

**School Lunch Advisory Council (SLAC)
Virtual Meeting Notes – October 16, 2020**

Attendees:

NYS Office of General Services (OGS) Foods Distribution:

Maureen Barbic	Gabrielle Viens
Debbie Hesch	Anja Allnach
Barbara Marshall	Adam Wright

US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Services (FNS), Northeast Regional Office

Adrienne Vingiglio	Abigail Sanders
Alicia Rampulla	Martine Cherry

SLAC Area Representatives

Area A - Karen Bronson-Clark, Food Service Director, School #1 BOCES
Area C - Tami Augugliaro, Food Service Director, Lancaster Central School
Area D - Bryan McCoy, Food Service Director, DCMO BOCES
Area E - Chris Whitmore, Food Service Director, Rome City School District
Area F - Dave Gravlin, Food Service Director, Potsdam Central School
Area G - Lyn Prestia, Food Service Director, Pine Bush Central School District
Area J - Lisa Ostrowski, Food Service Director, North Colonie Central School District
Area K - Regina Dunne, Food Service Director, Smithtown Central School District (Unable to Attend)
Area L - Brian Wright, School Lunch Director, Baldwinsville Central School District
NYC - Anne O'Donnell, Director of Supply Chain Management, Office of Food & Nutrition Services

NYS Education Department (SED) – Child Nutrition Program Administration

Raemie Swain
Sandy Sheedy

New York School Nutrition Association (SNA)

Jennifer Martin

OGS Food Distribution

- Welcome new members (Area D – Bryan McCoy) and (Area G – Lyn Prestia). Kim Corcoran – Area D and Mike Robinson Area G retired.
- June 2021 will be the end of Area E - Chris Whitmore and Area F - Dave Gravlin terms on SLAC.
- OGS reviewed the area reports and will address the most common questions.
- Area D and Area L Contracts are out for bid for a five-year contract to store and distribute USDA Foods. The bid opening will be held on November 19, 2020.

2020-21 School Year

- OGS cancelled Ground Beef, Diced Chicken, and Turkey Taco after reviewing storage concerns voiced by schools and inventory on hand at Distributors.
- Tuna, Spaghetti Sauce, and Turkey Roasts are delayed due to COVID-19 and vendor constraints.
- Strawberry cups and strawberry slices were cancelled by USDA due to vendor constraints caused by a poor harvest.
- Distributors should be emailing weekly inventory reports to schools to show commodities at the distributor and in school accounts. Schools need to pay attention to these emails and act on changes before product reaches their delivery dock. Schools cannot wait until the delivery arrives and refuse delivery. Run reports in WBSCM to see what is coming into the Distributor. Contact OGS immediately if you can't take the food.
- OGS opted into *Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) Waiver for School Year 2020-2021 National School Lunch Program USDA Foods Entitlement Calculations*. The preliminary SY 2020-2021

entitlement level, based on SY 2018-2019 lunch counts, will be the final entitlement value assigned for SY 2020-2021.

- There have been delays in implementing the new USDA Food inventory management system. The process for the Food Preference survey and USDA Food ordering for School Year 2021-22, will remain the same.

NYS Education Department (NYSED)

Electing Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)/Seamless Summer Option (SSO): A small team of our staff along with our IT rep have been working nonstop over the last month to modify the Child Nutrition Management System (CNMS) to allow for schools to elect SSO and SFSP and to claim SSO and SFSP meals. The good news is, it is very close to being finalized and we plan to roll it out early next week. We will of course include step-by-step instructions to help schools navigate the system and we plan to do a webinar very soon, as well. As soon as we have a date for the webinar, we will post it on our website.

Last Friday, USDA announced 12 nationwide waivers extending SFSP/SSO operations and other flexibilities through SY 2020-21. We have elected to use all except #68 as it applies to CACFP. The waivers we elected are:

