

# Rural Non-Congregate Meal Service Examples: Summer 2023

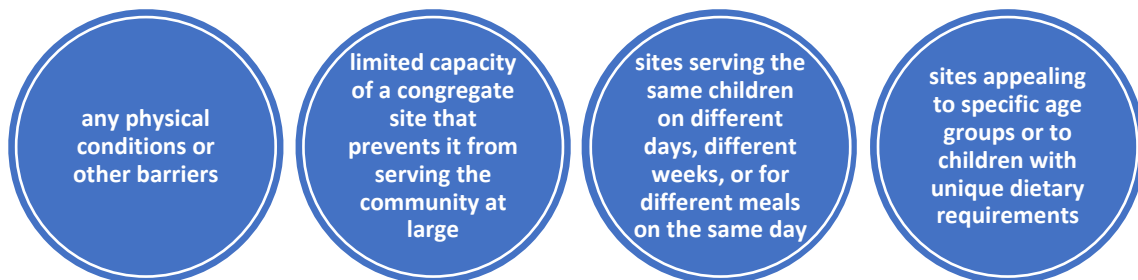
This document provides examples of using the rural non-congregate meal service option for the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and the Seamless Summer Option (SSO) in summer 2023:

1. when no congregate meal service is available in a rural area
2. when distributing multiple days' worth of meals.

**Note:** This document is intended to provide tips and illustrate possible approaches for SFSP sponsors implementing non-congregate meal service for Summer 2023 and is not intended to address all possible circumstances. All examples provided in this document include daily meal limits that do not apply to migrant or camp sites.

## Using the Rural Non-Congregate Meal Service Option When No Congregate Meal Service is Available

When determining if a rural area is served by a congregate site, the State agency should consider information about existing congregate meal sites in the area including, but not limited to:



The examples below focus on using the rural non-congregate meal service option on the same day when congregate meal service cannot reliably reach eligible areas or eligible children in rural areas during the summer months including:

- on certain days of the week,
- certain weeks during the summer, or
- for certain meals on the same day.

The reasons for this may include but are not limited to:

- public transportation limitations (i.e., limited-service times and days),
- attendance consistently too low on certain days impacting ability to operate in-person meal service,
- staffing shortages causing sites to be open less often, or
- congregate site in the area operating one day only per week or for only part of the summer.

The examples below apply to either:

- one site operating both congregate and rural non-congregate meal service, or
- two sites in the same area – one providing congregate meal service and the other providing rural non-congregate meal service.

## Allowable Ways to Combine Rural Non-Congregate Meal Service with Congregate Meal Service

Sites serving the same children on different days

**Example**

Congregate breakfast and lunch Monday - Friday  
Rural non-congregate meal service for breakfast and lunch for Saturday and Sunday

Sites serving the same children on different weeks

**Example**

Camp ends July 28  
School starts August 9  
Sponsor offers weekday rural non-congregate meal service for breakfast and lunch through August 8

Sites serving the same children for different meals on the same day

**Example**

Congregate breakfast  
Take home lunch, supper, or snack

**Example**

Congregate lunch  
Take home breakfast or snack

## Unallowable Ways to Combine Rural Non-Congregate Meal Service with Congregate Meal Service

Congregate breakfast and lunch  
Rural non-congregate meal service snack provided to take home

