



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,

Fall is right around the corner. After a very hot summer, I am sure I am not the only one who is looking forward to cooler temperatures. Like the leaves changing in Autumn, the CACFP and its institutions have endured a major change as well. NC CACFP CONNECTS has replaced NC CARES as our new management information system. NC CACFP CONNECTS officially went live August 21, 2023. This change has been long awaited, and we are so very pleased with the results. I hope everyone is enjoying getting to know the new system. Remember, if you have any questions, please reach out to your Field Service Representative (Regional Consultant).

If you have not accessed the system yet, the first step is to complete the NC CACFP CONNECTS Orientation Training. We have an on-demand version of this training on the training page of our website, under Pre-recorded Programmatic Training. Now that NC CACFP CONNECTS is live, we are looking forward to Record Renewal and accepting new applications. There will be more details to come on both, so stay tuned!

In addition to the launch of the new system, we have many more things to be excited about this fall; National Fruit and Vegetable Month, Whole Grains Month, and NC Crunch to name a few! You can read about all these and more below. Again, I hope everyone is enjoying this season of excitement and growth. Remember, for updates on all things CACFP, NC CACFP CONNECTS, and more, do not forget to attend our monthly institution calls and lookout for broadcast emails. Happy Fall everyone!

In appreciation,
 Cassandra Williams
 CACFP Manager

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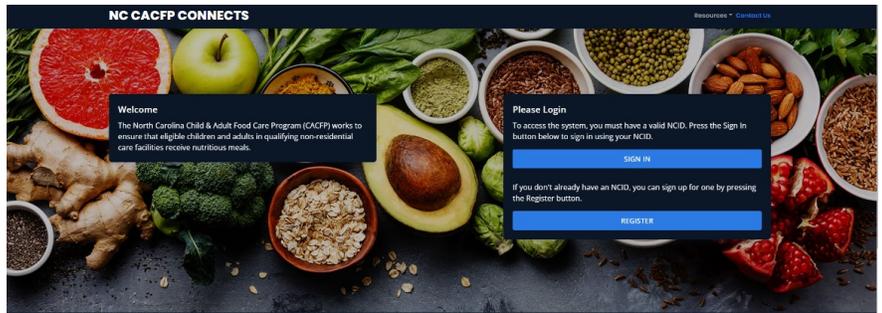
Reminders

- **Friday, October 6, from 1 to 2 PM**—next two State agency calls with CACFP Institutions (click [here](#) to join)
- **Friday, September 29, 2023**—last day to submit July 2023 claims
- **Tuesday, October 31, 2023**—last day to submit August 2023 claims
- Check out our seasonal standardized recipe for an Aztec grain salad on [page 9](#)



Announcements

NC CACFP CONNECTS is Now Live! If you have completed the NC CACFP CONNECTS Orientation Training and User Request Access Steps 1 and 2, you can now log into [NC CACFP CONNECTS](#) using your NCID and password.



Reimbursement provided to Institutions/Facilities for meals served:

Classification	Breakfast	Lunch/Supper	Supplement
Paid	.38	.40	.10
Reduced	1.98	3.85	.58
Free	2.28	4.25	1.17
Cash in Lieu of Commodities		\$0.2950	

Reimbursement Rates for FY 2023-2024 are now available on our website, on the Program Resources [page](#). These reimbursement rates are effective from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024.

Training

Record Renewal Training Registration: Registration is now open! Access our training page [here](#) to register for NC CACFP CONNECTS Record Renewal Training. IC and SO training will run from Monday, September 18 through Friday, September 29. We will have additional SO and IC training on Tuesday, October 17 and Thursday, October 19, respectively. There will be morning sessions from 8:30am - 12:30pm and afternoon sessions from 12:30 - 4:30pm. SFA-ARAM Record Renewal Training will be held the first week of October. Keep a lookout for emails to come with more details. Please be sure to sign up for the correct institution type (IC, SO, or SFA-ARAM).

