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2020

SNIC Ohio: Industry Conference Highlights



More photos can be seen on page 3

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The SNA of Ohio newsletter
is published three times a year.
Circulation is 1,000+.
For advertising rates call
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President's Message

Krys Hess, President, SNA of Ohio



What a difference a day makes...

To say we have had some struggles over the past few weeks is putting things mildly. We have seen our world turned upside down in a matter of days, but still we push on. For the greater good of our students, we have worked *many, many* hours over the past few weeks getting things in line to continue our quest to feed the students of Ohio. I cannot tell you how proud I am of each and every one of you. We have been there to support each other, offer advice and to lend a hand when one of us breaks down. Through the blood, the sweat and the tears, we have persevered. Let's hear it everyone...**O...H...I...O!!** What a wonderful team of School Nutrition Professionals!

Before the chaos, some of us traveled to Washington, DC and to charge the halls of Capitol Hill. We had the honor of speaking with our state's Congressmen and Congresswomen and/or their legislative assistants and to make our voices heard in regard to the world of Child Nutrition. It's always a privilege to accompany my colleagues in such an important experience.

As our school year draws to an unusual close, please continue to reach out to each other with strength, guidance and a helping hand. We are a great team here in the Buckeye State and we are always up for a challenge. Be well my fellow Buckeyes!

*"Success is not final, failure is not fatal;
it is the courage to continue that counts."*

- Winston Churchill

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SNIC Ohio: Industry Conference

Thank you to everyone who helped to make Ohio SNIC a great success!

We had 80 attendees from multiple locations including: school districts, consultants, and state agencies. Sessions ranged from Plant Based Menu Makeover to Equipment 101 to Demystifying Commodities. Each attendee earned 5 CEUs.

Because of the positive feedback on several sessions, we have been working on adding sessions to future Ohio SNA events.

Twenty five Platinum and Gold Industry Partners played a key role in helping to support the sessions as well as offer new menu ideas, commodity items and other marketing tools to the attendees at their tables. Thank you again for all that you do to support our SNA members throughout Ohio!

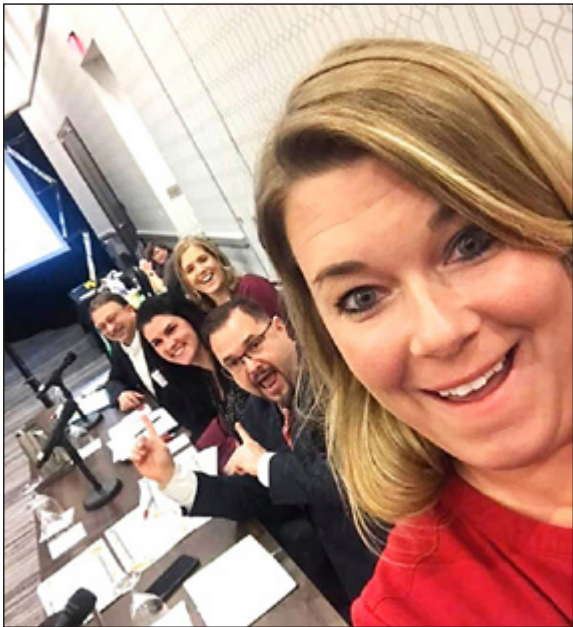
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2020 SNA of Ohio Annual Conference Update

SNA of Ohio Members & Friends:

It is with a heavy heart, and after much reflection and discussion, that we announce the cancellation of the 2020 SNA of Ohio Annual Conference in Columbus June 16-18. There are no plans to reschedule the conference this year. This unprecedented decision to cancel the Annual Conference is driven by the current COVID-19 global public health crisis. We feel that, with the current state of affairs in Ohio and globally, cancelling the Annual Conference is the best course of action.

Thank you to all of our school and industry members for your tireless efforts – including your dedication to feeding the children during these chaotic times.

SNA of Ohio does plan to hold our October 16, 2020 Expo & Education event in Columbus, so look for more information on that soon. With the cancellation of the annual conference, we will honor our 2020 award and scholarship recipients at that event and will be in touch with those recipients soon with details. Additionally, SNA of Ohio will hold a virtual Annual Business meeting this summer for the membership. Logistics are being finalized soon and will be distributed accordingly later this spring.

Also, below is important information from SNA National that may be beneficial to you, as we all navigate through this crisis.

