

# Funding Opportunity – Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program SY 2025-2026

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**Issue Number:** CNU E-Memo 03-2026

**Correspondence Date:** 07/15/2025

**Regulatory Authority:** Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, Section 19. (a)-(i); [42 U.S.C. 1769 a]

**Response Required:** No

**Attention:** Co-op Directors, Principals Superintendents, Child Nutrition Directors

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The Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) is a United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) program which provides reimbursement for fresh fruits and fresh vegetables served free to elementary students in grades K-6 during the school day, outside the lunch and breakfast meals.

**NOTE:** The fresh fruits and fresh vegetables served as part of this program may not be served before or after school and may not be served at regular student meal periods.

The Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, Child Nutrition Unit (CNU) is accepting applications from **elementary schools, with any combination of grades K-6**, that want to participate in the FFVP for School Year (SY) 2025-2026 – *pending approval of federal funding*.

To be considered for this program, each elementary school, with any combination of grades K-6, in the district that desires the program must submit a completed application. The application must be received by CNU no later than 4:30 pm on Friday, August 29, 2025. Applications must be emailed.

**Submit (scan and email w/ required signatures) applications to:** [ade.ffvpapp@ade.arkansas.gov](mailto:ade.ffvpapp@ade.arkansas.gov)

For **renewal applicants**, completing an application does not guarantee funding for SY 2025-26. Funding will be based on the school's Free/Reduced meal eligibility percentage, receipt of a complete application, and lack of significant issues operating the FFVP in SY 2024-25.

For **new applicants**, completing an application does not guarantee funding for SY 25-26. Funding will be based on the school's F/R percentage and receipt of a complete application.

**When planning to submit an application, please keep the following in mind:**

- Applications must be complete. Applications must be signed, scanned, and emailed as an **attachment**.
- In the subject line, type the word “**APPLICATION,**” and indicate the **DISTRICT/AND SCHOOL NAME” (EXAMPLE- SUBJECT: APPLICATION – Rock and Roll School District/Beatles Way Elementary School.**
  - Then email the application to: [ade.ffvpapp@ade.arkansas.gov](mailto:ade.ffvpapp@ade.arkansas.gov)
- Late and incomplete applications will be disqualified.
- Applications should be for schools with any combination of grades K-6 only.
  - The following are examples of grade combinations that could be funded: K-2, 3-5, 4-6
  - The following are examples of grade combinations that could not be funded: 6-8, 7-8, 4-7
- Applications without required signatures will not be considered.
- Applications will not be returned.
- Keep a copy of the application with original signatures for your files.
  - Maintain these records for five (5) years.
- Please note on your application if the district will be following a non-traditional calendar year.

**Goals of the FFVP are to:**

- Create healthier school environments by providing healthier food choices.
- Expand the variety of fruits and vegetables children experience.
- Increase children’s fruit and vegetable consumption, and
- Make a difference in children’s diets to impact present and future health.

**School selection criteria include:**

- Must be an elementary school. The Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) defines elementary as any school with a combination of grades K-6. No Pre-School Program will be approved for SY 2025-2026, including those Pre-K programs that are part of an elementary school. For example, a school with preschool through 4<sup>th</sup> grade, only grades K-4 will be funded.
- School must operate the National School Lunch Program. Schools must be in existence and successfully operate at least one of the USDA programs for one school year.
- Submit a signed and scanned application for participation that meets all criteria. All interested schools should submit an application, even if they currently have the program.
- Highest priority will be given to schools with the highest percentages of free and reduced eligible students to the maximum extent practicable.

**Note:** Schools/districts with major audit or administrative review findings related to the Child Nutrition programs will be disqualified. Schools that participated in SY 2024-25 and had significant issues in administering the program will not be funded.

This grant is for the period October 1, 2025 to September 30, 2026. The level of funding provided is based on October 1, 2024, official school enrollment at a level ranging between \$50-75 per student (as defined annually by CNU). Funding is contingent upon receipt of federal funds by the CNU from USDA.

