FEEDING AMERICA™

SUMMER FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM RESOURCE MANUAL

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CHAPTER 1: SUMMER FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM HISTORY & OVERVIEW

This section will cover the following topics.

- ✔ A brief history of the program.
- ✔ The administrative structure of the Summer Food Service Program.
- ✔ The different ways your food bank can be involved.

HISTORY

The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) was established in 1975 to ensure that low-income children continue to receive nutritious meals when school is not in session. SFSP is the single largest federal resource available for local sponsors such as Feeding America food banks who are interested in combining a feeding program with a summer activity program.

Nearly 18 million children in the United States receive free or reduced price school meals, yet only 2 million children receive meals during the summer. One reason for this is a lack of programs that make food available to children over the summer months. Through the SFSP, summer programs can provide up to two healthy meals or snacks per day, five days per week to children and teenagers 18 years and younger. Persons over age 18 with disabilities who participate in school programs for the disabled can also access meals. Sponsors receive reimbursement payments to defray the cost of food and administrative costs to support the operation of the program. Schools, public agencies, and private nonprofit organizations may apply to sponsor the program. All sponsors receive training from their state agency before starting the program to learn how to plan, operate, and monitor a successful food service program.

Feeding America is strongly committed to improving access to meals during the summer months and continues to develop new and helpful resources to help network members reach more children. By 2014, Feeding America plans to increase meals served to children during the summer by 25 percent, helping close the gap between participation in school meals programs and participation in summer food programs. To achieve this goal, Feeding America will be increasing its outreach efforts, strengthening network capacity, and providing support to programs exploring innovative ways to serve more children (especially in rural areas).

This manual serves as a resource for Feeding America food banks and their agencies who are interested in participating as a sponsor, starting a site, or serving as a vendor for the program. All materials referenced

throughout this guide are available on HungerNet. In addition, it is strongly recommended that food banks interested in sponsoring consult the 2009 USDA materials listed below.

2009 Administrative Guidance for Sponsors
Site Supervisor's Guide
Monitor's Guide
Nutrition Guidance Manual for Sponsors

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

USDA

- The program is administered at the federal level by the USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS). The USDA decides overall program policy, publishes regulations, and is a funding source for the program.

State Agencies

- At the state level, the program is administered by state agencies (typically departments of education). State agencies approve sponsor applications, are responsible for monitoring and inspecting, provide technical assistance and training, institute compliance actions, and maintain fiscal integrity.

Sponsors

- Sponsors can be public, private, or nonprofit organizations. Sponsors must sign a program agreement with the state agency and are responsible for overseeing program operations. Sponsors receive federal reimbursement from the state agency to cover administrative and operating costs of preparing and serving food to eligible children.

Sites

- Sites are responsible for meal service, tracking the number of meals served, meal production (if preparing meals onsite), and outreach.

Participants

- Participants are eligible children 18 or younger. Children over 18 with disabilities may also participate.

DIFFERENT WAYS YOU CAN BE INVOLVED IN SFSP

Food banks can participate in the program in a variety of ways. Each role is detailed below.

ADMINISTRATIVE SPONSOR

Most food banks that participate in the SFSP do so as an administrative sponsor. As an administrative sponsor, you will be responsible for organizing the program, which includes:

- Selecting sites
- Attending your state agency's training
- Submitting the necessary application forms
- Arranging for meals to be prepared or delivered
- Monitoring the distribution sites
- Preparing reimbursement claims

This can most easily be accomplished if you have multiple Kids Cafes or other agencies that serve eligible children and are appropriate for food service during the summer. As a sponsor, you are reimbursed only for the meals that are correctly served, counted, and reported to the state agency, so having adequately trained staff or volunteers to administer the program is critical.

SITE

A site is a physical location, approved by the state agency, where you serve SFSP meals during a supervised time period. Meal service sites may be located in a variety of settings including schools, recreation centers, playgrounds, parks, churches, community centers, day camps, residential summer camps, housing projects, migrant centers, or on Native American reservations. There are few restrictions on what constitutes a site; nearly any place where children may congregate can serve as a site.

The most effective sites will be located in areas where you can offer a supervised food service with recreational or enrichment activities. Utilize community organizations when selecting potential areas where a food service program would be a success. Work closely with your state agency to determine if your potential sites are located in eligible areas.

There are five types of sites allowed to participate in this program.

Type of Site	Eligibility Criteria	Eligible Participants	Eligible Meals
Open	Must be located in community with at least one school at which 50 percent or more of students qualify for free or reduced price school meals.	All children in the area.	Two meals (including snack).

Restricted Open	Meets open site criteria, but is restricted in the number of participants for safety, control, or security reasons.	All children in the area.	Two meals (including snack).
Closed Enrolled	Must qualify children individually and at least 50 percent must be from households at or below 185 percent of the federal poverty guidelines.	All children in the program.	Two meals (including snack).
Migrant	Must be certified by migrant organization or Tribal Authority.	Children of migrant or Alaskan Native households.	Three meals.
Camps	May be residential or non-residential. Only reimbursed for meals served to eligible children.	Children from households at or below 185 percent of federal poverty guidelines.	Three meals.

VENDOR

If you have a community kitchen or a production kitchen at your food bank you can fulfill both administrative and operational (meal service) roles. Alternatively, you may work with another organization that is serving as the administrative sponsor and bid to become the meal vendor. Vendors are paid by the SFSP sponsor and not reimbursed by the state, thus you only need to invoice the sponsor for food costs and are not required to fill out additional reimbursement paperwork. Meals provided by a vendor must meet the USDA guidelines for the SFSP program.

OUTREACH

Advertising to build awareness of the Summer Food Service Program is a key role that food banks can fulfill. Often the program is underutilized in areas that have sites available simply because the children who need to access the meals don't know where to go. Food banks can assist the local sponsor with outreach to families in need to let them know how to take advantage of the SFSP.

Food banks can also play the important role of community organizer, bringing groups together to run the program, share participant data, or increase outreach opportunities to make sure more children participate in the program. In any location, there are often a variety of organizations and stakeholders that work with children and that can impact the operation of a successful summer program, including schools, libraries, churches, Boys and Girls Clubs, departments of recreation, and others. The food bank can convene these groups to better outline what role each may play in supporting the SFSP, including sharing participant data between schools and sponsors, figuring out ways to increase enrichment opportunities at meal sites, or opening more community spaces for use in the summer.

CHAPTER 2: PLANNING THE PROGRAM

This section will cover the following topics.

- ✓ A timeline for getting started with the Summer Food Service Program.
- ✓ How to select sites.
- ✓ Roles and responsibilities of the sponsor and partners.
- ✓ Meal service models.
- ✓ Application requirements.
- ✓ How to budget for the program.
- ✓ Ways to save on SFSP.

GETTING STARTED

If you're considering sponsoring the SFSP, it's important to get started early. The first thing you'll need to do is contact your state agency. They will provide you with an application, training, and assistance with every aspect of running the program. Three helpful planning resources are listed below.

Timeline for Getting Started
Planning Checklist
State Agency Contact List

SITE SELECTION

Selecting the right site is one of the most important parts of administering the SFSP. Finding sites with staff that will comply with your instructions, such as checking temperatures and reporting meals served, will make your program run much more smoothly. Sites can be located anywhere that children will gather and food can be served safely.

TIPS FOR IDENTIFYING SUMMER SITES

- Try to find established programs that also operate during the school year, such as Kids Cafes, YMCA's, YWCA's, or Boys and Girls Clubs
- Ask parks and recreation departments about their summer recreation programs
- Contact faith based organizations about summer activities
- Consider other areas (housing complexes, community centers, rural trailer parks, etc.) where children congregate and look for ways to bring meals to them
- Contact your local parent groups to determine the level of community support
- If outdoors, think about contingency plans for inclement weather (required by SFSP)

You should develop criteria for sites to ease your entry into the SFSP. These may include using only indoor sites and/or requiring sites to have the following:

- Refrigerators and/or freezers
- Regular paid staff
- Properly trained or licensed food service staff
- Transportation for participants
- Activities to draw children to their locations

REACHING CHILDREN IN RURAL AREAS

Often, urban SFSP sites are located in schools, playgrounds, parks, faith-based organizations, community centers, or similar places. However, it can be difficult for SFSP sponsors to use these types of facilities in rural areas. Rural populations may be very dispersed, rural schools are less likely to be open during summer months, and community centers are less prevalent.