On-Demand NC CACFP CONNECTS Orientation Training: The NC CACFP CONNECTS Orientation Training is a required training and must be completed in order to gain access to NC CACFP CONNECTS. This on-demand course must be completed by institutions who were unable to attend the live NC CACFP CONNECTS Orientation Trainings held in August. Once an institution has completed this training in full, they will receive a certificate of attendance and then may request access to NC CACFP CONNECTS. If you attended a live training and would like a refresher on how to navigate through the new system, you are welcome to take this on-demand course. Access the training [here](#).



Having any trouble with NC CACFP CONNECTS? Check out our FAQs.

We have received many questions already concerning the new system. Take a look at the Frequently Asked Questions document [here](#) to see if there is a question you have that may have already been answered. This can be a valuable resource to use as you start to navigate through NC CACFP CONNECTS. If you have any questions pertaining to the new system, send an email to NCCACFPCONNECTS@dhhs.nc.gov.

Resources



Want to continue your healthy child care journey? Does your staff need free training?

Go [NAPSACC](#), a free resource for all NC ECE programs, includes **35 FREE DCDEE-approved trainings** on healthy habit topics. Increase your knowledge of child nutrition and breastfeeding or learn more about physical activity, oral health, and outdoor play & learning. All are possible in Go NAPSACC.

- All trainings are free as a part of your ECE program's Go NAPSACC account
- Trainings provide information and strategies for ECE programs – centers and FCCHs
- Trainings are appropriate for Center Directors, FCCH Owners, and classroom and support staff
- Watch trainings as a group or individually
- Trainings are about 30 minutes in length
- Participants receive a DCDEE-approved certificate for 0.5 contact hours/training
- Training certificates are permanently available within your Go NAPSACC account for future needs
- To receive a certificate, participants must complete the full training, pass the knowledge quiz, and complete the training evaluation

To get your free Go NAPSACC account, complete this short [Interest Survey](#). A consultant in your area will be in touch soon to get you started. Scan the QR code to the right for more information!



CEFS Farm to ECE Institute: Mark your calendars! The 2023 NC Farm to Early Care & Education Institute will be held on Saturday, October 21, 2023, from 9am–4pm at the Rocky Mount Event Center. Use [this link](#) to register, or scan the QR code to the left. Click [here](#) for more information.

USDA Crediting Indigenous Foods Page: The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) has a variety of resources to assist Child Nutrition Program operators in determining how traditional Indigenous foods may contribute toward a reimbursable meal. Visit their page [here](#) to access these resources.



**CACFP BOOT CAMP
HEAD START**
SEPTEMBER 26-28, 2023

The National CACFP Sponsors Association is hosting a **CACFP Head Start Boot Camp** September 26-28, 2023 on Zoom. This series will cover a wide range of vital topics tailored to the unique needs of Head Start programs in the CACFP. Access the registration page [here](#), which also has an informational flyer available to download/print. Please note, there is a registration fee.

Resources (cont.)

Food Buying Guide Update: New yields are now available in the Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs Interactive Web-based (FBG) Tool and FBG Mobile App! New yield data is available for: individually quick-frozen red beans, frozen diced potatoes, frozen cubed sweet potatoes, brown lentils, and canned black turtle beans. Stay tuned for additional yield data releases coming soon. Explore the [Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs](#) today!



Resources Now Available in Spanish:

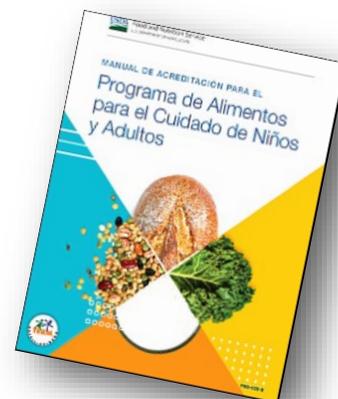


The Crediting Fruits, Meats/Meat Alternates, and Milk in the Child Nutrition Programs Tip Sheets are now available in Spanish. These simple tip sheets highlight the basics of crediting for these three meal components across all Child Nutrition Programs. Download these USDA tip sheets [here](#).

