



Proactive Planning for Partners

Providing Summer Meals is a year-round effort! At any point throughout the year, there are proactive actions your organization can take to expand Summer Meal Programs in your community.

Go to [Resources](#).

Partner Planning

Partners can use these timelines as a resource to determine in what areas State agencies, sponsors, and other partners need the most support. The following timeline provides a general schedule of activities for Summer Meal partners.

FALL

- Find out if there is already an annual Summer Meals conference or meeting for your State. If not, consider organizing one. A coordinated summer planning meeting is a great way to help create relationships, share innovative strategies, increase awareness of Summer Meals in the region, leverage resources, and create a coordinated outreach plan.
- Review unserved and underserved areas near current sites and reach out to State agencies and sponsors about creating sites in the areas.
- Compare participation from this year to that of prior years, as well as current participation for free and reduced-price meals in local schools.
- Consider providing nonmonetary awards to recognize sites and sponsors that excelled during the summer.
- Set participation goals for the next summer and plan how you will accomplish them.
- If there is not already one, consider creating a State-specific list of deadlines for sponsors to follow.



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Summer Meals Toolkit

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WINTER

- Figure out which sites are returning and explore site options and meet with community partners.
- Ask State agencies which organizations plan to host Summer Meal sites and contact these sponsors about helping with outreach activities.
- Take another look at your prior review on underserved and unserved areas and determine if there is still a need for sponsors or sites in the area.
- Connect with returning sponsors and offer assistance.

SPRING

- As you learn where sites will be placed, talk to community groups about creating activities in conjunction with Summer Meals.
- Continue connecting sites to sponsors, if possible.
- Ask sites if they need help finding vendors, keeping meal counts, etc., and offer volunteer services.
- Ensure schools are providing students and families with information about Summer Meal sites.
- Recruit volunteers to distribute Summer Meal program flyers.
- Host or help with a summer kick-off event.

SUMMER

- Engage with the State agency, sponsors, and other Summer Meal partners and find out what else they need to support the Program.
- Brainstorm programming to keep children coming and entertained.
- Note if any sites are being underutilized and find out ways to increase participation.
- Consider hosting or helping with a mid-summer event to remind families and children of the availability of Summer Meals.





Promising Practices

Here are examples of methods State agencies use to make it easy for sponsors and partners to stay organized throughout the year.

Kansas

Calendar of Sponsor Responsibilities

http://www.kn-eat.org/SFSP/SFSP_Menus/SFSP_Calendar_of_Responsibilities.htm

Indiana

SFSP Program – SFSP Sponsor Task Calendar

<https://www.doe.in.gov/nutrition/summer-food-service-program>

Minnesota

Summer Food Service - Key Tasks and Recordkeeping Requirements – SFSP

<https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/FNS/SFSP/>

West Virginia

SFSP Resources – SFSP Planning Checklist

<https://wvde.us/child-nutrition/summer-food-service-program/sfsp-resources/>

Resources

USDA

SFSP State Deadlines for Sponsors

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/summer-food-service-program-sfsp-state-deadlines-sponsors>

Food Research and Action Center

Summer Nutrition Programs Implementation Calendars and Guide

<https://frac.org/research/resource-library?type=resource&search=SFSP+Calendar+and+Guide>

Share Our Strength

Plan Collaboratively

<http://bestpractices.nokidhungry.org/programs/summer-meals/plan-collaboratively>





For Additional Information

Review these ideas and adopt the strategies that seem reasonable to you and achievable for your Program. The Summer Meals Toolkit has even more creative ideas and resources at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/summer-meals-toolkit>

Do you have more questions? Sponsors and the general public should contact their State agency for answers. State agencies should contact their Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) Regional Office.

List of FNS Regional Offices: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns-regional-offices>

List of State Agencies: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/sfsp-contacts>

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