



North Carolina Division of Child and Family Well-Being
Community Nutrition Services Section
Child and Adult Care Food Program
www.ncdhhs.gov/nccacfp

July/August 2024
Volume 5, Issue 4



The North Carolina CACFP Messenger

From the Child and Adult Care Food Program Manager

Hello CACFP Family,

I hope you all have been enjoying a lovely summer filled with family, friends, and fun! This has been a busy summer for the CACFP with meal pattern updates which you can read all about in this issue of the NC CACFP Messenger.

Believe it or not, it is time for FY 2025 Record Renewal. Regulations require all participating CACFP institutions to complete the renewal each fiscal year. While it may seem like we just wrapped up FY 2024 Record Renewal, the silver lining is that the new system and renewal process may be fresh in our minds! Nevertheless, the State agency is here to guide and assist you every step of the way, beginning with FY 2025 Record Renewal training. We strongly encourage all institutions to attend the training specific to their institution type to learn what is required for this fiscal year and help ensure a smooth and successful record renewal. We will share more information and registration details soon. Stay tuned!

As usual, the newsletter contains lots of great information on monthly celebrations. Did you know July is National Watermelon Month? We also observe healthy eating right from the start with National Breastfeeding Month and Kids Eat Right Month in August. Read on to learn more!

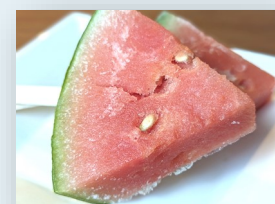
In appreciation,
Cassandra Williams
CACFP Manager

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Reminders

- **Friday, July 12 and August 2, from 1 to 2 PM** — next two State agency monthly calls with CACFP Institutions (click [here](#) to join)
- **Tuesday, July 30 and Thursday, August 29, 2024** — last days to submit May and June 2024 claims
- Beat the heat this July with delicious **Watermelon Pops** (on [page 9](#))! Celebrate National Watermelon Month (all month long in July!) and Freezer Pop Day (July 8th) with this refreshing treat.



Announcements

Updates to Nutrition Requirements in CACFP: The USDA issued a final rule in April 2024, aligning meal patterns for CACFP, SFSP, and School Meals to better reflect the [Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2020 - 2025](#). The table below summarizes the updates to nutrition requirements in the CACFP. Most of the updates have a compliance date of July 1, 2024. However, two updates, indicated with a star in the table, have an extended timeline for compliance of October 1, 2025. With State agency approval, CACFP operators may choose to implement these changes early (beginning July 1, 2024). The State agency will send out additional information with details on how operators may implement this change before October 1, 2025.

	Updated Requirements	Implementation Date
Added Sugars	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Breakfast Cereals: Must contain no more than 6 grams of added sugars per dry ounce. Yogurt: Must contain no more than 12 grams of added sugars per 6 ounce. Regulations affected: 7 CFR 226.20(B)(ii) and 7 CFR 226.20(a)(5)(iii)(B)	Oct 1, 2025 
Flavored Milk	No change. Maintains the current requirement to allow CACFP operators to offer flavored and unflavored, fat-free and low-fat milk to participants ages 6 and older.	N/A
Meal Modifications	Clarifies that both state licensed healthcare professionals and registered dietitians may write medical statements to request meal modifications on behalf of participants with disabilities. Regulations affected: 7 CFR 226.20(g)	Oct 1, 2025 
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defines a state licensed healthcare professional as an individual authorized to write medical prescriptions under state law. Regarding non-disability requests, makes clear in regulation that USDA encourages institutions and facilities to meet participants' non-disability dietary preferences when planning and preparing CACFP meals. Regulations affected: 7 CFR 226.20(g)	July 1, 2024
Substituting Vegetables for Grains	Allows sponsors, institutions, and facilities serving primarily American Indian or Alaska Native participants to substitute vegetables to meet the grains requirement. Allows all sponsors, institutions, and facilities in Guam and Hawaii to substitute vegetables to meet the grains requirement. Regulations affected: 7 CFR 226.20(f)	July 1, 2024
Nuts and Seeds	Allows nuts and seeds to credit for the full meats/meat alternates component, removing the 50 percent crediting limit for nuts and seeds at breakfast, lunch, and supper. Regulations affected: 7 CFR 226.20(a)(5)(ii)	July 1, 2024

Announcements (cont.)

