

School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme

What's it all about?

The School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme (SFVS) is a government programme that entitles every child aged 4-6 in fully state-funded schools to a piece of fruit or vegetable each school day, this equates to approximately 2.15m children in over 16,500 schools across England.



Eating 5 a day

The School Fruit & Vegetable Scheme is part of the national 5 A DAY programme. Fruit and vegetables are key to a healthier lifestyle for all of us and experts recommend that everyone eats at least five portions of a variety of fruit and vegetables in a day.

Eating fruit and vegetables every day helps children and teenagers grow and develop, boosts their vitality and can reduce the risk of many chronic diseases - such as heart disease, high blood pressure, some forms of cancer and being overweight or obese.

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SFVS National Helpdesk:

✉ sfvs@supplychain.nhs.uk

<https://sfv.supplychain.nhs.uk>

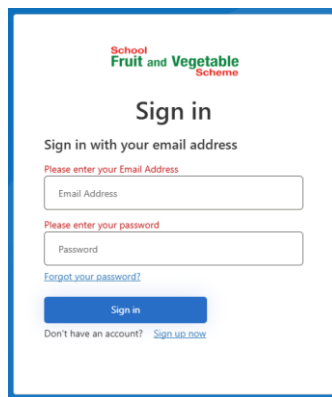
SFVS Portal

The SFVS Portal was launched in September 2024 at the following web address: <https://sfv.supplychain.nhs.uk>

The portal is used to complete day-to-day forms including:

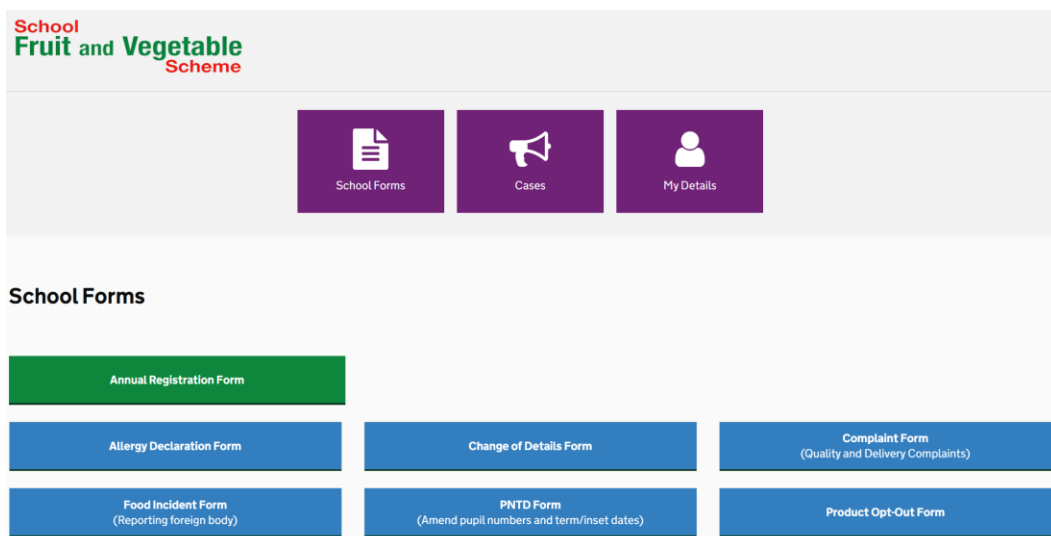
- Allergy Declaration form
- Change of details form
- Complaints form (quality and delivery issues)
- Food Incident form (if a foreign object is found within a product)
- PNTD form (amend pupil numbers and term/inset dates)
- Product opt out form
- The Annual Registration form (available yearly)

SFVS Portal Sign in page:



For portal related questions email: sfvs@supplychain.nhs.uk

Accessing Online Forms:



Consumption Calendar

A consumption calendar gives a guide as to which product should be consumed by the children each day. Please be aware due to the nature of the products they may change slightly in comparison to the calendar. Normally, fruit should not be consumed on day of delivery.

