



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

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The North Carolina CACFP Messenger

From the Child and Adult Care Food Program Manager

Hello CACFP Family,

I don't know about you, but I love this warm weather and sunshine! I hope you are all finding some time to get outside and enjoy the spring and summer seasons. My favorite spot to do this is at my happy place... the beach! You don't need salt water and sand to enjoy the beautiful weather though! There are plenty of ways to do so, and one thing that comes to mind is planting a garden. If you are new to gardening, this newsletter is the perfect place to start. May is "National Miniature Garden Month", and this issue is packed full of content and resources that can help you start your own garden at home or your centers.

Additionally, while I am sure you are familiar with many of our State agency staff from working with them on record renewal, trainings, or having them as your Field Service Representative, make sure to read the "Meet Your State Agency" section to see some new faces or get to know those you already work with a bit more. Each issue of this newsletter includes a few State agency staff members who work tirelessly to make the NC CACFP flow smoothly and reach as many institutions as possible. With that, I will leave you to read and enjoy all of the amazing articles and updates the newest issue of the North Carolina CACFP Messenger has in store!

In appreciation,
Cassandra Williams
CACFP Manager

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Reminders

- **Friday, May 3 and June 7, from 1 to 2 PM** — next two State agency monthly calls with CACFP Institutions (click [here](#) to join)
- **Thursday, May 30 and Monday, July 1, 2024** — last days to submit March and April 2024 claims
- It's International Sushi Day on June 18th! Why not celebrate with a fun activity? Check out our Banana Sushi Roll recipe on [page 11](#) and make sushi with the kids!



Announcements

NC Child Care Providers: Fulfill Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE) Contact Hour Credits (CHCs) and gain/refresh CACFP knowledge! Our prerecorded programmatic and nutrition training covers in-depth information about the CACFP and fulfills the following DCDEE CHC requirements. The on-demand format allows for maximum flexibility in your busy schedule. Take the training on your schedule and at your preferred location. Take a look at the chart below for the prerecorded trainings available, as well as their DCDEE Contact Hour Credits. Visit our [Training page](#) to sign up for and complete these trainings!



Training Title	DCDEE Contact Hour Credits (CHCs)
CACFP Meal Pattern Success: Serving Ounce Equivalents for Grains	1.0 CHC
Child Nutrition Label Training	0.5 CHC
Day Care Home Monitoring Tool Training for Sponsoring Organizations	1.5 CHCs
Facility Monitoring Tool Training for Sponsoring Organizations	1.5 CHCs
Food Service Contracts	0.5 CHC
FY 2024 Record Renewal Training for Independent Centers	4.0 CHCs
FY 2024 Record Renewal Training for Sponsoring Organizations	4.5 CHCs
Infant and Child Enrollment Form	0.5 CHC
Infant and Child Income Eligibility Application Training	0.5 CHC
Meal Count Training	0.5 CHC
Meal Pattern Training: Infants	0.5 CHC
Meal Pattern Training: Children	0.5 CHC
Medical Statement for Meal Modifications	0.5 CHC
NC CACFP Civil Rights	0.5 CHC
NC CACFP CONNECTS Orientation Training	1.0 CHC

LAST DAY OF CLAIM MONTH	POSTMARK OR RECEIPT DEADLINE FOR CLAIM
January 31, 2024	April 1, 2024
February 29, 2024	April 29, 2024
March 31, 2024	May 30, 2024
April 30, 2024	July 1, 2024
May 31, 2024	July 31, 2024
June 30, 2024	August 31, 2024
July 31, 2024	September 30, 2024
August 31, 2024	October 31, 2024
September 30, 2024	November 30, 2024
October 31, 2024	December 31, 2024
November 30, 2024	January 31, 2025
December 31, 2024	February 29, 2025

Claim Submission Deadlines: The Claim Submission 60-Day Deadline document for 2024 is now available. The document can be found on our CACFP General Forms page, and can also be accessed via [this link](#).

ESPAÑOL

Our Spanish page will be launched soon. Stay Tuned!
Pronto lanzaremos nuestra página en español.
 Permanezca atento.

