



September 15, 2026

CACFP Summit 2026 Recap: The Power of Nutrition— Building Brighter Tomorrows



On August 28, 2026, Nutrition Services welcomed Child and Adult Care Food Program professionals from across Georgia for the 2026 CACFP Summit, centered around the theme, “The Power of Nutrition: Building Brighter Tomorrows.”

The Summit brought the CACFP community together for a day of learning, collaboration, and connection.

Attendees participated in informative workshops and engaging discussions to strengthen their knowledge of the CACFP and provide practical tools and resources to support successful program operations.

Throughout the day, participants had opportunities to learn from presenters, exchange ideas with fellow CACFP professionals, ask questions, and build connections with others who share their commitment to serving Georgia’s children and communities.

From program requirements and compliance to meal patterns, nutrition, recordkeeping, and other important CACFP topics, the Summit provided attendees with valuable information and resources to take back to their organizations.

To close out the Summit, we added a little extra excitement by recognizing our raffle winners! Congratulations to each of our winners, and thank you to everyone who stayed engaged and participated throughout the day. The raffles were a fun way to celebrate our attendees and bring the 2026 CACFP Summit to a memorable close.



Nutrition Services extends a special thank you to our presenters, partners, staff, and attendees for helping make the 2026 CACFP Summit a success. Your participation, knowledge, and enthusiasm helped make the day a meaningful experience for our CACFP community.

Together, we are continuing to harness The Power of Nutrition to Build Brighter Tomorrows for Georgia's children and communities.

Something New is Coming to Nutrition Services: Introducing Nutrition S.T.A.R.



L to R: Tamika Boone, Nutrition Services Director; Shauna Payne, Tallatoona Community Action Partnership, Inc.; and Rhonda Kelley, Technical Assistance Coordinator

Attendees at the CACFP Summit on August 28 received the first glimpse of an exciting new recognition initiative from Nutrition Services.

Nutrition S.T.A.R. (Superb Training Attendance Recognition) will recognize organizations that invest in professional development and demonstrate a commitment to learning, growth, and excellence through participation in Nutrition Services trainings.



Watch the teaser video here: [Nutrition STAR Teaser](#)

As part of the teaser, Nutrition Services proudly recognized Tallatoona Community Action Partnership, Inc. as the very first Nutrition S.T.A.R. recipient. Tallatoona earned this distinction by achieving the highest training participation during FY 2026, demonstrating an outstanding commitment to professional development and continuous learning.

This achievement reflects the dedication and leadership that help strengthen CACFP programs and better serve Georgia's children and families. Training participation helps organizations stay informed about policy updates, regulations, and best practices while strengthening program quality, enhancing operations, and supporting the successful delivery of nutrition programs across the state.

Beginning with program year 2027 (October 2026 through September 2027), Nutrition Services will recognize five regional winners and one grand prize winner based on participation in eligible Nutrition Services training opportunities.

Learn more by viewing the [Nutrition S.T.A.R. one-pager](#).

And remember, this is just the beginning! Nutrition S.T.A.R. is the first step in building a culture of recognition and excellence across our nutrition programs. ★

CACFP Annual Renewal for FY 2027

Deadline for Enrollment September 30, 2026

Participating CACFP Sponsors and Institutions must meet annual renewal requirements by September 30, 2026. Registration for the required annual training opened on July 15, 2026, and enrollment for the 2027 application renewal opened on August 1, 2026.

Step 1: Complete Annual Training Requirements

Registration for the CACFP Annual Training opened on July 15. Annual training includes:

- Reviewing the CACFP 2027 Annual Training presentation in GA ATLAS
- Completing the CACFP 2027 Annual Training Test Assessment in GA ATLAS

Once the annual training assessment has been completed and submitted, you will receive access to the FY 2027 CACFP application.

Step 2: Enroll for FY 2027

Upon completing 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 for FY 2027 on or after August 1, 2026

Step 3: Submit your FY 2027 Application on or before September 30

Original or Annual Budgets and Budget Amendments must also be submitted on or before September 30, 2026.