- COVID-19 Response #59 – Nationwide waiver to allow SFSP and SSO operations through SY 2020-21 – extension
- COVID-19 Response #60 – Nationwide waiver to extend area eligibility waivers – extension #3
- COVID-19 Response #61 – Nationwide waiver to allow non-congregate feeding in SFSP/SSO – extension #5
- COVID-19 Response #62 – Nationwide waiver to allow parents and guardian to pick up meals for children – extension #5
- COVID-19 Response #63 – Nationwide waiver to allow meal pattern flexibility in SFSP/SSO – extension #8
- COVID-19 Response #64 – Nationwide waiver to allow area eligibility for closed enrolled sites in SFSP/SSO – extension #2
- COVID-19 Response #65 – Nationwide waiver to waive first week site visits in SFSP – extension #2
- COVID-19 Response #66 – Nationwide waiver of meal service time restrictions in SFSP/SSO – extension #2
- COVID-19 Response #67 – Nationwide waiver to allow OVS flexibilities in SFSP – extension #2
- COVID-19 Response #69 – Nationwide waiver to allow reimbursement for meals served prior to notification of preapproval and provide flexibility for preapproval visits in SFSP – extension
- COVID-19 Response #70 – Nationwide waiver to allow meal pattern flexibility in the Child Nutrition Programs – extension #5

The hope is that these waivers will allow you to continue to provide nutritious meals to students while minimizing potential exposure to COVID. The waivers are available on our website.

New Q&As: USDA released Q&As yesterday. They will be posted on our website. They didn't answer all the questions that have been coming up, like how to handle verification, but we have been told there are more Q&As to come.

SFSP: We are currently accepting applications for participation in the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). This is for new sponsors who have not been approved to operate the SFSP. As of now, the deadline to submit an application is October 31, 2020. There is a [SFSP New Sponsor Application Request Form](#) on our website for SFAs to request an application. If a school was previously approved to operate the SFSP for 2020 and would like to update or extend their dates of operation, they should contact their SFSP representative.

Equipment Grants:

FY18: We have a few SFAs that have not submitted documentation for reimbursement. If any SFA was awarded a FY18 grant and hasn't yet submitted their paperwork, they should do so ASAP or contact us (foodequip@nysed.gov) . (Grant ended 9/30/20. we asked for an extension from USDA but haven't been given approval yet)

FY19: We posted the awards on our website at the end of August. Grants finance is still working on sending out the official grant award notice to SFAs. SFAs have until June 30, 2021 to make purchases and submit documentation for reimbursement.

FY20: We have been allocated \$1.8 million to award for this next year. We are waiting for USDA to approve our RFP but expect to post it in mid-December or early January similar to last year.

New York School Nutrition Association (SNA)

NEW WEBSITE

- New website has launched. It's a database and website all in one. Members now have ability to create their own invoices for renewals and registrations online.
- All future event registrations will be online
- Directors have admin control for districts

30% INCENTIVE SUMMIT

- Worked with NYSED and NY Ag & Mkts to offer training and guidance for the 30% program. All recorded sessions are available on our website under the "Resources" section

MEMBER ENGAGEMENT

- NYSNA HQ has created "NYSNA News" which is basically replacing the e-newsletter
- Join Alyssa and Ashleigh every Tuesday and Thursday at 2 pm on Facebook for quick segments featuring all things NYSNA! *Think of it as an audio version of a newsletter (but much more fun) where you will hear NYSNA updates, event information, and even meet some fun guests.*
- In the month of October, we will be focusing on our upcoming event: *From the Show Floor* (38 Vendors will be participating in the NY Show)

EVENTS

- From the Show Floor – registration is open on our website
 - Deadline to register (to attend Live workshops) is October 30
 - Incentive Game opens November 2 and closes December 2
 - Live drawings at 4 pm on Facebook
 - Two keynotes live: Nov 2 and Dec 2 – both sessions will be recorded and uploaded into the event website
 - Visit website for more information
- **2021 LAC**
 - Cancelled – hotel went out of business
 - New platform
 - Important to build solid Public Policy & Legislation (PPL) Committee throughout the state
 - Albany buildings will not be allowing visitors in January

USDA

- New York opted to use 2018-19SY ADPs for the basis of 2020-21SY Entitlements
- In previous years, USDA would procure, on average, about \$1.5 billion in food. This past year, USDA procured \$4 billion in food.

AREA A

1. Why were all bulk potatoes (100506) cancelled?

A. Although bulk potatoes, material 100506, was cancelled in WBSCM, schools will still get their product. OGS sent out an email to all schools affected to alert them that due to excess pounds in the State Account their order would be cancelled in WBSCM and they would have pounds allocated to them from the State Account. Schools can verify their pounds in ProcessorLink and/or K12 Food Service.

2. Why are there so many cancellations of OGS product this year?

A. There were many cancellations this year due to multiple factors. OGS cancelled a few products after receiving reports from several schools regarding lack of storage. There was excess product on hand at the distributors and redistributed. Products were also cancelled due to vendor constraints caused by COVID-19, poor harvests, etc.

