# Taste of California Standardized Recipe Challenge Grant Request for Applications Handbook

California Department of Education

Nutrition Services Division

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Provides an overview of the Taste of CA Standardized Recipe Challenge grant, project guidelines, instructions for how to apply, resources and contacts to support current and potential grantees.

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## Background

In October 2020, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) awarded $300,000 of the 2021 Team Nutrition (TN) Training Grant for School Meal Recipe Development funds to the California Department of Education (CDE) Nutrition Services Division (NSD) to administer the TN Taste of California Standardized Recipe Challenge (Taste of CA Challenge). The NSD will award and administer $266,000 in subgrants to 24 school districts. The Taste of CA Challenge grantees will develop standardized entree or side dish recipes using locally grown products, with an emphasis on connecting healthy school meals served in the cafeteria with nutrition and food literacy education and community engagement. Grantees will also participate in professional learning opportunities provided by peer experts in culinary skills, recipe standardization, cafeteria environment, and customer service.

In the event that student instruction and food service adaptations, as well as related USDA Child Nutrition Programs (CNP) waivers for Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) are still in effect for School Year (SY) 2021–22, the CDE NSD will adjust the Taste of CA Challenge grant implementation accordingly. This will include virtual meetings for all grant required trainings, professional learning calls, and technical assistance (TA), as well as distance learning for nutrition education activities, remote taste testing, and collecting feedback online or in a socially-distanced manner.

The USDA FNS awarded over $4.1 million in 2021 TN Training Grants to state agencies that administer the National School Lunch Program. These grants will assist states in helping schools offer meals supported by recipes that use local agricultural products and reflect local food preparation practices and taste preferences. The CDE Taste of CA Challenge was designed to engage regional school nutrition leadership in the development of school meal recipes using local foods to meet the diversity of students’ taste expectations across California, reflecting cultural cuisine from the state’s Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Indian, West African, Turkish, and Middle Eastern communities. Locally grown products will be featured in the recipes and may include **almonds, grapes, cauliflower, dates, avocados,**and **lamb**. Up to twenty school districts will receive virtual training and complete the Taste of CA Challenge. An additional four school districts will be identified as Taste of California Ambassadors, who will support the Taste of California’s virtual regional trainings and TA, recipe standardization and verification, and development of statewide resources.

For more information about the 2021 USDA FNS TN Training Grant for School Meal Recipe Development visit the USDA 2021 Team Nutrition Training Grants web page at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/2021-team-nutrition-training-grants>.

## Grant Overview

The goal of the Taste of CA Challenge grant is to develop and submit 24 standardized recipes to the USDA and to support Child Nutrition Program (CNP) Operators across the state in engaging students in taste testing, recipe development, and nutrition education that supports increased meal participation and student consumption of healthy foods. In the event that student instruction and food service adaptations, as well as related USDA CNP waivers for COVID-19 are still in effect for SY 2021–22, the CDE NSD will adjust the Taste of CA Challenge grant implementation accordingly.

The USDA TN Training grant funding cycle is November 1, 2020, through September 30, 2022. The NSD plans to award the subgrants through a Request for Applications (RFA) process. The funding cycle for the subgrants will begin no later than April 1, 2021, through August 31, 2022.

## Grant Timeline

**Phase One: Recipe Project Proposal and Grant Award Process, Recipe Standardization Training, and Professional Learning:**During Phase One, the prospective subgrantees submit a standardized recipe proposal and complete the grant application process. The subgrantees will participate in grant orientation calls, school meals showcases, virtual regional trainings, and professional learning calls (PLC) coordinated by the CDE with the support of Taste of CA Challenge Ambassador school districts. Taste of CA Challenge Ambassadors will also attend the Institute for Child Nutrition (ICN) Recipe Standardization training online.

| **Dates** | **Subgrantees** |
| --- | --- |
| **April to May 2021** | * Attend orientation webinar * Complete online ICN Standardization Training Provided by CDE (Ambassadors only) * Review recipes and develop action plans for recipe standardization and project activities |
| **May to July 2021** | * Develop training materials and schedule online training * (Ambassadors only) * Register for virtual regional trainings * Attend School Meals Showcases * Attend a PLC * Collect feedback from the community about the recipe * Attend virtual regional trainings * Identify local procurement sources * Prepare project budgets and begin action plans |
| **August to September 2021** | * Host virtual regional trainings * Attend virtual regional trainings |

**Phase Two: Community Engagement, Nutrition Education, and Resource Development:**During Phase Two, the CDE and Ambassadors will assist subgrantees with standardizing recipes, developing nutrition education approaches, designing community engagement opportunities, and developing surveys. The subgrantees will attend PLCs and School Meals Showcases. The subgrantees will submit their final reports including recipes, success stories, and photos.

| **Dates** | **Subgrantees** |
| --- | --- |
| **October to November 2021** | * Begin recipe standardization and taste testing * Coordinate school partnership activities and events (adhering to state and county guidelines) * Submit midproject reports, action plans, and budgets * Attend a PLC |
| **December 2021** | * Continue recipe standardization and testing * Coordinate school partnership activities and events (adhering to state and county guidelines) |
| **January 2022** | * Attend a PLC |
| **February to March 2022** | * Complete the recipe verification and adjustment phase * Adhering to state and county guidelines, conduct nutrition education activities or community events (minimum of two) connected to school meal service * Attend a PLC |
| **April to May 2022** | * Incorporate recipe into menu cycle * Survey staff and students (remote surveys acceptable) * Complete success story templates and photographs * Attend virtual School Meals Showcases |
| **June to July 2022** | * Submit final reports, recipes, menus, survey results, photos, photo releases, and success stories * Prepare and submit budget expenditure reports |
| **August 2022** | * Share success stories with peers and community * Reconcile documents to close grant with CDE. |

## Grant Eligibility

The NSD will prescreen all applications for the required documents and information. If an application is incomplete, the NSD may consider the applicant nonresponsive and may eliminate it from further evaluation.

### Eligibility Criteria

Public school districts, county offices of education, direct-funded charter schools, private schools, and residential childcare institutions who are school food authorities (SFA) that participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) or School Breakfast Program (SBP) are eligible to apply for this grant. SFAs participating in the Seamless Summer Options (SSO) or Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) instead of NSLP or SBP due to COVID-19 are also eligible to apply.

