

Changes in the National School Lunch Program

What is the National School Lunch Program?

The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) is a federally-assisted meal program operating in public and nonprofit private schools and residential child care institutions. School districts and independent schools that choose to take part in the lunch program get money and foods from the U.S. Department of Agriculture for each meal they serve.

Changes to the NSLP that affect you and your child

After congress passed the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act (HHFKA) in 2010, many changes were incorporated into the NSLP. These changes will be gradually implemented over the next 3 years. They include:

- Increased amount and variety of fruits and vegetables
- All grains served are whole grains
- Trans fats limited to 0.5 grams per serving of food
- Milk offered is skim or 1%
- Age-specific minimum and maximum calorie levels per meal
- Maximum sodium and saturated fat levels

How does the HHFKA affect free and reduced-price meals?

There is a small change in what students must purchase in order to receive free or reduced-price meals. Of the 5 items offered that make up a NSLP meal (one food from the food groups of fruit, meat/meat alternatives, vegetables, dairy, and grains), 3 items must be chosen for a reimbursable meal. In addition, at least 1/2 cup of fruit or vegetable must be one of those 3 items.

For more information about the NSLP changes, go to :

<http://publichealthlawcenter.org/resources/feeding-americas-schoolchildren-resources-public-health-and-school-stakeholders>