3. How were the items that were cancelled decided upon? I feel like there should be a way that they could poll the masses before choosing for us. As we plan menus going forward, it's going to be important to know if something isn't coming in before it's due to come in. I, and I'm sure others, are working feverishly to use up last year's product knowing this year's is coming. If I don't know it's not coming, how do I plan appropriately? Venting for a moment, they are constantly getting after us about managing things better and planning, but they don't give us the ability to do so.

A. Items cancelled by OGS are determined by looking at which products are most frequently requested to be redistributed, how much of said product is coming in versus how much is already at the distributor, and the type of commodity (dry, cooler, freezer). Items cancelled by USDA are out of our control. Unfortunately, these products are often cancelled due to vendor constraints (which could include a multitude of reasons). WBSCM schools should run their Requisition Status Report at the very least once a month, if not more frequently to monitor any status changes on product that they ordered.

4. Schools are finding they cannot take excess items arriving due to lack of storage.

A. Schools need to contact OGS ASAP for guidance.

5. Several schools have complained on lack of communication from the Distributor.

A. If schools are having problems with their Distributor, these schools need to email OGS and OGS will take care of it. The contract is between OGS and the distributor.

AREA C

1. Are SFSP schools still eligible for commodity entitlement next year? Compared to an SSO school?

A. This is still to be determined; however, all meals served this year will be treated as school meals. Entitlement may not be based on this year's number due to COVID-19.

2. Have we been approved to receive our \$0.19 from the State as being SSO will give us the ability to receive it because at this time SFSP does not?

A. If you are an SSO school you can; there is no change from additional reimbursement rules. Your school does have to be approved for SSO, bought/utilized 30% of food from NYS in your menu, and have your application for this \$0.19 approved.

3. We would like clear direction on the waivers we should have at this time and any waivers that we should be looking for. We are feeding children for free, what are the recorded expectations of this both drive through pick up and in-house distributions?

A. *Waivers depend on how schools are operating. Records must be kept for all meals served. If your school is doing deliveries, you must have written consent from the home. If your school is doing Grab 'n' Go you must have a system in place.*

AREA D

Nothing to Report

AREA E

1. With all the cancellations on the brown box items, will there be other items available later in the year or will we get reimbursed for the amount of entitlement for items that we do not receive?

A. *If a brown box item is cancelled in WBSCM, the amount is returned to your school's available entitlement. Schools should run their Entitlement Bonus Summary Report to review their available balance. Schools can allocate available entitlement to the USDA DOD Fresh Program (DOD).*

AREA F

1. Some schools have received DoD Produce from Glazier.

A. *OGS confirmed with DoD, that Gargiulo is allowed to contract with another vendor (subcontractor) to deliver produce. Gargiulo is responsible to ensure that the subcontractor meets all requirements of the contract for USDA DoD Fresh, including: the produce must meet U.S. No.1 quality requirements. Please remember that schools must report issues immediately concerning produce quality, condition, or delivery to Gargiulo (rich@gargiuloproduce.com), the DLA representative Vera Strilchuk (vera.strilchuk@dla.mil) and to OGS. Schools can also contact DLA on the FFAVORS Customer Homepage, "Contact My DLA Account Specialist" or "FFAVORS Help Desk".*

AREA G

1. Shelf stable applesauce cups were reduced from 12 flavors to 4 – and these products are not available until December 2020 for Peterson Farms?

A. *Due to COVID demands and poor harvests, Peterson Farms reduced their options from 12 flavors to 4 flavors in order to keep up with demands and orders.*

2. Maid Rite orders are very delayed into the Distributor for September and October.

A. *Due to COVID-19 and vendor constraints, orders are behind and being fulfilled at a slower pace, causing delay.*

3. What is the purpose of verifying invoices in Processor Link?

A. *OGS requires schools to verify their allocated pounds in ProcessorLink and does not have access to view schools' invoices. OGS will be scheduling training on ProcessorLink and K12 for schools, which should provide more insight on this question. OGS will forward this question to ProcessorLink so that it can be covered at the training sessions.*

4. Can you have more than one distributor in Processor Link? (For example, potato and egg products, when bidding – all items on a bid catalog are not won by the same distributor)

A. *Yes, you can, it is just dependent on what your school orders. OGS will forward this question to ProcessorLink so that it can be covered at the training sessions.*

5. Can you split Net Off Invoice credit from two distributors? (For example, with chicken – there are six chicken products: nuggets, patties, tenders, etc. They are bid out and won by multiple distributors). How do you get NOI credit on multiple distributors for the same "Material" item?

