



NC Department of Health and Human Services
 Division of Child and Family Well-Being Community
 Nutrition Services Section
 Child and Adult Care Food Program
www.ncdhhs.gov/nccacfp

July/August 2025
 Volume 6, Issue 4



The North Carolina CACFP Messenger

From the Child and Adult Care Food Program Manager

Hello CACFP Family,

I hope you are having a delightful summer, filled with cherished moments with family and friends!

The past two years have presented challenges as we transitioned to the new management system. I truly appreciate your patience and hard work in adjusting to it. As we welcome the second year of the renewal process, we are confident it will be smoother than ever.

Given our past level-setting efforts, the upcoming record renewal process should be streamlined. With that in mind, we have set strict deadlines for Record Renewal FY 2026 (see [page 2](#)). We will also offer live training opportunities in July (see [page 2](#)), and we are requiring all institutions to attend the training specific to your institution type. This will help you learn what is required for this fiscal year and ensure a smooth and successful record renewal, allowing you to start your FY 2026 Record Renewal promptly.

Summer brings BBQ season! For healthy and enjoyable moments, be sure to read our Food Safety article on [page 8](#). Additionally, we will be highlighting healthy eating practices throughout August with National Breastfeeding Month and Kids Eat Right Month. And in our “Meet Our Institution/Facility” spotlight, we are thrilled to feature Richfield Child Development Center (an Independent Center in Stanly County). I hope you enjoy reading this issue.

With Appreciation,

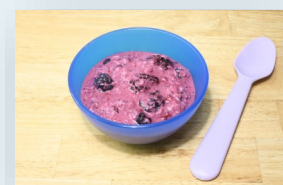
Cassandra Ward
 CACFP Program Manager

Inside this issue

- [Announcements2](#)
- [Announcements \(cont.\) & Resources.....3](#)
- [For Our Health.....4](#)
- [Meet Your State Agency Staff.....5](#)
- [Meet Our Institution/Facility.....6](#)
- [What’s Happening in July & Aug....7](#)
- [Stay Safe July 4th.....8](#)
- [CACFP Standardized Recipe.....9](#)

Reminders

- **Friday, July 11 and August 1, from 1 to 2 PM** - next two State agency monthly calls with CACFP Institutions (click [here](#) to join)
- **Wednesday, July 30, 2025, and Friday, August 29, 2025** - last days to submit May and June 2025 claims
- Standardized Recipe - **Easy Overnight Oats and Berries** (on [Page 9](#)). Celebrate National Berry Month in July with Easy Overnight Oats and Berries recipe! This no-cook, make-ahead breakfast puts a fresh twist on an old favorite, offering a delicious and whole grain-rich start to the day!



Announcements

The **Record Renewal for FY 2026 opens on Tuesday, July 15, 2025**, and **closes on Friday, October 17, 2025**, with the exception of Sponsoring Organizations of Unaffiliated Centers and Day Care Homes. For Sponsoring Organizations of Unaffiliated Centers and Day Care Homes, Record Renewal FY 2026 **closes on Sunday, November 30, 2025**.

Due to updates in the system and changes in some of the requirements, **training for Record Renewal FY 2026 is mandatory**. Participation will be measured and the training certificate will be part of the required Institution Documents. At least one person from each institution must take one of the trainings below. The training must be specific to the Institution Type; be sure to select, register, and participate in the appropriate one. Each training type is offered twice for your convenience. Registration is available [here](#).



	Time	Training
Tues, July 8	1:00 PM – 3:00	RR Training for SO DCH
Wed, July 9	9:00 AM – 11:00	RR Training for IC
Thurs, July 10	9:00 AM – 11:00	RR Training for SO Aff
Fri, July 11	9:00 AM – 11:00	RR Training for SO Unaff
Tues, July 15	1:00 PM – 3:00	RR Training for IC
Wed, July 16	1:00 PM – 3:00	RR Training for SO Aff
Thurs, July 17	1:00 PM – 3:00	RR Training for SO Unaff
Fri, July 18	9:00 AM – 11:00	RR Training for SO DCH
August	TBD	SFA-ARAM



Important Deadline for Record Renewal for FY 2026: All records NOT APPROVED by October 17, 2025, will receive a Notice of Serious Deficiency (SD) beginning the week of October 20, 2025. For Sponsoring Organizations of Unaffiliated Centers and Day Care Homes, all records NOT Approved by December 1, 2025, will receive an SD beginning the week of December 8, 2025. Institutions that have already received an SD for not completing their record renewals in previous years will receive a Notice of Proposed Termination and Proposed Disqualification.

