



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

March/April 2025
 Volume 6, Issue 2



The North Carolina CACFP Messenger

From the Child and Adult Care Food Program Manager

Hello CACFP Family,

As we welcome the arrival of spring, I find myself reflecting on the progress we've made and the exciting opportunities ahead. The vibrant months of March and April bring us celebrations that reinforce our commitment to healthy communities.

CACFP Week (March 16-22) is just around the corner. We'll be sending daily messages to highlight the vital role we play in supporting our communities by providing nutritious meals and fostering healthy habits for our youngest and oldest participants.

Also, in March, we celebrate National Nutrition Month®, the annual campaign from the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics that promotes healthy eating and active lifestyles. Keep an eye on your inboxes each week for information and CACFP resources that correspond to the 2025 National Nutrition Month theme, "Food Connects Us."

Looking ahead to National Garden Month (April), we're reminded of the importance of growth and nurturing, both in our gardens and in our communities.

Spring brings a sense of hope and possibility, reminding us that we are all part of a larger ecosystem of care. Your dedication and hard work are the sunshine and rain that allow our communities to thrive. You are the cultivators of well-being, the gardeners of good health.

Thank you for your unwavering dedication to the Child and Adult Care Food Program. Your efforts are making a real difference in the lives of North Carolinians.

With Appreciation,

Cassandra Ward
 CACFP Program Manager

Inside this issue

- [Federal Updates/Announcements 2](#)
- [Resources3](#)
- [For Our Health and
What's Happening in Mar/Apr..... 4](#)
- [Meet the State Agency5](#)
- [CACFP Week6](#)
- [WORD SEARCH7](#)
- [CACFP Standardized Recipe.....8](#)

Reminders

- **Friday, March 7 and April 4, from 1 to 2 PM** - next two State agency monthly calls with CACFP Institutions (click [here](#) to join)
- **Tuesday, April 1, 2025 and Tuesday, April 29, 2025** - last days to submit January and February 2025 claims
- Standardized Recipe - **Strawberry and Waffle Kebabs with Maple-Yogurt Dip** (on [Page 8](#)). Strawberries & waffles on a stick! Dip in maple yogurt for a tasty treat.



Federal Updates

Dear partner,

First, thank you for your ongoing dedication to supporting and caring for North Carolinians. It is important work for individuals and families, as well as the overall well-being of our state.

Over the past couple of weeks, there have been a number of communications from the White House that noted the stop of federal funds for some programs, services, and grants. These took the form of a memo from the federal Office of Budget Management, Executive Orders issued by the White House, and notices from federal agencies. These communications did not provide specifics on what was impacted, only broad statements about work that supported DEI programs or gender ideology programs.

However, a Temporary Restraining Order has been issued that prohibits the stop of federal funding in this manner. As part of the Order, the Federal Government was required to send a Notice of Court Order that states, "Federal agencies cannot pause, freeze, impede, block, cancel, or terminate any awards or obligations on the basis of the OMB Memo, or on the basis of the President's recently issued Executive Orders". With this order, it is expected that all federal funding should continue as originally established for the time being.

Given the long-term uncertainty of federal funding, NCDHHS is currently reviewing all Executive Orders issued by the White House and analyzing all programs and services supported by federal funding to gain clarity on the potential effect that a federal funding stop could have on programs, services, and grants. You may consider doing a similar review or analysis.

To the best of our ability, we will continue to provide updates and guidance on federal funding and communications from the White House and federal agencies.

Announcements

Claim Submission 60-Day Deadlines for 2025: The 2025 Claim Submission 60-Day Deadlines have been published and are accessible on [our website](#) (Finance > Claims) and NC CACFP CONNECTS. We encourage you to retain a copy of these dates for your records to ensure timely submission of all claims.

North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Child & Family Well-Being, Community Treatment Services Section
Child and Adult Care Food Program
Claim Submission 60-Day Deadlines*

LAST DAY OF CLAIMS MONTH	POSTMARK OR RECEIPT DEADLINE FOR CLAIMS
January 31, 2025	April 1, 2025
February 28, 2025	April 30, 2025
March 31, 2025	May 31, 2025
April 30, 2025	June 30, 2025
May 31, 2025	July 31, 2025
June 30, 2025	August 31, 2025
July 31, 2025	September 30, 2025
August 31, 2025	October 31, 2025
September 30, 2025	December 1, 2025
October 31, 2025	December 31, 2025
November 30, 2025	January 31, 2026
December 31, 2025	March 1, 2026

*These are potential deadlines and are subject to change, as is a federal holiday, the law date of receipt of the next calendar day, or a federal holiday.

