



July 15, 2025

Farm to Summer Week Spotlight: *Little Folks Farm & Childcare*



Little Folks Farm & Childcare in Lyons is a unique early learning center where nature and farming are at the heart of what they do every day.

As a farm-and nature-based program, children spend much of their time outdoors exploring the natural world, learning through hands-on experiences, and connecting directly with the food they grow and eat.

From caring for animals and tending to vegetable gardens to harvesting from the newly planted fruit orchard, the center's curriculum is rooted in the changing seasons.

Educators plan learning activities around what's happening on the farm — from welcoming baby animals in the spring to harvesting produce in the summer and fall. Every day brings something new to discover, and both children and staff are deeply engaged in the farm-to-table process.

For Farm to Summer Week, the children explored one of summer's most beloved crops: watermelon! This year, the farm grew both red and yellow varieties. The children conducted taste tests, comparing the two types and sharing their preferences.

"We blindfolded the children one by one and placed red and yellow watermelon in front of them, and they tried to guess which variety they were tasting," said Director Lisa Davis.



"While some thought they tasted the same, it was a fun game that taught the kids that just because something looks different, it may acutely be the same," added Davis. "The activity encouraged curiosity, decision-making, and the willingness to try something new — core values in both nutrition, education and early learning."

Little Folks Farm & Childcare exemplifies the spirit of Farm to Summer by weaving food,

Registration for FY 2026 CACFP Renewal Training Opens July 15; Enrollment Opens August 1

Participating CACFP Sponsors and Institutions are required to meet annual renewal requirements by September 30, 2025. The Nutrition Division will open registration for the required annual training on July 15, 2025, and open enrollment for the application renewal will be available beginning August 1, 2025.

Step 1: Complete Annual Training Requirements

Registration for the CACFP Annual Training requirements opens on July 15. These requirements include:

- Reviewing the CACFP 2026 Annual Training presentation in GA ATLAS
- Completing the CACFP 2026 Annual Training Test Assessment in GA ATLAS

Once the annual training assessment has been completed and submitted, you will receive access to the FY 2025-2026 CACFP application.

Step 2: Enroll in FY 2026

Upon completion of the Annual Training and Assessment, the CACFP application for the associated program year will change the institution or sponsor's status to "Not Enrolled" and the "Enroll" button will be available.

- Enroll into FY 2026 on or after August 1, 2025

Step 3: Submit your FY 2026 Application on or before September 30

Original or Annual Budgets and Budget Amendments must also be submitted on or before September 30, 2025.

Failure to complete the annual requirements by the specified deadline date will impact continued participation in the CACFP, which includes submission of monthly claims for reimbursement.

Date	Task
July 15	Registration Opens for required 2026 CACFP Annual Training
August 1	Enrollment Opens for FY 2026 Upon completion of Annual Training and Assessment, Sponsors & Institutions may enroll in FY 2026
September 15	Deadline to submit any additional changes to the FY 2025 Application Any FY 2025 changes including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• updates to the application• management plan and budget• the addition/termination of centers/homes MUST be completed in GA ATLAS by September 15, 2025, to allow time for review and processing.
September 30	Deadline to complete 2026 CACFP Annual Training and Assessment Deadline to submit 2026 CACFP Application Deadline to submit original or annual budget and budget amendments.

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

Application Specialists	Institution Assignment	Email	Phone Number
Jerald Savage	o (zero)- G	Jerald.Savage@dec.al.ga.gov	(770) 405-7916
Shericka Blount	H-P	Shericka.Blount@dec.al.ga.gov	(404) 656-6411
Vanessa Goodman	Q-Z	Vanessa.Goodman@dec.al.ga.gov	(404) 591-6027

Is Your Institution Required to Submit an Annual Budget?

