



Resources to Help You Help Them!

2020-2021 SCHOOL NUTRITION TOOLKIT

Successful Practices from the Field

Hot Now, Cold to Go!

Some districts provide a hot meal at the time of pick-up. The rest of the meals provided are shelf-stable or cold meals, so families do not have to reheat at home. This combination helps schools to use their inventory of hot meals while keeping meal prep simple for families at home.

Communications & Supporting Materials

- **Include menus.** A printed copy of the menu will instruct families on what belongs in each meal, when to serve it, and how to properly store and reheat the food if necessary.
- **Translate as needed.** Provide instructions in the languages commonly spoken by families in the district.
- **Share food safety tips.** Include a printed card or sheet with essential food safety instructions, like this sample from the Minnesota Department of Education:

Keep Hot and Cold Foods Safe

- Consume hot foods within 2 hours.
- Consume or refrigerate cold foods within 2 hours.
- Foods for other days should be stored in the refrigerator until eaten or reheated. If re-heating foods, ensure they are cooked to an internal temperature of 165 °F.
- Discard all refrigerated foods after 7 days of receiving it.

Individualized vs. Bulk Meals

Issued on April 11, 2020 in question 18 of memo [SP 13-2020](#), the USDA's nationwide child nutrition program waivers permit the distribution of bulk items in conjunction with non-congregate feeding situations in which multiple meals are provided at one time. These bulk foods, including milk, must include the proper minimum amount for each reimbursable meal being claimed.

- **Provide menus with clear directions** for the proper use and portion size for these bulk foods.
- **Consider household appliances & storage.** Families without refrigeration, ovens, and/or microwaves may not be able to safely store and properly reheat certain menu items.

Keep it Simple.

Send home foods that only require minimal preparation. Families should not have to chop, mix, or bake ingredients for recipes.