Even though the regulations permit the use of operating funds to transport children in rural areas to rural sites, it is not always cost-effective to transport children from the outlying areas to a site located in a rural town. In these cases it may make more sense to transport the meals to the children. Therefore, the USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) has permitted and even encouraged the use of non-traditional means of feeding children in rural areas. If you plan to operate the SFSP in a rural area, please check with your state agency for innovative and effective practices of providing "mobile" meal sites or other practical techniques.

It's also a good idea to consider the type of site that you would like to operate or the site type a certain location may require. The different types of sites and requirements for each are discussed below.

SITE DEFINITION AND ELIGIBILITY DOCUMENTATION

A site is the physical location where meals are served to children and are consumed in a supervised setting. Sponsors may operate the SFSP at one or more sites. Eligible sites, described below, are those that serve children in low-income areas or specific groups of low-income children.

OPEN SITE

- All children eat for free
- Serves all children in a geographical area where at least 50% of the children are eligible for free or reduced price school meals
- Reimbursed for all children attending

Eligibility Documentation

School Data	Other Data	Census Data
• Can use any month in the current year • Data is good for 5 years	• Housing authority or other economic information	• Consult with State Agency on how to document

RESTRICTED OPEN SITE

- Initially open to the entire community on a first come, first serve basis.
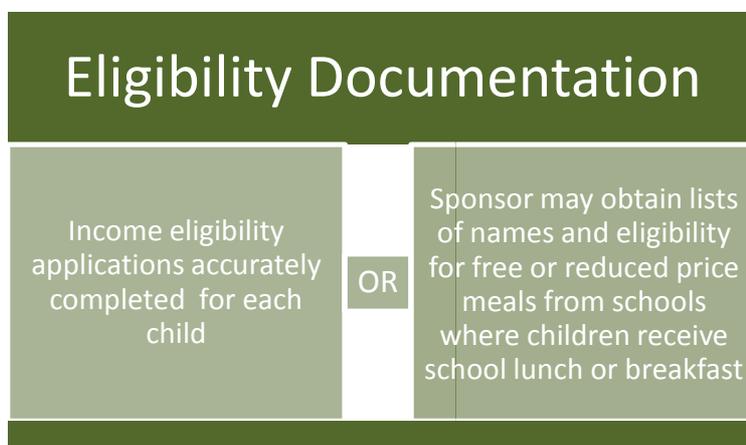- Sponsor may limit attendance for reasons of security, safety, or control due to staff limitations, etc.
- Reimbursed for all children attending

Eligibility Documentation

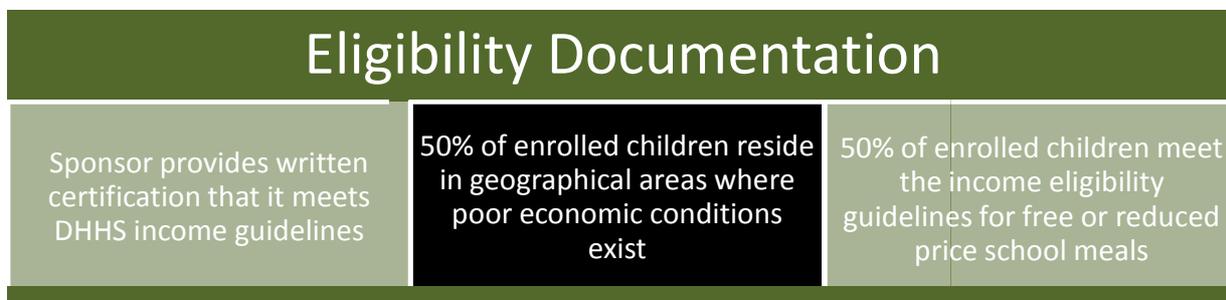| School Data	Census Data
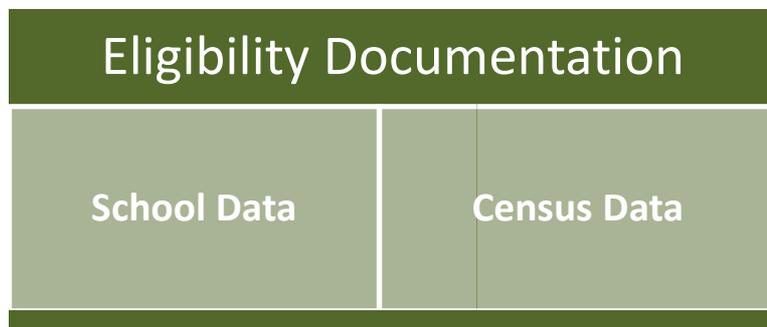
CLOSED ENROLLED SITE

- All children eat free
- Serves only children in specific program or activity serving only identified groups of children
- at least 50% of enrollees are eligible for free or reduced price school meals
- Site is not open to the community at large
- Reimbursed for all attending children

Eligibility Documentation

Income eligibility applications accurately completed for each child	OR	Sponsor may obtain lists of names and eligibility for free or reduced price meals from schools where children receive school lunch or breakfast

RESIDENTIAL SUMMER CAMP AND NON-RESIDENTIAL DAY CAMP

Camps are reimbursed only for meals served to campers who have been individually determined eligible. For example, if 55 percent of the enrolled children qualify, the sponsor will be reimbursed for 55 percent of the total meals served.

Eligibility Documentation

Sponsor provides written certification that it meets DHHS income guidelines	50% of enrolled children reside in geographical areas where poor economic conditions exist	50% of enrolled children meet the income eligibility guidelines for free or reduced price school meals

MIGRANT OR ALASKA NATIVE SITE

- Does not have to be located in area of high need
- Must primarily serve children of migrant families or Alaskan Native children
- Reimbursed for all children served

Eligibility Documentation

Migrant organization or tribal authority certifies that the site serves migrant or Alaska Native children

DOCUMENTING AREA ELIGIBILITY: SCHOOL DATA

Operating your program in a high need area, like those that qualify as open sites, will ensure that you serve children who might otherwise go hungry and allow you to run your program with the least amount of paperwork. To qualify as an open site or restricted open site, the location must be in an area where more than 50% of the children are eligible for free and reduced price meals through the National School Lunch Program.

To determine if your site can qualify as an open site, identify the elementary, middle, and high schools serving that area. If any of these schools have greater than 50% eligibility for free and reduced price school lunch, your site can qualify as an open site and serve all the children from that community (up to 18) without collecting additional paperwork. Most often, this data is gathered from elementary schools as they have the highest enrollment in the National School Lunch Program and serve the smallest geographical area.

Generally sponsors will find it most helpful to obtain a list of eligible areas (based on school meal participation rates) from their state agency, though not all states provide this list. Alternatively, sponsors may directly contact their local school district in order to obtain the current year's free and reduced-price data to document the need of the area they wish to serve. In most cases, current-year school data provides the most accurate representation of an area's current economic circumstances.

The state agency will determine the eligibility of each proposed site located in the area based on the data submitted by the sponsor. Since the local school or district office must certify that the data is accurate, sponsors should ask local schools or districts to provide the necessary figures on school or district stationery, with the signature of an authorized school official.

In certain situations, children in public school systems are routinely "bused" from their neighborhood school to schools in other neighborhoods. In this scenario, program sponsors may determine site eligibility based on the eligibility data of either:

- The school the children attend and are being bused to, or
- The school the children would have attended if not for the school's busing policy

Sponsors are encouraged to use school data rather than census data because it is usually more current, and more accurately represents current neighborhood economic conditions.

However, there may be certain circumstances that warrant the use of census data to establish area eligibility, such as:

- The potential site is located in a rural area, where geographically large elementary school attendance areas obscure localized "pockets of poverty," which can be identified through the use of Census Block Group (CBG) data.
- Available current-year school data shows an area to be close to, but under, the 50 percent threshold, and the CBG data may reveal specific portions of the area that are eligible for open sites.
- Mandatory busing of students has made it difficult to determine the percentage of children eligible for free or reduced price meals living in a given area. Census data can provide a snapshot of the neighborhood.