	Updated Requirements	Implementation Date
Geographic Preference Expansion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expands the geographic preference option to allow “locally grown,” “locally raised,” or “locally caught” as procurement specifications (e.g., a written description of the product or service that the vendor must meet to be considered responsive and responsible) for unprocessed or minimally processed food items. • Continues to allow state agencies and program operators to adopt their own definition of “local” and does not prescribe a federal definition of “local” for the purpose of procuring local foods. <p>Regulations affected: 7 CFR 226.22(c)</p>	July 1, 2024
Fluid Milk Substitutes	<p>Per 8 fluid ounces:</p> <p>Vitamin A - 150 mcg retinol activity equivalents (RAE)</p> <p>Vitamin D - 2.5 mcg</p> <p>Regulations affected: 7 CFR 226.20(g)(3)(ii)</p>	July 1, 2024
Whole Grains	<p>Adds in regulation the current definition of whole grain-rich: <i>“the grain content of a product is between 50 and 100 percent whole grain with any remaining grains being enriched.”</i></p> <p>Regulations affected: 7 CFR 226.2</p>	July 1, 2024
Miscellaneous Changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes references to “dry beans and peas (legumes)” to “beans, peas, and lentils.” • Changes references from “food components” to “meal components.” (Regulations affected: 7 CFR 226.20) 	July 1, 2024
	<p>Updates CACFP definitions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removes outdated language in the definition of “Functionally impaired adult.” • Adds definition for “meal component.” Meal component means one of the food groups which comprise reimbursable meals. The meal components are: fruits, vegetables, grains, meats/meat alternates, and fluid milk. <p>Regulations affected: 7 CFR 226.2</p> <p>Updates requirements for CACFP meals as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revises certain endnotes for clarity and combines related footnotes to improve readability in meal pattern tables. • Updates the meats/meat alternates row at 7 CFR 226.20(c), in meal pattern tables for children age 1 through 18 and adult participants, to use ounce equivalents and refer to meats/meat alternates sources generally, instead of listing specific foods within the category. <p>Regulations affected: 7 CFR 226.20</p>	July 1, 2024

Resources

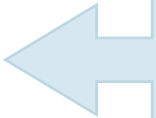
North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
 Division of Child and Adult Care Services, Children and Adult Services Section
 Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)
INCOME ELIGIBILITY GUIDELINES BY STATE

The following household size and income are used to determine CACFP eligibility categories of Free, Reduced, or Paid/Unsubsidized. The dollar amounts listed below the upper end of the Free and Reduced income categories represent the dollar amount in the Free column and the dollar amount in the Reduced column. The dollar amount in the Paid/Unsubsidized column represents the dollar amount in the Paid/Unsubsidized column. The dollar amount in the Paid/Unsubsidized column represents the dollar amount in the Paid/Unsubsidized column. The dollar amount in the Paid/Unsubsidized column represents the dollar amount in the Paid/Unsubsidized column.

HOUSEHOLD SIZE	YEARLY		MONTHLY		THREE TIMES MONTHLY		EVERY TWO WEEKS		WEEKLY	
	Free	Reduced	Free	Reduced	Free	Reduced	Free	Reduced	Free	Reduced
1	\$18,576	\$17,880	\$1,548	\$1,490	\$5,160	\$4,767	\$1,390	\$1,319	\$3,172	\$3,172
2	\$25,512	\$24,816	\$2,126	\$2,068	\$7,088	\$6,693	\$1,912	\$1,848	\$4,272	\$4,272
3	\$32,448	\$31,752	\$2,704	\$2,646	\$9,168	\$8,691	\$2,536	\$2,472	\$5,664	\$5,664
4	\$39,384	\$38,688	\$3,282	\$3,224	\$11,256	\$10,713	\$3,168	\$3,096	\$7,056	\$7,056
5	\$46,320	\$45,624	\$3,860	\$3,802	\$13,344	\$12,701	\$3,792	\$3,716	\$8,448	\$8,448
6	\$53,256	\$52,560	\$4,438	\$4,380	\$15,432	\$14,685	\$4,424	\$4,344	\$9,840	\$9,840
7	\$60,192	\$59,496	\$5,016	\$4,958	\$17,520	\$16,629	\$5,056	\$4,968	\$11,232	\$11,232
8	\$67,128	\$66,432	\$5,594	\$5,536	\$19,608	\$18,585	\$5,696	\$5,592	\$12,624	\$12,624
9	\$74,064	\$73,368	\$6,172	\$6,114	\$21,696	\$20,529	\$6,236	\$6,128	\$14,016	\$14,016
10	\$81,000	\$80,304	\$6,750	\$6,692	\$23,784	\$22,473	\$6,776	\$6,656	\$15,408	\$15,408

For each additional household member, add \$675 to the Free column and \$675 to the Reduced column.
 Example: A household of 4 with a yearly income of \$45,000.00 would be classified as Reduced.