**Unallowable**

The sponsor has exceeded the daily meal allowance (2 meals) per child

Congregate meal service for breakfast and lunch Monday-Friday

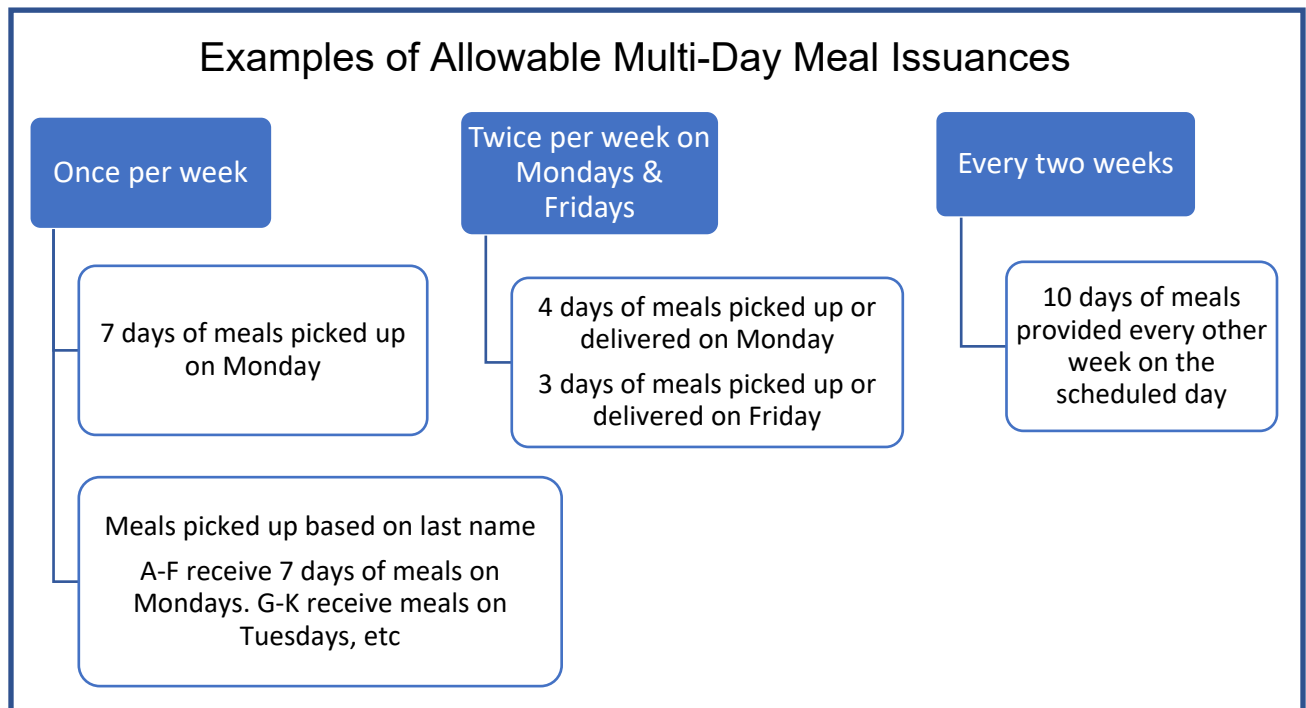
Non-congregate meal pick-up Monday-Friday for breakfast and lunch at the same site as congregate meal service

**Unallowable**

Rural non-congregate meal service cannot be provided if congregate meal service is available

## Using the Rural Non-Congregate Meal Service Option to Provide Multi-Day Meal Issuance

- State agencies, at their discretion, are allowed to approve sponsors for multi-day meal issuance for the allowable number of reimbursable meals that would be provided over a maximum 10-day calendar day period.
- State agencies should carefully review the proposed distribution or delivery days when approving multi-day meal issuances while adhering to the 10-day calendar day limit.



## Examples of Unallowable Multi-Day Meal Issuances

School starts on August 21  
A site's last distribution day is August 18  
The site distributes 10 days' worth of meals on the last distribution day

**Unallowable**  
Site should have only served 3 days' worth of meals (i.e., 8/18, 8/19, 8/20)  
7 days' worth of meals should be disallowed since school is back in session on 8/21

Pick-up service operated every Friday and provides 10 days' worth of meals (10 breakfasts and 10 lunches)

**Unallowable**  
The sponsor has exceeded the daily meal allowance per child.  
If meal pick-up service occurs every Friday, then a maximum of 7 days' worth of meals (7 breakfasts and 7 lunches) can be provided to ensure no more than the maximum daily meals are provided.

