



October 16, 2023

RossWoods Adult Day Services: An Inclusive, Hands-on Approach on Farm to CACFP



RossWoods Adult Day Services, a CACFP provider, is a community-supported non-profit corporation and a wheelchair accessible adult day care facility located in Dalton, GA. Each day, participants enjoy socialization and life-enriching programs-curated by a team led by the Executive Director, Ms. Carlene Mutter.

Pictured on left: RossWoods Adult Day Services' participants show off their harvest.

An important initiative at RossWoods Adult Day Services is Farm to CACFP. Through gardening, participants enjoy increased physical activity, greater nutritional intake through taste testing and more social and emotional connection by working together as they care for their plants and the environment.

Gardening has been part of the daily activities of the center for the entirety of its 27 years of operation. Every year, the participants plant a variety of vegetables and fruits including tomatoes, cucumbers, radishes, green beans, squash, and watermelon.

Pictured on right: Gardening has been a big part of the daily activities at RossWoods Adult Day Services for many years.



[Click here](#) to read more.

Nutrition Services encourages our CACFP operators to join in on the wide array of benefits and learning Farm to CACFP has to offer! Interested in learning more on how to get started? Check out our Getting Started: Georgia Farm to Early Care and Education Guide [here](#).

Make a Rainbow Wrap with CALi and Commissioner Jacobs

The [American Heart Association](#) and [Small Bites Adventure Club](#) are offering free resources for teachers to celebrate October Farm to School Month as well as instructions on how to make Rainbow Wraps with Peppers.



Join CALi, Commissioner Amy Jacobs, and Nutrition & Physical Activity Supervisor, Diana Myers in making a Rainbow Wrap in this [video](#). Visit this [website](#) to receive free resources and videos to prepare Rainbow Wraps in your classroom!

Physical Activity Training offered through DECAL *Georgia among 19 states now offering PALS Training*



On Saturday, September 23, DECAL's Nutrition Services Division hosted a [Physical Activity Learning Session \(PALS\) Training](#) for 29 CACFP providers.

Created by Nemours Children's Health and funded by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), PALS training goals are to increase providers' knowledge of best practices for physical activity in children birth to five.

Pictured above: Twenty nine CACFP providers participated in DECAL's first PALS Training.

Georgia is one of 19 states that implements PALS trainings through a "Train the Trainer" model. The participants say it best! "What I liked best about the PALS training... Everything! The pace, the trainers, the materials, the ice breakers, the games, the goodie bags, the lunch & the networking made for a great day!" "It was fun and educational. The activities kept us engaged."

Interested in attending a PALS training? Stay tuned for upcoming 2024 training dates. If you have any questions, please contact Physical Activity Specialist, Tina McLaren, MPH at tina.mclaren@decalfga.gov.

FY23 DCH Excess Funds Carry-Over Due *Deadline to Complete is November 30, 2023*

According to the CACFP Policy Memo, Carry Over of Unused CACFP Administrative Reimbursement, dated October 1, 2020, Family Daycare Homes (FDCH) Sponsors may only carry over 10% of administrative payments received into the succeeding fiscal year.

Funds exceeding 10% must be returned to DECAL or used in another USDA Child Nutrition Program. If the 10% carryover funds are not expended in the succeeding fiscal year, you are required to return the unused funds to DECAL. FDCH sponsoring institutions also have the option of returning all excess funds without carrying funds into the subsequent period.

Requirements:

- Complete the FDCH Carry-Over Notification Form. To support the calculation, a FDCH sponsor must also submit a system-generated general ledger or the bank statement showing the total ending balance.
- Both documents should be emailed to the Budget Compliance Supervisor at

gwendolyn.howard@dec.al.ga.gov or faxed to 770- 342-3156. For budget questions or concerns, please Gwendolyn Howard via email. Be sure to include the name of the institution and agreement number in your email.

