

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

# NATIONAL SCHOOL

3E'S OF HEALTHY LIVING  
EDUCATION, EXERCISE AND EATING RIGHT

*Lunch Program*

## May 2025 Monthly Newsletter

### Get Ready for MegaCon 2025!

Commissioner Sid Miller and the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) invite you to MegaCon 2025 – in Austin, May 21-23, 2025. To learn more about this conference, please visit the [conference website](#).

We are excited to engage with our MegaCon attendees this year! Below you will find a few opportunities to stay connected and interact with other vendors, attendees and CEs at our conference.

- To help navigate the conference, we encourage attendees to download the "**Zoho Backstage for Attendees**" **mobile app**. This app will be used as a handy tool to access handouts, Powerpoint presentations, ask questions and interact with polls. This app is available in the [Apple App Store](#) and the [Google Play Store](#).
- We're thrilled to announce that No Kid Hungry will be joining us at MegaCon to offer professional headshots in the Zlotnik Foyer! Be sure to come camera-ready on **Wednesday, May 22 from 11AM to 5PM** because this opportunity will be first come, first served!
- Team up with Texas Department of Agriculture at Central Texas Food Bank's distribution warehouse, where you'll help sort and pack vital food donations for those in need. We would like to ask you to be committed to the full volunteer shift on Wednesday, May 22 from 9AM to 12PM. Please note that pre-registration is required, so click this [link](#) to create an account and sign up for the shift on their platform.

### RELEASE: Revised ARM Section 17b, Buy American

Administrator's Reference Manual (ARM) Section 17b, Buy American has been revised and released. Updates were made to add the remaining Buy American provisions from the final rule, Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent With the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for American.

Updates were made to the following topics:

- Exception Threshold
- Exception Accommodation
- Determining Country of Origin

You can find the ARM [here](#)

Please replace any previous versions of the above sections that you may have saved.

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## [USDA Foods NSLP PY26 Next Steps](#)

Click [here](#) to view the webinar about USDA Foods NSLP PY26 Next Steps. Enter the passcode **ei\$8aSn?** to gain access.

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## [USDA Foods Inventory and Contract Management](#)

- TDA Surplus from Gold Star Foods servicing FDP Regions (1,2,3,5,8) has been provided to all schools through TDA's Fair Share process. Each school will be receiving 10-11 cases free of Entitlement. Delivery fees will be reimbursed in August for these cases. TDA suggests incorporating these free items into your menus and possibly using them to test new recipes or explore other avenues. TDA appreciates your cooperation and support with this new effort.
- SY25 Annual Physical Inventory Counts will be conducted during May and June for all state-contracted warehouses.
- Ensure all invoices are paid within 30 days of receiving your inventory/private storage fees and are up to date.
- TDA has been reviewing the SY25 Private Storage reports from all FDP Regions and has instructed State Contracted Warehouses to force ship inventory that has been sitting over 45 days to your sites. Please place your delivery orders, accordingly. All inventory must be on a delivery order by April 30, 2025.
- As you are aware, the Weekly Commodity Bulletin is no longer available to schools in TX-UNPS. In previous years, TDA has utilized the below reports/resources to pull together the information presented within the Weekly Commodity Bulletin. Each school will need to review the following reports/resources to gather the necessary information:
  1. Identify items received/used through the reports below:
    - \*WBSCM Reports\*
    - a. [Requisition Status Report](#) –
    - b. Value of Commodities Received – details products that have been shipped to your warehouse or processor:
      - \*State Contracted Warehouse reports
      - \*DOD Usage Reports
      - \*ProcessorLink or K12 usage Reports
  2. Once you have items used/received items, you can use one of two tools on SquareMeals to determine value of commodities received:
    - a. [Cost Management Tool](#) – used to help you determine the value of commodities received to ensure that your school receives the correct credit, rebates, or discounts.
    - b. [USDA Process Material Prices](#) – provides an average material price for all USDA Foods, even though it

references Processor Materials.

3. Connect with your ESC should you need assistance with any transfer requests. Ensure you are utilizing the [H4529 Transfer Jotform](#) for TDA approved transfers.

4. Visit this link for [ESC Contact Information](#).

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## **RELEASE: Updated Household Application Instructions (25-26 Income Eligibility Guidelines)**

English and Spanish versions of the NSLP/SBP and SMP Household Application Instructions have been revised and posted to include the Income Eligibility Guidelines for SY 2025-2026.

These documents can be found in the following locations on SquareMeals:

### **SNP**

- [NSLP Administration Form](#)

- [NSLP School Meal Application](#)

### **SMP**

- [Special Milk Program Administration Form](#)

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## **TANS Update**

The Texas Automated Nutrition System (TANS) will replace TX-UNPS for administration and management of all nutrition programs. Timelines, resources, and updates are available now on the [Systems Hub](#).

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## **The School Nutrition Program (SNP) application is open in TX UNPS- April 15, 2025**

The School Nutrition Program application is open in TX\_UNPS on April 15, 2025, for the 2025-2026 school year. To ensure participation in the program, be sure to prepare and submit the application in a timely. If you need assistance in filling out the application, please contact the Education Service Center (ESC).

