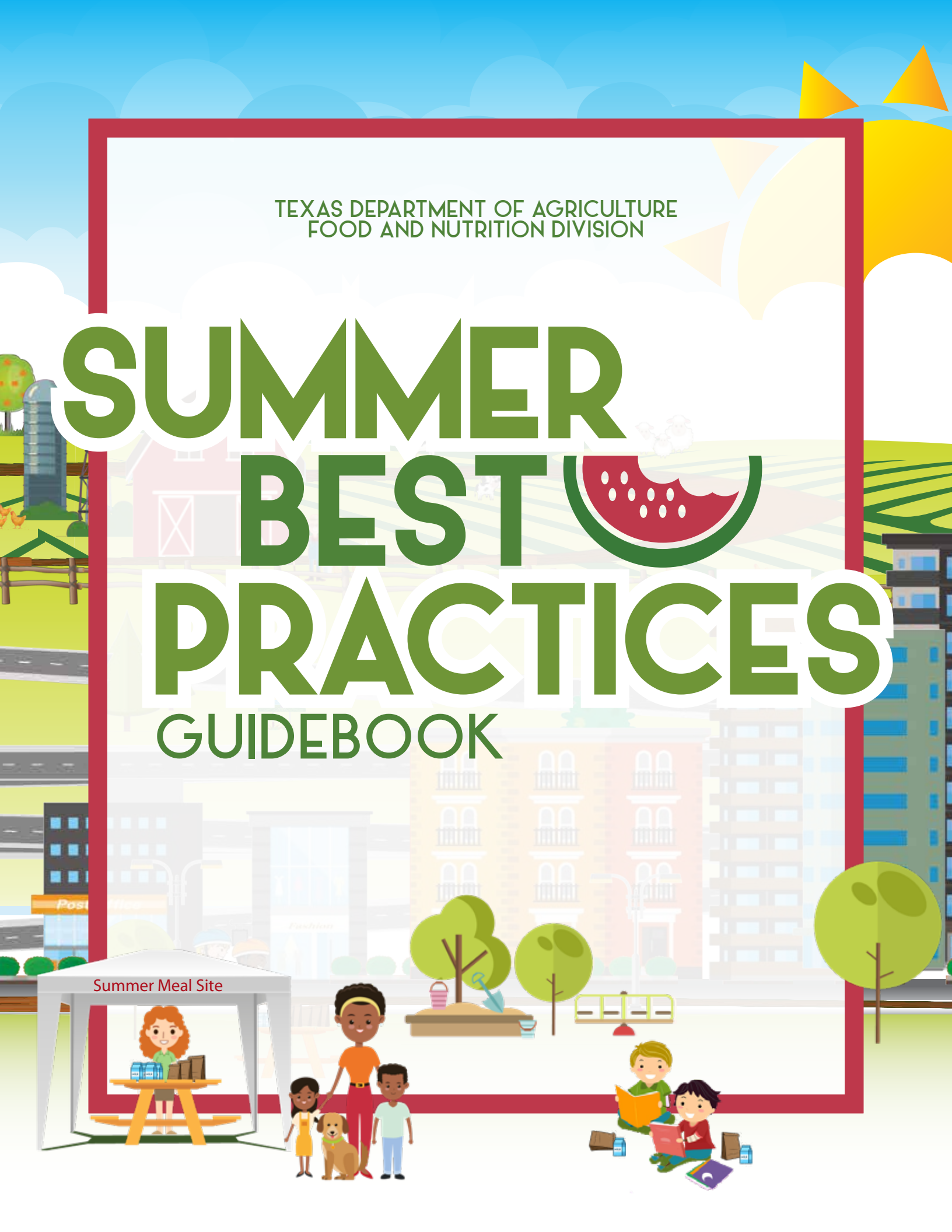


TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOOD AND NUTRITION DIVISION

SUMMER BEST PRACTICES GUIDEBOOK



SUMMARY

Using the tools and strategies in this guidebook will help set the stage for new successes as a partner in the Summer Meal Programs. When you serve appealing, great-tasting meals and have an engaging meal site setting, there are no limits to the impact your program can have. By making this commitment to summer meals excellence, you help build a healthier future for your community and the entire state of Texas.

