



North Carolina Division of Public Health
Nutrition Services Branch
Special Nutrition Programs Unit
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The North Carolina CACFP Messenger

From the NC CACFP Leadership Team

Hello CACFP Family,

Well, 2021 is teaching us life lessons from the start. As we embrace a new year it is my hope that we never forget what is important and why we do what we do daily. No matter what it looks like all around us, we are and have been in unified agreement. We agree to provide exemplary services to our most vulnerable citizens of North Carolina. We have stood strong to ensure our youngest to our oldest participants receive nutritious meals.

During March, we celebrate National Nutrition Month. This is the month that we learn about making informed food choices and developing healthy eating and physical activity habits. This year's theme is, "Personalize Your Plate." How befitting a theme to start this year, recognizing and celebrating our unique differences, as we learn from others while sharing a meal. Within this edition of the CACFP Messenger you will find creative ideas and tips to share with participants on how to "Personalize Your Plate."

We also celebrate National CACFP Week, March 14-20, 2021. We celebrate each of you, for all you do. We celebrate you for standing strong, for being flexible, for thinking outside of the box, for putting in the work, and for adjusting and adapting in a climate that we have never seen before. You are the heroes of the Child and Adult Care Food Program. We thank each one of you for your hard work and dedication.

With appreciation,

Cassandra Williams
Acting CACFP Program Manager

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Reminders

- Monday, March 1, 2021—
last day to submit
December 2020 claims
- Thursday, April 1, 2021—
last day to submit January
2021 claims
- Friday, March 5 and Thurs.,
April 1, from 1:00 to 2:00
pm—next two [State agency
calls with CACFP Institutions](#)
- National CACFP Week is
March 14-20, 2021! See
page 6 for more info.
- Check out our seasonal
standardized recipe for
Broccoli Salad on page 8



Upcoming CACFP Virtual Trainings

- ⇒ **Duties and Documents for Sponsoring Organizations**—The essential CACFP recordkeeping training for SOs! This training provides guidance and information on the daily, weekly, monthly, and annual recordkeeping requirements for the CACFP. We recommend that the person responsible for recordkeeping and CACFP training for the Sponsoring Organization attend.
 - * Wednesday, March 3, from 1:00 PM – 4:00 PM | [Click here to register](#)
- ⇒ **Duties and Documents for Independent Centers**—The essential CACFP recordkeeping training for ICs! This training provides guidance and information on the daily, weekly, monthly, and annual recordkeeping requirements for the CACFP. We recommend that the person responsible for recordkeeping and CACFP training for the Independent Center attend.
 - * Thursday, March 4, from 1:00 PM – 4:00 PM | [Click here to register](#)
- ⇒ **Build A Better Menu**—Join us for this live 3.5 hr. webinar and learn how to plan nutritious and delicious menus that meet the CACFP Meal Patterns. In this training, participants will review the meal patterns, analyze their current menus, learn where to find new recipes, and be guided through a menu makeover.
 - * Thursday, March 18, from 1:00 – 4:30 PM | [Click here to register](#)
- ⇒ **Compliance Review: Are You Ready?**—Is your Institution due for a review from the State agency this year? Learn information, resources, and best practices to help you prepare! Recommended for program managers operating the CACFP.
 - * Wednesday, April 7, from 1:00 – 3:00 PM | [Click here to register](#)

Announcement about Healthy and Safe Infant Feeding

The North Carolina CACFP and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) are aware of the report from the U.S. House of Representative’s Committee on Oversight and Reform concerning the safety of commercial baby foods. The report –“[Baby Foods are Tainted with Dangerous Levels of Arsenic, Lead, Cadmium, and Mercury](#)”—was made public on February 4, 2021. It presents data and information from several baby food manufacturing companies about heavy metals in their packaged infant and toddler foods. [The NC CACFP issued guidance --linked here--for Operators via email and on our website](#). At this time, no product recalls have been issued, but we will continue to share resources if any action is recommended. As always, you may contact the Nutrition, Training, and Policy team at CACFPtraining@dhhs.nc.gov with any questions.

And, from USDA’s Team Nutrition...

- ⇒ **Crediting Store-Bought Combination Baby Foods in the CACFP**—Learn the ins-and-outs of crediting store-bought combination baby foods in the Infant Meal Pattern.
 - * Thursday, March 18, from 2:00 – 2:30 PM (English)/3:00 – 3:30 PM (Spanish)
 - * [Click to Register](#) | Team Nutrition Worksheet on Combination Baby Foods: [English](#)/[Spanish](#)



Resources to the Rescue

The 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGAs) are now available!

