

Using AI to Transform School Nutrition

Practical. Safe.
Ready to Use Tomorrow.

Virginia SNA Conference

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Quick Energy Reset



What AI Is

A drafting assistant

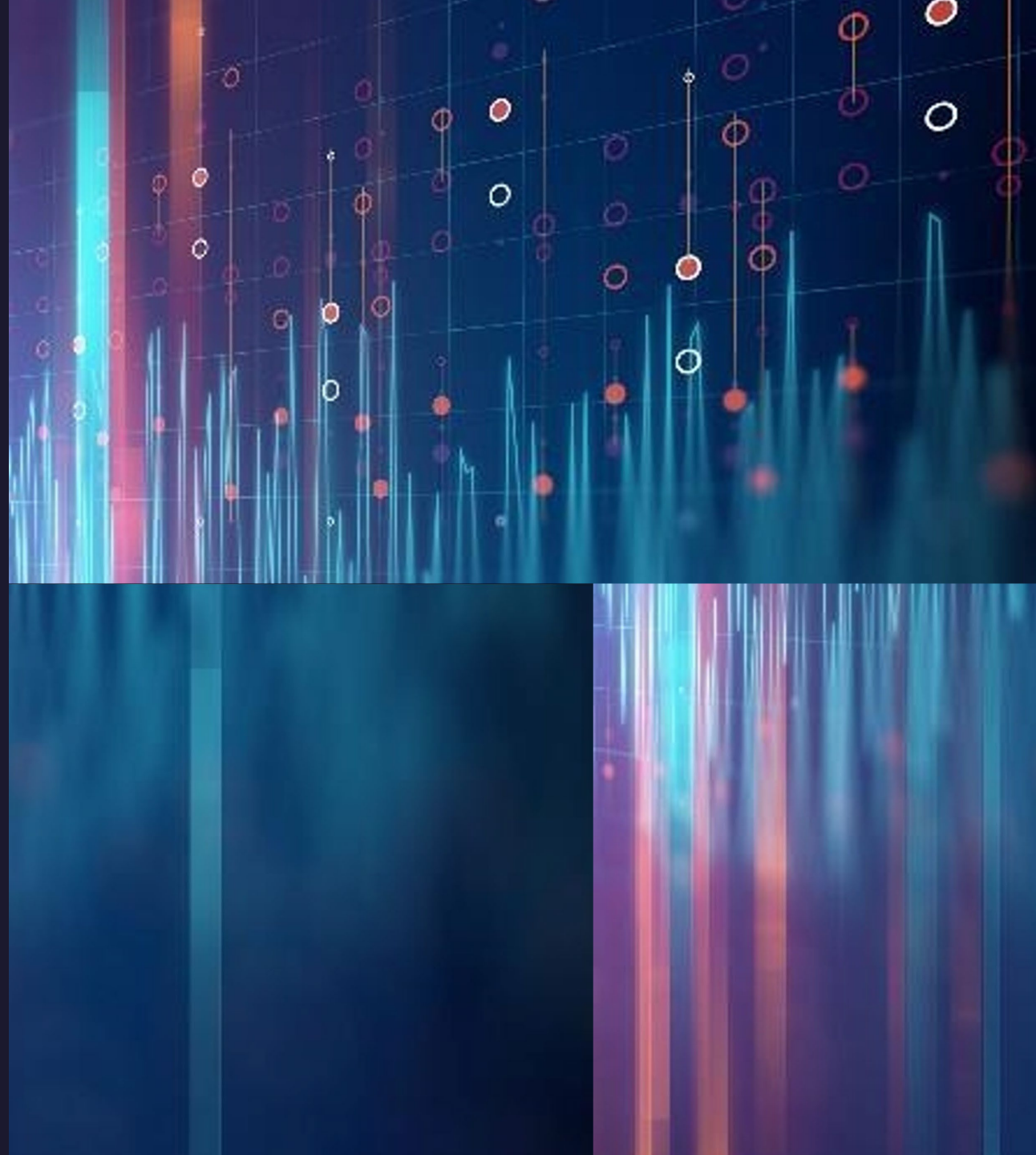
A pattern-recognition tool

A forecasting helper

A time-saving support system

A text and data assistant

A draft generator





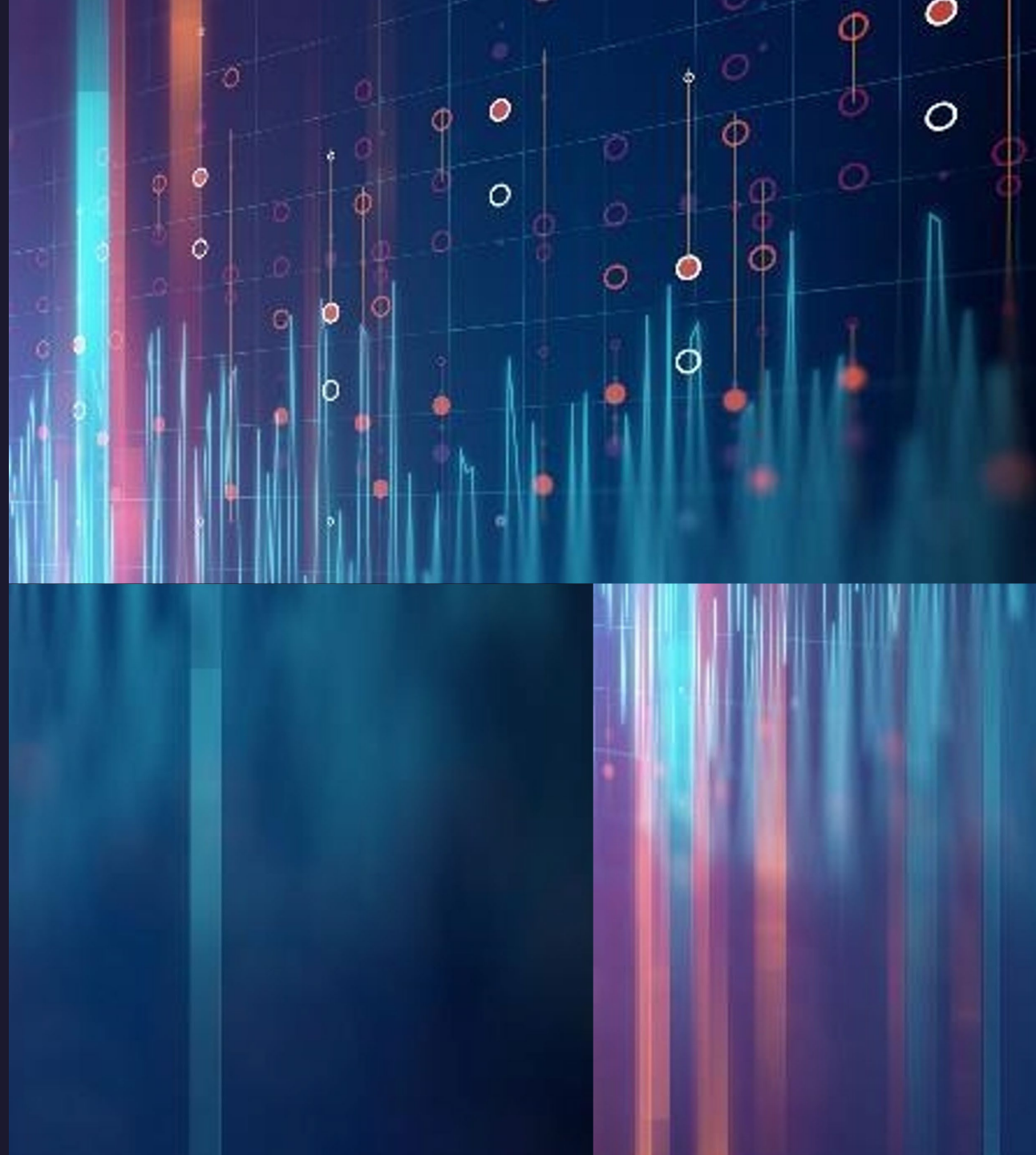
What AI Is NOT

A compliance authority

A replacement for 7 CFR regulations

A secure student data system

A substitute for your professional judgment



Why AI Matters Now in School Nutrition



Labor
shortages



Food cost
volatility



Participation
fluctuations



Increasing
compliance
expectations

AI Guardrails for School Nutrition Programs

Never enter PII (FERPA considerations)

Do not upload student-level data

Verify all regulatory references

Review procurement language for 2 CFR compliance

Buy American: 7 CFR 210.21(d)