Original or Annual Budgets and Budget Amendments must be submitted on or before September 30, 2025. At a minimum, annual budgets are required when:

- An Independent Center with an approved budget in FY 2025 intends to use FY 2026 reimbursement funds for new operating and/or administrative costs that require prior approval, specific prior written approval, or formal procurement.
- An Independent Center with an approved budget in FY 2025 with approved costs and the same costs in FY 2026, but new supporting documentation must be submitted for review and approval (e.g., lease agreements for center space, equipment rental, etc.).
- All Administrative, Center and DCH sponsoring organizations must submit an annual budget.

Please follow links below for budget related tools and references:

[Budget Guidance Manual](#)

[Budget Checklist](#)

[Budget Allocation Worksheet](#)

For budget questions or concerns, please contact Gwendolyn Howard, Budget Compliance Supervisor, at 404.651.7191 or email Nutritionbudget@dec.al.ga.gov

DECAL Nutrition Welcomes New Team Members



Meet Melissa Stanley, Policy Administrator

Nutrition Services is pleased to announce that Melissa Stanley has joined the Nutrition team in the role of Nutrition Policy Administrator. Reporting to Sonja Adams, Senior Manager of Provider Services.

In this role, Melissa oversees policy development and implementation for the nutrition programs and testifies on behalf of DECAL in administrative proceedings. It is her goal to provide sponsors with the most up-to-date interpretation and guidance for USDA's policies. She also works closely with the Legal and Audit divisions to manage the Serious Deficiency (SD) process.

With a remarkable background in legal policy, court systems, and public service including roles with the Georgia Department of Human Services, Fulton County Juvenile Court, and the Atlanta Police Department, Melissa brings a powerhouse of experience and dedication to detail.

What drives her most? Collaboration, creativity, and a passion for helping children. She's especially excited to dive into projects that support youth, and that allow her to contribute new ideas and to grow with the team.

Outside of work, Melissa is a Marvel-loving, binge-watching, concert-going wife and mom of two (fun fact: her kids share the same birthday!). She's also a proud pet parent to Curry, an energetic pup and Luna the sassy cat. Each pet matches perfectly with her children's personalities.

Melissa believes in the power of teamwork and the value of constructive feedback: "It helps me grow, rethink ideas, and push for positive change."

Meet Dylan Uhler, Business Operations Specialist

We're excited to introduce Dylan Uhler who recently joined the Nutrition Services team as a Business Operations Specialist. Reporting to Demetria Thornton, Application Services Manager, Nutrition Services.

In this role, Dylan will be responsible for reviewing and determining eligibility for the Child and Adult Food Care Program sponsored facilities and Happy Helpings meal sites. Additionally, she reviews and approves new CACFP facility & Happy Helping meal site applications and monthly updates for participating institutions and Sponsors.

Dylan brings a strong background in federal food programs, having worked with SNAP in Colorado for five years in both direct services and policy development. After taking time off to raise her family, Dylan was eager to return to the field—and found the perfect fit with DECAL Nutrition Services.



"I've always been drawn to policy work," Dylan shared. "I function really well within structured programs, and I enjoy the clarity that comes with federal guidelines. That's what keeps pulling me back to this kind of work."

Dylan is also a proud parent and spouse. She and her husband recently celebrated their 18th wedding anniversary and are raising three active children: a 16-year-old son who's about to start driving, a 13-year-old son, and a 9-year-old daughter. With a busy household and a partner who travels weekly, Dylan is looking forward to the extra help a teen driver will bring.

We're thrilled to have Dylan on board and look forward to the great work she'll do in supporting our mission.

Upcoming Training Dates:

August 5, 2025

FY 2026 CACFP Renewal Readiness Training

10:00 am – 12:00 pm

Do you need a refresher on the requirements to successfully complete the application renewal process?

Join this webinar to learn:

- detailed information on annual requirements,
- documents required for submission, and
- how to complete the FY 2025 annual renewal process in GA ATLAS.

