
A GUIDE TO VERMONT FOOD & NUTRITION RESOURCES

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The Economic Services Division (ESD) of the Department for Children and Families prepared this *Guide* to introduce Vermonters to several available public and private food-related services. If a particular program interests you, please contact the listing included with the program description for details about what the program offers or how it works. ESD welcomes your comments and suggestions for future editions (*see note on back cover*).

Note Regarding Income Guidelines: Several program descriptions in the *Guide* mention income eligibility limits. Those limits are not listed because the amounts, as well as the times of year they are updated, vary among nutrition programs.

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Name That Acronym!	

Child and Adult Care Food Program

Who Runs It?

Vermont Department of Education, Child Nutrition Program, with federal support from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

What Does It Offer?

Support toward the cost of meals that are served to children in day care centers and day care homes, and to impaired adults in adult care centers.

Who Is Eligible?

Licensed day care centers must be non-profit or, if they are for-profit, 25% of the children must be receiving day care subsidized by the Child Development Division of the Vermont Department for Children and Families. Registered day care homes may participate through a sponsor. Meals served to children of day care home providers may be subsidized if they meet eligibility guidelines. Adult care centers must be approved by the state Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living (DAIL).

What Will I Need When I Apply?

License or registration for centers and homes.
Proof of non-profit status for centers, OR
Child Development Division billing forms for 25% of enrolled children or 25% of licensed capacity, whichever is less.

Is This Program Offered Statewide?

Yes. Care homes and centers throughout the state are taking part in the program. However, not all homes and centers participate.

What Else Should I Know About This Program?

It subsidizes up to two meals and one snack per enrolled child or adult per day. Centers may receive federal food commodities in addition to a cash subsidy.

In 1998 Congress established an after-school snack program for at-risk children through the age of eighteen. School and non-school entities providing care during after-school hours, weekends and holidays are able to serve snacks to at-risk children at no charge.

Where Can I Apply Or Get More Information?

For details, or to contact a sponsor for your area, get in touch with:

Laurie Colgan
Child Nutrition Program
Vermont Department of Education
Mail address: 120 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05620-2501
802-828-5153 (fax: 802-828-0573)

Or visit the Department's Child Nutrition Program web site at:

<http://education.vermont.gov/>

Cooking For Life Program

Who Runs It?

Cooking For Life is a collaborative effort of the VT Campaign To End Childhood Hunger (VTCECH), the Expanded Food & Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) of University of Vermont Extension (*see page 4*), and local host agencies.

How Is It Supported?

VTCECH, EFNEP, private foundations, and a grant supported with state Economic Services Division funds and federal Food Stamp Program funds. Local host agencies are important partners in that they identify the class locations and low income participants.

What Does It Offer?

A series of six, 2 or 2½ -hour classes (depending on the program) about basic nutrition, cooking, food safety and shopping skills. Nutrition educators and local chefs teach participants how to prepare nutritious, low-cost dishes and provide the ingredients and recipes they need to hone their food preparation skills at home. Participants learn what constitutes a healthy diet and techniques to stretch their limited family food dollars.

Who Is Eligible?

The program is aimed at low income families with children, particularly those eligible for food stamp benefits. However, you do not have to be getting food stamps to qualify.

Three programs are offered. "Cooking For Life: Adult" targets low income parents of young children. "Cooking for Life: Young Adult" is for at-risk teenagers, ages 15 or older and transitioning into independent living. "Cooking for Life: Youth" targets at-risk youth ages 11-14.

Is This Program Offered Statewide?

The series can be held in any town where there is a local host organization that will find a suitable location and recruit 10-12 low income participants.

Do Services Require A Car Or Babysitter?

Child care is provided at all Cooking for Life: Adult classes, when needed. Class sites may be at locations that require transportation. It may be possible for class participants to arrange a carpool.

What Else Should I Know About This Program?

Class participants need to be willing to make a commitment of time and interest over a period of six weeks. VTCECH is always looking for local organizations interested in hosting the program in their community. Any local group can host the program, as long as the class participants are low income.

Where Can I Apply Or Get More Information?

For information about classes in your area, or if your organization is interesting in hosting a series of classes, contact:

Cooking For Life Coordinator
VTCECH
180 Flynn Avenue
Burlington, VT 05401

802-865-0255 (fax: 802-865-0266)
Email: cfl@vtnohunger.org

Emergency Food Shelves and Community Kitchens

Who Runs Them?

Agencies, faith-based organizations, town officers, volunteers and community groups.

What Do They Offer?

This depends on how the project is set up locally, and how much food they have on hand. Food shelves, also called food pantries, offer take-home groceries while community kitchens serve prepared, sit-down meals. Community kitchens used to be called "soup kitchens," but that term was unappealing and misleading since most offer complete meals, not just soup. As part of the service, some sites provide budget counseling and determine if the family qualifies for additional programs.

Who Is Eligible?

Generally, any person or family who risks going without meals that day or very soon because they cannot afford to buy food. Many sites limit services to local residents or have eligibility rules like income guidelines or limits on how often they can help you.

What Else Should I Know About These Services?

They rely on donations and welcome all the volunteer help they can get. Some sites get federal commodity foods to supplement their donated or purchased products. All sites are open part-time and most are run by volunteers, so it is a good idea to call ahead. (*A food bank is not the same as a food shelf. See page 19.*)

Are These Services Offered Statewide?

There currently are about three dozen community kitchens and over 130 food shelves in towns scattered across Vermont.

What Will I Need When I Apply?

Depends on the site. Some, especially the community kitchens, may not ask you to explain why you need help, but just in case, be prepared to provide information about your household's income and expenses.

Are Services Accessible If I Can't Afford A Car Or Babysitter?

