



WHAT IS SFSP?

The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) provides nutritious meals and snacks to children age 18 and under during the summer when school meals are not available. The U.S. Department of Agriculture provides reimbursements to schools, nonprofit youth programs, recreational centers, libraries, and other sponsors that offer meals to children.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

- The Maine Department of Education administers the program and communicates with USDA.
- Sponsors enter into agreements with DOE to run the program. Schools, local government agencies, camps, faith-based and other nonprofit community organizations that have the ability to manage a food service program may be SFSP sponsors. Sponsors get reimbursed by USDA and may manage multiple sites.
- Sites are places in the community where children receive meals in a safe and supervised environment. Sites may be located in a variety of settings, including schools, parks, libraries, community centers, health clinics, hospitals, apartment complexes, churches, and migrant centers. Sites work directly with Sponsors.

During the summer of 2015, 24% of eligible children in Maine received meals through the Summer Food Service Program.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

- Summer is a critical time for children's academic and physical well-being. During the summer children are at a higher risk of both obesity and hunger. SFSP provides free summer meals for kids and can become an important source of nutritious food for children and youth during this time.
- Offering free, nutritious meals also provides an incentive for children to participate in summer enrichment programs, which means that children are not only well-fed, but in a safe environment engaged in academic and recreational activities.

WHAT ARE THE BARRIERS?

SFSP can be challenging to implement, especially in a rural state like Maine. Obstacles include:

- **Transportation:** In many communities, there is no way to transport children to SFSP sites during the summer.
- **Program participation:** Sponsors only receive reimbursement for meals consumed at the site. Sponsors and sites can experience challenges getting enough children to attend the program each

day so that they receive adequate reimbursement to break even.

- **Community capacity:** Many communities do not have the resources to support a SFSP site or have not yet made it a priority. In the absence of a willing school, community center, church, or other program, it can be challenging to start a SFSP site.
- **Additional resources:** SFSP sponsors often need additional resources beyond meal reimbursements to pay for expenses such as enrichment offerings, staff time, and outreach materials.

THE RESULTS!



Maine is growing the SFSP each year, adding sponsors and sites and serving more kids every summer.



In June 2016, the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC) released its annual Hunger Doesn't Take a Summer Vacation report. Maine now ranks 6th in the nation for average daily participation in SFSP, up from 8th in the previous year and 23rd in the nation in 2010.



During the summer of 2015, Maine had XX SFSP Sponsors and XXX Sites across all 16 counties.



SFSP Mini-grant Program

Full Plates Full Potential and Good Shepherd Food Bank partner to offer mini-grants to SFSP sponsors and sites to help with additional program costs not covered by reimbursements.

Mini Grants are awarded to support:

- Food costs associated with providing higher quality, more kid friendly meals with an emphasis on fresh fruits and vegetables
- Transportation costs associated with serving multiple sites or providing busing options for participants
- Outreach costs for enhanced marketing and advertising to eligible families
- Staffing and/or enrichment costs associated with providing regular activities and engaging participating children.



Mini-grant awardees are able to increase program participation and enhance the impact of their SFSP sites. On average during the summer of 2015, mini-grant awardees grew participation by 35%.