Stay tuned for the Vegetables and Grains tip sheets and printed versions of the entire tip sheet series that will be available at a later date!

The [Crediting Handbook for the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#) is also now available in [Spanish](#)! The Crediting Handbook plays an important role in helping CACFP operators plan nutritious, age-appropriate meals with diverse options. It is a supplementary resource to the [Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs](#) and contains additional information on creditable foods served in child and adult care centers and covers topics such as:

- Meal pattern requirements in an easy-to-read format
- Meal components with detailed information to help identify creditable foods
- Definitions and explanations to aid with understanding of terminology
- Crediting in Action, which provides examples of how to determine meal component contributions
- The Resources Section, which lists additional resources for CACFP operators



New Breastfeeding Website: Exciting news! The Division of Public Health is thrilled to announce the launch of www.breastfeednc.com, a new website dedicated to supporting breastfeeding mothers, fathers, and families across North Carolina.

Check out the helpful information, local resources, and supportive community.

There is also a section dedicated to walking you through becoming a Breastfeeding-Friendly Child Care designee. Click [here](#) for more information.

Visit www.breastfeednc.com or scan the QR codes to the right.





Does your program go above and beyond to provide healthy meals and teach children and families healthy eating habits? If so, your program might be eligible for a REACH Recognition in Child Nutrition! [REACH](#) is a new initiative to recognize Early Childhood Education (ECE) programs for going above and beyond to support children's health. REACH recognition is available in Child Nutrition, Farm to ECE, Outdoor Play & Learning, Oral Health, Physical Activity, and Screen Time. Recognition includes a yard sign, profile on the REACH website, social media and newsletter posts, and more.

Congratulations to CACFP-participating institution, **A Safe Place** in Raleigh, NC for their REACH Recognition in Child Nutrition. They go above and beyond to support children's healthy eating because it "*is one of the first steps to a healthy and happy lifestyle. Early exposure will set children up to be lifelong lovers of good nutrition practices.*" Check out [other recognized programs](#). Follow REACH on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) to cheer on your fellow ECE professionals dedicated to children's health.

Interested in REACH?

Programs eligible to apply for a REACH recognition in Child Nutrition are:

- Licensed,
- Serve children in the 0-5 age range,
- And have achieved a "[Leading the Way](#)" score on Go NAPSACC's Child Nutrition self-assessment.

Not using Go NAPSACC yet? Go NAPSACC offers a suite of valuable tools and training to help you meet your program's goals around healthy eating, physical activity and more. Contact your local Go NAPSACC Consultant to get registered. This may be a Child Care Health Consultant, Extension Agent, or Technical Assistance professional from a local Partnership or R&R trained in Go NAPSACC.

Ready to apply?

[This video](#) walks you through how to apply. For more information, go to <https://reach-recognition.org/child-nutrition-recognition/>, reach out to your local Go NAPSACC Consultant, or directly to REACH at reachrecognition@gmail.com.

Going above and beyond to support breastfeeding? Check out the [Breastfeeding Friendly Child Care Designation](#) through the NC Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Child & Family Wellbeing.

NC BFCCD recognizes childcare centers who have implemented breastfeeding-friendly policies and practices at their facilities. Childcare programs receiving the NC BFCCD will receive a certificate, be recognized on [the NC Division of Child and Family Well-Being](#), and have the designation listed as Facility Special Features in their DCDEE facility profile. The designation is **FREE** and no site visits are required. The next application is due **September 30, 2023**. The online application and resources for application assistance are available [here](#).



North Carolina

**Breastfeeding-Friendly
Child Care Designation**

Meet Your State Agency Staff Amisha McNeill and Kierra Rush

Amisha McNeill

Title/Role: Administrative Specialist I

Region: Raleigh Office

- **My favorite food is...**lamb chops.
- **My favorite place and/or activity/event in North Carolina is...** visiting any restaurant with good food.
- **My favorite part of my job is...**talking with my coworkers and helping others as needed.
- **The best tip I have for success in the CACFP is...**pay attention to detail and ask questions!