MANAGING MEALS AND MEAL SERVICE

The SFSP limits meal service, content and production, though most of these regulations pose little obstacle to a hassle free summer program. To be reimbursed, food banks have to follow a protocol for the service of meals that limits when, what, and how meals can be served. The USDA also identifies protocols for the preparation and production of meals, which includes separate rules for meals being prepared on site and those prepared elsewhere. For most sites, these guidelines will not deviate from the meal service norm that sites already follow or would have followed without participating in the SFSP.

These rules are easy to follow, especially as the food bank's experience grows in sponsoring SFSP sites beyond the first summer. The paperwork involved is not as complicated, especially once you have an established system that works for you.

Food bank sponsors that have any questions should refer to their state agency. Consulting with your state agency can prevent any future issues with reimbursement. States may also have different or additional rules that apply to the SFSP.

PLANNING MEALS

The SFSP dictates the timing of the meal service, the kinds of meals being served, and the records that must be kept regarding the meal service. Food bank sponsors are responsible for following these rules in order to receive reimbursement and it is up to the food bank to verify that staff, sites, and food vendors (if applicable) follow these rules. Food banks that act as sites or vendors rather than sponsors, must follow only a subset of these rules that pertain to their role in the SFSP.

In general, these rules exist to protect children and to ensure they receive the meals for which they qualify. For example, the state agency wants to ensure that if a sponsor says they will be serving lunch from 12 to 1 p.m., that a lunch will be available for a child who arrives at 12:45.

MEAL SERVICE SET-UP

Sites, excluding camp and migrant sites, cannot serve more than two meals. A site may serve two of the following: breakfast, lunch, or snack. If a site has received permission to serve supper, it may not serve both lunch and supper and is still only permitted to serve two meals. Camp sites and migrant sites may serve three meals and can serve supper while also serving lunch.

To be reimbursable, the start of meal times, including snacks, must be spaced three hours apart. For example, if lunch starts at noon, a snack cannot be served until 3 p.m. (for camp or migrant sites, lunch and supper must be spaced four hours apart without an afternoon snack). This three hour spacing still allows for serving breakfast later in the morning, when more children are more likely to come, while still serving lunch at a normal hour. Serving more meals at appropriate times are advantageous because it can increase participation and will increase the scale of the SFSP. A greater quantity of meals served yields a larger reimbursement and the ability to purchase food in bulk at better prices. Most importantly, it means more children get meals they may not be able to get elsewhere.

The snack period may not last longer than one hour and lunch or supper may not last longer than two hours though states may have alternative scheduling requirements.

Food bank sponsors must notify the proper state agency of changes to planned meal service times or locations. Most state agencies will not find reasonable time changes to be an issue nor will they tend to object to reasonable changes in the location of meal service. *Field trips are permissible* — the sponsor simply must notify their state agency of the plans. Failure to notify the state of any changes may jeopardize reimbursement for the meals. States will have varying methods for such notifications, some being more formal than others.

MENUS

Sponsors should carefully consider the menu when planning a summer program, even if the site or vendor prepares the meals. It is critical to prepare tasty, nutritious meals that the children will eat and enjoy. The SFSP does not dictate whether meals should be served hot or cold except when food safety requires it. Thus, food banks may supply children with hot meals like spaghetti, cold meals like sandwiches, or even shelf stable items like fruit cups as long as the meal has the required components. Hot meals are encouraged because children are more likely to want to eat a hot meal, thereby increasing participation, and because hot meals can be prepared from more nutritious fresh ingredients. Cold meals, however, can be easier to prepare, require less time and staff resources, and are more easily stored and transported. Shelf stable meals, on the other hand, can be delivered to more remote locations where the food bank is unable to deliver daily and stored without specialized equipment like refrigerators.

The USDA requires certain components be in each type of meal in order for them to be reimbursable. Each meal has varying requirements concerning the inclusion of the following four groups of foods: milk; fruit and vegetables; meat or meat alternatives; and grain. The USDA provides several resources that provide more detail on meal pattern requirements, including information on specific foods that may not easily be categorized and about which sponsors typically have questions. Milk must be served at breakfast, lunch, and supper. Meal pattern requirements also dictate the serving size of each component. For more information on the USDA's meal pattern requirements and portion sizes, please see the USDA's SFSP Nutrition Guide or Feeding America's chart of SFSP meal requirements. Below is a short reference chart for each meal pattern:

Breakfast	Lunch and Supper	Snack
• One serving of milk • One serving of a vegetable or fruit or a full-strength juice • One serving of grain or bread • A meat or meat alternate is optional	• One serving of milk • Two or more servings of vegetables and/or fruits • One serving of grain or bread • One serving of meat or meat alternate	• Two items from different components (milk, vegetables or fruits, grains, or meat) • Juice cannot be served when milk is served as only other component

RECORD KEEPING

Sponsors must keep the following records on the number of meals served and produced:

- Number of meals served at each site
- Number of children served at each site
- Kinds of meals produced
- If vending, delivery and purchase receipts

For more information, forms, and how to manage these records, see the section of this manual dedicated to monitoring and record keeping.

SERVING MEALS

The SFSP makes a number of accommodations that help facilitate a positive dining experience for the children and the site, including allowing seconds, permitting food to be taken off site, having sharing tables, and reusing leftovers – each discussed below. Whether hot or cold meals are served, taking advantage of these accommodations can help decrease waste at your SFSP site and make the program more cost efficient. Unfortunately, only school sponsors and school-sponsored sites are allowed to use "offer versus serve" (letting children choose the items they want rather than serving the full meal to

each child) to distribute meals, not school sites sponsored by a food bank. **Therefore, all food bank sponsored programs must ensure that each child receives every component of each meal.**

- **The SFSP allows for second meals to be served, though only after every child receives a first meal.** Although seconds can be served, only a portion may be claimed for reimbursement. Reimbursable second meals from all sites cannot exceed 2 percent of all first meals served at all sites. Some states do not allow for seconds to be served, so check with your state agency.
- **Though the child must eat the rest of the meal on site, some states allow children to take a fruit or vegetable component off site for later consumption.** This practice may not be permissible in some states. For mobile sites or sites that are not affiliated with a program of activities, this accommodation can reduce the amount of time that staff has to spend at the site supervising the meal. It may also benefit the children as they may save the component for a snack later. This rule applies only to foods where food safety is not an issue and is only for the fruit or vegetable component.
- **Sites may also organize a sharing table for the exchange of unwanted meal components.** A sharing table is a space where children can exchange unwanted meal items for another of their choosing. For example, a child may exchange an unwanted apple for another child's unwanted (and unopened) granola bar. This, again, is only applicable to food items for which food safety rules allow, like oranges, granola bars, juice boxes and other appropriate items. Sharing tables present an opportunity for food banks and their sites to avoid unnecessary waste.
- **Sites may reuse leftovers, within food safety guidelines, and are encouraged to donate if unable to store properly left over meal items.** Using leftovers may help reduce waste and the use of other costly resources. If the sponsor has leftovers and decides to donate them, they cannot claim the donated meals for reimbursement.

PRODUCING MEALS

Food bank sponsors have several options to get the meals served at their sites (described below). If a food bank prepares its own meals, either at a central location or at each site, it is classified as a self-preparation (self-prep) sponsor. If a food bank chooses to purchase meals from a school or commercial food company, then the meals are referred to as "vended." Sponsors receive slightly higher reimbursement rates for meals produced at self-prep sites than for vended meals (this higher rate is also available for meals served in rural areas even if the site is not self-prep).

No matter the production method, it is ultimately the sponsor's responsibility to make sure all meals meet the meal pattern requirements and that other applicable guidelines are followed.

Self-Preperation (site)	Self-Prep (central production)	Vended	Self-Prep and Vended
• Sites produce their own meals.	• Food banks prepare meals in a central location, like its community kitchen, and deliver those meals to sites.	• Food banks purchase meals from a school food authority or food service company that are then delivered to each site.	• Meal production varies from site to site. • Food banks can have any combination of meal production methods serving its sites.