SNA values our members, and we are committed to helping you during this challenging time. Even though schools are closing throughout the country, we have seen some fantastic work as our members strive to provide meals to students. And we couldn't be prouder of the efforts you are making. It might feel like the world is on hold, but we know you're out there making a difference. In addition to the [Coronavirus resources](#) on the SNA website, we have also begun a COVID-19 webinar series to bring you the information and resources you need now. All live and on-demand webinars in the COVID-19 series are provided free to non-members.

The April issue of School Nutrition magazine will feature special coverage to help readers sort facts from misinformation and learn how other districts are managing during this crisis. If you would like the next few issues of SN to be mailed to a different address, such as your home, please log on to [MyAccount](#) and update your preferred address in the member record section. You can switch back at any time. Contact servicecenter@schoolnutrition.org for questions about changing your address.

If you are looking for more training as in-person meetings are being canceled or delayed, you can still advance your profession by earning CEUs with the many online training opportunities provided in the [Training Zone](#). There is sure to be something to interest you ranging from live and on-demand webinars to training modules and conference videos.

Here are just a few of our popular programs designed by school nutrition operators just like you.

Webinar Wednesdays

- Visit <https://www.pathlms.com/sna/events> for more information.

Webinars On-Demand

- Serving Students School Meals During COVID-19
- Food Allergy: Discussing the Science Behind the Facts
- Making it Count with Offer Versus Serve
- Procurement Do's and Don'ts for Operators

Video Series

- Effective Conflict Management
- Take a Trip Through the Tummy
- Employee Safety: Risk Management is a Win-Win
- The Four Essential Habits for Game Changers

Training Modules

- Dollars & Cents of Financial Management
- Culinary Skills
- School Nutrition Ethics

SNA is dedicated to bringing you continued [COVID-19 resources](#) and training as we navigate these uncertain times together. As always, please feel free to reach out to us with any questions or if there is anything we can do to help. We are here for you.

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9552	Bavarian Soft Pretzel Roll - Bulk Pack	2.2 oz.	90	2 grain
9553	51% Whole Grain Bavarian Style Nuggets	0.5 oz.	256	2 grain
9554	51% Whole Grain Bavarian Style Pretzel Twist	2.2 oz.	100	2 grain
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40407	Maple Brown Sugar Bar	2.5 oz.	48	2 grain
READI-BAKE® BENEFIT® COOKIE DOUGH- MADE WITH 51% WHOLE GRAINS				
14409	Gourmet Mayan Hot Chocolate with Caramel Pieces	1.85 oz.	192	1 grain
14410	Gourmet Spiced Key Lime with White Chocolate Chips	1.85 oz.	192	1 grain
14411	Gourmet Sweet Heat Oatmeal Cranberry	1.85 oz.	192	1.25 grain
READI-BAKE® PRE-PACKAGED GRAHAMS & CRACKERS - MADE WITH 51% WHOLE GRAINS				
56080	Belly Bears Cinnamon Graham Crackers	2.0 oz.	100	2 grain
56079	Jungle Crackers	2.0 oz.	100	2 grain
2049190	Crunch & Crave™ - Spicy Queso	1.6 oz.	100	2 grain
2049191	Crunch & Crave™ - Pizza	1.6 oz.	100	2 grain
2049192	Crunch & Crave™ - Original	1.6 oz.	100	2 grain
2049193	Crunch & Crave™ - Churro	1.0 oz.	160	1 grain
LUIGI'S® SOURS 100% FROZEN FRUIT JUICE SORBET				
48456	Sour Orange/ Raspberry Swirl	4.4 fl. oz.	96	1/2 cup fruit
TIO PEPE'S® SPICEDICE™ 100% FROZEN JUICE CUPS				
48470	Strawberry Jalapeño	4.4 fl. oz.	96	1/2 cup fruit
48471	Mango Chamoy	4.4 fl. oz.	96	1/2 cup fruit
48472	Horchata	4.4 fl. oz.	96	1/2 cup fruit
48473	Watermelon Chili Limón Verde	4.4 fl. oz.	96	1/2 cup fruit

