

The background is a composite image. The top left shows a line of yellow school buses with 'SCHOOL BUS' written on the front. The bottom left shows a classroom with blue walls, desks, chairs, and colorful balloons. A white diagonal line separates the two images.

Kentucky Sun Meals-Here We Grow Again!

The Partnership with Public Libraries



Kentucky Department of
E D U C A T I O N

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(1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Mail Stop 9410
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;

(2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or


(3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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What is the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)?



The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) is a USDA Summer Nutrition Program that was established to ensure that children who need them continue to receive nutritious meals in the summer when school is not in session. SFSP connects children with the nutrition they need to help them be healthy and ready to learn when they return to school. Free meals that meet federal nutrition guidelines are provided to all eligible children at approved SFSP meal sites. Sites must be in areas of documented need.

New Public-Facing Brand: Sun Meals



MEALS TO-GO

Sponsors and Sites

- A **Sponsor** is a participating non-profit organization that is trained, submits an application, and receives federal reimbursement
- A **Site** means the place where a child receives a program meal. A site may be the indoor or outdoor location where congregate meals are served, a stop on a delivery route of a mobile congregate meal service, or the distribution location or route for a non-congregate meal service.

**Join the
Action!
Growth in
Kentucky
Sun Meals**

Year	# of SFSP/Sun Meals
2019	3,200,000
2024	8,136,000
2025	11,075,817

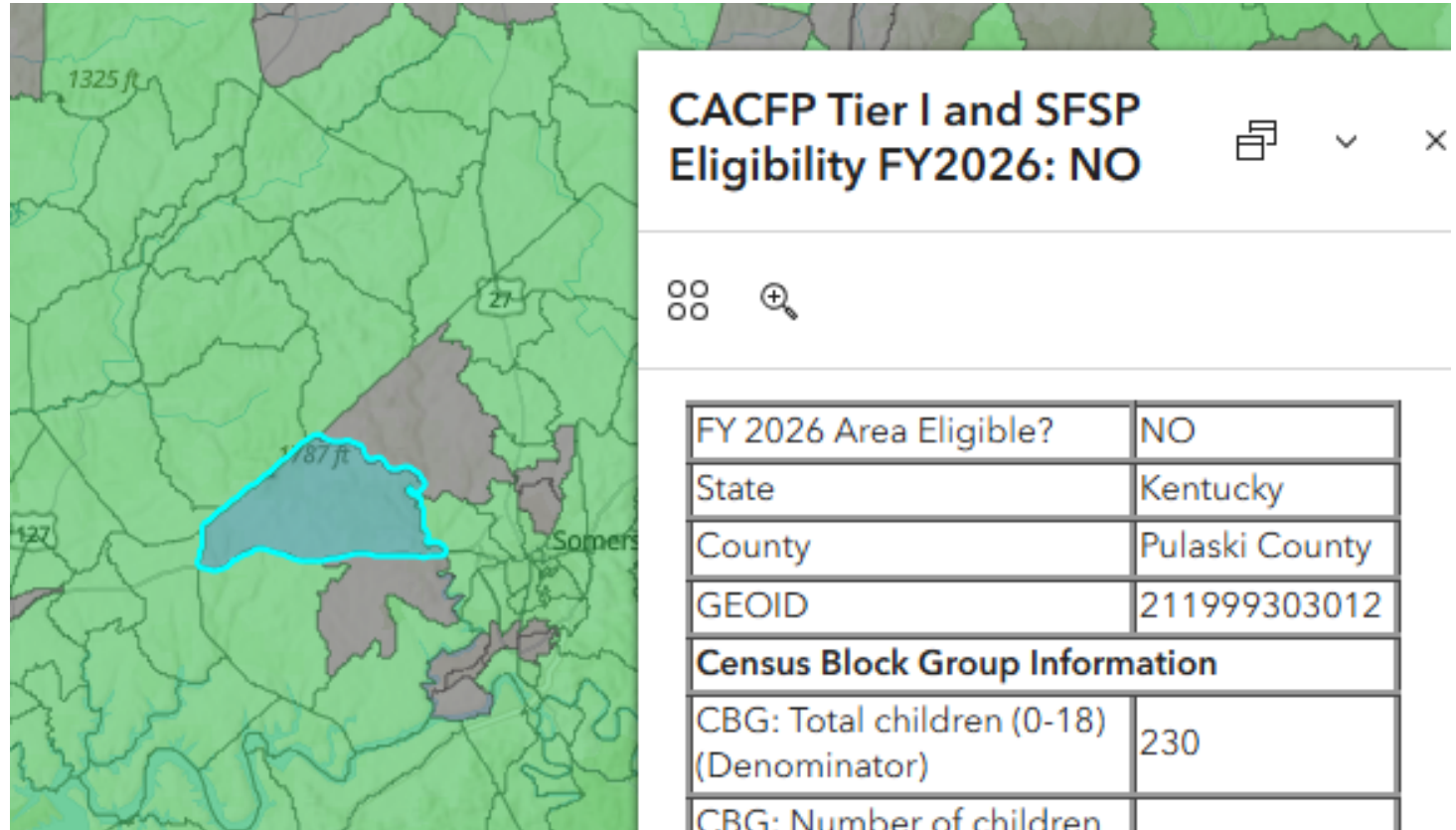
KY Library and Sun Meals Success

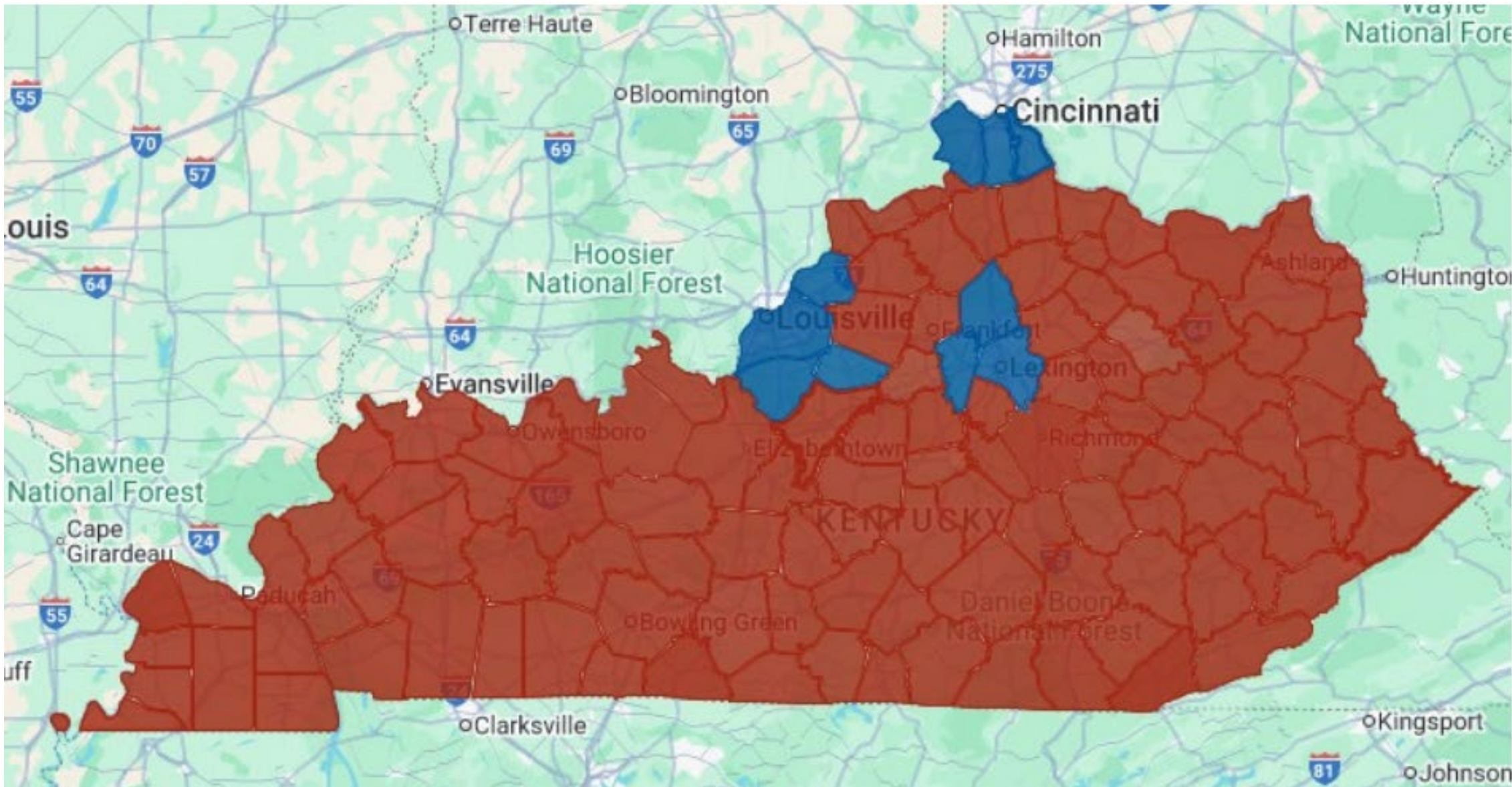
- 55 Library Sites in 2025
- 1 Library sponsor (Lawrence County Public Library)
- Libraries served almost 136,500 meals in summer 2025
- Libraries served almost 90,000 of those meals as rural, non-congregate meals