[\[Register Now\]](#)

August 12, 2025

CACFP Budget Readiness

10:00 am – 12:00 pm

Are you having challenges with your budget? Do you need guidance on requirements and processes of a CACFP budget?

Join this webinar to learn:

- the purpose of the budget package,
- the purpose of all the budget line items in GA ATLAS, and
- how to prepare & develop a complete GA ATLAS budget package.

[\[Register Now\]](#)

August 19, 2025

Tuesday Tip! CACFP Meal Pattern Refresher

1:30 pm – 2:15 pm

CACFP portion sizes can be confusing on paper, and in practice many more questions come up.

Join this webinar:

- to see correct portion sizes illustrated,
- to make sure you are meeting the minimum serving requirements and
- for a refresher of the meal pattern requirements and portion sizes.

Participants can earn one [0.50] state-approved hour(s) for attending this training in its entirety.

[\[Register Now\]](#)

August 20, 2025

CACFP Procurement Readiness

1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Do you have questions or challenges when executing procurement while trying to follow procurement regulations, requirements, and procedures?

Join this webinar to learn:

- procurement regulations
- relevant procurement practices when procuring food & non-food items,
- how to develop formal solicitations, and
- how to incorporate local sourcing practices into meal service.

[\[Register Now\]](#)

Notes: 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 e-mail. 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 or email leslie.truman@decal.ga.gov for assistance.

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 the [Product Formulation Statement \(PFS\) & CN Labels webinar](#). It discussed how Product Formulation Statements & CN Labels provide a way for a manufacturer to demonstrate how a processed food product may contribute to the meal pattern requirements in child nutrition programs

(CNP).

Snack Attack *New Recipes!*

The **National CACFP Sponsor Association** has shared snack options for program operators that are #CACFPCreditable.

- Cantaloupe and cucumber
- Soft pretzel and honeydew melon
- Cornbread and blueberries
- Potato salad and 100% grape juice
- Oatmeal and raspberries

Meal Pattern Minute *New!*

The **National CACFP Sponsor Association** has developed quick CACFP meal pattern tips, recipes, resources, and videos. View the videos of the following meal pattern minute tips below.

- **Identifying Allergens on Food Packaging *New!***
- **Queso Fresco *New!***
- **Herbs and Spices *New!***
- **Crediting Coconut *New!***
- **Enriched Grains *New!***

Have a Plant

Have a Plant is the ultimate fruit & veggie hub that boosts appeal and inspires lasting behavior change by tapping into the emotional connection. The hub provides easy, simple prep ideas and recipes for fruits and veggies.

[Read the Resource](#)



Nutrition Ed Nook *Sweet, Georgia Peaches!*

Sweet, Georgia Peaches are the July Harvest of the Month (**English** and **Spanish**) spotlight!

Peaches are packed with essential nutrients, including vitamins A, C, and E, potassium, and water. The peels are a great source of fiber, which helps maintain healthy blood sugar levels.

Additionally, the antioxidants in peaches can

support overall health and protect against chronic diseases.

In Georgia, peaches are in season from May through August, when they are at their peak quality and flavor. There are two main varieties: Freestone and Clingstone. Our state produces over 40 commercial varieties of peaches.

Enjoy peaches as a snack or add them to your favorite yogurt or cereal for extra flavor and nutrients. You can also blend them into smoothies, grill them for a unique and tasty treat, or mix them into a fresh fruit salad. Their versatility makes peaches a delightful addition to both sweet and savory dishes.

Fun Fact: Georgia, known as the Peach State, ranks third in the nation for peach production, following California and South Carolina.

Integration:

- **Peach Salsa**
- **Skillet Peaches**
- **Peach Yogurt Bites**
- **Peachy Oatmeal Bake**
- **Peach and Carrot Smoothie**

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.
- **Explore** peaches with children using their senses to describe how peaches look, feel, taste, and smell.
- **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 children can help with meal preparation such as spooning peaches into the blender to make a peach smoothie.
- **Bonus:** Send recipes home with families for them to incorporate peaches into their meals!
- **Want ECE peach-themed resources?** Check out Quality Care for Children's [Harvest of the Month toolkit](#) for more ways to engage ECE students.

