

USDA's Actions on Food and Nutrition Security: Child Nutrition Updates

NOPREN State-of-Science Webinar Series

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- Heather Hopwood, MPH, Senior Technical Advisor, School Meals Policy Division, Child Nutrition Programs, FNS
- Raisa Alstodt, MBA, PMP, Program Analyst, Summer EBT, Child Nutrition Programs, FNS
- Elizabeth Campbell, RDN, Branch Chief, External Affairs, FNS

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1 in 4 Americans is served by USDA's nutrition assistance programs



USDA's **Four-Pillar** Approach

Meaningful
Support



Healthy
Food



Collaborative
Action



Equitable
Systems



Recent FNS Food & Nutrition Security Investments



Increasing SNAP Benefits to Support Healthy Eating



Bringing SNAP and WIC Shopping Online



Modernizing WIC to Improve Reach



Strengthening Evidence to Inform FNS Policy and Nutrition Services

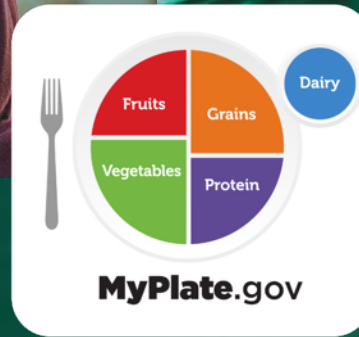


Supporting a Diverse WIC Workforce



Restructuring SNAP-Ed





The MyPlate National Strategic Partnership is a public-private collaboration, bringing stakeholders across many sectors together to promote the MyPlate symbol and messaging to consumers.

USDA Food and Nutrition Service Panelists



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Raisa Alstodt, MBA, PMP
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USDA Supports Healthy School Meals for All



Heather Hopwood
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National Priority



- White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, & Health: National Strategy
 - School meals: integral part of the school day
 - Expand access to free school meals: + 9 million students by 2032

