Welcome and Congratulations on being selected to participate in the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program!

The Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program strives to provide all children in participating schools with a variety of fresh produce throughout the school day, free of cost to students.

The program has been shown to be an effective and creative way of introducing fresh fruits and vegetables as a healthy snack option and exposing children to varieties that they may never experience outside of school.

This program is seen as an important catalyst for change in efforts to combat childhood obesity by helping children learn more healthful eating habits.
Together We Can

- **CDE Vision**
  - All students in Colorado will become educated and productive citizens capable of succeeding in society, the workforce, and life.

- **CDE Office of School Nutrition Mission**
  - The Office of School Nutrition is committed to ensuring all school-aged children have equal access to healthy meals by supporting, training, and connecting Colorado’s child nutrition community.
Training Objectives

By the end of the training, participants will be able to:

- Understand Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program regulations
- Learn about FFVP best practices
- Acquire strategies for a successful FFVP administrative review
- Learn successful implementation strategies from their peers

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The FFVP began as a pilot program authorized as part of the 2002 Farm Bill. The pilot was intended to identify best practices for increasing fresh fruit and vegetable consumption among students, and to determine the feasibility and students’ interest. By 2005 the pilot program was operating in 14 states and several Indian Tribal Organizations. The 2008 Farm Bill converted the pilot program into the nation wide FFVP.

The Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) is a grant program administered at the federal level by the U.S Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) and at the state level by the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) Office of School Nutrition (OSN).

At the state level, states are required to solicit applications from individual elementary schools, select specific elementary schools for funding and to provide oversight of school implementation.

Schools are to utilize FFVP funds to provide fresh produce to students, at no cost.
The goal of the FFVP is to increase children’s exposure to and consumption of a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables during the school day. Teaching children healthful eating habits at an early age helps promote a healthy school environment and improves the health and wellbeing of its students.

These goals can be achieved by expanding the variety of produce children experience throughout the week, increasing the exposure and consumption, and educating the students about the benefits of fresh produce and the impact it has on their present and future health.

As we know fruits and vegetables can be a great source of key nutrients which may play a role in reducing the risk of certain diseases. Every step taken towards introducing more fruits and vegetables will help your students be at their best.
As a participant in the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program you **must** follow these basic guidelines listed here.

- All schools that participate in the FFVP are required to widely publicize the program availability. (Publications, social media, webpage, displays, announcements, etc.)
- The Program must be available to all enrolled elementary children at no cost to them.
- Schools must provide nutrition education with some components but it is highly encouraged that complimentary nutrition education is regularly provided.
- Follow proper procurement and Buy American standards
- Know Food Safety and HACCP principles for fresh produce, which is critical in the prevention of foodborne illness.
- The FFVP produce must be provided separately from all other Child Nutrition Programs and served during the school day.
- You must process all reports on time in order to receive reimbursement

**As Best Practice it is encouraged:**

- Provide the FFVP a minimum of twice a week offering both fresh fruits and vegetables, with serving vegetables at least once week.
- Be creative with appearance, delivery, and variety of fruits and vegetables provided
- Communicate, collaborate and train all staff involved in FFVP
- Establish an implementation plan for the FFVP to include all key stakeholders involved with the FFVP. Consider the who, what, when, where, how, and how much for the implementation, planning and monitoring of the FFVP.
The FFVP is intended for elementary school age children. Any child who is considered a member of the school and who is present during operation of the FFVP may participate.

This includes children attending a child care center, Head Start program, Pre-Kindergarten or a split-session kindergarten class located in a participating school. Keep in mind they must be in school on the days the program is offered.

Teachers responsible for serving the fruits or vegetables to their students are also encouraged to participate and taste the produce along side their student to model positive eating habits. Other adults at a school who are not directly involved in the program may not participate.

**Note: Colorado Definition of an Elementary School**

“A School can have different designations for different grade ranges; in general the elementary designation is given to grades K-5 or K-6, middle schools are 6-8 or 7-8, and high schools are 9-12. Depending upon the lowest and highest grades of the school, specific grade ranges are designated as elementary, middle or high. For example a K-8 school will have a record as an elementary for the grade K-5 students and a middle school record for the 6-8 students.”

-Must be an elementary school= (PK-5, PK-6, or PK-8 – only PK-5 can participate)
Again, the goal of the FFVP is to introduce students to a variety of fresh produce and expose them to unique varieties that are not always seen on a day to day basis.