AI assists — you remain accountable

Check with your technology department to ensure AI is an allowable tool



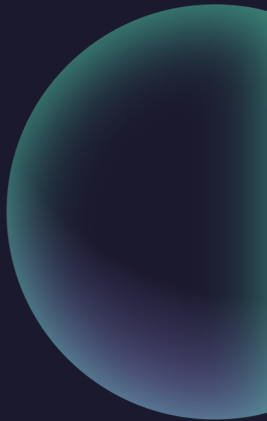
Menu Planning & Recipe Development

AI for Menu Planning & Recipe Development

Meal pattern
alignment

Cost
optimization

Student
participation



Meal Pattern Alignment (7 CFR 210.10 (c))

Sodium target compliance

Vegetable subgroups

Whole grain-rich criteria

Fieldtrip or shelf-stable meals for
special circumstances

Cost Optimization

Incorporating seasonal produce

Ready-made, speed-scratch, scratch
comparison

Meals per labor hour analysis

Inventory management, reduce food
waste

Student Participation

Student-centered menus

Follow Food Trends

Analyze student demographics

Monitor and analyze students'
dietary habits

Analyze surveys and feedback forms

Create themed menus

Ready-to-Use Prompt: Compliant Menu Drafting

Create a 5-day NSLP lunch menu for grades 9–12 that meets 7 CFR 210.10 meal pattern requirements, incorporates surplus sweet potatoes, includes two culturally responsive options, for 225 students, and stays within a \$1.65 food cost target.



Ready-to-Use Prompt: USDA Foods & Sodium Targets

Develop three scratch recipes using USDA Foods brown rice and canned black beans that meet National School Lunch Program Sodium Target 2 requirements and appeal to middle school students.



Ready-to-Use Prompt: Taco Tuesday Menu

Develop a NSLP Taco Tuesday menu for grades kindergarten through 5th grade. Send me links to NSLP compliant standardized recipes for the menu items. Ensure that protein, grain, fruit, vegetable, and milk are included in the meal and that the component serving size is correct to be NSLP compliant. Avoid pork and shellfish.





Food Waste & Forecasting

Reducing Food Waste with AI

Analyze historical participation trends

Predict production needs

Identify overproduction patterns

Support inventory planning

Ready-to-Use Prompt: Participation Forecasting

Analyze this 3-month meal participation dataset and identify overproduction trends by day of week. Suggest adjustments to reduce waste by 5–10%.





Claims & Compliance

AI for Claims Review & Data Monitoring



FLAG ANOMALIES



IDENTIFY
PARTICIPATION
INCONSISTENCIES



DRAFT MEMO
SUMMARIES



CREATE
DASHBOARDS

Ready-to-Use Prompt: Claims Review

Review this anonymized breakfast participation data and flag discrepancies between average daily attendance and meal counts prior to monthly claim submission.



Operations & Training





Operational Efficiency & Labor Support

Generate
order
guides

Create
cleaning
checklists

Develop micro-
training modules
and infographics

Create task lists for
individual staff members
based on menus

Ready-to-Use Prompt: Staff Training

Create a 30-minute micro-training for new cafeteria staff explaining Offer vs Serve requirements under 7 CFR 210.10 using simple language and include a 5-question quiz.





