

Nutrition News

Summer Food Service Program



January 11, 2021

HAPPY
New Year

Sponsor Spotlight - Reconstructing Youth Foundation provides resources for Georgia's Youth



Children receiving their meals from RYF in Lee, Calhoun, Clay and Randolph Counties.

Reconstructing Youth Foundation (RYF), a five-year Summer Food Service Sponsor (SFSP), is a non-profit organization that provides resources for the development of Georgia's youth. They assist at-risk children living in lower income homes who may not typically have access to important resources.

RYF provides youth services, camps, programs, events, seminars, community services and more to assist children in overcoming adversities and challenges they may be facing. Their goal is to make sure the necessary resources to develop a child's strength and skills are attainable to support their individual success.

During SFSP FY 2020, the organization distributed approximately 135,000 free meals to children in Lee, Clay, Terrell, Stewart, Calhoun, Quitman, Fayette, Randolph, and Fulton counties. RYF focuses and caters to more rural areas of the state which have a higher percentage of food insecurity.

Executive Director **Natischa Harvey** says the main reason RYF became a SFSP Sponsor was to meet the needs of the community by providing services that decrease food insecurity. She says “there is a high need for that and [it] is also part of our mission.” She added: “We were able to execute that by partnering with Bright from the Start. [The SFSP] offers advantages to the programs that we currently implement.”

Both children and parents are very grateful for the free and nutritious meals provided by RYF, especially during the ongoing pandemic. With several parents that may have lost their jobs or more businesses that have closed, serving free and healthy meals ensure that parents do not have to worry about their children going hungry.

“Being able to provide services to people in need is very fulfilling,” said Natischa. “We love that we are able to fulfill a need and decrease food scarcity [in Georgia] and that people are very appreciative and grateful for it,” she added.

For fellow SFSP Sponsors, Natischa offers the following advice: 1) focus on your goal of minimizing food scarcity, 2) ensure you are adhering to all guidelines, 3) participate in training, and 4) create a hands-on approach for [training] staff by having them shadow [experienced staff] during the first few weeks of the program.

Natischa recommends focusing on the purpose of the program: to feed children. “It can be a tedious process, but stay focused on the mission and the vision, have enough patience to thoroughly understand the program, and have enough staff to adhere to all guidelines and requirements because the reward is far greater.”

For more information on the Reconstructing Youth Foundation, [click here](#) to visit their website.



Top: Cars in line for free RYF meals distributed in Randolph County.
Bottom: RYF meals being served in Randolph and Clay County

Extending SFSP Operations through June 30, 2021

Pursuant to recent USDA guidance, Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) sponsors are permitted to extend their operations until June 30, 2021. Sponsors that wish to continue serving meals after December 31, 2020, will be required to meet all traditional SFSP requirements.

Approved SFSP Sponsors Extending through June 30, 2021

Sponsors currently approved to serve meals under traditional FY 2020 SFSP that would like to continue serving meals until June 30, 2021, must complete the following actions to be considered eligible for reimbursable meals:

- Register and participate in the virtual FY2021 SFSP Experienced Sponsor training scheduled on **February 17, 2021** or **March 10, 2021**. Registration will open **January 11, 2021**. Approved sponsors may continue to serve meals until training sessions are made available. Failure to register and participate in a SFSP Experienced Sponsor training will result in meals no longer being eligible for reimbursement.
- Review and update the FY 2021 application in GA ATLAS, which may include:
 - Review of the entire application
 - Revision of the management plan

- Submission of the annual budget
- Review and revision of site applications (e.g., new operating dates, new mealtimes)
- Submission of annual documents

All hard copy documents must be printed, completed (including signature), scanned and uploaded in GA ATLAS. Once all hard copy documents have been submitted and electronic application sections are completed, please notify your assigned Application Specialist via email of your submission.