Getting food shelf groceries may depend on whether you or the site can arrange to get the food to you. Most community kitchens serve children as well as adults.

Where Can I Apply Or Get More Information?

A Community Action Agency (*page 7*) will with help applicants directly or refer them to the nearest site.

You also may dial 211 from anywhere in Vermont to get confidential information and referral services (*see page 20*). For listings of food site listings and how to contact them, go to the Vermont 211 web site at:

<http://www.vermont211.org>

and click on "search the database," then "select a town" – if you leave this blank, you will get all listings in Vermont – then click "see list of services by category," then "basic needs," and then click the plus sign next to "emergency food." Lastly, click the names of the programs in blue-color type to see details about each site.

For a report on the state's most recent survey of Vermont food shelves and community kitchens, contact Mary Carlson, Food and Nutrition Program Coordinator at the Economic Services Division, at 802-241-2458 or marycar@ahs.state.vt.us

Expanded Food & Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP)

Who Runs It?

University of Vermont (UVM) Extension, with funding from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

What Does It Offer?

A program geared to your needs, offering a series of practical lessons on food buying, meal planning and preparation (including recipes), nutrition and physical activity for your family, and food budgeting. Methods used are individual home visits or small group meetings held in participants' homes or community centers.

Who Is Eligible?

Vermont EFNEP is aimed at pregnant women or families with children with incomes at or below 185% of the federal poverty line.

Are Services Accessible If I Can't Afford A Car Or Babysitter?

Most EFNEP services take place in the participants' homes.

What Else Should I Know About This Program?

Applicants need to be willing to make a commitment of time and interest over a period of several weeks.

Is This Program Offered Statewide?

No, but most of the state is served out of the offices listed on the following page, and mail-out lessons can be arranged.

What Will I Need When I Apply?

Nothing, except a desire for the service.

Where Can I Apply Or Get More Information?

Call or write:

Heather Danis, EFNEP Coordinator
305A Terrill Hall, UVM
570 Main Street
Burlington, VT 05405-0148
802-656-2311
fax: 802-656-0407
heather.danis@uvm.edu

Or contact the EFNEP Educator serving your area (*see next page*).

Expanded Food & Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP)

UVM Extension listings as of November, 2006

Addison County

EFNEP Educator
UVM Extension
68 Catamount Park, Suite C
Middlebury, VT 05753-1292
802-388-4969, ext. 14
1-800-956-1125 (Vermont only)
Fax: 802-388-0511

Bennington County

EFNEP Educator
UVM Extension
PO Box 559
Bennington, VT 05201-0559
802-447-7582, ext. 12
1-800-287-1552 (Vermont only)
Fax: 802-447-8076

Caledonia County

EFNEP Educator
UVM Extension
Windhorse Common, 107 Eastern Ave.
St. Johnsbury, VT 05819-2762
802-751-8307, ext. 2500
1-800-545-8920 (Vermont only)
Fax: 802-751-8800

Chittenden County

EFNEP Educator
UVM Extension
655 Spear Street
Bioresearch Laboratory, UVM
Burlington, VT 05405-0107
802-656-9465
1-800-571-0668 (Vermont only)
Fax: 802-656-5422

Franklin and Grand Isle Counties

EFNEP Educator
UVM Extension
278 South Main Street, Suite 2
St. Albans, VT 05478-1866
802-524-6501, ext. 216
1-800-639-2130 (Vermont only)
Fax: 802-524-6062

Rutland County

EFNEP Educator
UVM Extension
Howe Center Business Park
1 Scale Avenue, Unit 55
Rutland, VT 05701-4457
802-773-3349, ext. 16
1-800-281-6977 (Vermont only)
Fax: 802-775-4840

Windsor County

EFNEP Educator
UVM Extension
212 Holiday Drive, Suite 4
White River Junction, VT 05001
802-296-7630
1-800-278-5471 (Vermont only)
Fax: 802-296-7631

EFNEP classes currently are not held in Essex, Lamoille, Orange, Orleans, Washington and Windham Counties. However, mail-out EFNEP lessons may be available to low income residents of those counties.

Vermont Farm To Family Program

Who Runs It?

Economic Services Division (ESD) of the VT Dept. for Children and Families, in cooperation with the state Dept. of Health, Dept. of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living (DAIL), and Agency of Agriculture. The coupons are distributed by district Health offices and Community Action Agencies.

What Does It Offer?

Coupons redeemable for fresh fruits and vegetables at farmers markets enrolled in the program, plus information about selecting and using fresh produce. The farmers market season in Vermont runs roughly May-October, and each market sets its own schedule.

Who Is Eligible?

Households with incomes below 185% of federal poverty standards. Federal law earmarks most of the coupons to WIC Program participants (*page 16*) and elderly households, but Vermont Community Action Agencies (CAAs) have coupons for non-WIC households that do not include seniors.

Is It Offered Statewide?

Yes, where there are enrolled markets and as long as coupon supplies last. Over forty Vermont farmers markets are authorized to accept the coupons. Single-vendor roadside stands and farmstands do not qualify.

Do Services Require A Car Or Babysitter?

Coupon distribution schedules and methods vary with the local office. Farmers markets are only open for a few hours one or two days a week, but they are outside and farmers enjoy teaching children about the foods they grow.

What Else Should I Know About This Program?

Its name in federal law is the Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP), and it is funded with a mix of federal and state dollars. The FMNP has two goals: to promote farmers markets and to increase the consumption of fresh, unprocessed fruits and vegetables by nutritionally at-risk persons. The first goal is why the coupons are not valid at stores or farmstands. The second is why they may not buy other farmers market products, such as cider, baked goods, meats or pickles.