Program Resources

- NC CACFP Newsletter
- Monthly Institutions Call
- Ethnic and Racial Data
- Policies and Procedures
- Area Eligibility Data
- Regulations
- Reimbursement Rates
- Income Eligibility Guidelines

- [Income Eligibility Guidelines 2024-2025](#)
- [Income Eligibility Guidelines 2023-2024](#)

Income Eligibility Guidelines for FY 2025-2026: The Income Eligibility Guidelines for the coming fiscal year will be available on our website shortly. These guidelines are effective from July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026. Please keep an eye on [our website](#) under *Program Resources* → *Income Eligibility Guidelines* for the update.

HOUSEHOLD SIZE	ANNUAL		MONTHLY		TWICE PER MONTH		EVERY TWO WEEKS		WEEKLY	
	Free	Reimbursement	Free	Reimbursement	Free	Reimbursement	Free	Reimbursement	Free	Reimbursement
1	\$0	\$12,000	\$0	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000	\$0	\$1,000
2	\$0	\$24,000	\$0	\$2,000	\$0	\$2,000	\$0	\$2,000	\$0	\$2,000
3	\$0	\$36,000	\$0	\$3,000	\$0	\$3,000	\$0	\$3,000	\$0	\$3,000
4	\$0	\$48,000	\$0	\$4,000	\$0	\$4,000	\$0	\$4,000	\$0	\$4,000
5	\$0	\$60,000	\$0	\$5,000	\$0	\$5,000	\$0	\$5,000	\$0	\$5,000
6	\$0	\$72,000	\$0	\$6,000	\$0	\$6,000	\$0	\$6,000	\$0	\$6,000
7	\$0	\$84,000	\$0	\$7,000	\$0	\$7,000	\$0	\$7,000	\$0	\$7,000
8	\$0	\$96,000	\$0	\$8,000	\$0	\$8,000	\$0	\$8,000	\$0	\$8,000
9	\$0	\$108,000	\$0	\$9,000	\$0	\$9,000	\$0	\$9,000	\$0	\$9,000
10	\$0	\$120,000	\$0	\$10,000	\$0	\$10,000	\$0	\$10,000	\$0	\$10,000

Announcements (cont.)

Policy Memos

- ⇒ [CACFP 09-2025 Using Federal Funds to Purchase Local Foods](#): This memo reminds U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Child Nutrition Program (CNP) participants (including CACFP) about various ways to purchase local foods to serve in Program meals. Sourcing and serving locally grown foods and engaging in farm to school/ CACFP activities (e.g., taste testing, gardening, and education) can help bring new energy and vision into Program operations, support community health, local farmers, and economies, as well as promote healthy food choices. The USDA encourages CNP operators to purchase unprocessed agricultural products, both locally grown and raised, to the maximum extent practicable and appropriate.
- ⇒ [CACFP 10-2025 Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2025](#): Effect on Child Nutrition Programs: Consistent with the guiding principles regarding nutrition programs identified by USDA Secretary Brooke Rollins to clarify statutory, regulatory, and administrative requirements, this memo provides guidance from the Full-Year Continuing Appropriations and Extensions Act, 2025 (Public Law 119-4). This memorandum applies to State agencies and local organizations administering the Federal Child Nutrition Programs.



REMINDER

Program operators should direct any questions concerning this guidance to their State agency. As a reminder, it is the Program operator's responsibility to stay up-to-date on all policies.



Grant Opportunity: 2025 ASAP Appalachian Farms Feeding Families ECE Grant - The Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project's (ASAP) Growing Minds Farm to School Program and Local Food Campaign offers grants ranging from \$500 to \$1500 based on student numbers to support farms in Western NC. These grants are specifically for purchasing Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) shares or custom orders. Priority is given to classes new to the grant, Head Start and CACFP programs, and schools with high rates of free and reduced lunch. Click [here](#) for more information.

Resources

The Mealtime Memo from the Institute of Child Nutrition supports CACFP child care professionals with research-based best practices for nutrition and meal planning, preparation, and serving in their settings. The May and June 2025 issues are now available. Click [here](#) to access current and past issues.

Mealtime Memo June 2025: Discover how herbs and spices can enhance taste, color, and aroma while reducing the need for excess salt, sugar, and fat in your dishes.

Mealtime Memo May 2025: Learn about the power of legumes - versatile, affordable superfoods like beans, peas, and lentils. Find out how incorporating them can positively impact children's health by helping reduce the risk of chronic diseases.



For Our Health — Loved Ones First

In previous *For Our Health* articles, we have been sharing information about the [Blue Zones](#) Power 9: Lifestyle Habits of the World's Healthiest, Longest-Lived People, a project by researcher, Dan Buettner and sponsored by National Geographic, in which they identified areas of the world with the most people living to 100 and studied how they live differently from the rest of the world.