Looking for the latest science-based recommendations for a healthy diet?

- ⇒ Go to DietaryGuidelines.gov to learn the latest from the experts on a healthy diet through the life stages.
- ⇒ Check out this quick video on the Dietary Guidelines and the message to “Make Every Bite Count” here: <https://youtu.be/CsUMzYUMNig>.
- ⇒ Share with staff, friends, and family!



Quick Tips for Preparing to File Your Monthly Claim for Reimbursement

We hope this checklist will help you file an error-free claim for reimbursement!

- ✓ Verify **Enrollment Forms** are on file for every participant enrolled for care
 - Child Enrollment Forms must be complete, signed by parent/guardian, and updated annually
 - Adult Enrollment Forms must be on file, with participant or guardian signature
 - For infants, Infant Feeding Consent forms are on file, in addition to Child Enrollment Forms
 - *Exception: At-risk afterschool programs and emergency shelters are not required to have enrollment forms*
- ✓ Verify **Income Eligibility Applications (IEAs)** are on file for every enrolled participant
 - Filled out completely
 - Classified correctly
 - Signed and dated by the Institution representative or Sponsor and updated annually
 - Summarized by category – Free, Reduced, or Paid (Denied)
 - *Exception: At-risk afterschool programs, emergency shelters, and Head Start Programs are not required to have IEAs*
- ✓ Verify that **attendance records** are on file for the claim month
- ✓ Verify **meal counts** by name are accurate and totaled by meal type
- ✓ Ensure **menus** are on file for each meal served – menus must be dated, include creditable components, list type of milk, identify whole grain-rich grains, and include the abbreviated USDA non-discrimination statement (“This institution is an equal opportunity provider.”)
- ✓ Ensure **all supporting documents**—receipts, invoices, or catering slips for food and non-food supplies—are on file. Retain time sheets, bank statements, and payroll records to support any labor costs claimed
- ✓ Ensure **all claimed expenses are approved** in the institution’s CACFP budget
- ✓ If applicable, ensure **day care home participants are correctly identified by tier** (applies only to Sponsors of Family Day Care Homes)



Spring is Coming! Time to Plant Your Edible Garden

Whether you are new to gardening or ready to expand your on-site vegetable garden, here are some tips from expert gardener Maria Hitt. Maria is the Farm to Early Care and Education (Farm 2 ECE) Team Leader and Growing Up Healthy Project Manager for Orange County Smart Start, based in Hillsborough, NC.

Why Plant an Edible Garden?

Gardens provide great opportunities for learning about nature, weather, science, and the growth cycle of plants. Being outside gives children fresh air, social time, and physical activity. And, research shows that children will eat what they grow!



Where Should We Plant Our Garden? Follow the Sun!

Consider planting a vegetable garden near play areas and choose based on how much sun the area receives. Your garden space should receive at least 4-6 hours of sun per day to grow most vegetables, flowers, and fruits. Stay away from large trees that make shade and whose roots will take the water from your gardens. Check throughout the day for any areas where you would like to put your gardens and see when and how long the sun is shining there. Also, make sure your garden has easy access to a water spigot or hose for watering.

To test the layout of your garden, you can sprinkle flour on the ground in the shape of the bed you are planning to imagine what will work in your space. *Important note:* Never place gardens over septic fields.



Healthy Soil is Key

Make sure that the soil for planting is safe and not close to roadways or where there may have been any other kind of spills or contamination from lead paints or other hazards. If you are planning to plant in raised garden beds, use a blend of half garden soil and half organic compost to keep the soil healthy and improve drainage. Use organic fertilizers to add nutrients to the soil.

Container Gardening

If you aren't ready for a large garden, you can start small with container gardening. Pots or grow bags can grow a lot of herbs and vegetables! Just be sure not to overcrowd pots with too many plants. If you want to try tomatoes, use a 5-10 gallon pot for one big plant. Containers need more frequent watering than raised beds or in-ground planting. A great resource on container gardening is [Pot and Container Sizes for Growing Vegetables from Harvest to Table](#)

Find A Garden Champion!

Chances are, there is a director, teacher, parent, or grandparent that is enthusiastic about gardening to help take the lead. Enlist the help of staff and organize a garden workday to get things started. Have parents plant a seed or seedling with their child at pick up time. Offer a taste of a seasonal food with the parents at pick up. Call your local [NC Cooperative Extension agent](#) for gardening help.