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SPREAD THE WORD USING SUMMER OUTREACH MATERIALS



The Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) has developed outreach resources for the Summer Meal Programs to help you increase community awareness and connect more children with meals. This guidebook explains how contracting entities (CEs) can use these resources and marketing tactics to further support their efforts to achieve new successes and increase the number of children who visit their summer meal sites.

Visit [SummerFood.org/OutreachTools](https://www.summerfood.org/outreachtools) to view all materials featured in this guidebook.



Promotional Materials

AVAILABLE FOR ORDER AND DOWNLOAD

The following resources can be used to improve outreach efforts in your community. Download or order printed materials online at SummerFood.org/OutreachTools.

BOOKMARKS



PROGRAM POSTER



PARENT INFORMATION CARD



YARD SIGNS (VARIOUS)



Helpful Tip: Posters can only be used with property owner consent.

Helpful Tip: Yard signs can only be used with property owner consent.

KEEP SUMMER MEALS GOING POSTCARD (CUSTOMIZABLE)



FILLABLE POSTER (CUSTOMIZABLE)



DOOR HANGERS



Helpful Tip: Door hangers should NOT be placed in mailboxes for any reason.

Helpful Tip: Postcards should NOT be placed in mailboxes for any reason.

Local Media Support Resources

AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD

Connect with city government and local media outlets such as newspapers, magazines, radio/TV stations, etc. Download these materials online at SummerFood.org/OutreachTools.

NEWSPAPER ADS/ MAGAZINE ADS

**NO COST
SUMMER MEALS
FOR KIDS!**

Find summer meals in your community this summer. No cost for kids 18 and younger and enrolled students up to 21 with disabilities.

Find a meal location near you:
[Visit Our Website](#)

This product was funded by USDA. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

(Insert Logo Here)

For Immediate Release
DATE:

SPONSOR NAME WILL SERVE UP GOOD NUTRITION FOR LOCAL CHILDREN THIS SUMMER
Sponsoring healthy summer meals to _____ community helps _____ children ensure kids have a healthy vacation and return to school ready to learn.

LOVE HAS NO BORDERS _____ This summer, _____ will connect children 18 years and under through our Healthy Summer Food Service Program (HSFP) meals at no cost to the HSFP. HSFP is a U.S. Department of Agriculture volunteer program administered by the Lone Star State by the Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA). For the children who stay or school meals during the vacation, your meals provide a source of good nutrition when school is out for the long summer vacation.

City/County/State _____ children need good nutrition and meals on their vacation, grow and succeed in life, and _____ Sponsor representation in name and title here. _____ HSFP meals, 2 million meals (meals being served in Texas, these healthy meals are not to be counted along Texas during the summer vacation). (Add details specific to your HSFP program including kick-off events along with any information not subject to change)

Partner Name _____ is one of the nonprofit organizations partnering with TDA to serve meals during Texas. If possible we encourage you to use these three links to find a meal site opportunity in the state:

- Eat
- Map
- Text

Organizations partner with TDA to make meals to areas where more than 10 percent of children are eligible for free or reduced price meals in the National School Lunch Program. (Include sponsoring organizations website address, toll-free phone number, website address, government agencies and other key resource organizations. All meal sites must be approved by an organization that has a contract with TDA.)