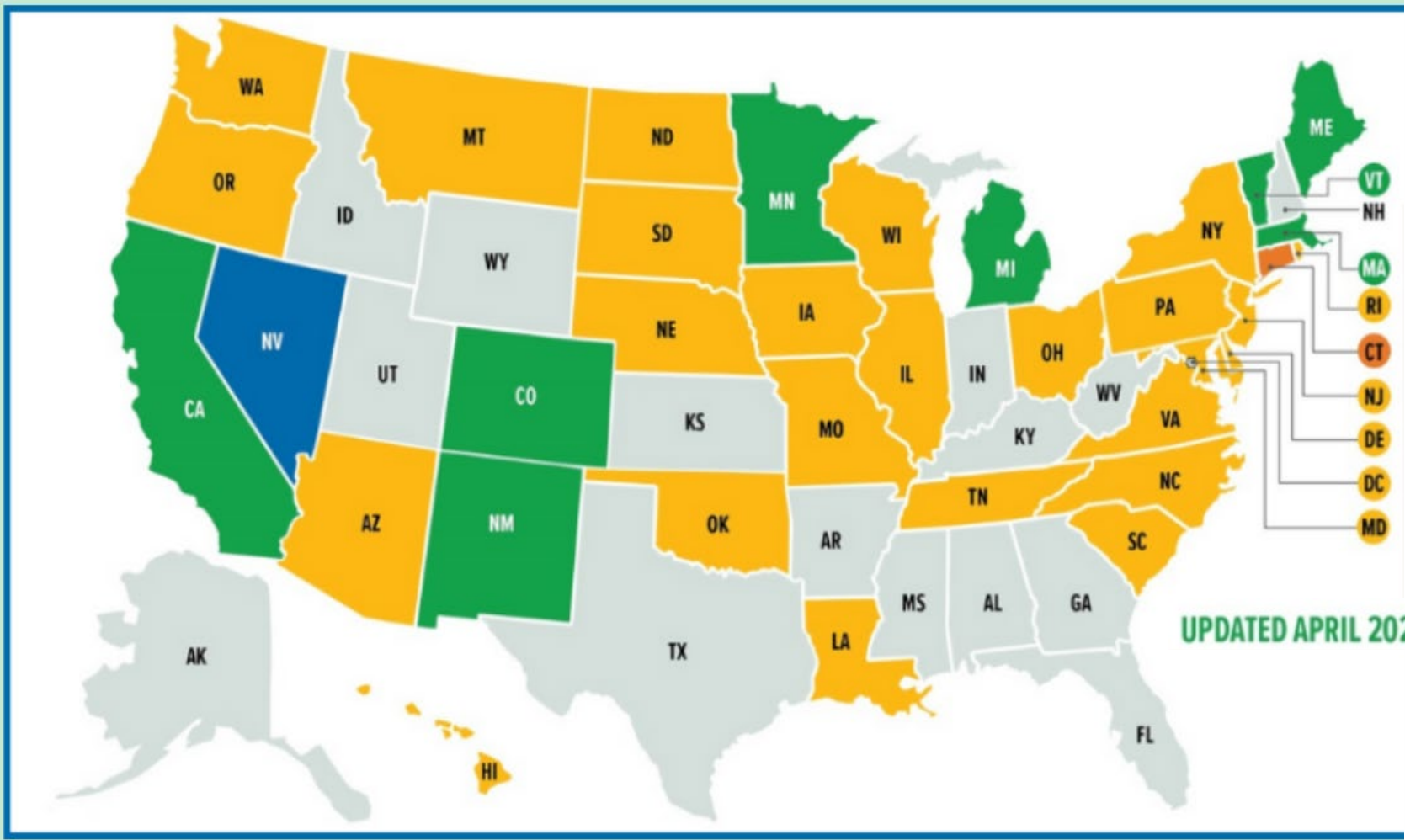


COVID Flexibility (March 2020-June 2022)

Free meals for all children



Healthy School Meals for All: Current Landscape



● Policies Passed, Starting 2022–2023 School Year

● Policy in Place for 2022–2023 School Year

● Policy in Place for 2022–2023, 2023–2024 School Years

● HSMFA Bills Introduced and/or Coalitions Formed



United States Department of Agriculture

Source: Food Research & Action Center



USDA Support for Healthy School Meals for All



- Expand Community Eligibility Provision
 - Final Rule published September 2023
 - FY 2025 Budget Proposal
- Strengthen School Meals
- With FRAC, convene meetings with HSMFA States

Expand Community Eligibility Provision

- **Lower eligibility threshold to 25%**
 - Expand access to
 - 3,000 schools; 5 million students
- **President's FY 2025 Budget Proposal**
 - Increase reimbursements to CEP schools
 - Statewide group



Community Eligibility Provision Benefits

Students

- Decreased hunger
- Reduced social stigma
- Positive impacts on student's diet quality & academic performance

Households

- No application
- No meal charges
- Stretches household food budgets
- Improves household food security

Schools

- Decreased administrative burden
- Streamlined meal service
- No school meal debt

Learn More!

Community Eligibility Provision Resource Center:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/community-eligibility-provision>

- CEP Memos
- Estimator Tool
- CEP Data
- Webinars



Strengthen School Meals: FINAL RULE

CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS MEAL PATTERNS

Major Provisions:

1. Added Sugars

- Product-based Limits in SBP/NSLP (July 1, 2025)
- Weekly Limits (July 1, 2027)

2. Sodium

- Maintain current sodium limits through SY 2026-2027
- One Reduction (July 1, 2027)

3. Flavored Milk (no change)

4. Whole Grains (no change)



Resources to Support Implementation: Meal Pattern Updates



- Comparison Chart: Proposed vs. Final Standards
- Implementation Timelines: CACFP, SFSP & School Meals
- Media Toolkit
- Infographics
- Videos
- Questions & Answers

Final Rule
Website



United States Department of Agriculture



Opportunities

- Collaborate on an all-of-society approach to end hunger, improve nutrition and physical activity, and reduce diet-related diseases and disparities
- Support Healthy School Meals for All activities and schools adopting the Community Eligibility Provision
- Amplify positive messages about school meals
- Support school meals as an integral part of the school day
- Support complementary policies:
 - Enough time to eat
 - Recess before lunch
 - Closed campus



Research

- [Community Eligibility Provision Evaluation Study](#) (2014)
- [Community Eligibility Provision Characteristics Study, School Year 2016-2017](#) (2022)
- [Systematic Review](#) (2021)
 - Cohen JFW, Hecht AA, McLoughlin GM, Turner L, Schwartz MB. *Universal School Meals and Associations with Student Participation, Attendance, Academic Performance, Diet Quality, Food Security, and Body Mass Index: A Systematic Review*. *Nutrients*. 2021 Mar 11;13(3):911. Diet quality (pp. 6-9); Academic performance (p. 10).



