

## **Application and Selection Criteria**

### 1. How will the schools be selected?

We want to determine how well the pilot will operate in a variety of situations (for example, rural versus urban settings; elementary versus secondary schools; high versus low free/reduced price eligibility; etc.). We are also seeking a variety of distribution methods, such as offering fruits/vegetables in the classroom, from carts in hallways, using vending machines and other innovative approaches. Therefore, schools will be selected to ensure a variety of demographics and distribution methods, to the extent possible.

### 2. How will the amount of the individual school's grant be determined?

Currently, we are contemplating that enrollment will be the major factor in determining the amount of the grant.

### 3. When do schools have to start the pilot and how long will it last?

Plans are to have the schools selected by September 15, and we anticipate that schools would implement the pilot as early in October as possible. The pilot should run for the remainder of the school year.

### 4. Is a nutrition education component required?

Nutrition education is strongly encouraged. Any nutrition education efforts regarding consumption of fruits and vegetables that are planned in conjunction with the pilot should be described in the narrative on the School Profile that schools interested in participating in the pilot would submit.

### 5. Are private, non-profit (non-public) schools eligible?

Yes.

### 6. Can more than one school in a school food authority (SFA) be selected?

Yes.

## **Reporting**

### 7. What data will schools need to collect? What types of reports will be required for schools and SFAs?

Please see the sample form for pilot project claims. This is the information that will be submitted on a monthly basis. State agencies may change the format but must request the information outlined on the form. There are no reports required for the SFA other than consolidating the individual claim forms if more than one

school in the SFA is participating in the pilot. As part of the evaluation process, schools and SFAs may be asked some general questions about the pilot which will be based on anecdotal information from staff that administered or observed the pilot projects.

8. What types of reports will be required for State agencies?

The State agency will need to annotate the quarterly FNS-269 to include the total pilot project expenditures.

### **Procedural Issues**

9. May more than one distribution technique be used in the same school?

Schools are encouraged to develop innovative and varied methods to offer the fruits and vegetables to students. Schools may want to have different methods based on the ages of the students such as classroom distribution for younger students and hallway distribution for older students.

10. During the school day, when should the fruits and vegetables be made available?

The fruits and vegetables may be made available at any time during the school day other than meal service periods. Schools may offer them in classrooms, hallways, as part of classroom activities such as nutrition education, on buses, before and after school, etc.

11. What may be done with leftovers?

Purchases should be made with the intention of using the products in the pilots. Schools should recycle any leftovers in accordance with board of health requirements. However, if leftovers cannot be easily used in the pilot, they could be used in the meal programs or transferred to a homeless shelter in accordance with board of health requirements.

12. Can teachers and school personnel take the produce offered?

The pilot project must be targeted to the students. However, teachers and school staff may consume the produce since they serve as models for behavior to encourage consumption of produce by students.

13. Can students take the fruits and vegetables out of the school (on the bus, on the playground, home)?

Consistent with school policy, students may take the food out of the school.

14. Can fruits and vegetables be offered after school?

The pilot cannot be offered during meal service periods, including the after school snack service of the National School Lunch Program. However, free fruits and vegetables may be offered after school under the pilot project during school sponsored athletic programs, club meetings, and other activities.

15. Can full-strength fruit juice be offered?

Freshly squeezed juice that is locally produced may be offered no more than one time per week. Schools need to ensure that all necessary food-safety precautions are taken if they choose to serve freshly squeezed juice.

16. Must only fresh or dried fruits be offered?

Yes.

17. Must only fresh vegetables be offered?

Yes.

18. Are there any requirements for serving sizes?

The servings offered should be appropriate for the age and consumption pattern of the participating students.

19. May split session kindergarten classes in the Special Milk Program participate in the pilot?

Yes.

#### **Use of Funds/Allowable Costs**

20. Can schools purchase value added or enhanced products?

Yes, funds may be used to purchase products with dip; sliced, individually bagged fruits and vegetables, etc. The cost of these enhanced items would be included as part of the food cost.

21. Can schools purchase non-domestic fruits and vegetables with pilot project funds?

The only non-domestic produce schools may purchase with pilot project funds is bananas.

22. Can schools use the funds for purchases/expenses other than food?

Up to 10% of the funds may be used for non-food costs, i.e., administrative costs necessary to operate the pilot

23. May the State agency waive the 10% limit?

The State agency, in consultation with the FNS Regional Office may, on a case-by-case basis, consider requests to waive the 10% limit on non-food costs.

24. What types of administrative costs are allowed?

Schools may purchase both durable and non-durable supplies. These include but are not limited to: small equipment to prepare and serve the fruits and vegetables; trash cans and bags; etc. Wages for staff to prepare the produce may also be included as an administrative cost.

25. Can the funds be used for nutrition education?

Schools are encouraged to conduct nutrition education. Within the limits for use of funds for non-food costs, schools may purchase nutrition education materials. However, funds cannot be used to develop new materials.

26. Can the State agency retain a percentage of the funds?

No, the funds are earmarked for schools.

27. How will the funds be disbursed?

Funds will be disbursed on a reimbursement basis based on the monthly claim.