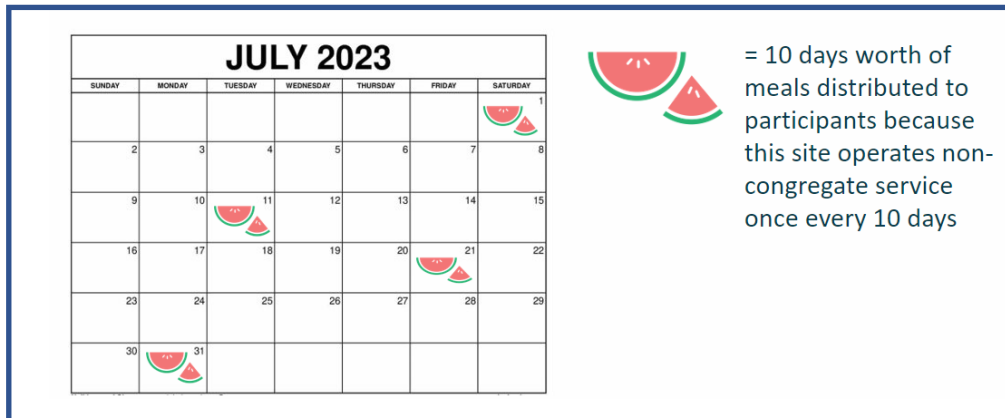
### Reminders

- All sponsors should work closely with their State agency in order to ensure that their meal operations comply with FNS guidance and regulations.
- Although the rural non-congregate meal service option is not intended to replace congregate meal service, sponsors should work with their State agency to determine which option works best for their community.
- For Summer 2023, rural non-congregate meal service can operate in areas served by congregate meal sites, but only when service is limited to meals or days of the week when that congregate service is not offered.
- The maximum number of reimbursable meals that may be offered at a site remains the same: up to two meals, or one meal and one snack, per child, per day may be offered in any combination except lunch and supper.
- State agencies have the discretion to establish statewide policies regarding aspects of rural non-congregate meal service operations. Therefore, examples provided above may or may not apply. Information on rural non-congregate meal service flexibilities should be clearly outlined in the State agency's MAP submission.
- All examples provided in this document include daily meal limits that do not apply to migrant or camp sites. Camps and migrant sites can provide up to 3 meals per day, whereas all other SFSP sites can provide up to 2 meals or 1 meal and 1 snack per day. For simplicity, we only reference meals on this page.

## Calendar Examples of Multi-Day Meal Issuance

### Allowable Multi-Day Meal Issuance

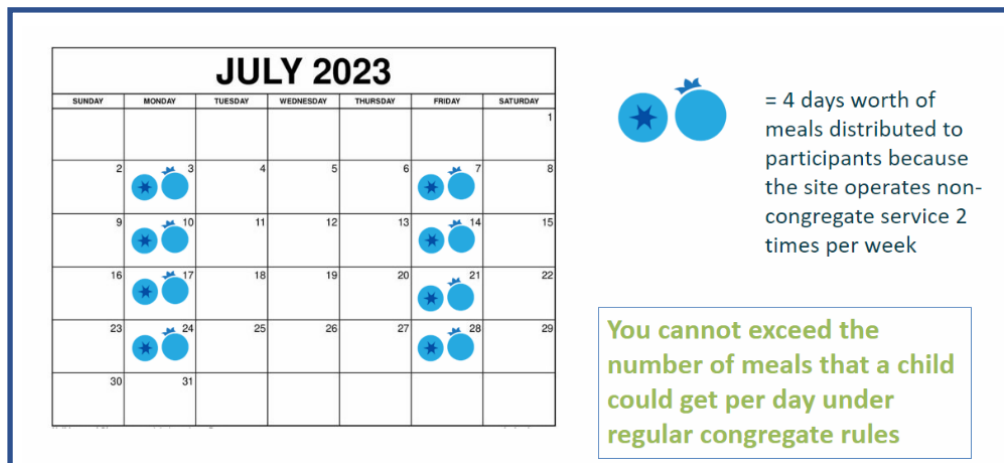
The watermelon represents a home delivery model for which 10 days' worth of meals are served to children at a time. In this example, meals are only delivered once every 10 days. This operating calendar complies, since they do not exceed the maximum 10 calendar day period or the maximum of number of reimbursable meals that can be provided in the 10-day calendar period for multi-day meal issuance.



### Unallowable Multi-Day Meal Issuance

The blueberries represent 4 days' worth of meals. In this example, meals are delivered twice a week on Mondays and Fridays. This would be unallowable since the number of meals in a given week would be exceeded.

Calculation: 4 days' worth of meals x 2 times per week = 8 days' worth of meals per week



## References

[SFSP 01-2023, SP 05-2023, \*Implementation Guidance: Summer 2023 Non-Congregate Meal Service in Rural Areas\* – Revised](#), issued February 28, 2023.

[SFSP 07-2023, SP 14-2023, \*Questions and Answers #2: Summer 2023 Non-Congregate Meal Service in Rural Areas\*](#) – issued April 20, 2023