



# KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

## NEWS RELEASE

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## **FREE SUMMER MEALS MAY SOON HAVE HOME GROWN FLAVOR**

(Frankfort, KY.) – Free summer meals served to children across the state may be home grown – at least in part – with new incentives to serve fruits and vegetables produced in the Bluegrass State.

Under the Kentucky Vegetable and Fruit Incentive Program (KVIP), Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) sponsors can receive 33 cents back for every dollar spent on Kentucky-grown fruits and vegetables that they buy and serve. This is in addition to the federal per-meal reimbursement they receive from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Potential benefits of the KVIP are:

- Children and teens will receive more fresh grown fruits and vegetables in SFSP meals, contributing to the nutrient values of their diet.
- Local farmers will enjoy a share of federal reimbursement that Kentucky sponsors receive from participation in the SFSP. This amount topped \$9,000,000 for 2017 meals. Every dollar reimbursed to SFSP sponsors through KVIP is the result of three dollars of sales from Kentucky farmers.
- Relationships between sponsors and farmers will be established and carry over into the school year, which will benefit farmers beyond the summer growing season, and also be beneficial for other School Nutrition Programs.
- The heightened attention that KVIP brings to the SFSP will increase awareness of the program in communities across the Commonwealth and increase participation by children and teens at meal sites.

Sponsors served more than 2,833,000 meals to Kentucky children and teens during summer 2017 under the Summer Food Service Program, which is overseen by the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE).

The KDE partnered with the Kentucky Association of Food Banks (KAFB), the Kentucky Department of Agriculture (KDA), and the Governor's Office of Agricultural Policy (GOAP) to secure funding from the Kentucky Agricultural Development Board for the Kentucky Vegetable and Fruit Incentive Program.

To participate as a Summer Food Service Program sponsor, organizations must have an approved 2018 SFSP application. For more information about SFSP or KVIP, contact the Kentucky Department of Education, Division of School and Community Nutrition by phone at (502) 564-5625 or email Cathy Gallagher at

[Cathy.Gallagher@education.ky.gov](mailto:Cathy.Gallagher@education.ky.gov). Eligible sponsors can apply for KVIP participation at the following website:

[www.kykidseat.org/kvip](http://www.kykidseat.org/kvip).

(more)

**About the Summer Food Service Program**

The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) ensures that low-income children continue to receive nutritious meals when school is not in session. This summer, the USDA plans to serve more than 200 million free meals to children 18 years and under at approved SFSP sites across the United States.

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