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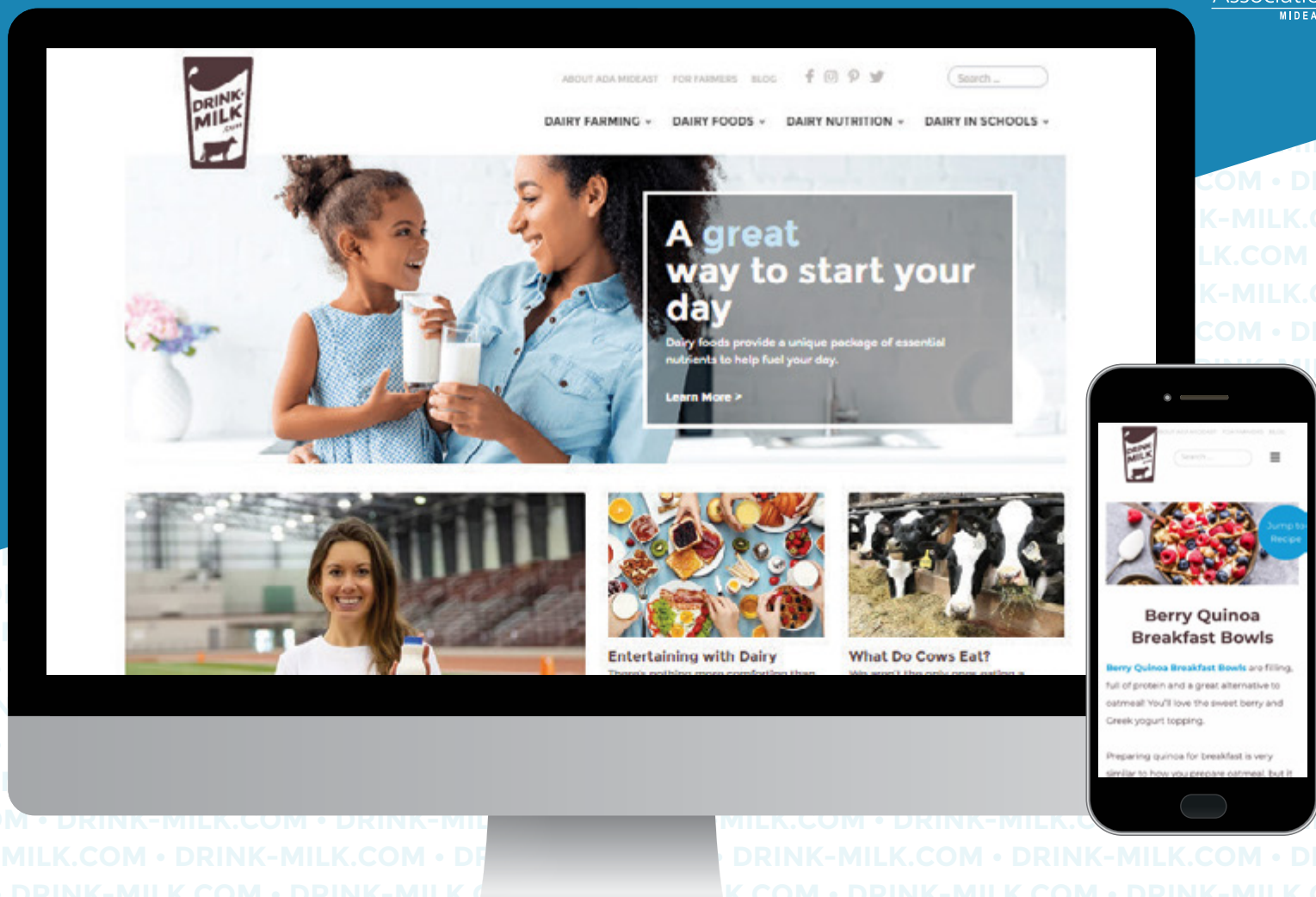
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Congratulations to SNA of Ohio Vice President Tiffany McCleese on her recent “Young Lion” Award, presented by Foodservice Equipment Reports! For full details about this awesome award, [click here!](#)

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ODE Update - Child Nutrition Programs

One of Ohio's highest priorities during the ordered school-building closure period, which seeks to diminish the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19), is to ensure that students receive nutritious meals. This is fundamental to supporting the whole child. We recognize this will be challenging, but we are already heartened and encouraged by the way in which the education community and food service operations are stepping up to meet the needs of students.

