

**Title:** School Meal Eligibility Extension and Information Update

**Audience:** Principals, Approving Officers, Business Managers, Food Service Managers and Directors

The previous year's student eligibility for school meals has been extended for an additional period of 30 operating days based a waiver from USDA granted to VT due to the flooding and damages from Tropical Storm Irene and its impact on schools, families, roads and the infrastructure of our state.

Typically, a student who has been deemed eligible for free or reduced price meals during school year 2010-2011 may carry over that eligibility into the new school year for up to 30 operating days, or until a new application has been submitted but not later than October 15<sup>th</sup>. At the 30<sup>th</sup> operating day deadline or October 15<sup>th</sup>, if a household had not submitted a new application or the student was not on the Direct Certification List, the student's household was notified that he or she was no longer eligible for meal benefits.

As result of the granted extension, students whose households have not yet submitted their new meal applications for the 2011-2012 school year may continue to be eligible from the previous school year for an additional 30 operating days. This longer timeframe will allow families sufficient time to complete a meal application and schools the opportunity to contact households from whom they have not received an application for the new school year.

This waiver does not change the required dates for the verification process, which began on October 1. As an additional reminder, the Direct Certification List is updated each month and should be checked on a regular basis. Schools may contact our office to verify if a student's name is on the current Direct Certification List.

**Contact:** Laurie Colgan @ [laurie.colgan@state.vt.us](mailto:laurie.colgan@state.vt.us) or at (802) 828-5153.