Need More Edible Gardening Resources? Check out "Gardening with Young Children" from the Natural Learning Initiative: <https://naturalearning.org/gardening-series>

Meet Your State Agency Staff

Laura Cooke-Brown and Nathalie Broom Sumner



Laura Cooke-Brown

Title/Role: Administrative Specialist

Region: State agency home office (Raleigh)

- **My favorite food is...**grilled porkchops.
 - **My favorite place and activities in North Carolina are...**I love visiting Sugar Mountain in Banner Elk, NC. Activities that I like include horseback riding, visiting the Elk River Falls, and eating at the restaurants. My favorite restaurants there are Bodegas Kitchen & Wine Bar, Bella's Breakfast & Lunch, and Sorrento's Italian Bistro.
 - **My favorite part of my job is...**communicating with Sponsoring Organizations and helping to ensure that children are being fed nutritional meals.
- **The best tip I have for success in the CACFP is...**organization, communication, and paying attention to detail.



Nathalie Boom Sumner

Title/Role: Child Nutrition Assistant

Region: Western North Carolina (the Blue Ridge Mountains)

- **My favorite foods is...**authentic street tacos.
 - **My favorite places in North Carolina is...**exactly where I am—the mountains. The outdoor activities are bountiful here. However, my most favorite thing to do is mountain biking. Our beautiful mountain region is a hub for mountain biking. I also love spending my summer weekends on the water at the most beautiful lake, Lake Chatuge.
- **My favorite part of my job is...**I love providing technical assistance (TA) to the institutions I work with. The inner teacher in me loves to share what I know, and at the same time, I enjoy learning something new.
 - **The best tip I have for success in the CACFP is...**organization and timeliness are key! Keeping files organized is the most helpful thing an institution can do for easy monthly reporting and especially during compliance reviews.

Tips from the Professionals (You!)

Thank you to everyone who responded to the question, “What was the best tip you learned from the webinar training ‘Compliance Review: Are You Ready?’ to help you prepare for your next CACFP Review?” See a couple pearls of wisdom below.



⇒ **From Mark A. Flowers, Sr., Administrator, Quality Education Institution (Winston Salem, NC | Forsyth County)**



“You need multiple eyes to look at your paperwork each month to make sure everything is correct and you maintain accurate records. If so, you should have zero to minimal infractions.”

⇒ **From Crystal Nix, Macon Program for Progress (Franklin, NC | Franklin County)**



“Be ready with organized reports, know where your stuff is, and have it in order. Be prepared before the news comes that you’re having a review. Because of COVID, I make sure that I write down on the monthly reports any answers that a reviewer might ask me. For example, we currently have virtual classrooms, so I make sure I note that on the attendance reports. Our program just hired a new registered dietitian (RD), so I developed a timeline for her to review the menus and if we have a combination menu item, she will write the [standardized] recipe that goes with item.”

Next “Tips from the Professionals” Question:

How does your garden grow? We hope the article on edible child care gardens on page 4 inspired you! Please tell us what you are planting this year at your child care or adult care site. We’d love your photos too!

Email your pro tips to CACFPtraining@dhhs.nc.gov by Friday, March 26, 2021.

➔ Info on National CACFP Week!



- * [National CACFP Week](#) is March 14-20, and the National CACFP Sponsors Association has plenty of resources to help you celebrate!
- * The [CACFP Week website](#) has social media tools and flyers to help raise awareness of how the CACFP works to combat hunger and the wonderful work done by providers and CACFP Sponsors.
- * You’ll also find activity sheets, meal planning tips, and more, including a video for parents, caregivers, and kids on trying new foods: <https://sesamestreetincommunities.org/activities/trying-new-foods/>



For National Nutrition Month 2021...Personalize Your Plate!

Each March, the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics encourages a celebration of [National Nutrition Month®](#). It's a time to learn more about making informed food choices and developing healthy eating and physical activity habits. This year's theme, "**Personalize Your Plate**," seems like the right message during these difficult times.

We can all use a reminder that there is no "one-size-fits-all" approach to nutrition and health. We are unique, with different backgrounds, cultural eating practices, different bodies, and different lifestyles. During the pandemic, many of us have explored that uniqueness by trying new recipes and cooking techniques, and perhaps returning to traditional foods that nurture us.

Here are 5 tips from the [Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics](#) to help you personalize **your** plate. We hope you will share the message of good health during National Nutrition Month and beyond!