To achieve this goal, the Ohio Department of Education has developed this technical assistance document to help schools think through important child nutrition opportunities. This information will help ensure the most successful outcomes. **Schools should file the specified applications as quickly as possible to ensure the smoothest transition to alternate food service operations during the ordered school building closure. This process will not take much time.**

Ohio's Stay at Home Order

On March 22, 2020, a [Stay at Home Order](#) was issued by Dr. Amy Acton, director of the Ohio Department of Health, to take effect March 23-April 6. This order generally requires Ohioans to stay at home. However, certain people are exempt from the order and allowed to leave their homes or places of residence to participate in certain essential businesses and operations. Section 12(o) of the order specifies that one of these essential businesses and operations includes schools and other entities that typically provide food service to children. The order allows schools and other entities to continue to provide food services on a pickup or take away basis only, and food is not permitted to be eaten at the site at which it is provided or any other gathering site. Please note that Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) sponsors are included as "other entities" and permitted to continue meal service on a pickup or take away basis.

This provision of the "Stay at Home" order also allows home and bus stop meal deliveries to continue for emergency feeding plans during the ordered school-building closure period. All educational institutions, including child nutrition program sponsors, should ensure social distancing of six feet per person is maintained to the greatest extent possible.

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Nationwide Waivers

The USDA issued three nationwide waivers regarding child nutrition programs on March 21, 2020, effective through

June 30, 2020, or upon expiration of the federally declared public health emergency, whichever is earlier.

1. **Non-congregate Feeding National Waiver** – This waiver allows National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, Child and Adult Care Food Program, and Summer Food Service Program sponsors to serve non-congregate meals.
2. **Meal Times Nationwide Waiver** – This waiver suspends meal-time requirements and restrictions, allowing sponsors to provide multiple meals, such as breakfast and lunch, at the same time, for up to one week for the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, Child and Adult Care Food Program, and Summer Food Service Program.
3. **After-school Activity Waiver** – This waiver applies to after-school snacks in the National School Lunch Program and after-school at-risk program meals and snacks in the Child and Adult Care Food Program and waives the requirement for meal service in a structured and supervised setting with an educational or enrichment activity.

School or District Closure

During the ordered school-building closure period, all closed schools may continue to receive reimbursement for meals served during the closure by following the simple steps described in this document. Schools can apply to participate in the Seamless Summer Option (SSO) or the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) to continue serving meals during the ordered school-building closure period.

Schools that have student enrollments of 50 percent or more free or reduced-price or that are Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) schools

Schools with 50 percent or more free or reduced-price enrolled students participating in Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) or area eligible based on [census data](#) may offer meals to students and count and claim meals served under the Seamless Summer Option (SSO) or the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). Reference the [Summer Food Service Program versus Seamless Summer Option comparison chart](#) for more information.

Schools with less than 50 percent free or reduced-price enrolled students

Schools that do not have at least 50 percent free or reduced-price enrolled students must operate as a closed enrolled site

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under the Seamless Summer Option (SSO) or the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). Schools operating as a closed enrolled site must maintain a roster for students receiving meals to track eligibility and aim to serve free and reduced-price enrolled students during the ordered school-building closure period.

Schools with less than 50 percent free or reduced-price enrolled students operating as a closed enrolled site are permitted to claim all meals served to free and reduced-price enrolled students, as well as the same proportion of meals served to students who normally pay full price for meals. For example, if a school served 210 breakfast meals and 100 of the meals (47.6%) were served to students categorized as free and reduced, the school may claim 100 (47.6%) meals for children ineligible for free reimbursement. The remaining 10 (4.8%) meals are not eligible for meal reimbursement.

Note: Schools should not turn away students. At the present time, reimbursement requests through the normal procedures should include all meals served to free and reduced-price enrolled students and the same proportion of meals served to students that normally pay full price for meals as described in the above paragraph. Reimbursement requests should not include meals that are not eligible for meal reimbursement based on the above guidelines. We have initiated a waiver request to allow reimbursement for such meals.

Schools providing online instruction

Schools that still are providing instruction through alternate means (including online or other remote approaches) during the ordered school-building closure are permitted to operate and claim reimbursement under the National School Lunch Program or School Breakfast Program, as they would normally, or participate in the Seamless Summer Option or Summer Food Service Program. Schools that are completely closed and not providing instruction through alternate means — **may not** continue to participate under the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program and must operate under the Seamless Summer Option or Summer Food Service Program.