Updates on “**And Justice For All**” poster: The State agency is still waiting for new posters to be delivered from USDA. We will mail them to you once we receive them. In the meantime, please continue to use the existing “**And Justice For All**” posters. Haven’t filled the order form yet? Use [this link](#) to request.



Resources

Farm to ECE Statewide Mapping Survey – UPDATE: The Map is ACTIVE! Are you on the map yet? If not, you will want to be! Check out the [North Carolina Farm to ECE Connections Map!](#)

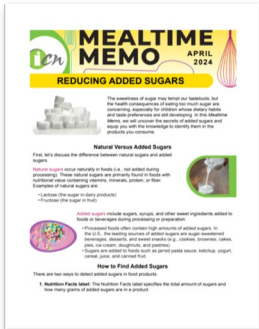


This resource is an interactive tool showcasing and facilitating relationships between childcare programs and local farms. It illustrates how these programs can connect and integrate local farm-fresh foods and agricultural education into their curriculum, promoting healthy eating habits, supporting local 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. Register [here](#) to be on the map today!

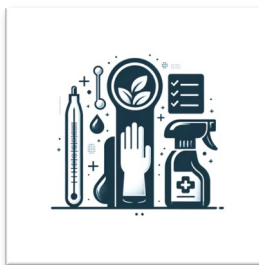
Grant Opportunities: Funding Opportunity from Newman's Own: Food Justice for Kids Prize: Up to \$1M in total funding (over two years) is available for nonprofits, public schools, and tribes working to advance food justice for kids in the United States and its territories. More details found [here!](#)



Food Buying Guide (FBG) Updates: The Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs Interactive Web-based (FBG) Tool and FBG Mobile App have been updated with new yield data. These are: USDA Foods canned mixed fruit and canned beef, smoked salmon fillet, cactus fruit (prickly pear), purple rice, instant long grain brown rice, and quick cooking medium grain brown rice. Plan your meals with ease. Explore [the FBG](#) today!



CACFP operators, the Mealtime Memo is a valuable resource designed specifically for you! Developed by the Institute of Child Nutrition, it offers research-based tips for planning, preparing, and/or serving nutritious, safe meals that kids will love. The [April issue](#) features tips on how to reduce added sugars. You can also check out previous issues from [here](#).



Keep Participants Safe: Master Food Safety in Your CACFP Program. The CACFP Food Safety Toolkit provides essential resources, including sample Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), logs, food allergy fact sheets, food safety guides, and more. Download it now (click [here](#)) and ensure healthy meals for your children.

Plus, explore [the Child Care Center Food Safety Guide](#) (available both in English and Spanish) for essential tips and guidelines for preparing food in childcare settings.



Child Nutrition Recipe Box: Now available in Spanish (click [here](#)).



For Our Health

May is Global Employee Health and Fitness Month. It is a well-known fact that employers with wellness programs have healthier, happier, and more productive employees. Benefits of employee wellness programs include reduced risk of chronic health conditions and reduced healthcare costs, decreased stress and absenteeism, and a better work environment, which adds to increased work satisfaction.

Employee wellness programs can be adapted by employers of any size. Encouraging employee wellness can be as simple as making time for employees to get annual check-ups and health screenings, taking 10 – 15 minutes every day for morning yoga or [yoga at your desk](#) (link is in English and Spanish), [practicing daily meditation](#) – even [10 minutes](#) can make a huge difference in reducing stress and increasing mental health, having walking breaks or even walking meetings, providing healthy snacks and lunches to employees, or having healthy eating at work policies – these policies make it easier to be a healthy eating role model for child and adult care employees.









Improving employee health, and therefore the health of the work place, can have positive benefits for everyone. During May and June, try some of the ideas above to improve the physical, mental, and emotional health of everyone at your workplace.

It just takes starting, and it can be contagious. Enjoy!



Training Opportunities

We are excited to announce that the State agency has updated some of the existing on-demand, self-paced programmatic and nutrition training courses. These mobile-friendly courses are available 24/7 and can be completed from any device, including desktops, tablets, and smartphones. See the list of updated topics below and sign up today to start learning at your own pace!