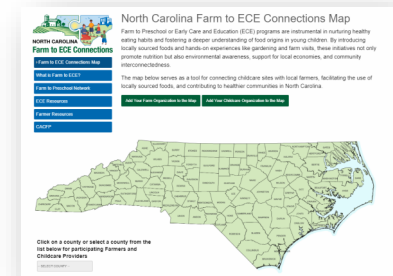
NC 0207 - Income Eligibility Guidelines by State 08/01/2024



Income Eligibility Guidelines for FY 2024-2025: The Income Eligibility Guidelines for the coming fiscal year are available for download [here](#). They are also available on our website, on the Program Resources [page](#). These guidelines are effective from July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025.

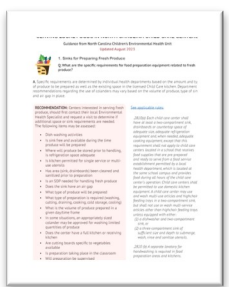
Resources for Family Style Dining: Interested in implementing family style meal service? Check out these resources from the [National CACFP Sponsors Association](#) and [USDA](#) to explore how this type of dining encourages learning and development and to get started. Try the [Afghan Salata](#) recipe for a great family style vegetable component.

- ⇒ [Tips for Family Style Dining](#)
- ⇒ [Meal Pattern Minute: Preparing Children for Family Style Dining](#)
- ⇒ [Family Style Meal Service With Children in the CACFP: Training Materials](#)
- ⇒ [CACFP Trainers' Circle: Family Style Meal Service With Children in the CACFP](#) (recorded webinar, 55 min)



The [North Carolina Farm to ECE Connections Map](#) is LIVE! This resource is an interactive tool highlighting and building connections between childcare programs and local farms. It illustrates how early care and education (ECE) programs can integrate local farm-fresh foods and agricultural education into their curriculum, promoting healthy eating habits, supporting local farmers, and enhancing children's understanding of food origins. This tool was developed as a collaboration with the North Carolina Division of Public Health, the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), and the North Carolina Farm to Preschool Network. Be sure to visit the map and discover what is available at a farm near you! If you are not on the map yet, click [here](#) to register.

Serving Local Foods in North Carolina Child Care Centers — Guidelines from North Carolina Children's Environmental Health Unit: Looking to bring fresh, local produce to your child care center? [This](#) resource answers frequently asked questions about starting a garden, preparing local ingredients, and adhering to sanitation rules. It also offers helpful tips for new facilities or those renovating kitchens to prep and serve fresh produce.



Upcoming Webinars

- **Guac 'n' Roll: Avocado Inspirations for Your Menu:** July 11, 2024, 2:00 PM - 2:30 PM | Register [here](#).
- **Recursos en español para CACFP:** July 16, 2024, 2:00 PM - 2:30 PM | Register [here](#).
- **Sweeten Smart: The Natural Goodness of Fruits:** August 1, 2:00 PM - 2:30 PM | Register [here](#).



For Our Health

I have been doing an increased amount of reading this year. One of the books I read recently is, *The Blue Zones: Secrets for Living Longer from the Healthiest Places on Earth*.

There are five Blue Zones around the world - places where people live the longest. The reasons for a healthy, long life in these areas might surprise you - having a sense of **purpose**, practicing **faith belief** of some kind, belonging to a **community**, having regular **downtime** in the day, **natural movement** (walking, especially up and down hills, gardening, getting down on the floor and back up again multiple times per day, etc.) and **plant-based eating**.



Studies have shown that poor social relationships, social isolation, and loneliness can increase the risk of heart disease and stroke by about 30%. They identified that having positive, healthy social connections gives us purpose, a reason to live, a reason to get up in the morning, and keep moving because someone out there needs us to show up.

Thank you for showing up for the participants in your program; age 0 to 100+, they need you. And thank them for giving you a **purpose**. It's good for your health!

- Karen Lainez Rubi, Supervisor - Nutrition, Training, and Policy Team

Farm to CACFP

FARMWISE: The [Association of State Public Health Nutritionists \(ASPHN\)](#) in cooperation with the [USDA](#) will administer the first ever Farm to Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Institute and Learning Collaborative, FARMWISE. Through this project, state coalitions will work to advance their state-level Farm to CACFP initiatives to increase exposure and access to locally grown foods, educational opportunities on food and agriculture, and cultivate life-long healthy eating habits beginning at an early age. We are excited to announce that North Carolina has been selected to participate in FARMWISE. The CACFP is part of the North Carolina coalition and will be working closely with the [NC Farm to Preschool Network](#) as well as other State and community partners to enhance FARM to CACFP across North Carolina. Read more about FARMWISE [here](#).



