

# Nutrition News



Happy Helpings

Georgia's Summer Food Service Program

July 3, 2023

## Happy Helpings Kick-off events held to promote Summer Meals

DECAL's Nutrition Services Division co-hosted two Happy Helpings kick-off events in June. The first event was held in Clayton with Rabun County Family Connection, and the second event was in Pembroke with the Bryan County Board of Commissioners. These events are meant to bring awareness to summer meals in the community, as well the importance of combining nutrition with physical activities and staying hydrated.



More than 75 kids enjoyed a free healthy meal in Pembroke at the Happy Helpings kick-off event.



DECAL's Nutrition team and Rabun County Family Connection collaborated on a Happy Helpings kick-off event at the Rabun County Public Library on June 13.

Pictured L-R: **Kim Cannon**, Rabun County Library Youth Services Coordinator; **Carl Glover**, DECAL, Marketing and Outreach Specialist; **Tina McLaren**, DECAL, Physical Activity Specialist; **Diana Myers**, DECAL, Nutrition and Physical Activity Supervisor; **Morgan Chapman**, DECAL, Nutrition Education Specialist; **Tamika Boone**, DECAL, Director of Nutrition Services; **Laura Lane**, Rabun County Family Connection Coordinator

On June 13, Laura Lane of Rabun County Family Connection joined DECAL in hosting a kick-off event at the Rabun County Public Library in Clayton. Over 90 children enjoyed nutritious meals, did a taste-test with Georgia grown fruits and vegetables, learned about the importance of staying hydrated during the summer months, and played various games to encourage physical activity that included an egg race, hula hoops, and volleyballs. The library also had a rock painting activity for the children to enjoy before the meals were served.

On June 27, Wendy Sims-Futch with the Bryan County Board of Commissioners partnered with DECAL to host a kick-off event at the Sawmill Apartments in Pembroke. The kick-off event was held in conjunction with Farm to Summer Week, which brings awareness to the many opportunities that summer brings to serve fresh, local foods and hands-on agriculture activities that help children develop healthy habits. The nutrition team had a hydration station with fruit, vegetable, and herb infused water. There were locally grown fruits and vegetables available for the children to taste-test. Those in attendance enjoyed physical activities such as bean bag toss and hopscotch.



Physical activity combined with good nutrition keeps kids healthy.



The fruit infused water was a big hit with kids.

"The Happy Helpings program is made possible by our sponsors. Coming to these events to see the wonderful work they do for the children in their community always brings a smile to my face," said Tamika Boone, Director of Nutrition Services.

The Nutrition Services Division plans to hold a spike event in metro Atlanta later this month.



Children enjoyed taste testing the local fruits and vegetables at the kick-off event in Bryan County.

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## Rural Non-Congregate Meal Services

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023 (P.L. 117-328), established a permanent non-congregate meal service option for rural areas with no congregate meal service available through the Summer Meals Programs to include the SFSP.

In response, USDA issued the guidance, *"Implementation Guidance: Summer 2023 Non-Congregate Meal Services in Rural Areas."* USDA issued additional guidance on April 20, 2023 entitled *"Questions and Answers #2: Summer 2023 Non-Congregate Meal Service in Rural Areas."*

On May 17, 2023, DECAL Nutrition issued, *Rural Non-Congregate Meal Services in the Summer Food Service Program* which provided:

- Updated resources to determine if a site is located in a rural pocket
- Updates to participant (child) eligibility requirements for home delivery
- Further guidance on bulk distribution of food items including the distinction between bulk items and multi-day meal issuance
- Notification that experienced sponsors must be in good standing to be approved to operate non-congregate service
- Guidance and requirements regarding sponsors' monitoring of non-congregate meal service sites

**Please note:** *Rural non-congregate meal service requests must be managed and approved by Nutrition Services' Applications Unit. Therefore, sponsors should not request use of this flexibility through the waiver module in ATLAS.*

For additional information, please refer to the resources below, which includes a newly added webinar recording:

## Recorded Webinars

- [Happy Helpings SFSP Updates \(Part 2\): Rural Non-Congregate Meal Service Option](#), June 6, 2023 **New!**
- [Happy Helpings SFSP Updates: Non-congregate Rural Option, Final Rule, Racial and Ethnic Data, and Tiering Status](#), April 25, 2023

## Questions and Answers FAQs

- [Rural Non-Congregate Meal Service Option Q&As](#)

## Policy Memoranda

- [Rural Non-Congregate Meal Services in the Summer Food Service Program](#), May 17, 2023
- [Questions and Answers #2: Summer 2023 Non-Congregate Meal Service in Rural Areas](#), April 20, 2023
- [Implementation Guidance: Summer 2023 Non-Congregate Meal Service in Rural Areas](#), February 28, 2023

Please email your questions, comments, and feedback to [Leatha.Bryant@dec.al.ga.gov](mailto:Leatha.Bryant@dec.al.ga.gov) or the Nutrition TA Mailbox at [NutritionTA@dec.al.ga.gov](mailto:NutritionTA@dec.al.ga.gov). The Nutrition Services Team will respond to all questions and make the responses available.