**Use of funds:**

Funds are to be used primarily to purchase, prepare, and distribute fresh fruits and fresh vegetables that will be made available at no charge to all enrolled students K-6, in the school at times other than lunch and/or breakfast. The program should be structured so that the maximum benefits go to children.

Selected schools will submit a monthly FFVP Claim for Reimbursement to CNU as well as necessary supporting documentation of expenses.

Schools **MUST** begin the grant implementation, including serving fresh fruit or vegetables to students, on October 1, 2025. Not implementing the program on schedule will result in withdrawal of funding.

**Allowable expenses from this grant include:**

- Fresh fruits and fresh vegetables
- Non-food supplies required to implement the program (such as napkins, paper plates, etc.)
- **Minimal** labor expenses for staff preparing, serving, and cleaning up
- Up to 10% of the school's grant award may be used to pay **minimal** administrative costs, including documented expenses for planning, and managing the paperwork required by the program and/or purchasing the produce and equipment necessary to implement the program.

Funds may not be used for promotional activities, to supplement the lunch or breakfast program, for nutrition education materials and/or activities, or for indirect or other administrative costs.

**Additional expectations of participating schools:**

Because USDA is required to submit reports to Congress, FFVP schools will be expected to cooperate in any evaluations or reports requested and be expected to provide information related to participation, purchases, costs, and other information. A district's Child Nutrition Agreement will be amended to reflect any schools in the district that are selected to participate in the FFVP program.

**How to apply:**

1. Read the [USDA Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program Handbook](#), updated for Arkansas, April 2025 (Attachment A) Review grant requirements and "best practices" within the USDA Handbook for FFVP implementation ideas.
2. Read the 3 attached USDA Policy Memos:
  - a. [SP 25-2014 – USDA Policy Memo, School Food Authorities \(SFAs\) Purchasing from US Department of Defense \(DoD\) Vendors Using Section 4 and 11 or FFVP Funds](#)
  - b. [SP 33-2012 – USDA Policy Memo, FFVP Fees in FSMC Contracts](#)
  - c. [SP 08-2011 – Teacher Modeling in the FFVP](#)
3. Complete an [Arkansas Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program Application SY 2025-2026](#) (Attachment B) for each elementary school applying for the program.
4. Email as an attachment the complete signed and scanned application to CNU by 4:30 PM. Friday, August 29, 2025.

Incomplete or late applications will not be considered. Applications without required signatures will not be considered.

**Required Training:**

At least one person directly involved with the operation of the FFVP must attend training annually. The training will be held on Wednesday, September 17, 2025 beginning at 9:00am. You may arrive between 8:30-9:00 to register. The site of the training will be [St. John's Catholic Center, Fitzgerald Hall, 2500 N.](#)

[Tyler Street, Little Rock](#). Please register [HERE](#) before close of business, Friday, September 12, 2025. The training should conclude by 2:00pm.

**Timeline:**

August 29, 2025:	Deadline for CNU to receive applications
September 2025:	Notification of Schools Awarded Grants for SY 2025-2026
September 17, 2025:	Required FFVP Training for ALL SY 2025-2026 FFVP Schools.

Please consider taking part in the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program as another way to help students develop lifelong healthful eating habits.

**Attachments:**

- A. [Travel Directions](#)
- B. [USDA FFVP Handbook, Updated for Arkansas, April 2025](#)
- C. [Arkansas FFVP Application - School Year 2025-2026](#)
- D. [SP 25-2014 – USDA Policy Memo, School Food Authorities \(SFAs\) Purchasing from US Department of Defense \(DoD\) Vendors Using Section 4 and 11 or FFVP Funds](#)
- E. [SP 33-2012 – USDA Policy Memo, FFVP Fees in FSMC Contracts](#)
- F. [SP 08-2011 – Teacher Modeling in the FFVP](#)