 	 	 	 
Medical Statement for Meal Modifications Registration Link: Here	Crediting Combination Foods for Infants Registration Link: Here	CACFP Meal Pattern Training: Infant Meal Pattern Registration Link: Here	CACFP Meal Pattern Training: Child Meal Pattern Registration Link: Here



Spread the Word! Do you know any Institutions interested in joining the NC CACFP? Please direct them to the NC CACFP website "[How to Apply](#)" page for details. Any questions regarding new applications can be sent to CACFPnewapp@dhhs.nc.gov.



Age-Defying Flavors: Adapting Recipes for Older Adults
Wed, May 8 | 2 pm – 2:30 pm
Register [here](#).



Between the Bread: Nutrition Packed Sandwiches
Thurs, June 20 | 2 pm – 2:30 pm
Register [here](#).

Meet Your State Agency Staff Edith Toral and LaSonya DeBose

Edith Toral: Finance & Business Compliance Analyst I Region: Statewide

- **My favorite food is...**I love homemade Mexican food; however, my favorite not-so-authentic Mexican food is Chipotle.
- **My favorite place and/or activity/event in North Carolina is...**strawberry season in NC. I enjoy picking and eating fresh strawberries with my nieces.
- **My favorite part of my job has been...**knowing that we are making a difference in providing nutritious meals to participants of North Carolina.
- **The best tip I have for success in the CACFP is...**to join Institution calls, attend the trainings provided by the State agency and become familiar with the [NC CACFP website](#). They provide all the resources needed to be successful in the program.



LaSonya DeBose: Business Officer Region: Raleigh

- **My favorite food is...**tacos.
- **My favorite place and/or activity/event in North Carolina is...**any and everything Outside.
- **My favorite part of my job is...**working with a supportive team.
- **The best tip I have for success in the CACFP is...**ah, the secret sauce for conquering the CACFP, is to be like a well-balanced meal—mix it up! Keep your paperwork crispier than a perfectly baked cookie, your communications tastier than a five-star chef's creation, and your love for helping people warmer than fresh bread from the oven. Oh, and never forget to snack on a healthy dose of patience because navigating bureaucracy can be a marathon, not a sprint!

What's Happening in May & June

May is National Miniature Garden Month: May blooms with creativity as we celebrate National Miniature Garden Month! Embrace the joy of creating your very own tiny landscapes filled with flowers and/or edible plants that you can use in your menus and meal plans! Whether you're a seasoned gardener or just dipping your toes in for the first time, miniature gardening can be fun for all ages.



These small-scale gardens not only foster creativity and community engagement, but also offer an educational platform for exploring sustainable gardening practices. By introducing participants to the fundamentals of cultivation through miniature gardens, we empower them to become stewards of their own local produce.

Through hands-on learning experiences, your institution can gain insights into plant growth cycles, soil health, and resource management, ultimately contributing to the resilience and vitality of our local agricultural landscapes. Start your own miniature garden today!

Sustainable Gardening With Kids Activity Guide: This activity guide is by KidsGardening and High Country Gardens. Empower kids to take action and make positive contributions to their communities! This FREE 18-page guide walks you through the basics of sustainable gardening and offers tips and activity ideas for four sustainable youth garden themes. Click [here](#) to learn more.

June is National Dairy Month: Strong bones start with dairy! MyPlate groups milk, yogurt, cheese, lactose-free milk and fortified soy milk and yogurt choices under "Dairy." As children and adolescents build bone mass, dairy products play an essential role in promoting bone health. Recognizing this importance, the CACFP includes milk as a key part of its meal patterns, providing essential nutrients for growing children like calcium (for strong bones and teeth), potassium (for healthy blood pressure and muscle function), vitamin D (to aid calcium absorption and promote bone health), and protein (essential for building and repairing tissues). To support healthy development in children, program operators should serve age-appropriate milk options with the right amount of fat, with or without flavoring. The USDA's worksheet, "[Serving Milk in the CACFP](#)," outlines the specific milk types allowed for each age group. To streamline meal planning, minimize food waste, and avoid overspending, check out our handy Milk Calculator on the [NC CACFP website](#)!