For questions regarding policy memoranda, please contact [Robyn.Parham@dec.al.ga.gov](mailto:Robyn.Parham@dec.al.ga.gov).

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## Reminder to Review Application for Accuracy

Sponsors are required to review and ensure that all sections of their online Happy Helpings (HH) application in GA ATLAS are accurate at all times. Failure to maintain an accurate application could result in a finding(s) and/or an adverse action. [Click here](#) to access HH application update procedures.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your assigned Business Operations Representative. For HH applications, contact:

Business Operations Representative	Institution Assignment	Email	Phone Number
Lavesia Ervin	o (zero)-C H-P	<a href="mailto:Lavesia.Ervin@dec.al.ga.gov">Lavesia.Ervin@dec.al.ga.gov</a>	(404) 293-5258
Edith Pierre	D-G, Q-Z	<a href="mailto:Edith.Pierre@dec.al.ga.gov">Edith.Pierre@dec.al.ga.gov</a>	(404) 463-8314

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## Procurement Updates

### *Monitoring Executed Contracts, Agreements, and Services*

As a reminder, organizations are encouraged to monitor and evaluate executed contracts, agreements, and invoices frequently, and assess current and potential meal sites. Monitoring contracts, agreements, and services may help with the following:

- Finding unexpected changes by the vendor on prices or supplies.
- Inspecting unanticipated changes in the number of meals served to apply in the upcoming Program year.
- Discovering a need for a new vendor based on unfilled terms in the agreement or contract.
- Preparing for the end of the contract.
- Identifying there are no remaining renewal options.

- Determining an alternative procurement method to use compared to the prior year (i.e., new bid process, new agreements, amendments, change in procurement method overall, etc.).

If the Sponsoring Organization will have to execute formal procurement or if a new vendor should be used for the upcoming year. Remember, securing a new bid is a multi-step process; **plan early**. Take a look at the steps:

- Assessing and identifying the procurement needs
- Preparing the Invitation for Bid
- Submitting the Invitation for Bid to the State Agency
- Publicizing of Invitation for Bid and publicly announcing the IFB at least 14 days before bid the openings.
- Notifying the State Agency of the time and place at least 14 days before the bid opening
- Publicly opening all bids received
- Submitting to the State Agency copies of all contracts, a certificate of independent price determination, and copies of all bids received
- Evaluating the bids received
- Awarding the contract
- Monitoring the contract

For questions regarding procurement, please contact Tempest Harris, Procurement Compliance Specialist at [tempest.harris@dec.al.ga.gov](mailto:tempest.harris@dec.al.ga.gov).

## Happy Helpings Sponsors:

*Submit pictures of your high-quality meals*



### We want to hear from you!

The Nutrition Services Division wants to spotlight the high-quality meals that you are serving in your Happy Helpings program this year. We are seeking pictures of your *appetizing, appealing, and nourishing* meals being served this summer!

You fill the gap for children during the summer months by providing access to necessary and nutritious meals to support children's healthy growth and development. Let's share and

celebrate your efforts across Georgia!

Submit your high-quality meal photos, organization's name, and any local items being served to Nutrition & Physical Activity Supervisor, Diana Myers at [diana.myers@dec.al.ga.gov](mailto:diana.myers@dec.al.ga.gov).

## TURNIP THE BEET



### Apply for USDA's "Turnip the Beet" Award Summer 2023

*Nominations Open on Monday, August 7*

The Turnip the Beet Award recognizes outstanding Summer Meal Program sponsors across the nation who work hard to offer high quality meals to children that are appetizing,

appealing, and nutritious during the summer months.

Last summer, Happy Helpings Sponsor Step of Faith Outreach, Inc, was recognized with the Turnip the Beet Award for providing quality meals. They have been serving summer meals for

20 years.

