



Meal Service Best Practices

The goal of the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) is to provide nutritious meals to children. To help reach this goal, all meals served must meet the meal pattern and meal service requirements. By implementing these meal service best practices, sponsors can help ensure meals served are nutritious and appetizing to keep children coming back, keep costs low and to make sure the site run smoothly.

Did You Know?

The meal service best practices can help create a pleasant eating environment for children. A pleasant eating experience is just as important as serving nutritious meals to help children build healthy habits and attitudes towards food that may serve as a foundation for healthy choices in life.

How?

To learn more about how you can meet meal service best practices, please visit the following toolkit pages:

- How to Establish Meal Service Times
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/cnd/SMT-MealServiceTimes.pdf>
- How to Use Offer Versus Serve
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/cnd/SMT-OfferVersusServe.pdf>
- Family Style Meals: A New Way to Teach Healthy Eating Habits
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/cnd/SMT-FamilyStyleMeals.pdf>
- Serving Adults: What You Need to Know
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/cnd/SMT-AdultMeals.pdf>
- What to Do with Leftover Meals
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/cnd/SMT-LeftoverMeals.pdf>
- Successfully Operating a Congregate Feeding Site
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/cnd/SMT-CongregateFeeding.pdf>

USDA Resources

Regulations and Policies

- **7 CFR 225.16: Meal Service Requirements**
http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=d87b1089e455f65409bd1dbf463b3686&node=pt7.4.225&rqn=div5#se7.4.225_116



Summer Meals Toolkit

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- **Meal Service Requirements, SP 13-2015 (v.2), SFSP 05-2015 (v.2), *Summer Meal Programs Meal Service Requirements Revised Q&As- Revised*, January 12, 2015**
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/summer-meal-programs-meal-service-requirements-gas-revised>

Handbooks and Other Tools

- **Site Supervisor's Guide**
 - English:
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/SiteSupervsGuide.pdf>
 - Spanish:
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/sp-SiteSupervsGuide.pdf>
- **Nutrition Guide for Sponsors**
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/NutritionGuide.pdf>
- **Tips for Success: Meal Service Issues**
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/Meals.pdf>
- **Best Practices: Meal Service**
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/best-practices-meal-service>

Partner Organizations Resources

National Food Service Management Institute (NFSMI)

Resource Center

In the NFSMI Resource Center, you can find a wide array of education and training materials, research, newsletters, and other online resources.

<http://www.nfsmi.org/Templates/TemplateDivision.aspx?qs=cEIEPTI=>

School Nutrition Association (SNA)

Summer Feeding Toolkit

This toolkit is designed to help schools start or enhance a summer feeding program. Find inspiration in the best practices of other school nutrition professionals.

<https://schoolnutrition.org/summerfeeding/>



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For Additional Information

Utilize these resources to ensure your summer meal operations are successful. For additional questions, sponsors and the general public should contact their State agency for help. State agencies should contact their FNS Regional Office.

List of FNS Regional Offices: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns-regional-offices>

List of State Agencies: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Contacts/StateDirectory.htm>

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