Annual CACFP Budgets for FY24 are Due

FY2024 kicked off October 1, 2023, and will continue through September 30, 2024. Please be sure your annual budget has been submitted for the fiscal year if your organization meets the following requirements:

CACFP Independent Institutions (7 CFR 226.7 g)

- The center projects costs that require, specific prior written approval
- The center plans to use meal reimbursements to pay for allowable administrative expenses; or;
- The center has previously approved FY2023 costs that require supporting documentation annually.
 - **Note:** Any costs that have been previously approved in FY2023 that were not self-prep food costs under \$250K, non-food costs under \$250K, and operating labor costs **will require** you to submit an annual budget.

CACFP Sponsors of Affiliated and Unaffiliated Centers (7 CFR 226.6 f)

- Required to submit a budget annually under all circumstances.

CACFP Day Care Homes (DCH) Sponsors (7 CFR 226.7 g)

- Required to submit a budget annually under all circumstances.

Please log onto GA ATLAS and review your previously approved 2022-2023 budget to determine if any of the above criteria apply to your organization.

If any criteria apply, you are required to submit a CACFP budget in the 2023-2024 application packet located in Atlas. When submitting the budget, be sure all necessary supporting documentation is uploaded as well.

Please follow links below for budget related tools and references:

- [Budget Guidance Manual](#)
- [Budget Checklist](#)

For budget questions or concerns, please contact the Budget Team at nutritionbudget@dec.al.ga.gov. Be sure to include the name of the institution and agreement number in your email.

Annual Renewal Requirements must be completed to participate in CACFP

All institutions/sponsors were required to complete annual renewal requirements by September 30, 2023, to continue participating in the CACFP. Institutions/sponsors that didn't complete annual renewal requirements will not have an approved FY 2024 application, and therefore, will not be authorized to operate in FY 2024.

If your organization would like to continue participating in the CACFP, please complete all annual renewal requirements.

For instructions on how to register, complete FY 2024 Annual Training and Assessment Questions and enroll in FY 2024 application, [click here](#).

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your assigned Application Specialist:

Application Specialists	Institution Assignment	Email	Phone Number
Jerald Savage	o (zero)-G	Jerald.Savage@decals.ga.gov	(770) 405-7916
Shericka Blount	H-P	Shericka.Blount@decals.ga.gov	(404) 656-6411
Cassandra Washington	Q-Z	Cassandra.Washington@decals.ga.gov	(404) 591-5616

Enhancing Local Procurement: Unlocking the Power of Geographic Preference

Explore the benefits of leveraging the new Geographic Preference option outlined in 7 CFR 226.22(c)(1) and 7 CFR 226.22(c)(2). This change is poised to revolutionize local procurement efforts, promote nutrition security, and encourage the value chain model.

Geographic Preference allows CACFP operators to prioritize unprocessed locally grown or locally raised agricultural products when making procurement decisions. Additionally, CACFP Operators determine the specific local area to which the Geographic Preference will apply.

Embracing Geographic Preference within the CACFP has far-reaching advantages:

- **Supports Local Economies:** CACFP operators contribute directly to local economies' growth by opting for locally sourced products.
- **Environmental Stewardship:** The reduced transportation of goods from afar translates to lower carbon emissions, aligning with sustainability goals.
- **Nutritional Excellence:** Locally procured products are often fresher and of higher quality. This means the meals served are delicious and packed with essential nutrients, benefiting the health of children and adults in care.
- **Community Building:** Geographic Preference builds bridges between CACFP institutions and local producers.

CACFP operators are encouraged to explore the possibilities of Geographic Preference. Making informed decisions based on procurement standards (7 CFR 226.22 and 2 CFR 200.317-326.327) and establishing connections with local producers can significantly impact your community's well-being and sustainability.

DECAL will continue to delve into local procurement, value chain, and sustainable sourcing in the upcoming months. For questions regarding procurement, please contact Tempest Harris, Procurement Compliance Specialist at tempest.harris@decals.ga.gov.

At-Risk Afterschool Waivers Available during Unanticipated School Closures

On August 30, 2023, DECAL was approved by USDA to grant CACFP At-Risk Afterschool Meal Component facilities waivers for the following:

- Non-Congregate Meal Service
- Parent and Guardian Meal Pick-up
- Meal Service Times
- At-Risk Enrichment Activities

These waivers can only be utilized during unanticipated school closures resulting from natural disasters, unscheduled major building repairs, court orders relating to school safety or other issues, labor-management disputes or when approved by DECAL for similar unanticipated causes.

