

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

NATIONAL SCHOOL

3E'S OF HEALTHY LIVING *Lunch Program*
EDUCATION, EXERCISE AND EATING RIGHT

February 1, 2021

Embedded attachments with this issue

Refer to the COVID Page for Updates

Your Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) newsletter has returned, but [SquareMeals.org/CVNSLP](https://www.squaremeals.org/CVNSLP) will still be your source for all COVID-19-related regulatory information. The most current information regarding program operations that have been modified due to COVID-19 will continue to be found on our Coronavirus page to ensure that TDA shares updates from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) in a way that is timely and consistent.



[Subscribe](#) to our email list.

2021 National School Breakfast Week

Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) promotional online materials for School Breakfast Week (SBW) are still available! Remember, materials are available at no cost to you. Don't miss out on this great opportunity to encourage children to Blast Off with a Healthy School Breakfast. Visit SquareMeals.org/SBW to download and print additional resources like morning announcements, themed recipes, and menus to ease the stress of planning for the celebration week. Virtual materials are also available including Zoom backgrounds, site/web button and social media ads. Each item supports the theme reflected in the cafeteria posters, so schools can have consistent SBW decorations throughout.

Policy Updates

Coming Soon: Updated Procurement Guidance

TDA is currently working on clarifying multiple procurement topics in the Administrator's Reference Manual (ARM), such as aggregate for micro-purchasing, cost analysis, and the two topics below:



◆ Buy American

All procurement solicitations and contracts for food products must include the Buy American provisions. To address the provision in solicitations and contracts, refer to the Solicitations and Contracts guidance found in Section 17b, Buy American, of the ARM.

◆ Buy Board and Other Online Purchasing Cooperatives

CEs should not assume online purchasing cooperatives, such as Buy Board, were procured according to USDA procurement regulations and requirements. Please note that EDGAR requirements can differ from USDA requirements, and that items and services procured according to EDGAR requirements may not meet USDA requirements. Before purchasing from an online purchasing cooperative, the CE must ensure that all USDA procurement requirements are met.

New Emergency or Sole Source Purchase Process

We are excited to announce a new and consolidated process for requesting approval of an Emergency or Sole Source Purchase. All F&N Contracting Entities (CE) who are required to receive approval on these non-competitive purchases can do so by submitting a JotForm. Instructions are incorporated within the form.

Items to remember:

- When submitting the form please be mindful to **provide a complete description of the circumstances** that have occurred to justify the purchase request.
- **Be specific** on the specification (what needs to be purchased) and the **total cost or range of cost** based on estimates to support the price is reasonable.
- F&N cannot approve an **open ended request**.
- If TDA requires additional information to approve the request, an email will be sent to the person who submitted the JotForm.

The Emergency Procurement JotForm link can be accessed [here](#).

Texas Farm Fresh Initiative

Registration Now Open for the 2021 Spring Farm Fresh Challenge

All program operators are invited to participate in a special spring Farm Fresh Challenge during April 2021. Operators that meet the Eat Local, Teach Local, and Be Social parameters can get access to new resources and earn recognition for bringing local foods to meals for kids. Whether you are operating digitally or in person this spring, please visit [Squaremeals.org/FarmFreshChallenge](https://squaremeals.org/FarmFreshChallenge) to learn more about how to participate in the Spring Farm Fresh Challenge.



[Register here](#)

Opportunity to be Featured in Farm Fresh Video Series

The TDA Farm Fresh Initiative is seeking school districts and Texas food producers to feature in a video about local purchasing for school meals. The purpose of the video is to demonstrate how producers can strengthen their relationships with child nutrition departments in ways that are beneficial to both the producer and child nutrition. If your district regularly works with a local producer and you would like to share your story with a statewide audience, or if you would like to learn more about this opportunity, please contact FarmFresh@TexasAgriculture.gov by March 1, 2021. For examples of similar projects, watch TDA's We Made it Happen videos from [Balch Springs Middle School](#) and [Henderson ISD](#).

Resources

Updates to Policy Related Documents

TDA has updated policy-related documents for the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs! These changes have improved readability and include our new brand logos and colors.

They are available to view, print and download [here](#).

New Menu Calendar Templates

The menu calendar templates for the 2021-2022 school year are now available! This year's theme is "Feeding Your Creativity" and each template features a fun character who incorporates food into an everyday activity!

TDA appreciates your feedback and this year we have removed the activities on the back of each calendar and are now providing weekly and daily menu template options. English and Spanish templates are still available this year. We hope this gives you more flexibility when planning your menus.

Click [here](#) to download the templates.

New Look for TDA Online Training Page

The TDA Online Training resource page has undergone updates and has a new look. End users will now find the date of the last update to the training in the descriptor for each class. Visit our [online training page](#) on SquareMeals.org to see all the new resources available to you to assist in gaining program knowledge.



Art Contest

The Texas Department of Agriculture's (TDA) You Art What You Eat art contest is a great way to encourage students to learn about good nutrition. Get students involved in the following ways:

- **Share Art Contest information with teachers!** Incorporate the art contest into subject areas like science, history, language arts, culinary arts, and more!

- Order posters, bookmarks, and meal stickers to promote the art contest to students! **Order by Wednesday 2/3/21** through our website www.SquareMeals.org/ArtContest

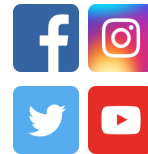
- TDA's 2021 You Art What You Eat art contest theme is "**Feed Your Creativity with a Healthy School Breakfast/ Lunch**". For more details, contest guidelines, forms, and to enter visit our website www.SquareMeals.org/ArtContest.



Thank you for encouraging students to learn about healthy nutrition as they focus their artistic talents on healthy school meals. We look forward to seeing your students' entries in the 2021 You Art What You Eat student art contest!



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