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

Date	Task
July 15	Registration opened for required FY 2027 CACFP Annual Training.
August 1	Enrollment opened for FY 2027. Upon completing Annual Training and Assessment, Sponsors & institutions may enroll for FY 2027.
September 15	Deadline for submitting any additional changes to the FY 2026 Application Any FY 2026 changes including: • Updates to the application • Management plan and budget • The additional/termination of centers/homes Must be completed in GA ATLAS by September 15, 2026, to allow time for review and processing.
September 30	Deadline to complete FY 2027 CACFP Annual Training and Assessment Deadline to submit FY 2027 CACFP Application Deadline to submit original or annual budget and budget amendments

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

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

FY 2026 Budget Revisions

Due Today, September 15, 2026

As FY 2026 CACFP is winding down, please review your budget to ensure it aligns with your expenses. Now is the time to submit any revisions for the end of the year. Be sure to review your enrollment for all sites for changes as well. All budget revisions should be submitted by September 15, 2026.

- ☐ New or Emergency Costs
 - ☐ **Why do I need to submit a budget revision?**
 - ☐ Sponsor projects a new cost item will be incurred that requires prior or specific prior approval or special consideration; (i.e. formal procurement)
 - ☐ This item is not already approved in the budget
 - ☐ When an approved specific prior written approval item's actual cost is found to be more than the actual approved amount
 - ☐ **Notify Budget Specialist within 24 Hours**

- ☐ Capacity Increase/Decrease
 - ☐ **Why do I need to submit a budget revision?**
 - ☐ When an increase in budgeted costs requires formal procurement.
 - ☐ Sponsor projects an increase or decrease **by 20% or more** for costs previously approved
 - ☐ Sponsor has **25%** increase or decrease in sites
 - ☐ When allocation methodologies changes within organization resulting in an increase or decrease of **20% or more**
 - ☐ **Notify Budget Specialist within 3 Days**

Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

Annual Budget Submission Requirements

Due September 30, 2026

Original or annual budgets and budget amendments must be submitted on or before September 30, 2026.

At a minimum, annual budgets are required when:

- An Independent Center with an approved budget in FY 2026 intends to use FY 2027 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 2026 with approved costs and the same costs in FY 2027 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.

Follow links below for budget related tools and references:

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

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

Procurement Tip Sheet:

Formal Procurement Responsibilities for Nutrition Program Operators

This quick-reference resource complements Nutrition's **Procurement Manual** and summarizes the required action steps for completing the formal procurement process. You may access the document here: [Procurement Tip Sheet](#).

For questions or additional information, contact ProcurementNutrition@dec.al.ga.gov.

New GA@WORK Supplier Portal

The State Accounting Office (SAO) has implemented GA@WORK, a new supplier management system for State of Georgia vendors. This system is now used for new supplier registrations and for updating supplier information, including:

- Banking information
- Mailing address
- Email address
- W-9 information

As a result, **Supplier Change Request (SCR) forms are no longer required.**

For new CACFP sponsors/institutions, registration in GA@WORK must be completed before claim payments can be issued.

If you participated in **CACFP prior to July 1, 2026**, and were already set up to receive payments, you should have received two emails from GAatWork@sao.ga.gov. The first email contains your supplier portal link and username, and the second contains your temporary password. We encourage all sponsors to log in now, even if no updates are needed, to ensure you have access to your account when needed in the future.

If you did **NOT** receive these emails, contact the **State Accounting Office Help Desk (SAO)** at 770-357-5555 (**Option 2, then Option 2**) or email Supplier@sao.ga.gov for assistance.

Sponsors/ Institutions who update their supplier profile must submit an updated W-9 to Finance.Nutrition@dec.al.ga.gov and specify the changes made to their account to ensure ATLAS is updated accurately.

Sponsors/Institutions are encouraged to plan ahead when submitting supplier updates. Processing and approval times may be lengthy, and DECAL does not have visibility into the State Accounting Office's approval process, because SAO is a separate state agency.