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## **USDA Foods for Further Processing**

### **Processing Accounts**

Check your processing account balances online, 24/7. Tracking systems also provide reports for year-to-date usage comparison and end-of-year reconciliation in various metrics that include cases, pounds, and dollars. Routinely checking balances can ensure pounds are being drawn down properly, credit for USDA value has

been applied, transfers posted, and correct end products are being ordered. Contact your local [Education Service Center](#) for technical assistance in creating an account, monitoring inventory, and generating reports. [Report Flyer Link](#)

### **Annual Transfer Exercise**

As of April 30, processing transfer opportunities have concluded.

### **Processor Inventory Dashboard**

The Processor Inventory Dashboard has been updated and a tab added with a chart for poultry proportional rates.

[FDP Resource Page for Further Processing](#)

### **Annual Redistribution of Pounds (Processing)**

JULY 1, 2025: The annual redistribution of pounds is applied to all Recipient Agency accounts participating in USDA Foods for further processing. Order deliveries for the current program year must be delivered to your location by June 30, 2025.

[One Page Flyer](#)

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## **Local Food for Schools Grant**

### **Share Your Local Food for Schools Grant Success Story!**

We want to celebrate the incredible work your district did through the Local Food for Schools (LFS) grant! Whether it's new partnerships with local farms, student engagement, or highlighting a favorite menu item, TDA wants to hear about it. Please submit your success story [here](#).

### **LFS Grant Deadline was March 31, 2025**

All purchases must be on or before 3/31/25.

Please submit reimbursements by clicking [here](#) to access the portal. Please watch the [video training](#) on how to submit for reimbursements.

### **LFS Reimbursement Request Deadline is May 9, 2025**

The last day to submit your reimbursement request is 5/9/25. Ensure all submissions are completed by this date.

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## **Buy American Provision Webinar**

TDA will host an upcoming webinar in May 2025 about the Buy American Provision. More information coming soon.

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## **Webinar: Duplicate Costs**

TDA is hosting a [webinar](#) on May 20, 2025, at 9 a.m. Please join us to learn about duplicate costs in SFA contracts.

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## **USDA Foods Ordering Updates**

- Round 1 is complete. WBSCM requisitions are either associated with truckload sales order numbers or are blank, meaning they have been canceled.
- Requests for USDA Foods can be tracked using the WBSCM Requisition Status Report. Pricing fluctuations will continue until items reach "Purchased" status.
- WBSCM Round 2 catalogs for direct delivery items are open and will close on Friday, May 23, 2025, at the close of business. This may be the final opportunity to bring in cases of USDA Foods for PY 26 to utilize your Planned Assistance Level (PAL) funds.
- Gold Star Foods will utilize a new warehouse in Fort Worth for the upcoming school year. TDA has updated all SY26 requisitions to reflect this change.
- If you opted into the DoD Fresh Fruit and Vegetable program, this will be displayed on your WBSCM Entitlement/Bonus Summary report. TDA will load these funds into FFAVORS in late June. Unspent values in WBSCM cannot be moved to increase DoD Fresh program funds.
- The current rate of assistance published by USDA is 45 cents per meal. Initial PY 26 Planned Assistance Level (PAL) information is available in WBSCM reports under the Entitlement/Bonus Summary Report.
- Refer to the Resources page on [www.squaremeals.org](http://www.squaremeals.org), Food Distribution Program for NSLP, for helpful information regarding ordering USDA Foods.

### School Year 2024-2025

- DoD Fresh FFV Program Participants:
- Please remember to complete receipts in FFAVORS for each delivery within two business days of the delivery date.
- TDA monitors the monthly utilization of DoD funds in FFAVORS to ensure proper use of entitlements. To maximize your DoD entitlement, SFAs should spend, at minimum, 10% of their funds per month. SFAs who have not been utilizing funds may risk redistribution.
- Final 8 weeks: If you identify that you cannot deplete all PY 25 funds by the last open ordering date, June 18, 2025, please email [commodityoperations@texasagriculture.gov](mailto:commodityoperations@texasagriculture.gov) so TDA can reduce and redistribute funds to other PY 25 participants.
- Please check your user accounts in WBSCM to ensure that appropriate SFA staff are active, have the correct roles assigned, and that their email addresses are up to date.
- Sales orders in "Order Received" status are available at your contracted warehouse and must be placed on a delivery schedule as soon as possible.
- Please check with your contracted warehouse if you need any available surplus.

For questions regarding USDA Foods, please contact your respective [Education Service Center](#) Child Nutrition representative(s) for guidance, training, and technical assistance in WBSCM.



TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
**COMMISSIONER SID MILLER**



Fraud Hotline: 1-866-5-FRAUD-4 or 1-866-537-2834 | P.O. Box 12847 | Austin, TX 78711  
Toll Free: (877) TEX-MEAL | For the hearing impaired: (800) 735-2989 (TTY)

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