There are no minimum serving sizes for the FFVP and it is encouraged to adjust the serving sizes based on the age-grade group of the students served. It is also recommended when introducing a new item to start with a smaller “taste-testing” portion.

The FFVP may only operate during the school day and not during any other child nutrition programs. The FFVP may be provided during a year-round school summer session if it is considered part of the regular school year; however, not during summer school or summer programs.

It is important to remember the FFVP must be monitored at all times. If serving the FFVP during an afternoon snack, ensure there is a system in place for picking up leftovers, documentation, and clean up of the program.

Best practices to consider:
Ensure fruits and vegetables are appealing and easy to grab
If serving dips recommend pre-portioning in the correct serving size
Introduce different varieties while encouraging their favorites
Establish guidelines to ensure children follow proper food safety practices and good manners
Allowable items include any fresh produce variety.

You may serve cooked vegetables and prepared dished, such as, salsa once a week; however, it must be accompanied with nutrition education. Nutrition education is a great opportunity to describe the produce in its original state and provide further information such as nutrient content, food pairings, and recipes.

Dips may also be served but only with vegetables and the dips must be low-fat, non-fat and in 1-2 TBSP servings.

As a reminder- the intent of the program is for students to “connect” with the taste of natural, minimally processed fruit and vegetables.
Unallowable items include any item that has been processed or preserved such as freezing, drying or canning.

Juice is an unallowable item as well as smoothies.

Dips are not allowed with fruit. If dips are purchased with other funds and served with the fruit, the fruit may not be claimed using FFVP funds.

Fruits with added flavorings or infusions are also not allowed and would include items such as Grapples.
The most successful distribution areas for the Program will be places where children can easily consume the fruits and vegetables.

The techniques you use to distribute the produce will depend on a number of factors. Consider grade level, maturity of students, time available to eat the fruits and vegetables, time required for preparation and service and staffing issues.

Multiple delivery methods are allowed with this program. For example, produce can be delivered to each classroom every day as well as having baskets of fresh fruit available in the hallways for when children pass between classes such as after gym class. You may set up kiosks around the school or offer free produce in vending machines. You may want to set up the program in the cafeteria if it is convenient (limited to the school day, not during school breakfast or lunch programs). You may also serve the produce as part of nutrition education activities.

Share Examples Seen:
- Gym Class at the end of playing. Time for nutrition education and FFVP.
- Playground with Kiosks
- Cafeteria
- Classroom
If a child’s disability prevents them from consuming fresh fruits and vegetables as prepared, the school must provide accommodations as they would for other child nutrition programs. Schools must consider how the requirement may be applied in the operation of the FFVP. For example, in providing accommodations for the FFVP, schools may have to modify texture. Schools must make sure that both the parent and the child’s doctor are aware of the program and its intent to provide fresh produce in order to determine if the fresh items are an acceptable choice for texture modifications.
In order to comply with civil rights requirements, you must inform participants of the availability of the FFVP and include the nondiscrimination statement on all program materials.

Participating sponsors must be in compliance with federal civil rights requirements. Ensure program benefits are made available and provided to all eligible individuals without discrimination on the basis of their race, color, national origin, age, sex, or disability.

Also, you must display the "And Justice For All" poster in the main serving area at the site. Please contact our office at 303-866-6661 if you need a copy of the “And Justice For All Poster.”

Updated Non-Discrimination Statement, Civil Rights Trainings and resources can be found at the link on this slide.
http://www.cde.state.co.us/nutrition/civilrights
The focus of the FFVP is to bring fresh produce into the school for distribution to children. For too many children, the produce they see in school might be their first exposure to certain fresh fruits and vegetables and the only ones they see that day. This is why nutrition education is critical to the program's success. Educating students on the produce they are consuming is a great way to build acceptance and participation of the produce you are introducing.

Studies have also shown that by exposing children to new foods, they overcome “picky” eating behaviors, which is largely encountered at the elementary school age. It may take up to 12 introductions to a new food before a child will decide to try it. Just remember to be patient and keep trying, be a role model, and make food experiences fun and educational! Expose children to new foods at a young age – the earlier the better. It will set them up for behavioral success in choosing healthful eating behaviors that will last a lifetime.

