



School Lunch Advisory Council (SLAC) Meeting Notes – Friday, May 10, 2024

Attendees

NYS Office of General Services (OGS) USDA Food Distribution

Nicholas Barber
Gabrielle Viens
Frank Palmo
Jeffrey Ruff
Melissa Robinson

USDA Northeast Regional Office Food and Nutrition Service

N/A

SLAC Area Representatives

Area A - Scott Ziobrowski, Food Service Director, Hilton Central Schools
Area C - Heather Myers, Food Service Director, Westfield Central School
Area D - Bryan McCoy, Food Service Director, Broome Tioga BOCES
Area E - Kate Dorr, Food Service Director, Oneida BOCES
Area F - Brian Mitchell, Food Service Director, Ogdensburg Public Schools
Area G - Lyn Prestia, Food Service Director, Monroe-Woodbury Central School District
Area J - Colleen Wise, Food Service Director, East Greenbush Central School District
Area K - Alessandro Palumbo, Food Service Director, Farmingdale Public Schools
Area L - Geoffrey Fasy, School Lunch Director, Canandaigua Public Schools
NYC - Anne O'Donnell, Director of Supply Chain Management, Office of Food & Nutrition Services (Absent)
Direct Ship-to - Ruth Connor, Food Service Director, Buffalo City Board of Education

NYS Education Department (SED) – Child Nutrition Program Administration

Meghan Lanzetta
Jamie McMillian
Nicole Travis

New York School Nutrition Association (SNA)

Jennifer Martin

NYS Agriculture & Markets

Timothy McBride
Matthew Keen

American Commodity Distribution Association (ACDA)

Jose Quinones
Max Mahoney

Fellowships

N/A

Opening Remarks

- Director introduced the OGS team and discussed the meeting's agenda.

American Commodity Distribution Association (ACDA)

Website: <https://www.commodityfoods.org/>

- School Nutrition Funds & USDA Foods
 - Entitlement Reimbursement
 - 4-hour training from USDA for RA's
- USDA Roles and Responsibility
 - Establish Entitlement dollars and communicate to the state.
 - Communicates food available.
 - Monitors national MPR of Inventories at Processors
- State Roles and Responsibilities
 - Insures utilization of Entitlement
 - VPT- Value Pass Through System
 - Some distributors may not bring in product towards the end of the year.
 - 6-month inventory level with the state
- Processor Roles and Responsibilities
 - Enter into agreements with USDA (NPA) or States (Processing Agreement)
 - Maintain tracking system for USDA Foods from receipt through production and delivery to all sites.
 - Secure performance and surety bonds as required (based on USDA Foods in the processors possession. This is required at their facility and/or distributor.
 - You are EARNING entitlement dollars every year. Utilize it! This is not free!
- K12 (<https://www.k12foodservice.com/>) and Processor Link (<https://www.processorlink.com/>)
 - Will give you detailed reports.
 - You can schedule when you get your reports.
 - Provides MPR's, Inventory and Production Reports to State and FDD
- Distributer Roles and Responsibilities
 - Stores and Delivers USDA Foods according to RA Bids/Processor Agreements
 - Make sure that the products that you are getting from the distributor meet the meal pattern and are made in the USA.
 - Share your menu with the distributor and have the conversation as of when they will be bringing the product (provide projections).
 - Inspect your product to make sure its correct
 - Hold your distributors accountable.
 - Commodity Complaint Forms
- Ways to Spend Entitlement
 - USDA DoD Fresh Program
 - Processing/ Direct Diversion
 - Direct Delivery/Brown Box
 - USDA Pilot Program
- November 15- Commodity File Report to get food values.
 - Choose USDA food items that cost more in Commercial Market
 - Cost analysis will help you get biggest bang for your buck.
 - Attend state trainings.
 - Know your state's guidelines.
 - Get state's technical Assistance.
 - Use entitlement every year.
 - Stay ahead of schedule.
 - Manage Processing Diversion.