Kierra Rush

Title/Role: Administrative Specialist I

Region: Raleigh Office

- **My favorite food is...**sweet potato pie
- **My favorite place in North Carolina is...**attending shows at Raleigh Memorial auditorium in downtown Raleigh or the DPAC in Durham, or any place where there is food & live music!
- **My favorite part of my job is...**working and interacting with the other CACFP Staff in the office daily, there's never a dull moment.
- **The best tip I have for success in the CACFP...**to learn as much as you can about your position and CACFP (whether through trainings or asking questions) so that you can continuously be an asset & knowledgeable about what's happening in your region & statewide. Also always be respectable, approachable, and dependable.



Let's Celebrate!

There is so much to celebrate in the coming months! Did you know that September is National Whole Grains Month *AND* National Fruit and Vegetable Month? These nourishing foods will bring the colors of Fall right to your menu. In addition to adding variety, these healthy foods can help you meet the CACFP meal pattern requirements.

National Whole Grains Month: Whole grains contain all the essential parts of a grain: the bran, germ, endosperm, and naturally occurring nutrients of the entire grain seed. The CACFP regulations [7 CFR 226.20](#) require at least one serving per day, during one meal or snack, to be whole grain-rich, except for the infant meal pattern. Please note, the term *whole grain-rich* applies to those foods that contain 100 percent whole grains, or at least 50 percent whole grains with the remaining grains in the food being enriched.

To celebrate National Whole Grains Month, why not strive to meet the [CACFP best practice](#) and provide at least two servings of whole grain-rich grains each day? Some ideas to help reach this goal are to replace white rice with brown rice or quinoa. Serve whole grain pasta, bread, or crackers, and offer oatmeal as a warm breakfast option. Be sure any ready-to-eat and instant and regular hot cereals served, even those that are whole grain, contain no more than 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce.

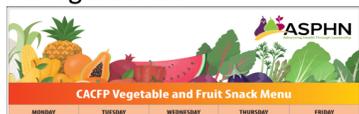
Check out the [Crediting Grains in Child Nutrition Programs Tip Sheets](#). This is a three-part series designed for program operators on how to credit grains and incorporate them into their menus. [Part Two](#) of this series will help you determine if a product is considered whole grain-rich. Test your whole grain knowledge with the Team Nutrition's [Whole Grain Quiz](#) and be sure to watch the [Meal Pattern Minutes](#) on WGR foods from the National CACFP Sponsors Association!



National Fruit and Vegetable Month: The cooler temperatures and colorful [produce available](#) make Fall a great time of year to visit a local farm or farmers market. Use the [USDA's Local Food Directories](#) to find a farm or farmers market near you.

The [CACFP Meal Patterns](#) require a vegetable *or* fruit to be served at breakfast and a vegetable *and* fruit (or two vegetables) served at lunch/supper. While vegetables and fruits are optional at snack, keep in mind the CACFP best practice to make at least one of the two required components of snack a vegetable or a fruit.

With so many vegetables and fruits in season during the fall months, it can be hard to decide which to serve! The [NC CACFP Fall Seasonal Menus](#) and the [Association of State Public Health Nutritionists \(ASPHN\) CACFP Vegetable and Fruit Snack Menu](#) are great resources that can help you add these healthy foods to your menus and follow the CACFP meal pattern regulations.



September 15 through October 15 is recognized as **National Hispanic Heritage Month!** The [National CACFP Sponsors Association](#) is ready to help you celebrate by hosting a FREE webinar that will explore cultural foods and fun activities that you can bring back to your center. You can register [here](#). Also, be sure to check out the USDA [Cultural Recipes from Central and South America](#) and the standardized, CACFP-approved recipe on [page 9](#).



National Farm to School and Early Care and Education Month is coming up in October! Celebrate with the State of NC and host an [NC Crunch](#) event at your center. See [page 8](#) for more details. This is also a great time to visit our [Farm to CACFP](#) webpage and discover resources for getting started with center gardening and incorporating local foods into your CACFP operations.