Summer EBT Overview

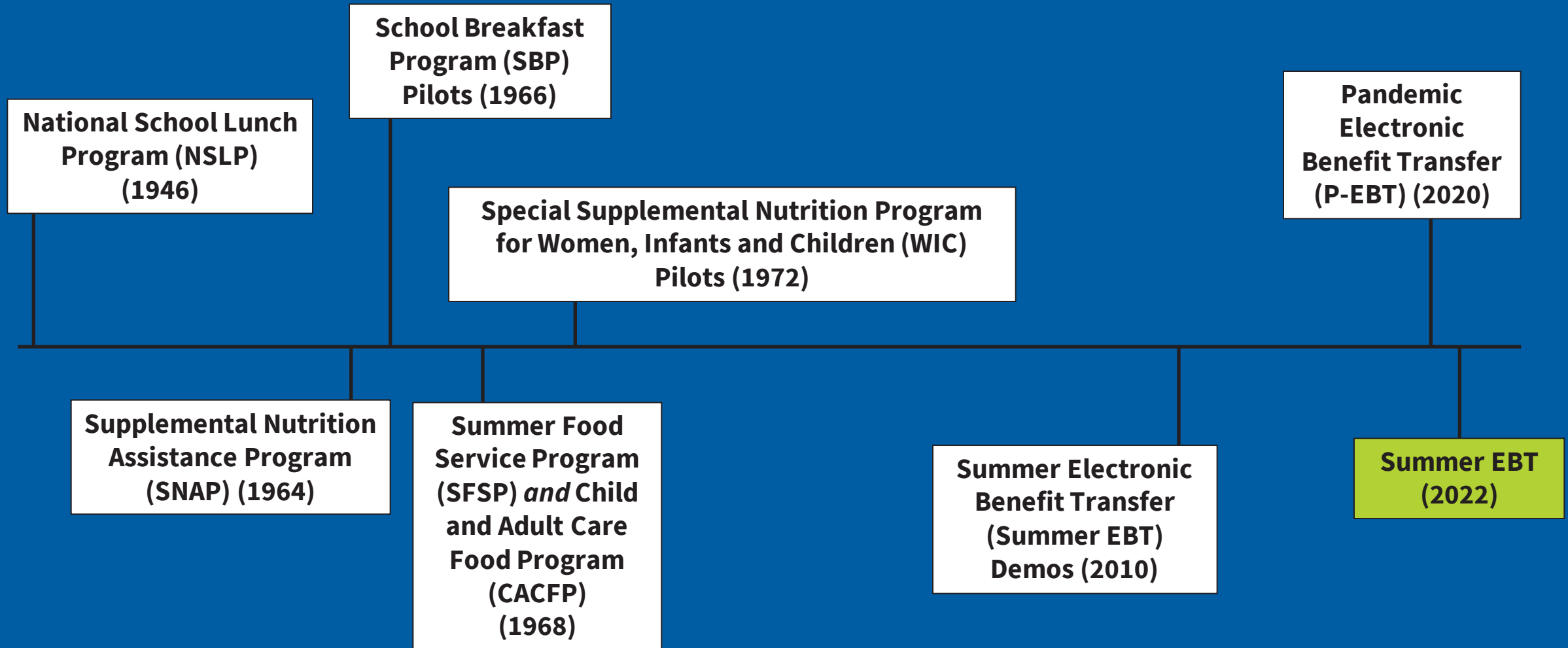
Raisa Alstodt
Program Analyst
Child Nutrition Programs
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USDA's newest
permanent
nutrition program:
Summer EBT



FNS Programs Over the Years



Today's Agenda

- Background
- Overview of Summer EBT





Summer should be a time for fun, not hunger

Food insecurity rises during the summer, when nearly **30 million children** who participate in USDA's school meals programs lose access to these nutritious meals



Summer EBT Works!