There are alternative options for those who can't consume cow's milk. Soy milk can be a choice, but remember that not all soy milk meets the nutritional requirements set by the regulations ([7 CFR 226.20\(g\)\(3\)](#)). Our [Potentially Allowable Non-Dairy Beverages](#) document is a helpful resource to find options. However, keep in mind that manufacturers may reformulate products, so re-checking the nutrition label is always a good practice to ensure the product still meets the requirements. Our [Non-Dairy Beverage Tool](#) (Excel) simplifies this process by highlighting compliant options. For all children, a nutritious future starts with strong bones! Let's celebrate National Dairy Month by providing healthy beverage options for everyone.

Resources: [CACFP 17-2016](#)





Go NAPSACC

Go NAPSACC supports Farm to ECE!



Eating fruits and vegetables benefits the health and development of children. Yet, according to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), nearly half of children ages 1-5 in the United States do not eat a daily vegetable, and one in three children do not eat a daily fruit.

Black children and children from homes that are [food insufficient](#) (households that cannot always afford enough to eat) are less likely to eat a daily fruit or vegetable. Factors like access, cost, and taste preferences play a role in how often children and families eat these foods.

ECE programs can address some of these factors by providing children with a variety of fruits and vegetables each day. Healthy eating can be supported further through ECE gardens. Gardening can help children learn about the importance of fruits and vegetables, increase their accessibility, and promote healthy eating habits.

Starting a garden at your ECE program might seem overwhelming, but there is support throughout North Carolina. [Go NAPSACC](#) is a free online resource that can teach you more about gardening in your ECE program. Its [5-step improvement process](#) helps ECE programs assess their current activities in Farm to ECE while learning where they can improve. Go NAPSACC walks early childhood educators through action planning with a tips & materials library and free online trainings to help make plans reality.

Go NAPSACC includes 35 free online trainings (4 in Farm to ECE and 7 in Child Nutrition). They are all approved for DCDEE training hours credit. Staff can take the trainings individually or as a group.

ECE programs that join Go NAPSACC are matched with a consultant to help them walk through the process. Together you can brainstorm the next steps to take and how to implement your plans with confidence.

Fearless Beginning Gardening at Your Program

The joy of learning to garden with young children

Do any of these thoughts sound familiar to you?

- I've never gardened before. I feel **overwhelmed** and am not sure where to begin.
- I'm **not sure** how to involve young children in gardening.
- Without experience, how will I get support from my staff/supervisor for doing this?
- Is it **safe or allowable** to put a garden in at my program or have children eat the produce?

If you relate to these statements, you are not alone. In fact, if you have never gardened before but want to try, you are one of the best candidates for starting a garden at your program. **The less you know, the more you can authentically model for children what it is like to try something new** by asking questions, seeking out information, and experimenting.

The key to gardening with young children is to start small. Here are two safe and simple ideas to get started:

1. At your program, find a sunny window and plant lettuce seeds in a small pot. Sample small pieces when plants are big enough.
2. In spring, plant a few pea seeds in a 5 gallon bucket (with holes in the bottom) with organic potting soil. Put in a sunny spot outside and water when soil is dry to touch. Observe beautiful pea flowers. Let children pick pea pods when finger sized!

How can we engage young children in the garden?

- Encourage children's **joy and wonder** about the natural world by modeling exploration with all the senses.
- Allow for **silence and observation of the unexpected**, like a butterfly landing on a flower. As ECE teachers, you are experts in capturing the learning power of the unexpected!
- Ask **open-ended questions**. Know that "I'm not sure, what do you think?" is always a great response. It's the wanting to know that is most important.
- **Allow children to do as much as possible themselves.** The more we let go of perfection, the more learning that can happen.

"Not only are gardens an approved practice for ECE sites, they are strongly encouraged and a best practice."
-Albee Braun, Professional Development Manager, Supporting Families Together Association

"Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) funds may be used to purchase garden supplies, and the fresh fruits and veggies produced are great for use in meals and snacks."
-Mollie Polzin, RD, CD Nutrition Program Consultant, WI Dept. of Public Instruction





GO NAPSACC Trainings

An overview of training topics provided



Go NAPSACC is free and available to any ECE program in North Carolina!