Returning Sponsors Operating through June 30, 2021

Experienced Sponsors who did not operate SFSP in FY2020 but would like to serve meals through June 30, 2021, must complete the following actions to be eligible for reimbursable meals:

- Complete an abbreviated viability screening process (Government entities, School Food Authorities and CACFP Sponsors are exempt). Please contact **Demetria Thornton** to request a viability assessment.
- Sponsors that meet the viability requirements, will be required to register and participate in the virtual FY 2021 Experienced SFSP Sponsor Training scheduled on **February 17, 2021** or **March 10, 2021**. Registration will open **January 11, 2021**.
 - Returning sponsors will be given access to start their applications and serve meals until training sessions are made available. Failure to register for and participate in a SFSP Experienced Sponsor training will result in meals no longer being eligible for reimbursement.
- Enroll in Program Year FY2021*
- Complete Annual Renewal Certification Statements*
- Review and update the FY2021 application in GA ATLAS, which may include:
 - Review of the entire application
 - Revision of the management plan
 - Submission of the annual budget
 - Review and revision of site applications
 - Submission of annual documents

All hard copy documents must be printed, completed (including signature), scanned and uploaded in GA ATLAS. Once all hard copy documents have been submitted and electronic applications sections are completed, please notify your assigned Application Specialist via email of your submission.

***Note:** *Dual sponsors who have already enrolled in FY2021 CACFP are not required to re-enroll and do not need to complete annual certification statements.*

New Organizations Interested in Participating in SFSP

New organizations interested in participating in the SFSP will be required to complete a viability screening assessment.

A complete and accurate viability screening packet must be submitted at least seven business days prior to the last new sponsor training to allow time for review of the submitted information.

Organizations that meet all viability requirements will be registered to attend one of the required two-day trainings for new sponsors scheduled on **March 24-25, April 7-8, or April 28-29, 2021**. Registration will open **January 11, 2021**.

***Note:** *School Food Authorities (SFAs) and government entities are exempt from the Viability, Capability, and Accountability (VCA) Checklist requirement. These organizations can contact **Leslie Truman** at **404-657-1779** to register for new sponsor training.*

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

Application Specialists or Business Operations Specialist	Institution Assignment	Email	Phone Number
Paula Lawrence	o (zero)-G,	Paula.Lawrence@decal.ga.gov	(404) 463-2111
Shericka Blount	H-P	Shericka.Blount@decal.ga.gov	(404)656-6411
Temika Moore	Q-Z	Temika.Moore@decal.ga.gov	(404) 463-1494

Budgeting for SFSP

Pursuant to recent USDA guidance, Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) sponsors are permitted to extend their operations until **June 30, 2021**. Sponsors currently approved to serve meals under traditional FY 2020 SFSP that would like to continue serving meals until June 30, 2021, must update their institution's budget to include months January - June 30, 2021. If sponsors are certain their institution will continue operations beyond June 30, the sponsor can include the remainder of FY2021 (July - August) SFSP's reimbursement and costs in the budget. Please contact **Shonda Franklin**, Budget Compliance Supervisor with any questions or concerns.

In accordance with the budget guidance provided above, sponsors with food costs exceeding the simplified acquisition threshold of \$250,000 must proceed with formal procurement procedures. Food costs will not be approved in excess of \$250,000 until a contract has been executed. For further instruction on how to complete the formal procurement process, please contact **LaMonika Jones**, Procurement and Purchasing Compliance Officer.

SFSP Reimbursement Rates for Summer 2021

Effective January 1, 2021 – December 31, 2021

Meal Type	Rural or Self Prep	Other Types of Sites
Breakfast	\$2.4625	\$2.4150
Lunch/Supper	\$4.3175	\$4.2500
Snack	\$1.0200	\$0.9975

Get Informed: Upcoming Training Opportunities

Upcoming Training and Technical Assistance

January 11, 2021 - Memo Monday!

Regulations are constantly changing and interpreting all the policies and memorandums can be a challenge. Therefore, Nutrition Services will discuss the following policy memos during our January *Memo Monday*.