You may access the waiver request approval [here](#). To read more about At-Risk Afterschool Waivers Available during Unanticipated School Closures, click [here](#).

For questions, please contact [Robyn Parham](#) or [Tammie Baldwin](#).



Celebrating "Pepper Palooza" All Month Long

October is Farm to School & Farm to Early Care and Education Month. Schools and early care centers across Georgia are celebrating PEPPERS all month long. *Pepper Palooza* is a statewide campaign to get kids eating, growing, and participating in pepper-themed activities.

To participate in *Pepper Palooza* at your school, home, early care center, or in your community, visit [here](#) to register. Participants will receive access to a free electronic toolkit filled with pepper-themed activities, standards-based lesson plans, fact sheets, recipes, school nutrition resources, and more!

Share your *Pepper Palooza* pictures and activities on social media with [#pepperpalooza](#) and [#GAFarmtoECE](#). Each week during October, anyone who has used this hashtag will be entered to win a prize and at the end of the month there will be a grand prize winner.

Register Now for the Georgia Farm to School and Early Care & Education Mini Summit

Registration is now [open](#) to join educators, school nutrition staff, early care providers, and agriculture professionals for the 2023 Georgia Farm to School and Early Care & Education Mini Summit in Savannah, GA on **Friday, November 3**. Learn and share best practices for encouraging kids, families, and communities to grow, eat, and learn about local food.



Discover how you can help build a just food system through a keynote conversation with USDA Director of Nutrition Security and Health Equity and nationally-recognized childhood obesity expert, Dr. Caree Cotwright, PhD, RDN. This event is hosted by Georgia Organics and the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning and presented by the Georgia Farm to School Alliance and Georgia Farm to Early Care and Education Coalition. The registration cost is \$50 per person. Visit [here](#) to register.

If you have questions, please contact abbie@georgiaorganics.org.

Get Informed: Upcoming Training Dates

October 19, 2023

Bid Specifications and Managing Contracts

Contract (agreement) management plays a crucial role in the procurement success of the Child and Adult Care Food Program. It helps ensure that all parties adhere to the terms of the agreement such as the bid specifications and the federal, state, and local regulations.

Join this webinar to learn.

- What is contract management?
- What are the elements of contract management?
- What are bid specifications and how they are developed?

October 23, 2023

Memo Monday

Want to avoid meal disallowances, unallowable costs and learn the proper way to claim meals in Family Child Care Learning Homes?

Join our October Memo Monday webinar where we will discuss the following memos:

- **Meal and Cost Disallowances in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)**
- **CACFP Policy #12 - The Claiming of Meals by Family Child Care Learning Homes Licensed by the State of Georgia, CACFP #12 (00-12)**

November 20, 2023

Memo Monday

Want to learn about the At-risk Afterschool Meals Program eligibility, processes, and requirements? Have you ever wondered, what is an exemption?

Join our November Memo Monday webinar where we will discuss the following memo/policy:

- **Area Eligibility in Child Nutrition Programs**
- **CACFP Policy #34 - Eligibility Requirements for Participating in the At-Risk Afterschool Meals Component of the CACFP, CACFP #34 (07-34)**

November 30, 2023

Procurement Supporting Documents & Resources

Each year, CACFP operators are tasked with calculating the food cost for the fiscal year and selecting the appropriate procurement method(s) to support the food cost.

Join this webinar to learn ways to:

- distinguish the standard procurement methods with each procurement threshold,
- complete or create a Procurement Policy, and
- understand the required procurement documents to complete and submit to support the food cost.

Please click [here](#) to register for all of the webinars listed above.

Registration: This is a **two-step** process:

- **Step 1:**
 - After registering in GA ATLAS, you will receive a Training Confirmation email *immediately* from Georgia DECAL Help Desk -helpdesk@cnpus.com with a registration link to attend the webinar (**check your spam/junk folder**).
- **Step 2:**
 - You must then register for the training using the link provided on the Training confirmation email.
 - If you should have an issue with registering, please contact Leslie Truman **prior** to the day of training.
 - **Click here** if you need a refresher on how to register for training in GA ATLAS.