A federal Senior FMNP administered by DAIL supports the cost of some of the coupons distributed by CAAs. That grant also funds a different program through which residents of many senior housing sites in Vermont get produce from community supported agriculture farms (*see page 20*).

Where Can I Apply Or Get More Information?

Households with a WIC participant over the age of six months must apply for the coupons through their Health office (*page 17*). Other households should contact their nearest CAA (*page 7*). Coupon distribution starts in late June and ends when coupon supplies run out, which is quickly in some areas.

For information about the program, or if you manage a VT farmers market with produce vendors wanting to accept coupons, contact:

Mary Carlson, Farm To Family Coordinator
Economic Services Division
VT Department for Children and Families
103 South Main Street
Waterbury, VT 05671-1201
802-241-2458 or marycar@ahs.state.vt.us

Vermont Community Action Agencies (CAAs)

Administrative and satellite offices as of November, 2006

*The CAAs are private, nonprofit agencies that offer many programs or services to address poverty-related conditions. Their nutrition services vary from site to site, and may include emergency food, budget counseling, vegetable seeds and community garden plots. Contact the CAA nearest you for help with emergency services, information about or help filling out forms for food stamps or other programs, and other services for low income Vermonters. A full address is listed for the main headquarters for each of the five CAAs, followed by telephone numbers for the agency's current satellite sites (*means that the site is only staffed part-time, but staff are still accessible by phone or appointment).*

Bennington-Rutland Opportunity Council (BROC) – serves Bennington and Rutland Counties except for the town of Pittsfield, which is part of the CVCAC area

60 Center Street
Rutland, VT 05701
775-0878 or 1-800-717-2762 (fax: 775-9949)

Bennington447-7515

Central Vermont Community Action Council (CVCAC) – serves Washington, Orange and Lamoille Counties; the towns of Granville, Hancock, Pittsfield; and the Windsor County towns of Barnard, Bethel, Rochester, Royalton, Sharon and Stockbridge

195 US RTE 302 – Berlin
Barre, VT 05641
479-1053 or 1-800-639-1053 (fax: 479-5353)

Bradford 222-4963 or 1-888-815-6737
Morrisville..... 888-7993 or 1-800-639-8710
Randolph 728-9506 or 1-800-846-9506

Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity (CVOEO) – serves all of Chittenden, Grand Isle, Franklin and Addison Counties, except for the towns of Hancock and Granville in the CVCAC area

PO Box 1603 (Site: 191 North Street)
Burlington, VT 05402
862-2771 or 1-800-287-7971 (fax: 660-3454)

Middlebury 388-2285 or 1-800-639-2318
Burlington..... 863-6248 or 1-800-287-7971
St. Albans 527-7392 or 1-800-300-7392
Grand Isle*372-5726

North East Kingdom Community Action (NEKCA) – serves all of Orleans, Essex and Caledonia Counties

PO Box 346 (Site: 70 Main Street)
Newport, VT 05855
334-7316 or 1-800-639-4065 (fax: 334-8240)

Island Pond723-6245
St. Johnsbury748-8997
Canaan266-7134

Southeastern Vermont Community Action (SEVCA) – serves Windham and Windsor Counties except for the six towns that are assigned to the CVCAC service area

91 Buck Drive
Westminster, VT 05158-9618
722-4575 or 1-800-464-9951 (fax: 722-4509)

Brattleboro* 254-2795
Springfield* 885-6153
White River* 295-5215
Wilmington* 464-7500
Windsor* 674-2900

Food Stamp Program

Who Runs It?

The Economic Services Division (ESD) of the VT Department for Children and Families, with U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) funding.

What Does It Offer?

Monthly benefits to help people buy food. In cases of extreme poverty, the first month's benefits can be issued within a week.

How Does It Work?

Recipients get a Vermont Express electronic benefit transfer (EBT) debit card that knows the amount of benefits the recipient has available to buy food. The EBT card can be used at most food stores in and out of state, just like a credit or debit card. Farmers markets and some small food stores cannot process EBT cards at this time.

In Vermont, many elderly (65+) or disabled households get cash benefits (instead of food benefits) deposited directly to their bank account or applied to their Vermont Express EBT card if they do not have a bank account.

Who Is Eligible?

Any person, or group of people who buy or prepare meals together, that meets the income, assets and residency requirements may be eligible, even if they own their home and up to two reliable cars. You do not need a permanent mailing address. Household members must register for work and meet work-related rules, unless they are exempt from those rules. Many self-employed and working households qualify for benefits, as do families with children that get a VT Earned Income Tax Credit.

What Will I Need To Apply?

Proof of identity, Vermont residency, income, expenses and assets (e.g., bank accounts, cars, and cash on hand) for all members of the household or group seeking benefits.

Do I Have To Apply In Person?

You may name an authorized representative to complete your application, or may apply by mail. You must have either a face-to-face or telephone interview with an ESD worker to complete the application process.

What Else Should I Know About This Program?

Children getting food stamp benefits qualify for free meals from federal school meal programs (*pages 13-14*).

How Does A Retailer Apply To Accept Food Stamp Benefits?

Businesses that sell staple foods should call the USDA Food & Nutrition Service at 802-828-4492. That Vermont number connects to a New Hampshire office that covers both VT and NH. Call a 24-hour toll free hotline (1-877-823-4369) to request an application form.

Where Can I Apply Or Get More Information?

Visit an ESD office (*next page*) or call toll-free 1-800-287-0589 on weekdays.

Community Action Agencies (*page 7*) and Area Agencies on Aging (*page 12*) can give you information and help you apply.

