

FRESH

FRUIT

&

VEGETABLE

PROGRAM



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Introduction

The New York State Education Department (NYSED) offers the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) in accordance with Section 19 of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to provide fresh fruits and vegetables, free of charge, to all enrolled students in elementary schools with the highest percentage of students certified for free and reduced-price benefits.

The goal of the FFVP is to:

- Create healthier school environments by providing additional opportunities for children to make healthier food choices.
- Expand the variety of fruits and vegetables children experience.
- Increase children's fruit and vegetable consumption.
- Make a difference in children's diets to impact their present and future health.
- Encourage nutritious snacking.

Eligible Applicants

School Food Authorities (SFAs) that operate the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) in elementary schools (pre-kindergarten through grade 6) with 50 percent or more students eligible for free/reduced price lunch based on January 2025 NSLP reimbursement claims. Schools that participate in the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) are eligible for FFVP if the individual school's identified student percentage (ISP) of directly certified students multiplied by 1.6 is equal to or greater than 50, regardless of CEP elected groupings.

How to Apply

SFAs must complete and submit via email to FFVP@nysed.gov by **May 16, 2025**:

- One FFVP Application form for each interested elementary school
- One aggregate Initial Budget Form (*SFA will be notified to submit after awarded*)

Schools needing assistance to apply can email FFVP@nysed.gov.

Funding

The funding period for the 2025-2026 FFVP is July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2026. Selected schools will receive \$60 per enrolled student.

The Assistance Listing Number (ALN) for the FFVP is 10.582.

Reimbursement

To receive reimbursement payments, awarded schools must submit monthly claims in the Child Nutrition Management System (CNMS) based on the allowable costs incurred during the month and [email](#) a monthly menu showing the produce served at the SFA during the claim month.

Method of Award

Awards are not competitive. Funds will be awarded to SFAs with elementary schools with the highest percentages of free and reduced-price eligible students. This ensures that the FFVP benefits children that generally have fewer opportunities to consume fresh fruits and vegetables on a regular basis.

Due to limited funding, and the large number of high need schools in New York State, NYSED will only be able to award funds to those SFAs with the highest percentage of eligible students enrolled.

NYSED can choose not to award a high need school if it has concerns with the school's administration of another child nutrition program or how the FFVP was administered in previous years.

Awardees will be notified by email and required to review the FFVP orientation webinar. This short orientation ensures all participating schools are fully aware of the requirements for participating in the FFVP and the procedures for submitting claims in CNMS.

Allowable Program Costs

Allowable program costs include operating costs and administrative costs.

A. Operating Costs

These are the costs of running the service of the FFVP. They include expenses for acquiring, delivering, preparing and serving FFV. Please note FFVP funds cannot be used to purchase nutrition education materials or for promotional activities. Schools should find other funds for the cost of these items. Allowable operating costs include:

- Buying fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Buying nonfood items needed to serve the fresh fruits and vegetables (napkins, paper plates, serving bowls, trays, cleaning supplies, trash bags).
- Value added services (pre-cut produce, ready-made produce trays, delivery charges).
- Salaries and fringe benefits for employees participating in program preparation for the FFVP, including washing and chopping produce, preparing trays,

distributing produce to classrooms, setting up kiosks, cleaning up, etc.

B. Administrative Costs

Administrative costs are limited to ten percent of the total award by school. SFAs will be required to submit the breakdown of administrative costs spent for each individual school building receiving an award. Administrative costs include expenses for planning, managing paperwork, obtaining equipment and maintaining the program, not related to the preparation or service of fresh fruits and vegetables. The FFVP should be structured so that the maximum benefits go to the children.

Administrative costs include:

- Purchasing or leasing equipment such as refrigerators, portable kiosks, carts and portable food bars, etc. Written justification must be provided and approved by SED to support the purchase. Equipment purchased with FFVP funds that will be used in other school feeding programs must be **prorated** among the programs.
- Salaries and fringe benefits for employees who compile and maintain claims for reimbursement and other financial reports, plan and write memos, order produce, track inventory and coordinate nutrition promotion activities.

Applicants with questions as to whether a specific cost is allowable should contact FFVP@nysesd.gov.

Requirements

- All selected schools are encouraged to start serving FFV during the first week of operations in the 2025-26 school year but **must** serve them by the end of the second week.
- All selected schools are expected to widely publicize within the school the availability of free fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Fresh Fruit and Vegetables (FFV) cannot be served as a component of the reimbursable meal or during meal service, or at the same time as the service of the breakfast or lunch or afterschool/extended day snack program.
- All FFV are served free of charge to all enrolled children in pre- kindergarten-6th grade.
- Other products on their own or commingled with other foods, such as in trail mix, are not allowed.
- FFV must be available to ALL students (PK-6) any time during the school day.
- Leftovers may be recycled; however, every effort should be made to use FFV in the FFVP.
- FFV must be served at least two days a week
- FFV cannot be used as a reward or gift.
- Children cannot be denied access to the FFVP for disciplinary reasons.
- Teachers directly responsible for serving the fruit or vegetable to their students

in a classroom setting may consume the FFV since they are role models. The FFVP is not available to the general teacher population and other adults in the school.

