

USDA delays whole grains requirement for schools

May 20 2014, by Mary Clare Jalonick

The Agriculture Department will allow some schools to delay adding more whole grain foods to meals this year, responding to criticism from school nutrition officials and Congress.

The delay comes hours after a Republican-led House spending panel criticized the Obama administration's healthier [school](#)-lunch standards and proposed letting some schools opt out of them entirely.

USDA said schools can put off for two years a requirement that all grain products in schools be whole-grain rich, or more than half whole grain, if they can demonstrate that they have had "significant challenges" in preparing those products. Many schools have complained that the whole-grain pastas don't hold together well when cooked.

The Agriculture Department said the delay will allow the [food industry](#) to develop better whole-grain pastas.

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