Mark your calendars! This year's North Carolina Crunch is October 18, 2023!

This October, join the state of North Carolina in celebrating National Farm to School and Early Care and Education Month by crunching into a locally grown apple, or other North Carolina vegetable or fruit. NC Crunch is a fun way to celebrate North Carolina agriculture and recognize all those involved in feeding our communities.

Whether you are crunching on October 18th or another date, get ready for your celebration with a visit to a [local farm or farmers market](#). Before your visit, check out the "[What's in Season?](#)" guide to see what locally grown produce may be available. While you're there, be sure to thank the farmer for growing those delicious and nutritious foods!

More details of the NC Crunch can be found on the [printable flyer](#) (below) and at [Growing-Minds.org](#). Click [here](#) to register; once you are registered you will receive a free guide with tips, promotional materials, and more!

We invite you to share details and pictures of your NC Crunch celebration. Please email us at CACFPTraining@dhhs.nc.gov by **Monday, October 23, 2023**, so we can include your story in the next issue of the NC CACFP Messenger. As a friendly reminder, be sure to keep current photo release forms on file at your institution for any children included in pictures.



What: Celebrate Farm to School Month with a local produce crunch heard 'round the state! Taste and learn about North Carolina-grown fruits and veggies, and thank all those involved in feeding our communities.

Who: Kids and adults can crunch with their schools, early care and education sites, organizations, families, and communities.

When: Crunch Wednesday, October 18, 2023 at noon, or any time during the month of October.

How: Sign up to participate at www.growing-minds.org/north-carolina-crunch to receive a free guide with tips and resources.

Share about your #NCCrunch on social media. Tag @F2SCoalitionNC and @NCFarmtoPreschool.

Help us reach all 100 counties and 500,000 kids and adults with the NC Crunch!

Whole Grains

Aztec Grain Salad combines a South American, high-protein grain called quinoa with aromatic roasted butternut squash, crisp apples, and dried cranberries to make a delicious and colorful side dish.





Aztec Grain Salad

NOVI MEADOWS 6TH GRADE UPPER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Novi, Michigan

Our Story

Novi Meadows, an upper elementary Blue Ribbon Exemplary School, drew on the talents and hard work of students, staff, parents, and the community to create their unique recipe. The School Nutrition Action Committee (SNAC) brainstormed recipe ideas that would not only fulfill the nutritional requirements of the contest, but would also be appealing to the students. The SNAC wanted to come up with something that was different and chose quinoa as the whole grain to feature in the recipe. Quinoa was then paired with traditional American fall produce to create a unique flavor experience. Aztec Grain Salad was named by the students, and it is a fantastic side dish to offer your students.

School Team Members

SCHOOL NUTRITION PROFESSIONAL

JoAnn Clements

CHEF

Ina Cheatem (Natural Food Chef, Fresh Delights)

COMMUNITY MEMBER

Michelle Thompson

STUDENTS

Cory G., Bryan T., and Jackie D.