Steps for Operating Effectively During the Ordered-School Building Closure Period

Step 1: Request waiver to serve meals during the ordered school-building closure period

Schools that opt to serve meals during the ordered school-building closure period must complete the [Feeding Children During Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Related Unanticipated School Closures Application](#). When completing the

application, schools must provide information about participating sites, dates of closure and meal service, meal distribution methods used, methods to serve free and reduced-price students, methods for communicating meal availability with families and how schools will conduct program oversight.

Upon approval from the Ohio Department of Education, the school must choose to operate under the Seamless Summer Option or the Summer Food Service Program. Then, schools will work with their assigned education program specialist to complete the application.

Step 2: Complete Either the Seamless Summer Option Application or the Summer Food Program Application

Seamless Summer Option Application

Schools that opt to serve meals through the Seamless Summer Option during the ordered school-building closure period must list the sites participating in the Seamless Summer Option in the waiver request. Upon approval, the school can complete the application in the [Claims Reimbursement and Reporting System \(CRRS\)](#) School Nutrition Program module in the 2019-2020 Application Packet.

- Once in the application packet, click **Seamless Summer Option** under **Site Applications**. Make sure to fully complete each site application.
- In the periods of operation section, document the meal service start date and anticipated date by which meal service will end. A revised application may be submitted to amend this date as needed.
- Enter the number of serving days anticipated for March and April in the top boxes and the estimated number of students served daily in the bottom boxes.
- Make sure you save each screen and check certification boxes as needed. Schools must **Save** then **Finish** the Seamless Summer Option site application then click **Submit**.

Summer Food Service Program Application

Schools that opt to serve meals through the Summer Food Service Program during the ordered school-building closure period must complete the application in the [Claims Reimbursement and Reporting System \(CRRS\)](#). It is important to complete the application in the following order. Most of the information submitted last year has pre-populated into the fiscal year 2020 application. Be sure to save each screen and check certification boxes as needed.

1. Sponsor Application
2. Management Plan
3. Food Production Facility List (even if self-prep)
4. Site Applications
5. Budget Detail: Complete after all sites have been entered and submitted error free
6. Checklist Summary for sponsors and sites (supporting documents)
7. Submit completed application packet for approval

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Meal Pattern Requirements

Meals must meet the regular menu planning requirements of the [Summer Food Service Program](#) or [Seamless Summer Option](#), which follows the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) menu planning. Offer versus serve (OVS) will not apply and all meals must be unitized, meaning a complete reimbursable meal that meets the requirements of the menu planning method used, including milk, must be distributed. Shelf-stable milk may be used. USDA foods also may be used. (Note: If a school encounters a situation where it runs out of an item that prevents the achievement of a unitized meal, it should immediately contact the Ohio Department of Education to notify of the situation, but then continue to serve meals.) **If availability of milk or other meal components becomes a persistent issue, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) will work with the Ohio Department of Education to provide the needed waivers or flexibility.**

Non-Congregate Feeding Options

Schools choosing to feed students can use non-congregate feeding options during the ordered school-building closure period. Non-congregate feeding sites are those where the meal is consumed offsite. The following options are available to schools:

- Meal distribution at a school site
- Meals delivered to set locations in neighborhoods
- Volunteers delivering meals to households
- Meal distribution at a community location
- Other methods as identified (including by mail)

If schools or Child and Adult Care Food Program sponsors deliver meals to households, they must:

1. Seek approval from the local or county health department for the school's chosen mode of delivery.
2. Ensure that volunteers or non-food service employees sign an appropriate non-disclosure form to protect private information about eligible students and households.
3. In cases where volunteers or non-food service employees are used to provide home-meal delivery, obtain the consent of the household for information about the family's free and reduced meal status being shared with delivery personnel to facilitate service of meals to the children. (This is an important privacy protection.)

Multi-Day Distribution: Schools are permitted to deliver up to one week of meals at a time. In the Seamless Summer Option or Summer Food Service Program application, the school food authority must detail to the Office of Integrated Student Supports its multi-day distribution approach.

Requirements for Mailing: If a school decides to mail shelf-stable, reimbursable meals to households, postage would be an allowable cost using food service funds.

Collaboration with Local Health Department: Schools and Child and Adult Care Food Program sponsors are encouraged to work with their local or county health department to determine the safest non-congregate feeding option for their district.

Shelf-Stable Foods: To further ensure food safety, schools and Child and Adult Care Food Program sponsors may choose to select shelf-stable foods that meet the meal components including shelf-stable milk.

