

RURAL NON-CONGREGATE MEALS INNOVATION AWARD

The **Rural Non-Congregate Innovation Award** will be presented to a sponsor that operated at least one SFSP or SSO Meals To-Go or NON-CONGREGATE MEAL (NCM) site in 2025. The nomination should demonstrate how the sponsor used the new rules, innovative concepts, and marketing strategies to provide meals to families in underserved rural areas.

To apply for this award, please submit:

- **A slide presentation**, 3-5 slides, no more than 40 words per slide plus notes as needed. **These slides are your application!** Make sure you address all of the criteria from the rubric in your slides.

Please include a slide with information on your sites:

- Total number of sites in summer 2025.
- Number of meal sites that were congregate, non-congregate (NCM), and non-congregate hybrid (NCMH).
- Number of mobile non-congregate meal sites, and home delivery non-congregate meal sites.
- Descriptions of where non-congregate sites were located and why those locations were chosen.
- Number of meals served in each meal package and number of distribution days per week.

Please include a slide with detailed information on your menu:

- Fresh food? Shelf stable? Hot meals? How often were menu cycles rotated?

Please include a slide explaining how innovative concepts contributed to your non-congregate program. Innovative concepts could include but are not limited to: marketing efforts; unique staff roles; new and diverse community partnerships; distribution site selection; mobile or home delivery routes; site placement in unique areas; and more. (Innovation related to congregate sites should apply for the blue Going the Distance in Innovation Award.)

- **Bonus: Supporting Documentation.** Supporting documentation could include but is not limited to news clips about your program, social media posts, photos, testimonials and feedback from youth, outreach and promotion materials, community statements, State Agency feedback, special events, activities at meal sites, etc.

See the rubric on the next page for the distribution of points and additional guidance in preparing your materials for submission.

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS: Please send the presentation and all attachments in ONE email to carolinahungerinitiative@unc.edu with the title “**2025 Summer Nutrition Champion Awards – Your Sponsor/Stakeholder Name**” in the subject line of the email. Label the documents and/or attachments with the title of the award you are entering and your sponsor/stakeholder title, Ex. “**Rural Non-Congregate Award – Apple County Schools**”. See the awards overview page for additional info.

All nominations should be submitted no later than Tuesday, October 21 by 5 PM.

Awardees will be recognized at the November 2025 SummerPalooza! planning summits, and may be asked to make a short presentation at a SummerPalooza! Summit. Further information regarding the presentation content will be provided to awardees. The Summer Nutrition Champion nominees will be evaluated by an independent party outside of the NCDPI School Nutrition Staff. For questions, please email carolinahungerinitiative@unc.edu.

Thank you and good luck!



Rural Non-Congregate Meals Innovation Award Rubric

Presentation Components (up to 6 points)	0 points (Sponsor does not describe this topic)	1 point (Sponsor describes one example)	2 points (Sponsor describes two or more examples)	Total Points
Innovative Concepts				
Marketing Strategies				
HOW did you meet the need of rural, underserved areas?				

NCM Site Specifics	1 point	1 point	1 point	Total Points (up to 3)
(Refer to sponsor's slides)	Sponsor operated a mobile or home delivery NCM route	At least 50% of NCM sites were non-school sites	NCM site in unique setting (not operated before and meets a community need)	

Menu	1 point	1 point	1 point	Total Points (up to 3)
(Refer to sponsor's slides)	Included hot meals when possible	Included fresh fruits and vegetables	Menu cycle is at least 3 weeks	

Bonus: Supporting Documentation	0 points	1 point	2 points
Circle one	Sponsor does not provide any relevant supporting documentation	Sponsor provides one form of relevant supporting document	Sponsor provides two or more forms of relevant supporting documentation

Bonus: Community Partnerships (1 point)	Total points:		out of 15
Describe how you partnered with other organizations to expand your reach and impact			