- ***Questions and Answers Relating to the Nationwide Waiver to Allow Summer Food Service Program and Seamless Summer Option Operations during School Year 2020-2021 – Q&A #3*** dated 11.2.20

February 3, 2020 – Creative Meals and Menu Planning Webinar

Are you having trouble getting children to try new food? Do you serve participants who have

special food requirements? Join this webinar session to learn:

- simple steps to develop creative menus for picky eaters,
- food preparation ideas for participants that have a restrictive diet due to a disability or special dietary needs and
- resources to meet Child Nutrition Program requirements.

Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) Orientation and Program Training

Do you plan to serve summer meals during the FY 2020-2021 program year? If so, please plan to participate in **one (1)** of the upcoming *SFSP Orientation and Program Training* sessions. All sessions will be offered virtually. **Registration opens on January 15, 2021 .**

SFSP Experienced Sponsor Training (1 Day)

- **February 17, 2021**
- **March 10, 2021**

SFSP New Sponsor Training (2 Days)

- **March 24-25, 2021**
- **April 7-8, 2021**
- **April 28-29, 2021**

REGISTRATION
OPENING SOON!

In Case You Missed It: Memo Monday!

Memo Monday webinars provide an overview of new and/or revised policy memorandums for the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and/or the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP).

If you missed our December *Memo Monday*, the recorded webinar link is below and more previously recorded webinars are located on the [Training and Technical Assistance](#) webpage.

Memo December 2020

- [Requirements for Obtaining a Food Service Permit](#) dated 4.17.19
- [Food Service Permit Inquiry Form](#)

It's Never too Early to Start Planning for Summer 2021

Providing summer meals is a year-round effort. At any point throughout the year, there are things you can do to prepare for next summer! Click [here](#) for more information on proactive planning for sponsors.

January

- Sign up for mandatory sponsor training classes.
- Begin to determine which sites are returning, explore new site options, and meet with community partners.
- Plan site staff training, meal production and delivery, and programs and activities.
- Begin exploring the potential for serving mobile meals.
- Continue developing a marketing and outreach campaign.

Help Spread the Word: 2021 SFSP Summit

February 16, 2021

Non-profit organizations that are interested in learning more about the Summer Food Service Program are invited to attend the FREE virtual SFSP Summit on Tuesday, February 16.

Date: Tuesday, February 16, 2021

Time: 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Fee: FREE

Click [here](#) to register. For more information, contact [Cindy Kicklighter](#).



Updates to DECAL's Nutrition Division Child Health & Wellness Webpage Now Available!

Child Health & Wellness encompasses the whole child as a state of physical, mental, intellectual, social, and emotional well-being. Engage these available resources to improve the way you reinforce child health and wellness in your programs.

The newly updated webpage includes useful resources, knowledge, and information revolved around:

- Nutrition Education
- Meals and Menu Planning
- Farm to Child Nutrition Programs
- CACFP Meal Patterns
- USDA Recipe Box
- Food Safety
- Physical Activity
- Georgia SHAPE

Please click [here](#) to check out all of the available resources.

COVID-19 Resources for Sponsors

FAQs: Serving Meals during Unanticipated School Closures

Answers to frequently asked questions regarding serving meals during the COVID-19 pandemic.

SFSP: Providing Multiple Meals at a Time for Children During the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic

Nationwide Waivers:

SFSP

For full details on the SFSP waivers below, please click on the links to read the actual waiver memo.

DECAL Participation of Nationwide Waivers Due to COVID-19

For full details, please click on the links to read the actual waiver memo, or [click here](#) for a complete list of the Nationwide Waivers due to COVID-19.

Nationwide Waiver to Allow Reimbursement for Meals Served Prior to Notification of Approval and Provide Flexibility for Pre-Approval Visits in the SFSP

FNS waives the requirement that reimbursement shall not be paid for meals served at a site before the sponsor has received written notification of approval for participation in the Program. ****Waiver in effect until June 30, 2021****

Nationwide Waiver to Allow SFSP & SSO Operations through June 2021

This waiver allows the SFSP & SSO to continue to operate through June 2021.