Already have an account, come back and find what's new! Email GoNAPSACC@unc.edu if you need help accessing your account. New to Go NAPSACC? Complete this [interest survey](#) or use the QR code to get started. Welcome to NAPSACC Nation!

Milk Donor Program



Is there a designated breastfeeding area at your childcare facility? If so, your assistance is needed.

Presently, the Division of Public Health is collaborating with the North Carolina Mother's Milk Bank for a significant initiative to boost milk donations. Your support could greatly aid by displaying [this](#) printable poster in your breastfeeding spaces.

Additionally, for those situated in Cumberland, Durham, Mecklenburg, or Pasquotank counties, the Mother's Milk Bank has recently set up new donor milk depots in your respective areas. [Printable posters](#) containing the locations of these depots are available for your convenience and may be accessed by contacting Katherin Munoz (Katherin.Munoz@dhhs.nc.gov) at the State agency.

If you would like to donate:

WakeMed would love to talk with you. Below is an overview of how the screening process will go:

- ⇒ **Online Questionnaire:** Visit WakeMed's website to access the questionnaire.
- ⇒ **A Telephone Screen:** You'll be contacted by WakeMed's Donor Intake Representative to answer a few additional questions about your health and lifestyle.
- ⇒ **Paperwork:** You'll then complete the donor packet which consists of a written interview and forms for your physicians to complete.
- ⇒ **Blood Work:** Once all of your paperwork has been received, WakeMed will provide you with a requisition number to have blood tests performed at WakeMed or your local LabCorp. WakeMed tests for hepatitis B and C, HIV, HTLV, and syphilis. All testing is done at WakeMed's expense.
- ⇒ **Make your donation:** Once WakeMed receives your negative blood test results, you will be approved as a donor. They will then discuss the final logistics with you about delivering or shipping your milk to them.

You can also click [here](#) to learn more about how you can make a difference in the lives of parents who are in need of donor milk. Your contribution can help babies in need immensely.



100 oz of liquid gold is all you need to become a donor

Check out our convenient drop off locations and donate before your milk expires.

WakeMed
Mothers' Milk Bank

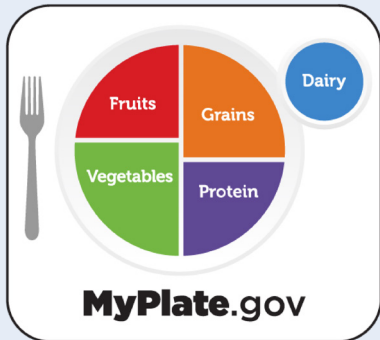


Scan here to learn more about how you can become a milk donor.

Encouraging Excellent Eating Early

Interested in giving your young child a taste for healthy eating right from the start? Kids can react strongly to the foods they are offered – healthy or not! They may push them away, refuse to open their mouth, shake their head, or more. What is a parent or caregiver to do?

With a few child-feeding tips and advice on how to set a positive tone for balanced, healthy eating, anyone can be a child-feeding pro!



MYPLATE CAN HELP!

Make every bite count with MyPlate by offering a variety of nutritious options from each food group – fruits, vegetables, grains, dairy, and protein foods – including those that provide unsaturated fats and are low in added sugar and sodium. From apples to avocados, corn tortillas to queso fresco, and pork to parsley, you can offer your child a variety of colors, textures, and flavors.

Once you know what to feed, it's time to master how to do it. Read on for our best tips to help young kids build healthy plates.

SETTING THE TABLE FOR SUCCESS

Mealtime is family time. Even ten minutes of eating together can increase children's fruit and vegetable intake. Start this habit with your baby or toddler by bringing them to the table with you!

Your child may only be eating baby food but include them at meals to increase their exposure to table food by seeing the foods you eat. ^

It can take up to 15 exposures before a food is "trusted" and tasted. Use the exposure time to describe the food.*

Tasting is just the first step – it can take 10 to 15 more exposures before they like the food. This means it could take 30 exposures in total before your child enjoys the food.*



If your child eats the same foods as you, ensure their food has no added sugar or sodium. If adding these to your food, set aside their portion first. ^

Each exposure can look different. Meats can be ground or shredded while vegetables can be cubed, cut into strips, or mashed.