You must take into account the storage space, kitchen facilities, and staff availability when deciding how to produce the meals and how often to deliver. For example, if a site lacks kitchen facilities but has storage space, you may deliver shelf stable meals once a week. However, if a site has a full industrial kitchen with cold storage, it may be possible to provide that site with food and have the site prepare meals.

A particular challenge when producing or purchasing meals is knowing how much food to prepare or deliver. Meal count forms, which are required from each site, can help you anticipate how much food will be necessary. Especially if daily meal count information is gathered each day from the sites, you can begin to notice attendance patterns and adjust more quickly to changes in the number of meals that are required.

When starting the SFSP, you may have to rely on the site to tell you what numbers of children are expected each day. Projecting the right amount of food or meals to send can be difficult and in the first weeks especially, you may be unable to accurately project the number of meals or amount of food that a site will need. As well, attendance will vary from day to day and week to week throughout the summer. Over the course of the summer however, you will be better able to assess how much food to send based on the previous weeks meal count records. Thus, it is critical to maintain accurate and organized records of the meal service.

SELF-PREPARATION

Food banks acting as self-prep sponsors have a number of options to procure and prepare food. A food bank may prepare meals at a central location or have sites prepare meals. Food banks can purchase foods, use various product in food bank inventory, use TEFAP commodities to supply meal ingredients (if allowed in your state), use produce from food bank or site gardens, or blend these resources. Food bank sponsors may also access some USDA commodities through the SFSP to use in meal preparation if they are self-prep. This amount is based on the sponsors past participation or expected participation. Regardless of the food source, the SFSP reimbursement is a flat amount per meal.

Food banks that decide to prepare meals at their own facilities may prepare meals in their on-site kitchens or package unitized meals with healthy shelf stable items. Food bank kitchens offer the capacity to prepare batches of hot meals, package meals that can be frozen and reheated, or prepare cold meals for delivery to sites. Food banks may also serve as the staging area for construction of shelf stable meals that can be distributed to sites at intervals. Volunteers can easily package meals composed of shelf stable items. This type of meal can be stored at the food bank or on site, space permitting, and can be delivered more easily than other types of meals. For food banks delivering hot meals to their site or delivering meals to sites that lack adequate storage, delivery must be within one hour of meal time.

Food banks can still be a self-prep sponsor if the meals are prepared at the SFSP sites. Having the sites prepare meals reduces delivery costs as well as other costs associated with the use of food bank facilities and resources. In addition, if sites already prepare meals on site and are simply partnering with the food bank to get access to cheaper food or administrative assistance with the SFSP, it will be easy to integrate the administrative work with the food preparation and meal service already taking place at the site. If the food bank sponsors SFSP sites that serve different communities, on site preparation means that sites can produce meals most appropriate for the population of children that visit, helping sustain participation.

Advantages	Disadvantages
• May provide fresher or higher quality meals • Can use ingredients from commodities, donations, etc. that do not cost • Self-prep sites can produce meals most appropriate for participating children • No bidding process or contract	• Self-prep sites means more paperwork, as each will have separate and varied meal production records • Self-prep sites require closer monitoring to make sure meals meet requirements • May be more costly as food banks can lose economies of scale with self-prep sites

PURCHASING MEALS

If a food bank does not prepare meals itself or have sites that prepare meals, they can contract with a vendor to prepare meals. Food banks can purchase meals through local school food authorities (SFAs) or food service management companies (FSMCs). Vending meals requires less work to prepare meals and to monitor meal patterns. Vending often includes delivery and may include other necessary supplies like utensils, napkins, trash bags, or other items. Vending may be a more affordable option than self-preparation depending on the resources of a food bank and its sites as well as the number of meals that need to be made. Purchased meals must be unitized though the milk or juice may be provided separately. A sponsor may seek a waiver from the state to get non-unitized meals from SFAs.

School Food Service Authorities
Many sponsors, including food banks, contract with local SFAs to provide meals at their SFSP sites. FSAs are experienced in producing meals in bulk that satisfy USDA meal pattern requirements and, oftentimes, meals that children enjoy or will eat. **Sponsors may contract with SFAs without going through a competitive bid process, which is required for vendor contracts in excess of $100,000**. Most states as well as the USDA have a template agreement for sponsors to use with SFAs that can serve as a

basis for a contract. If the food bank is sponsoring a site at a school whose meals are prepared by that school's SFA, it may still be considered a self-prep site.

Food Service Management Companies

Food banks can use a FSMC to supply meals for their SFSP sites, especially if the food bank already uses such a company or organization to supply meals for other programs at the food bank. An FSMC is usually a private company, though the designation can also refer to a public entity or a private nonprofit organization. Typically, food banks that purchase meals from an FSMC also have the organization deliver the meals to each site and may also include the provision of utensils, napkins, and other items in the contract. Unless the contract will be more than $100,000, the food bank does not have to award the contract based on a competitive bid process. Several states have additional requirements regarding contracts with FSMCs, depending upon the amount of the contract.

SFSP regulations for FSMC contracts include several requirements for the meals, contract length, cancellation, and delivery. Meals purchased through an FSMC must be unitized, with or without milk. The contract should be for a period of one year but may include an option to extend the contract for up to an additional three years, pending state agency approval. The contract must include a cancellation clause. Finally, if sites lack appropriate storage for meals, delivery must be within one hour of meal time – a stipulation that may need to be included in the contract. For more information on the bidding process and constructing the contract to get the best meals possible, see FRAC's Guide to Purchasing Nutritious Meals.

Food banks contracting with a vendor should also make provisions for changes in ordering and for corrective action if meals are inadequate. Frequently, SFSP sites will experience changes in daily participation, which can sometimes be anticipated and which should be reported to the vendor so that the sponsor does not purchase more meals than necessary. **Food banks will only be reimbursed for the meals served, not the meals ordered.** Moreover, if meals do not meet meal pattern requirements, are not of sufficient quality, or are otherwise inadequate, the food bank should have a course of action to correct the meal production.

The delivery of meals must be documented via delivery receipts that include the number and type of meals delivered to each site. This is required for the meals to be reimbursable and should be incorporated into the training of site staff as needed.

Advantages	Disadvantages
• May be cheaper, especially with greater scale • Saves time on preparation and delivery • FSAs have experience meeting USDA meal pattern requirements	• Additional paperwork required (contract, delivery receipts) • May have less control over quality and composition of meals.

> **The Bidding Process**
>
> The process for obtaining bids from an FSMC is not difficult, it just has specific steps. The following steps outline the general process; your state agency will be able to walk you through bidding in your state. More information on placing bids can also be found in the USDA's Administrative Guidance for Sponsors.
>
> Step 1 – Prepare the Invitation for Bid (IFB). This should include:
> - A copy of your menu requirements, including quality standards;
> - Any non-food items that will need to be included (e.g. napkins, forks);
> - Any special dietary needs that will require accommodation;
> - Anticipated location of sites and number of meals.
>
> Step 2 – Announce the bid
> - Publish an announcement in your local paper at least 14 days before the bid opens;
> - Include where and when the bid will happen;
> - Let the state agency know where and when the bid will happen.
>
> Step 3 – Open the bid, review all bids to see if they meet all of the stated criteria, and award the company that meets all of your needs. Before deciding, consider touring the vendor's facilities or otherwise verifying the vendor's quality control capabilities.
>
> Step 4 – Submit to the state agency copies of all bids you receive and your reason for selecting the

OTHER MEAL SERVICE RESOURCES

USDA's 2009 SFSP Administrative Guidance for Sponsors
USDA's 2009 SFSP Nutrition Guidance for Sponsors
USDA's 2009 Monitor's Guide
USDA's SFSP Meal Patterns
Example Meal Service Agreement
FRAC's Guide to Purchasing Nutritious Meals

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

If you're considering sponsoring the Summer Food Service Program, you must submit an application to your state agency. The following resources will be helpful when beginning the application process.

State Agency Contact List
Timeline for Getting Started

Application requirements will vary by state, but the following is a list of basic application requirements sponsors must satisfy.