1. Celebrate Your Culture. Our personal connections to the foods we were brought up with are powerful and lasting. Honoring these connections not only feeds the body, but also feeds the spirit.

2. Fix Healthy Snacks. Healthy snacks can sustain your energy levels between meals, especially when they include a combination of foods. Follow the CACFP guidelines, and try to include 2 food groups when you snack. Some great ideas are edamame sprinkled with low-sodium soy sauce and a cheese stick; apple slices with peanut butter; mini baked sopes; half a bagel with cream cheese and sliced cucumbers; yogurt and mango slices sprinkled with low-sodium Tajín; or, dried fruit and nut mixtures.

3. Make Half Your Plate Vegetables and Fruits. Fruits and veggies add color, flavor, and texture plus vitamins, minerals, and dietary fiber to your plate. A great goal is 2 ½ cups of vegetables and 2 cups of fruit each day. All types count – fresh, frozen, and canned.

4. Slow Down at Mealtimes. Instead of eating on the run, try sitting down to eat and focusing on the food you're about to enjoy. Dedicating time to savoring the taste and textures of foods can help you notice when you feel full.

5. Reduce Added Sugars. You've eliminated "grain-based desserts" from CACFP menus, but how are you doing with your own eating patterns? Setting realistic goals such as cutting soda intake in half or waiting an hour after dinner to see if you really want dessert can help to lower the amount of added sugar you consume.

"I like the country foods: the greens and the beans and the cornbreads and the biscuits. Not just for the taste, but because it infuses the house with an aroma that says, "You are welcome. You're going to have some good food. It's going to take some time. And once you eat it you won't want to leave."

- Maya Angelou, poet, writer, and civil rights activist



We will leave you with advice from nutrition expert Marion Nestle, MPH, PhD, author of *What to Eat*, *Food Politics*, and *Unsavory Truth*, among other books: ***"I follow my own advice: eat less, move more, eat lots of fruits, vegetables, and grains, and don't eat too much junk food. It leaves plenty of flexibility for eating an occasional junk food."***



Broccoli Salad

Recipe Category: Vegetable

CACFP Meal Pattern Contributions: ½ cup vegetable

Serving Size: ½ cup

Ingredients	12 SERVINGS		25 SERVINGS		50 SERVINGS	
	Weight	Measure	Weight	Measure	Weight	Measure
Low-fat mayonnaise	8 oz	¾ cup	1 lb	1 ½ cups	2 lb	3 cups
Sugar	2 oz	¼ cup	4 oz	½ cup	8 oz	1 cup
Cider vinegar		⅛ cup		¼ cup		½ cup
Low-fat (1%) milk		2 Tbsp + 2 tsp		⅓ cup		⅔ cup
Fresh broccoli, florets	1 lb	1 qt + 3 ⅛ cups	2 lb	3 qt + 2 ¼ cups	4 lb	1 gal + 3 qt + ½ cup
Fresh red onions, diced	1 ½ oz	4 Tbsp + 2 tsp	3 oz	½ cup + 4 tsp	6 oz	1 cup + 2 Tbsp + 2 tsp
Dried cranberries	4 oz	¾ cup + 2 ½ tsp	8 oz	1 ½ cups + 5 tsp	1 lb	3 cups + 3 Tbsp + 1 tsp
(Optional) Walnuts, chopped	4 oz	1 cup	8 oz	2 cups	1 lb	1 qt
(Optional) Sunflower seeds	2 oz	½ cup	4 oz	1 cup	8 oz	2 cups
Yield:	6 cups		12 ½ cups		25 cups	

Procedure

- Dressing:** Combine mayonnaise, sugar, vinegar, and milk in a bowl. Stir well. Set aside for step 3.
- Combine broccoli, walnuts or sunflower seeds (**optional**), onions, and dried cranberries in a large bowl. Toss lightly.
- Pour dressing over vegetable mixture. Stir well.
- Transfer broccoli salad to serving pans and refrigerate. For 25 servings, use one pan (12" x 20" x 2 ½"). For 50 servings, use 2 pans.
- Critical Control Point: Cool to 40°F or lower within 4 hours.
- Critical Control Point: Hold at 40°F or below.

Recipe adapted from: Child Nutrition Recipe Box by Institute of Child Nutrition.

(<https://theicn.org/cnrb/featured-recipes/featured-recipes-child-care-center/broccoli-salad-usda-recipe-for-cacfp/>)