Aztec Grain Salad

Meal Components: Red/Orange Vegetable-Fruit-Grains

Grains B-24r

Ingredients	25 Servings		50 Servings		Directions Process #3: Complex Food Preparation
	Weight	Measure	Weight	Measure	
Quinoa, dry	2 lb 3 oz	1 qt 1 ½ cups	4 lb 6 oz	2 qt 3 cups	1. Rinse quinoa in a fine mesh strainer until water runs clear, not cloudy.
Water		2 qt 3 cups		1 gal 1 ½ qt	
*Fresh Granny Smith apples, peeled, cored, cubed ¾"	1 lb 13 oz	1 qt 1 cup	3 lb 10 oz	2 qt 2 cups	2. Combine quinoa and water in a covered stockpot and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer until water is completely absorbed, about 10-15 minutes. When done, quinoa will be soft and a white ring will pop out of the kernel. The white ring will appear only when it is fully cooked. Refrigerate at 40 °F.
*Fresh butternut squash, peeled, cubed ½"	2 lb	1 qt 3 cups	4 lb	3 qt 2 cups	
Canola oil		¼ cup		½ cup	3. Combine apples, squash, and canola oil. Add half of the ginger and half of the cinnamon. Reserve remaining ginger and cinnamon for step 6. Toss well to coat.
Ground ginger		1 tsp		2 tsp	
Ground cinnamon		2 ½ tsp		1 Tbsp 2 tsp	4. Transfer apple/squash mixture to a sheet pan (18" x 26" x 1"). For 25 servings, use 1 pan. For 50 servings, use 2 pans.
Frozen orange juice concentrate	6 oz	¾ cup	12 oz	1 ½ cups	
Extra virgin olive oil		⅓ cup		⅓ cup	5. Roast until squash is soft and slightly brown on the edges. DO NOT OVERCOOK. Conventional oven: 400 °F for 15-20 minutes Convection oven: 400 °F for 12-15 minutes
Honey		1 Tbsp 1 tsp		2 Tbsp 2 tsp	
Dijon mustard		1 ½ tsp		1 Tbsp	6. Combine orange juice concentrate, olive oil, honey, mustard, vinegar, salt, black pepper, white pepper, cilantro, and remaining ginger and cinnamon. Whisk dressing until combined.
Red wine vinegar		½ cup		1 cup	
Salt		½ tsp		1 tsp	
Ground black pepper		⅓ tsp		⅓ tsp	

 The grain ingredients used in this recipe must meet the Food and Nutrition Service whole grain-rich criteria.



Whole Grains

Aztec Grain Salad

Meal Components: Red/Orange Vegetable-Fruit-Grains

Grains B-24r

Ingredients	25 Servings		50 Servings		Directions Process #3: Complex Food Preparation
	Weight	Measure	Weight	Measure	
Ground white pepper		¼ tsp		½ tsp	
Fresh cilantro, finely chopped		1 Tbsp: Option: Add additional for garnish		2 Tbsp Option: Add additional for garnish	
Dried cranberries, finely chopped	10 oz	2 cups	1 lb 4 oz	1 qt	7. In steam table pan (12" x 20" x 4") combine quinoa, apple/squash mixture, cranberries, raisins, and dressing. Mix well. For 25 servings, use 1 pan. For 50 servings, use 2 pans. Option: garnish with additional chopped cilantro. Cover and refrigerate at 40 °F to allow flavors to combine.
Golden raisins, seedless, finely chopped	10 oz	2 cups	1 lb 4 oz	1 qt	8. Critical Control Point: Cool to 40 °F or lower within 4 hours. Refrigerate until ready to serve
					9. Portion with 8 fl oz spoodle (1 cup).

Notes
*See Marketing Guide for purchasing information on foods that will change during preparation or when a variation of the ingredient is available.

Serving	Yield	Volume
1 cup provides (8 fl oz spoodle) ½ cup vegetable, ⅓ cup fruit, and 1 oz equivalent grains.	25 Servings: about 9 lb 8 oz	25 Servings: about 1 gallon 1 quart 1 steam table pan
	50 Servings: about 19 lb	50 Servings: about 2 gallons 2 quarts 2 steam table pans

 The grain ingredients used in this recipe must meet the Food and Nutrition Service whole grain-rich criteria.

Marketing Guide		
Food as Purchased for	25 servings	50 servings
Granny Smith apples	2 lb 6 oz	4 lb 12 oz
Butternut squash	2 lb 8 oz	5 lb

Nutrients Per Serving					
Calories	297.80	Saturated Fat	0.91 g	Iron	2.36 mg
Protein	6.41 g	Cholesterol	0 mg	Calcium	44.35 mg
Carbohydrate	53.56 g	Vitamin A	3391.52 IU (170.84 RAE)	Sodium	58.43 mg
Total Fat	7.83 g	Vitamin C	15.22 mg	Dietary Fiber	5.56 g