To receive a Taste of CA Challenge grant, an SFA **must** meet the following **minimum criteria**:

* Serve elementary school, middle school, or high school students
* Operate the NSLP, SBP, or SSO or SFSP in lieu of NSLP and SBP
* Propose a recipe featuring a locally grown product
* Provide an implementation plan describing the recipe development process, two nutrition education and community engagement activities connected to school meal service, and partnerships
* Have documented support of the school food service manager and district superintendent
* Submit a complete grant application package by the deadline
* Be in good standing status with the operation of federal CNPs

## Grant Project Requirements

Grantees have the flexibility to develop their own implementation plan and to choose the key ingredient, recipe flavor profile, menu grade group, nutrition education and promotion materials, and community engagement activities. Grantees are also encouraged to develop partnerships to help implement the program, such as with local universities, extension services, farmers markets, local growers, and grocers.

All grantees will be required to:

* Develop and standardize a regional recipe with school community participation
* Implement two nutrition or food literacy education activities that highlight both the featured locally grown ingredients and the local agricultural community
* Participate in Taste of CA Challenge virtual regional trainings and PLCs
* Produce and serve the recipe as a part of a reimbursable school meal during one meal service in at least one school site
* Conduct taste testing with staff and students, review survey results, and evaluate feedback; modify recipe accordingly and repeat cycle until 85 percent acceptance rate
* Provide requested data and reports to the CDE

In the event that student instruction and food service adaptations, as well as related USDA CNP waivers for COVID-19 are still in effect for SY 2021–22, the CDE NSD will adjust the Taste of CA Challenge grant implementation accordingly.

## Grant Awards

The CDE will use $266,000 of the Taste of CA Challenge grant to award 24 subgrants at two different award levels:

* 4 Taste of CA Challenge Ambassador School Districts will receive a $24,000 award.
* 20 Taste of CA Challenge School Districts will receive an $8,500 minimum award.

Number of awards and award amounts may vary based on the number of applications received and recipes submitted for standardization. Ambassador School District awards are based on additional project objectives and requirements including training development and attendance, curriculum and resource development, and peer support with recipe standardization, nutrition education, and community engagement activities.

## Grant Recipients

You can access the grant recipients and funding allocations for the Taste of CA Challenge from the CDE funding results web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/fo/fr/>. After selecting the link, you will need to search by fiscal year and type in Taste of CA Challenge under key words, then search. You can also access the Taste of CA Challenge Funding Results link from the CDE Rates, Eligibility Scales, and Funding web page <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/rs/index.asp#grants>, under the Grants section.

## SFA Capacity

### Project Director

The SFA must designate a project director (PD) for Taste of CA Challenge grant. The PD will oversee and coordinate all grant activities, maintain required records, and submit project and fiscal reports to the CDE. The PD is responsible for maintaining communication with, and must be part of the leadership team for each of the participating school sites.

The PD must have grant management experience or the SFA must identify relevant experiences and skills that will ensure successful grant management. The SFA must notify the CDE in writing of any changes in the staffing of the PD position and provide the CDE with the experience and qualifications of the replacement.

### Grant Project Support Team

Success with a Taste of CA Challenge grant requires a team approach. Grant Project Support Team members must have the authority to implement the activities in the grant project proposal. One of the team members must be the PD. Although the team may also include additional members, such as school principals, teachers, school staff, program coordinators, or community partners, the leadership team for the district must include at minimum the:

* PD
* District Food Service Director (FSD)
* Cafeteria Manager (CM) or Menu Planner or Coordinator

### Taste of CA Challenge Ambassador

SFAs awarded the Taste of CA Challenge grant at the Ambassador level must designate a district staff member with expert level experience in the recipe standardization process to be a Taste of CA Challenge Ambassador.

The Taste of CA Challenge Ambassador will:

* Assist four to six Taste of CA Challenge grantees with completing analysis, verification and adjustment of the recipe and creating high quality photos of their final menu item. Ambassadors may assist other grantees remotely (travel not required).
* Coordinate with the CDE to provide virtual training and TA on the recipe standardization processes to school districts in their regions.

The Taste of CA Challenge Ambassador must:

* Complete the ICN Recipe Standardization Training online.
* Have training leadership and facilitation experience or identify relevant and related experiences and skills.
* Maintain communication with other Taste of CA Challenge grantees and the CDE to ensure that the grant objectives can be completed in a timely manner.

The SFA must notify the CDE in writing of any changes in the staffing of the Ambassador position and provide the CDE with the experience and qualifications of the replacement.

### Student Involvement

This grant requires student involvement in both recipe development and nutrition education. The SFA must demonstrate capacity to involve at least 50 students who participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) or School Breakfast Program (SBP) in taste testing of the recipe and maintain participation until the recipe has received an 85 percent approval rating (recipe accepted as is). SFAs may involve students in taste testing who are participating in the Seamless Summer Option (SSO) or Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) instead of NSLP or SBP due to COVID-19. The SFA must also administer surveys to students to evaluate the acceptance of the new standardized recipe once offered on the menu during normal meal service.

To adhere to county health precautions that may be in place during the grant period, grantees may adjust their implementation of activities requiring student involvement accordingly:

* Grantees may use online tools or surveys, QR codes on labels, cards, and signage, and social media platforms, in addition to traditional taste testing evaluation methods.
* Grantees may allow taste testing to occur off site if students are provided a means to give feedback within a consistent and timely manner.
* Grantees may provide nutrition education activities online or in-person and socially-distanced, if permitted, through school educators as well as community nutrition educators and partners.

### Staff and Community Engagement

This grant requires engagement of the school community including school nutrition staff, students, teachers, or other community partners. The SFA must demonstrate the capacity to involve the stakeholders in the recipe development process and to collect their feedback.

For example, grantees may involve the school community in the following project activities:

* Identifying recipe main ingredients and menu ideas
* Demonstrating how the recipe reflects the cultural or regional preferences or preparation methods
* Participating and coordinating taste testing, nutrition education, and recipe promotion events, in adherence to county health precautions
* Providing feedback on the practicality of the recipe as part of ongoing meal service operations

At minimum, the SFA must collect feedback from school nutrition professionals preparing the menu item during normal meal service.