- Summer EBT benefits reduced the most severe category of food insecurity among children during the summer by one-third compared to those receiving no benefits
- Children who participated ate more fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and dairy than those who didn't get Summer EBT
- Participants generally were satisfied with how the projects operated and found the benefits easy to use
- Retailers noted that their summer business increased significantly due to Summer EBT benefit use





Lessons Learned From Summer EBT Demonstrations

The findings from these evaluations play an important role in shaping program operations for the permanent Summer EBT program.

The strategies USDA has adopted:

- Using a range of diverse outreach techniques.
- Implementing a year-round approach to program implementation and operations.
- Requiring centralized, statewide data systems and application processes.
- Encouraging flexibility in distribution and rollover of benefits.

Pandemic EBT (P-EBT)



On EBT cards (worked the same as SNAP cards)



Available through the duration of the pandemic, including the summer months



Temporary program due to school closures as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic



Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023

The law permanently authorized a **nationwide Summer EBT** program!



A photograph of a woman and a young girl in a grocery store. The woman, wearing a light blue button-down shirt, is smiling and looking down at a clear plastic bag filled with green leafy vegetables. The girl, wearing a bright pink long-sleeved shirt, is also smiling and looking at the bag. They are both holding the top of the bag. In the background, there are shelves of various grocery items, including what appears to be a loaf of bread in the foreground.

Launching in 2024! **Summer EBT**

Could benefit more than
29 million children

USDA Guidance

- New regulations at 7 CFR 292- Published December 2023
- USDA issued early guidance prior to rule publication
- <https://www.fns.usda.gov/sebt>
 - Implementation Toolkit
 - Outreach Toolkit



Guiding Principles for Summer EBT

- Effectively deliver benefits to eligible families
- Streamline program administration
- Minimize burden on schools
- Provide states temporary flexibilities where possible, as they work to stand up Summer EBT

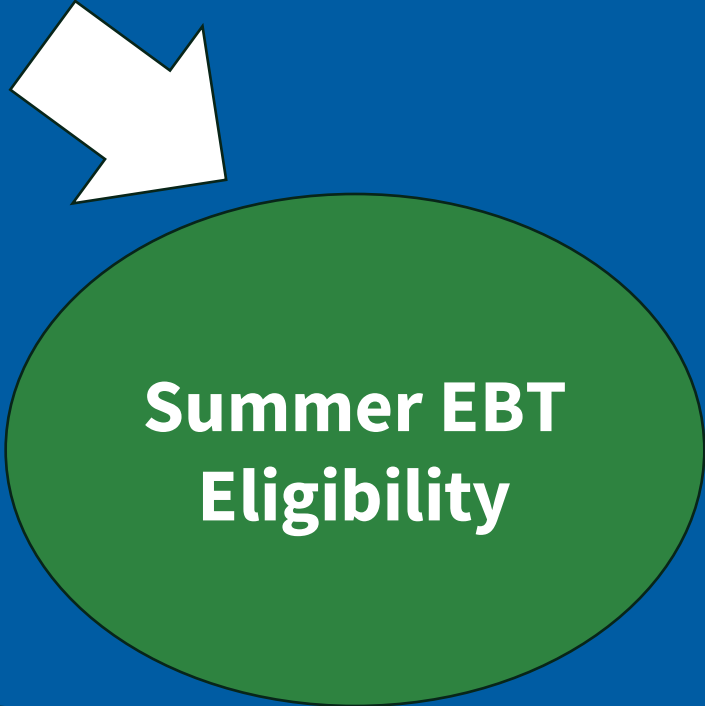




Summer EBT Eligibility Guidance

Streamlined Certification

- Direct certification with SNAP, FDPIR, TANF
 - Includes Medicaid in DC-M demo states
- Categorically eligible (e.g. homeless children)
- Certified for F/RP meals by application



Summer EBT Application

Administrative Matching Funds





**We can ensure no
child goes hungry in
the summer!**



Summer Nutrition Programs for Kids



Thank You & Stay Connected



www.usda.gov/nutrition-security

 @USDANutrition

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