For program information, to estimate whether you might qualify for benefits, or to get an application form, visit the interactive web site:

www.vermontfoodhelp.com

Department for Children and Families (DCF) Economic Services Division

District office listings as of November, 2006

Call the toll-free number at 1-800-287-0589 (TTY 1-800-225-3004) to learn which district office serves your Vermont town. Ask to speak with someone about food stamps or other income support programs, such as Reach Up benefits for families with children, fuel assistance, or Medicaid/Dr.Dynasaur health care benefits.

Barre

DCF Economic Services Division
McFarland Office Building
5 Perry Street, Suite 150
Barre, VT 05641-4270
479-1041 or 1-800-499-0113

Bennington

DCF Economic Services Division
200 Veterans Memorial Drive, Suite 6
Bennington, VT 05201-1918
442-8541 or 1-800-775-0527

Brattleboro

DCF Economic Services Division
PO Box 70, 232 Main Street
Brattleboro, VT 05302-0070
257-2820 or 1-800-775-0515

Burlington

DCF Economic Services Division
1193 North Avenue, Suite 5
Burlington, VT 05401-2749
863-7365 or 1-800-775-0506

Hartford

DCF Economic Services Division
224 Holiday Drive, Suite A
White River Jct., VT 05001-2097
295-8855 or 1-800-775-0507

Middlebury

DCF Economic Services Division
700 Exchange Street, Suite 103
Middlebury, VT 05753-1529
388-3146 or 1-800-244-2035

Morrisville

DCF Economic Services Division
63 Professional Drive, Suite 4
Morrisville, VT 05661-8522
888-4291 or 1-800-775-0525

Newport

DCF Economic Services Division
100 Main Street, Suite 240
Newport, VT 05855-4898
334-6504 or 1-800-775-0526

Rutland

DCF Economic Services Division
320 Asa Bloomer Building
Rutland, VT 05701-9400
786-5800 or 1-800-775-0516

Springfield

DCF Economic Services Division
100 Mineral Street, Suite 201
Springfield, VT 05156-9900
885-8856 or 1-800-589-5775

St. Albans

DCF Economic Services Division
20 Houghton Street, Suite 313
St. Albans, VT 05478-9922
524-7900 or 1-800-660-4513

St. Johnsbury

DCF Economic Services Division
67 Eastern Avenue, Suite 7
St. Johnsbury, VT 05819-9950
748-5193 or 1-800-775-0514

Food Works at Two Rivers Center

Who Runs It?

Food Works is a small, tax exempt educational organization governed by a board of directors.

How Is This Program Supported?

Food Works is supported by foundation grants, donations, curriculum guidebook sales, fees for professional development courses, and summer herb and garden camp fees.

What Does It Offer?

Hands-on workshops and courses for teachers and students in school gardening, food education, cooking and herbal studies, including Summer Herb and Gardens for Learning camps for children ages 4-15.

Site design and master planning of the school environment as a demonstration site for local food production and ecological research. Help in developing a community-school food policy as a plan for regional food security.

Over a dozen guidebooks and videos for school and family use.

A Farm To Table program that links local farm foods to under-served meal sites. A Foodbank Farm that grows fresh food for Foodbank (*see page 19*) network partners and provides cooking, nutrition and food presentation workshops.

Professional development services and on-site consultations offered through VT FEED, a partnership with the National Organic Farmers Association and Shelburne Farms.

Is This Program Offered Statewide?

Yes, as well as nationally since 1997.

Who Is Eligible?

Any school or parent/community group may contact Food Works for an introductory workshop to see if they would be interested in the programs. The camps for children are open to all.

What Else Should I Know About This Program?

Food Works at Two Rivers Center is developing a model demonstration food and agricultural center on farmland in the Montpelier, Vermont area. The center includes a landmark 1836 farmhouse, backhouse and barn, and eventually will include a living traditions barn, solar greenhouse and Quebec bread oven.

Where Can I Apply Or Get More Information?

Contact:

Office Manager
Food Works at Two Rivers Center
64 Main Street
Montpelier, VT 05602

802-223-1515 (fax 802-229-5277)
Email: info@tworiverscenter.org

Web site: www.tworiverscenter.org

Older Adult Nutrition (community and home-delivered meals)

Who Runs It?

Community groups and contractors, through Area Councils or Agencies on Aging (nicknamed "Triple A's") and the Vermont Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living (DAIL).

What Does It Offer?

Hot meals that supply at least one third of the daily nutrient needs for people aged 60+. Community meals occur in social settings anywhere from several times a month to daily. Most sites serve 3-5 times a week. Participants socialize and volunteer to help organize the meal and events. Other services may be offered at meal sites, such help with Food Stamp applications, nutrition education, physical activities or health screenings.

Home-delivered meals are provided up to five or more times a week. Multiple meals may be delivered cold or frozen for weekend or evening consumption. In some cases, the program may contract with a friend or neighbor of the participant to prepare and deliver the meals.

Who Is Eligible?

For community meals, anyone aged sixty or older and their spouse of any age. Certain volunteers and disabled persons of any age who live in senior housing or are in the care of a senior receiving the meal.

Home-delivered meals are for a similar group, but are targeted to persons who are isolated or frail. Persons with disabilities who are younger than sixty may qualify if they live in senior housing or are in the care of a person receiving home-delivered meals, or through the VT Center for Independent Living.

Is There A Fee?

There is no charge for meals, but everyone is invited to make an anonymous donation toward the cost of the meal. Guests under the age of sixty must pay a set fee to eat at a community meal site.

Is This Program Offered Statewide?

Community meals are offered at over one hundred locations in Vermont, and transportation usually can be arranged. The purpose of the home-delivered meals is to get nourishing food to frail, isolated persons wherever they may be. Program directors try to be flexible, making accommodations to suit individual circumstances.

What Else Should I Know About This Program?

A community meal program can be started in any town with donated space and volunteers to cook the meal.

Where Can I Apply Or Get More Information?