Please note: Only the Program Contact (PC) can self-register within GA ATLAS. If an additional person will be attending, please contact Leslie Truman, Administrative Assistant, at (404) 657-1779 for assistance.

Training Resources

In Case You Missed It: Webinar Recordings Now Available!

If you missed a *webinar*, please visit the [Training and Technical Assistance](#) webpage for

previously recorded webinars. This month's training highlight is **Farm to Early Care and Education (ECE)**. It discussed ideas to incorporate local foods, hands-on food education activities, and tools to increase garden-based education.

Team Nutrition Web Quizzes *New Spanish Version* - USDA's Team Nutrition has developed interactive ten-question web quizzes as a fun way to introduce a variety of nutrition topics. The quizzes can be used during staff training and other nutrition events. Upon completion of each quiz, quiz takers receive a score along with a link to resources that can help expand their knowledge on the topic and build their nutrition skills. Quiz takers can also view a printable version of the questions and answers upon quiz completion. These web quizzes are also available as a widget. Please see a list of available quizzes below.

- **Infant Nutrition Quiz**
- **Toddler Nutrition Quiz**
- **Meal Components Quiz**
- **Milk in the CACFP Quiz**
- **Older Adult Nutrition Quiz**
- **School Gardening Quiz**
- **Whole Grains Quiz**
- **Nutrition Label Quiz**
- **[See Spanish Version]**

Food Buying Guide (FBG) for Child Nutrition Programs *Food Yields!* – 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 (IQF) black beans, IQF pinto beans, roasted soybeans, roasted chickpeas, fresh oranges, grape tomatoes, and ready-to-use diced and sliced onions. Stay tuned for additional yield data releases coming soon. Explore the **Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs** today.



Become a Health-Empowered ECE Site

HealthMPowers is a nonprofit organization serving children, youth, schools, and families in communities across Georgia. Through physical activity and nutrition education and programming, they address the root causes of many preventable chronic diseases that stem from poor nutrition and lack of physical activity.

The HealthMPowers Early Care and Education (ECE) Program is:

- Approved for **11.5 hours** of Bright from the Start (BFTS) credit from the Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning (DECAL).
- Aligned with: *Standard 2* of Georgia's Quality Rated System and BFTS Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS).

Eligibility Requirements:

- Be an Early Care and Learning Site enrolled in CACFP.
- Commit to a 3-year Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).
- Have children ages 3-5 enrolled.

For more information on enrollment, please contact kimberly.santijanna@healthmpowers.org

Nutrition Ed Nook
It's a Pepper Palooza

We're celebrating peppers all month long as October's Harvest of the Month spotlight and this year's October is Farm to School & Early Care and Education Month *Pepper Palooza* campaign. Peppers come in all different shapes, sizes, colors, and flavors, and they can be found in cuisines throughout the world! Peppers are scientifically considered to be fruits because they contain seeds and are produced from a flowering plant.



Bell peppers & hot peppers are excellent sources of Vitamin C and B6. A bell pepper provides 169% of daily vitamin C intake while a hot pepper provides 72% of daily vitamin C intake. As peppers become ripe, their vitamins A and C content increase, which makes sweet peppers get sweeter and hot peppers get hotter. You can tell when peppers are becoming ripe because their colors change from green to red, yellow, or orange.

Harvested in both spring and fall, crisp, delicious Georgia bell peppers pop up in a variety of colors from mid-June through October. Locally grown varieties are usually more cost effective and fresher.

Fun Fact: The hottest pepper in the world is the Carolina Reaper. It is rated 1,569,000 on the Scoville Heat Unit (SHU). For comparison, a bell pepper is 0 SHU and a jalapeno is between 2,000-8,000 SHU.