Determine whether you are eligible under SFSP

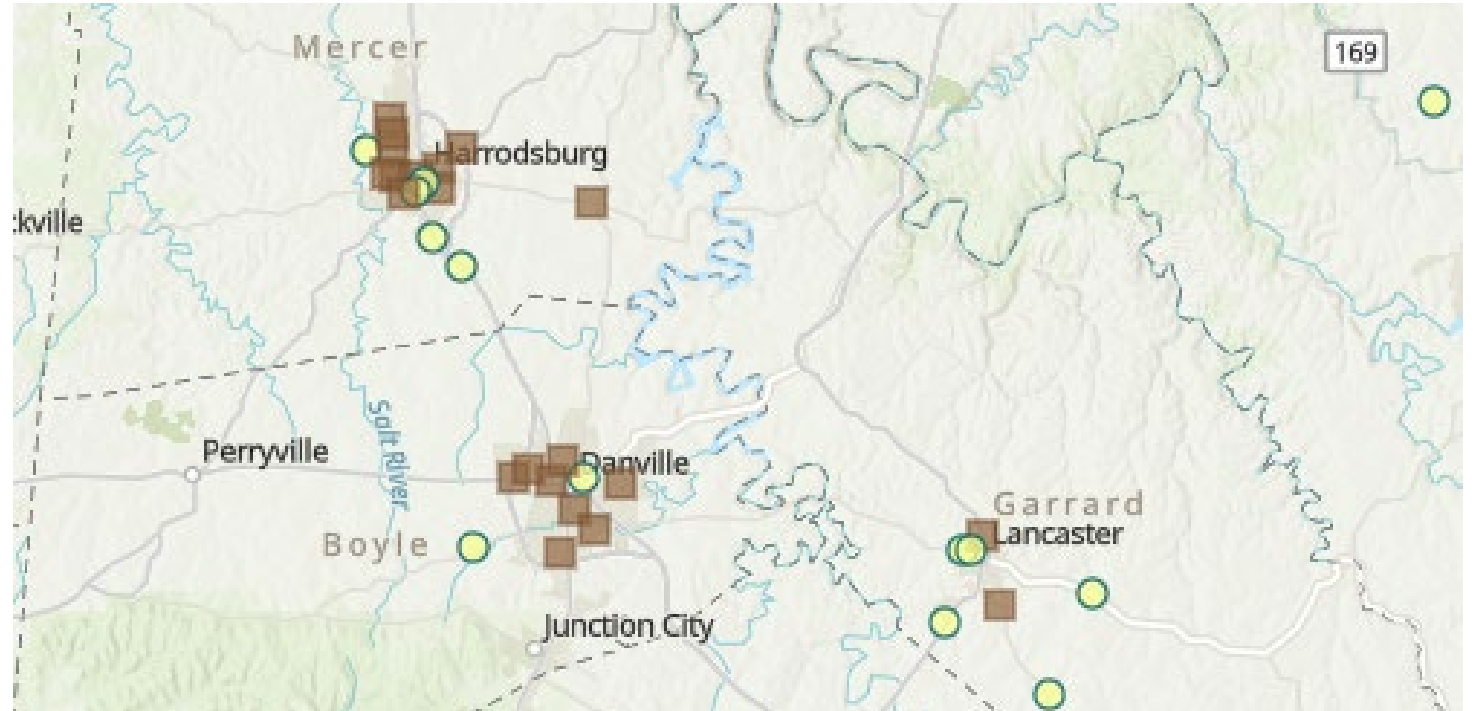
- Sites must serve in income-eligible areas, or children with documented low household income
- In Kentucky, most of the state is comprised of eligible areas by free-reduced eligibility (County-wide eligibility)
- Go to the USDA's Area Eligibility Map: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/area-eligibility>
- Your local sponsor/sponsoring organization will be checking this and they can help!