Herbs & Spices: Small Ingredients, Big Flavor

Herbs, spices, and spice blends add color, aroma, and flavor to foods while helping reduce the need for added salt, sugar, and fat. They are an easy way to introduce children to new flavors.

Herbs are the leafy parts of plants and can be used fresh or

dried.

- Examples: Basil, dill, rosemary, thyme
- Try them in: Eggs, vegetables, grain dishes, soups, and sauces

Spices come from other parts of plants, such as seeds, bark, roots, buds, or fruits. They are most often used dried.

- Examples: Cinnamon, ginger, garlic powder, paprika
- Try them in: Oatmeal, yogurt, fruit, vegetables, beans, soups, and meats

Spice blends combine herbs and spices to create a unique flavor profile.

- Examples: Italian Seasoning, taco seasoning, pumpkin pie spice, curry powder
- Try them in: Pasta dishes, tacos, oatmeal, baked fruit, and roasted vegetables

Create Your Own Spice Blends

- [Flavorful Cooking Using Herbs and Spices](#)
- [Spices for Anytime](#)

Helpful Recipes (using the spice blends above)

- [Italian Chicken & Veggie Sheet Pan](#)
- [Tofu Taco](#)
- [Fall Apple Pumpkin Oatmeal](#)
- [Chicken Chimichanga](#)

Tip: Start with small amounts and gradually introduce new herbs and spices. Repeated exposure helps children become familiar with and accept new flavors.

October is Farm to School and Early Care and Education Month

Every October, schools, ECE programs, farmers, and communities celebrate National Farm to School and Early Care and Education Month.

Visit our [Farm to ECE Webpage](#) to find resources to help you celebrate:

- 4 Week Fall Sample Menu with Recipes
- Book List with Local Food Resources
- Farm-Themed Active Games
- Toddler and Pre-K Activity Ideas
- State-Approved Training Opportunities
- Partner Resources



Interested in incorporating more local foods in your menus, but not sure where to start? Contact Monica.Griffin@dec.al.ga.gov.

Physical Activity Corner

Move of the Month: Yoga



September is National Yoga Month, and we're inviting you to celebrate yoga as Nutrition Service's Move of the Month.

Share your yoga photos on social media using #DECALPhysicalActivity or send them to Tina.McLaren@dec.al.ga.gov.

[Click](#) on the graphic to watch this month's video.

Resource Highlight:

Activities for Families with Young Children

Did you know children are more likely to be active when their families are active with them? Family engagement through physical activity creates meaningful opportunities for children and caregivers to

connect, learn, and build healthy habits together.

Whether it's taking a walk, dancing in the living room, playing catch in the backyard, or participating in a family event at an ECE program, every movement matters. CACFP Sponsors play an important role in supporting ECE programs by sharing simple, fun, and affordable ways families can stay active together.

Download and share [Activities for Families with Young Children](#), which provides dozens of fun ways families can incorporate physical activity with their infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and school-agers.

We'd love to feature your class in our next newsletter or on social media. Share your Move of the Month photos, family engagement success stories, and activity ideas with Physical Activity Specialist, Tina McLaren at tina.mclaren@dec.al.gov.



Upcoming Training Dates:

September 15, 2026

Tuesday Tip! Cooking with Herbs & Spices

1:30 - 2:00 p.m.

Curious about how to add more flavor without extra salt or sugar?

Join this webinar to learn the basics of cooking with herbs and spices! We will explore the difference between herbs and spices, how to use blends, and which seasonings can help reduce sodium or add natural sweetness.

Participants can earn one-half [0.5] state-approved hours for attending this training in its entirety.

[Register Now](#)

October 6, 2026

Tuesday Tip! Building Healthy Habits from the Start with Farm to Early Care and Education (ECE)

1:30 - 2:00 p.m.

October is Farm to School and Farm to Early Care and Education (ECE) Month!

Join this webinar to learn about this annual celebration and discover simple ways to engage your little learners.

