

# FRESH BITES NEWSLETTER



May 2021

Featured: Risk-Free Pricing for COVID Recovery

CARES Act Eligible\*

## RISK-FREE

No long-term contract.  
No upfront costs.  
Transparent pricing.  
Money-back guarantee.

NutriStudents K-12<sup>®</sup>  
Menu Freedom. Tools for Success.

**Month-by-month. No upfront costs. Cancel at any time. Money-back guarantee.**

Our support to help school districts survive and recover from COVID continues with a special risk-free subscription offer for the entire program:

- \$289/month subscription\*, which can be canceled at any time.
- 100% money-back guarantee at any time up to your first anniversary, if you've used the system as intended and are not satisfied for any reason.

\*Your state's stimulus/CARES Act funds may include integrated services, including nutrition programs like NutriStudents K-12, as eligible expenses. Eligibility varies by state.

Take advantage of our offer today! Click or call to schedule a demo now.

[Schedule a Demo](#)

\*Subscription based on district of 4 schools or less. Additional schools at \$49/month/school.



*"Since instituting NutriStudents K-12, we have definitely seen our foodservice program become more efficient, compliant and profitable. Overall, [the] assistance with menu selection, daily prep work, promotion and compliance is well worth the membership cost."*

Teresa Grossell  
Business Manager  
I.S.D. 857

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## Plan for 21-22 Now!



SY20/21 was crazy. Changing USDA waivers, social distancing guidelines, safety protocols, distance and hybrid learning and eating. We know you're exhausted and looking forward to summer break.

Before summer comes, do yourself a favor and choose your SY21/22 menu rotation from our 45 weeks of menus for the National School Lunch Program and the Seamless Summer Option. In a matter of minutes, you can know what you're serving for the entire school year. In addition to NSLP/SSO menus, we offer menus for the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).

Currently for the 21/22 school year, the USDA is directing schools to follow SSO guidelines rather than the SFSP guidelines most districts followed this year. The SSO meal pattern is the same as NSLP. USDA waivers allow schools to feed all students for free and be reimbursed at the higher SFSP rates.

**DON'T FORGET!** SY21/22 applications are due by July 1. If you officially changed the program under which you served meals in 20/21, make sure your application is correct for the 21/22 application. Most districts will be serving under NSLP/SSO next year. If your program is not classified correctly, you will not be reimbursed correctly.

**ALSO!** You may have missed this bit of news relative to the NSLP/SSO meal pattern: Permanent flexibilities for sodium, whole grains and milk that were in play since 2018, were thrown out in court in April 2020. That means the meal pattern again requires all grains be whole-grain-rich, a variety of milks must be offered but only unflavored low-fat milk may be served, and sodium levels must meet Target 2 limits. If you anticipate not being able to meet these requirements in 21/22, you may seek an exception from your state agency under a USDA waiver.

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[This Q&A](#) from the School Nutrition Association explains the implications of the court ruling in more detail. [This USDA policy memo](#) outlines the details of the waiver.

As guidance for the 21/22 school year crystalizes, we'll share updates on our Fresh Bites blog and on social media. With an arsenal of menus and productivity tools from NutriStudents K-12, you're ready for whatever 21/22 brings. Choose your menu rotation today and you'll have more time for the unknowns that may come in August.

Get In Touch!  
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[MenuFreedom.com](http://MenuFreedom.com)

[Fresh Bites Blog](#)

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Congratulations!

Alice Westrich  
Co-Director  
Upsala Area Schools

Alice Westrich, head cook and co-food director at the Upsala school district in Minnesota, has been chosen as NutriStudents K-12 Foodservice Hero! School Lunch Hero Day, which takes place each year in early May, was created by the School Nutrition Association to recognize hard-working foodservice staff members for everything they do to support students and learning.

Alice started in her position less than two years ago without a background in nutrition – and she has effectively transformed the district’s foodservice program.

“We are in ‘meat and potatoes country’ here in central Minnesota,” she said. “Even so, the kids were ready for a change and I was too.”

