



Materials to inspire your USDA Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Program

## What you'll find inside:

- **Monthly “News Bites”** with ideas for food celebrations
- **Fun Facts about Vermont Fruits and Vegetables** and ideas for preparing them
- Hands-on, nutrition education **Activities**
- **Recipes** that can be prepared in the classroom to educate students about the benefits of eating fresh, local foods
- **Classroom standards-based food activities.**
- **Resources** for more information and ideas

## Goals of the FFVP

- Create healthier school environments by providing and modeling healthier food choices with nutrition education
- Expand the variety of fresh fruits and vegetables students experience while increasing their overall consumption.
- Make a difference in students' diets to impact their present and future health

If you are school nutrition personnel, a teacher, or a farm to school advocate and want to serve local foods as part of your fresh fruit and vegetable program, this guide is for you!

**T**hrough classroom taste tests and hands-on cooking experiences, students increase nutritional awareness, their willingness to try new foods, and their ability to make healthy choices.

The Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) provides all students in participating kindergarten through eighth grade schools with a variety of **FREE** fresh fruits and vegetables throughout the school day. This program is an important vehicle to introduce vegetables and fruits as healthy snack food alternatives in our efforts to reduce childhood obesity in our country.

This is an opportunity to creatively introduce fresh fruits and vegetables as healthy snack options and incorporate nutrition education in the classroom while providing a **FREE** healthy snack (schools are reimbursed for produce used based on number of students). Support your neighborhood farmer by **BUYING LOCAL!** Please see the Resource section for information on local sourcing of fruits and vegetables.

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# FRESH FRUIT & VEGETABLE PROGRAM REGULATION *Reminders!*

## 1 Program Requirements

- Agree to make free fruits and vegetables available to all enrolled children
- Provide fresh fruits and vegetables during the school day as snacks, not meals
- Widely publicize within the school the availability of free fresh fruits and vegetables
- Keep a monthly record of fruits and vegetables served each day and the estimated portion size offered.

## 2 Use of Funds

- Primarily to purchase, prepare and distribute fresh fruit and fresh vegetables
- Served at NO charge to ALL students
- At times OTHER than lunch and/or breakfast or after school snack
- A per-student allocation provides reimbursement for actual allowable program expenses
- Supplies for once a week cooking and nutrition lesson

## 3 Considerations

- FFVP guidelines encourage schools to use this program 2x/week at minimum, if possible
- Handle locally sourced produce the same way you handle produce from other sources
- It is appropriate to ask about food safety protocols from any supplier
- Be clear about your own quality standards
- If you want to buy directly from a farm, visit it!

## 4 Left Over Cut Fruits & Vegetables

- Follow safe food handling procedures
- Items opened in a classroom can be assumed to be contaminated and should be discarded
- Items not handled in the classrooms- can be used and stored and safe to re-serve
- Unopened containers from the classrooms are considered safe to re-serve
- Left-over cut up fruit and vegetables that would otherwise spoil, can be used in a prepared meal in following days

## 5 Left Over Whole Fruits & Vegetables

- Offer again later in the week, next day, try to incorporate in FFVP
- Can't be used in meal programs as whole vegetable or fruit

## 6 FFVP Limits

- Only low- or non-fat vegetable dips allowed
- Serving size for condiment: 1–2 Tbsp
- Fresh vegetables (not canned, frozen or dried) that are cooked must be limited to once a week and always as part of a nutrition education lesson
- Cooking vegetables to increase palatability (such as winter squash) is allowed once per week but must be presented as a Nutrition Education Lesson



# introduction

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## FRESH FRUIT & VEGETABLE PROGRAM

### Best Practices!

#### Don't forget some of these FFVP Best Practices:

- The Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program must remain separate from the National School Lunch and Breakfast Program
- To get students and parents interested and excited about the program, create a colorful and creative menu to send home
- The most effective FFVP programs are administered in the classroom and combined with nutrition education and modeling healthy, respectful behavior
- Modeling healthy eating habits can be a very effective way to encourage students to try new foods, just remember teacher participation is only allowed when fruits and vegetables are presented in the classroom
- Be sure to follow safe food handling procedures and incorporate any whole produce back into the program. If you have only a few of each type make a colorful fruit salad
- You may use leftover cut products in the Lunch or Breakfast Program but only to avoid spoilage
- Cooking vegetables is allowed once per week but must be presented as a Nutrition Education Lesson
- Administrative costs are limited to 10% of total allotment and may be used for equipment to be used in the program
- You can find the full text of the Program Handbook at: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/handbook.pdf>

