

# Obstacles to Implementing NSMP

## Expenses

Suitable computer hardware and USDA-approved software must be initially purchased, supported and maintained. The average cost per school district is less than \$1,000.

*If cost is an issue for your school district, consider applying for a Kellogg-sponsored grant. Receiving this grant can help fund software and training costs for your district. Application information is included with this packet.*

## Expertise

The menu planner must possess sufficient nutrition and food preparation knowledge to accurately evaluate the nutrient analyses to ensure that food items, recipes and menu data entries have been correctly made.

*Training sessions and customer service are available from USDA approved software providers. Kellogg has also formed a partnership with the largest provider, NUTRIKIDS®, to aid in answering data entry questions for our customers.*

## Loss of flexibility for substitutions

Once menus are analyzed and adapted to meet the nutrient targets, menu items cannot be substituted unless in an emergency during the two-week window.

## Increased need for training

- Cashiers may require daily training on the day's menu – especially if the number of menu items varies daily.
- Cashiers must recognize reimbursable meals at the point of service.

*Tools have been provided with this packet to ease in cashier and other staff training.*

## Increased time on the front end

- To input nutrient information of commercially prepared foods that are not in the nutrient database.
  - The USDA updates the database once per year on all approved software
- To input local recipes, including any modifications made to USDA recipes.
- To input a draft menu for each age/grade group used.
- To aggregate data for weighting menu items, if the SFA analyzes centralized menus.
- To adjust or modify menus to meet the nutrient standards.
- For re-analysis of menu adjustments for menu, food product, student food selection changes.
- For documenting menu substitutions.

*The estimated front-end/input time is 3-6 weeks with smaller annual updates and revisions for refreshing menus and adding new products and recipes. Districts have noted decreased menu planning time on the back-end once the initial time investment is made.*

“The major challenges are getting the nutrient information and the time to set up the database information. Once it's all entered, it's a breeze.”

Elsie Lee Szeto, MS, RD,  
Director, Food & Nutrition Services,  
New Haven FSD,  
Union City, CA

“When a food item substitution is necessary because of a delivery problem or running out of food, managers contact the central office to check that the substitution is a nutritionally equivalent product.”

Diane Dahm,  
Director of Child Nutrition Services,  
College Station ISD,  
College Station, TX