“With help from NutriStudents K-12, we have expanded their horizons. Every day seems to be something new and we are serving food they haven’t experienced before. Like the queso meatball sub – the little kids were fascinated, wondering why the meatballs were on the bun!”

Alice cares deeply about making healthy meals that appeal to a wide variety of students while creating a warm and welcoming environment for the kids. Recently while attending a basketball game, one of her students walked over just to say thank you.

“When people ask me if I like my job, I say yes! It’s like getting to host a graduation party every day,” she said.

As our 2021 Foodservice Hero, Alice will receive an official Foodservice Hero apron and hat.

Congratulations Alice!

### Cafeteria Connection: Foodservice Hero Edition

Recognize your hard-working team with the Foodservice Hero edition of Cafeteria Connection. Before the year ends, remind your parents, teachers and administrators to thank your foodservice team. Download it today from the [client portal](#) or via [our Cafeteria Connection subscription page](#).

### Government Providing \$50-75 Broadband Credit to Qualifying Households

The federal government established the Emergency Broadband Benefit Program to provide qualifying low-income households a temporary discount on monthly broadband bills for the remainder of the pandemic or until funds are depleted. Applications are now being accepted. [LEARN MORE](#)

### Cafeteria Connection: Summer Meals Edition

Use our summer meals edition of Cafeteria Connection to get the word out about your program. Download it today from the [client portal](#) or via [our Cafeteria Connection subscription page](#).

LOVE IT  
or it's free!

Click for details

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## CDC Offers Food Allergies Toolkit



According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), about 1 in 13 children have a food allergy. That's about 8 percent of children in the United States. Allergic reactions to certain foods can trigger reactions ranging from an upset stomach and vomiting to life-threatening anaphylaxis.

Studies show that about 20 percent of kids with food allergies will have a reaction while eating at school. For this reason, many schools and early childhood education programs take formal steps to implement food-allergy mitigation and safety plans.

To help schools manage food allergies, the CDC offers a comprehensive [Food Allergies Toolkit](#). In addition to resources for school administrators, superintendents, teachers and paraeducators, transportation staff and health professionals, it includes specific guidelines for nutrition professionals. You will find the following resources:

- [Tip sheet](#) for nutrition professionals that includes planning and training resources, information to help you recognize symptoms, and resources for preventing and responding to emergencies.
- PowerPoint presentation ([downloadable PDF](#) under "The Role of School Nutrition Professionals") for educating your foodservice staff and others about food allergies.
- [Podcast](#) highlighting the role of school nutrition professionals in managing food allergies at schools.

For children who have Special Diet Statements on file in your district, it's best not to try to determine if an item on a regular menu contains an allergen. Manufacturers frequently change ingredients in the foods they sell to schools and they are not required to report ingredient/label changes. Even when studying labels, it's possible that some allergens may not be obvious. Instead, we recommend using our allergen-free menu.

The [NutriStudents K-12 allergen-free menu](#) offers delicious entrees that eliminate the most prevalent allergens: dairy, gluten, soy, eggs, fish/shellfish, tree nuts and peanuts. The entrees also contain minimally processed foods with relatively few ingredients, which also helps safeguard against potential allergens. They can be paired with the grain of your choice (cilantro or garlic brown rice or gluten-free tortilla chips) and a fruit or vegetable. The allergen-free menu is available under the "Lunch" dropdown menu in the client portal.

Also, for [NSLP Offer vs. Serve](#) schools, students can select foods that conform to their diet to build a reimbursable meal. For example, if a student wants to eliminate grains, they can build a reimbursable meal by choosing at least three of the remaining four components required (meat or meat alternative, milk/dairy, fruit, vegetable and grain).

Additional information about managing food allergies in schools can be accessed on the [CDC website](#).

### Visit with Us at an Upcoming Trade Show

CWD Healthcare/School Show  
Wednesday, May 26, 2021  
Divot's DeVent Center  
Norfolk, Nebraska

[SNA-WI Annual Conference](#)  
Tuesday, June 29, 2021  
Kalahari Resort  
Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin  
Amanda Craig, NutriStudents K-12 Director of Sales, will be presenting "Making the Most of Your School Breakfast Program" during breakout block 6, Tuesday, 11:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.