Bonus: Participants will also learn how to celebrate Farm to CACFP Week, another exciting October opportunity to connect children with local foods and hands-on learning.

Participants can earn one-half [0.5] state-approved hour for attending this training in its entirety.

[Register Now](#)

October 8, 2026

Physical Activity Learning Sessions - PALS: Digging In: Active Play in ECE Gardens

1:00- 2:00 p.m.

How can physical activity and Farm to ECE strategies transform gardens into spaces for moving, learning, and skill development?

Join Nutrition Services for a free webinar to explore how recommended physical activity practices and Farm to ECE strategies can turn garden spaces into vibrant hubs for movement and playful learning.

Participants can earn one [1.0] state-approved hour for attending this training in its entirety.

[Register Now](#)

Notes:

Registering for training is a two-step process:

- **Step 1:** After registering in GAATLAS, 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 in the Training Confirmation email.
- If you have an issue with registering, contact [Leslie Truman](#) before the day of the training.
- [Click here](#) if you need a refresher on how to register for training in GA ATLAS.

NOTE: Only the Program Contact (PC) can self-register in GA ATLAS. If an additional person will be attending, contact [Leslie Truman](#), Administrative Assistant, at (404) 657-1779 for assistance.

In Case You Missed It:

Webinar Recordings Now Available

If you missed a webinar, visit the [Training and Technical Assistance](#) webpage for previously recorded webinars.

Follow DECAL on Pinterest

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

To 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.

Submit questions or suggestions to

morgan.chapman@dec.al.ga.gov or tina.mclaren@dec.al.ga.gov.



Eat, Learn, and Grow

Georgia Early Care and Education Harvest of the Month 2026-2027 Calendar

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

Visit [EatLearnGrowGA](#) to access classroom activities aligned with the Georgia Early Learning and Development Standards (GELDS), recipes, book lists, family newsletters, and more to help you incorporate a new vegetable or fruit each month in the classroom, kitchen, and home.



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:

- [CACFP Crediting Handbook Revised](#)
- [FY2027 CACFP Reimbursement Rates](#)
- [CACFP Area Eligibility Interactive Map Updated for FY26](#)
- [A Resource Hub for Food Industry Partners](#)
- [Recordkeeping Requirements in the CACFP](#)
- [Revised Product Formulation Statement \(PFS\) Templates and Samples](#)
- [Waivers Available during Unanticipated School Closures](#)
- [FNS Issues Guidance on Using Federal Funds to Purchase Local Foods](#)
- [At-Risk Afterschool Waivers Available during Unanticipated School Closures](#)
- [Reimbursement Rates for CACFP Providers](#)
- [How to File a CACFP Claim for Reimbursement](#)

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

Dates to Remember

DATE	EVENTS
September	Harvest of the Month: Peppers
September 15	Deadline for submitting any additional changes to the FY 2026 Application
	Tuesday Tip! Cooking with Herbs & Spices - Webinar
September 30	Deadline to complete FY 2027 CACFP Annual Training and Assessment
	Deadline to submit FY 2027 CACFP Application
	Deadline to submit original or annual budget and budget amendments
October 6	Tuesday Tip! Building Healthy Habits from the Start with Farm to Early Care and Education (ECE) - Webinar
October 8	Physical Activity Learning Sessions - PALS: Digging In: Active Play in ECE Gardens - Webinar

DECAL Download

Child Passenger Safety



Keeping children safe on Georgia roads starts long before the car is in motion. For parents, grandparents, child care providers, and anyone transporting young children, choosing the right car seat or booster seat and using it correctly every time is one of the most important steps we can take to prevent injuries and save lives.

Joining us to talk about child passenger safety in Georgia is Tomekia Hudson, CCS Technical

Assistance Consultan; Emerson Lundy, Southwest Law Enforcement Liaison with the Governor's Office of Highway Safety; and Jenny Harty, longtime advocate for child passenger safety and author of Francie & Fitz Booster Buddies, children's books promoting child passenger safety.

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

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