Conversation:

- Have the children eaten peaches before?
- What is their favorite way to eat peaches?
- What other fruits can you think of that are similar to peaches?

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

Physical Activity Corner

Beat the Heat: Indoor and Outdoor Activities in the Summer

Summer is here, and it's the perfect time to get kids moving! Children need at least one hour of physical activity each day—but it doesn't have to feel like exercise. Games, dancing, and playing all count!

Outdoor play is great for development, but rising temps can be risky. Young children are especially vulnerable to heat-related illnesses like dehydration and heat exhaustion.

Tips for Safe Summer Play:

- Head outside early, before it gets too hot.
- Use shade from trees, tents, or umbrellas.
- Offer plenty of water.
- Mix indoor play, when needed.



Here are some fun physical activity ideas for small spaces, both indoors and outdoors, to keep children active:

Indoor Activities:

- **Dance Party:** Turn on some music and have a dance-off. It's a great way to get moving and have fun.
- **Obstacle Course:** Use pillows, chairs, and toys to create an indoor obstacle course.
- **Yoga and Stretching:** Follow along with a kid-friendly yoga video or do some simple stretches.
- **Simon Says:** Play a game of Simon Says with active commands like jumping jacks, running in place, or hopping on one foot.
- **Scavenger Hunt:** Create a list of items for kids to find around the classroom. Add physical challenges like "hop to the rug" or "tip toe to the cubbies."

Outdoor Activities (in shaded or cooler areas):

- **Water Play:** Set up a small splash pad, sprinkler, or water table for some cool water

- fun.
- **Treasure Hunt:** Hide treasures around the play area and create clues for the children to find them. For example, "Look under the big tree" or "Find the red flower." This activity promotes problem-solving and exploration.
- **Sidewalk Chalk Games:** Draw hopscotch or mazes for active play.
- **Garden Planting:** Gather small pots, soil, seeds, and water. Let the children plant seeds in small pots and water them. This helps kids hone their fine motor skills and learn about plant growth.

Tips for Staying Cool:

- **Hydration:** Make sure kids drink plenty of water before, during, and after activities.
- **Cool Clothing:** Dress children in light, breathable clothing.
- **Shade:** Use umbrellas, tents, or natural shade to stay cool.
- **Timing:** Schedule outdoor activities for early morning or late afternoon when it's cooler.

Education:

- **Read** aloud the book, *Summer is Here*, by Renee Watson.
- **Watch** the video on [Move Your Way: Tips for Getting Motivated](#).
- **Talk** with families about ways to stay indoors during the heat, 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:** Send #OutdoorFun, #SummerAdventures, #BeatTheHeat, #StayCoolInside, #Outdoor/Indoor pictures and events that are happening in your communities.

Conversation:

- What is your favorite indoor or outdoor activity to do during the summer season?
- How to keep children cool in the summer?
- What are some fun ways you keep children entertained during the summer?
- Why is it important to exercise outdoors during the summer?
- Why is it important to hydrate before, during, and after exercise?

Physical Activity Resource:

- [Summer Safety Tips](#)

No matter the weather, children can stay active—even in small spaces. Always adhere to CCS's [Rules and Regulations](#) regarding [weather conditions](#) affecting outdoor play. If temperatures get too high, bring children indoors for physical activity. Keep children safe, hydrated, and healthy by staying alert and prepared. Have fun, stay cool, and enjoy a safe summer of play! ☐☐

Share your #SummerAdventures, #BeatTheHeat #Outdoor/Indoor stories and pictures with Physical Activity Specialist, Tina McLaren, MPH at tina.mclaren@dec.al.ga.gov



Follow DECAL on Pinterest

Do you need ideas to help incorporate nutrition education and physical activity at your site?