^USDA & HHS. Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025. 9th Edition. December 2020.

*Scaglione, S et al. Factors Influencing Children's Eating Behaviours. Nutrients 2018.

MEALTIME IN ACTION

This pork looks juicy, feels soft, and is warm!

The tortilla is soft, what colors do you see on it?



This avocado is green, sounds squishy, and feels smooth.

The vegetables are different colors, which ones do you see?

GOING BEYOND 'YUCK' and 'YUM'

What does it look like?

Colorful	Goopy
Dry	Bumpy
Juicy	Shiny
Runny	

What does it feel like?

Chewy	Wet
Creamy	Mushy
Crunchy	Smooth
Dry	Sticky

What does it taste like?

Spicy	Sweet
Sour	Tart

What does it smell like?

Strong	Smokey
Fresh	Fruity
Minty	

What temperature is it?

Cool	Hot
Cold	Warm
Freezing	

What does it sound like?

Crunchy	Sizzling
Crispy	Squishy

POWERFUL WORDS TO USE DURING MEALTIME

"Good job trying a new food!"

"Wow! Did you notice everybody likes different foods on their plate?"

"What vegetable would you like to eat tomorrow?"

REFUSING FOOD? TRY THESE NEUTRAL PHRASES

"We can try this fruit together again another time."

"Next time, would you like to try your potatoes soft and smooth like mashed potatoes instead of roasted in pieces?"

"When you are ready, you can give it a try."

TIPS TO REMEMBER WHILE YOU PRACTICE YOUR NEW POWER LANGUAGE

- As a parent or caregiver, you decide what, when, and where the child eats; the child decides if and how much they will eat.
- Introduce new foods with current favorites – this may help acceptance.
- Young children don't eat a lot of food at a time, so they do not need to eat a certain amount at each sitting.
- Add 1-2 tablespoons of each food at the table on your child's plate. Follow their lead, if your child eats a food, offer more- one tablespoon at a time.
- Because they eat small amounts at a time, make every bite count with healthy choices.

Visit https://wicworks.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/media/document/English_ReducingRiskofChokinginYoungChildren.pdf for information about choking hazards in children.

Created by Hass Avocado Board, National CACFP Association, and National Pork Board, members of the MyPlate National Strategic Partnership Program. This resource was reviewed by USDA CNPP for alignment with MyPlate. It is the policy of USDA not to endorse any commercial enterprise, product, or publication.





Recipe Name: Banana Sushi Roll

CACFP Meal Pattern Contributions:

- ½ cup Fruit,
- 1.0 oz. eq. WGR grain, and
- 0.5 oz. eq. Meat/Meat Alternates

Serving Size: 1 Roll

Ingredients	1 SERVING		25 SERVINGS		50 SERVINGS	
	Weight	Measure	Weight	Measure	Weight	Measure
Whole Grain Tortilla, Soft 6" (28 g)	1 oz.	1 each	1 lb. 9 oz.	25 each	3 lbs. 2 oz.	50 each
Fresh Banana (7 to 7-7/8", Whole)	~ 5 oz.	1 Banana	7 lbs.	25 each	14 lbs.	50 each
Nut Butter*		1 Tbsp	14 oz.	1 ½ cups + 1 Tbsp	1 lb. 12 oz.	3 cups + 2 Tbsp
Yield:	1 Roll		25 Rolls		50 Rolls	

Procedure

This recipe is a fun way to get kids involved in making their own snack!

1. Wash hands in warm, soapy water for at least 20 seconds (or for the amount of time it takes to sing the "Happy Birthday" song twice), then pat dry with a paper towel.
2. Give each child a tortilla and nut butter* and let them spread it using the back of a spoon.
3. Place a peeled banana at one end of the tortilla and roll it up tightly.
4. Slice the roll into eight pieces.

*If your center is nut-free, you can try sunflower butter or soy butter instead of nut butter.

Recipe Adapted From:

National CACFP Sponsors Association (<https://www.cacfp.org/2020/12/29/banana-sushi-roll/>) and ASPHN CACFP Vegetable & Fruit Snack Menu (<https://asphn.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/5.-Banana-Rollup.pdf>)

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.