This document is an informational guide only.
NC CACFP #01/2025



Grant Opportunity: The ALDI Community Gift Card Program offers grants of \$100 - \$500 in gift cards to organizations defined as tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the IRS code. Funding focuses on children's health and wellness and food insecurity. Applications are accepted between March 1st and December 15th annually. Applicants are encouraged to submit their funding request at least eight weeks prior to when the donation is needed. Find more information [here](#).

For Our Health

"Let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food.", is a quote often credited to the ancient Greek physician, Hippocrates, known as the father of medicine. *"Tell me what you eat, and I will tell you what you are"* is a quote from the 1826 book *Physiologie du Gout* (Physiology of Taste) by French gastronome, Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin, which is often shortened to *"you are what you eat"*. Both Hippocrates and Brillat-Savarin knew what they were talking about. There is true power in the foods we eat, which leads me to share the next lifestyle habit of the world's healthiest, longest-lived people, the Blue Zone concept of "Plant Slant."

Plant Slant means focusing on having mostly plant-based meals and snacks. Eating lots of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains and eating less animal products and processed foods is healthier for everyone. Changing to plant-based eating can improve health, and can even reverse chronic diseases like cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, and cancer.

People in the Blue Zone areas, known for living longer, eat a variety of fruits and vegetables, beans, nuts, and whole grains every day. They eat only small amounts of meat and not very often.

Here is how to eat with a plant slant: (1) Eat more meatless meals, (2) Fill half your plate with vegetables at every meal, (3) Choose whole grains like quinoa, brown rice, and oats, (4) Include healthy fats like avocados, nuts, seeds, and olive oil, (5) Eat a variety of seasonal fruits and vegetables, and (6) Avoid processed foods.

Sicknesses such as hypertension, heart disease, diabetes, and osteoarthritis are not a normal part of aging, they are the result of poor eating habits and unhealthy lifestyles. We really are what we eat, so eat wisely. Eat for your health.

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

What's Happening in March and April

[National Nutrition Month®](#), observed each March and organized by the [Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics](#), aims to educate the public on making smart food choices and adopting healthy lifestyles. Originating as a week-long event in 1973 and evolving into a month-long celebration in 1980, the campaign provides media resources, promotes Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN) and Nutrition and Dietetics Technician, Registered (NDTR) Days, and features a yearly theme. In 2025, the theme "Food Connects Us" emphasizes the unifying power of food. Enjoy the WORD SEARCH on [page 7](#).



Discover new flavors this CACFP Week! From March 16 - 22, join the [National CACFP Sponsors Association](#) in celebrating "Trying New Foods." This annual event, held the third week of March, promotes the USDA's healthy meals program. Visit www.cacfpweek.org for resources, social media challenges, and webinars, and help spread awareness! See the flyer on [page 6](#). Click [here](#) for Spanish version.



April is National Garden Month - the perfect time to discover (or rediscover!) the joys of gardening! Whether you are attracting pollinators, teaching kids about nature, or growing your own food, there's something for everyone. Ready to get started? The [NC Farm to Preschool Network](#) offers resources such as lesson plans, toolkits, activities, and even farm visit ideas. For NC-specific gardening tips, workshops, and Master Gardener support, check out [NC State Extension](#). We would love to see how you celebrate! Share your gardening photos and stories with us at CACFPtraining@dhhs.nc.gov.

Meet Your State Agency Staff Caitlin Spears and Laura Cooke-Brown

Caitlin Spears

Title/Role: Nutrition Program Consultant

Region: Statewide

- **My favorite food is...**whatever is in season locally. I love cooking for my friends and family with fresh ingredients so one of my favorite things is incorporating produce that is in season into my meals. We are so lucky in North Carolina to have access to a wide variety of fresh fruits and vegetables throughout the year.
- **My favorite place and/or activity/event in North Carolina is...**attending local festivals throughout NC with my family. Not only are they fun, but they also allow us to visit and to learn about different communities and eat good food. Some of our favorites are: Chinese Lantern Festival (Cary), Cheerwine Festival (Salisbury), Pickle Festival (Mount Olive), NC Hot Sauce Contest & Festival (Oxford).
- **My favorite part of my job is...**While I am newer to this role, I am not sure I've found my favorite part just yet, however I am so excited to be joining this wonderful team! Everyone is so knowledgeable and passionate about helping participants navigate the CACFP. I am definitely looking forward to seeing more of this great state and getting to know the program participants.
- **The best tip I have for success in the CACFP is...**familiarize yourself with the NC CACFP website. There are a ton of helpful resources just a click away.