NYS Education Department (SED) – Child Nutrition Program Administration

Website: [Child Nutrition | NYSED](#)

[View Presentation](#)

- Up and coming...
 - ISP- Identified Student Percentage
 - Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) Schools
 - School Snack Program that can substitute fresh fruits and vegetables as a snack.
- Learning Management System (LMS) - new online training

- Increased up to 10 million breakfasts and 18 million lunches.
- Admin Reviews: Common Findings
 - Buy American
 - Pre-K meal pattern
 - Milk Variety
 - Breakfast in the classrooms
 - Production Records - Incomplete
 - Local wellness policy
 - Best Practices? Webinars on SED website
 - A 5-year review cycle (can do targeted follow up reviews)
 - Re-allocating 5 million

NY School Nutrition Association (SNA)

Website: [Home \(nyschoolnutrition.org\)](http://nyschoolnutrition.org)

[View Presentation](#)

- School Nutrition Industry Conference (SNIC)
 - Networking
- July 1st deadline for SNA scholarships and award nominations
- NYSNA's new Podcast Series, "Healthy School Meals for All"
- NYSNA's 73rd Annual Conference in Verona, NY, October 25 – 26, 2024
- Spring publication of Fresh Bites

NYS Agriculture & Markets

Website: [Agriculture and Markets | Agriculture and Markets \(ny.gov\)](#)

[View Presentation](#)

- USDA Grant Application
- Pros and Cons to Audits
 - 30% imbursement for CEP
- Farm to School Grant Program
 - Increases volume and variety of NYS Farm Products
- 2024-25 Grant Program
 - Proposed 1.5 million
- Program Goals
 - Encouraging products for K12
 - Boost workforce development by providing training.

NYS Office of General Services (OGS) USDA Food Distribution

Website: [USDA Food Distribution | Office of General Services \(ny.gov\)](#)

[View Presentation](#)

- USDA Direct Delivery
 - Annual Redistribution & Delivery Deadlines
 - Redistribution Deadline – April 30th.
 - Delivery Deadline – June 10th.
- Distributer Updates - Changes for next school year:
 - Area A - J&L Ice (Batavia)
 - Area F - US Foods (Renzi)
 - Area G - FoodCo Distributors Inc
- Processing
 - End of Year Sweep: All unused pounds will be swept on June 30th.
 - Turkey, Beef, and Pork are non-substitutable.
 - If you have 1 lb., system will let you place an order, but doesn't mean that you should.
- Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)
 - SFSP July 1st – September 30th
 - Use SFSP funds before you use your NSLP funds.
 - SFSP is a separate USDA entitlement.
 - Only used for USDA DoD Fresh program with the same vendors and is still ordered through FFAVORS.
- USDA DoD Fresh Program (DoD)

- Commodity Complaints should be sent to the DoD Fresh Vendor and OGS Food Distribution within 24 hours of receiving the product.
 - Send OGS the [USDA DoD Complaint form](#) and we will submit the complaint.
- USDA Pilot Project for Unprocessed Fruit and Vegetables (PILOT)
 - Schools were emailed a copy of the agreement.
 - The pilot vendor needs to apply for more products through the USDA.
 - If you want the Pilot Program to grow, then reach out to the Vendors and make it happen.
- In October/ November entitlement could change due to previous school year lunch counts.
- To increase your entitlement then increase your lunch counts.
- SY 2024-25
 - Orders were placed with estimates.
 - Estimated effective meal rate – *will update in July.*
 - 2022-23 lunch counts – *will update to 2023-24 actual counts in Oct/Nov*
 - 2023-24 state carry over at the time of ordering – *will continue to adjust until the 2023-24 SY is complete.*

School Lunch Advisory Council Representative – Area Feedback & Discussion

Question 1: Do you understand USDA Direct Diversion (Processing)?

| Area | Representative | Feedback & Discussion |
|--------------|--------------------|---|
| A | Scott Ziobrowski | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • It is my understanding that according to pricing and needs, I spend my dollars completely in the spring. however, if you make a mistake, it cannot be fixed. We used to have a form that you could fill out in August if there was an adjustment that needed to be made. I have now been told that I must wait for voluntary sweeps. |
| C | Heather Myers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes. • Yes, somewhat. • I understand, but do not use. • Yes, except I did need to reach out to OGS regarding the poultry processing. I was unsure about using the whole bird. • Mostly, it's very challenging to plan and then have the plan completely change since pricing is live. • Yes... am I good at it. No. • No. • We don't use. We focus on scratch cooking. |
| D | Bryan McCoy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We don't process. • Broker does not come here. |
| E | Kate Dorr | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The experienced directors understood processing, the newer ones totally did not and felt like they needed a lot of help wrapping their heads around it. |
| F | Brian Mitchell | |
| G | Lyn Prestia | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Somewhat but would like to know more about it. • Yes. • I somewhat understand the Direct Diversion, but some parts of the process are confusing. • Does anyone? • This is my first year (started in Jan) as a director, I don't fully grasp it, but I did send out some items for diversion. |
| J | Colleen Wise | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I think so. Doing it for the first time this year so I can learn the system. • Yes • I have only diverted once and was confused when I received an invoice to pay for the items. • For the most part. If I have a question I ask. |
| KW | Alessandro Palumbo | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mostly • Yes • A little • I once did, however the rules and requirements are constantly shifting and WBSCM is a cumbersome system. |
| L | Geoffrey Fasy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the most part yes, |
| NYC | Anne O'Donnell | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I think I have a good idea. |
| Direct-Ships | Ruth Conner | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buffalo – Yes • Rochester – Yes • Syracuse – Yes, but currently not processing/diverting. |

