

## Overview of USDA Foods Program in Connecticut

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) manages the USDA Foods Program for schools in Connecticut. The CSDE's role is to help school food authorities (SFA) obtain USDA purchased commodity foods. Each year, schools are given a Planned Assistance Level (PAL), which is based on the number of reimbursable lunches served in the previous school year multiplied by the federal meal rate. The federal meal rate changes yearly. Each SFA decides how to use their PAL budget. The USDA Foods Program is available to schools in several ways.



### Direct Delivery Foods

- State surveys schools
- State offers food items to schools
- Schools request food through WBSCM
- State orders food from USDA
- USDA procures foods
- Food delivered to schools by state contracted warehouse



### Further Processed Foods

- State offers foods for further processing to schools
- Schools order foods for further processing through WBSCM, indicating which processor they are using
- USDA procures food
- USDA sends ordered food to processor
- Processor makes end products
- School orders end products through commercial distributor
- Distributor delivers food



### USDA Department of Defense Fresh

- DoD procures produce vendor
- State requests DoD allocations
- DoD approves allocations and site requests
- Schools order produce through FFAVORS
- Vendor delivers produce

## Overview of USDA Foods Program in Connecticut

- **Direct Delivery (DD):** DD is the traditional way to use PAL funds. In late winter/early spring, the CSDE surveys SFAs to see what items they would like available on these orders. In the spring, SFAs order from a variety of items for the following school year. If possible, the CSDE will allow additional orders throughout the school year. The recipient agency (RA) places orders in the USDA's Web Based Supply Chain Management (WBSCM) system. The CSDE orders these foods directly from the USDA, on behalf of SFAs, and manages distribution to all participating schools. PAL funds cover the value of the USDA Foods, but SFAs are responsible for payment of delivery, administration, and storage fees.
- **Further Processed Foods:** Further Processing is an optional way to use PAL funds for processed foods. Each spring, SFAs can elect to allocate dollars towards the purchase of processed items for the following school year. Each RA must properly procure processing services from processors that are approved by the CSDE. During the school year, SFAs can order these products from their commercial food distributor. PAL funds cover the value of the USDA Foods contained in the product, but SFAs are responsible for payment of processing and distributor fees.
- **USDA Department of Defense (DoD) Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program:** The USDA DoD Fresh Program is an optional way to use PAL funds for fresh produce. In late winter, SFAs can elect to allocate entitlement dollars towards the purchase of these items for the following school year. During the school year, SFAs can order produce as often as once per week through the Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Order Receipt System (FFAVORS). PAL funds cover the cost of the produce in addition to the delivery fees.

Connecticut is one of eight states chosen by the USDA to conduct the **USDA Pilot Project for the Procurement of Unprocessed Fruits and Vegetables**. This pilot project provides more purchasing flexibility and options for unprocessed fruits and vegetables. It allows Connecticut schools to use local approved vendors with their entitlement dollars, and supports the use of locally grown foods in school meal programs. This pilot initially started with a small number of participating approved schools. The option to participate was extended to all school districts starting in school year 2016-17. Schools choose the amount of PAL they wish to put toward the pilot, and order weekly from an approved vendor list. PAL funds cover the cost of the produce.

CSDE USDA Foods Program Contacts		
Allison Calhoun-White	860-807-2008	<a href="mailto:allison.calhoun-white@ct.gov">allison.calhoun-white@ct.gov</a>
Monica Pacheco	860-807-2086	<a href="mailto:monica.pacheco@ct.gov">monica.pacheco@ct.gov</a>
Website: <a href="https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Food-Distribution-Program-USDA-Foods">https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Food-Distribution-Program-USDA-Foods</a>		

## Overview of USDA Foods Program in Connecticut



For information on the Connecticut Food Distribution Program (FDP), visit the CSDE's [Food Distribution Program \(USDA Foods\)](#) webpage or contact the [FDP program staff](#) in the CSDE's Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841.

This document is available at <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/FDP/USDAFoodsinfo.pdf>.

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at: [How to File a Complaint](#), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

The Connecticut State Department of Education is committed to a policy of equal opportunity/affirmative action for all qualified persons. The Connecticut Department of Education does not discriminate in any employment practice, education program, or educational activity on the basis of age, ancestry, color, criminal record (in state employment and licensing), gender identity or expression, genetic information, intellectual disability, learning disability, marital status, mental disability (past or present), national origin, physical disability (including blindness), race, religious creed, retaliation for previously opposed discrimination or coercion, sex (pregnancy or sexual harassment), sexual orientation, veteran status or workplace hazards to reproductive systems, unless there is a bona fide occupational qualification excluding persons in any of the aforementioned protected classes.

Inquiries regarding the Connecticut State Department of Education's nondiscrimination policies should be directed to: Levy Gillespie, Equal Employment Opportunity Director/Americans with Disabilities Coordinator (ADA), Connecticut State Department of Education, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 607, Hartford, CT 06103, 860-807-2071, [levy.gillespie@ct.gov](mailto:levy.gillespie@ct.gov).