Example of the consumption calendar

Autumn Term 2025	W/C	01-Sep-25	08-Sep-25	15-Sep-25	22-Sep-25	29-Sep-25	06-Oct-25	13-Oct-25	20-Oct-25
	Mon	Raisins	Apple	Apple	Apple	Pear	Pear	Pear	Pear
	Tue	Easy Peel SA	Tomato	Tomato	Tomato	Apple	Apple	Apple	Apple
	Wed	Tomato	Easy Peel SA	Easy Peel SA	Easy Peel SA	Easy Peel (SA mix)	Easy Peel	Easy Peel	Easy Peel
	Thu	Banana	Banana	Banana	Banana	Banana	Banana	Banana	Banana
	Fri	Carrot	Carrot	Carrot	Carrot	Carrot	Carrot	Carrot	Carrot
	W/C	27-Oct-25	03-Nov-25	10-Nov-25	17-Nov-25	24-Nov-25	01-Dec-25	08-Dec-25	15-Dec-25
	Mon	Half-Term (1 week)	Raisins	Pear	Pear	Pear	Pear	Pear	Pear
	Tue		Apple	Apple	Apple	Apple	Apple	Apple	Apple
	Wed		Easy Peel	Easy Peel	Easy Peel	Easy Peel	Easy Peel	Easy Peel	Easy Peel
	Thu		Banana	Banana	Banana	Banana	Banana	Banana	Banana
	Fri		Carrot	Carrot	Carrot	Carrot	Carrot	Carrot	Carrot

This calendar changes termly, please email us at sfvs@supplychain.nhs.uk if you would like an updated calendar for your current term.

First week back to school after a holiday

Raisins are provided for consumption on the first day back to school after each holiday. Deliveries of raisins will be made during term time, prior to the end of term and normally with a delivery of other SFVS items. The raisins must be stored by each school and must NOT be distributed prior to the allocation day. Please be aware that raisins can sometimes be delivered in a plain white box rather than the usual SFVS packaging, which can lead to them going missing within schools.

We are only able to provide a maximum of 6 portions of dried fruit to children during any academic year.

Product information



•Apples

•Each bag contains Approx.10 pieces, each child has 1 piece.

•**Storage:** Preferably kept in a refrigerator, otherwise store somewhere cool, dry, away from direct sunlight, cleaning equipment and off the ground.

•**Preparation:** Wash

•Pears

•Each bag contains 10 pieces, each child has 1 piece.

•**Storage:** Preferably kept in a refrigerator, otherwise store somewhere cool, dry, away from direct sunlight, cleaning equipment and off the ground.

•**Preparation:** Wash

•Soft Citrus

•Each bag contains 10 pieces, each child has 1 piece.

•**Storage:** Preferably kept in a refrigerator, otherwise store somewhere cool, dry, away from direct sunlight, cleaning equipment, and ideally off the ground.

•**Preparation:** None, although some children may need help with peeling the fruit

•Bananas

•Each bag contains 10 pieces, each child has 1 piece.

•**Storage: DO NOT REFRIGERATE.** Store somewhere dry and away from direct sunlight, cleaning equipment and off the ground.

•**Preparation:** None, although some children may need help with peeling. If bananas are under ripe and green, then storing in a warm room will assist with the ripening process (*for more advice on ripening bananas please see FAQ page 11*)

•Carrots

•Each bag contains 10 pieces, each child has 1 piece,

•**Storage:** Preferably kept in a refrigerator. Fresh carrots can sometimes dry out.

•**Preparation:** Wash. Fresh carrots can sometimes dry out in the bags and can look unappealing. They may have a white / silver tinge and will bend due to dehydration. If necessary, the carrots can be soaked in a bowl of cold water for 5 minutes and they will return to their anticipated condition and be good for the children to eat.

Product information (Continued)

• Sugar Snap Peas



- Each bag contains around 30 pieces, each child to have 2-3 pieces.
- **Storage:** Preferably kept in a refrigerator, otherwise store somewhere cool, dry, away from direct sunlight, cleaning equipment, and off the ground
- **Preparation:** Wash. No need to de-pod as they should be eaten whole.