A. Yes, but again, it depends on what your school orders and how many pounds are allocated to each processor. Schools also have the option to choose the distribution/delivery method of processed product.

6. Can you cancel diversions that did not work out the way they were planned?

A. Yes. Schools must notify OGS ASAP. If the product hasn't been ordered (and a truck has not been ordered). Schools will receive entitlement credit if a truck can be cancelled. If a truck cannot be cancelled and the school's pounds are put into the State Account, they will not receive entitlement credit unless a new home is found for the pounds.

7. What can be done with pounds that are so low/unusable in further processed manufacturer accounts?

A. Schools must notify OGS and we will work on options.

8. What flexibility is there now regarding changing/transferring diversion?

A. Due to the pandemic, we encourage schools to contact OGS and we can discuss options.

9. Why are some pounds carried over to the next fiscal year and other pounds are not carried over?

A. OGS only carried over pounds from SY 2019-20 for the schools that supplied a detailed plan.

10. USDA products 110921 Chicken Fillets, 110462 Unseasoned Chicken strips, 100360 Garbanzo Beans, and 100364 Vegetarian beans are all very versatile and wonderful/easy to use!

11. USDA Portion control items are great, and we are looking for more of them (Fruit, String Cheese, etc.)

12. Where is the USDA SY2021 Food Value List located/how do we find the current item pricing?

A. The Food Value List is specific for Area K and W schools. All other schools should be running their "Value of Commodities Received" Report in WBSCM to find the current prices of items.

13. Given the COVID-19 pandemic and the cancellation of some direct delivery items, could the USDA catalog be reopened so we could add more of the following?

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| -100517 and 100521 NYS Apple variety | -110396 String Cheese |
| -110859 Mixed Berry Cups | -110553 Turkey Deli Sliced |
| -100277 Orange Juice (4 oz) | -100187 Sliced Ham |
| -100283 Fresh Oranges | -110854 Individual Peanut Butter Cups |
| -100241 Peach Cups (Frozen) | -110400, 110401, and 110402 Yogurt Cups |
| -100256 Strawberry Cups (Frozen) | |

A. Unfortunately, many of these items are considered seasonal and can only be ordered during February/March. Apples and Oranges, are available through the USDA DOD Fresh Program. OGS will be reviewing products, but for the above-mentioned materials 110396, 110553, 100187, 110854, 110400, 110401, 110402 the next USDA deadline for orders is December 18, 2020, so those may be a possibility. Those orders would have April-June delivery dates though. Materials 110396, 110400, 110401, and 110402 have a short shelf life.

14. What does the Sales Change Notification from WBSCM mean and what action should be taken after receiving said notification?

A. These notifications to alert schools of status changes to orders. Schools should be running and reviewing the Requisition Status Report often to monitor orders.

15. Will there be any more of the trade mitigation opportunities to use our entitlement for direct delivery grab/go items like the raisins, cereal, cranberries, and/or cheese sticks available this year?

A. We have not heard of any more Trade Mitigation or Bonus offers. These offers do not count against entitlement.

16. Will we be able to spend the entitlement we got back from the cancellations?

A. Yes. Schools should run their Entitlement Bonus Summary Report to check the amount of available entitlement. Entitlement can be used for the USDA DOD Fresh Program to order fresh produce that is delivered to the school. Contact OGS Food Distribution for more information.

17. Is there credit given for direct delivery products not delivered?

A. Yes. Schools should run their Entitlement Bonus Summary Report to check the amount of available entitlement.

18. Can you use multiple produce Pilot Vendors?

A. Yes, however schools must properly procure each Pilot vendor.

19. A district cancelled further processing products as their number of meals being served are down from their projections. Will they get back these entitlement dollars?

A. Schools will receive entitlement back if a truck can be cancelled. If a truck cannot be cancelled and the school's pounds are put into the State Account, they will not receive credit back until a new home is found for the pounds.

20. How will SY2021-22 allocation amounts be determined? If it's based on the previous year, many programs will be dealt a reduction in entitlement in an already difficult financial situation.

A. This is still being discussed.

21. Great items in FFAVORS! Schools love the fresh green beans, broccoli florets, diced celery, celery sticks, chopped romaine, carrot sticks, grapefruit, and plums!

