



Feeding Bodies. Fueling Minds.™

June 30, 2021

The Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack:

On behalf of our 50,000 members, the School Nutrition Association (SNA) would like to bring to your attention an emerging procurement challenge for school meal programs in several states.

Recently, school districts in Florida, Kansas, and Pennsylvania, which contract with the national distributor US Foods, were notified that “due to labor shortages and warehouse capacity” the company will be unable to serve their school meal programs for the 2021/22 school year. As you can imagine, this presents a dire situation for schools and districts that awarded bids to this company last spring and are now scrambling to find a distributor to supply their meal programs in time for back to school. It is our understanding that US Foods is making these decisions on a district-by-district and market-by-market basis. SNA members are very concerned that districts in additional states could be impacted, and that US Foods’ announcement is an early indicator of more widespread disruptions in the supply chain.

SNA respectfully requests that USDA: 1) Review the waiver on emergency purchasing to continue or to provide relief to districts that are impacted by this procurement dilemma (<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/child-nutrition-response-90>); and 2) Provide technical assistance to school districts on options if an awarded contract is broken by a successful bidder.

SNA would welcome the opportunity to discuss this matter in greater depth. Thank you for consideration of this request and for your continued commitment to the nutritional health and well-being of our nation’s children.

Sincerely,

Reggie Ross, SNS
SNA President

Patricia Montague, CAE
SNA CEO