• Raisins/Sultanas



- ****These are provided for consumption on the first day back to school after a holiday****
- Each bag contains 30 packs, each child has 1 pack each.
- **Storage:** Somewhere cool, dry, away from direct sunlight, cleaning equipment, and ideally off the ground.
- **Preparation:** None

• Mini Cucumbers



- Each bag contains 10 pieces, each child has 1 piece each.
- **Storage:** Preferably kept in a refrigerator, otherwise store somewhere cool, dry, away from direct sunlight, chemicals and ideally off the ground. Storing with fruit can turn mini cucumbers yellow.
- **Preparation:** Wash

• Sweet Bite Peppers



- Each bag contains Approx. 10 pieces, each child has 1 piece.
- **Storage:** Preferably kept in a refrigerator, otherwise store in a cool dry place.
- **Preparation:** Wash
- The seeds within peppers are safe to eat.

• Cocktail Tomatoes



- Each bag contains 10 pieces, each child has 1 piece each.
- **Storage:** Somewhere cool, dry, away from direct sunlight, cleaning equipment and off the ground.
- **Preparation:** Wash

Essential information required from schools

All deliveries must be checked and signed for. We suggest you check the delivery for the quantity to ensure the correct number of bags have been delivered and for quality.

Pupil numbers vary each year and can change during an academic year with Spring and Summer term intakes. Unfortunately, a system has yet to be devised to automatically notify us of pupil number changes.

Pupil numbers for a new academic year.

Towards the end of each academic year, you will receive an email from your distributor to log into the SFVS portal and complete the “Annual Registration” form for the next academic year. This will need to be completed before the given deadline. Any changes, after you have completed your Annual Registration form should be submitted via the Pupil Number and Term Dates (PNTD) form on the portal from September onwards.

Interim pupil number changes.

If your school has more than one intake each year, or you have additional pupils starting school at the start of other terms, you will need to complete a Pupil Numbers and Term Dates (PNTD) form on the SFVS portal. A PNTD form is to be completed and submitted with each change of pupil numbers.

Inset days.

The SFVS only receive funding for a maximum of 190 days of fruit or vegetables each academic year. It is essential that you notify us with a minimum of 2 weeks notice of your Inset Days to guarantee your deliveries can be amended. Failure to notify your distributor of your term dates, will mean that fruit deliveries to your school will stop up to a week before the end of the school year due to your school having received fruit for consumption on Inset Days. Notification of inset days can be provided through the annual registration form or via a PNTD.

School closure

Every now and then schools incur last minute closures due to situations outside their control, for example, bad weather, no water, no heating, deep cleaning etc. As well as last minute closures, there are some other circumstances where schools may need to close, but where they will have notice of the need to close –for example, polling days. Please notify the main helpdesk at the earliest opportunity to avoid wastage of produce and making unnecessary deliveries to a closed school. Contact the main helpdesk on 0330 678 0926, email us on sfvs@supplychain.nhs.uk or complete a PNTD form on the portal.

School details change.

- Status – If you are becoming an Academy you need to inform us using the “Change of Details” form on the SFVS portal.
- Address – If you are moving, please complete a “Change of Details” form as we will need to verify the move and our distributors are not able to amend delivery address without approval, therefore, unfortunately deliveries will stop if we have not been notified.

Please ensure your school details are correct on “**Get Information about Schools**” which is the Department of Education’s national school register. Please see link below:

<https://get-information-schools.service.gov.uk/>

Academies and Free Schools

Academies are publicly funded independent schools, free from local authority and national government control.

Free Schools are all-ability, state-funded schools with Academy status, set up in response to parental and community demand.

Academies and Free Schools can change the length of their terms and school days. The SFVS receives funding to supply a maximum of 190 days of fruit or vegetables each academic year.

If you are an Academy or a Free School and choose to have alternative term dates to those set out by your Local Authority, you need to be aware that we are unable to guarantee a supply of fruit and vegetables during Local Authority school holidays.

