



# Department of Education

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Secretary of Education  
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December 1, 2025

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) Sponsors

**FROM:** Aimee F. Beam, MS, RD *AFB*  
Director, Nutrition Programs

**RE:** **2026 Operational Memo #1**  
USDA Food and Nutrition Service's 2025 Turnip the Beet Award

This information is for all Sponsors who participated in the 2025 Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) through the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE) Nutrition Programs.

We are pleased to share with you the USDA Food and Nutrition Service's **2025 Turnip the Beet Award** information. The Turnip the Beet Award recognizes *outstanding Summer Meal Program sponsors across the nation who work hard to offer high quality meals to children that are appetizing, appealing, and nutritious during the summer months*. We know that this is happening across Delaware, as we have seen the great meals being served to Delaware's children this summer!

Sponsors may submit a self-nomination or be nominated by another party. All nominations are due to our office by **Thursday, January 15, 2026**. Details can be found on the attached documents and links below. The nomination form and additional information can also be found on the Turnip the Beet website at: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/turnip-the-beet>.

**Please note for this year, all nominations have a five (5) document limit.**

When completing the nomination form, please keep in mind that the nomination reviewers consist of USDA staff from other regions who might not be familiar with you, your district, or your organization's activities.

Please contact our office with any questions at 302-857-3356.

Attachments: Turnip the Beet 2025 Nomination Form  
TUB 2025 SA and RO Checklists

cc: Nutrition Team

**Turnip the Beet: High-Quality Summer Meals Award Program  
2025 Nomination Form**

**Instructions:** Please complete the information below to be considered for a 2025 Turnip the Beet Award. Only nominations that contain all the requested information will be considered. Submit this completed form via email to your Summer Meals State agency point of contact (<https://www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/program-contacts>).

**Submission deadlines vary by state, so please contact your State agency to learn their submission deadline. Nominations must be sent by the State agency to the appropriate FNS Regional Office by January 23, 2026.**

**Note:** USDA has the right to reproduce, publish, or otherwise use the data in the application for this award, and authorize others to reproduce, publish, or otherwise use the data in the application for this award for Federal purposes.

**Section 1: General Information**

<p><b>Sponsor's Name or Program Name:</b></p> <p>The sponsor's name or program name on the award certificate will be typed exactly as written in the sponsor's name or program name section above. Please ensure that the entire name with any appropriate punctuation is clearly indicated. Award certificates will not be re-printed due to an incorrect or illegible sponsor name or program name.</p>	
<p><b>Select Sponsorship Type*</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) Sponsor</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Seamless Summer Option (SSO) Sponsor</p> <p><b>Select Meal Service Type*</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Congregate</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Rural Non-Congregate</p> <p>*Submit a separate menu for each meal service type.</p>	<p><b>Contact Information</b></p> <p><b>Name &amp; Title:</b></p> <p><b>Phone Number:</b></p> <p><b>Email Address:</b></p> <p><b>Mailing Address*</b> (Street, City, State, and Zip code):</p> <p>*This address may be used to mail the award certificate. P.O. Box addresses are not acceptable.</p>

**OMB Burden Disclosure Statement:** This information is being collected to assist the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) in recognizing high quality summer meals. This is a voluntary collection and FNS will use the information to determine Turnip the Beet award winners. This collection does request personally identifiable information under the Privacy Act of 1974. According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0584-0658. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Office of Policy Support, 1320 Braddock Place, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor, Alexandria, VA 22306 ATTN: PRA (0584-0658). Do not return the completed form to this address.



**3. How were nutritious foods such as vegetables, fruits, and whole grains incorporated into menus and promoted to children at summer sites?** (Describe how the sponsor promoted nutritious foods. For example, fun descriptors were used on menus and signage, or healthier choices were placed prominently in the service area to encourage consumption.)

**4. What, if any, food and nutrition-based activities were offered at the summer sites (or included with rural non-congregate meals)?** (Describe activities and resources related to USDA materials, cooking, local foods, gardening, farming, or other food and nutrition topics.)

### **Section 3: Menus and Other Supporting Documents**

Along with submitting this completed nomination form, you must submit a one-month menu to be considered for a Turnip the Beet Award. Please see the attached sample menu for guidance on menu documentation. All menus must meet meal pattern requirements per SFSP or SSO regulations and policy, as applicable.