Question 2: How often do you communicate with your brokers?

| Area | Representative | Feedback & Discussion |
|--------------|--------------------|--|
| A | Scott Ziobrowski | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have a very hard time finding who reps what products. I call the contacts on the sheet (must be processor) and still have a hard time finding the broker. I wish the brokers would reach out to us like they used to do. • As needed. A few times a year. • I still don't know how to contact my brokers and when I should be contacting them |
| C | Heather Myers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few times a year. • Not often. • On a regular basis. • As needed. • When needed to place orders or coordinate receiving or delivery of products. • Regularly. • I haven't – I am new to the job. • Only when I have questions. • What is a broker? • Depends on the broker. |
| D | Bryan McCoy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes. • Once a week • As needed |
| E | Kate Dorr | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The experienced directors understood processing, the newer ones totally did not and felt like they needed a lot of help wrapping their heads around it. |
| F | Brian Mitchell | |
| G | Lyn Prestia | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not often. • Yes. • 2 times • I don't communicate with my brokers. • Never. • As little as necessary, typically via email at commodity season and not again until there are issues. • When needed but I have been communicating with them more frequently, so I don't run out of my commodity items. • Depends, sometimes once a month or just a couple of times a year. • Frequently. • I reach out to the brokers I sent commodities to and request to try some products. |
| J | Colleen Wise | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I believe our BOCES procurement specialist does this for us. • Monthly • 3-4 times a year • Very often • Some regularly. • I communicate with food brokers often about products. • Dependent on broker, some weekly • No. New to the job. • As needed, some never and some 4 times a year. • I deal with Sysco directly; they work with my brokers and processors. |
| KW | Alessandro Palumbo | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whenever I get an email from them or if I have an issue. • As needed about 6 times per year. • Once per month. • Rarely. • Weekly. • Not often. • Very minimally, some confirm their monthly FFS orders. |
| L | Geoffrey Fasy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usually at the trade shows, when they reach out about the products, |
| NYC BOE | Anne O'Donnell | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depending on if we are having issues. |
| Direct-Ships | Ruth Conner | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buffalo - mostly during bid awards/ when needed. • Rochester – I like to keep an open line of communication regarding what is new and what is discontinued as well as any supply chain issues. • Syracuse – Monthly as needed to track draw down. |

Question 3: How often do you communicate with your processors?

| Area | Representative | Feedback & Discussion |
|--------------|--------------------|--|
| A | Scott Ziobrowski | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As needed. A few times a year. I rarely communicate with the processors. Again, not sure how/when I should be contacting them. |
| C | Heather Myers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As needed. Not often. Only when I have questions. Most call me regularly. Monthly Never Not often. Constantly. |
| D | Bryan McCoy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Rarely No |
| E | Kate Dorr | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The general response was also that they all only communicate with brokers and processors when needed, very rarely and wished these relationships would be stronger. Also, some confusion about what a broker is! |
| F | Brian Mitchell | |
| G | Lyn Prestia | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not at all. 2 times. Processors, not often. 1 or 2 times a year. Depends on FFS or NOI. NOI almost never. FFS more regularly to fix bills, find lost cases of products, etc. FFS almost monthly communications. Only Tyson and Maid rite. Tyson has no brokers and yang's and maid rite get a direct delivery. Depends, sometimes once a month or a couple times a year. Never. We are a Whitson's account. Corporate deals with any issues. As needed. They call me. I have yet to do that. |
| J | Colleen Wise | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I believe our BOCES procurement specialist does this for us. Monthly Never Not so often Never, just go through brokerage. Quarterly Only if there is an issue. |
| KW | Alessandro Palumbo | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not often When needed. First time this year Rarely |
| L | Geoffrey Fasy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Usually in June and then at the trade show. Unless there is an issue |
| NYC BOE | Anne O'Donnell | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Depending on if we're having issues. |
| Direct-Ships | Ruth Conner | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Buffalo - May/ June to schedule the following school year monthly schedule. Then when needed 3x/year to assess delivery/ pounds and PO/ challenges. Rochester – As often as necessary. Generally, when questions arise regarding available commodity pounds, balances, direct orders, and delivery notifications. Syracuse – Monthly or a few weeks before an expected drop |