Summer food program meal sites help children succeed by providing the nourishment they need to return to school in the fall ready to thrive.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Contact: (Include contact information)

PRESS RELEASE (CUSTOMIZABLE)

PROCLAMATION

RADIO/TV PSA



Proclamation
Healthy Summer Meals for Kids

WHEREAS, Summer meals should be about children enjoying all that Texas has to offer, from farm fresh foods to our state's natural beauty; and

WHEREAS, When school is out for summer, kids who count on eating meals at school might not otherwise have access to all the nutrition they need to be active and healthy; and

WHEREAS, Texas children face food insecurity, and Summer Food Service Program meals provide an important source of good nutrition; and

WHEREAS, Summer Food Service Program meal sites also provide Texas children with a place to spend time with friends and stay active; and

WHEREAS, Summer meals can help children stay healthy and prepare them to return to school ready to learn and thrive; and

WHEREAS, By increasing awareness of free summer meals through community outreach, adding new meal sites, expanding existing sites to underserved areas, and investing in summer programming to attract more kids to meal sites, "COMMUNITY" can increase access to summer meals in the Summer Food Service Program; and

WHEREAS, "COMMUNITY" is committed to making sure no child goes hungry this summer;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, "OFFICIAL'S NAME AND TITLE" do hereby proclaim "COMMUNITY" a Healthy Summer Meals for Kids Community and call upon citizens and partner organizations to celebrate with appropriate ceremonies to acknowledge these efforts.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand on this MMDDYYYY



Web Based Resources

AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD

Promote your summer meal sites on your website or social media platforms. Download materials online at SummerFood.org/OutreachTools.



WEBSITE BANNER



WEBSITE BUTTON



SOCIAL MEDIA SUPPORT PACKET



SPREAD THE WORD USING SOCIAL MEDIA

Social Media Strategies

Social media enables sites to share content in real time, connect with different audiences, post photos, and engage with those who may not know about the Summer Meal Programs. Developing a social media strategy can give structure to daily posts and ensure consistent messaging.

Best Practices When Planning Your Own Social Media Content



AUDIENCE

- Language and content should be tailored to reach the target group, whether it is parents, kids or the community. This may mean communicating about a site in several different ways.



PHOTOS AND VIDEOS

- Social media posts that include either a photo or video catch readers' attention more than words alone.
- Video and live streaming offer fun ways to introduce multimedia into communications.
- Research has shown that video posts offer excellent reach and no additional cost.



CALL TO ACTION

- In marketing, a call to action is defined as an instruction to the audience that provokes an immediate response. It usually includes an imperative such as "find out more" or "click here."
- The sample posts section on the next page includes an example of using a call to action.



TAGS

- When someone is tagged in social media with the user's handle preceded by the at symbol (@), it creates a short link to their profile and the post may be added to that person's or group's timeline. This could increase the visibility of the posts beyond an immediate audience.
- Tag TDA on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram.
Twitter: [@TexasDeptofAg](#)
Facebook: [@TexasDepartmentofAgriculture](#)
Instagram: [@TexasAgriculture](#)



POST ON MULTIPLE CHANNELS

- There are multiple social media channels including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and many others, all with different target audiences.
- Many of the tips from above resonate across all three channels.

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SPREAD THE WORD USING COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Partnerships

Partnerships can boost your marketing efforts by combining forces and strengths. Read on to learn about building strong partnerships.



CONNECTING WITH LOCAL OFFICIALS: MAYORS, JUDGES, CITY COUNCIL AND COMMISSIONER COURT MEMBERS

Communities and their local officials offer opportunities for increasing your sites' visibility. Send the "Healthy Summer Meals for Kids" proclamation electronically to the mayor's office and ask that the mayors and city council members present this proclamation at a city council meeting. Sample proclamations are available for download at SummerFood.org/Outreach Tools.