Contact your Area Agency on Agency (*see listings, next page*) for details, or in the case of a person applying for home-delivered meals, to arrange for a certification visit. You may also dial a toll-free Senior HelpLine for Vermont at 1-800-642-5119 (Voice/TTY) weekdays from 8:30 am – 4:30 pm.

Anyone who is younger than sixty years old and has a disability may also contact the Vermont Center for Independent Living in Montpelier by calling 802-229-0501 locally or toll-free at 1-800-639-1522 (Voice/TTY).

Area Agencies On Aging (AAAs)

Listings as of November, 2006

For details about either the community or home-delivered meal programs, including the locations, schedules and phone numbers of meal sites, contact the Nutrition Program Director at the AAA serving your area. You also may call Vermont's toll-free Senior HelpLine (1-800-642-5119) which rings at your nearest AAA and is voice and TTY accessible.

Central Vermont *(all of Washington and Lamoille Counties; all of Orange County except the town of Thetford; towns of Granville, Hancock and Pittsfield; plus the Windsor County towns of Bethel, Rochester, Royalton, Sharon, Stockbridge)*

Central Vermont Council on Aging
30 Washington Street
Barre, VT 05641
479-0531 or 1-800-642-5119
Fax: 802-479-4235

or: Lamoille County Office on Aging
109 Professional Drive, Suite 1
Morrisville, VT 05661
802-888-2504 or 1-800-642-5119

Northeast Kingdom *(all of Orleans, Caledonia and Essex Counties)*

Northeastern Vermont Area Agency on Aging
1161 Portland Street
St. Johnsbury, VT 05819
748-5182 or 1-800-642-5119
Fax: 802-748-6622

or: 55 Seymour Lane, Suite 4
Newport, VT 05855
802-334-2190 or 1-800-639-1873
Fax: 802-334-3389

Champlain Valley *(all of Chittenden, Franklin and Grand Isle Counties; and all of Addison County except for the towns of Granville and Hancock)*

Champlain Valley Agency on Aging
PO Box 158
Winooski, VT 05404
(Site: 1 Mill Street, Room 3-5 in Burlington)
865-0360 or 1-800-642-5119
Fax: 802-865-0363

Southeastern Vermont *(Windsor County except for the five towns assigned to Central Vermont; all of Windham County; plus the towns of Thetford, Readsboro, Searsburg and Winhall)*

Council on Aging for Southeastern Vermont
56 Main Street, Suite 304
Springfield, VT 05156
885-2655 or 1-800-642-5119
Fax: 802-885-2665

Southwestern Vermont *(all of Rutland County except for Pittsfield; Bennington County except for the towns of Readsboro, Searsburg and Winhall)*

Southwestern Vermont Council on Aging
East Ridge Professional Building
1085 U.S. Route 4, Unit 2B
Rutland, VT 05701
786-5991 or 1-800-642-5119
Fax: 802-786-5994

or: 169 North Street
Bennington, VT 05201
442-5436 or 1-800-642-5119
Fax: 802-447-2846

School Breakfast Program

Who Runs It?

Vermont Department of Education, Child Nutrition Program, with federal support from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

What Does It Offer?

Nutritionally balanced breakfasts offered free or at low cost to all children in participating schools. The school receives a federal subsidy for each such meal served. The subsidy is higher for meals that are served free or at reduced price (*see below*).

Who Is Eligible?

All public and private, non-profit schools that are approved or recognized by the Vermont Department of Education. All students at those participating schools, regardless of family income. Meals may be served free or at a reduced price of no more than 30 cents if the family applies and has income below the limits for these benefits. Most foster children qualify for free breakfasts regardless of the family's income.

How Do People Apply?

If the school takes part in the program, no application is needed unless the family wants to apply for free or reduced price meals. Application forms are sent home with children at the start of the school year, and are always available from the school principal. The same application will cover both the breakfast and lunch programs. Vermont families whose children receive Reach Up or Food Stamp benefits only need to list the case number. Others applying for free or reduced price breakfasts must list their past month's income and a social security number.

Is This Program Offered Statewide?

Yes, nine out of ten public schools in Vermont take part in the breakfast program now, and more schools join every year. Contact the school principal to learn if the school serves breakfast or to discuss your interest in the program.

What Else Should I Know About This Program?

Created in 1966 to help children living in rural areas who had to travel long distances to get to school, the breakfast program has been found to improve children's behavior, attendance and achievement levels at school. Fancy cooking or dining facilities are not needed. The meal may be served in either the classroom or cafeteria. Grant funds may be available to help schools with program startup costs.

Where Can I Apply Or Get More Information?

Parents, guardians and foster parents seeking free or reduced-price school meals for a child should apply at the child's school. A Community Action Agency (*page 7*) can help parents fill out the application if needed.

School administrators or others wanting to know more about the program should visit the web site:

<http://education.vermont.gov/>

Or contact:

Jo Busha, Child Nutrition Program
Department of Education
Mail address: 120 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05620-2501
802-828-2447 (fax: 802-828-0573)

National School Lunch Program

Who Runs It?

Vermont Department of Education, Child Nutrition Program, with federal support from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

What Does It Offer?

Nutritionally balanced lunches offered free or at low cost to all children in participating schools. The school receives a federal subsidy for each meal served. The federal subsidy is higher for meals that are served free or at reduced price (*see below*).

Who Is Eligible?

All public and private, non-profit schools that are approved or recognized by the Vermont Department of Education. All students at those participating schools, regardless of family income.

Meals may be served free or at a reduced price of no more than 40 cents if the family's income falls below the limits for these benefits. Most foster children qualify for free lunches, regardless of the family's income.

How Do People Apply?