Writing Effective Prompts

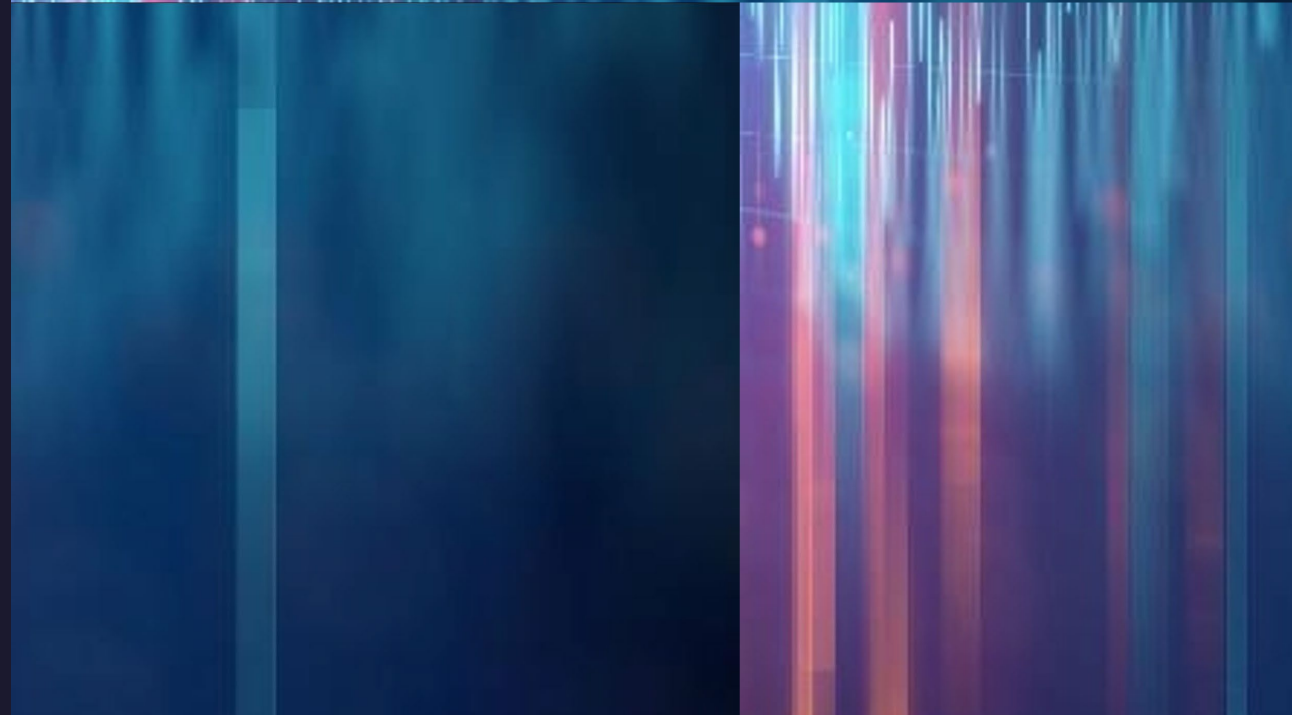
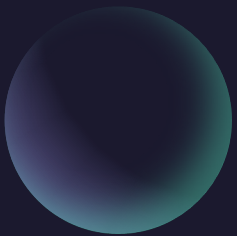