****Waiver is effective until June 30, 2021****

Area Eligibility

Allows Program operators to locate Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) open sites in areas that do not meet area eligibility requirements. ****Waiver extended until June 30, 2021****

Closed Enrolled Eligibility

Under this waiver, for all States, Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) and National School Lunch Program Seamless Summer Option (SSO) closed enrolled sites during the COVID-19 public health emergency may determine site eligibility through area eligibility without collecting income eligibility applications. ****Waiver extended until June 30, 2021****

First Week Site Visits

FNS waives, for all States, the requirement that Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) sponsors are required to visit each of their sites at least once during the first week of operation. (2) This waiver applies to State agencies administering and local organizations that have operated the SFSP successfully in the previous year, and SFSP sponsors in good standing that have successfully participated in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) or the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). ****Waiver extended until June 30, 2021****

Meal Pattern Flexibilities

The requirement to serve meals that meet the meal pattern requirements is waived during the public health emergency. ****Waiver extended until June 30, 2021****

Meal Times Waiver

This waiver allows program operators the flexibility to adjust the times meals and snacks are provided in order to streamline operations. ****Waiver extended until June 30, 2021****

Non-Congregate Feeding

The requirement that meals be served in a congregate setting and must be consumed by participants on site is waived during the public health emergency. ****Waiver extended until June 30, 2021****

Parent Pick-Up

Under this waiver, program operators in a state with an approved waiver allowing non-congregate meal distribution during COVID-19-related operations may distribute meals to a parent or guardian to take home to their eligible children. ****Waiver extended until June 30, 2021****

Onsite Monitoring Waiver for Sponsors

For sponsors only - FNS waives that SFSP monitoring requirements included at 7 CFR 225.15(d) be conducted on site. ****Waiver extended until September 30, 2021****

Important Reminders:

If you were previously approved for a SFSP only waiver, but would like to continue utilizing the waiver in your CACFP operations, please submit a request to utilize the waiver for the CACFP. Similarly, if you were previously approved for a CACFP only waiver but wish to utilize the waiver in your SFSP operations, a SFSP waiver request is required.

Waiver requests can be submitted to [Leslie Truman](#). Waiver request forms that were previously approved for both CACFP and SFSP do not need to be re-submitted.

For any waiver-related questions, please contact [Kate Alexander](#).

Updated SFSP Sponsor Monitoring Guidance during COVID-19

New Guidance and Fact Sheets regarding Off-Site Monitoring in Child Nutrition Programs During the Pandemic *(new)*

On November 13, 2020, USDA issued guidance and fact sheets regarding Program monitoring in the CACFP, SFSP and the National School Lunch Programs. Each correspondence reiterates monitoring requirements as well as flexibilities for State agencies and Program operators as a result of the pandemic. The flexibilities mentioned in the guidance are extended through September 30, 2021. To review copies of the guidance, click [here](#) and see *Nationwide Waivers – Policy Guidance*.

A **Sponsor Monitoring Guide** was created to provide guidance on monitoring during COVID-19, monitoring waiver options, and conducting virtual/desk reviews. Due to the continuation of the Summer Food Service Program operations in FY2021, this guidance has been developed to ensure sponsors are in compliance with SFSP monitoring requirements per 7 CFR 225.15 (d)(2)(3) and to provide additional guidance regarding on-going site monitoring after the first and fourth week visit/review.

Effective January 4, 2021, DECAL recommends that, in addition to the first and fourth week visit/review, all sponsoring organizations conduct on-going quarterly monitoring reviews for all sites in operation in FY2021. Refer to the guidance below:

- [SFSP Sponsor Monitoring Guidance during COVID-19](#)
- [Record Request Checklist Template](#)

The documents can also be found at DECAL's website under COVID-19 Resources>Resources.

Procurement News

Procurement Update

As of January 1, 2021, formal procurement procedures will be required for sponsors who will be participating in SFSP FY21 through June 30, 2021. Please take this time to review your anticipated food costs. If your food costs will exceed the small purchase threshold of \$250,000, formal procurement procedures will need to be executed.