If the school takes part in the program, no application is needed unless the family wants to apply for free or reduced price meals. Application forms are sent home with children at the start of the school year, and are always available from the school principal. The same application will cover both the breakfast and lunch programs. Vermont families whose children receive Reach Up or Food Stamp benefits only need to list the case number. Others applying for free or reduced price breakfasts must list their past month's income and a social security number.

Is This Program Offered Statewide?

Yes, but over a dozen Vermont public schools do not take part in the federal lunch program. Contact your school principal to learn if the program is available there, or to discuss your interest in the school joining the program. Some grant funds may be available to help Vermont schools with program startup costs.

What Else Should I Know About This Program?

In 1998 Congress established an after-school snack program for children through the age of eighteen, as part of the school lunch program. In addition, school lunch programs can now offer meals during the summer through the "Seamless Summer Option."

Where Can I Apply Or Get More Information?

Parents and foster parents seeking free or reduced-price school meals for a child should apply at the child's school. A Community Action Agency (*see page 7*) worker can help parents fill out the form if needed. The application is available on-line at:

http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/pgm_nutrition.html

School boards or other community groups wanting to know more about the program may visit the Department's website at:

<http://education.vermont.gov/>

Or contact:

Jo Busha, Child Nutrition Program
Vermont Department of Education
Mail address: 120 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05620-2501
802-828-2447 (fax: 802-828-0573)

SERVE New England

Who Runs It?

SERVE is a private, non-profit organization headquartered in Massachusetts. Before 1998, it was known as SHARE New England.

What Does It Offer?

A cooperative program whose participants exchange community service for a discount on groceries. SERVE provides packages of quality foods that include fresh vegetables and fruits, frozen meats and other staple items at about 40% savings. All of the food is purchased, not donated. Produce-only, meat-only and seasonal food packages are available.

Who Is Eligible?

SERVE is open to anyone who does at least two hours a month of volunteer service for a community organization or someone who needs help. Examples might be doing yard work for a disabled neighbor or helping at a local senior center or food shelf.

How Much Does It Cost?

SERVE offers several different food packages, including one designed to feed a family of four. You may purchase more than one package, and may choose not to participate whenever you wish. Participants may pay for their SERVE food packages with cash, money orders and food stamp benefits.

Is This Program Offered Statewide?

SERVE currently has over fifteen host sites in nine Vermont counties.

Do Services Require A Car or Babysitter?

Recognizing that community service takes many forms, SERVE defines volunteer work as anything you do for someone outside your immediate family without getting paid. Participants may customize their service to suit their own schedules and limitations.

What Else Should I Know About This Program?

SERVE strengthens local communities by promoting volunteer service, while providing a dignified means for people to save money on food. In addition to the food, SERVE volunteers receive a newspaper that includes articles from SERVE host sites, recipes for cooking products contained in the food packages, nutrition information and listings of all host sites in New England.

Where Can I Apply Or Get More Information?

For information about the program, registration and distribution schedules, host site contacts, or how to start a site in Vermont, visit their web site at:

www.servenewengland.org

You may also write:

SERVE New England
144 Bodwell Street
Avon, MA 02322

Or call 1-888-742-7363 toll-free, then dial 0 for customer service, or ext. 12 for Susan Williams, or ext. 17 for Ann Adams (email: aadams@servenewengland.org)

Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC)

Who Runs It?

Vermont Department of Health, using federal U.S. Department of Agriculture funds.

What Does It Offer?

Health screening, nutrition education, breastfeeding support, food, referral to other services. The food package (dairy products, juice, peanut butter, eggs, cereals) is geared to the health status, diet needs and preferences of the participants. WIC also provides breast pumps to mothers who qualify. All WIC participants over the age of six months automatically qualify for Vermont Farm To Family farmers market coupons (*see page 6*).

Who Is Eligible?

Pregnant and breastfeeding women, women who have been pregnant in the past six months, infants, children less than five years old. Applicants must be both income-eligible and medically or nutritionally "at risk." Income eligibility means either having incomes below 185% of the federal poverty standards or receiving Reach Up, Food Stamp or Medicaid benefits.

What Will I Need When I Apply?

Identification for each applicant, including children (birth certificate, immunization record, driver's license or other identification). Information about current household income (*call the district Health office for details*). Proof of pregnancy if the applicant is a pregnant woman.

Are Services Accessible If I Can't Afford A Car Or Babysitter?

Applicants may need to drive to get to one of the more than fifty clinic locations around the state. WIC tries to arrange appointments at the clinic closest to home and to schedule friends and neighbors together if that will make travel easier. Babysitting services are not provided because children are expected to come to the clinic.

What Else Should I Know About This Program?

WIC coordinates closely with many other health and social service programs. Vermont has one of the highest WIC participation rates in the country, enrolling half of all babies born in Vermont each year. Rarely, when funds are limited, not all eligible people can be served. When this happens, pregnant or breastfeeding women, infants and children with medical conditions are enrolled first. Other income-eligible persons are enrolled if there are enough federal funds.

Where Can I Apply Or Get More Information?

Visit the Department's web site at:

<http://www.healthvermont.gov/>

You may dial a toll-free WIC Hotline at 1-800-463-4343, extension 7333, from 7:45-4:30 weekdays or contact your district Health Department office (*see next page*).

