



Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program Frequently Asked Questions

The Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) began as a pilot project authorized by Congress in 2002, and supported only four States: Indiana, Ohio, Michigan, and Iowa. The success of the pilot program led to the enactment of legislation in 2004 to expand the FFVP and make it a permanent program under the National School Lunch Act. In 2008, The Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 amended the National School Lunch Act by adding section 19, *the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program*. Section 19 permanently authorizes the program nationwide.

The following information will provide answers to some of the frequently asked questions which address key program operation issues.

General Procedures

Q. What are the FFVP hours of operation?

A. The program is available only during the school day, not before or after regular school hours.

Q. 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.

Q: Where can FFVP be served?

A: Wherever it makes sense for the school so all students have access and food safety is maintained.

Q. 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.

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

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.

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Q. 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/cnd/FFVP/FFVPReserouces.htm>

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

Food

Q: 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.

Q. 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.

Q. 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. See the Allowable/Non-allowable Expenditures handout for a more exhaustive list.

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

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.

Q. Are dips allowed?

A. Dips may not be used for fruits. However, in the interest of promoting the consumption of vegetables, *low fat* and *non-fat* dips for vegetables, in amounts no greater than 2 Tablespoons is allowed.

Q. 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. As an example, a class may study nutrition, and part of the lesson may be to learn about specific vegetables and their nutritional value.

Q. What are the FFVP funds obligation timeframes on a fiscal year or school year basis?

A. For Schools:

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

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

Funding/Reimbursement/Costs

Q. 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 and the school enrollment. Claims are submitted based on actual costs not on the number of children served.

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

A. While it is anticipated that expenditures will be spent over the school year, administrative costs to purchase larger items can be submitted and paid at the beginning of the program year. The Equipment Justification Form should be submitted to OSSE for approval. Total administrative costs are limited to 10% of the grant.

Q. 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 (3) years, plus the current year.

Q. 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.