

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 21, 2015

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## DHHS Gives Schools, Child Cares Good News for School Year

**Lincoln** – Nebraska school districts and child care programs will keep more than \$1.2 million in food transportation and warehousing costs this school year after the Department of Health and Human Services applied for and received reallocated federal funds to pay those costs, according to CEO Courtney Phillips.

CFS directs the distribution of domestically grown U.S. Department of Agriculture donated foods to schools and child care programs, which have paid the distribution costs in the past.

The funds were received from the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service to pay for distribution costs associated with programs such as the National School Lunch Program, Child and Adult Care Food Program and the Summer Food Service Program. These programs fight hunger and obesity at schools, child care centers and after-school programs by providing healthy meals to children. States that fund their own food distribution return the dollars to the federal government.

Phillips said DHHS Food Distribution applied for the funds, which will pay for nearly all administrative expenses and food distribution costs.

"These funds will take pressure off schools and child care programs who provide healthy school lunches to children," Phillips said. "We're very glad our application was approved so these programs can reduce their costs."

The U.S.D.A. supports domestic agriculture by purchasing surplus commodities and in turn providing the foods to states in support of U.S.D.A. Child Nutrition programs, she said. The U.S.D.A. funds uses funds from import duties to buy the food.

In another cost-savings move, DHHS arranged direct shipments of U.S.D.A. foods to several large school districts, avoiding state transportation and warehousing costs. Cost savings from this effort are expected to exceed \$500,000, Phillips said.

U.S.D.A. foods make up about 18 percent of all food served at Nebraska's schools, she said. During the 2014-15 school year, DHHS Food Distribution moved over 300,000 cases of U.S.D.A. foods or about 12 million pounds of donated food.

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