## Project Design

### Recipe Development

Each Taste of CA Challenge school district will propose at least one recipe for standardization. This recipe must be an entrée or side dish designed for an elementary school, middle school, or high school participating in the NSLP or SBP, or SSO or SFSP in lieu of NSLP and SBP due to COVID-19 meal service adaptations. All Taste of CA Challenge standardized recipes will be submitted to the USDA and posted on the ICN Recipe Box web page at <https://theicn.org/cnrb/recipes-for-schools/>. Therefore, recipes must not duplicate current recipes but meet an identified need for recipes not already available on the ICN Recipe Box web page at <https://theicn.org/cnrb/recipes-for-schools/>.

### Regional Training and Professional Learning

All Taste of CA Challenge grantees are required to attend virtual regional training and professional learning events provided during the grant project. The trainings are designed to assist grantees with meeting their project objectives as well as develop staff in sustainable practices for recipe standardization, local procurement, nutrition education, and community engagement. Distance learning opportunities may be substituted for in-person trainings based on travel restrictions that may be in place during the time of the training. Grantees may also share training materials posted online with staff. The CDE NSD will offer additional training opportunities that are in line with social distancing precautions, as needed.

The following team members are required to participate in the following Taste of CA Challenge trainings:

* **Taste of CA Challenge Grant Online Orientation** 
  + Required: PD and FSD
  + Optional: Grant project support team members
* **USDA Recipe Standardization Online Training**
  + Required: Taste of CA Challenge Ambassadors (Participation is currently limited to Ambassadors)
* **Virtual Regional Trainings**
  + Required: Taste of CA Challenge PDs, FSDs, CMs, and Ambassadors
  + Optional: Project leadership team members, school district nutrition staff, other regional SFAs, and community partners
* **Professional Learning Calls (PLC) and Online School Meals Showcases**
  + Required: PDs, FSDs, and CMs must participate in at least two PLCs and one SCHOOL MEALS SHOWCASES during the grant period.
  + Optional: Project leadership team members and school district nutrition staff, other regional SFAs, and community partners

### Recipe Standardization

1. **Preparation:** The recipe must be prepared at least three times to verify a consistent yield of 50 or 100 servings.
2. **Verification:** The recipe must be analyzed to determine the contribution of the recipe towards the meal pattern requirement and nutrition standards. The Recipe Analysis Workbook available on the USDA Food Buying Guide web page at <https://foodbuyingguide.fns.usda.gov/> must be used to determine the expected meal pattern contribution and crediting information for recipes developed under this grant. Taste of CA Challenge Ambassadors will be assigned to grantees to assist with the recipe analysis and verify that the recipe meets the requirements.

If meal service adaptations and USDA waivers are in place for COVID-19, the menu item may be served as a part of an SSO or SFSP menu. However, the SFA must also demonstrate that the menu item can meet the NSLP or SBP weekly meal pattern requirements.

1. **Adjustment:** Standardized recipes shall be developed in yields of 50 or 100 servings. If the recipe does not provide the exact yields, it must be adjusted to the correct yield. Grantees may use the Factor Method, Direct Reading Tables Method, Percentage Method, or the Computerized Recipe Adjustment Method to adjust recipes.
2. **Student Taste Testing:** Before the recipe is finalized, it must be taste tested and accepted by students participating in the NSLP or SBP. SFAs may involve students in taste testing who are participating in the SSO or SFSP instead of NSLP or SBP due to COVID-19. The taste testing may occur prior to submitting your recipe proposal, as well as multiple times throughout the standardization process. The taste testing must include a tool for documenting student acceptance. Grantees may use online tools or surveys, QR codes on labels, cards, and signage, and social media platforms, in addition to traditional taste testing evaluation methods. Grantees may also allow taste testing to occur off site if students are provided a means to give feedback within a consistent and timely manner. A minimum of 50 students must taste test the recipe and 85 percent of the taste testers must approve the recipe for it to be accepted. Recipes that do not reach or exceed the acceptability rate must be modified and retested.
3. **Finalization:** Recipes must contain all the information listed below:
   * Title and description
   * Recipe category
   * Ingredients list
   * Weight or volume of each ingredient
   * Preparation directions
   * Cooking temperature time and preparation time
   * Serving size
   * Recipe yield
   * Equipment and utensils needed
   * Meal pattern crediting information (per serving)
   * Nutrient analysis (per serving)
   * As purchased amount to yield edible portion
   * Food safety guidelines
   * High resolution photo (300 dots per inch [DPI]) of the finished product and a single serving

The final recipe information must be submitted using the USDA approved template for posting on the ICN Recipe Box web page at <https://theicn.org/cnrb/recipes-for-schools/>.

**Service:** Grantees must serve the new recipe as a part of a reimbursable school meal during one meal service in at least one school site for SY 2021–22. Prior to service, the school community should be introduced to the new menu item through nutrition education and promotion. These activities may be conducted virtually. Grantees are required to conduct a survey of school nutrition service staff so that they may provide feedback after the menu item is served. If possible, grantees are also encouraged to collect feedback from students participating in normal meal service.

If significant food supply disruptions occur that impact your ability to receive the key ingredient, please contact the CDE NSD. The CDE NSD recommends selecting recipes whose ingredients were readily available during previous COVID-19 meal service adaptations.

### Nutrition Education and Food Literacy

Grantees are required to provide at least two nutrition education, food literacy, or community engagement activities connected to school meal service that feature the local agricultural products, food sources, and recipes. Activities may be conducted online or in-person, if permitted under county health precautions, through school educators as well as community nutrition educators and partners. Grantees should engage in local community partnerships to identify nutrition education materials and resources and to implement activities. The nutrition education and food literacy activities must extend to schools where the menu item will be served. Grantees may fulfill this requirement through various methods that are in adherence to current state and county precautions for social-distancing, which may include, but not be limited to:

* Online or in-class instruction
* Social media and online videos
* Farmer’s markets
* Cooking demonstrations (may be virtual)
* Workbooks, assignments, projects, and handouts
* Taste testing of the key ingredient and other locally grown products
* School nutrition advisory committees
* Virtual or in person field trips, garden tours, competitions, or assemblies

Grantees must inform CDE of planned nutrition education events that promote the recipe ingredients and provide experiences with local agricultural products and coordinate potential CDE observation, whenever possible. The CDE may or may not coordinate site visits due to travel or COVID-19 restrictions.