Integration:

- [Simple Stuffed Peppers](#)
- [Salsa Verde](#)
- [Peach Salsa](#)
- [Veggie Quesadillas with Cilantro Yogurt Dip](#)

Education:

- **Watch** the [Learn Fruits and Vegetables for Kids: The Bell Pepper](#) video. In this episode, children get to know the bell pepper better and have fun!
- **Read** aloud the book [Green is a Chile Pepper – A Book of Colors by Roseanne Greenfield Thong](#). In this lively picture book that Booklist described as "a cheerful color-concept book that presents a slice of Latino culture through food and fun," children discover a world of colors all around them: red is spices and swirling skirts, yellow is masa, tortillas, and sweet corn cake.
- **Create** pepper arts and crafts with the children in your program.
- **Talk** with families about how children can help with meal preparation such as washing and cleaning peppers for a meal. **Bonus:** Send recipes home with families for them to incorporate peppers into their meals!

Conversation:

- Have the children you serve eaten peppers before?
- What peppers have they tried?
- Which peppers do they like the most?

Share your Harvest of the Month stories and menu integration of peppers with Nutrition Education Specialist, Morgan Chapman, MPH, MCHc at morgan.chapman@decal.ga.gov.



Walktober - A new month, a new you, and a new start of the beautiful fall season. October is National Walk to School Month. Walking is one of the many physical activities people enjoy adding into their daily routine as the weather cools down. Start the day by moving - go for a walk with you and your family to keep your heart rate up for at least 30-minutes every day. Walking helps to raise awareness on the importance of physical activity and supports good health for our families, schools, and neighboring communities.

As per the Centers for Disease Control's *Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans*, physical activity improves sleep, reduces anxiety and depression, lowers risk of hypertension and type 2 diabetes, and other chronic diseases.

How To Observe #OctoberWalks

- At home: Break away from sitting less and *move* more. Take a 15-minute walk early in the morning or during a lunch break. End a long day of work with a few stretches or a yoga session for quietness, tranquility, and peace of mind.
- To school (children/parents): As a family, go together with your children early in the morning to walk to and from school or after-school in the afternoon.
- With the family: Walk in with your neighborhood or community – to the park, local mall, local farmer's market, or a grocery store in the day or on a weekend. Be safe!
- At work (colleagues): Invite a colleague to take a 10-minute walk during your break from the computer/office. Take the stairs, instead of the elevators.

The "Power of Walking" is an International Walk to School Month celebrated in the month of October. Organize, plan, or coordinate a small walk community event or an activity with your family, school, work, or local communities. To find out more, please visit the following websites www.walkbiketoschool.org or www.livesmartoni.com/walktober.

Integration:

- [Walk to School](#)
- [The Every Body Walk!](#)
- [Step It Up! The Surgeon's General Call to Action to Promote Walking and Walkable Communities](#)
- [State Parks and Trails in Georgia](#)
- [2023 Georgia 2-Day Walk for Breast Cancer](#)
- [Walks in Georgia](#)

Education:

- **Read** aloud the book "[We Walk Through the Forest,](#)" By Lisa Ferland and Yana Popova.
- **Watch** the video on the [Benefits of Walking](#).
- **Talk** with families about ways to incorporate walking into their daily lives. **Bonus:** Send #WALKTOBER pictures and events that are happening in your home, early childcare centers, offices, schools, and communities.

Conversation:

- What is the best day and time to walk?
- Who do you enjoy walking with?
- What are the benefits of walking?
- How much should I walk a day?
- What is your favorite leisure place to walk (i.e., parks, trails, neighborhoods, schools)?

Share your #Walktober, #WalkDay, #Walkathon, #Walkclub, #WalkToSchool, and #WalkToWork stories and photos with Physical Activity Specialist, Tina McLaren, MPH at tina.mclaren@decal.ga.gov.



DECAL's Nutrition Spotlight: *Meet Vanessa Goodman, Business Operations Representative*

Vanessa Goodman joins the Nutrition Services Division as a Business Operations Representative. In this role, she will review and determine eligibility for the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and sponsored facilities. Vanessa is also responsible for CACFP site level updates for sponsoring organizations that fall under D-G and Q-Z.

Vanessa will also assist with processing add a site applications and site level updates for Happy Helpings.