Name: Laura Cooke-Brown

Title/Role: Nutrition Program Assistant, Regional Consultant

Region: Eastern Region of NC

- **My favorite food is...**grilled food & pasta.
- **My favorite place and/or activity/event in North Carolina is...**I love the mountains during the fall months & beaches during the summer months.
- **My favorite part of my job is...**being able to collaborate with institutions to ensure children are getting nutritious meals. Giving technical assistance to institutions to help provide nutritional meals.
- **The best tip I have for success in the CACFP is...**organization & good record keeping tools. Use tools that the State agency and USDA have provided. Never be afraid to reach out to your assigned Field Service Representative or anyone from the State agency with any questions or concerns. We all are a team & "Teamwork makes the Dream Work"!!!! We all want the same thing for all participants & that's ensuring they are being fed nutritious meals.



National CACFP Week

March 16-22, 2025



CACFP Week is designed to raise awareness of how the USDA's Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) brings healthy foods to children and adults in care centers, homes and afterschool programs.

- ✓
Educate children and parents about healthy eating habits with the CACFP's free fun activities and communication tools.

- ✓
Raise Awareness of how the CACFP works to combat hunger.

- ✓
Promote the CACFP and advocate with a press release, a letter to congress and a request for proclamation.

- ✓
Share #CACFPWeek on social media and show your appreciation to all of those who work with CACFP every day.



Visit cacfpweek.org to learn more!





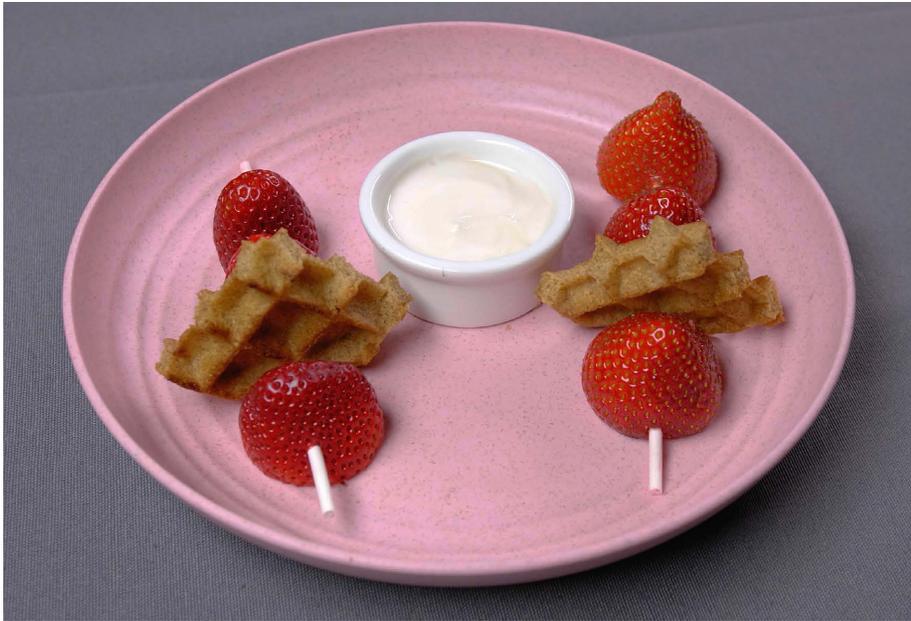
Food Connects Us

2025 NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH®

WORD SEARCH

Words may be horizontal, vertical, diagonal, or backwards

Acorn Squash	A	C	O	R	N	S	Q	U	A	S	H	C	E
Bulgur	S	A	P	K	E	A	D	L	I	N	E	W	I
Chard	N	M	E	D	R	M	P	O	P	C	O	R	N
Chicken	O	R	P	S	U	A	E	S	B	L	Y	U	D
Edamame	O	Y	A	I	N	T	C	A	S	D	E	G	B
Honeydew	T	A	R	O	R	O	O	T	N	K	N	L	S
Kiwi	E	D	M	D	K	M	H	R	I	A	U	U	R
Lychee	R	B	E	E	Y	C	B	W	O	C	R	B	R
Okra	W	I	S	A	R	D	I	N	E	S	B	Y	E
Parmesan Cheese	N	R	A	N	O	M	W	H	R	N	T	S	N
Popcorn	E	L	N	A	L	E	E	M	A	M	A	D	E
Sardines	K	U	C	S	A	T	S	G	S	T	P	E	C
Sesame Seeds	C	T	H	D	E	C	U	B	O	R	W	E	H
Tamarind	I	G	E	L	Y	H	R	A	O	M	H	S	I
Taro Root	H	Q	E	H	O	L	Q	D	M	W	C	E	L
Yogurt	C	H	S	P	G	R	N	L	G	E	D	M	A
	O	P	E	C	U	I	P	R	E	D	R	A	T
	P	W	G	B	R	P	K	H	N	Y	Q	S	D
	L	I	O	A	T	U	C	P	A	E	N	E	W
	N	G	M	R	R	Y	E	H	T	N	U	S	C
	R	A	E	K	L	G	I	N	O	O	R	I	F
	T	O	L	B	A	D	W	E	C	H	A	R	D



Strawberry and Waffle Kebabs With Maple-Yogurt Dip

Two favorites, strawberries and waffles, pair up for an amazing meal kids will love.