22. Why is it that the USDA DoD Fresh Program has many more items than the Pilot Vendors?

A. The USDA DoD Fresh Program and Pilot are two separate programs. Pilot is a pilot program and there are more restrictions for the vendors. Pilot Vendors have GAP Audits before they can be approved as a vendor. All of their produce items must be inspected and approved before they can be offered. The USDA DoD Fresh Program does not have as many restrictions. The procurement for the produce is done by the Department of Defense.

23. Can funds be transferred into the USDA DoD Fresh Program or the Pilot Program from entitlement?

A. Yes, schools may send a request to OGS requesting specifying a dollar amount they would like allocated to either program (or both) from their available entitlement.

24. Can funds be transferred from the Pilot program to the USDA DoD Fresh Program?

A. Yes, but schools must keep in mind that the state is capped at \$3.5 million for the Pilot Program and DOD has no cap.

25. Can a location have more than one DOD delivery per week?

A. No.

26. Is a new USDA Pilot agreement required every year? If so, what is required?

A. Yes, a new USDA Pilot agreement is required each year. This two-page document has program criteria and schools acknowledge that they will properly procure the Pilot produce.

27. Is there a way to know in advance when certain items (melons, grapes, etc. will no longer be included on the DOD program offering? How is that determined?

A. Mostly all items offered through DOD are seasonal and are only offered during certain times of the year. Items are always 100% domestic.

28. Institute for Child Nutrition (ICN) online materials have been very useful in developing a Professional Standard monthly training plan for staff to meet the minimum amount of annual training hours for all. Between the videos, posters, and material resources; professional development is easily prepared without reinventing the PD wheel.

AREA J

1. Staff is worried about the districts keeping their jobs with such low participation. Tons of food and no customers. Budgets have also been cut to allocate money to other areas of urgency.

2. The state is not setting solid guidance because they are not getting guidance themselves. I am between the SFSP and the NSLP, no one really knows what program I am running at this time.

3. Morale is beginning to decrease because we have too much time on our hands when we should be working to feed kids. Wondering if we should provide the parents with information on how COVID-19 is not spread through food?

4. Snack room sales are little to none because kids are not allowed to get out of their seats or allowed to go back through the line later for snacks.

5. Parents are not willing to pick up meals and we are unable to provide bus deliveries. I do not feel sending students' home with meals is a safe idea with concerns for Food Safety.

AREA K/W

Unable to attend.

AREA L

1. Many directors have voiced concern about storage of commodities within their district due to lower participation.

A. If a school is having concerns with storage of USDA Foods, they need to contact OGS.

2. Concern over receiving a full year worth of product in a single delivery. Some schools seem to like some of the additional fruits that are available in the single serve format.

A. OGS will get specifics on this concern and address it separately.

3. A couple of directors are looking for updated pricing on the Pulled Pork. Where do we find the latest commodity value prices?

A. Pulled Pork is a Trade Mitigation item. When running reports in WBSCM, clear the 'Program' field to display Trade Mitigation and Bonus items.

4. Big Apple communication is still very good! Their sister distributor, Deli Boy, has shifted delivery days on short notice for the Syracuse/Eastern part of Area L.

NYC Board of Education

1. NYC (to date) has served 60 million meals during the COVID-19 pandemic. At the height of COVID-19 NYC was serving 550,000 meals a day.

2. Working to increase the counts through advertising. The Mayor and Chancellor are to remind audiences during press conferences.
3. NYC is continuing to serve a “cold” menu to students in classrooms and who are learning remotely
4. NYC still has approximately 261 adult community sites open for service
5. Still serving a variety of menus: Kosher and Halal
6. NYC is following the “Trace and Test” suggestions in reference to school closures.

Concerns:

1. Still has concerns with Fairfield Organics Sunflower Butter. There was foreign matter in the butter, they are inconsistent with quality, and there are packages that leak. After submitting a commodity complaint USDA was working to replace the sunflower butter, then said they were not going to replace it, and are now back with the sunflower will be replaced, but there has been no movement on this matter.

A. OGS and USDA are currently working on finding a resolution to this situation

2. Can USDA provide a yearly product code reference guide to all their products to guide in deciphering BIUB's and providing shelf life?

A. Because USDA procures products commercially, the USDA must follow industry standards. BIUB's and pack dates are not industry standard, so USDA cannot require standardized dating/labelling.

3. Can USDA provide origin on their USDA Food Product Information Sheets

A. This information varies by vendor.

Next SLAC meeting dates:

Friday, January 8, 2021 (Snow date Friday, February 5, 2021)

Friday, May 14, 2021