Check out DECAL's Pinterest for CACFP, Happy Helpings& Harvest of the Month recipes, physical activity ideas, healthy holiday celebrations, and more click [here](#).

Nutrition and Physical Activity pins are saved and added weekly.

Questions or suggestions, submit to morgan.chapman@dec.al.ga.gov or tina.mclaren@dec.al.ga.gov.



Eat Healthy and Live Active

Georgia Early Care and Education Harvest of the Month 24-25 Calendar

The Georgia Early Care and Education Harvest of the Month is a collaborative campaign between Quality Care for Children, Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning, Georgia Department of Human Services, and Georgia Organics. The campaign aims to encourage healthy eating habits by promoting a different local, seasonal fruit or vegetable each month.

Visit Quality Care for Children's Farm to ECE [webpage](#) to access a variety of classroom resources, ideas, a book list, and family newsletter to help you promote a new vegetable or fruit each month.

For school-age children resources, visit the Georgia Department of Education's Harvest of the month

[webpage](#).

CACFP Resources:

The following documents were covered in previous newsletters:

- [Summer 2025 Family Literacy Activity Guide](#)
- [FNS Issues Guidance on Using Federal Funds to Purchase Local Foods](#)
- [Helpful Hints for Completing the CACFP Application](#)
- [Supplier Change Request \(SCR\) Form and Updates](#)
- [Updates to Child and Adult Care Food Program Procurement Documents](#)
- [Stay Informed: At-Risk Afterschool Waivers Available during Unanticipated School Closure](#)
- [Check your Email Messages & Update Your Email Address in ATLAS](#)
- [Nourishing Healthy Eaters](#)
- [CACFP Policy 41 – State Agency Monitoring Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#)
- [Reimbursement Rates for CACFP Providers](#)
- [Updated Procurement Forms to include Civil Rights Assurance Statement](#)
- [Updated Agreements for DCH and Administrative Sponsors](#)
- [Updated Suspension & Disbarment Certification Information](#)
- [How to File a CACFP Claim for Reimbursement](#)

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

Dates to Remember

DATE	EVENTS
July	Harvest of the Month: Georgia's Peaches
July 15	Registration Opens for Required 2026 CACFP Annual Training
August 1	Enrollment Opens for FY 2026 CACFP Annual Training
August 5	FY 2026 CACFP Renewal Readiness Training- Webinar
August 12	CACFP Budget Readiness- Webinar
August 19	Tuesday Tip! CACFP Meal Pattern Refresher- Webinar
August 20	CACFP Procurement Readiness- Webinar
September 1	Holiday: Labor Day
September 15	Deadline to submit any additional changes to the FY 2025 Application
September 30	Deadline to complete 2026 CACFP Annual Training and Assessment
September 30	Deadline to complete 2026 CACFP Application
September 30	Deadline to Submit Original or Annual Budget Amendments

Join Us for a NEW DECAL Download!

Taste of DECAL: Best Places to Eat in Georgia



DECAL has a workforce of over 800 employees spanning the state of Georgia. Our team travels extensively between cities to visit child care programs and engage with community partners and advocates. Through their travels, they have accumulated valuable insights regarding some of the best dining establishments in the state. From sit-down meals to sweet treats to enjoy on your journeys, this week we have assembled an

outstanding panel of experts to help your taste buds as you travel the state.

Joining us to talk about a Taste of DECAL and the Best Places to Eat in Georgia is Brittany Marks and Clayton Adams, both with our Early Education Community Partnerships team, and Kimberly Stoy, who is with CCS in Southeast Georgia. We are also joined by Ira Sudman, General Counsel for DECAL.

Listen to the episode [here](#).

How was my Customer Service?

Provide feedback on your experience with the Nutrition Team



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



Nutrition Services Marketing & Outreach Team

Cindy Kicklighter
Joann Kilpatrick

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

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