Weak Prompt

Incomplete

Vague

Missing Regulation Details





Strong Prompt

Grade Group

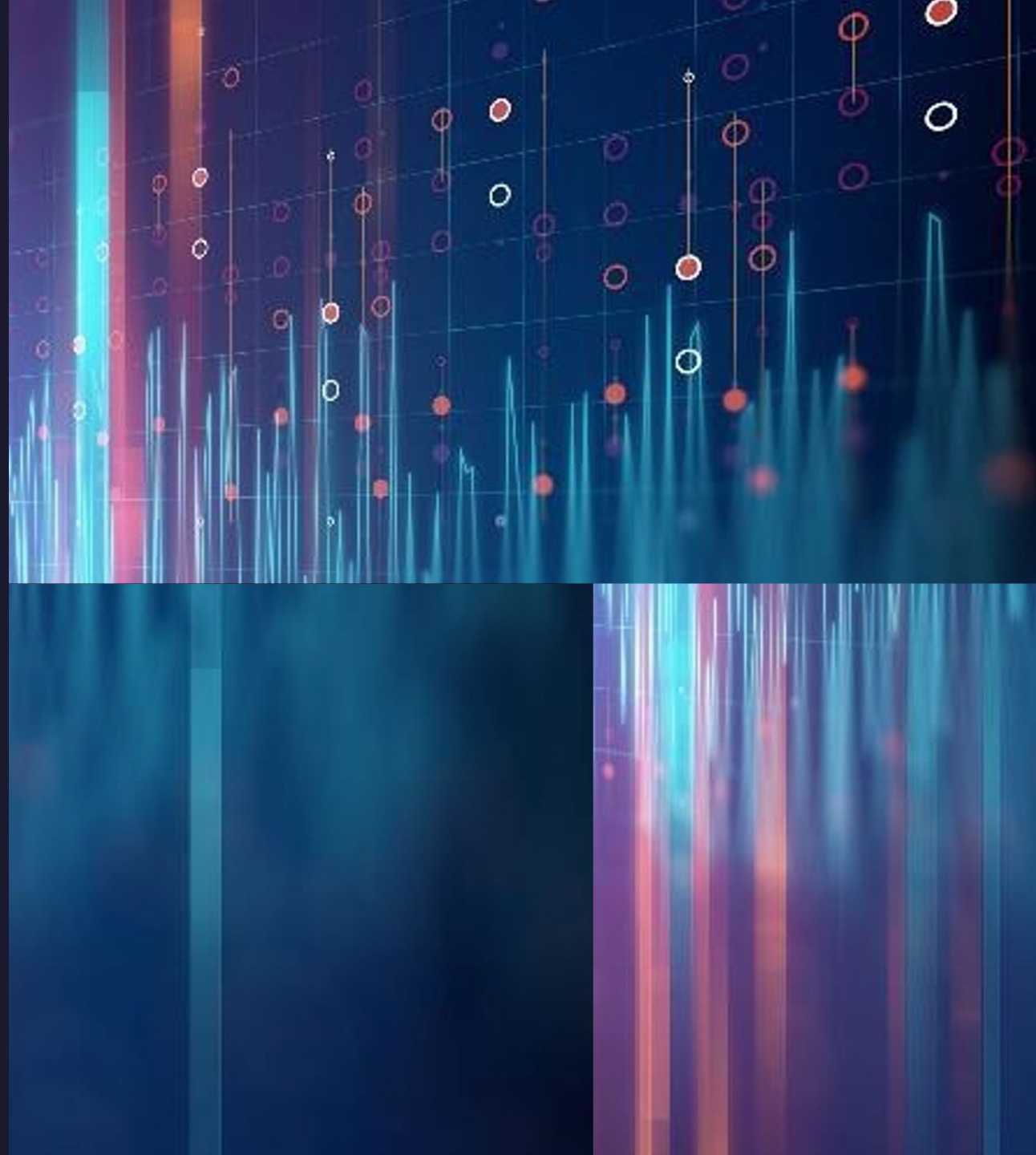
Regulatory Reference

Ingredients

Cultural Considerations

Number of Students

Cost Target





Strong Prompt vs Weak Prompt

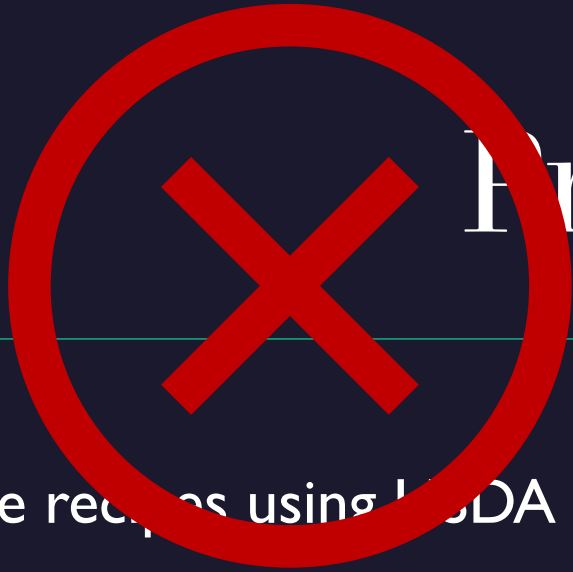
Prompt #1

Create a 5-day NSLP lunch menu for elementary students that includes all components and avoids pork.



Prompt #2

Create a 5-day NSLP lunch menu for grades K–5 that meets 7 CFR 210.10 meal pattern requirements, includes all vegetable subgroups, avoids pork, serves 325 students, and stays under a \$1.45 food cost target.



Prompt #3

Develop three recipes using USDA Foods brown rice that meet sodium requirements.



Prompt #4

Analyze participation trends and suggest improvements.



Prompt #5

Analyze this anonymized 3-month lunch participation dataset by site and identify overproduction trends by day of week. Suggest adjustments to reduce waste by 5–10% while maintaining compliance.

Directors vs Managers: Where AI Helps Most

Directors:

Provide AI training for staff

Claims review

Cost forecasting

Dashboard creation

Managers:

Production sheets

Recipe scaling

Training materials

Waste analysis

Start Small This Week

Draft a menu

Summarize a memo

Analyze participation
trends

Create a training outline

Final Take Away

AI will not replace your professional judgment.
It can replace repetitive drafting and manual analysis.

AI drafts. You approve.



USDA Professional Standards

Nutrition-Menu Planning 1100

Nutrition-General Nutrition 1320

Administration-Program
Management 3200

Administration-Financial
Management 3300

Administration-Human Resources
and Staff Training 3400



 Rate Now!