Claims for Reimbursement for the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs

Reimbursement claims for meals served before the ordered school-building closure: School meals served prior to the unanticipated ordered school-building closure period under the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) must follow the Child Nutrition Program's [claim deadline requirements](#). Claims for reimbursement are submitted through the [Claims Reimbursement and Reporting System \(CRRS\)](#).

Reimbursement claims for meals served during the ordered school-building closure: Reimbursement claims for meals served during the ordered school-building closure are submitted in the CRRS under the program the school selected to operate during the closure. If a school opts to serve under the Seamless Summer Option (SSO), claims are submitted in the CRRS School Nutrition Program module. If a school opts to serve under the Summer Food Service Program (SFPS), claims are submitted in the CRRS Summer Food Service Program module.

Log in to the CRRS and select the School Nutrition Program for the Seamless Summer Option or Summer Food Service Program module.

- Click the **Claims** section and then select **Claim – SSO** or **Claim – SFSP**. This displays the Claim Year Summary screen.
- Select the **Claim Month** to display the Claim Month Details screen.
- Select the site, enter all claim information then click **Save and Finish**.
- Click **Continue**, check **Certification** box and then **Submit for Payment and Finished**.

Schools may not submit a claim for a month that does not have an approved application packet in effect. If you cannot access claims for a specific month, check that the application packet is approved for that month. If your application packet is approved and you still are unable to submit a claim, contact your assigned education program specialist.

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Other Considerations for Schools Participating in USDA Foods Program

Canceling scheduled food supply deliveries from state warehouses to schools: Schools participating in the USDA Foods Program are permitted to cancel scheduled deliveries of USDA Foods. For direct deliveries from the state-contracted warehouse, please contact [Christine Farmer](#) or [Justin Chapman](#) with the scheduled delivery date and location. Schools must notify the Ohio Department of Education by 12 p.m. the day before the scheduled delivery.

Changing Delivery Locations: Schools may also change delivery locations to accommodate delivery location closures. Schools may opt to consolidate orders to one delivery location if needed. For direct deliveries from the state-contracted warehouse, please contact [Christine Farmer](#) or [Justin Chapman](#) with the new delivery location and dates of operation.

Co-Operative Purchasing Groups: Schools that receive USDA Foods through a co-operative purchasing group (co-op) must work with their co-op administrator to modify deliveries.

1. Department of Defense Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program Participants: Schools that participate in the USDA Department of Defense (DoD) Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program must contact Premier Produce One directly to cancel or modify orders. Contact [Casey Bauer](#) at Premier Produce One.

Expiration Dates: For all USDA Foods, schools should note the expiration dates of all products and take steps to use or dispose of perishable food inventories before the expiration date. Schools may contact manufacturers to verify a product's expiration date. If a school cannot use products prior to the expiration date, the school may donate those items to charitable organizations such as a food bank. Keep a record of any donated or disposed items.

Procurement of Goods and Service

Under 7 CFR 200.320(f)(2), the declared national emergency due to coronavirus (COVID-19) allows the use of emergency contracts (procurement by noncompetitive proposals). Sponsors should attempt competitive procurement to the greatest extent possible and document when noncompetitive procurement was conducted.

Schools Opting Not to Serve Meals

Schools and districts should make all decisions in the best interest of the health and safety of students and the community. Local school districts have the discretion to serve meals during the ordered school-building closure period; however, schools and community organizations are encouraged to ensure that the needs of low-income children are met during extended school dismissals. Schools should

communicate and work with local community partners and organizations to identify ways to serve children during a school closure.

Additional School Nutrition Food Program Waivers Being Requested

Meal Pattern Flexibility Waiver: The U.S. Department of Agriculture is not currently processing meal pattern waivers due to adequate food supply. **If a school or site experiences food shortages, contact the Office of Integrated Student Supports immediately at Child.Nutrition@education.ohio.gov or contact your Education Program Specialist.**

Waiver Requesting Approval for All School Sites to Operate as Open Sites: The Ohio Department of Education filed a waiver with the U.S. Department of Agriculture requesting approval for all school sites to operate open sites under either the Seamless Summer Option or the Summer Food Service Program. If the waiver is approved, the Ohio Department of Education will notify school food authorities. If approved, this would allow sites to be reimbursed for all meals served regardless of a student's eligibility. Until the waiver is approved, sites with less than 50 percent of enrolled students eligible for free and reduced meals must operate a "closed enrolled" site and only count and claim meals for reimbursement served to free and reduced-price eligible students.

