



## 2015 Position Paper Reauthorization of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act

### **Grant individual SFAs the authority to decide whether students are required to take a fruit or vegetable as part of a reimbursable meal.**

SNA supports *offering* a greater variety and quantity of fruits and vegetables; however, some students do not want a fruit or vegetable with every single meal.

The requirement that a student *must take* a ½ cup with every breakfast and lunch has increased waste and costs, leaving schools with less funding to invest in more expensive and appealing produce choices such as fresh berries, sliced melon and kiwi.

[Researchers](#) from Cornell and Brigham Young universities found that requiring students to take a fruit or vegetable with every meal increased waste by 100%, with an estimated \$684 million of fruits and vegetables thrown in the trash each school year.

In a recent SNA [survey](#), 81% of school nutrition professionals indicated an increase in the amount of food being thrown away by students at lunch since implementation of the new meal pattern requirements. Vegetables were identified as the meal component that was most frequently causing the increase in plate waste.

In a subsequent SNA [survey](#), 63% of school nutrition operators indicated “Increased plate/food waste” was a “serious” challenge for their programs.

SFAs know best whether this mandate has been beneficial or detrimental and should be allowed to decide whether students must take a fruit or vegetable with every meal.