- ◆ Be sure to visit our [Farm to CACFP](#) webpage to learn more about getting started with local foods and explore helpful resources including seasonal menus, toolkits, and more.
- ◆ Check out this great resource from the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC) on [Leveraging CACFP for Farm to Early Care and Education](#) and discover how CACFP may be able to support Farm to Early Care and Education at your center.



**MEALTIME
MEMO**



The [Institute of Child Nutrition \(ICN\)](#) shared via email the July 2024 **Mealtime Memo on Gardening with Children:** “Introducing children to gardening can be an enriching experience that fosters a love for nature and promotes an acceptance of healthy foods. By including gardening activities in your child care program, you can create a hands-on learning environment for children to witness the magic of seed to harvest. [This Mealtime Memo](#) discusses how to engage children in gardening activities to increase their knowledge and acceptance of healthy, local foods.”

Meet Your State Agency Staff Karen Lainez Rubi and Latosha Redd



Karen Lainez Rubi

Title/Role: Nutrition, Training, and Policy Team Supervisor

Region: Statewide

- **My favorite food is...**Okinawan Purple Sweet Potatoes (they're super good for you) and pickled banana peppers (I put them on everything).
- **My favorite place and/or activity/event in North Carolina is...**outdoor concerts, especially Reggae.
- **My favorite part of my job is...**helping people and working with a GREAT training team; they are all so dedicated.
- **The best tip I have for success in the CACFP is...**review our website regularly for new information and to refamiliarize yourself with the information that is available there. Be sure to attend all live and prerecorded training that is offered, as well as the Monthly Institution Calls. Read the bimonthly newsletter. The monthly calls and newsletter are meant to keep you up to date and aware of new information.



Latosha Redd

Title/Role: Program Supervisor II

Region: Statewide

- **My favorite food is...**Mexican food is my favorite.
- **My favorite place in North Carolina is...**the beach is one of my favorite places, and with family living so close, we visit quite frequently. My favorite event is going to the State Fair. I especially love trying all of the different foods. Although most are not the healthiest options, it doesn't hurt to splurge every once in a while.
- **My favorite part of my job is...**assisting the Institutions with guidance through CACFP and building that rapport that allows them to call or email me with any question regardless of how small.
- **The best tip I have for success in the CACFP is...**to stay in the know! Always stay updated on what is going on with the program and make sure you pay attention to information posted on NC CACFP CONNECTS and the NC CACFP websites.

What's Happening in July & August

July is National Watermelon Month! Do you know which states produce the most watermelon in the U.S.? In 2021, Florida ranked number 1, producing 30% of US production (or 1.016 billion pounds). Despite the cool spring weather in Georgia and Texas that impacted watermelon production in those states, Georgia managed to claim the number two spot. California ranked third, surpassing Texas as a top watermelon-producing state.

Other Fun Facts:

- ◇ Has more lycopene (antioxidant linked to reducing the risk of cancer, heart disease, and age-related eye disorders) than any other fresh fruit or vegetable.
- ◇ Ninety-two percent of watermelon consists of water.
- ◇ A good source of vitamin C.

(Reference: [USDA Economic Research Service](#) and [Mayo Clinic Health System](#))



August is National Kids Eat Right Month! Launched to educate the public about childhood obesity, the [Kids Eat Right](#) campaign supports educating children and families on the importance of healthy eating and active lifestyles. Explore the website for more information and resources, such as Toolkits and Tip Sheets. Sign up to have the *Kids Eat Right* e-newsletter delivered to your inbox every Monday morning by clicking [here](#). This valuable resource is packed with delicious and nutritious recipes that will get kids excited about healthy eating. It will also keep you informed of upcoming awards and grants.

National Breastfeeding Month and World Breastfeeding Week

Mark your calendars! August is [National Breastfeeding Month](#) (NBM) and [World Breastfeeding Week](#) (WBW) from August 1 - 7. This month-long celebration emphasizes expanding support, advocacy, and protection for breastfeeding parents. It's the perfect time to educate new parents about the incredible health benefits of breastfeeding and equip them with practical tips for success in their daily lives. #WBW2024 will focus on survival, health, and well-being; its slogan is "Closing the gap: breastfeeding support for all."