The menus should also include sufficient detail for reviewers to assess them based on the criteria below. For example, please indicate whether vegetables and fruit are fresh, frozen, canned or dried, the type of milk (i.e., fat content and whether it is flavored), which items are whole grain-rich\*, a clear statement of whether water is available at no cost (applies to congregate sites only), and which items are sourced locally.

Sponsors earn two points for every menu evaluation criterion met and one point for every bonus criterion met.

You may submit other supporting documents to further demonstrate the quality of the meals, such as ingredient lists, recipes to verify a food item is whole grain-rich, Child Nutrition (CN) Label or a manufacturer's Product Formulation Statement (PFS), invoices for local food purchases, news clips about the program, photos, etc. If photos contain pictures of children, please include a signed photo release form with your application. Please do not submit more than five (5) supporting documents.

*\* Whole grain-rich is the term designated by FNS to indicate that the grain content of a product is between 50 and 100 percent whole grain with any remaining grains being enriched.*

For reference, menu evaluation criteria include:

- Locally produced vegetables, fruits, grains, milk, or meats/meat alternates are served as part of the reimbursable meal and promoted as local foods at least one (1) time per week, per meal type.
- Entrees repeat two (2) times or fewer per month, per meal type.
  - **Bonus:** Entrée types (e.g., sandwiches, pasta dishes, breaded poultry dishes, etc.) are repeated two (2) times or fewer per week, per meal type.
- Menu includes at least one (1) hot food item per week, per meal type.
- At least four (4) different vegetables and/or fruits are served per week, per meal type.
  - **Bonus:** At least one (1) serving each of dark green vegetables, red and orange vegetables, beans and peas (legumes), starchy vegetables, and other vegetables is served per week. (This is a requirement for SSO sponsors.)
- Fifty (50) percent or more of vegetables and fruits are fresh per week, per meal type.
- Juice is served to meet the fruit and vegetable component two (2) times or fewer per week, per meal type.

- Fifty (50) percent or more of grains served are whole grain-rich per week, per meal type. (e.g., the grain content of a product is between 50 and 100 percent whole grain with any remaining grains being enriched). (SSO requirement: Sponsors must have at least eighty (80) percent of the weekly grains offered be whole grain-rich.)
- Grain-based desserts (e.g., cookies, cakes, brownies, fruit turnovers, doughnuts, toaster pastries, or sweet rolls) are served two (2) times or fewer per week, per meal type (i.e., if a summer site serves breakfast and snack, a grain-based dessert is served at no more than two (2) breakfast meals and two (2) snacks per week).
  - **Bonus:** Grain-based desserts are not served.
- Only low-fat (1%) or fat-free dairy milks are served to children aged 2 and older. If one-year-old children attend the summer site, they are served whole milk.
- Water is available at no cost. (Applies to congregate sites only.)

**Privacy Act Statement**

**Authority:** Section 13 of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (NSLA) 42 U.S.C. § 1758, as amended, authorized the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and the Seamless Summer Option (SSO) of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP).

**Purpose:** Information is collected for use by the USDA Food and Nutrition Service in the administration of the Turnip the Beet award within the SFSP and the SSO.

**Routine Use:** Information may be disclosed in USDA publications exclusively for the purposes of recognizing award winners and directing the public to award-winning meal sites.

**Disclosure:** Furnishing the information on this form is voluntary, but failure to do so will result in ineligibility for a Turnip the Beet Award.

**TUB Sample Menu (SFSP)**

**June 2 - June 27, 2025**

Water is available at every meal and snack.

