

New Jersey Department of Agriculture Seeks Sponsors for Summer Food Service Program

Agriculture Secretary Douglas Fisher has launched the annual search for organizations interested in providing meals for needy children under the federally-funded Summer Food Service Program. The program reimburses participating organizations for meals served to children from areas in which at least 50 percent of the children qualify for free or reduced price meals under the National School Lunch Program. Children in your city/township are eligible to receive free meals during the summer months under this program.

Applicants may include public or private non-profit school food authorities; units of local, municipal, county or state governments; public or private non-profit organizations; residential summer camps and National Youth Sports programs.

The Summer Food Service Program began in 1976 as an outgrowth of the National School Lunch Program, which provides meals to needy children during school hours. The summer program targets children 18 years old or younger in economically disadvantaged areas. It is also open to people over 18 who are mentally - or physically - handicapped and who participate in public or non-profit private programs during the school year established for the handicapped.

Organizations approved to provide service programs are also responsible for running the feeding sites that provide the meals to youngsters. Most participating organizations may be reimbursed for up to two meals a day – lunch and either breakfast or a snack. Those serving primarily migrant children may be reimbursed for up to three meals a day.

Residential camps also may serve up to three meals a day, but they will be reimbursed only for meals served to children **eligible** for free or reduced-price meals under the National School Lunch Program.

Organizations interested in such a sponsorship should write to Cherrie M. Walker Coordinator of NJDA's Summer Food Service Program, at NJDA, Division of Food & Nutrition Services, Bureau of Child Nutrition Programs, P.O. Box 334, Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0334 or call (609) 292-4498. **The deadline for submission of completed applications is June 15, 2012.**