Vanessa may have a new position, but she has been with DECAL almost two years. In her previous role as a Scholarship Administrative Specialist, she processed initial applications to determine program eligibility for CAPS scholarships.

Vanessa currently resides in Conyers with her husband, and she is the mother of four. She enjoys spending time with her family and friends and decorating her home. Vanessa loves the holidays especially Christmas as it is her favorite time of year.

Eat Healthy and Live Active *Georgia Early Care and Education Harvest of the Month 23-24 Calendar*

Harvest of the Month (HOTM) is the Georgia Department of Education School Nutrition Program's farm to school initiative that highlights an item each month that can be sourced locally and served in Georgia's school meals.

The Georgia Early Care and Education Harvest of the Month is a collaborative campaign to promote a different local, seasonal fruit or vegetable in child care settings each month.

Visit the Georgia Department of Education's HOTM [webpage](#) and Quality Care for Children [webpage](#). Upon viewing, you can find tips and tricks for preparing produce items, curriculum connections, activity lists and book alignment for your early care classrooms.



CACFP Resources:

The following documents were covered in previous newsletters:

- [Are you required to submit a FY2024 CACFP Annual Budget?](#)
- [Announcing New Application Services Team Members](#)
- [Determine Estimated Food Costs and Procurement Methods for FY24](#)
- [Navigate Toddlerhood with Webinars by Children's Healthcare of Atlanta](#)
- [Stay Informed: CACFP Policy Updates](#)
- [Make Sure Kids Don't Lose Medicaid or CHIP Coverage](#)

- [Post-Public Health Emergency Resources Available](#)
- [Reminder - PolicyStat available on Nutrition Services' Webpage](#)
- [Middle Georgia Aquaponics Greenhouse teaches Students about Alternative and Sustainable Gardening Options](#)
- [How to File a CACFP Claim for Reimbursement](#)
- [Check your Email Messages & Update Your Email Address in ATLAS](#)
- [New Interactive Map shows CACFP Participation in Georgia](#)
- [Interactive State Policy Map](#)
- [Guidance on Collecting Race and Ethnicity Data](#)
- [Be a Health Hero - Health Empowers You](#)
- [Update Your Banking Information](#)
- [Non-profit Food Service & Procurement Procedures Monitoring](#)
- [Newly Revised CACFP Memorandum-Civil Rights Complaint Procedures](#)

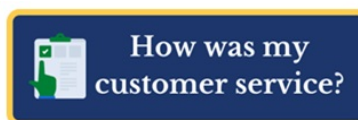
You can find archived CACFP Newsletters [here](#).

Dates to Remember

DATE	EVENTS
October	Harvest of the Month: Peppers
October	Farm to School Month 2023: "Pepper Palooza"
October 19	Bid Specifications and Managing Contracts Webinar
October 23	Memo Monday
November 3	Georgia Farm to School and Early Care & Education Mini Summit
November 20	Memo Monday
November 23	Thanksgiving
November 30	Procurement Supporting Documents & Resources Webinar
November 30	FY23 Daycare Homes Excess Funds Carry-Over Due

How was my Customer Service?

Provide feedback on your experience with the Nutrition Team



Click on the icon at right to participate in the customer service survey. Responses are anonymous.

Join Us for a NEW DECAL Download!

DECAL Open Enrollment

The leaves are starting turn, football is being played and pumpkin spice lattes can be spotted everywhere across the state. That means Fall is upon us, and it also means Open Enrollment here at DECAL and with the State of Georgia. Open Enrollment is for active eligible employees and COBRA

On the next...
DECAL
Download 
New Episodes Every Wednesday!



Sabrina Henry
HR Operations Supervisor



This Week's Topic:
DECAL Open Enrollment



beneficiaries.

It is a time to review, enroll, make changes to your Flexible Benefits plan options, including dental, vision and life insurance coverage. We're encouraging everyone to stop and take the time to make the decisions in the best interests of themselves and their families. Joining us on this episode to talk about Open Enrollment here at DECAL is

HR Operations Supervisor Sabrina Henry.

Listen to the episode [here](#).



Nutrition Division

Marketing & Outreach Team

Cindy Kicklighter
Carl Glover

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