### Resource Development

Grantees are required to submit their final recipe using the required USDA template, photos, and success story with the final project report. Additional resources developed with this funding for the purpose of promotion, training, nutrition education, or community engagement must be shared with the CDE.

For more information and resources to develop your Taste of CA Challenge project, visit the Resources tab.

## Sustainability

In addition to submitting the recipes to the USDA, the CDE will post the final Taste of CA Challenge standardized recipes on the CDE CA Culinary Centers Standardized Recipes web page and publish a recipe book with each grantee’s recipe and success story.

The CDE will also post the virtual regional training materials on the CDE website developed in partnership with the Taste of CA Challenge Ambassadors. Other materials shared during professional learning calls and School Meals Showcases will also be posted on the CDE website.

At the end of the project, the SFA will submit a sustainability plan for the district that will include:

1. Implementing a method for sharing and promoting these materials with school nutrition staff and other district programs or community partners.
2. Continuing standardized recipe development for school nutrition meal service using locally grown products at their school district.
3. Sharing future standardized recipes with the CDE. The CDE may accept future standardized recipes submitted by grantees if they are peer reviewed and verified by a Taste of CA Challenge Ambassador or another CA Culinary School District. Grantees must submit future recipes using the CDE Standardized Recipe Form at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/he/documents/recipe.pdf>.

## Project Budget

SFAs will receive grant funds in two allocations:

1. Ninety percent of the funds will be allocated at the initiation of the grant
2. The remaining 10 percent of the funds will be allocated at the conclusion of the grant and upon the CDE’s receipt of the final report

### Taste of CA Challenge School Districts

The purpose of the Taste of CA Challenge grant funding is to support the following Taste of CA Challenge school district grant requirements:

* Attendance at virtual regional training, PLCs, and online School Meals Showcases
* Recipe standardization and verification process, meal preparation, taste testing, staff training, and evaluation
* Implementation and coordination of nutrition education, food literacy, and community engagement activities, in adherence to county health precautions
* Finalization of standardized recipes, success stories, and resources

In the event that student instruction and food service adaptations, as well as related USDA CNP waivers for COVID-19 are still in effect for SY 2021–22, the CDE NSD will adjust the Taste of CA Challenge grant implementation accordingly.

### Taste of CA Challenge Ambassador School Districts

In addition, the Taste of CA Challenge Ambassador School Districts may use grant funds to support the following Ambassador Grant requirements:

* Attendance at USDA Recipe Standardization Online Training
* Development of recipe standardization train the trainer curriculum and materials
* Coordination and facilitation of virtual regional trainings
* TA to other Taste of CA Challenge school districts in the areas of recipe standardization, nutrition education, and community engagement activities

Each site must expend grant funds according to their approved project budget and budget narrative. All grant funds must be obligated, and all activities must be completed by June 30, 2022.

## Allowable and Unallowable Costs

In addition to federal regulations and state guidance, the USDA FNS 2020 TN Training Grant Request for Applications (CFDA #10.574) defines the allowable and unallowable uses of the Taste of CA Challenge grant funding in the following budget expenditure categories.

### Food Costs

Taste of CA Challenge grant funds may be used to pay for food if the food is part of a specific grant activity.

Allowable costs include:

* Food purchases to develop and test standardized recipes developed under this grant.
* Food purchases and supplies for taste testing events conducted with students (who attend an NSLP, SBP, SSO, or SFSP participating school) to evaluate or promote the standardized recipes being developed under the grant.
* Food purchased to demonstrate or provide instruction to school nutrition professionals on the preparation of a standardized recipe developed under this grant.
* Food used as part of nutrition education activities with students in accordance with the objectives of this grant.

Unallowable costs include:

* Purchasing meals and snacks for training participants.
* Foods used to prepare a meal for which reimbursement will be provided under the FNS nutrition assistance programs.
* Foods used as an incentive or prize.
* Foods provided directly to students and families to prepare and eat at home.
* Foods not related to the standardized recipes developed under this grant.

Food purchases must be in accordance with the Agency’s Buy American Provision. For more information, refer to the Office of Management and Budget Title 2, Code of Federal Regulations (2 CFR), Part 200, (Super Circular) and 2 *CFR*, Part 400, available on the Electronic Code of Federal Regulations web page at <https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=99852e757813fd558292ce69c705d3f9&mc=true&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2tab_02.tpl>. Local agricultural products featured in the recipes must be procured from a local producer.

Taste of CA Challenge school districts may not have food expenditures that exceed 15 percent of the funds awarded.

Grantees awarded as Taste of CA Challenge Ambassador school districts may not have food expenditures that exceed 10 percent of the funds awarded.

### Personnel

Allowable personnel costs include the PD, chef, or school nutrition professional responsible for developing recipes, nutrition educator, trainer, or photographer, etc. Positions must be justified by grant project roles and activities. If adequate funding is available, and the expenditure is approved by the CDE, the SFA may use these grant funds to hire a substitute teacher, administrator, or food service staff to allow Taste of CA Challenge representatives to attend training, participate in planning sessions, or other staff development opportunities in recipe standardization or nutrition education. For accounting purposes, a record of who attended the session, how long it lasted, and the purpose of the session is required.

### Supplies

Supplies and small equipment may be purchased to implement Taste of CA Challenge program objectives. Allowable expenses include but are not limited to: developing and preparing standardized recipes, providing samples of recipe items or components for taste testing, supplies to support community engagement activities, and promoting the menu item during meal service. Allowable items such as menu boards, baskets, serving trays, blenders, cutting boards, or knives, for example, may be purchased. However, the school must have prior approval from the CDE before purchasing any item with a unit price of $300 or more.

Any costs associated with prizes or incentive items are not allowed.

