

## **Make Summer a Nutritious and Healthy Experience for Lower Income Children**

### **Operate A Summer Food Program**

Millions of children depend on free or reduced-price school lunches and breakfasts for 9 months out of the year.

For many of those children, summer vacation does not mean "fun in the sun" but rather increased risk of hunger and developmental decline.

As community leaders, you may know that children who miss school breakfast and lunch are more likely to be sick, absent or tardy, disruptive in class, and inattentive. They also score lower on achievement tests. Good nutrition is essential for learning in school.

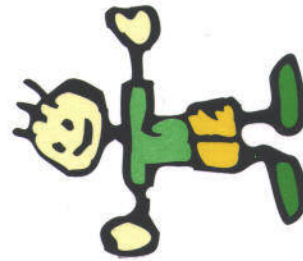
Learning does not end when school lets out. Neither does the need for good nutrition—which is crucial for children to have safe and productive summers.

The summer food program provides an opportunity to continue a child's physical and social development while providing nutritious meals. The summer food program helps lower income children return to school ready to learn.

### **What's the next step?**

Visit our website at:  
[www.summerfood.usda.gov](http://www.summerfood.usda.gov)

Then contact your appropriate State agency or USDA regional office.

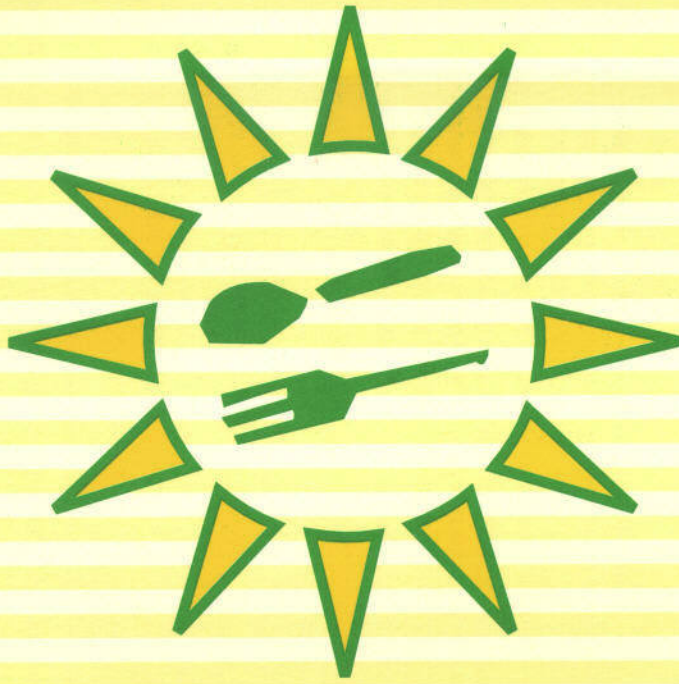


USDA prohibits discrimination in the administration of its programs. To file a complaint, write to the Administrator, Food and Nutrition Service, 3101 Park Center Dr., Alexandria, VA 22302.



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Food and Nutrition Service  
FNS-310  
February 1999  
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# ***Food that's in when school is out!***



***Private nonprofits can help...***

## **The Summer Food Service Program for Children**



# Everyone Wins With Summer Food!

- Low-income children have nutritious meals and organized activities.
- Low-income parents stretch food dollars and have healthy recreation for their children.
- Food service workers have summer employment.
- The private nonprofit organization receives Federal money to carry out the program.

## What is the summer food program?

The Summer Food Service Program for Children is a federally funded program operated nationally by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and administered at the State level by a State agency. The agency reimburses sponsors (such as private nonprofits) for meals served at approved feeding sites in low-income areas to children 18 years and under.

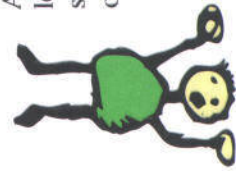
## Who can sponsor the summer food program?

Units of local government, camps, schools, and private nonprofit organizations.

## What is an approved feeding site?

A feeding site must be approved by the State agency as either an "open" or "enrolled" site. An "open" site is one in which at least half the children in the area are eligible for free or reduced-price school meals.

An "enrolled" site is one in which at least half the children enrolled in the summer program are eligible for a free or reduced-price lunch.



## Who can receive meals at an approved feeding site?

All children 18 years of age or under are eligible to receive free meals at an "open" site. Only enrolled children may eat at an "enrolled" site.

## How does a private nonprofit apply to be a program sponsor?

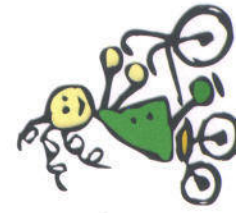
Contact the State agency and complete an application form supplied by the agency.

## How are private nonprofits reimbursed for the meals served?

Forms documenting how many meals were served for the month must be submitted to the State agency. There is an administering and operating rate for each meal served. The sponsor will be reimbursed at that rate or for actual cost if less than the rate.

## Can a private nonprofit sponsor a summer food service program if it does not have meal preparation facilities?

Many private nonprofits serve as sponsors and operate feeding sites but contract out meal preparation to vendors such as schools. The sponsor needs to negotiate a rate for meal preparation with the vendor. If your private nonprofit is interested in this arrangement, contact the summer food State agency, or find a meal service vendor.



## What type of meal service is required?

Meals must be served as a complete package and have the same meal components as school lunch and breakfast. Lunch and one other meal or snack may be served. Additional benefits are available for migrant sites.

## Can a private nonprofit operate a feeding site and not be a sponsor or prepare meals?

Many private nonprofits, particularly smaller ones, want to operate a feeding site and perhaps a recreational or enrichment program and don't have the ability or desire to do more. Many sponsors would welcome such an arrangement. You should contact the State agency indicating your interest, or find a local sponsor and make your own arrangements.

## Are there any special provisions relating only to private nonprofit organizations?

There are special provisions, such as a private nonprofit can only:

- operate up to 25 feeding sites; and
- serve 300 children at a site (500 with a special waiver granted by the State).