This issue's Power 9 habit is Loved Ones First.

Centenarians in the [Blue Zones](#) put their loved ones first. [Researchers](#) found the families in these areas keep aging parents and grandparents nearby; commit to a life partner, you may have heard being married increases life expectancy (especially for men); and they invest in their children (with time and love).

Keeping aging parents and grandparents nearby or living with their children and grandchildren actually benefits everyone in the home. In a Facebook video, Dan Buettner calls this the "[Grandmother Effect](#)." He says *"Grandparents have a much bigger impact than we think... when you keep a grandparent nearby, grandchildren have better survival rates and lower rates of mortality and disease. Instead of warehousing our aging parents in a retirement home, keep them nearby, ideally living in-house. Harness their wisdom, harness their resilience. Put them to work. Tell them they count. Use them for child care. Grab their recipes that have been around in your family for 100 years. Help each other through difficult times. The grandparent effect will help you become a grandparent yourself and you might even live to be 100."*

According to [USAFacts](#), in 2022, only 8.1% of the US population lived in a multi-generational household, the majority of whom are non-white, under 18, or born in other countries. I have often thought that it is unfortunate that multi-generational households are not the norm in the U.S. Having three or more generations of a family under the same roof or very nearby is quite uncommon. In addition to increasing health and longevity, close family ties add to a feeling of belonging and purpose, two Power 9 habits we previously covered.

Loved Ones First matters whether you are related by blood or not. Centenarians in blue zones regions also have well-built social networks. Frequent visits from their neighbors are normal, allowing them to share wisdom and lean on each other in hard times.

So, I encourage everyone to make an effort to keep family (and friends) close. Call your parents. Call your grandparents. Value healthy social connections. Make friends with someone older or younger than you. Schedule a weekly friend date. Follow family traditions. Celebrate the milestones together. Help each other through tough times. Stay close, love each other, and add years to the lives of everyone.

Click [here](#) for more information about "Loved Ones Close."

(Karen Lainez Rubi, Supervisor – Nutrition, Training, and Policy Team)



Meet Your State Agency Staff Tamiko Chavis and Elizabeth Lorenzi

Name: Tamiko Chavis

Title/Role: Staff Development Specialist II

Region: Statewide (Based in Raleigh, NC)



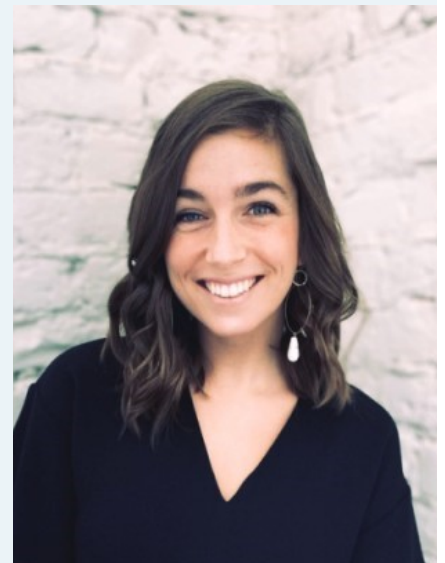
- **My favorite food is...**Crab Cakes.
- **My favorite place and/or activity/event in North Carolina is...**attending various cultural festivals, trying out new restaurants, and going to the mountains.
- **My favorite part of my job is...**training. I love witnessing that moment when something clicks for someone– when they not only grasp a part of CACFP but also feel confident in applying it. It’s such a rewarding experience to know I’ve played a role in building their confidence and skill set.
- **The best tip I have for success in the CACFP is...**to ensure records are maintained and edit checks are in place. Keeping accurate and organized documentation is crucial, as it not only helps in compliance but also streamlines the review process. By implementing these checks, you can catch errors early and ensure your program runs smoothly.

Name: Elizabeth (Weeks) Lorenzi

Title/Role: Staff Development Specialist II

Region: Statewide (Based in Raleigh, NC)

- **My favorite food is...**green smoothies! Frozen mango, spinach, plain Greek yogurt, & OJ.
- **My favorite place and/or activity/event in North Carolina is...**In-town: Teaching & practicing yoga at my hot yoga studio in Raleigh. Out-of-town: Spending time on the coast in Wilmington in the summers with my family.
- **My favorite part of my job is...**being a helpful resource to provide customer service, technical support, and meal pattern/menu support to anyone who needs it, and getting to know and speak with program operators across the state doing the work daily to provide valuable nutrition to children & adults!
- **The best tip I have for success in the CACFP is...**take advantage of CACFP trainings and resources on the State agency website, and reach out to the Nutrition, Training, & Policy team at CACFPTraining@dhhs.nc.gov if you ever get stuck on something, have questions, or just would like clarification. We are here and happy to help!



