
FRESH FRUIT AND VEGETABLE PROGRAM

1. What is the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program?

The Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) is a federally assisted program providing free fresh fruits and vegetables to students in participating elementary schools during the school day.

The goal of the FFVP is to improve children's overall diet and create healthier eating habits to impact their present and future health. The FFVP will help schools create healthier school environments by providing healthier food choices; expanding the variety of fruits and vegetables children experience; and increasing children's fruit and vegetable consumption.

2. When did the FFVP become a national program?

The FFVP began as the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Pilot Program, authorized by Congress under the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (P.L. 107-171) in a limited number of States and schools. The purpose of the pilot was to identify best practices for increasing fresh fruit and vegetable consumption among students, and to determine the feasibility and students' interest.

In 2008 the Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 established the FFVP as a permanent program and also expanded the FFVP nationwide to all 50 States, the District of Columbia, and the territories of Guam, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-234) amended the National School Lunch Act (NSLA) by adding section 19, the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, and substantially increased the funding level.

3. Who may participate in the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program?

The 50 States, District of Columbia, and the territories of Guam, Puerto Rico and Virgin Islands may participate. The FFVP is targeted to elementary schools with the highest free and reduced price enrollment.

4. Who administers the Program?

The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) that administers all the Child Nutrition Programs at the Federal level also administers the FFVP. At the State level, the FFVP is usually administered by the State education agency, which operates the program through agreements with school food authorities (SFA).

5. How does the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program work?

Elementary schools participating in the program receive between \$50.00 - \$75.00 per student for the school year. The State agency decides the per-student funding amount based on total funds allocated to the State and the enrollment of applicant schools.

With these funds, schools purchase additional fresh fruits and vegetables to serve free to students during the school day. They must be served outside of the normal time frames for the National School Lunch (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP). The State agency or SFA determines the best method to obtain and serve the additional fresh produce.

Schools participating in the FFVP submit monthly claims for reimbursement which are reviewed by the SFA before payment is processed to the State agency. Schools are reimbursed for the cost of fresh fruits and vegetables and limited non-food costs. Schools must follow all food safety requirements and HACCP guidance.

6. What are the Program requirements for eligible elementary schools?

Schools have the flexibility to develop their own implementation plan, choose the type of produce, number of days a week (FNS strongly encourages schools, whenever feasible, to offer the FFVP no less than 2 days a week)and times during the day (outside of NSLP and SBP operation) to provide free fresh fruits and vegetables to their students. Eligible elementary schools must submit an application that includes:

- the total number of enrolled students and the percentage eligible for free/reduced price meals;
- a certification of support for participation in the FFVP signed by the school food manager, school principal and the district superintendent (or equivalent position)
- a program implementation plan including efforts to integrate the FFVP with other efforts to either promote sound health and nutrition.

Schools are also encouraged to develop partnerships to help implement the program, such as with local universities, extension services and local grocers. Schools must also agree to widely publicize the availability of the program.

7. How do schools purchase fruits and vegetables for the Program?

Schools may purchase their fruits and vegetables through the same system they make purchases for the NSLP and SBP. They may acquire produce through the DOD Fresh program, or they may purchase locally. In all cases, schools must follow proper procurement procedures and produce must be purchased according to existing local, State and Federal guidelines.

8. How is the program funded?

Congress established the funding amount and cycle for the FFVP as follows:

October 1, 2008: \$40 million

July 1, 2009: \$65 million

July 1, 2010: \$101 million

July 1, 2011: \$150 million

July 1, 2012: \$150 million*

*Beginning school year 2012/2013, the base funding made available for the FFVP is adjusted to reflect changes for the 12-month period ending the preceding April 30 in the Consumer Price Index. In addition, this is combined with prior year funds. As such, the total funding for the FFVP in school year 2012/2013 is \$163.5 million. Funding amounts in all subsequent years will also reflect these adjustments.

The funding level per state is determined through a formula allocation as described in the NSLA and provided through the States' Letter of Credit.

August 2012