Show how you are going above and beyond to ensure that children in your care are receiving high-quality meals that are both nutritious and appetizing. The deadline to submit nominations is **Friday, September 1, 2023**.

Questions? Contact Morgan Chapman, Nutrition Education Specialist at [morgan.chapman@dec.al.gov](mailto:morgan.chapman@dec.al.gov).

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## Summer Meals Site Finder is Live

Click on the [Summer Meals Site Finder](#) (aka Meals 4 Kids Site Finder) link to find meals for the 2023 summer season. The map will be refreshed and published weekly.

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## Get Informed: Upcoming Training Dates

### July 12, 2023 – *Let's Hydrate!*

Are you frequently thinking about fun ways to increase fluid intake? Join this webinar to learn:

- creditable milks and juices,
- fun ways to increase water intake, and
- the importance and benefits of water consumption.
- **Participants can earn two [2] state-approved hours for attending this training in its entirety.**

## Training Resources

### In Case You Missed It: Webinar Recordings Now Available! **New!**

If you missed a webinar, please visit the [Training and Technical Assistance](#) webpage for previously recorded webinars. This month's training highlight is the [SFSP Updates Webinar Recording \(Part 2\)](#). It discussed guidance on the rural non-congregate meal service option.

- **Note: USDA has released new guidance regarding the rural non-congregate meal service option. Please ensure to view this webinar recording for the latest information.**
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## Nutrition Ed Nook

### *Sweet, Georgia Peaches*

Sweet, Georgia Peaches are the July Harvest of the Month ([English](#) and [Spanish](#)) spotlight. Georgia is known as the Peach State, however, Georgia's production of peaches is ranked behind California and South Carolina for the third spot.

Peaches provide important nutrients like vitamins C, A and E, potassium, and water. Peach peels are a good source of fiber which supports healthy blood sugar levels. You can enjoy them as a snack or with your favorite yogurt or cereal for extra flavor and nutrients.

Peach season in Georgia is May through September, when they are at peak quality and most cost effective. There are two main varieties of peaches are Freestone and Clingstone. Over 40 commercial varieties of the fruit are produced in our state.

**Fun Fact:** Peaches originated in China and were introduced to St. Simons and Cumberland Islands on Georgia's coast in 1571.

## Integration:

- [Peach Salsa](#)
- [Peach Sundae](#)
- [Peach & Mint Infused Water](#)
- [Peach, Pineapple & Orange Smoothie](#)
- [Southern Sweet and Sour Chicken Bowl with Peaches](#)

## Education:

- **Watch** the [Harvest with Holly](#) video that explores the Harvest of the Month spotlight, how these items grow, where they grow in Georgia, and how they get from the farms to school meals all across the state of Georgia.
- **Grow** peach trees. Plant peach trees in the spring in an area that receives full sun and has well drained soil.
- **Read** [Each Peach Pear Plum by Janet and Allan Ahlberg](#). *Each Peach Pear Plum* introduces favorite fairy tale characters, such as Tom Thumb and The Three Bears and, with a poem on each page hinting as to what is hiding in the picture, children are encouraged to participate and follow the story themselves.
- **Talk** with families about how participants can help with meal preparation such as washing fresh peaches to serve or spooning peaches into the blender to make a peach smoothie. **Bonus:** Send recipes home with families for them to incorporate peaches into their meals!

## Conversation:

- Have your program participants eaten peaches before?
- What is their favorite way to eat peaches?
- How does the outside of a peach feel?

Share your Harvest of the Month stories and menu integration of peaches with Nutrition Education Specialist, Morgan Chapman, MPH, MCHc at [morgan.chapman@decal.ga.gov](mailto:morgan.chapman@decal.ga.gov).

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## Hydration: Quench Your Thirst

Drink water often and stay healthy! According to the American Dietetic Association, water makes up 60 percent of body weight. It is important to replenish the water in your body by drinking at least 8-10 cups of water a day for a healthy body and to avoid heat stroke or exhaustion.

We have all been there. The feeling of parched or dried lips and excessive sweating after a workout, run, or even heavy gardening. These feelings are greater now in the summer, especially when we have temperatures in the 90's and humidity over 90 percent.

Here are great ideas to keep your children and family hydrated this summer and year-round while on the move.