Meet Our Institution/Facility

Growing Health and Freedom at Richfield Child Development Center



Richfield, North Carolina

At Richfield Child Development Center our garden is more than a space to grow food. Our garden is a place where children connect with the earth, build immunity through time outdoors, and gain the independence and vitality that comes from hands-on learning. This living classroom is a clean, nourishing environment that supports the whole child.

Natural Learning. Real Health.

Here in the garden, children:

- Move freely in open, chemical-free green space
- Build immunity through safe exposure to soil, microbes, and sunshine
- Eat what they grow, learning to love whole, unprocessed foods
- Develop independence by taking ownership of their plants and tasks

"This is real health—sun, soil, and food that fuels the children's minds and bodies."

— Kelley Huff, Owner/Director



Clean Food, Happy Kids

In the garden, children learn about nurturing and caring, patience and discovery, stewardship and respect, beauty and life. The children also learn practical skills such as mathematics (measuring, counting seeds), science (how things grow, plant life cycles), cognitive development (curiosity, observation, problem-solving), and nutrition (vitamins, minerals and natural foods).

Salad Day

- This garden has been providing food to our children for over **15 years**.
- For example: Lettuce, tomatoes, radishes, broccoli and peppers picked by the children at 9:00 am.
- Served the same day to the children by 11:00 am.

Back to Basics, Ahead for Life

Outdoor play and unstructured learning improve mental clarity, reduce stress, and boost confidence.

In a world full of screens and processed food, our garden offers a different kind of education.



What's Happening in July and August



National Berry Month (July): It's time to celebrate National Berry Month! Each July we acknowledge these small but mighty foods. [Berries](#) are rich in [antioxidants](#) and fiber which support the immune system, keep the heart healthy, and fight inflammation. Some berries are so nutritious that they're often referred to as [superfoods](#). Plus, because they're naturally sweet, berries tend to be a welcome addition to the [menu](#) – and can be a healthy alternative to processed snacks.



Looking for ideas to bring berries into the classroom? Check out the [Growing Minds Farm to Preschool Toolkit](#) and If you work with school-age children, [The Great Garden Detective Adventure](#) curriculum from USDA may be a great resource for you!

National Berry Month is the perfect time to enjoy fresh, [local](#) harvests or try a new berry-inspired recipe, such as the Easy Overnight Oats and Berries ([page 9](#)).

National Kids Eat Right Month (August): August is National Kids Eat Right Month, a time when the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Foundation's Kids Eat Right program takes center stage. This initiative highlights the vital importance of healthy eating and active lifestyles for children and their families. Parents and caregivers can access the program's valuable resources to provide food and nutrition education within their communities. These tools include culturally relevant tips and recipes, all designed to help consumers shop smart, cook healthily, and eat right. To learn more, click [here](#).



National Breastfeeding Month (August): August is dedicated to raising awareness and promoting education and advocacy around breastfeeding.

Established in the United States in 2011, this month-long observance highlights the vital role breastfeeding plays in providing optimal nutrition and fostering a strong emotional connection between parent and child.

Throughout August, we recognize the numerous health and developmental benefits of breastfeeding and honor the dedication of parents who embrace this meaningful practice. Join us in supporting and celebrating breastfeeding as a foundation for lifelong health and well-being.

For additional resources on breastfeeding - whether you're a new parent, support person, or healthcare provider - please click [here](#).

Stay Safe July 4th: Summer Food Safety Tips for Your Cookout

The July 4th weekend is a time for fun, food, and fireworks - but it's also important to keep food safety a priority. Whether you're enjoying a backyard barbecue or heading to the pool with snacks in tow, following a few simple tips can help keep your gathering safe from foodborne illness.

1. Start with Clean Hands

Before handling any food, make sure your hands are clean. If you have access to running water, wash your hands thoroughly:

- ✓ Wet hands
- ✓ Lather with soap
- ✓ Scrub for at least 20 seconds
- ✓ Rinse and dry

If you're outdoors and water isn't available, use hand sanitizer or wipes that contain at least 60% alcohol.



2. Pack Perishables the Right Way

Heading to the beach, park, or a friend's cookout? Keep perishable food cold—below 40°F—to prevent harmful bacteria from growing.

Cooler Tips:

- ✓ Use separate coolers: one for drinks, one for perishable foods. Drink coolers get opened often, which can cause temperature changes.
- ✓ Keep coolers in the shade, not the sun.
- ✓ Pack coolers full—cold items stay cold longer in a full cooler.
- ✓ Place a refrigerator or freezer thermometer inside the cooler to monitor the temperature.

