

NEWS RELEASE

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Midwest Food Processors Support Fruit And Vegetable Access for Children

The Midwest Food Processors Association ([MWFPA](http://www.mwfpa.org)) has endorsed bipartisan legislation introduced in the U.S. Senate that will enable elementary schools to serve a full range of healthy fruit and vegetable snacks.

Introduced by Sen. Ron Johnson (R-Wis.) and co-sponsored by Sens. Joe Donnelly (D-Ind.), Dan Coats (R-Ind.) and Tammy Baldwin (D-Wis.), the “Fruit and Vegetable Access for Children Act” ([S. 2243](https://www.congress.gov/bills/114/s/2243)) expands the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) to allow schools to serve all forms of fruit and vegetables as snacks, including frozen. Currently the program restricts schools to serving only raw produce.

Specifically, the “Fruit and Vegetable Access for Children Act:”

- Allows schools to get maximum value for program dollars by using frozen, canned dried and puréed fruits and vegetables when the cost of fresh produce may not be economical, especially in light of seasonal availability of fresh produce.

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- Aligns the FFVP with USDA's Dietary Guidelines for Americans, which recommend consuming more fruits and vegetables in all of their forms.
- Introduces children to more fruits and vegetables without impacting the cost of the FFVP.

According to MWFPA President Nick George, "Broadening the FFVP will bring it into line with the United States Department of Agriculture's Dietary Guidelines and regulations for school lunches, school breakfasts, and the WIC food packages – which all recommend processed, as well as fresh, fruits and vegetables."

George added that "processed fruits and vegetables, including frozen, canned, and dried make a valuable contribution to the American diet and, especially, America's child nutrition programs. Compared to fresh produce, processed fruits and vegetables are nutritionally similar and occasionally superior, less expensive to purchase, less expensive to serve, more likely to be of American origin, and often more food safe."

The bill is identical to legislation introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives by Reps. Bruce Poliquin (R-Maine) and Kurt Schrader (D-Ore.). The House bill has 15 bi-partisan co-sponsors.