WABA | WORLD BREASTFEEDING WEEK 2024



Source: U.S. Breastfeeding Committee

Continue to learn about breastfeeding throughout the month of August and mid-September. Click [here](#) to explore the overall 2024 NBM theme, "Nourish, Sustain, Thrive" and each weekly focus:

- Week 2 (August 8-14): Indigenous Milk Medicine Week
- Week 3 (August 15-21): Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Breastfeeding Week
- Week 4 (August 25-31): Black Breastfeeding Week
- Week 5 (September 1-7): Workplace Lactation Week
- Week 6 (September 5-11): Semana de La Lactancia Latina

This year, the North Carolina Division of Public Health and Division of Child and Family Well-Being are joining the celebration of National Breastfeeding Month with the theme, "Liquid Gold." Stay tuned for more information and be sure to keep a look out on social media for breastfeeding success stories from across the state. If you have a success story to share, we would love to hear all about it! You are welcome to send your story to the NC Nutrition, Training, and Policy Team at cacfptraining@dhhs.nc.gov. If any images are shared, current photo consent forms must be on file at your facility for any children who are in the pictures.

North Carolina Breastfeeding Resources



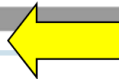
NC Breastfeeding-Friendly Child Care Designation (BFCCD) recognizes childcare centers that have implemented breastfeeding-friendly policies and practices at their facilities. Childcare programs receiving the NC BFCCD will receive a certificate, be recognized by the NC Division of Child and Family Well-Being, and have the designation listed as Facility Special Features in their DCDEE facility profile (see below). The designation is FREE and no site visits are required. Click [here](#) to learn more about the benefits of this designation and how to apply. The next application is due **September 30, 2024**.

Facility Special Features

The following information is furnished by the provider and is not guaranteed to be up to date, nor verified for accuracy by DCDEE. You can confirm the information by contacting the provider directly.

Additional Services & Amenities

NC Breastfeeding-Friendly Child Care Designation



Are you interested in learning more about breastfeeding and how to best offer support? If so, be sure to check out these valuable resources:

[Breastfeed NC – Breastfeeding tips for new moms, new dads, and providers in NC](#)

BreastfeedNC.com is a user-friendly website packed with valuable resources to help moms, dads, and families on their breastfeeding journey. Reliable educational content, local support directories, downloadable guides, and more are available to offer support every step of the way!

Be sure to check out the [Breastfeed NC Resources Toolkit](#) for even more helpful information and materials that you can download and print.



Making It Work
Supporting Breastfeeding Parents at Work

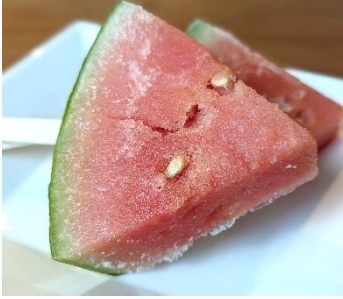
[NC Making It Work Tool Kit – Breastfeed NC](#)

Did you know that more than 80% of women choose to breastfeed? Supporting these women at work is a win for the business and the family. The NC Making It Work Toolkit provides clear steps, solutions, and essential information for everyone to support breastfeeding families at work.

[North Carolina Breastfeeding Coalition \(NCBC\)](#)

NCBC is a non-profit, volunteer lead organization that serves as a resource hub for families, providers, businesses, and advocates. Visit their website to view resources specific to your region of North Carolina.





Recipe Name: **Watermelon Pops**

CACFP Meal Pattern Contributions:

- ½ cup Fruit

Serving Size: 2 pops

Ingredients	16 SERVING		32 SERVINGS		48 SERVINGS	
	Weight	Measure	Weight	Measure	Weight	Measure
Small watermelon, seedless	6 lbs.	1 watermelon	12 lbs.	2 watermelons	18 lbs.	3 watermelons
Limes, juiced		2 limes		4 limes		6 limes
Popsicle sticks		32		64		96
Yield:	32 pops		64 pops		96 pops	

Procedure

1. Wash the watermelon thoroughly under running water, rinse well, and pat dry.
2. Cut watermelon into wedges by cutting the whole watermelon long ways. Next, cut both halves of the watermelon long ways again; then cut each quarter piece into 4 slices.
3. Place a popsicle stick through the rind of each watermelon wedge like a popsicle.
4. Brush lime juice on one side of each watermelon slice.
5. Place watermelon slices on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper and freeze overnight.
6. Serve two pops per child. Enjoy!

Recipe Adapted From: [National CACFP Sponsors Association](#)

Check out this [video](#) from the Oregon Department of Education Child Nutrition Programs for tips on cutting watermelon and cantaloupe.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.