### Equipment

The SFA may not use TN funds to purchase food service operation equipment, such as salad bar equipment, refrigerators, and food processors. However, small equipment purchases under $5,000 for food service operation equipment such as sliders, sectionizers, food processors, electric skillets, coolers, worktables, utility carts, can openers, and mixers are allowable.

Small mobile kitchen equipment for classroom food preparation or hands-on food experiences may be permissible if such activities are part of the integrated nutrition education lessons specified under objectives of the proposed grants. Teacher commitment to teach nutrition in the classroom or online and share the use of the purchased mobile kitchen equipment among other teachers should be clearly indicated in the grant proposal.

A total expenditure of small mobile kitchen equipment and nutrition-related equipment purchases should not exceed 5 percent of the total grant awarded.

### Training and Nutrition Education Materials

The following training and nutrition education costs are allowed if submitted in a proposed budget and approved by the CDE:

* Costs to provide training to state agency staff, consultants, contractors, and partners that will be developing standardized recipes.
* Costs to provide training to school nutrition professionals on the preparation and meal service of standardized recipes under this grant.
* Costs related to the development of training, recipes, and nutrition education materials to support grant activities, such as videography, photography, food styling, graphic design, duplication, translation, online training development, 508 remediation of documents, and shipping.
* Clothing such as chef hats, aprons, and shirts are not allowed.

### Technology

Procurement of technology is allowable with approval of the CDE and may not exceed 10 percent of requested funds. Grantees may purchase high resolution photography equipment to take photos of the recipe item, standardization process, meal service, and nutrition education activities. Other allowable technology purchases may include equipment or software to support the development of virtual trainings, cooking demonstrations, or nutrition education or the development of online surveys. However, funds used for photography or videography equipment shall not exceed $2,000.

### Travel

Taste of CA Challenge grant funds may be used for travel costs necessary for the following grant activities, if permitted under county health precautions:

* Travel reimbursement for attending local trainings (according to CDE travel guidance and per diem rates).
* Travel of key personnel to taste test events and other grant activities.
* Travel costs associated with school-sanctioned field trips to visit farms or production facilities of local agricultural products featured in the standardized recipes.
* Stipends may be used to reimburse for local travel and hotel costs for school nutrition professionals to attend grant-related trainings and activities.

The CDE has currently restricted in state and out state travel through December 31, 2021. In the event that student instruction and food service adaptations, as well as related USDA CNP waivers for COVID-19 are still in effect for SY 2021–22, the CDE NSD will adjust the Taste of CA Challenge grant implementation accordingly to eliminate unnecessary travel and in-person contact.

### Indirect Costs

Indirect costs are agency-wide, general management costs (i.e., activities for the direction and control of the agency as a whole). General management costs consist of administrative activities necessary for the general operation of the agency, such as accounting, budgeting, payroll preparation, personnel services, purchasing, and centralized data processing. Indirect cost rates may not exceed the approved CDE Indirect Cost Rate for the local educational agency provided on the CDE Indirect Cost Rate web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/ac/ic/>.

## Reporting

The CDE requires all Taste of CA Challenge grantees to complete an action plan, a budget, a mid-project report, success story, and a final report. The CDE will provide grantees with templates and timelines for the reports.

## How to Apply for the Taste of CA Challenge Grant

### Request for Applications

The CDE Taste of CA Challenge grant Request for Applications (RFA) is an online application. All eligible school food authorities (SFA) must submit the application to apply for the Taste of CA Challenge Grant.

You can download the grant application package and instructions from the Search CDE Funding web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/fo/sf/index.aspx>. After selecting the link, you will need to type in Taste of CA Challenge under keywords, then search. You can also access the Taste of CA Challenge RFA online application from the Rates, Eligibility Scales, & Funding web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/rs/index.asp#grants> under the Grants section.

### Grant Eligibility

Information about the Taste of CA Challenge grant eligibility is available under the Grant Overview tab. Applicants that do not meet the Taste of CA Challenge grant eligibility and program requirements will not be awarded and should not apply.

### Good Standing Status

If an agency is currently participating in any of the federal Child Nutrition Programs (CNP), they must be in good standing status in the operation of those programs administered by the CDE and in compliance with all related regulations during the application process and anytime during the course of the grant period. This means that an agency cannot be documented as having an open serious deficiency in its operation of the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) or the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), and cannot have an active reimbursement hold in the School Nutrition Programs (SNP) related to nonsubmission of or unacceptable corrective action documentation (Title 7, *Code of Federal Regulations* [7 *CFR*], sections 226.6[c][3][iii], 225.11[c], and 210.24 respectively).

If an agency knowingly submits false information on its grant application or invoices, the CDE may deny or collect the agency’s grant funding.

The following criteria are considered when making grant award determinations. Any of the factors below may affect your agency’s eligibility to receive grant funding:

1. Open serious deficiencies in the CACFP or SFSP (7 *CFR*,sections 226.6[c][3][iii] and 225.11[c])
2. SNP reimbursement holds (7 *CFR*, Section 210.24)
3. Failure to attend mandatory training (CACFP, SFSP) (7 *CFR*, sections 226.16[l][2][viii] and 225.7[a])
4. Failure to report or submit required documents (CACFP, Food Distribution Program [FDP], SFSP, and SNP) (7 *CFR*, sections 226.16[b], 240.11[a], 250.12[c], 225.6[c], and 210.15[a])
5. Outstanding account receivables (that are not currently being offset) and have aged beyond 30 calendar days (CACFP, FDP, SFSP, and SNP) (7 *CFR*, sections 226.14, 225.12, and 210.19[c]; California State Administrative Manual – Nonemployee Accounts Receivable – Section 8776.6; and Management Bulletin (MB) NSD-FDP-01-2011)
6. Fiscal accountability findings identified during the agency’s most recent annual update completed via the Child Nutrition Information and Payment System (CNIPS), review or audit (CACFP, SFSP, and SNP) (7 *CFR*, sections 226.6[b][2][vii][A][1], [2], and [3]; 226.6[m][3]; 226.8; 225.7[d][2]; 225.10[a]; and 210.19[a][1])
7. Administrative capability findings identified during the agency’s most recent annual update completed via the CNIPS, review or audit (CACFP and SFSP) (7 *CFR*,sections 226.6[b][2][vii][B], 226.6[m][3], 226.8, 225.7[d][2], and 225.10[a])
8. Excess net cash resources (CACFP, SFSP, and SNP) (MB NSD-CACFP-07-2011; FNS 796-2, Rev. 4, page 7, Section [IV][D]; and 7 *CFR*, sections 226.15[e][13], 210.9[b][2], 210.14[b], and 210.19[a][1])

### General Assurances and Certifications

General assurances and certifications are requirements for applicants and grantees as a condition of receiving the grants. Applicants do not need to sign and return the general assurances and certifications with the application; instead, they must download them and keep on file to be available for compliance reviews, complaint investigations, or audits.