When planning nutrition education and activities consider collaborating with internal and external partners and stakeholders. Partnerships have been essential in the success of the program and can help schools better manage the program, resolve logistical challenges and help maintain and implement nutrition education.

Please remember Nutrition Education cannot be paid for with FFVP grant funds; however, there are many free resources available to help you with education materials, ideas, promotion, etc.
A few best practices for incorporating nutrition education can include:

- Developing nutrition activities that fit your students and age/grade level
- Build relationships with partners to assist with nutrition education, resources and materials
- Involve students to help create posters and materials. It can be a great nutrition education lesson.
- Include nutrition education and FFVP promotion in monthly newsletters, publications, or even social media.

Visit the CDE OSN FFVP webpage for more information and resources. Some great resources have been added and include fruit and vegetable databases!
Fruits and vegetables are an important part of a healthy diet and as we emphasize the importance of serving and consuming fresh produce within our schools we must ensure produce safety is a top priority.

To prevent the contamination of fresh produce, food safety strategies must be implemented during all stages of the process.

- The first step in ensuring the produce you receive is safe, is to always know your source and purchase from reputable suppliers.
- Upon receiving ensure staff are trained to properly inspect, accept or decline all deliveries. Staff must be trained to verify receiving temperatures, expiration dates, produce quality, invoices and documentation.
- Follow proper storage procedures and ensure you follow recommended storage temperatures for the various produce items. As always ensure items are properly covered, labeled and dated.
- When handling fresh produce remember no bare hand contact with ready to eat foods. Always wash produce under cool running water, in the appropriate produce sink. When preparing fresh produce ensure food safety principles are followed such as: proper handwashing, cleaning and sanitizing of all equipment and work stations, prevent cross-contamination and maintain adequate time and temperatures.
- When transporting produce remember to follow basic food safety practices to ensure food is safe and follows all state and local food safety standards. Ensure proper equipment is utilized and time and temperature is closely monitored and recorded.
• At the end of service, staff must ensure leftover produce and supplies from the FFVP service are received and documented.

In order to prevent a foodborne illness from occurring it is your responsibility to ensure food safety & HACCP procedures are in place and staff are in compliance. Staff should be trained when they are first hired and on an ongoing basis.

As a reminder please always contact your local health department or governing agency with questions concerning state and local compliance.
Procurement is a multi-step process for obtaining goods, products, and/or services at the best possible price. Procurement policies and procedures should be in place and procurement standards must be followed when purchasing fresh produce for the FFVP.

There are three procurement methods that we will describe in more detail:

1. Micro-purchase
2. Small purchase
3. Formal
Micro-purchases would include any purchase below $3500. These purchases may be awarded without obtaining competitive quotes if the price is considered to be reasonable. Purchases must be rightfully distributed among qualified suppliers.

Small purchase threshold applies to purchases between $3,500 - $150,000. This threshold allows for small purchase procurements to be conducted using a simple and informal method; such as, a price or rate quote, provided that each procurement is conducted in a manner that ensures free and open competition. Quotes must be obtained from an adequate number of qualified sources prior to purchasing. The sponsor must document the date, suppliers consulted, and quotes received.

Formal procurement process is used when the estimated amount of the purchase falls above the small-purchase threshold of $150,000. The formal process follows five steps:
1. Develop a solicitation
2. Publicly announce/advertise the solicitation
3. Publicly open the bid at the time and place identified within the solicitation
4. Award contract to the most responsible bidder with the lowest responsive bid
5. Manage the contract to ensure you are receiving everything the contract stipulates

Keep in mind many districts have their own thresholds and must adhere to the most restrictive.
Local foods may include a variety of products and come from a variety of resources. For many school districts, fresh fruits and vegetables are a logical starting place for local procurement. Participation in the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program is a great way to introduce local produce to the students while educating them on where their produce was sourced.

In procuring local foods, defining local is the first step. Districts are responsible for defining what local means to them. There are many options for defining “local” and the definition can vary based on product even seasonality. Local could be defined within a certain number of miles, within the county or within the state. Again, this will be determined by the SFA.

When deciding to purchase local always keep in mind the main goals of the district and the vision you want to accomplish.

When making procurement decisions, SFAs and other child nutrition program operators should always follow the Federal, State, and Local procurement policies. Also keep in mind the four fundamental principles to include the Buy American Provision, State and local regulations, Full and open competition, responsible and responsive vendors.