Determine if your area is already well-served by SFSP sites

- Go to the USDA's Capacity Builder Map to identify existing sites: www.fns.usda.gov/capacitybuilder
- Check with your local sponsoring organization, or
- Contact KDE SFSP for assistance
- New meal sites will be approved if there is a demonstrated need



Meal Service Types: Rural Non- Congregate & Urban Congregate Meals

Latest regulatory changes allow for grab and go meals in rural areas where children cannot access congregate meals.

Rural non-congregate meals mean children do not need to stay on site to consume meals.

Congregate meals-children eat on site.

Rural, Non-Congregate Meals

- In rural designated areas, meals may be provided as Grab and Go
- Meals may be provided to parents or guardians
- Meals may be provided for multiple days
- *You can still serve congregate meals in a rural area!!*



No-cost meals for kids, for pick-up or delivery. Let's eat!



Congregate Sites

- Typically seen in urban areas
- Congregate meals allow for enrichment activities since children stay and eat!
- Children still need meals in low-income neighborhoods.
- The library is a safe and trusted space for summer meals!



Sun Meals/SFSP Can Work with Your Library's Needs

- Ex: receive lunch M-F all summer, or
- Receive lunch M, W, F, or
- Receive a supper for a special event.
- Up to two meals, any combination except lunch + supper



What do you need to be a site?

- A Summer Food Service Program sponsor (a sponsor is responsible for the financial, administrative, and food procurement aspects of the programs)
- Staff and/or volunteers to serve meals and supervise.
- A designated space (inside or outside!) for kids and teens to eat
- Plenty of trash cans and a cleaning kit for small spills
- An offered activity or enrichment component like worksheets, story-time, or games (kids and teens are not required to participate in order to receive a meal or snack)
- An open mind and attitude and a willingness to try – sometimes the program takes a few iterations to find the right fit!



What don't you need?

- No need to buy and prep food
- No need for a kitchen
- Libraries do not have much paperwork to complete. The majority of the paperwork is the responsibility of sponsors.
- Libraries do not need a lot of storage space for food. Many sponsors are able to deliver meals daily. However, libraries with storage space may opt for less frequent deliveries.
- No need to register students for the meal program. They can serve any kid or teen that would like a meal!



How do I find a sponsor?

- Contact your local school district Child Nutrition or Food Service Director when in doubt!
- Contact KDE Summer Food Service Program staff
- Or....become a sponsor! Ex. Lawrence County Public Library



Become a Sponsor!

Why?

You can possibly add sites and reach more children

Receive reimbursement for meals

Possibly increase grant opportunities?

How?

Contact the State agency for initial forms/steps

Attend SFSP training

Arrange for meals

Train staff

Provide meals and submit claim



Planning for a Successful Summer: Create an Inviting Space

- The ideal location for food service can vary, and may include a community room, a library café, or a nearby park. Ideally, the space will be accessible and easy to find. Consider your expected participation rate when selecting a location, and search for a space where you will not have capacity issues.
- If grab-and-go is an option for you, use signage and décor to lead patrons to your pick-up location. Make it easily accessible by car, bike, and foot, and safe for patrons who walk or bike to your site.
- Translate program rules into families' primary languages, considering potential issues of limited literacy. *
- Table toppers with basic program rules alleviate some of the burden on library staff of continually reminding families about the rules. *
- Get involved in the experience by encouraging children to try new foods. When possible, sit with children during meals, and using positive phrasing to promote healthy eating.





Food for Adults?

- Note that food provided by SFSP may not be consumed by parents or caregivers unless they themselves are 18 or under.
- Meals may be provided, if the sponsor allows, as long as they are paid for.
- Create a handout that lists local free food programs available to adults. Distribute it during meal/snack times.
- Work with local food banks or Farmer's Markets to provide food boxes to parents or information about Double Dollars, etc.



What are your next steps to participating in the Sun Meals/ SFSP?



Next Steps

Become a sponsor? We can work with you to be a sponsor in 2027-contact Cathy Gallagher if interested. Cathy.Gallagher@education.ky.gov

Be a congregate site? Serve meals on site and provide feed minds and empty tummies!

Be a non-congregate site? Serve meals to go and provide enrichment and food to go! Still meeting the physical and mental needs of kiddos!



To Serve as a Sun Meals/SFSP Site

- Contact your local sponsor or reach out to Cathy.Gallagher@education.ky.gov
- Once you are on a program, be trained on what to expect and your responsibilities as a site.
- Get excited! This is gonna be great!



Questions?