Vermont Department Of Health

<http://www.healthvermont.gov/>

District Health offices as of November, 2006

Barre

VT Department of Health
McFarland Office Building
5 Perry Street, Suite 250
Barre, VT 05641-4272
479-4200 or 1-888-253-8786

Bennington

VT Department of Health
324 Main Street, Suite 2
Bennington, VT 05201
447-3531 or 1-800-637-7347

Brattleboro

VT Department of Health
232 Main Street, Suite 3
Brattleboro, VT 05301-2881
257-2880 or 1-888-253-8805

Burlington

VT Department of Health
1193 North Avenue, Suite 1
Burlington, VT 05408
863-7323 or 1-888-253-8803

Middlebury

VT Department of Health
700 Exchange Street, Suite 101
Middlebury, VT 05753-1529
388-4644 or 1-888-253-8804

Morrisville

VT Department of Health
63 Professional Drive
Morrisville, VT 05661
888-7447 or 1-888-253-8798

Newport

VT Department of Health
100 Main Street, Suite 220
Newport, VT 05855
334-6707 or 1-800-952-2945

Rutland

VT Department of Health
300 Asa Bloomer State Office Building
Rutland, VT 05701
786-5811 or 1-888-253-8802

St. Albans

VT Department of Health
20 Houghton Street, Suite 312
St. Albans, VT 05478-2248
524-7970 or 1-888-253-8801

St. Johnsbury

VT Department of Health
67 Eastern Avenue, Suite 1
St. Johnsbury, VT 05819-2638
748-5151 or 1-800-952-2936

Springfield

VT Department of Health
100 Mineral Street, Suite 104
Springfield, VT 05156
885-5778 or 1-888-296-8151

White River Junction

VT Department of Health
226 Holiday Drive, Suite 22
White River Jct., VT 05001
295-8820 or 1-888-253-8799

Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)

Who Runs It?

Vermont Department of Education, Child Nutrition Programs, with federal support from the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

What Does It Offer?

Nutritious meals at no cost to needy children ages 0-18 years. Sponsoring organizations receive reimbursement for all meals served to eligible children at approved sites.

Who Is Eligible?

The program may be sponsored by schools, residential camps, local governments or non-profit organizations. It is limited to "areas in which poor economic conditions exist" or sites where at least half of the children are eligible for free or reduced price school meals (*see pages 13 and 14*).

What Will I Need When I Apply?

The Department of Education will help organizations to determine if they qualify to sponsor the program and to establish the eligibility of a proposed meal site. Private organizations need proof of non-profit status.

Is This Program Offered Statewide?

It is available statewide, and participation has slowly been growing in Vermont, with SFSP sites being sponsored at camps, schools, housing projects, churches and municipal summer recreation projects. However, the program currently is reaching only about ten percent of eligible Vermont children.

What Else Should I Know About This Program?

It was established as a national child nutrition program in 1968 so that low income children could receive nourishing meals during school vacation, as they can through school meal programs during the school year.

The required training for organizations planning to sponsor a summer food program takes place in early spring. Some public or private funds may be available to help with startup costs. The Vermont Campaign To End Childhood Hunger (*see page 20*) may offer information, technical assistance or other resources to groups interested in starting a SFSP in their community.

Where Can I Apply Or Get More Information?

To find out if there is a Summer Food Service Program site in your area, or if you are interested in setting up a new site, contact:

Helen Ballard
Child Nutrition Program
Department of Education
Mail address: 120 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05620-2501
802-828-2447 (fax: 802-828-0573)

Details are also available on their web site:

<http://education.vermont.gov/>

Vermont Foodbank

Who Runs It?

The Vermont Foodbank, Inc. is a private, non-profit organization governed by a board of trustees and affiliated with America's Second Harvest, the Nation's food bank network.

How Is It Supported?

Contributions of cash and food from private individuals, groups, supermarkets, food producers, merchants, foundations and others. Network partners (i.e., member agencies) also contribute shared maintenance fees because the Foodbank's operating costs average about 32 cents per pound of product.

What Does It Offer?

Donated non-perishable, prepared and fresh foods for non-profit member organizations at an average "shared maintenance fee" (handling fee) of 18 cents a pound. Some basic products are bought from wholesalers and redistributed to local agencies at low cost ("Food Purchase Program"). For an additional fee, the Foodbank can deliver products to its network partners.

The Foodbank manages The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), a federal program (*see page 20*) through which food shelves enrolled in the program may receive certain types of food commodities to boost the supply they have on hand to give to low income households.

Are Services Offered Statewide?

Yes. The Vermont Foodbank membership includes over 260 local nonprofit agencies providing both emergency and non-emergency food services throughout the state.

Who Is Eligible?

Membership is open to organizations, rather than individuals. Network partners must serve food to low income people and be a church or classified 501(c)(3) tax exempt by the Internal Revenue Service. Network partners are prohibited from either charging directly or requesting a specific donation amount for any product they get from the Foodbank, or for any meal prepared with Foodbank products.

What Is The Difference Between The Foodbank And Food Shelf?

Vermont currently has over a hundred food shelves but only one food bank, the Vermont Foodbank. While a family unable to afford enough food might go to a local food shelf or community kitchen for help, the Foodbank's role is to make donated and low cost food available to organizations operating a food shelf, community kitchen or other local food service. The Vermont Foodbank is mobilizing and distributing over six million pounds of product into the community each year.

Where Can I Apply Or Get More Information?

The Vermont Foodbank welcomes visitors and is located in the Wilson Industrial Park in Barre. For directions, more information, or an application packet, contact:

Joe Dauscher, Agency Relations Manager
Vermont Foodbank
PO Box 254
South Barre, VT 05670-0254
802-476-3341, extension 106

Or visit their web site at:
www.vtfoodbank.org

Other Food Resources in Vermont

Federal Commodity Programs

The VT Dept. for Children and Families Child Development Division administers federal commodity programs that supply foods to schools, daycares, institutions and other nonprofits. *For details, contact:* Holly Peake (802-241-2582). One program gives the VT Foodbank commodities to allocate to participating food shelves (*see page 19*).

Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)

The CSFP provides nutrition education and a monthly box of healthy foods to people aged 60+ with incomes below 130% of the poverty limits, and to five-year-olds and pregnant or postpartum women who have incomes below 185% of poverty and do not get WIC benefits. The VT Foodbank delivers the foods to local sites, where CSFP enrollees pick up the food. Enrollment cannot happen at the food pickup sites. The VT Dept. of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living (DAIL) runs the CSFP. Interested persons must enroll in advance; call 1-800-214-4648 to request an application.

Community Supported Agriculture, Vermont Farm Share, and Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program

Consumers buy "shares" in a community supported agriculture (CSA) farm in the spring, when the farmer is planning the next growing season. After harvesting begins, shareholders get a weekly supply of produce from the farm throughout the season. This provides economic stability to small farms and good produce to consumers. Financial aid to help low income people buy CSA shares may be available. *For details, contact:* VT Farm Share Program at the Northeast Organic Farming Association (NOFA) in Richmond at 802-434-4122. A Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program run by DAIL in

partnership with NOFA provides CSA farm shares and nutrition education to residents of dozens of VT senior housing sites. *For details, contact:* Amy Nickerson at DAIL (802-241-2930).

Vermont 2-1-1

A program of the United Ways of Vermont, Vermont 211 is a confidential information and referral program reached by dialing 211 from anywhere in Vermont. It offers person-to-person problem solving support while linking people to a wide range of needed services. You may also contact the program by dialing 1-866-652-4636 toll-free within Vermont, or 1-802-652-4636 from outside Vermont, or at their web site:

<http://www.vermont211.org>

<http://www.vermontfoodhelp.com>

The VT Campaign To End Childhood Hunger (VTCECH), in partnership with ESD, manages a comprehensive nutrition resource web site. Visitors to [vermontfoodhelp.com](http://www.vermontfoodhelp.com) can learn about Food Stamp Program and whether they may qualify for benefits. The site has information about many nutrition programs, links to related sites, a resource library with downloadable outreach tools, and even healthy recipes. *For details, contact:* VTCECH at 802-865-0255 in Burlington.

Vermont "Eat For Health" Web Site

The VT Dept. of Health launched a new site – <http://vermonthhealth.gov/eatforhealth> – that offers shopping tips, weekly meal plans, easy recipes, nutrition education tools, program links, and a wealth of other information to help Vermonters make and promote healthy food choices. People without access to the Web may dial Vermont 211 (*see above*) and ask for a hard copy of materials found on the Eat For Health site.

Name That Acronym!

Confused by folks who speak in letters instead of words? Here are some terms you may hear in nutrition issue discussions in Vermont:

AAA Area Agency on Aging. Private, non-profit agency serving Vermonters over sixty, also called "Triple A's" (*see pages 11-12*).

ABAWD Able-bodied adult without dependants. Refers to adults aged 18-50 for whom food stamp eligibility was restricted under 1996 federal welfare reform legislation.

AHS Agency of Human Services. Large state agency comprising several departments, including DAIL, DCF and Health.

CAA or CAP Community Action Agency. Private, non-profit agency addressing poverty related issues and needs (*see page 7*).

CACFP Child & Adult Care Food Program. Run by the Education Department (*page 1*).

CSFP Commodity Supplemental Food Program. Federal nutrition program for low income seniors and young children and pregnant/postpartum women not receiving WIC (*see page 20*).

DAIL VT Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living. Runs CSFP and other nutrition programs for older adults.

DCF VT Department for Children and Families. Large component of AHS with many divisions, e.g., Economic Services and Child Development.

EBT Electronic Benefits Transfer. Replaced vouchers as a way to deliver public program benefits. Recipients get food stamp or TANF benefits posted to a card that they would use like a commercial debit card (*see page 8*).

EFNEP Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (*see page 4*).

ESD Economic Services Division. Part of DCF that operates the TANF, Food Stamp, Farm To Family and other programs. Formerly called the Dept. of PATH.

FMNP Farmers Market Nutrition Program. Federal name for programs that fund farmers market coupon distribution – Vermont dubbed this "Farm To Family" (*see page 6*) – and other efforts to provide fresh, locally grown produce to low income people (*see page 20*).

FNS Food and Nutrition Service. Branch of USDA that manages most of the federal programs in this Guide (e.g., WIC, Food Stamps, commodity or school meal programs).

FRAC Food Research and Action Center. National advocacy group on food issues.

NOFA Northeast Organic Farming Association (*see page 20*).

SFSP Summer Food Service Program. Supports food costs for low income children at summer activity sites (*see page 18*).

TANF Temporary Assistance For Needy Families. Name in federal law for the program that Vermont calls Reach Up.

TEFAP The Emergency Food Assistance Program. Federal program supplying food commodities to food shelves (*see page 20*).

USDA U.S. Department of Agriculture.

VTCECH VT Campaign To End Childhood Hunger (*see page 20*).

WIC Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children. (*see page 16*)

The Americans With Disabilities Act requires all public programs to be accessible to people with disabilities. This *Guide* describes a variety of public and private services, some of which may not be fully accessible at the local level. It may be wise to contact a program site first for information about accessibility.

This *Guide* was prepared by the Economic Services Division (ESD) of the Vermont Department for Children and Families.

For an electronic copy of the *Guide*, please send an email to:
marycar@ahs.state.vt.us

For a hard copy of the Guide, call 802-241-3535 or 802-241-2458 or write to the address below. If you need more than five copies, or if you have corrections or suggestions for future editions, please contact Mary Carlson, ESD's Food and Nutrition Program Coordinator, at 802-241-2458 (email: marycar@ahs.state.vt.us) or write to:

Food & Nutrition Program Coordinator
Economic Services Division
Vermont Dept. for Children and Families
103 South Main Street
Waterbury, Vermont 05671-1201

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