Special Needs Schools

Each Special Needs establishment is assessed on an individual basis. Should the products delivered to your school be unmanageable for the children in attendance, we are able to make changes to the produce to accommodate their needs. This will mean that there will be less variety. Please complete a product opt out form on the portal explaining that the request is related to the special needs of the children or contact our helpdesk at sfvs@supplychain.nhs.uk for further guidance.

Allergies

There are a number of allergies that affect the children in different ways. If your school is affected by an allergy to any of the products listed on page 4 and 5, we have included this guide.

Schools will need to go to the SFVS portal and complete the Allergy Declaration form if you need a specific product removed from your deliveries:

The screenshot shows the 'School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme' portal. At the top, there are three purple buttons: 'School Forms', 'Cases', and 'My Details'. Below these, the 'School Forms' section is displayed. It contains a green button for 'Annual Registration Form' and a grid of blue buttons. An arrow points to the 'Allergy Declaration Form' button in the first row of the grid. The other buttons in the grid are 'Change of Details Form', 'Complaint Form (Quality and Delivery Complaints)', 'Food Incident Form (Reporting foreign body)', 'PNTD Form (Amend pupil numbers and term/inset dates)', and 'Product Opt-Out Form'.

This form will ask for information such as the year group of the child, the type of allergy, the product and any other information that can be provided on the allergy.

Each case is assessed on an individual basis. The most important factor is the child's welfare, and we must consider the other children in the school who are eligible for the SFVS. We ask schools if they are able to manage an allergy at a local level, this is to ensure other children do not miss out on a popular piece of produce. It also offers educational benefits in teaching consideration to others and understanding the needs of others. If managing the allergy at a local level is not possible, and the allergy is life threatening, we will arrange to offer an alternative product.

Our vehicles also deliver fruit for other schools, and although we may be able to replace produce for your school, there is still a risk of cross contamination, therefore food hygiene is of paramount importance.

Please complete an allergy declaration form on the SFVS portal at the end of each academic year, this is done to ensure that the allergy information we hold is still relevant. If we do not hear back from you within 2 weeks your school will revert to the full calendar.

Complaints procedure

The School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme strives to deliver quality produce with a high standard of customer care. All feedback and complaints are vital to the successful operation of the scheme as it assists us to identify produce that may be of poor quality and highlights possible delivery issues that you and other schools may be experiencing. You may find the following guidelines helpful in knowing who to contact under what circumstances:

Poor quality produce received

To report poor quality produce received please complete an online complaints form on the SFVS portal no later than the day of consumption. You will require the traceability code from the produce label (it is printed directly onto the plastic bag, for banana, the code is not always with other information and is sometimes on a small sticker and will just contain numbers). Providing the traceability code matches that week's delivery, the distributor will arrange a replacement to be delivered as soon as possible. In the meantime, you may need to use pre-delivered produce for the following day. Below are trace code examples. Codes accepted are Trace, pack and GGN.



Unsatisfactory response from distributor

If you feel that the complaint has not been resolved or appears to be on going, please do not hesitate to escalate the complaint to us at the helpdesk sfvs@supplychain.nhs.uk.

No delivery received

Please log into the SFVS portal and raise a complaint form specifying 'no delivery'. Please include in the 'actions taken by school' section when your last delivery was and what you received, and we will investigate this with your depot. Please be mindful that although it may appear that you have a regular delivery time, it is not a set delivery time as we are unable to offer bespoke delivery slots.

The only time you should be eating fruit on the day of delivery is the first week back to school after a break, by the end of that first week, the distributors will have caught up and your deliveries will always be for consumption the following day. The exception being if your entire delivery of fruit has had to be replaced, you may be asked to eat the following days produce allowing the distributors time to deliver the replacement.

Foreign object found in product

Please complete a food incident form on the SFVS portal

FAQ

- “We are waiting for our delivery and the children have no fruit for break. When is our delivery due?”