AGES: 3–5 years

PREP TIME: 1 hour

COOK TIME: 4 minutes

CACFP CREDITING INFORMATION

½ 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. 2 Preheat oven to 350 °F. 3 Gather sticks for kebabs. For 25 servings, use 50 sticks. For 50 servings, use 100 sticks. 4 In a medium bowl, combine yogurt and maple syrup. Whisk until well-blended. Keep cold at 40 °F or lower.
Greek yogurt, non-fat, vanilla	1 lb 9 oz	3 cups + 2 Tbsp	3 lb 2 oz	1 qt + 2¼ cups	

INGREDIENTS	25 SERVINGS		50 SERVINGS		DIRECTIONS
	Weight	Measure	Weight	Measure	
Maple syrup		¼ cup		½ cup	
Waffles, frozen, whole grain-rich (at least 34 g or 1 oz each)	12½ oz (at least 425 g)	12½	25 oz (at least 850 g)	25	5 Arrange waffles in a single layer on sheet pan (18" x 26" x 1"). Bake for 8-10 minutes. Cut waffle into 4 triangles. For 25 servings, use 1 pan For 50 servings, use 2 pans.
Strawberries, fresh, whole, stems removed* (gently wash strawberries under running water before cutting)	4 lb 13 oz (150)	3 qt + ½ cup	9 lb 8½ oz (300)	1 gal + 2 qt + 1 cup	6 Build kebabs. Kebab 1: 3 strawberries and 1 waffle triangle. Kebab 2: 3 strawberries and 1 waffle triangle.
					7 Serve 2 kebabs with ⅛ cup (#30 scoop) of maple-yogurt dip. Serve immediately, or keep cold at 40 °F or lower.

*See Marketing Guide



NUTRITION INFORMATION

2 kebabs and 1/8 cup of maple-yogurt dip

Nutrients	Amount
Calories	102
Total Fat	2 g
Saturated Fat	0 g
Cholesterol	0 mg
Sodium	102 mg
Total Carbohydrate	18 g
Dietary Fiber	3 g
Total Sugars	7 g
Includes Added Sugars	N/A
Protein	4 g
Vitamin D	N/A
Calcium	44 mg
Iron	0 mg
Potassium	N/A

N/A = Data not available

***MARKETING GUIDE**

Food as Purchased for:	25 Servings	50 Servings
Strawberries, fresh	5 lb 7½ oz	10 lb 15 oz

NOTES

- **Contains milk (yogurt) and wheat (waffles).** Frozen waffles can be a hidden source of common allergens, which include milk, peanuts, tree nuts, eggs, fish, shellfish, soy, wheat, and sesame.
- Sesame can appear as an ingredient in foods where it might not be expected (waffles) and may be included in the ingredient statements as “spice” or “flavoring.”
- Do not overcook waffles. If waffles are too crispy, they will fall off the stick.
- Recommend 6” lollipop sticks or 5½” apple sticks.
- **Optional:** Serve without sticks. Place 6 strawberries and 2 waffle triangles on a plate. Serve 2 Tbsp maple-yogurt dip on the side.
- **Choking Risk:** For children under the age of 4, you may want to cut whole strawberries in half.
- For breakfast, you can credit the grains or meats/meat alternates in this recipe toward the reimbursable meal.
- Yogurt must not contain more than 23 grams of total sugars per 6 ounces.
- 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 2 oz fruit & waffle + 1 lb 12 oz dip Yield: 12½ waffles and ~150 strawberries + ¾ cups 2 Tbsp dip	Weight: 11 lb 9 oz fruit & waffle + 3 lb 8 oz dip Yield: 25 waffles and ~300 strawberries + 1 qt ¾ cups dip
25 Servings with sticks	50 Servings with sticks
Weight: 6 lb 4 oz fruit & waffle + 1 lb 12 oz dip Yield: 50 kebabs + ¾ cups 2 Tbsp dip	Weight: 11 lb 11 oz fruit & waffle + 3 lb 8 oz dip Yield: 100 kebabs + 1 qt ¾ cups dip

