needs.

You can help change this by encouraging eligible schools in your district to provide children in your community with summer meals at your school this summer. Local schools make the best sites for summer feeding efforts. Children and parents are familiar with local schools and schools are known for providing nutritious food in a safe environment. Even if your eligible school will not be offering summer programming, they can serve as summer feeding sites and fill a meal gap for your students so they are ready to learn when they return to school.

Your food service program also may be able to provide meals to other summer sites as a vendor. You are uniquely qualified to provide meals to other summer sites in your area. Please consider working with local community organizations to provide meals to the children in your school district.

You can learn more about the USDA Summer Meals Programs by visiting www.summerfood.usda.gov.



Summer Food Rocks!

Summer Meals Toolkit

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

These programs need champions. Please help us feed more children in your community when school is not in session by being a champion for summer meals. Thank you, as always, for your dedication and commitment to our children.

Sincerely,



Summer Food Rocks!

Summer Meals Toolkit

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.