Applicants that participate in the consolidated application should already have a copy of the general assurances and certifications on file and do not need to keep a separate copy. The general assurances and certifications can be accessed on the CDE Funding Forms web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/fo/fm/ff.asp>.

Applicants, if funded, as a condition of receiving funds must agree to comply with the federal Uniform Administrative Requirements. For more information, visit the Title 2, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 200, web page at <https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2cfr200_main_02.tpl>.

### Tips for Completing Applications

1. **Gather** all the requested information before you submit your application. For ease of editing and formatting, **draft** your answers to the questions in a Word document and then cut and paste them into the online application.
2. **Print** a hard copy or PDF the entire application from the first screen of the application before entering any responses.
3. **Save** each application, so you can return to it later. You can save the unique URL to the online application as a bookmark or add to Favorites in your web browser.

Before you submit the application online, print and review the application for completion, grammar errors, and accuracy. Print and save a hard copy of your responses for your records. **You will not have access to your completed application after it is submitted.**

## Application Instructions

### Applicant Information

The CDE will use the SFA and school identification information provided in the application to verify that all the grant criteria are met. Applicants must provide the SFA’s:

* Name
* Address
* CNIPS identification number
* Vendor number
* County number

This information can be verified in the CDE CNIPS.

### Proposed Recipe

Submit a recipe proposal using the CDE Standardized Recipe Form at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/he/documents/recipe.pdf> and describe how the applicant:

* Identified a California locally grown key ingredient.
* Identified cultural or regional preferences and preparation methods.
* Developed a recipe that meets the NSLP or SBP Meal Pattern Requirements and Nutrition Standards.

To propose a recipe the Taste of CA Challenge district must:

1. **Identify a California locally grown key ingredient.** This ingredient should be a locally grown agricultural product that can be easily procured by your school district and not overly represented on the Institute for Child Nutrition (ICN) Recipe Box web page at <https://theicn.org/cnrb/recipes-for-schools/>. School districts are encouraged to partner with local farmers to identify ingredients and develop sustainable procurement practices.
2. **Identify cultural or regional preferences and preparation methods.** The recipe must also reflect flavor profiles or preparation methods that appeal to the local school communities’ cultural or regional preferences and preparation methods. Taste of CA Challenge districts may choose to survey students or school community members, or research culinary history and practices of communities in their region to inform their grant proposal.
3. **Assess the recipe’s adherence to the NSLP or SBP Meal Pattern Requirements and Nutrition Standards.** Schools operating the NSLP or SBP must meet weekly and daily meal pattern requirements and nutrition standards. Therefore, meal service use may be limited if the recipe item causes the menu not to meet or exceed these requirements.

Taste of CA Challenge Recipes should include:

* Multiple food components that assist the meal program in meeting the meal pattern including fruit, grains, meat or meal alternates, and a variety of vegetable subgroups.
* Low levels of sodium, fat, saturated fat, and zero trans-fat.
* Calorie content appropriate for the age and grade group menu served during normal meal service.

### Implementation Plan

Propose a project implementation plan that describes how the applicant will:

* Complete recipe standardization and verification
* Participate in virtual regional trainings and professional learning
* Implement two nutrition education and community engagement events online or in-person, if permitted
* Conduct student taste testing, in adherence to county health precautions
* Collect feedback from school community and school nutrition staff, in adherence to county health precautions
* Sustain recipe standardization and community engagement practices

For more information about the Taste of CA Challenge project design visit the Project Guidelines tab.

### Project Director and Ambassador Capacity

Identify the Project Director (PD) or Ambassador and provide descriptions of their capacity to:

* Provide grant oversight and reporting
* Coordinate staff and activities
* Attend online training
* Complete recipe standardization process
* Provide virtual regional training and technical assistance
* Manage financial aspects

### School Grant Team Support Form

To qualify for a grant, the CDE requires that the applicant must have the documented support of the district superintendent and school food service manager or director. In addition, each grant team must identify a PD or primary grant contact.

By completing the application, each member of the grant team is signifying that they agree to the general assurances and certifications (including drug-free workplace, lobbying, debarment, and suspension), and terms of this grant for all site applications identified with this SFA. The school support team includes, but is not limited to:

* School Superintendent (or designee)
* Food Service Director (or designee)
* Cafeteria Manager
* PD

### Submission

**The Taste of CA Challenge grant applications must be completed and submitted online**. The CDE **will not** consider email or hard copy applications as a complete submission.

Once the application is submitted, the CDE will provide a confirmation email to all the contacts included in the School Support Team.

Please visit the Taste of CA Challenge Funding Profile on the CDE Available Funding web page at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/fg/fo/af/index.aspx> for status updates.

## Grant Application Evaluation Process

The CDE NSD will screen all applications to ensure that they contain the required documents and information. If an application does not include all appropriate information, the NSD will consider the application nonresponsive and will eliminate it from further evaluation.

### Scoring Criteria

The NSD will use the following scoring criteria to evaluate applications under this competition. The maximum score is 300 points:

* SFA Capacity–50 points
* Recipe Proposal–90 points
* Merit of Project Design–100 points
* Sustainability–20 points
* Project Budget Appropriateness and Efficiency–40 points

#### SFA Capacity (50 points)

##### PD and Ambassador (20 points)

* Describes the qualifications and experiences of the PD as related to the required activities of this grant and with an emphasis on grant management, project management, and other skills that will ensure success.
* (Ambassador awards only) Describes the qualifications and experiences as related of the Ambassador, as related to the required activities of this grant and with an emphasis on standardized recipe development, relevant culinary experience, training, technical assistance, and management that will ensure successful recipe standardization for all Taste of CA Challenge grantees.