You may be out of sync with the consumption calendar. Products delivered are not to be consumed on that day. For example, Mondays delivery is to be consumed on Tuesday and Wednesday. This will ensure all schools have fruit in time for break. Delivery days are Monday, Wednesday and Friday on one week and Tuesday and Thursday the second week. These weeks will alternate.

- “Can a school request for a specific fruit to be removed from delivery?”

A school can ask for a specific product to be removed from their deliveries, however when a school requests for a product to be removed it will not be replaced with another product (unless the school is a special needs school). One of the aims of the SFVS is to encourage children to eat products that they would not necessarily choose to eat and also offer a variety of items during a week. Research by UCL shows “that after tasting a new vegetable at least ten times, children like it more and will eat more of it”.

- “What do we do if our delivery is short of products?”

When receiving a delivery the produce must be checked on arrival to ensure the school is receiving the right quantity and quality produce. Should there be an issue with either of these things the driver is to be notified immediately in order for the distributor to rectify the issue. If you realise after the point of delivery that there is a shortage, then this must be reported within 24 hours of delivery, you can complete a complaint form on the SFVS portal or email the helpdesk on sfvs@supplychain.nhs.uk. Should you discover the produce declines in quality after it has arrived at the school please use log onto the SFVS portal and complete a complaint form. Complaints regarding quality must be made no later than the day of consumption and we require a traceability code from the packaging so please ensure you keep the labels that include this info (shown on complaints procedure page).

- “We had an inset day and now there is no fruit for the children”

If the inset day falls on the day after a holiday you should have raisins for consumption on the day of return. If you have stated on your annual registration form or when providing us with the school inset days that you are able to accept deliveries then delivery will commence as scheduled. Please let us know if your school is open to accept deliveries or completely closed on inset dates. If you are closed and cannot accept deliveries then your school may go without fruit for 2 days if the closure falls on your scheduled delivery day. Should this happen schools are advised to ask parents if they are able to provide snack for their children on this occasion.

FAQ

- “Why does our soft citrus look green?”

There are two periods each year referred to as “the shoulders of the seasons”.

The first usually occurs mid March to late April, when we move from Northern to Southern hemisphere fruit. The second, early October to mid November, when we move from Southern to Northern hemisphere fruit, this can last between 4 – 6 weeks.

In the early weeks of these periods the fruit will be late season and may appear to look old, not as tasty and the skin maybe more pitted than normal. In the later weeks the citrus may not last as long, and the fruit will generally have a green tinge for the first few weeks of a season. Please always inspect the fruit upon receipt and regardless of the consumption calendar the fruit may need to be eaten prior to it's scheduled consumption day. If so, please swap it with another product that will last an additional day. Apples tend to have a good shelf life during the citrus shoulders of season.

- “Our school has complained about produce quality, however we have not seen any improvement yet?”

When a complaint is received from a school a process is followed which enables the distributor and supplier to be notified that there is a quality issue with their product. Once this happens they will investigate through the supply chain, back to the country of origin, to see if it an isolated incident or a recurring one and then remedy the situation. On occasions it can take time for some issues to be resolved and for this to be seen at a school level.

- “Our Bananas have not ripened in time for consumption”

Unfortunately, this can occur from time to time and is commonly linked to a change in the weather amongst other factors. We would ask that, if possible, bananas are consumed on Friday instead of Thursday as planned in order to give them an extra day to ripen. Below is some helpful advice that will need to be followed to speed up the ripening process.

- Remove the packaging as the fruit needs to be able to receive enough oxygen.
- Placing the fruit in a paper bag would help but only if this is available.
- Keep them together, bananas which remain in a bunch will ripen more quickly than if separated.
- Place the fruit in a warm spot – on a windowsill in the sunlight or in the school kitchen where the appliances will increase the ambient temperature.
- If there is an opportunity to store them near other ripe fruit this will help convert the starch into sugar (i.e., tomato) as the natural ethylene gas they both produce will enhance the ripen process.

Green bananas are perfectly safe to eat, the only difference between a yellow banana and a green banana is their appearance and a slightly less sweet taste, this is because during the ripening process the starches are converted into sugars, and this will not have happened to its full extent yet.