

OSPI USDA Foods Show

January 26, 2026 — University Place

January 30, 2026 — Spokane

8 am – 2 pm

Time	Room 1	Room 2	Room 3
7:30 – 8 AM	Registration Front Desk		
8 – 9 AM	USDA Foods & OSPI Updates Group Session - Auditorium		
9:15 – 10:15 AM	Pathways to Food Procurement in School Nutrition	Simplifying Diversions	Culinary Demo: Black Bean Burger
10:30 – 11:30 AM	Maximizing Menus and Dollars	Taste of Success: Best Practices for Engaging Taste Tests	Culinary Demo: Frozen Chicken
11:45 – 12:15 PM	FDP New System Preview Group Session – Auditorium		
12:15 – 2 PM	USDA Foods Taste Testing Group Session - Cafeteria		

Breakout Session Descriptions

Pathways to Food Procurement in School Nutrition

There are many ways to purchase food in Child Nutrition Programs. In this session, you'll have the opportunity to hear an expert panel of child nutrition professionals discuss the clever ways they allocate their food budgets. We'll break down complex systems in an overview of procurement pathways, help you think about efficient ways to spend your limited dollars, and discuss the power of leveraging contracts and group purchasing. You'll leave with new ideas for stretching a limited food budget and feel ready for procurement and pre-order season!

Maximizing Menus and Dollars

Back by popular demand! Learn practical strategies for innovative menu plans that maximize your USDA entitlement funds. Join Patricia Barret, Director of Food and Nutrition Services at South Kitsap School District to discover new ways to optimize your USDA Foods allocation.

A Taste of Success: Best Practices for Engaging Taste Tests

Taste tests engage students of all ages, provide exposure to new foods and flavors, and support the success of new menu items, which means increased participation in your school nutrition program! Taste tests pair well with other nutrition education strategies and can be an exciting way to connect to what students are learning in the classroom. In this session, we explore the *why*, the *how*, and the *what*: why should you bring taste tests into your cafeterias, how do they benefit participants and your programs, and what does it take to put one together? Gain practical advice from experienced school nutrition professionals and leave ready and excited to run your own taste tests!

Simplifying Diversions

This session will focus on simplifying the process for getting started using the Diversion Program. We'll also review tangible steps for success during the school year for using your diverted pounds.

Culinary Session: Exploring Possibilities with USDA Frozen Chicken (Item # 111361)

Join Chef Mataio for a fast-paced demo featuring creative, school-ready applications for USDA Frozen Chicken. We'll explore flexible techniques, global flavors, and cost-effective meal ideas that work in districts of all sizes. Attendees will gain practical inspiration they can plug into weekly menus right away.

Culinary Session: Exploring Possibilities with USDA Black Bean Burger Patties (Item# 111860)

Join Chef Mataio for a fast-paced demo featuring creative, kid-friendly uses for USDA Black Bean Burger Patties beyond the standard burger format. We'll focus on versatile prep methods, flavor-forward approaches, and cost-effective menu ideas that support plant-forward meals in schools of all sizes.