

# Maximizing the Impact of USDA's Summer Nutrition Programs

## FOR PHILANTHROPIC ORGANIZATIONS

### New Ways to Address Child Summer Hunger

A healthier future for our country begins with our children. Unfortunately, many children face hunger during the summer when they lose access to school meals. Children need good nutrition to grow, learn, and thrive. There are new tools to address summer hunger, including Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer (Summer EBT), and a new flexible way to offer meals to children living in hard-to-reach, rural communities.

### USDA's Summer Nutrition Programs Benefit Students and Communities

The programs help:

- **Assist families and boost local economies.**  
Starting in 2024, States, Indian Tribal Organizations administering the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), and Territories can offer \$120 per eligible child during summer on EBT cards to buy food at grocery stores and other food retailers authorized to accept Summer EBT. This helps children stay well-nourished and increases spending within communities.
- **Reduce summer hunger.**  
Together with in-person summer meal sites, Summer EBT and the new option for to-go/home-delivered meals in rural areas can dramatically reduce summertime child hunger nationwide.
  - **Summer EBT is proven to reduce hunger.**  
Research shows that providing families with summer grocery benefits can reduce child hunger by 33 percent.<sup>1</sup>
- **Provide consistent nutrition access.**  
Group summer meal sites, often operated by school districts and community partners with strong support from philanthropy, offer children healthy meals and enrichment activities that support learning and physical activity. These remain a key source of nutrition and interaction for children in the summertime.

### Three Ways to Combat Summer Hunger

There are now three flexible ways to reduce child hunger in the summer:

1. In-person group meal service
2. Summer EBT **NEW!**
3. To-go/delivery meal service in rural areas **NEW!**

**Learn how all three options can work together to address summer hunger and help fuel children with the nutrition they need when school is out.**



<sup>1</sup> Food and Nutrition Service. (2016). Summer Electronic Benefit Transfer for Children (SEBTC) Demonstration: Summary Report. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. <https://www.fns.usda.gov/sebt/demonstration-summary-report>

## Key Steps You Can Take to Maximize Summer Nutrition Options for Students and Communities

### Summer EBT



#### Help with Funding

**Support State-level efforts to secure matching funds.**

The USDA covers 100 percent of the EBT benefits for families and 50 percent of the cost to run the program. The remaining 50 percent must be provided through other means, such as State funds, other non-Federal public agency funding, or philanthropic funds.



#### Educate Your Network and Programs

**Help shine a spotlight on this historic opportunity.** After your State, Indian Tribal Organization, or Territory opts into Summer EBT, help support promotion efforts about the new benefit among organizations that serve families with eligible children. Everyone has an important role to play in the success of Summer EBT.



### Rural To-Go/Delivery and Group Meal Services



#### Champion Summer Meals

**Fund summer meal programs.** Help ensure that summer meal operators are set up for success by providing funding to cover necessary start-up costs, such as coolers and storage crates, as well as ongoing costs such as staffing and transportation.

### All Summer Nutrition Options



#### Support Public Outreach

**Fund marketing campaigns to inform families and others about summer nutrition options.** Fund peer-learning platforms and roles to provide technical assistance and spread the word about all available summer nutrition offerings in your State.

**Reduce Summer Hunger.** You have the power to make a difference for children and their families.

Learn more >