**USDA FACT SHEETS (Show on Webpage):** [https://www.fns.usda.gov/flipbooks/factsheets](https://www.fns.usda.gov/flipbooks/factsheets)
The Buy American provision, requires schools to purchase, to the maximum extent practicable, domestic commodities and products. A domestic commodity or product means an agricultural commodity that is processed in the United States, and/or a good or product that is processed in the United States substantially using agricultural commodities that are produced in the United States.

Purchases made in accordance with the Buy American Provision must still follow the applicable procurement rules calling for free and open competition.

SFAs should include a Buy American clause in all product specifications, solicitations, purchase orders and any other procurement documents so vendors are aware of this requirements.

Limited exceptions to the Buy American Provision allow for the purchase of products not meeting the “domestic” standard; however, before utilizing an exception alternatives must be considered. Alternative or exceptions to the Buy American Provision may be approved by the SFA; however, documentation must be on file explaining the reasoning for the alternative or exception. Such reasoning could include:

1. The product is not produced or manufactures in the U.S in sufficient and reasonable available quantities of a satisfactory quality; or
2. Competitive bids reveal the costs of a U.S. product are significantly higher than the non-domestic product.
With the FFVP, it is encourage to introduce children to new exotic varieties. As a reminder, if using one of these exceptions documentation must be kept on file.

Buy American Provision Worksheet:
http://www.cde.state.co.us/nutrition/ffvpbuyamericanprovisionworksheet
The FFVP is a grant based program and funds are awarded per school. Schools operating the program will receive one allocation which is intended to cover all program expenses throughout the school year. The FFVP operates on a federal fiscal year, which allows fund utilization from July 1st – June 30th.

Each awarded school will be allocated a different sum based on enrollment. Allocations are determined based on a threshold of $50-$75 per student. In Colorado, the OSN strives to ensure as many students can participate as possible; therefore, the allocation per student is usually around $50.

Note-The funding for the FFVP is different from the NSLP and SBP as districts receive reimbursement based on the number of meals served times the reimbursement rate. Under the FFVP, a set allocation is awarded to the schools at the beginning of the school year and must be utilized in its entirety throughout the year.
FFVP program costs are broken out into two categories: Operating and Administrative. Both categories allow for labor and equipment costs; however, there are slight differences between the two.

**Operating costs** include costs for running the program, such as preparation and service in addition to small ware purchases.

**Administrative costs** include costs for planning, oversight and management in addition to large equipment purchases. Administrative costs cannot exceed 10% of the school’s total allocation.

**Administrative Costs** - are limited to 10% of your school’s total FFVP grant.

- Administrative costs include planning the program, managing paperwork, and large equipment purchases or leases.
- Any single item more than $250 MUST be APPROVED, through the equipment justification form. The justification should explain the need for the additional equipment, why the current equipment is not sufficient, how many times the FFVP program will be offered each week, and any other information that will support the purchase. If the equipment is being used for other school feeding programs, the purchase must be prorated among the programs. For example, if a new refrigerator was purchased, and it will be used for the FFVP 25% of the time, only 25% of the cost may be claimed.

**Operational Costs**-

- Are costs of running your FFVP service.
- Can include buying, preparing, and serving fruits and vegetables, low-fat, non-fat dip for vegetables only. Buying nonfood items like napkins, paper plates, serving bowls and trays,
cleaning supplies, and trash bags. Value added services such as pre-cut produce and salary & fringe benefits for employees who are involved with preparing, distributing, setting up, restocking, cleaning up the FFVP.

**Labor**

- Operational and Administrative Labor costs should be reported in the claim month for which the hours are worked.
- The labor that is reported must include the hours worked during the FFVP for that month multiplied by the pay rate. The pay rate does include the benefits. Contact CDE if you have any questions about labor claims or allowable labor costs!
Keep in mind that most of a school’s FFVP funds must go toward purchasing fresh fruits and vegetables. All non-food costs must be carefully reviewed and deemed reasonable, given the extent of program operations. Labor costs should be minimal in both the operating and administrative categories and only cover time spent on FFVP related tasks.

It is recommended that all labor claimed be documented on the OSN time sheet or a comparable reporting document. Inaccurate reporting and lack of sufficient documentation may result in denied reimbursement. To avoid problems related to reimbursement, please have all staff complete a FFVP time sheet.