<b>Week 1</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
<b>Breakfast</b>	Rise n' Shine Parfaits: -Whole grain granola  Low-fat plain yogurt  Mixed berries (frozen)  1% and fat-free milk	Scrambled eggs  Whole wheat toast  Watermelon slices (fresh)  1% and fat-free milk	Whole-wheat English muffin with peanut butter  Whole grain cereal  Banana (fresh)  1% and fat-free milk	Team Nutrition Strawberry Smoothie Bowl: -Low-fat Greek yogurt -Local Strawberries (fresh) Whole wheat toast 1% and fat-free milk	Choice of whole grain cereal  Local peaches (fresh)  1% and fat-free milk
<b>Lunch</b>	Zesty Spaghetti Casserole: -Enriched Spaghetti -Ground Beef (90% lean) -Marinara Sauce -Parmesan Cheese  Mixed greens salad with local cherry tomatoes (fresh)  Corn (frozen) Orange slices  1% and fat-free milk	Southwest Chicken Wrap: -Whole wheat tortilla -Grilled chicken -Lettuce -Salsa  Black beans (canned)  Steamed broccoli (frozen)  Pineapple chunks (canned)  1% and fat-free milk	Turkey sandwich on whole grain bun (with lettuce and tomato)  Roasted potato wedges (frozen)  Steamed green beans (fresh)  1% and fat-free milk	Grilled cheese sandwich on enriched bread  Baby carrots (fresh)  Local sugar snap peas (fresh)  1% and fat-free milk	Black bean burger on whole grain bun (with lettuce and tomato)  Roasted sweet potato wedges (fresh)  Grapes (fresh)  1% and fat-free milk
<b>Snack</b>	Whole-grain crackers Fat-free chocolate milk	Low-fat yogurt  Mango (frozen)	Crunchy carrot and celery sticks (fresh)  Hummus	Banana (fresh)  Fat-free chocolate milk	Low-fat yogurt  Local mixed berries (fresh)

	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
<b>Week 2</b>					
<b>Breakfast</b>	Oatmeal with Raisins and Pecans Diced pears (canned) 1% and fat-free milk	Omelet: -Turkey or Ham -Cheese -Onions (frozen) -Bell peppers (frozen) Hash brown potatoes (frozen) Whole wheat toast 1% and fat-free milk	Whole wheat toast with peanut butter Sliced cantaloupe (fresh) Local raspberries (fresh) 1% and fat-free milk	Multi-grain bagel with reduced fat cream cheese Local peaches (fresh) Strawberries (fresh) 1% and fat-free milk	Mini buttermilk pancakes Mixed berries (fresh) Banana (fresh) 1% and fat-free milk
<b>Lunch</b>	Sizzling Stir-Fry: -Chicken -Bell peppers (frozen) -Snow peas (fresh) -Onion (frozen) -Mushrooms (fresh) White rice Pineapple tidbits (canned) 1% and fat-free milk	BBQ Beef Sliders on Whole Grain Buns Local mixed greens and cucumber salad (fresh) Banana (fresh) 1% and fat-free milk	Mediterranean Hummus and Veggie Wraps: -Whole wheat tortilla -Hummus -Cheese -Local cucumbers (fresh) -Local lettuce (fresh) -Local tomatoes (fresh) Mixed berries (frozen) 1% and fat-free milk	Burrito Bowls: -Grilled chicken strips -Black beans (canned) -Local lettuce (fresh) -Local tomatoes (fresh) -Avocado (fresh) -Salsa -Brown rice Sliced cantaloupe (fresh) 1% and fat-free milk	State Spotlight: Louisiana Style Red Beans and Rice Baby carrots (fresh) Mixed fruit (canned) 1% and fat-free milk
<b>Snack</b>	Watermelon slices (fresh) String cheese	Low-fat yogurt Local strawberries (fresh)	Apple slices (fresh) Fat-free chocolate milk	Low-fat yogurt Blueberries (frozen)	Cheddar cheese Whole grain crackers

	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
<b>Week 3 Breakfast</b>	Rise n' Shine Parfaits: -Whole grain granola -Low-fat plain yogurt -Mixed berries (frozen)  1% and fat-free milk	Scrambled eggs  Whole wheat toast  Watermelon slices (fresh)  1% and fat-free milk	Whole-wheat English muffin with peanut butter  Whole grain cereal  Banana  1% and fat-free milk	Team Nutrition Strawberry Smoothie Bowl: -Low-fat Greek yogurt -Local Strawberries (fresh)  Whole wheat toast  1% and fat-free milk	Choice of whole grain cereal  Local peaches (fresh)  1% and fat-free milk
<b>Lunch</b>	Spaghetti and Meatballs: -Enriched spaghetti -Marinara sauce -Beef meatballs  Local mixed greens salad (fresh)  Local roasted green beans (fresh)  1% and fat-free milk	Turkey sandwich on whole grain bun (with lettuce and tomato)  Carrot and celery sticks (fresh)  Diced peaches (canned)  1% and fat-free milk	Tex-Mex Chicken Fajitas: -Whole wheat tortilla -Grilled chicken strips -Bell peppers (fresh) -Onions (fresh)  Fruit salad (fresh) 1% and fat-free milk	Grilled cheese sandwich on enriched bread  Team Nutrition Tasty Tots: -Sweet potatoes (fresh) -Garbanzo beans (canned)  Sliced cantaloupe (fresh)  1% and fat-free milk	Team Nutrition Asian Tuna Burger on whole grain bun (with lettuce and tomato): -Tuna -Local green onions (fresh) -Red pepper (fresh)  Roasted broccoli (fresh) Roasted potato wedges (frozen) 1% and fat-free milk
<b>Snack</b>	Low-fat yogurt Pear (fresh)	Banana (fresh) Fat-free chocolate milk	Apple slices (fresh) Cheddar cheese	Local sugar snap peas and cucumber slices (fresh) Hummus	Watermelon slices (fresh) Whole grain crackers