SFSP Basic Application Requirements	
1	Documentation of tax-exempt status.
2	Demonstration of adequate administrative and financial responsibility to manage an effective food service.
3	A site information sheet for each proposed site which includes: • Documentation of eligibility; • Meal service times and capabilities for each site.
4	A written policy statement on free meals for enrolled sites.
5	A signed program agreement with the state agency.
6	A copy of a proposed media release with the application.
7	A complete management plan that includes staffing needs and an administrative budget.
8	Advance payment application (if applicable).
9	Certification that you will conduct a training program for monitors and site personnel.
10	A copy of the invitation for bid (for sponsors that plan to use a food service management company to provide meals) or a proposed agreement (for sponsors that plan to use a school food authority to provide meals).
11	Application for start-up payments (if available and you wish to use them).
12	Certification that the sponsor will directly operate the food service at each site if the sponsor is a governmental entity or a private non-profit organization.

Deadline: Check with your state agency to determine the date the application is due (most are due in April). It's a good idea to submit your application as early as possible to ensure that it will be processed and approved in time to open your sites.

Application Tips:

- Make sure every field is filled in and nothing is left blank
- Double check your dates and days of operation
- Submit eligibility documentation for each open site
- Keep a copy of the application for your files.

FINANCING THE SUMMER FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM

The financial implications of sponsoring the SFSP are varied. Some food banks invest more in the program than they recoup in reimbursements and some break even. The biggest expenses in operating SFSP are food and staff, while the chief source of revenue is the SFSP reimbursement. Many receive donations, grants, or other support to help fund their SFSP sites. To maximize the reimbursement, food banks should make every effort to encourage participation and take advantage of the food procurement resources at their disposal. The sections below cover a typical budget for a food bank sponsor, along with two sample budgets, a description of potential revenue sources, and strategies to save money as an SFSP sponsor.

BUDGETING: EXPENDITURES

As stated above, the two major expenses for food bank sponsors are meals and staff. Other necessary expenses include outreach, administrative overhead, delivery of meals, and transportation. Typically, the potential costs of the program are associated with the location of your sites, level of participation, number of meals served, types of meals served, and sponsor's ability to partner with other community programs and organizations. Thus, to anticipate the potential costs to run an SFSP in your area, think about the number of children that will participate, kinds of meals that will be served, and types of sites the food bank will sponsor.

> Possible Expenditures:
> - Food or meals
> - Staff
> - Outreach
> - Administrative costs
> - Miscellaneous and other expenses

FOOD AND MEALS

The most costly expense will be the meals or food. Whether the food bank vends the meals, prepares them at a central location, or provides food to the sites, the cost will hit the food bank directly. In these cases, food banks may decide to retain a portion or all of the SFSP reimbursement. Some sponsors may have the sites prepare meals, in which case it is up to the food bank to work out with the sites how the purchase and preparation of food will be reimbursed. Some food banks will pass through a portion or all of the SFSP reimbursement to the sites if those sites prepare their own meals, whether or not the food bank is providing some sort of product support.

STAFF

Staff is required in the SFSP for meal preparation, meal service, recordkeeping, site monitoring, site staff training, and other administrative activities like filing for reimbursements. There are staff responsibilities at both the site and sponsor levels, with the bulk of administrative work concentrated at the sponsor level. Sponsors may need to hire temporary, seasonal staff or recruit volunteers to carry out monitoring activities, site visits, and other duties. Depending upon how the food bank chooses to prepare the meals, the sponsor may also be responsible for staff to prepare the meals. Most certainly, the sponsor will require staff to administer the program, but the sponsor may be able to have site staff absorb daily record keeping and meal service duties without additional compensation. Alternatively, the sponsor may have to supply or provide support for staff that can perform those duties if no others are able to supervise and serve meals.

OUTREACH

Children's participation is critical to the success of the program and should be encouraged through targeted outreach. Outreach expenses for the SFSP will be only a fraction of the overall program budget, but is an expense not to be overlooked. Some state agencies, the Feeding America national office, and the USDA all provide resources on outreach that will ease the time and money that must go into such

efforts. There are costs for flyers, banners, ads, and PSAs – all of which are important ways to encourage community children to participate. Sponsors may in some cases rely on sites to conduct outreach, especially for restricted open, closed enrolled or camp sites. However, since higher participation rates can make the SFSP more cost efficient and help alleviate hunger, food bank sponsors should devote some time and funds to outreach.

For more on outreach and freely available resources, see the Program Outreach section of this manual.

ADMINISTRATIVE AND OTHER EXPENSES

Other smaller expenses for most sponsors include those associated with administrative overhead, supplies, disposables, and equipment. In addition to the staff required for the administration of the SFSP, sponsors may need to provide resources like cell phones, transportation, office supplies, and various other incidentals to support administration. These may be required to allow staff to conduct site visits, handle paperwork, and perform various other tasks. Budget accommodations should also be made for travel expenses so that food bank staff can visit and monitor sites. Sites may require items like plates, forks, cups, other serving utensils, coolers, or other equipment necessary for the meal service, delivery, and storage. Nutrition education classes or other enrichment activities may require some small expenditure if conducted by the food bank. Finally, food banks should not overlook food safety training for site staff.

> Miscellaneous Expenses:
> - Administrative and Office
> - Travel
> - Supplies and disposables
> - Equipment
> - Training
>
> Other Expenses:
> - Meal Delivery
> - Child transportation
> - Occupancy
> - Insurance

Depending on the types of sites a food bank sponsors and the environment in which those sites operate, the total SFSP budget may need to include items relating to the delivery of meals, transportation of children, occupancy, and insurance. Food banks preparing meals in their community kitchen, for example, will need to allocate funds to provide for the delivery of those meals. Food banks sponsoring sites in rural areas may find that the only way to get children to an SFSP site is to provide transportation, in which case a sponsor's budget should reflect this substantial cost. Occupancy costs and insurance are expenses that few food banks will incur as sites typically provide for their own space and insurance. However, some community locations or facilities may require a small fee for use as an SFSP site.

BUDGETING: REVENUE

The primary revenue source for most SFSP sponsors is the SFSP reimbursement. For some, particularly new sponsors, this may not cover the total program expenses. To make up the difference, food banks and their sites may wish to fundraise, draw on organizational funds, or partner with other community programs.

Sponsors may apply for reimbursements on a monthly basis. **In addition, sponsors may apply for an advance for the summer from their state agency.** This advance is based on the participation numbers

from the previous year or, if a new sponsor, on expected participation. The advance amount is deducted from the reimbursement filed by the sponsor. If the food bank sponsor did not serve enough meals to be reimbursed in the amount of the advance, then the state agency will request that the excess funds be returned to the state.

Below are the reimbursement rates for 2009:

2010 SFSP Reimbursement Rates*		
Type of Meal	Self-preparation or Rural Sites	Other Types of Sites (Vended, Urban)
Breakfast	1.8475	1.8125
Lunch or Supper	3.2475	3.1950
Snack	0.7625	0.7450

*SFSP payment rates for all states except Alaska and Hawaii. Reimbursement rates for sites in Alaska and Hawaii are higher.

Sites may generate revenue if they provide meals to parents or other adults for a fee, which is allowable in the SFSP (but may have to comply with additional regulatory guidelines). These meals are not reimbursable, though they must be recorded. Meals served to "program adults" (staff or volunteers who are responsible for meal service) may be served for free. Sponsors serving non-program adult meals for a fee must charge at least the cost for the meal, including non-food operating costs, and must note this income in the sponsor's records. Usually, parents or guardians tend to be the consumers of these meals. In fact, opening the meal to parents and guardians can increase participation.

Sponsors may also look to more traditional means of program funding, which include grants, donations, civic organization sponsorship, and similar streams of funding. Given the SFSP's short operational timeline, some groups may be more inclined to donate or sponsor this specific program, especially since many are keen to support efforts that help children. Since the federal government supports the bulk of the program, the amount funded by donations is more accessible to smaller scale donors.

