

APPENDIX B
SFA SURVEY ON SUPPLY CHAIN DISRUPTION

SFA Name: _____

SFA ID: _____

INTRODUCTION

Throughout the pandemic, school nutrition professionals have met extraordinary challenges to ensure every child can get the food they need to learn, grow, and thrive. But circumstances in local communities remain unpredictable, and supply chains for food and labor have been stressed and at times disrupted. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) is committed to working together with state agencies, SFAs, the food industry, and other stakeholders to communicate school food supply chain challenges and to identify solutions.

This survey will assist USDA’s Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) and its partners to enhance the toolbox for school nutrition professionals working hard to make sure students have reliable access to healthy meals. Information gained through survey responses will build on the insight that USDA needs to support school districts during this difficult time with tailored resources, tools and flexibility needed to serve students healthy and nutritious meals.

The survey has 20 questions and is estimated to take approximately 20 minutes to complete. FNS is asking all SFAs that participate in the Child Nutrition Programs to complete this survey no later than [insert deadline].

We understand that this is a quick turnaround and that many of you have little time available to dedicate to such activities given the exceptional levels of effort you are putting into feeding children at this time. As such, with input from several of your colleagues, we have made this survey as short and simple to complete as possible. Please share your experiences from this school year and communicate the specific issues you are facing in your community directly to FNS.

If you have any questions about the survey, please email us at [insert dedicated email address].

We thank you in advance for your contribution to this important effort.

- 1. Since the start of the regular 2021-2022 school year, which Child Nutrition Programs has your SFA operated?** Do not include programs operated during summer 2021. *Select all that apply.*
 - a. NSLP Seamless Summer Option (SSO) – select if operating breakfast, lunch, or snacks under the SSO nationwide waiver for SY 2021-2022

The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is collecting this information to better understand the impacts of supply chain disruption on school districts nationwide. This is a mandatory collection. FNS will use the information to develop tailored resources, tools and flexibilities to support school districts in serving students healthy and nutritious meals. This collection does not request personally identifiable information (PII) under the Privacy Act of 1974. According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0584-XXXX. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 20 minutes (0.3333 hours) per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Office of Policy Support, 1320 Braddock Place, 5th Floor, Alexandria, VA 22314, ATTN: PRA (0584-0607). Do not return the completed form to this address.

- b. National School Lunch Program (NSLP) – select only if not operating under the SSO waiver for lunch
 - c. School Breakfast Program (SBP) – select only if not operating under the SSO waiver for breakfast
 - d. NSLP Afterschool Snack Service
 - e. Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) At-Risk Afterschool Meals
 - f. Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP)
 - g. Special Milk Program (SMP)
 - h. Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) – select only if SFA operated SFSP during school closures since the start of the regular 2021-2022 school year
- 2. Is your SFA experiencing challenges with procuring or receiving the types or quantities of foods or beverages that were planned to be on the school meals program menus?**
- a. No challenges procuring or receiving foods or beverages planned
 - b. Yes, challenges procuring or receiving the *types* of foods or beverages planned
 - c. Yes, challenges procuring or receiving the *quantities* of foods or beverages planned
 - d. Yes, challenges procuring or receiving both the *types* AND *quantities* of foods or beverages planned
- 3. Is your SFA experiencing challenges procuring or receiving non-food supplies or equipment for the school meals programs?**
- a. Yes
 - b. No
- 4. Since the start of the regular 2021-2022 school year, how often has your SFA experienced challenges procuring or receiving the following items? [ASK IF Q3 OR Q4 = YES; matrix format with responses: *Never, Rarely, Sometimes, Often, Always*]**
- a. Fruits
 - b. Vegetables
 - c. Vegetable subgroups
 - d. Grains
 - e. Whole grain-rich items
 - f. Milk
 - g. Meats/Meat alternates
 - h. Low sodium foods

- i. Meal service supplies (e.g., food trays, portion cups, disposable utensils, or packaging)
 - j. Meal preparation or storage equipment (e.g., refrigerator, freezer, milk box, etc.)
- 5. Compared to the beginning of SY 2021-2022, are the challenges your SFA is experiencing with procuring or receiving the following items getting worse, better, or are they about the same? [DISPLAY ALL SELECTED IN Q5; matrix format]**
- a. Getting worse
 - b. Getting better
 - c. About the same
 - d. Don't know
- 6. Please indicate the top 3 food categories in which your SFA is experiencing challenges procuring or receiving menu items: [ASK IF Q3 = YES; allow up to 3 selections]**
- a. Canned vegetables or beans
 - b. Frozen vegetables or beans
 - c. Fresh vegetables
 - d. Canned fruits
 - e. Frozen fruits
 - f. Fresh fruits
 - g. Bakery items (e.g. bread, rolls, muffins)
 - h. Staple grain items (e.g. rice, pasta, flour, cereal)
 - i. Fluid milk
 - j. Other dairy items (e.g. cheese, yogurt)
 - k. Chicken products
 - l. Beef products
 - m. Turkey products
 - n. Pork products
 - o. Fish/seafood products
 - p. Egg products
 - q. Mixed dishes (e.g. sandwiches, pizza, burritos)
- 7. To the best of your knowledge, are the challenges your SFA is experiencing with procuring or receiving foods or supplies for the school meals programs due to any of the following factors? [ASK IF Q3 OR Q4=YES; matrix format with responses: Yes, No, Don't Know for each row below]**

