

# USDA Makes Positive Improvements to Child Nutrition Programs

*NCA Applauds USDA Efforts to Further Align Child Nutrition Programs with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.*

ROUND ROCK, TX, USA, May 15, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Last month, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) released a [final rule](#) to better align Child Nutrition Programs, including the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), School Breakfast Program (SBP) and National School Lunch Program (NSLP), with the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGAs) - creating more consistency across the programs.



Serving over 8.5 billion meals collectively, these Child Nutrition Programs are rooted in the science-based recommendations of the DGAs and help ensure that children across the United States are not only food secure but are receiving the nutrition they need to be happy and healthy.□

"NCA applauds the USDA's efforts to create more consistency across Child Nutrition Programs," said Lisa Mack, President & CEO of the [National CACFP Sponsors Association](#) (NCA). "As the leading national organization offering support to those who administer the CACFP, we are constantly working to help ensure nutrition security for families by facilitating access to vital food programs. These improvements from the USDA will ensure that these programs are inclusive and that children will receive the meals they need for proper development."

One significant step towards creating consistency across programs is the application of the CACFP meal pattern requirements for afterschool snacks served through the National School Lunch Program. Currently, only one in sixteen children who receive free or reduced-price meals during the school day have access to food through afterschool meals programs. With the new CACFP afterschool snack requirement, there is a great opportunity for schools to also step in to serve supper to low-income students through the CACFP as well.

This rulemaking also creates consistency between Child Nutrition Programs and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). This final rule in tandem with the final rule for WIC food packages, both create an added sugar limit for yogurts and cereals eligible for use. This is particularly important for CACFP operators, who often reference WIC lists provided by their State agencies for items that they can serve in their programs.

Not only does the final rule make nutrition-based improvements, but changes implemented by the USDA will make these programs more accessible for participants with disabilities and special dietary needs and create flexibility to allow programs to be culturally responsive to their communities. In addition, the rule expands the ability of programs to incorporate local foods in the meals they serve.

NCA is glad to see such positive changes made to Child Nutrition Programs and commends USDA for their leadership in improving programs vital to child food security.

Since 1986, the National CACFP Sponsors Association (NCA) has been a leading national organization offering support to thousands within the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) community. Our core mission is to provide advocacy, education and resources for everyone involved in administering, operating and participating in USDA's child nutrition programs. Our overarching goal is to ensure nutrition security for families by facilitating access to vital food programs.

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