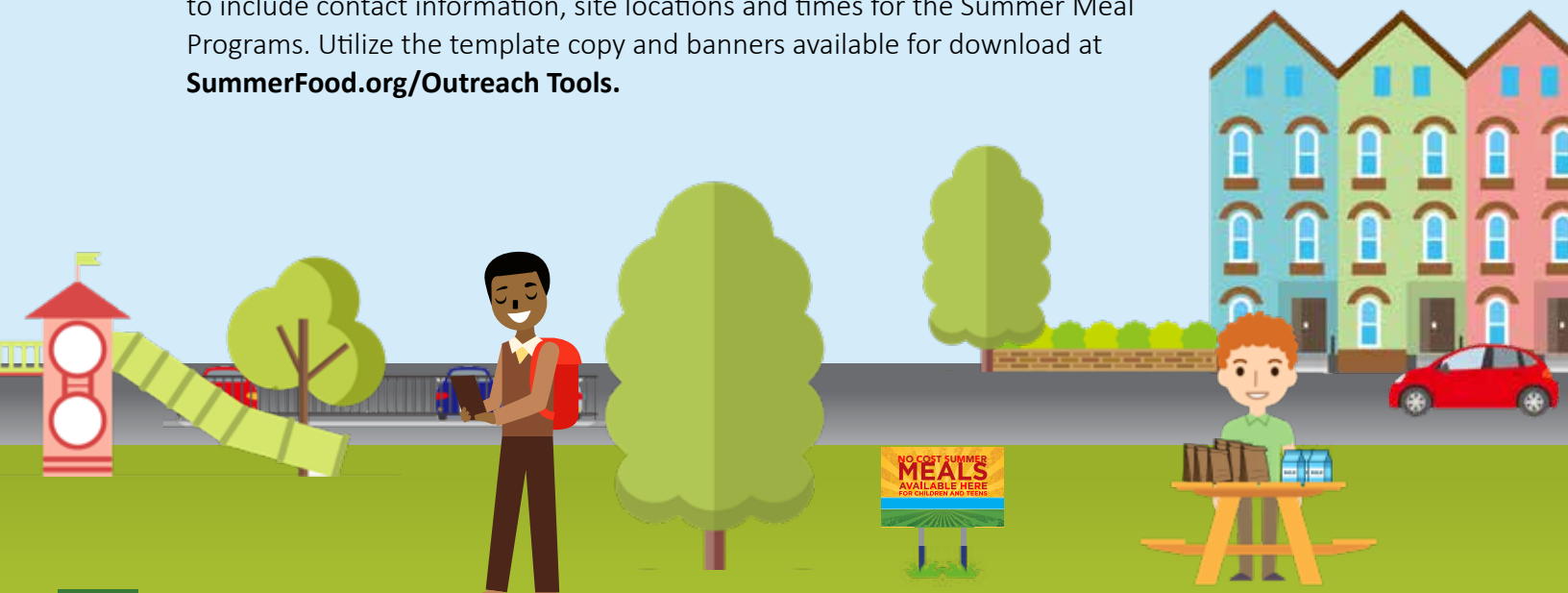
CONNECTING WITH LOCALLY OWNED BUSINESSES AND FARMERS' MARKETS

Farmers' markets and locally owned businesses offer unique partnering opportunities. Coordinate with these businesses to display marketing materials to promote the Summer Meal Programs.

COMMUNITY-BASED EMAIL COMMUNICATION

Many community partners and organizations send local families newsletters highlighting upcoming events and activities. Newsletters and email campaigns are sent directly to program participants and help increase awareness.

Partner with local organizations to share information through their communication channels. Be sure to include contact information, site locations and times for the Summer Meal Programs. Utilize the template copy and banners available for download at SummerFood.org/Outreach Tools.



In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. mail:
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. fax: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. email: program.intake@usda.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.



Food and Nutrition Division
Summer Meal Programs



TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
COMMISSIONER SID MILLER

Fraud Hotline: 1-866-5-FRAUD-4 or 1-866-537-2834 | P.O. Box 12847 | Austin, TX 78711
Toll Free: (877) TEX-MEAL | For the hearing impaired: (800) 735-2989 (TTY)

This product was funded by USDA.
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www.SquareMeals.org

