



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF

EDUCATION

Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program

Frequently Asked Questions

The Office of the State Superintendent of Education's (OSSE) Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) provides a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables as a healthy snack option to all elementary school children in participating schools. The FFVP encourages nutrition education and community partnership, with the goal of introducing healthy, local practices at an early age that may lead to life-long healthy eating habits.

The following information will provide answers to some of the frequently asked questions regarding key program operations:

General Procedures

Q1. What are the FFVP hours of operation?

A. The program may only be served during the school day (i.e., not before school or during afterschool programs).

Q2. Can the fresh fruits and vegetables be served at the same time as the breakfast or lunch program but in a separate part of the cafeteria?

A. No. The FFVP cannot be provided at the same time as the service of the breakfast or lunch program. Additionally, the FFVP cannot be served as part of summer school sessions. The FFVP may be provided during a "year-round-schools" summer session as this is considered part of the regular school year. Multiple distribution times may be used and may be the best way to maximize participation.

Q3: Where can FFVP be served?

A: The most successful distribution areas for the FFVP will be places where children can easily consume the fruits and vegetables. Consider grade level, maturity of your students, time available to eat the fruits and vegetables, and time for cleanup when deciding on a serving area. Serving areas include classrooms, cafeterias, playgrounds, hallways, kiosks, gymnasiums, etc.

Q4. How many times during the school week must fresh fruits and vegetables be offered?

A. We expect schools to offer fresh fruits and vegetables as many times as possible during the school week, but should be served at least twice per week.

Q5. Must fresh fruits and vegetables be offered the entire school year or can schools choose to offer the program a limited number of months?



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF

EDUCATION

A. The FFVP should be offered through the entire school year and not limited to certain months. One goal of the program is to effect a change in eating habits and a continual exposure to fresh fruits and vegetables is necessary/ beneficial in making this change.

Q6. Can FFVP funds be used to purchase nutrition education materials or pay for nutrition education presentations?

A. No, a variety of free nutrition education materials, both printed and online are available from state and federal partners identified in the FFVP page of the Child Nutrition Programs public website:

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/ffvp/fns-resources>

Local partners, such as [food retailers](#), [organizations](#), [health departments](#), and the USDA Extension Service, are also good sources for nutrition education and promotional materials that may be used in the program.

OSSE also has nutrition education materials available [online](#) and by request. Contact your FFVP Program Specialist for more information.

Food

Q7: Are there any requirements for serving sizes?

A: No. Produce should be presented in a way that it will be easily identified by students. Encourage students to enjoy fruits and vegetables in their original state. It is up to the school to determine appropriate types and sizes of produce to serve. Keep in mind that the appropriate types and sizes will depend on student age and preference as well as the ways you offer fruits and vegetables.

Q8. Can we use trail mix, nuts or dried fruit?

A. No. Only fresh fruit and vegetables can be purchased. See the Allowable/Non-allowable Expenditures handout for a more exhaustive list.

Q9. Can fruit smoothies, frozen fruit cups or bars, canned fruit, veggie pizzas and fruit pizzas be provided under the FFVP?

A. No. Only fresh fruits and vegetables may be offered.

Q10. Can herbs be claimed for reimbursement as part of the FFVP?

A. No. Fresh and dried herbs are not considered a fresh fruit or vegetable, and therefore cannot be reimbursed as part of this program.

Q11: Does produce purchased for FFVP need to be locally grown?



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF

EDUCATION

A: No. The FFVP provides schools the opportunity to purchase exotic fruits and/or vegetables that are not available locally or that are not domestically grown. When purchasing such items always follow proper procurement procedures and the [Buy American Provision](#).

Q12. Are dips allowed?

A. Dips may not be used for fruits. However, in the interest of promoting the consumption of vegetables, *low fat* and *fat-free* dips for vegetables, in amounts no greater than two Tablespoons is allowed.

Q13. Can cooked vegetables be provided and reimbursed in the FFVP?

A. Schools may only cook fresh vegetables (These vegetables should be ones not normally eaten raw) as part of a nutrition education lesson not more than once a week. The vegetables must be fresh; not frozen, canned or dried. Schools may not claim any additional ingredients that are part of the cooked fresh vegetable dish.

Funding/Reimbursement/Costs

Q14. Are the FFVP funds obligation timeframes on a fiscal year or school year basis?

A. For Schools:

July-September FFVP funds: must be obligated by Sept. 30 of that year.

October-June FFVP funds: must be obligated by the following June 30.

Q15. How will the school district be reimbursed?

A. FFVP is a cost reimbursement program not an entitlement program like NSLP. The amount of the grant for each school is based on a per student amount (\$50-\$75 per student) and the school enrollment. Claims are submitted based on actual costs not on the number of children served.

Q16. Can a sponsor purchase a larger piece of equipment, like a serving cart or kiosk, and be reimbursed?

A. Administrative funds can be used to purchase large equipment as long as the school submits the Equipment Justification Form prior to purchasing the equipment. The Equipment Justification Form should be submitted to OSSE for approval. Total administrative costs are limited to 10 percent of the grant. The form can be found on the [OSSE FFVP website](#).

Q17. Do schools have to submit all supporting documentation with their claim for reimbursement?

A. No, however they must maintain this information for review upon request. All documentation should be kept on file for three years, plus the current year.

Q18. Are schools required to have separate purchase orders/invoices for the FFVP?



A. No, provided they can demonstrate on the orders which purchases pertain to the FFVP.

For more information or questions, please contact Andrea Belloli at Andrea.Belloli@dc.gov or (202) 724-1398.