Question 4: Do you know what to do if a processor is not delivering on Net of Invoice (NOI) items?

| Area | Representative | Feedback & Discussion |
|------|--------------------|---|
| A | Scott Ziobrowski | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes. • If I don't get NOI of item, I contact me sales rep. Other than that, I don't know what I should be doing. • Typically work with broker and or processor. Didn't thing to go to OGS, will do that moving forward if I need to. |
| C | Heather Myers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maybe • No • I would call vendor distributing first, then the broker • I contact the shipping company. • Yes. • No. • No, I do not. • Not really. I had issues so I contacted OGS, the broker, and distributor. • No never had this problem. |
| D | Bryan McCoy | |
| E | Kate Dorr | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Again, mixed replies on what to do if a processor is delivering or not- experienced folks said yes, newer folks said no, not at all. |
| F | Brian Mitchell | |
| G | Lyn Prestia | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No. • Yes. • No, I don't know what to do if they are not delivering NOI items. • I used to contact Sysco and ask them about the NOI credit. • I have been able to find the produce somewhere. I always list my favorite vendors in k12 so I can get NOI even if one does not have the product I need. • I haven't had that happen. If it did, my first step would be to call OGS. • I just started reaching out to the company that is supposed to deliver. Not sure of the protocols. • Only if not seen on our Sysco invoice. • I do FFS. • I have no idea. • Yes. |
| J | Colleen Wise | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I don't know what that means so I can't answer that. • Not really and would love some more information on this. • Not sure if there is a standard. I speak with OGS. • Speak with OGS • Not sure about these questions, I haven't had a problem where I couldn't get the product I wanted. • Would start with our broker, then distributor, then reach out to OGS. • Contact OGS • Yes, we are starting to put together a decent system at BOCES to help our directors with this. • If the NOI isn't happening, I check K12/ProcessorLink to make sure I set it up correctly and then work with the distributor. If the product isn't coming in, I communicate with distributor/broker and often the processor gets looped in. • I email Sysco and they work with the processor on getting my NOIs. • I have never had an issue that I know of. Do not really know what to if there's an issue. |
| KW | Alessandro Palumbo | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reach out to the broker and processor. • Reallocate funds to DoD. • Not sure • Yes • Communicate with the distributor and broker. • Email OGS • Reach out to broker. • Reach out to state and broker |
| L | Geoffrey Fasy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The bigger issue is we are having is Vendors bidding on the NOI items. There are 4, that I know of, that have no idea what we will be paying for our Gold Kist Chicken |

| | | |
|--------------|----------------|--|
| | | in the upcoming year. Renzi was, in the past. Now US Foods ins????t bidding on it and Sysco has never done it. We no longer have Deli Boy as our savior and will bring these items in. We have gone back and forth to no avail. |
| NYC | Anne O'Donnell | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I think so but am now questioning. This is good to be reviewed. |
| Direct-Ships | Ruth Conner | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Buffalo - Report to you and reach out to brokers/ processor and adjust. • Rochester – Most of the issues regarding NOI are driven by the distributor side with items not being plugged in to credit the commodity. If a processor was unable to deliver products to them at all I would reach out to OGS for guidance on a resolution. • Syracuse - Notify OGS to work on reallocating the entitlement |

Meeting Schedule for SY 2024-2025

- Meeting 1 (Fall) – Friday, September 20, 2024 (in-person)
- Meeting 2 (Winter) – Friday, January 24, 2025 (Virtual)
- Meeting 3 (Sprint) – Friday, May 9, 2025 (In-person)

SLAC Terms Ending

- Brian Mitchell

Closing

- OGS conference hosted by SNA next spring 2025.
- “CC” SLAC members on New FSD emails
- Area Reports
- DLA Complaint form
- A Food Service Directors group chat for each area