##### Organizational Capacity, Commitment, and Motivation (20 points)

* Adequately describes the motivations for applying for the grant, including any issues that the grant will address or and opportunities to improve school meal service.
* Describes the capacity of the organization, including similar or relevant past experiences, in performing the required elements of the grant.
* Includes any additional information, such as the priorities of the students, parents, school or cafeteria staff, as well as those of the district and community; this could include a brief summary of any needs assessment or related data that indicates a need for funding.

##### Grant Project Team Support (10 points)

* Includes at a minimum, the district Food Service Director and the cafeteria manager.
* Identifies the PD as one of the members of the leadership team.
* Includes additional members on the leadership team such as community partners or other school staff, such as teachers

#### Recipe Proposal (90 points)

##### Recipe Format (15 points)

* Recipe provided using the CDE Standardized Recipe Form at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/he/documents/recipe.pdf> (PDF).

##### Locally Grown Ingredient (25 points)

* Identifies the locally grown agricultural product and documents specific to the region.
* Locally grown feature ingredient is not overly represented in the ICN Recipe Box web page at <https://theicn.org/cnrb/recipes-for-schools/>.

##### Cultural or Regional Preference (25 points)

* Describes how the recipe reflects flavor profiles or preparation methods that appeal to the local school communities’ cultural or regional preferences and preparation methods.

##### Nutrition Standards (25 points)

* Discusses how the proposed recipe contributes to the appropriate meal pattern requirements and nutrition standards for the grade level and menu identified.

#### Merit of Project Design (100 points)

##### Virtual Regional Trainings and Professional Learning (20 points)

* Provides opportunities for virtual training and professional learning at minimum to the grant support team, and key nutrition staff, but may also include students or community.
* Identifies plan to engage district community in virtual regional training and professional learning.
* (Ambassador Only) Demonstrates experience and ability to develop peer training and engagement opportunities and materials; able to attend the ICN Recipe Standardization Training online.

##### Recipe Standardization (40 points)

* Demonstrates a reasonable understanding of the steps in the recipe standardization process.
* Identifies key staff and resources that will support the standardization process.
* Includes the use of CDE, USDA, or ICN developed materials.
* Provides examples of how students and food service staff will be involved in the process from recipe development to meal service.

##### Nutrition Education and Community Engagement (40 points)

* Provides at least two nutrition education, food literacy, and community engagement activities connected to school food service that feature the local agricultural products, food sources, and the standardized recipe online or in-person, if permitted.
* Identifies local community partnerships to support implementation with nutrition education materials, resources, and activities.
* May include broader reach with students or a more comprehensive nutrition education program, such as sequential, standards-based nutrition education curriculum.
* Describes adaptations to implementation plan to meet the nutrition education, student engagement, and taste testing requirements in the event that student instruction and food service adaptations, as well as related USDA CNP waivers for COVID-19 are still in effect for SY 2021–22.

#### Sustainability (20 points)

##### Rollout within the school sites and district (20 points)

* Describes proposed expansion of standardized recipe development, nutrition education, or community engagement throughout the district.
* Proposes methods for sharing and promoting the recipe and related materials with school nutrition staff and other district programs or community partners.
* Describes next steps in expanding the use of locally grown products at their school district.

#### Project Budget Appropriateness and Efficiency (40 points)

##### Expenditures (20 points)

* Itemizes reasonable, necessary, and allowable uses of funds.
* May include use of in-kind funds.

##### Narrative (20 points)

* Describes the agency’s planned financial and administrative oversight for the grant.
* Describes how funds will be spent and by whom.
* May include potential contracts or procurement for food or services within or outside the district.

### Review and Selection Process

Following the initial screening process, the NSD will assemble a review team to assess the technical merits of each application. The review team will evaluate and score the proposals based on how well they address the required application components. The review team will provide its recommendation to the NSD which will determine if the applicants are in good standing status in the CNPs and eligible for a grant.

The NSD reserves the right to award a grant to meet agency priorities, program balance, geographical representation, or project diversity.

### Confidentiality

When an application is submitted, it becomes part of the record of NSD transactions, available to the public upon specific request. Information that the NSD determines to be of a confidential, privileged, or proprietary nature will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law. Therefore, any information that the applicant wishes to have considered as confidential, privileged, or proprietary should be clearly marked within the application.

Applicants may withdraw their applications at any time prior to the final action therein by contacting the Taste of CA Challenge team at [CArecipes@cde.ca.gov](mailto:CArecipes@cde.ca.gov).

## Resources

The following resources can assist you in creating standardized recipes, engaging students, and preparing menus for your Child Nutrition Programs (CNP).

* [Recipe Development](#_Recipe_Development" \o "Recipe Development)
* [Student Engagement](#_Student_Engagement)
* [Meal Service](#_Meal_Service)
* [Community Partnerships](#_Community_Partnerships)
* [Training](#_Training)

### Recipe Development

| **Resource** | **Description** |
| --- | --- |
| CDE School Menu Planning Options web page <https://cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/he/smi.asp> | Guidance and resources on the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) meal patterns. |
| CDE Connecting with Local Farmers Market Sellers web page <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/countyfoodavailability.asp> | Includes the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) Farmers Market Certified Producers Directory, a contact list with over 800 certified Farmers’ Market sellers in California by County. |
| CDFA California Agricultural Statistics Review (PDF) <https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/statistics/PDFs/2017-18AgReport.pdf> | Includes statistics for leading commodities in California by county and season. |
| Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN) Recipe Box web page <https://theicn.org/cnrb/recipes-for-schools/> | USDA searchable collection of standardized recipes. |
| CDE Standardized Recipe Form (PDF) <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/he/documents/recipe.pdf> | This recipe template describes the exact, measurable amount of ingredients and the method of preparation needed to consistently produce a high-quality food product. |
| CDE Food Buying Guide (FBG) Calculator web page <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/ed/fbgcalculator.asp> | Provides the steps for using the USDA FBG Calculator to determine required quantities of foods to purchase to meet the meal pattern requirements. The USDA FBG for CNPs with interactive tools is also available as a mobile application. Download it today on your iOS and Android device from the Team Nutrition FBG Mobile App web page <https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/food-buying-guide-mobile-app>. |
| USDA Certification of Compliance Worksheets: 5-day Schedule web page <https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/certification-compliance-worksheets-5-day-schedule> | The certification worksheets to assist in determining if your menu is meeting the requirements. |
| USDA Approved Nutrient Analysis Software web page <https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/usda-approved-nutrient-analysis-software> | A list of nutrient analysis software approved for use in the NSLP and SBP. |
| USDA Foods Product Information Sheets web page <https://www.fns.usda.gov/usda-fis/usda-foods-product-information-sheets> | Fact sheets categorized by food type that describe the items expected to be available for schools participating in the NSLP and SBP. |