Local Sourcing Spotlight:

Going Crazy for Collards...and Mustards...and Turnips!

The winter months can prove to be a challenging time for produce to thrive and grow in cold weather. However, dark leafy greens are able to withstand the chilly temps so they can continue to be harvested. Collards, Mustard and Turnips are available here in Georgia from January through June and again October through December.

Although widely available across Georgia, Colquitt and Tift County are top growers with 17,5000 **collards, mustards and turnips** crops planted. With quite a few varieties to choose from, there should be no issues when purchasing these locally sourced dark, leafy greens.



If you are ready to incorporate more dark, leafy greens into your menu **Corner Greens**, a local family farm located in Peachtree Corners has direct consumer and wholesale purchasing opportunities available. Produce at Corner Greens is local, clean and sustainably grown.

Local Sourcing – Food Safety Practices

While dark, leafy greens can be purchased from a myriad of farms, farmer’s markets and co-ops around Georgia during most of the year, you may find yourself with access produce on hand. Extra greens creates the perfect scenario for freezing and storing for future use. Here are few tips from **Georgia Grown** if you find yourself with extra collard, mustard and turnip greens:

Collard Greens: Soak, changing water as needed to remove grit. Remove leaves from stems, rough chop, blanch for 30 seconds, chill in an ice bath, squeeze out excess moisture, freeze flat on a parchment-lined sheet pan in portioned clumps, transfer to a labeled gallon bag

Mustard and Turnip Greens: Soak, changing water as needed to remove grit. Rough chop, blanch for 10 seconds, chill in an ice bath, gently squeeze out excess moisture, freeze flat on a parchment-lined sheet pan in portioned clumps, transfer to a labeled gallon bag

For questions regarding procurement, please contact **LaMonika Jones**, Procurement Compliance Officer.

Nutrition Ed Nook: *Greens, Greens, and More Greens!*



Turnip greens, Collard greens, and Mustard greens are our Harvest of the Month (**English** and **Spanish**) spotlight this January! Typically planted eight to ten weeks before the first frost, these green varieties are available to be purchased locally in Georgia at this time of the year and will continue growing well throughout the winter. Collard greens have a slightly bitter flavor, while mustard and turnip greens have a slightly spicy, peppery one. Collard greens are a popular vegetable in southern cuisine but can also be found in meals elsewhere around the world, such as Brazil, Kashmir, Kenya, Portugal, and Tanzania. These leafy green vegetables are often cooked together. Share cultural traditions from across the world with your participants!

Integration:

- **Winter Greens***
- **Collard Greens (Col berza)**
- **Greens & Beans Soup* (Sopa de garbanzo y hojas verdes)**

*You may substitute any of the HOTM greens for this recipe or include a combination of all of them.

Education:

- *Grow* turnip, mustard, and collard greens – growing greens begins in fall time and early spring and are an exciting item to harvest as the



- leaves get bigger.
- *Make* a variety of cultural dishes that include greens to share various meals from across the world with your participants.
- *Talk* with families about how children can help with meal preparation including tearing up greens to be cooked into a dish. **Bonus:** send greens recipes home for families to try together!

Conversation:

- Have your participants tried greens before?
- What is their favorite type of green to try? Each type has a unique flavor!
- Do your participants have a certain type of green that they cook at home?

Share your winter Harvest of the Month stories and menu integration of collard, mustard, and turnip greens with Nutrition Health Educator, **Diana Myers, MS, RD, LD!**



Nutrition Division Employee Spotlight:

Kate Alexander - Policy Administrator



Meet **Kate Alexander**, DECAL's Nutrition Services' Policy Administrator since 2018 and one of Georgia's newest attorneys. Throughout her years of experience, Kate has truly gained a passion for child welfare-related policy.

Originally from Florida, Kate earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Florida and a law degree from Mississippi College School of Law in Jackson, MS. While in law school, she met her husband and they later relocated to Atlanta.

