

SCHOOL MEAL/FEEDING PROGRAM(S)

School year: 2020–2021

- School Meals Program (SMP)

Lead Agency: School Meals Department

NATIONAL LAWS, POLICIES, AND STANDARDS

- National school feeding policy
- Nutrition
- Food safety
- Health
- Agriculture
- Private sector involvement

Line item in the national budget...

- Yes No No response

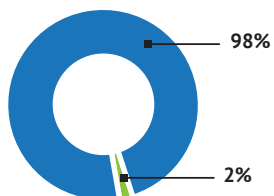
BUDGET

Total: USD 9,882,895

- Government: USD 9,722,792
- International donors*: USD 0
- Private sector: USD 0
- Other donors: USD 160,103**

Includes funding from the United States Department of Agriculture Yes No No response

* International donations by United Nations agencies or non-governmental organizations often represent funding from multiple donors.
**Students' parents contribute to the total program costs.



INFRASTRUCTURE

All schools in Barbados have electricity, piped and clean water, and gender-private flush toilets; some have dedicated eating spaces/cafeterias, while none include kitchens. The School Meals Program prepares food off-site through a centralized food service system: there are four sites of food preparation, and delivery is based on geographic zones. These off-site kitchens are typically equipped with refrigeration, storage facilities, and gas or electric stoves.

SPECIAL NOTES

Population and enrollment numbers from the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS) were used to complete this report; this may account for some mis-alignment between the number of students enrolled and fed.

MEALS/SNACKS/MODALITY

- Breakfast
- Lunch
- Dinner
- Snacks
- Take-home rations
- Other

- Grains, cereals
- Roots, tubers
- Legumes, pulses, nuts
- Dairy products
- Eggs
- Meat
- Poultry
- Fish
- Green, leafy vegetables
- Other vegetables
- Fruits
- Oil
- Salt
- Sugar

- Dairy milk
- Yogurt drink
- Fruit juice
- Tea
- Water
- Other

Prohibited food items: None

FOOD SOURCES

- Purchased (domestic)
- Purchased (foreign)
- In-kind (domestic)
- In-kind (foreign)

COMPLEMENTARY ACTIVITIES

- Handwashing with soap
- Height measurement
- Weight measurement
- Testing for anemia
- Deworming treatment
- Eye testing/eyeglasses
- Hearing testing/treatment
- Dental cleaning/testing
- Menstrual hygiene
- Drinking water
- Water purification

COMPLEMENTARY EDUCATION PROGRAMS

- Food and nutrition
- Agriculture
- School gardens
- Hygiene
- Health
- Reproductive health
- HIV prevention
- Physical education

The checked items were provided in most or all participating schools.



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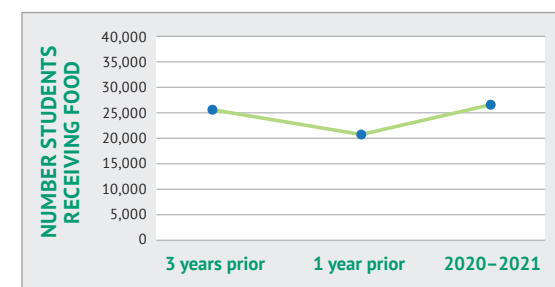
Barbados



SCHOOL MEAL PROGRAMS

CHILDREN RECEIVING FOOD, 2020–2021

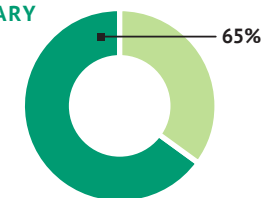
| School level | Total | # Enrolled | # Receiving food |
|------------------|---------------|---------------|------------------|
| Pre-school | 5,957 | 5,018 | 1,200 |
| Primary school | 19,309 | 19,242 | 22,500 |
| Secondary school | 18,297 | 19,033 | 1,945 |
| Total | 43,563 | 43,293 | 25,645 |



COVERAGE: PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN

Total number primary and secondary school-age children: 37,606

Receiving school food: 24,445



- Food was also provided to some students in...
- Pre-schools
 - Vocational/trade schools
 - Other

NUTRITION

School feeding program(s) included/involved the following:

- Fortified foods
- Bio-fortified foods
- Micronutrient supplements
- Nutritionists involved**
- Special training for cooks/caterers in nutrition**
- Objective to meet nutritional goals**
- Objective to reduce obesity**

Food items fortified/biofortified:

Not applicable

Micronutrients:

Not applicable

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The National Nutrition Center has worked with the School Meals Department to review the school menus each term, with the aim of bringing meals in line with the National School Nutrition Policy. Consumption of sugar sweetened beverages, sodium, and fat in schools has been drastically reduced. To prevent or mitigate overweight/obesity, the SMP has utilized nutritional requirements for food baskets, food restrictions on or near school grounds, food and nutrition education, health education, and physical education. Nutritionists paid by the national government are involved with the SMP, and cooks/caterers receive special training in nutrition, menu planning, and food safety/hygiene.