<b>Week 4</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>
<b>Breakfast</b>	Oatmeal with Raisins and Pecans Diced pears (canned) 1% and fat-free milk	Omelet: -Turkey or Ham -Cheese -Onions (frozen) -Bell peppers (frozen) Hash brown potatoes (frozen) Whole wheat toast 1% and fat-free milk	Whole wheat toast with peanut butter Sliced cantaloupe (fresh) Local raspberries (fresh) 1% and fat-free milk	Multi-grain bagel with reduced fat cream cheese Local peaches (fresh) Strawberries (fresh) 1% and fat-free milk	Mini buttermilk pancakes (enriched) Mixed berries (fresh) Banana 1% and fat-free milk
<b>Lunch</b>	State Spotlight: New York Style Bagels with Egg and Cheese Mixed greens salad (fresh) Sliced cantaloupe (fresh) 1% and fat-free milk	Black bean burger on whole grain bun (with lettuce and tomato) Roasted sweet potato wedges (fresh) Local sugar snap peas (fresh) 1% and fat-free milk	Sizzling Stir-Fry: -Chicken -Bell peppers (frozen) -Snow peas (fresh) -Onion (frozen) -Mushrooms (fresh) Enriched white rice Pineapple tidbits (canned) 1% and fat-free milk String cheese Whole grain crackers	Tuna salad on whole wheat pita (with lettuce and tomato) Bean salad: -Black beans (canned) -Carrots (fresh) -Local green onions (fresh) -Bell peppers (fresh) Apple slices (fresh) 1% and fat-free milk Low-fat yogurt Mango (frozen)	Cheese pizza on whole grain crust Local mixed greens and cucumber salad (fresh) Mixed fruit (canned) 1% and fat-free milk
<b>Snack</b>	Low-fat yogurt Granola cereal	Pear slices (fresh) Fat-free chocolate milk			Local watermelon slices (fresh) Crackers (enriched) with peanut butter or sunflower butter

Attachment

### Turnip the Beet: High-Quality Summer Meals Award Program 2025 State Agency and Regional Office Checklists

**Sponsor Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

#### Section 1: State Agency Checklist and Signature

- The nominated sponsor participated in either the Summer Food Service Program or the Seamless Summer Option in Summer 2025.
- The nominated sponsor is in good standing (i.e., the sponsor had no major findings and program violations or completed and implemented all corrective actions from the last compliance review, was not found seriously deficient in the past two years as of the time of the nomination and has never been terminated from the Summer Food Service Program [SFSP] or Seamless Summer Option [SSO]).
- Through the documentation submitted, the nominated sponsor has demonstrated compliance with meal pattern requirements per FNS regulations and policy, based on the type of program (SFSP or SSO).
- The sponsor's name and address on the application are complete, legible, and correct. P.O. Box addresses are not acceptable.

As the State agency reviewer, your signature hereby confirms that the attached nomination packet is complete, and all the above statements are true and complete to the best of your knowledge.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

**Printed Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Job Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**State Agency:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Section 2: Regional Office Checklist and Signature**

- The nomination packet is complete, including:
  - Sponsor name and contact information (P.O. Box addresses are not acceptable)
  - Responses to short answer questions
  - One-month menu (one calendar month or four consecutive weeks) per service type **OR** an explanation of why a one-month menu is not available
  - Sufficient menu documentation to evaluate based on award criteria
  - Completed and signed State agency checklist

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

**Printed Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Regional Office:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date submitted to RO:** \_\_\_\_\_