After moving to Atlanta, Kate worked for the Georgia General Assembly. There, she was assigned to the judiciary committee which focuses on criminal and civil law matters. In that role, she worked heavily on an adoption bill and was instrumental in writing some of the law for it. The legislation, that had not been updated since the 1990's, passed a few years ago.

Desiring to specialize in child welfare policy, Kate transitioned from Georgia's Gold Dome to her current position at DECAL. As Policy Administrator, she oversees all policy implementation and testifies on behalf of DECAL in administrative proceedings. She also works closely with the Legal and Audit divisions to manage the Serious Deficiency (SD) process and serves on various policy and agency-wide committees.

Kate loves working with her co-workers in the Nutrition Services Division. "I miss seeing everybody in the office and hearing their voices and hearing what they're [up to]," she said. "We really do act as a team. Everything we do is a team effort to get the job done," she added.

SFSP Meal Sites throughout Georgia



Georgia's children still have access to free, healthy meals through the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP).

Click [here](#) to find a meal site location near you.



SFSP DATES TO REMEMBER



JANUARY 11, 2021	Memo Monday
JANUARY 15, 2021	Registration opens for the SFSP Orientation & Program Training
FEBRUARY 3, 2021	Creative Minds and Menu Planning Webinar
FEBRUARY 16, 2021	2021 SFSP Virtual Summit
FEBRUARY 17, 2021 / MARCH 10, 2021	SFSP Experienced Sponsor Training (1 Day)
MARCH 24 - 25, 2021	SFSP New Sponsor Training (2 Days)
APRIL 7 - 8, 2021	SFSP New Sponsor Training (2 Days)
APRIL 28 - 29, 2021	SFSP New Sponsor Training (2 Days)
JUNE 30, 2021	Deadline for SFSP Sponsors to extend their operations

NEW DECAL Download

Georgia ECE Health and Wellness Collaboration Project

What impact has COVID-19 had on head start programs and the families they serve across the state? Recently our Georgia Head

Start Collaboration Office joined the American Academy of Pediatrics and child care advocates GEEARS and Voices for Georgia's Children to study just that. We learned that head start families who were already vulnerable have suffered from job losses as well as food and even housing insecurity.

In this week's episode we have an extremely impressive lineup joining us to talk about the collaborative effort. Sharing what they learned is **Dr. Terri**

McFadden, a professor in the Department of Pediatrics of the Emory University School of Medicine and immediate past president of the Georgia chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics; **Fozia Khan Eskew**

is the director of child health with the Georgia chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics; **Brittney Newton** is a policy analyst with Voices for Georgia's Children; **Callan Wells** is the health policy manager for GEEARS; and **Allison Setterlind** is the director of the Georgia Head Start Collaboration Office.

Stay tuned for this week's water cooler question and the DECAL Download Quiz for your chance to win a nice prize!

Have an idea for a future topic? [E-mail us](#).

You can find DECAL Download [here](#) or on Apple Podcasts, Google Play, Spotify, Stitcher, TuneIn, Overcast, and more!

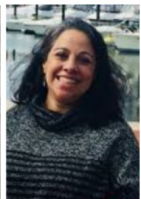
On the next ...

DECAL
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New Episodes Every Wednesday!

This Week's Guests



Terri McFadden, MD
Professor for the
Department of Pediatrics
of the Emory University
School of Medicine



Fozia Khan Eskew
Director of Child Health
at the Georgia Chapter
of the American
Academy of
Pediatrics



Brittney Newton
Policy Analyst
Voices for Georgia's
Children



Callan Wells
Health Policy Manager
GEEARS



Allison Setterlind
Director of
Georgia Head Start
Collaboration
Office

This Week's Topic:
Georgia ECE Health and Wellness
Collaboration Project

Nutrition Division Marketing & Outreach Team

Cindy Kicklighter
Gaby Garza



**Georgia Dept
of Early Care
and Learning**
BRIGHT FROM THE START

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