STUDIES CONDUCTED

A review of school feeding programs in the Caribbean (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, University of West Indies, 2021)

RESEARCH NEEDED

Not specified

AGRICULTURE, EMPLOYMENT, AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Jobs created by school feeding programs*

- Cooks and food preparers
- Transporters
- Off-site processors
- Food packagers and handlers
- Monitoring
- Food service management
- Safety and quality inspectors
- Other

The School Meals Department has 560 full time employees.

**If blank, no response was provided.*

Farmers were involved with the school feeding program(s)...

- Yes No No response

Other private sector (for profit) actors were involved...

- Yes No No response

There was a focus on creating jobs or leadership or income-generating opportunities for...

- Women Other groups
 Youth No response

There was community engagement (by parents or others) in the school feeding program(s)...

- Yes No No response

Were there links between food banks and the school feeding program(s)?

- Yes No There are no food banks in this country.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

While food is purchased through open-bid (competitive tendering) procedures in which small-scale farmers/ small farmer organizations/ small companies successfully compete, there are no structured arrangements between the SMP and small farmers. Thus, the linkages between the SMP and local food and agriculture are weak. Farmers provide tubers, dairy products, green leafy vegetables, and other vegetables, and private companies provide food processing services. Community members find employment in the SMP as cooks in the four central kitchens and as food servers in the schools. Some parents volunteer as helpers in schools; these individuals assist at lunch times and help to encourage participation.

SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

Recent successes related to school feeding in Barbados include improvement in school enrollment – particularly in resource-limited families – as well as improvement in the social skills and interactions of students. The high costs of the program present a challenge to the sustainability of the SMP, and there is need for closer linkages between the SMP and the local agricultural sector.

EMERGENCIES/COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, schools were closed but operating remotely for several months of the 2020/2021 school year, and the number of students fed and the frequency of school feeding decreased. In addition, school feeding operations temporarily ceased, and there was a temporary change in feeding modality (e.g., a switch from in-school meals to take-home rations provided to students or their parents to pick up at school and eat at home). One lesson learned is that during pandemics, the re-introduction of dishes that incorporate locally grown indigenous foods facilitates efforts to get food to children; these tend to be more affordable, are usually healthier, and also support the local farming industry. Community food security is a growing priority that could be most applicable at a time when entire neighborhoods are quarantined and children are home from school. For the safe reopening of schools, the Government has issued guidelines which include measures/provisions for packed lunches for pupils, instructions for pupils to have snacks/lunches at their desks, the application of physical and social distancing, and sanitation of all equipment used.

CONTACTS: BARBADOS

Agency: Ministry of Education, Technological and Vocational Training

Website: <https://mes.gov.bb/>

SCHOOL MEALS PROGRAM (SMP)

Lead implementer(s): School Meals Department

OBJECTIVES:

- To meet educational goals
- To provide a social safety net
- To meet nutritional and/or health goals
- To prevent or mitigate obesity

MODALITIES OF PROVIDING STUDENTS WITH FOOD:

- In-school meals

FREQUENCY AND DURATION:

- 5 times per week during the school year

TARGETING:

All students in primary and government-run nursery and special schools are eligible for school meals; meals are provided for students at secondary schools based on individual need, as identified by guidance counselors.

HOW MANY STUDENTS RECEIVED SCHOOL FOOD IN 2020–2021 SCHOOL YEAR?

| School level | # Students | % Girls | % Boys |
|------------------|---------------|---------|--------|
| Pre-school | 1,200 | – | – |
| Primary school | 22,500 | – | – |
| Secondary school | 1,945 | – | – |
| Total | 25,645 | – | – |

FOOD AND BEVERAGE ITEMS:

| | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|------------|
| Grains, cereals | Meat | Fruits |
| Roots, tubers | Poultry | Oil |
| Legumes, pulses, nuts | Fish | Sugar |
| Dairy products | Green, leafy vegetables | Dairy milk |
| Eggs | Other vegetables | Water |

* fortified

FOOD SOURCES:

30% Purchased (domestic) 0% In-kind (domestic)
70% Purchased (foreign) 0% In-kind (foreign)

If blank, no response was provided.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

The School Meals Program began operating in 1963. Pupils contribute a small sum per week toward the meals, though a child is not denied a meal if they cannot afford to pay for it. The School Meals Department organizes the distribution of the meals in insulated bulk containers to the schools. Milk is provided as a mid-morning break item in two forms: pasteurized milk for primary school children and powdered dry milk for preschool children. The milk is distributed directly to nurseries, special schools, and primary schools by suppliers. However, secondary schools do not receive milk.