The following is a list of potential funding sources for the SFSP, many of which may already support the food bank in some form:

- **Feeding America:** Currently, Feeding America is able to provide grants through the generous support of CAF Foundation's "Hunger Free Summers" initiative. Check HungerNet for grant opportunities.
- **Community foundations and the United Way**
- **Service clubs:** Service clubs often fundraise among their memberships for specific causes within their community. They may be especially interested in supporting the SFSP as it helps children in the community, is short term and seasonal, and is of a size such that the group's support can be a substantial component of donor support. Membership groups like this can also be a source of volunteers. Examples of this type of organization include Rotary Clubs, Lions Clubs, Kiwanis Clubs, and Junior League. These are national organizations with local chapters, though some are only based locally.

- **Other community, religious, or civic groups:** Various other community entities may be inclined to support the SFSP, especially since the summer food program would be good for public relations.
- **Businesses:** Here again, supporting a child hunger program is appealing to businesses on multiple levels, least of which is good publicity for a cause that registers positively with the public.
- **Sponsorship fundraising:** One common fundraising method used by food banks affixes a dollar amount to the number of meals served or the time period the food bank can serve a child. This is very similar to a method used to raise money for the BackPack Program and may be a seasonal replacement if individuals or others want to sponsor children's programs throughout the year.

SAMPLE SFSP BUDGETS

The budgets below reflect no specific summer food program in the Feeding America network. These examples merely serve to inform current and potential sponsors of what expenses may be incurred during the course of an SFSP program and to show the differences between food banks that serve different communities.

SAMPLE FOOD BANK A

Food Bank A is sponsoring 15 open sites in an urban area and purchases meals from a vendor. The sites tend to be at community centers or other organizations that have their own summer programming and staff. On staff at the food bank is a program coordinator, who is a full-time employee of the food bank and also runs the BackPack program during the school year. The SFSP operates for seven weeks and feeds lunch to about 600 children daily.

Expenses		Revenue	
Meal Contract	$57,800.00	Reimbursement (21,000 Lunches x $3.13)	$65,730.00
Staff *Program Coordinator (30% of full-time)* *Programs Director (10% of full-time)*	$15,000.00	Community Foundation Grant	$5,000.00
Outreach	$1,500.00	Rotary Club Donation	$3,000.00
Administrative	$1,000.00	Food bank operating budget	$2,570.00
Training (food safety & SFSP training)	$1,000.00		
Total	**$76,300.00**	**Total**	**$76,300.00**

SAMPLE FOOD BANK B

Food Bank B is in a rural area and sponsors four open sites, serving lunch at each. As food bank-owned vehicles are tied up during the week, Food Bank B uses a van owned by a local church to deliver meals

daily to its site locations, all of which are in different towns at parks, housing complexes, and other places that are not affiliated with any other program or activity. The meals are made at the food bank by staff in its small community kitchen. The food bank has hired a part time staff person to deliver the meals but uses a set of dedicated, reliable volunteers to keep site records and supervise the children once meals are delivered. The staff delivering meals returns to each site after delivery to retrieve leftovers, waste, and the daily records. Food Bank B only delivers meals Monday through Thursday. The program runs for eight weeks, serving about 110 children daily.

Expenses		Revenue	
Food *Purchased Product (milk, juice, etc)* *Donated Product*	$6,000.00	Reimbursement (3,520 Lunches x $3.1825)	$11,202.40
Staff *Program Coordinator (10% of full-time – $3,000)* *Chef (10% of full-time staff – $3,000)* *Site Monitor (20 hrs at $8/hr – $1,280)*	$7,280.00	Community Foundation Grant	$2,000.00
Administrative	$500.00	Main Street Bank – Corporate Donation	$1,000.00
Outreach	$350.00	Food Bank Operating Budget	$1,127.60
Transportation (gas for delivery van)	$450.00		
Training (food safety)	$400.00		
Supplies (plates, napkins, etc)	$250.00		
Total	**$15,330.00**	**Total**	**$15,330.00**

WAYS TO SAVE ON SFSP

The SFSP provides much needed support for efforts to provide children with meals during summer, but it takes effort to maximize usage of the reimbursement. This section provides suggestions on minimizing the costs of sponsoring and running SFSP sites.

INCREASE SCALE BY INCREASING MEALS SERVED

One of the best ways to make your summer food program more cost efficient is to increase the scale of your program through participation, sites, and the kinds of meals served at your sites. Higher participation at a greater number of sites that serve both breakfast and lunch will result in more reimbursement funds. At the same time, the larger numbers will increase your ability to purchase foods or meals in bulk and at lower prices. Of course, these aspects are limited by capacity and need, but given the discrepancy between summer food participation and NSLP participation, millions of children are missing out on summer meals.

Sponsor open sites.
Sponsoring more open sites tends to make financing the program easier as it allows for greater access for children and less administrative work. The fewer forms the kids and parents need to fill out in order

to participate, the more likely the children will attend an SFSP site. Administrative expense can be saved by sponsoring open sites, which require less paperwork.

Open sites can include a combination of a camp-like program of activity for enrolled children, but offer lunch that is open to children from the surrounding neighborhood. In cases like these, where lunch or another meal is essentially opened to all children in the community, the sponsor and site staff should be aware of safety and supervision issues while also considering how to make neighborhood children feel most welcome at the site.

Serve hot, appetizing meals.
To increase the overall participation, sites may try serving hot meals. Children tend to find hot meals more appetizing and worth the effort of participating, especially if there is not another attractor like enrichment activities. Also, notice what the children like and do not like so that you can adjust your menu accordingly to serve the most appetizing meals possible.

Pay extra attention to the temperature of the food both in preparation and in storage in keeping with proper food safety guidelines. It is helpful to keep a functioning thermometer on hand for this purpose.

Serve more meals.
Children will be more likely to participate if there is more than one meal being served each day. Serving breakfast instead of a snack provides the children with more of their daily nutritional requirements. Breakfasts are reimbursed at a higher rate than snacks, adding to the program's revenue stream. Breakfast does not have to be served very early – the three hour time gap required between breakfast and lunch means that breakfast can be served at 9 a.m. or 9:30 a.m., which is a more attractive service time for children who sleep later in the summer.

Partner with organizations that offer summer activities.
Children are much more likely to attend a meal program if it also includes an activity in which they also want to participate. Some sponsors find that even a short activity still contributes to greater participation. A full program of activities is even better. Involving parents also helps to increase participation. If sites allow parents to eat meals with the children they can increase child participation and generate extra revenue. However, remember that program regulations require the parents pay at least the cost of the meal unless they are a volunteer.

REDUCE LABOR COSTS

Sponsors can minimize the cost of staffing, one of the largest costs in sponsoring the SFSP, by increasing or altering the job duties of site staff, using volunteers, and partnering with other organizations or programs to fill various functions. Many food banks partner with organizations that already have a full staff that can supervise children, keep daily records, and prepare meals, without specific financial support from the sponsor for the site's labor costs. If new or extra staff is needed, volunteers can supplement paid staff or, in less demanding cases, completely supervise and run an SFSP site. Volunteers can also be used to provide programmatic assistance if site or sponsor employees are providing meal service (or vice versa).

Other community or government programs may offer some labor cost relief, especially vocational or culinary training programs that may be able to plan menus and prepare meals. Some of these opportunities may lie with a community kitchen, local school programs, or with a federal job training program, like Job Corps. Service programs like AmeriCorps VISTA and NCCC offer government subsidized labor that can support the SFSP in a multitude of roles. Finally, many states and the federal government offer work study programs that allow students to work at community service organizations. This can be a way to subsidize additional staff for sites or site administration. Often, state departments of education operate work study programs.

REDUCE FOOD COSTS

To reduce food costs, which are often largest expense in a sponsor's budget, food banks can use USDA commodities, donated product or other product in their inventory, purchase foods, enter into deals with local farmers, or purchase through a collective purchasing agreement with other local organizations. Generally, most products in a food bank's inventory, barring items with their own usage restrictions, can be used for the SFSP as long as proper food safety rules are followed. Depending on how the food bank plans to operate the SFSP, the food bank may use the same items it orders for the BackPack or Kids Cafe programs. Donors supporting the BackPack or Kids Cafe programs may be inclined to also "adopt" a summer program, especially if those donors supply child appropriate food donations. Also, you may purchase produce locally more cheaply during the summer months.

