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Commissioner

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MEMORANDUM

To: School Food Authorities operating the National School Lunch Program
From: Robert M. Leshin, Director
Office for Food and Nutrition Programs
Date: February 27, 2024
Subject: Northeast Food for School Grant Extension and Reallocation

In school year 2022-2023, 234 School Food Authorities (SFA) opted into the Northeast Food for Schools (NFS) funding opportunity available through the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's, Office for Food and Nutrition Programs (FNP). NFS seeks to increase the capacity for SFAs to procure local unprocessed or minimally processed foods for service in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program, thus strengthening local food systems and ensuring children across the Commonwealth have access to high quality local foods in school meals. FNP is taking the following steps to maximize the use of federal funds, by ensuring we have expended our full award.

Extension Request Submitted: FNP has submitted a request to extend the NFS spending deadline from June 30, 2024, to mid-School Year 2024-2025. If approved by the United States Department of Agriculture, SFAs:

- in good standing, that have expended 30 percent (or greater) of their NFS funding allocation as of March 31, 2024, will be eligible for this extension.
- that have spent less than 30 percent of their NFS funding allocation as of March 31, 2024, will have until the original deadline of June 30, 2024, to expend their awarded funding. **Any remaining funds left unspent will be reallocated.**
- will be notified in May 2024 if they are eligible for this extension.

Current Action Items:

1. Verify if and how much you were awarded in [Northeast Food for School Grant Awards and Support memorandum](#).
2. Check your balance using [Northeast Food for School Reimbursement Summary](#) tool.
3. Refer to the [Northeast Food for School Instruction Manual](#) for specific explanations of eligible products, funding requirements, professional development opportunities and reimbursement procedures.
4. Use available technical assistance to effectively spend your award and request reimbursement. If you seek to use fluid milk purchases to meet the 30 percent (or greater) spending threshold, contact [Local Food System Specialist Maggie Nowak](#) for prior approval.

This institution is an equal opportunity.

Note: you must request reimbursement for a purchase to count towards the 30 percent spending threshold. If you do not request reimbursement by the April 30, 2024, submission deadline for March purchases, the purchase will not count towards the 30 percent threshold.

5. If you don't have the capacity to continue participation in this funding opportunity, contact [Maggie Nowak](#) to proactively relinquish your remaining funds.

Technical Assistance available through Massachusetts Farm to School (MFTS):

- [Mini-Coaching for NFS Procurement Sessions](#)
- [Procurement Regulations: Sourcing Local and Complying with Federal & State Regulations Webinar](#)
- Procurement Workshop Webinars on [Fresh & Frozen Produce](#) and [Meat, Seafood, and Dairy](#)

FNP offers a monthly technical support session during [Office Hours](#) designed to answer procurement questions and brainstorm next steps for maximizing your Northeast Food for School funding. If you have questions about your relinquishing your award or reimbursement, please contact [Local Food System Specialist Maggie Nowak](#). If you are interested in discussing your plan for spending NFS funds or to request procurement assistance, please contact [MFTS](#).