- Drink plain or fruit & herb-infused water. Fill the pitcher with cool water. Add different combinations of flavors, such as lemon, cucumber, strawberry, orange, fresh ginger, or fresh whole leaves (mint, basil, rosemary, or parsley). Chill in refrigerator before enjoying!
- Eat foods with higher water content like cucumbers, watermelon, other melons, lettuce, celery, grapes, oranges, bell peppers, and broccoli.
- Combine ice and fruit in a blender to create a slushy, cool and refreshing drink when planning a family picnic or playing sports (i.e., soccer, baseball, basketball, etc.).
- Always carry a water bottle in the car, at home, and at school.
- Ask for water when dining out.



- Have a glass of water (8 – 10 glasses) near you when you are working out at the gym, gardening, farming, walking in the neighboring community, parks, and trails, running, hiking, and more.

Get children, families and the community moving and feeling good with sports-themed games and exercises. Drinking more water is one of the simplest things we can do to be healthier.

### Integration:

- [CDC – Increasing Access to Drinking Water to ECE Settings](#)
- [USDA – Make Better Beverage Choices](#)
- [Department of Human Services – Hydrate My State Georgia](#)
- [USDA – Move More. Sit Less](#)

### Education:

- Read aloud, [“Drinking Water” by Mari Schuh](#)
- **Watch** the video on [“Get Healthy: Hydration”](#) by NBC news.
- **Talk** with families about ways to stay hydrated and drink water in the summer or all year round, whether at home, outside, in their local community, at your childcare site, or at their local recreational areas. **Bonus:** Share #QuenchYourThirst, #RethinkYourDrink, #StayHydrated, #SummerMoves, #DrinkWater pictures and events that are happening in your communities.

### Conversation:

- What are the benefits of drinking water?
- How much water should you drink while exercising?
- What hydrates better than water in the summer?
- Why is it important to hydrate before, during, and after exercise?
- How do you beat dehydration in the summer?

Share your [#QuenchYourThirst](#), [#RethinkYourDrink](#), [#StayHydrated](#), [#SummerMoves](#) and [#DrinkWater](#) stories and pictures with Physical Activity Specialist, [Tina McLaren at \[tina.mclaren@dec.al.gov\]\(mailto:tina.mclaren@dec.al.gov\)](#)!

## Eat Healthy and Live Active

### *Georgia Early Care and Education Harvest of the Month 22-23 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.

DECAL’s Harvest of the Month calendar aligns with the Georgia Department of Education’s Harvest of the Month initiative and was created in partnership with Quality Care for Children, Georgia Organics, and the Farm to Early Care & Education (ECE) Coalition for ECE settings.

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.



## Dates to Remember

DATE	EVENTS
July	Harvest of the Month: Peaches
July 4	Independence Day
July 12	Let's Hydrate! Webinar
September 1	"Turnip The Beet" nominations due

## Happy Helpings Resources:

*The following documents were covered in previous newsletters:*

- Stay Informed on Monitoring
- Summer Resources for Georgia's Children
- "And Justice For All" Posters
- Determining Duty Allocation in the Management Plan
- Requesting an Advance Payment for Happy Helpings
- Pre-Award Cost Request vs. Excess Funds Use Request
- Omnibus Spending Bill Signed into Law
- Capacity Builder Tool helps Sponsors Identify Locations for New Meal Sites
- FY23 Reimbursement Rates Released
- Locate Happy Helpings' Meal Sites on FoodFinder
- Apply for a No Kid Hungry Grant Today
- Be a Health Hero - Health Empowers You
- Guidance on Collecting Race and Ethnicity Data
- Updated HH Forms and Policies



- **Reminder: PolicyStat is available on the Nutrition Services' Webpage**
- **Check your Email Messages in GA ATLAS**

## 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.

## NEW DECAL Download

### CAPS Provider Relations

**Ann Panzica**  
CAPS Provider Relations  
Education and Outreach  
Manager

**Kay Mayfield**  
CAPS Provider Relations  
Director

Georgia Dept  
of Early Care  
and Learning  
BRIGHT FROM THE START

We all know that CAPS is the program in Georgia that provides financial assistance with child care, and it is administered here at DECAL.

Now, we are excited to announce that DECAL will soon begin administering the provider management function of the CAPS Program. That's the work that is currently, and has historically, been performed by

our contractor, Maximus. These changes are being made to provide more streamlined services and to increase service levels for the child care providers who support CAPS parents and children.

Joining us on this episode of the DECAL Download to talk about the new CAPS Provider Relations Unit is Kay Mayfield, the CAPS Provider Relations Director at DECAL, and Ann Panzica, the CAPS Provider Relations Education and Outreach Manager.

Listen [here](#).



### Nutrition Division

### Marketing & Outreach Team

Cindy Kicklighter  
Carl Glover

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