For more information and questions, contact: Child.Nutrition@education.ohio.gov or contact your Education Program Specialist.

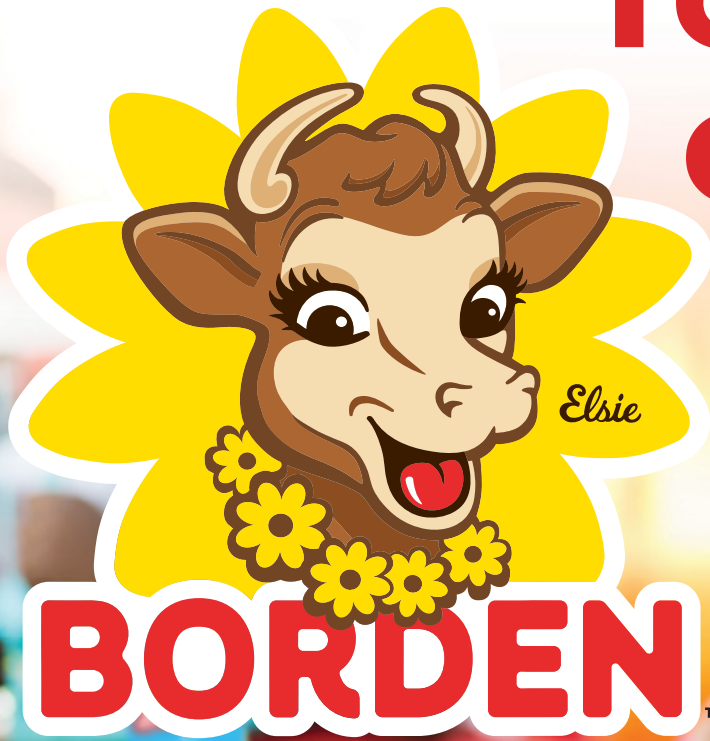


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2020 Champion of Breakfast Award

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Anxiety• School nurse visits• Tardiness• Absenteeism^{1,2}

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*Food Research and Action Center (FRAC) “Food for Health” Fall 2017. www.frac.org
**National Center for Education Statistics. Access through Healthy School Communities – 2017/2018. Retrieved 2/12/2019. www.ohio.gov

2020 Champion of Breakfast Award Winners

- Black River Local School District
- Campbell City School District
- Carrollton Exempted Village School District
- Cincinnati Public Schools- Eleven Grade 7-12 Buildings
- Cleveland Metropolitan School District
- Dover City School District- South Elementary School
- East Cleveland City Schools
- Hamilton City School District- Elementary Schools
- Hillsboro City School District- Hillsboro Elementary
- Madison-Plains Local School District- Junior High, High School
- Northwest Local School District- Struble, Taylor, and Pleasant Run Elementary
- Paulding Exempted Village School District- Paulding Elementary
- Ripley Union Lewis Huntington School District- RULH Elementary, Middle School
- Southern Local School District
- Wellston City School District
- Winton Woods City School District-Winton Woods High School

For resources and school breakfast best practices visit OhioSchoolBreakfastChallenge.com



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16317	Biscuit Stick	1 Bread equiv	250/1.25 oz	180
15191	WGR 6" Round Flatbread	2 oz WG eq.	144/2 oz	270
16845	WGR Mozzarella Bites (4)	2 oz WG eq./2M/MA	8/2.25 lb	540
16206	WGR Hawaiian Sweet Roll Dough	1 WG oz eq.	240/1.4 oz	180
17279	WGR Waffle Flatbread	1 oz Grain eq.	192/1.1 oz	180

For more information, please contact:

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Legislative Action Conference 2020

Legislative Action Conference is a favorite event for many SNA of Ohio members. We get to enhance the efforts that SNA Lobbyists work on all year long. It is exciting to have meaningful conversations with our Congressmen and Congresswomen about how our operations help our students and provide jobs in our communities. On March 10, 2020, our group of delegates from schools and industry partners in Ohio hit Capitol Hill to discuss the SNA Position Paper, which included many pertinent topics that could have very beneficial impacts for our operations. We left each congress person with an acrylic award for their office, as a Thank You for their continued support of Child Nutrition Programs.