If schools purchase equipment for the FFVP, they must provide written justification to support the purchase. For example, the justification should explain the need for additional equipment, why the current equipment is not sufficient for FFVP operations, how many times the FFVP program will be offered each week, how many times deliveries are received each week/month and any other information that will support the purchase. Equipment purchased with FFVP funds that will be used in other school feeding programs must be prorated among the programs. The FFVP represents a small program and therefore the funds claimed under the FFVP should represent the smaller portion.
It is imperative to maintain a budget to ensure all FFVP funds are tracked and expended in a timely manner. It is the district’s responsibility to budget carefully. The award should be able to fund the program throughout the school year. Adjustments may be made to service days and portion sizes if money needs to be spent faster or slower. Any money spent that exceeds a school’s award cannot be reimbursed by the state agency and will have to be paid for by the school or the district.

The budget calculator tool is a great way to monitor your allocations per school and is formulated to help you stay on track.
- Financial Management
  - Establish a **monthly** FFVP budget
  - Ensure administrative funds remain under 10% of the school’s allocation
  - Labor hours for the FFVP should average no more than 1-2 hrs./service day
The FFVP claim for reimbursement must reflect invoices for when you buy, not when you serve. If you make a purchase towards the end of the month, and the food isn't served until the next month, the claim must list the correct invoice date.

Claims for reimbursement must be submitted within 60 days following the close of the claiming month. Keep in mind, this is 60 days, not two months. This follows the regular claim rules as described in the annual CDE OSN memo. You have 90 days past the end of the claim month to submit a revised claim. You may combine a partial month claim with a full month claim for reimbursement. Follow the same claiming requirements as outlined in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program claiming requirements. This program follows the SAME dates as the NSLP.

Best Practice:
Ensure your FFVP claims for reimbursement are submitted. Keep confirmation emails on file and or screen shots showing completion of claim submission. We are currently working with the Hub to produce an email confirmation once the FFVP claim is submitted. However, it will still be important to monitor the status of your claim, as anytime you enter a claim you can knock it out of the submission status.
When submitting a claim in the CO Child Nutrition Hub, please follow the claiming instructions.
Maintain all FFVP documentation for three years plus the current year. Documentation to include but not limited to:
Participation in the FFVP requires you to follow program requirements. It is critical that every effort is made to ensure the FFVP is operating properly in participating schools.

To ensure your FFVP runs smoothly remember to maintain adequate documentation, submit claims for reimbursement on time, utilize program funds and monitor the program to ensure compliance and integrity is maintained.

Keep a file that contains
- Policy Memoranda
- Addendums
- Contact information for each participating school
- Invoices
- Monthly claims
- Purchase order information
- Vendor/local farmer information
Off-site review procedures includes validating one claim for reimbursement for each FFVP school selected for review.

The reviewer will verify that a majority of the FFVP funds are used to
• purchase fresh produce,
• equipment purchases are justified and properly prorated,
• labor and non-food costs are minimal,
• administrative costs are within 10% of the schools total grant, and
• claims are submitted on-time, accurate, and accountable.
On-site review procedures include observing the FFVP operation for each site indicated. The reviewer will ensure the FFVP is provided to all eligible students free of charge and widely publicized throughout the school.

The reviewer will ensure the
- FFVP service occurs during the school day, and not served during another Child Nutrition Program,
- only allowable items are served,
- all food safety and HACCP principles are followed and employees are adhering to the school’s food safety plan,
- verify any nutrition education accompaniments of cooked or prepared produce items, and
- verify any dips served are low-fat or non-fat and only served with vegetables if necessary.
Some of the common findings found in our past reviews but are not limited to:
- Food Safety and sanitation violations
- Inadequate monitoring of the FFVP
- Utilizing allowable vs. unallowable items
- Not publicizing the availability of the FFVP within the school
- Lack of documentation
  - Operational Labor Hours
  - Administrative Labor Hours
  - Invoices, Receipts, etc.
  - Food Safety - FFVP SOP
  - Temperature Logs

If the school and school food authority is deemed noncompliant by failing to meet these requirements the CDE OSN may issue corrective and fiscal action and will conduct technical assistant to ensure the SFA is in compliance.

It is recommended to conduct on-site monitoring of our FFVP sites, especially prior to an administrative review. Review On-Site monitoring guide in folder.
Review FFVP Resources and Webpage.