- a. Shipment delays or cancellations
- b. Orders arriving with missing items, reduced quantities, or product substitutions
- c. Limited product availability
- d. Increased cost of food items or supplies
- e. Labor shortages in the supply chain (e.g., warehouses, distributors, drivers, harvesters)
- f. Contract cancelled by vendor
- g. Limited or restricted food delivery days or times
- h. Vendor requiring pick-up at centralized locations
- i. Limited or no vendors available
- j. Vendor surcharges or increased purchasing minimums
- k. Vendors giving preference to restaurants, grocery stores, or other businesses over schools
- l. Other (please specify)

8. Approximately how long do you expect the challenges listed below to continue?
[DISPLAY ALL SELECTED IN Q7; matrix format]

- a. Less than 6 months
- b. Through the end of this school year (SY 2021-2022)
- c. Through summer 2022
- d. Into next school year (SY 2022-2023)
- e. Don't Know

9. Is your SFA experiencing any challenges obtaining products through USDA Foods or USDA DoD Fresh?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Not applicable – SFA does not use, or does not have access to, USDA Foods or USDA DoD Fresh

10. Please specify the types of issues you are experiencing obtaining products through USDA Foods: [ASK IF Q9 = YES; matrix format with responses: Yes, No, Don't Know or N/A for each row below]

- a. USDA Foods direct delivery (brown box) product cancellations
- b. USDA Foods direct delivery (brown box) delivery delays
- c. USDA Foods diverted to processors product availability issues
- d. USDA Foods diverted to processors delivery delays or issues

- e. USDA DoD Fresh product availability issues
- f. USDA DoD Fresh delivery delays or issues

11. What impact(s) are the supply chain-related challenges your SFA is experiencing having on school meal operations in your SFA? *Select all that apply*

- a. Reduced program participation
- b. Increased program costs
- c. Inability to offer enough reimbursable meals to participating children
- d. Inability to meet meal modification requirements for children with food and nutrition related disabilities
- e. Difficulty maintaining compliance with meal pattern requirements
- f. Inability to maintain compliance with regular procurement requirements
- g. Difficulty maintaining routine program documentation
- h. Inability to offer afterschool snacks/suppers
- i. Increased staff stress or workload
- j. Decreased staff morale
- k. Inability to fulfill other job requirements due to time spent on meal planning, procurement, or food service
- l. Increased negative feedback or complaints about school meals from parents or students
- m. Other (please specify)

12. What methods has your SFA used to address these challenges? *Select all that apply*

- a. Increased use of local vendors
- b. Increased use of USDA Foods direct delivery (brown box)
- c. Increased use of USDA DoD Fresh
- d. Leverage state contracts
- e. Conduct emergency procurements
- f. Increased use of micro-purchases
- g. Use meal pattern waivers (as appropriate)
- h. Use waiver to offer the Seamless Summer Option (SSO) for SY 2021-2022 at higher reimbursement rates
- i. Partner with restaurants, catering companies or community partners (such as universities and hospitals)
- j. Limit or repeat weekly menu offerings

- k. Diversify menu offerings
- l. Substitute products
- m. Increased bulk purchasing
- n. Increased scratch cooking
- o. More frequent ordering
- p. Increased tracking of shipments
- q. Increased use of available products across multiple menu items
- r. Other (please specify)
- s. No methods used

13. In your opinion, are the products you are substituting to address supply chain disruptions of lower, similar, or higher quality than the items you had planned to use, on average? [ASK IF Q12 = L]

- a. Lower quality
- b. Similar quality
- c. Higher quality
- d. Don't know

14. In a typical year prior to the pandemic (e.g., SY 2018-19 or before), what was the status of your school food service account balance?

- a. Operated at a surplus (i.e., revenues exceeded costs)
- b. Broke even (i.e., revenues are about equal to costs)
- c. Operated at a deficit (i.e., costs exceeded revenues)

15. At the end of SY 2020-21, what was the status of your school food service account balance?

- a. Operated at a surplus (i.e., revenues exceeded costs)
- b. Broke even (i.e., revenues are about equal to costs)
- c. Operated at a deficit (i.e., costs exceeded revenues)

16. As of October 2021, what was the status of your school food service account balance? If unsure, please use your best estimate.

- a. Operating at a surplus (i.e., revenues exceed costs)
- b. Breaking even (i.e., revenues are about equal to costs)
- c. Operating at a deficit (i.e., costs exceed revenues)

17. As of October 2021, approximately what percent of your SFA's total costs were covered by your total revenues? [ASK IF 16=C]

Example Calculation:

SFA Costs = \$100,000

SFA Revenues = \$85,000

Percent of costs covered by revenues = $\$85,000 / \$100,000 = 0.85 \times 100 = 85\%$
(in this example, you would enter '85' into box below)

Enter estimated value: _____%

18. Which of the following factors are driving this deficit within your SFA? [ASK IF 16=C] *Select all that apply*

- a. Food costs
- b. School nutrition service labor costs
- c. Supply costs
- d. Equipment costs
- e. Storage costs
- f. Transportation costs
- g. Indirect costs (e.g., fringe benefits, accounting, payroll, purchasing, facilities managements and utilities)
- h. Increased Program participation
- i. Decreased Program participation
- j. Other, please specify
- k. Don't know

19. Is your SFA, or are schools within your SFA, experiencing staffing shortages in the following job categories: [matrix: Yes/No/Don't Know or N/A for each row]

- a. School nutrition managers
- b. Administrative or clerical staff
- c. Maintenance staff
- d. Warehouse staff
- e. Drivers
- f. Dietitians/nutritionists
- g. Cooks/Food prep
- h. Cashiers
- i. Monitors
- j. Other (please specify)

20. What else would you like FNS to know about the challenges your SFA is experiencing providing meals to students this school year or the obstacles your SFA is experiencing to addressing those challenges? If there are particular strategies you would like to use to address your SFA's supply chain challenges but you are experiencing barriers to doing so, please explain.