- The FFV must be consumed at school, not taken home.
- Mixed fresh fruit salads made by the school are allowable.
- Dips for fresh vegetables are allowed but should be low fat and in minimal portion. (A maximum serving size of 1-2 tablespoons of dip is recommended.)
- Salsa made at the school as part of a nutrition lesson is allowed.

The following are not allowed

- Processed or preserved fruits and vegetables (this includes all canned, frozen, or vacuum packed FFV).
- Trail mixes
- Dried fruits such as raisins
- Smoothies
- Dips for fruits
- Fruit leathers
- Jellied fruit
- Full-strength/purchased, or reconstituted store-bought fruit or vegetable juices
- Fruit desserts (such as fruit pizzas made with cookie dough crust, and fruit tarts).
- Salsa made fresh at the store (store-bought salsa)
- Cooked fruits and vegetables, unless they are part of a classroom lesson.

Serving Practices

There are several ways that fresh fruits and vegetables can be distributed to students and teachers. Each school will choose the practices that best suit their building and students. The distribution of FFV should be consistent with school wellness policies. The following methods are suggested:

- Inside classrooms (best way to control process and deemed to be most effective)
- Hallways
- The nurse's office or school office
- Cafeteria (buffet table set up in a.m. or p.m.)
- As a part of nutrition education activities
- Kiosks (easy access)

Procurement

The FFVP is subject to the same procurement requirements that apply to any purchase from the nonprofit school food service account.

Selected schools must follow federal and State procurement regulations and procedures.

Produce should be purchased from the local growers, farmers' markets and local grocery stores when possible.

Nutrition Education

Schools that participate in the program are expected to implement or continue nutrition education. There are several ways that FFVP can be incorporated into the existing nutrition education curriculum. Activities should fit the students and the school community. For example:

- Plant a school garden or participate in a community garden.
- Schedule the service of fresh fruits and vegetables as classroom nutrition education activities where children can prepare the FFV with their classmates and teachers.
- Plan assemblies and/or health fairs. Have students create displays or newsletters.
- Promote FFVP on monthly menus.
- Adopt school lesson plans to include nutrition education.
- Use student address systems and student broadcasts to share educational information about the importance of eating healthy.
- Consult FFVP partners to obtain low cost or no cost promotional items (posters, banners, fliers, pamphlets, buttons).
- Hold a poster contest to promote healthy eating.

Required Reports and Records

Awardees will also be required to submit a FFVP End-of-the-Year report to SED. The report will simply ask for feedback on the program such as what worked, barriers, items served and partnerships. Awardees should keep all records for three years after the funding ends. Please be advised that these records must be readily retrievable or immediately available upon request. The following records must be maintained:

- End-of-the-Year-Reports
- Menus, Production Records, Invoices, Documented Costs, Monthly Claims
- Nutrition Education Materials
- Purchase Order Information-all costs, including labor charged to the FFVP
- Participating Vendors/Local Farmers
- Procurement documentation
- Signed vendor contract if the SFA or any RAs are partnering with a vendor for any services using FFVP money (a copy of this also needs to be provided to SED with the application packet)

Monitoring

Evaluation of the FFVP will be conducted by NYSED during the Administrative Review.

In addition, FFVP records must be made available, upon request, by NYSED, USDA, or any authorized entity to determine the effectiveness of the program in changing eating behaviors.

Selected schools must operate the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and be in good standing with program regulations. Failure to abide by the NSLP regulations throughout the award period could result in immediate loss of the awarded funds and disallowance of FFVP payments.

Partnerships/Collaboration

Eligible applicants are encouraged to work with others to optimize their programs. For example, you may work together with the following:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• local grocers and stores• produce associations• nutrition trade associations• food distributors• civic organizations• Farm Bureau	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• orchards• local farmers' market• media• PTA/PTO• area businesses• wellness committees
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Food Safety

- Employees and anyone who is handling the food must be trained in and know proper food safety and sanitation procedures. All local and State health requirements must be followed.
- All foods that are not to be cooked cannot be touched by bare hands.
- All fruits and vegetables must be washed appropriately.
- Raw seed sprouts must not be served to highly susceptible populations.

Challenges That May Be Incurred

- Inadequate storage and refrigerator space.
- Finding reliable suppliers.
- Student acceptance of some FFV.
- Kiosks that provide reduced student access, are less sanitary, are time-consuming, or cause confusion depending on location.
- Cleanup and trash disposal
- High preparation costs-especially if participation is very high and more food needs to be prepared.

Impact on Students

- Students ate more fruits and vegetables.
- Students consumed less high calorie, high fat vending machine snacks.
- Students had better attention spans and were less hungry throughout the day.
- There were fewer discipline problems.

NYSED would like to hear about the impact FFVP has on schools throughout NYS. Please send in pictures and best practices with the End of the Year Report.

Resources

Use the free or low-cost resources and educational materials that are available from USDA's Team Nutrition, 5-A-Day and other FFVP partners.

FFVP Handbook:

- <https://www.fns.usda.gov/ffvp/fresh-fruits-and-vegetable-program-handbook-schools>

Other Useful Links:

- <https://www.fns.usda.gov/ffvp/fresh-fruit-and-vegetable-program-resource-center>
- <https://jsyfruitveggies.org/>
- <https://www.myplate.gov/>
- <https://www.fns.usda.gov/team-nutrition>

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