3. Avoid the "Danger Zone"

Bacteria thrive between 40°F and 140°F—what's known as the *Danger Zone*. To keep food safe:

- ✓ **Cold foods** should stay at or below 40°F. Use ice, coolers, or insulated containers.
- ✓ **Hot foods** should stay above 140°F. Use grills, chafing dishes, slow cookers, or warming trays.

Check food temperatures often to make sure they stay in the safe range.

4. Follow the Two-Hour Rule

Food should not sit out for more than **two hours** - and if it's hotter than 90°F outside, the limit drops to **one hour**. After that, it's safest to throw the food away. As the saying goes: *when in doubt, throw it out*.

Final Tip: Food safety doesn't take a holiday. A little preparation goes a long way in keeping your friends and family safe during summer celebrations. For more information, check out this useful [handout](#) from [FoodSafety.gov](#). Happy Fourth!



Easy Overnight Oats and Berries

A new twist on an old favorite. Try this no-cook, make-ahead whole grain-rich breakfast.

AGES: 3–5 years


PREP TIME: 30 minutes

COOK TIME: 0 minutes

CACFP CREDITING INFORMATION

¼ cup fruit

¼ oz eq meat alternate

½ oz eq grains 

SOURCE

Team Nutrition CACFP Easy Recipe Project

TeamNutrition.USDA.gov

INGREDIENTS	25 SERVINGS		50 SERVINGS		DIRECTIONS
	Weight	Measure	Weight	Measure	
					<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
Milk, low-fat (1%)	8 fl oz	1 cup	16 fl oz	2 cups	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2 In a steam table pan, combine milk, Greek yogurt, honey, and vanilla extract. Stir. For 25 servings, use a half pan (10³/₈" x 12³/₄" x 4"). For 50 servings, use 1 pan (12" x 20" x 4").
Greek yogurt, vanilla, non-fat	1 lb 9 oz	3 ³ / ₈ cup	3 lb 2 oz	1 qt + 2 ¹ / ₄ cups	
Honey, pasteurized (honey is not safe for infants under 12 months)		3 Tbsp		¼ cup + 2 Tbsp	

INGREDIENTS	25 SERVINGS		50 SERVINGS		DIRECTIONS
	Weight	Measure	Weight	Measure	
Vanilla extract		1 tsp		2 tsp	
Oats, quick	13½ oz	1 qt	1 lb 11 oz	2 qt	3 Add oats. Mix well.
Blueberries, blackberries, and raspberries, whole, frozen, unsweetened	3 lb 8 oz	3 qt + ½ cup	7 lb	1 gal + 2 qt + 1 cup	4 Add berries. Stir.
					5 Cover and refrigerate for 8–12 hours at 40 °F or lower.
					6 Remove from the refrigerator and stir.
					7 Serve ½ cup (#8 scoop). Serve immediately, or keep cold at 40 °F or lower.


NUTRITION INFORMATION

½ cup Easy Overnight Oats and Berries

Nutrients	Amount
Calories	127
<hr/>	
Total Fat	1 g
Saturated Fat	0 g
Cholesterol	0 mg
Sodium	15 mg
Total Carbohydrate	24 g
Dietary Fiber	5 g
Total Sugars	10 g
Includes Added Sugars	N/A
Protein	6 g
<hr/>	
Vitamin D	N/A
Calcium	66 mg
Iron	1 mg
Potassium	N/A

N/A = Data not available

NOTES

- **Contains milk (milk and yogurt).** Some oats may be grown/processed with other wheat products.
- Yogurt must not contain more than 23 grams of total sugars per 6 ounces.
- For breakfast, you can credit the grains or meats/meat alternates in this recipe toward the reimbursable meal.
- Meats/meat alternates may be served in place of the entire grains component up to 3 times per week at breakfast in the CACFP.
- Meals as Teaching Moments: The yogurt in this recipe may not be easy for kids to recognize (visible) as a meat alternate component of the meal. Adding a visible meat/meat alternate, such as finely chopped nuts or a spoonful of additional yogurt on top, may help kids learn about meats/meat alternates as part of a balanced meal.
- The  symbol indicates the recipe is whole grain-rich.
- Creditable grains contribution calculated using the Recipe Analysis Workbook, Method A.

YIELD/VOLUME

25 Servings	50 Servings
Weight: 6 lb 14 oz	Weight: 13 lb 7 oz
Yield: 3 qt ½ cup	Yield: 1 gal 2 qt 1 cup