### Student Engagement

| **Resource** | **Description** |
| --- | --- |
| CDE CNPs Resource Library web page <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/ed/cnpresourcelibrary.asp> | Lists by program nutrition education curriculum, recipes, cooking in the classroom toolkits, and additional resource database links. |
| CDE The Child Nutrition Programs Cook with Kids! online training <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/ed/course431.asp> | A variety of tips and handouts for planning and instructing cooking and nutrition education in the classroom, including equipment lists, sample recipes, and safety rules. |
| Smarter Lunchrooms of CA <https://www.healthyeating.org/Schools/School-Foodservice/Smarter-Lunchrooms-Movement-of-California> | Provides best practices and resources for engaging students, promoting your nutrition program, and creating healthy school environments. |
| CDE Plant-based Meal Options in CNPs web page <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/he/vegmealoptionscnp.asp> | Includes definitions, background, health benefit information, how to take action, resources, online trainings, and policy guidance for CNP Operators interested in offering plant-based meals. |
| USDA Team Nutrition web page <https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn> | Provides resources listed by CNP, examples are posters, curriculum, garden activities, stickers, recipe books, and more. |
| CDE Distance Learning web page <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/dl/index.asp> | Guidance and resources for teachers and families in kindergarten through grade twelve schools regarding high quality distance learning. |
| Creating an Emotionally Healthy and Safe Child Nutrition Environment in Challenging Times (PDF) <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/documents/emotionalhealthfactsheet.pdf> | Handout for protecting your health and creating an emotionally healthy and safe environment for staff, students, and families during these challenging times. |

### Meal Service

| **Resource** | **Description** |
| --- | --- |
| CDE Menu Production Record (MPR) Forms <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/he/mnprodfrm.asp> | Example forms used by food service personnel to determine the amount of food to serve for menu production. |
| CDE Information Required on MPR <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/he/menuprorecords.asp> | The information required on the MPR. |
| NSD-SFSP-01-2008, Temperature Controls of Potentially Hazardous Food web page <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/sf/mbnsdsfsp012008.asp> | Information regarding temperature controls for potentially hazardous foods. |
| Safe Food Handling Practices During COVID-19 (PDF) <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/documents/foodsafetyfactsheet.pdf> | Handout for food safety guidance for school meal service during the COVID-19 pandemic. |
| COVID-19 Health and Safety Considerations During Food Service Preparation and Delivery (PDF) <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/documents/staffsafetyfactsheet.pdf> | Handout for staff safety guidance for school meal service during the COVID-19 pandemic. |

### Community Partnerships

| **Resource** | **Description** |
| --- | --- |
| Harvest of the Month web page <https://harvestofthemonth.cdph.ca.gov/Pages/default.aspx> | Resources to share fun nutrition facts about fruits and vegetables, easy to cook recipes, and tasting ideas that bring together the classroom, cafeteria, home, and community. |
| CA Family Community Career Leaders of America (FCCLA) web page <https://www.ca-fccla.org/> | Shares student leadership opportunities for students interested in the food industry, hospitality, nutrition education, and other family and consumer sciences. To contact the FCCLA Coordinators in your region visit the CA FCCLA website at <https://www.ca-fccla.org/chapters-regions/region-coordinators/> |
| Dairy Council of California Programs and Services web page <https://www.healthyeating.org/products-and-activities/programs-services> | Free curriculum and community engagement resources such as school assemblies, professional development, and advising for all things nutrition and food. |
| CalFresh Healthy Living, University of California web page <https://uccalfresh.ucdavis.edu/> | Free resources such as hands-on curriculum training, nutrition education materials, in-class presentations with food tastings, and family newsletters and nutrition classes. |
| CDE Farm to CNP web page <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/he/farmtoschool.asp> | Provides resources, technical assistance, and training to support the USDA CNPs to incorporate a farm to school program into their existing food service operation. |

### Training

| **Resource** | **Description** |
| --- | --- |
| CDE CNP Course Catalog web page <https://cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/ed/cnpcoursecatalog.asp> | Support your teams’ culinary skills with free Standardizing Recipes and Meal Pattern online courses and more. |
| Institute for Child Nutrition’s E-Learning Portal web page <https://theicn.docebosaas.com/learn> | Free online trainings and resources for School Nutrition Program (SNP) directors, managers, and staff designed to prepare participants to meet the challenges of day-to-day operations. |
| USDA Professional Standards for SNP Professionals web page <https://professionalstandards.fns.usda.gov/> | Training opportunities from a variety of sources, searchable by the following key areas: (1) nutrition, (2) operations, (3) administration, and (4) communications and marketing. |

## Contact Us

These recipes are just a sample of the delicious school meals created in California. To find more of the latest California Department of Education (CDE) nutrition news and information, visit the Nutrition Services Division web page at <https://cde.ca.gov/ls/nu/index.asp>. To share photos of your recipe results, taste testing events, or favorite standardized recipes with us, follow us on Twitter [@CDENutrition](https://twitter.com/cdenutrition).

[](https://twitter.com/cdenutrition)

For questions regarding the content of this web page, please contact the Nutrition Services Division by phone at 800-952-5609 or by email at [CArecipes@cde.ca.gov](mailto:CArecipes@cde.ca.gov).

**USDA Nondiscrimination Statement**

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Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form (AD-3027) found online at <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf>, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call 866-632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

1. mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture   
   Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
   1400 Independence Avenue, SW   
   Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
2. fax: 202-690-7442; or
3. email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

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