Using food bank product of any sort will require close collaboration with operations or warehouse staff in order to make ordering and storage as efficient as possible. Having them on board will make for smoother operation of the SFSP and ensure that the inventory is properly tracked.

For a closer look at how you can save money on meals, pre-cost meals by calculating the cost of each

> Note that Feeding America's Summer Food Program Standards require that SFSP sponsors make a reasonable effort to protect the safety of children at program sites:
> - For programs reimbursed through the USDA's Summer Food Service Program: Must comply with guidance/standards from the administering state agency regarding requirements to ensure safety.
> - For other summer service models: staff and volunteers with direct repetitive contact with children must pass National Background Search.

item and other associated production costs to determine the cost per meal. Especially if trying to decide between production methods, this will allow you to determine the most cost-effective option and will further allow you to adjust your menu to lower its cost. It may be helpful when predicting meal costs to have an accurate projection of attendance, when can be gleaned from the site staff and past attendance records.

REDUCE TRANSPORTATION AND MEAL DELIVERY COSTS

Meal delivery can also be taxing on resources, especially with a high number of sites. One way to reduce the costs of delivery is to utilize preexisting food bank routes so that when trucks or vans go out for delivery, they may also deliver meals to sites. If using this method, carefully plan the order of how the meals are loaded onto food bank trucks and plan accordingly to sustain appropriate meal temperatures.

Alternatively, food banks may be able to partner with other community organizations or companies that have wide reaching delivery networks, either for donated or cheap delivery assistance. Delivery possibilities depend on the types of meals being served – hot meals can be harder to deliver since they require delivery more frequently at specified times whereas cold meals can be hard to keep at temperature in hot summer months. Food banks may also partner with an outside entity, like a church or school, to secure a vehicle if all other food bank vehicles are unavailable.

Churches, schools, and other similar organizations may also be able to assist with the transportation of children. In rural areas with a less dense population, poor transportation limits SFSP participation. In some cases, schools may be open to donating the services of a bus or two to take children to and from a site. Other government agencies like departments of parks and recreation may be able to donate similar resources, especially if not sponsoring the SFSP themselves. Churches or other civic organizations that tend to have larger vehicles that they do not use regularly may be able to let organizations use the vehicle at reduced or no cost.

REDUCE COSTS THROUGH COLLABORATION

Often partnering with other community organizations, companies, civic groups, and government agencies can lead to reducing the costs of the SFSP. Organizations can share staff, meal preparation, provision of activities, and numerous other resources that can increase the success of your summer program.

Also, better integration with other food bank activities can also streamline the program and reduce costs. Child hunger programs like BackPack and Kids Cafe may overlap the SFSP in the foods, labor, and sites they require. For more information on how food banks can integrate the SFSP with their other programming, see Feeding America's SFSP Case Studies (coming soon).

CHAPTER 3: ADMINISTERING THE PROGRAM

This section will cover the following topics.

- ✓ Training your staff, sites, and volunteers.
- ✓ Site monitoring requirements.
- ✓ Record keeping requirements.
- ✓ Filing claims for reimbursement.

TRAINING

Sponsors are required to attend a training session through their state agency. In addition, sponsors are required to train all administrative staff, site monitors, site supervisors, and all other site staff.

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Training for all administrative staff should cover the following:

- **Basic program information**: purpose of the program, site eligibility, recordkeeping requirements, organized site activity, meal requirements, and nondiscrimination compliance
- **How the program will operate within the framework of the guidelines**: how meals are provided, delivery schedule, records/forms used
- **Specific duties of monitors**: conducting site visits/reviews, assigning site responsibilities, monitoring schedule, reporting procedures, follow-up procedures, office procedures

Resources
Administrative Staff Training Checklist
Administrative Staff Training Template (Coming Soon)*
*Important: Please note that state agency training requirements may differ and you may need to modify the training template accordingly.

SITE MONITORS

Monitors should attend the administrative staff training, but since the monitor function is so important to the program it is recommended that the sponsor hold a separate training session for monitors. This training session should cover the following:

- Monitor duties and responsibilities

- Distribution of monitor review forms and any other records you may need to keep, such as mileage records
- Procedures for monitoring meal counts, adjusting meal preparation or deliveries, reporting complaints to the vendor, and collecting site records
- Assignment of sites each monitor will be responsible for

Resources

Site Monitor Training Checklist

Site Monitor Training Template (Coming Soon)*

*Important: Please note that state agency training requirements may differ and you may need to the training template accordingly.

SITE STAFF

No food service site may operate until staff at that site has attended at least one of the sponsor's training sessions. Sponsors must document attendance at site training sessions. The following topics must be covered during this training session:

- General explanation of the program
- How sites operate (vended vs. self-prep)
- Recordkeeping requirements
- Monitors' responsibilities
- Civil Rights requirements
- Other policies/issues specific to food bank or state agency

SFSP regulations require that at least one person who has completed the sponsor training session be present at each site during meal service operations. Therefore, it is a good idea to train multiple supervisors at each site.

Resources

Site Staff Training Checklist

Site Monitor Training Template (Coming Soon)*

*Important: Please note that state agency training requirements may differ and you may need to the training template accordingly.

MONITORING

It is essential for food banks to have a qualified monitoring staff in place to ensure the successful operation of the program. The monitor is the direct link between the sponsor and site staff. It's important to verify that sites are operating according to program guidelines.

Monitor's responsibilities include:

- Participate in sponsor's Monitor Training session

- Check that program is operating according to guidelines and that adequate records are maintained
    - Prior to a site visit, monitors should review prior records for each site in order to verify that the site's activities, like number of meals served, are consistent with what is being recorded
- Conduct site trainings, if necessary
- Conduct pre-operational visits for new and problem sites
- Visit all assigned sites in the first week of operation to verify that food service is operating smoothly and make any needed adjustments
- Review food service operations of all sites within the first 4 weeks to thoroughly examine and observe meal service, from start to finish, correcting problems and providing additional training when necessary
    - Meals should be examined to make sure meal patterns are met and all required components of each meal are served to each child
- Revisit sites as necessary
- Reconcile discrepancies in meal counts with site supervisor
- Suggest corrective action, if needed
- Prepare reports for all visits and reviews and ensure that copies of reports are included in a file for each site
- Inform sponsor of problems at sites and make sure corrective action is taken and documented

A sponsor must ensure that the following minimum monitoring requirements are met:

MONITORING REQUIREMENTS	
Pre-Operational Visits	Sponsors should visit all new and problem sites before they begin operations. These visits are required to make sure that sites have adequate facilities to provide meals service for the number of children expected to attend.
Site Visits	Sponsors must visit all sites at least once during the first week of operation. However, state agencies may waive this requirement for sponsors on a site-by-site basis, provided that the sites were operated successfully in the previous year and have an experienced program staff at each of the sites for which the waiver is requested.
Site Reviews	Sponsors must review all sites at least once during the first four weeks of program operations. After this initial period, sponsors must conduct a "reasonable" level of monitoring. If a site operates less than four weeks, the sponsor must still conduct a review.

As a new sponsor, you should be on the lookout for the following indications that closer monitoring is required. Paying close attention to a sites records and being attentive to changes at sites will make it easier to ensure that each site abides by SFSP regulations.

- **Sites with high staff turnover or significant staff changes**

  Sites with a lot of staff turnover or sites with staff changes that occur in the middle of the summer may mean individuals without adequate training are running the summer program. Not only should new individuals be trained but the sites should be closely watched during the transition to avoid any complications with record keeping or meeting SFSP requirements.

- **Sites run solely by volunteers**

  Since volunteers may be less experienced with meal patterns or other aspects of running a program that must follow federal guidelines, careful attention should be paid to this type of site.

- **Daily meal counts that do not change from day to day**

  If daily meal count records for a particular site do not change from day to day, the site may not be accurately recording the number of meals served. Most sites will experience variation in daily attendance and therefore experience variation in the number of meals served.

- **Daily meal counts that are inconsistent with count on day of monitoring visit**

  Before any monitoring visit, review past meal count records. If on the visit, the number of meals served differs significantly from past records, inquire about the cause of this discrepancy and determine whether follow-up training or other solutions are required.