Topics we discussed with our Congressional representatives include:

- **Eliminate the Reduced-Price Category** to assist those families that earn between 130% and 185% of the Federal poverty level.
- **Expand Direct Certification with Medicaid for Free and Reduced-Price Meals to all states.** Currently, there are 19 states that participate in this pilot program, but Ohio is not one of them.

- **Urge USDA and the US Department of Education, in collaboration with SFAs, to develop best practices and guidance to ensure school schedules provide students adequate time to eat healthy school meals.** We asked that students be able to sit down and eat for at least 10 minutes at breakfast, and 20 minutes at lunch.
- **Preserve USDA's 2018 final rule Child Nutrition Programs: Flexibilities for Milk, Whole Grains and Sodium Requirements.**
- **Increase USDA Foods (commodities) support for the School Breakfast Program (SBP).** The FY 2020 Agriculture Appropriations Bill contains \$20 million for breakfast commodities.
- **Support USDA's ongoing effort to streamline overly complex child nutrition programs.**

Thank you to the following people who were a part of TEAM OHIO this year for LAC! Our group included 7 first-timers!

LAC Team Ohio

James Bannerman
Carrie Beegle
Stacey Bettis
Winne Brewer
Tascin Brooks
Joe Brown

Jennifer Bujak-Hirsh
Julianna Carvi
Patrick Clemens
Roger Doseck
Carol Erb
Laura Filippi

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Tiffany McCleese

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Dorie Pullen

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Ashley Ritz
JoAnne Robinett
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Jessica Shelly
Beverly Wasserbeck

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Equipment Upkeep: Some Things to Consider

Under the current circumstances, I find I have more time to consider things. Having worked for an equipment manufacturer for nineteen years, I get to see best practices and, unfortunately, the other side of the care of the large production equipment I see in most school kitchens these days.

When you left school last month, did you think the school year was over? Did you leave the kitchen like you would be back after spring break? Now it has turned out it is going to be an extended summer vacation, and that is a whole different situation.

Being in the steam equipment business, I realize the advantages and disadvantages you have running school lunch programs. A big advantage I see is the cooking staffs are appreciative of their equipment, and they keep it clean. Clean equipment has a lot fewer problems than dirty, greasy equipment. Another advantage is the limited schedule. You do not have to cook three meals a day, 365 days a year. Unfortunately with a lot of steam equipment the summer vacation and the resulting lack of use create a problem. Hidden behind that shiny stainless steel are valves that control the water flow into boilers or steam generators. Lime (calcium carbonate) is the villain here. If you did not delime your equipment since you left, it is in those pipes, boilers, and generators hardening up. Those extra few months off this year are just going to make things worse. The best you can hope for is it still works, but it is not going to operate very efficiently. If you have a combi-oven, make sure it has been descaled.

Most equipment that uses water needs a good filter. Make sure you are changing those filters. They are hidden in behind the equipment many times, and it is easy to not pay attention to them. It also might be a good time to look at updating your filter system. First, they are not all the same. The best actually remove the calcium, but others

just treat it. If yours treats the water, there are still a lot of minerals in that water just waiting to settle out and clog things up. Reverse osmosis systems need to have their membranes changed out to continue to remove the minerals. The water we receive these days is a lot more corrosive than it used to be, so take that into consideration if you make a change.

Any gas equipment you have requires some preventative maintenance. When was the last time the burners on the range had the orifices cleaned? Gas equipment is now a real piece of technology. The gas rating agencies, UL, and the EPA all certify this equipment. It is much more efficient and many times more complicated than in the old days. Make sure your service company has the manufacturers' recommended maintenance procedures and they follow them. Gas pressures need to be checked and adjusted to your building's gas pressure. Igniters and orifices need to be cleaned. Remember every time a burner lights you have an explosion. As manufacturers, we depend on you to properly maintain your gas equipment to control that explosion. The happy benefit to this is you will have efficient and trouble-free operation.

I talk with a lot of service agencies. Right now is a great time to get them in your kitchens. They are not as busy as normal. Now they have time to be thorough and get any equipment that needs repaired fixed properly. I am sure the refrigeration servicers are looking for things to do also. When the "all clear" is given, this will change, and if you can get someone in, you may have to pay overtime. Let's get ahead of this while the opportunity exists.

I encourage you to reach out to me with any questions or thoughts on this article. You can reach me at pgerding@accutemp.net or my direct phone number is 260-341-8155.

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	Total Fat 1g	1%	Total Sugar 1g	2%

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