- **Daily meal counts that consistently matches the number of meals that are delivered**

  There are a number of reasons the number of meals served may consistently match the number of meals delivered. It may mean that not enough meals are being delivered, the site is stockpiling the meals, or the site is serving the meals without recording them in the correct category. The solution may be sending more meals or re-training, among others.

Additional Monitoring Resources:

2009 USDA Monitor's Guide
Pre-Operational Site Visit Worksheet
First Week Visit Form
Site Review Form

RECORDKEEPING

Sponsors must keep full and accurate records in order to document the number of program meals they have served to children. Sponsors are required to provide program forms to the sites and site records should be based on what happened on the actual day of operation.

In order to justify claims for reimbursement, sponsors must maintain the following records

- Records of meal counts taken daily at each site
- Records of program operating costs, including food, and other costs
- Records of program administrative costs, including labor and supplies

- Records of funds accruing to the program

The following chart details records the sponsor must keep on file:

RECORDKEEPING DETAILS		
Record	**Who/How Often**	**Details**

Meal Counts
 	
Sample Daily Form
 	
Sample Weekly Form
	Site personnel must complete records daily based on actual counts.	• Meals delivered or prepared, by type (breakfast, snack, lunch, supper)
		   o Vended programs must provide signed delivery receipt
		   o Programs with a central kitchen should provide signed delivery receipt
		   o A designated member of site staff must verify the adequacy and number of meals delivered by checking meals when delivered
		• Complete first meals served to children, by type
		• Complete second meals served to children, by type
		• Excess meals or meals leftover
		• Non-reimbursable meals
		• Meals served to program adults, if any
		• Meals served to non-program adults, if any

Operating Costs	The sponsor must keep records on all operating costs. For vended programs, sites are responsible for keeping delivery slips to support sponsors claim for reimbursement.	• Food costs (for onsite preparation)
		   o Receiving reports that show the amount of food received from the supplier
		   o Purchasing invoices
		   o Records of any returns, discounts, or other credits not reflected on purchase invoices
		   o Inventory records that show the kinds of food items on hand at the beginning and end of the inventory period, the quantity of each item, documented major inventory adjustments, and the total value of the beginning and ending inventory
		   o Canceled checks or other forms of receipt for payment
		• Food costs (for vended programs)
		   o Signed delivery slips
		   o The site supervisor should:
		      ▪ Determine what meals they are signing for on the delivery slip
		      ▪ Check the quantity
		      ▪ Ensure that meals meet the meal pattern requirements
		      ▪ Note any errors/differences on the delivery slip
		      ▪ Maintain the signed detailed delivery slip to support the sponsor's claim for

		reimbursement ○ The delivery slip should include (at a minimum): ■ What meal is being delivered ■ The number of meals delivered ■ The delivery date and time • Labor costs ○ Compensation by sponsor for labor that is required to prepare and serve meals, to supervise children during meal service, and to clean up after meal service • Other operating costs ○ Costs of nonfood supplies ○ Rental costs for buildings, food service equipment, and vehicles ○ Utility costs ○ Mileage allowances
Administrative Costs Sample Administrative Mileage Form Sample Staff Hours Form Sample Administrative Combined Cost Form	Sponsor must document costs for all administrative activities. Note: time records must be kept to document all labor costs.	• Labor costs for administrative activities, including: ○ Preparing and submitting an application for participation ○ Establishing eligibility of open sites ○ Attending training provided by the state ○ Hiring and training site and administrative personnel ○ Visiting sites, reviewing and monitor sites ○ Preparing an Invitation to Bid if you are contracting with a food service vendor ○ Preparing and submitting claims for reimbursement ○ Other administrative activities relating to planning, organizing or managing the program • Rental costs of offices, office equipment and vehicles • Vehicle allowance and parking expenses • Office supplies • Communications • Insurance and indemnification • Audits • Travel
Funds accruing to the program	Sponsor must track all funds accruing.	• All funds received from federal, state, local and other sources (does not include program advances, startup funds, or payments received from the state agency), must be tracked through: ○ Deposit records ○ Voucher stubs ○ Receipts
Training records	Sponsors must document all training activities.	• Date(s) of training for site and administrative personnel • Attendance at each training session by having all attendees sign an attendance form

		• Topics covered at each training site
Visits and reviews [Pre-operational Review Report](#) [First Week Review Report](#) [Site Review Report](#)	Sponsors must document that they've met monitoring requirements.	• Pre-operational site visit report • First week site visit report • Any additional site visit reports • A site review report for reviews conducted during the first four weeks of operation • A site review report for reviews conducted throughout the duration of the program
Retention of records	Sponsor must maintain all records.	• As a sponsor, you must maintain all records for three years after the end of the fiscal year of operation or as required by your state agency. • Records must be accessible to federal and state agency personnel for audit and review purposes

CLAIMS FOR REIMBURSEMENT

Sponsors receive reimbursement based on the number of meals served multiplied by the appropriate reimbursement rate for combined administrative and operating costs. Claims for reimbursement must only reflect meals that met the SFSP requirements and were actually served to eligible children. Sponsors must take the following steps:

- Report the number and type of first and second meals served to all children. The total number of second meals claimed cannot exceed two percent of the number of first meals, for each type of meal served.
- Sign the reimbursement claim form and send it to the state agency within the month following the month you are claiming. Check with your state agency on the exact filing deadline.

Sponsors must maintain records of all operating and administrative costs as well as any program income received. The records must be available for review by the state agency.

Please note that state agencies may establish additional requirements and may have different methods of submitting claims, such as an online form. As always, it's important to work closely with your state agency to ensure you are meeting all requirements.

CHAPTER 4: MARKETING AND OUTREACH

This section will cover the following topics.

- ✓ Marketing and communication materials.
- ✓ Outreach materials.
- ✓ Summer Food Celebration.

MARKETING YOUR PROGRAM

Feeding America offers an array of services and materials to assist you in your marketing efforts. Below is a list of materials that will be helpful as you plan and market your program.

- Summer Food Service Program PSAs (TV and Radio) and Posters
- Summer Food Service Program Fact Sheet
- Face of Hunger Talking Points
- Hunger in America Talking Points
- Child Hunger Talking Points
- Feeding America Media Library
- Sample Press Release Template
- Feeding America Summer Food Service Program Logo*

*The Feeding America program logos were developed as a resource for all member food banks to help identify the connection between local programs and national efforts. Use of the logos should be in accordance with Appendix C of the Member Contract. Food banks are responsible for ensuring that program partners and agencies comply with usage guidelines.

PROGRAM OUTREACH

Program outreach is one of the most important aspects of the Summer Food Service Program. Often the program is underutilized in areas that have open sites simply because the children don't know where to go. In addition, food banks can act as community organizers, bringing together local organizations to operate the program. Your food bank can play a role in getting the word out by using the Summer Food Service Program Outreach Toolkit.

Feeding America has created banners, freely available from the national office, to identify open sites:

SUMMER FOOD CELEBRATION

Feeding America is committed to expanding the reach of the Summer Food Service Program and plans to hold an annual Summer Food Celebration to kick-off the start of local programs.

The Summer Food Celebration is a push for national and local media coverage. Food banks are encouraged to host kick-off events and register them with the national office. The national office will work with you to help plan events and work with local media to publicize your program. **Kick-off events are great opportunity to get your member of Congress involved, helping to raise the profile of your program and build a positive relationship between the food bank and legislators.**

Food banks are encouraged to use the Summer Food Celebration Toolkit which includes outreach ideas, event planning guides, scheduling requests to invite members of congress, and more.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The following resources are available to assist with planning and running the SFSP.

- **State Agency Contact List**
- **Glossary of Terms**
- **Glossary of Acronyms**
- **Sponsor Toolkit** (includes all sample forms referenced in this document)
- **Outreach Toolkit**
- **USDA 2009 Administrative Guidance for Sponsors**
- **USDA 2009 Site Supervisor's Guide**
- **USDA 2009 Monitor's Guide**
- **SFSP Food Bank Case Studies**
- **HungerNet's Child Hunger Programs Discussion Board**

For further assistance starting a summer program, please contact Feeding America's Programs staff at programsteam@feedingamerica.org.