



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



October 12, 2023

Greetings Nutrition Program Providers,



DECAL's Nutrition Services has partnered with Georgia Organics for this year's October Farm to School & Early Care and Education Month **Pepper Palooza** campaign.

**Pepper Palooza** is a state-wide campaign to get kids eating, growing, and participating in pepper-themed activities.

To participate in **Pepper Palooza** at your early care center or home, visit [here](#) to register and receive access to a free electronic toolkit filled with pepper-themed activities, standards-based lesson plans (for ECE and K-12), fact sheets, recipes, and more!

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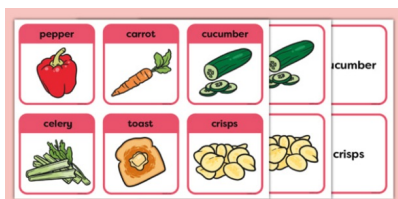
## **Governor Brian Kemp signs proclamation declaring October as Farm to School and Farm to Early Care and Education Month in Georgia**

Farm to School (F2S) and Farm to Early Care and Education Month Education (FTECE) programs represent an innovative opportunity to address some of the most critical issues facing Georgia through a comprehensive approach that seeks to improve child nutrition, thus improving academic performance and providing local market opportunities for Georgia farmers.

Georgia agencies, schools, Early Care Education (ECE) providers, parents, students, farmers, and communities are collaborating to implement F2S and

FTECE programs to increase access and education around fresh, local, and nutritious foods, reducing childhood obesity. View the proclamation [here](#).

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## Play the Pepper Patch Matching Game

Teachers will need to prepare a set of picture cards with various peppers. Sign up [here](#) for this year's campaign to access the full instructions for this game.

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## Read "I Love Bell Peppers" by Zangena La Touche

Discover the ten amazing bell pepper colors in this illustrated storybook to help you make food fun for kids. This book is full of colors, activities, recipes and more! Sign up [here](#) for this year's campaign to view the *Pepper Book List – Suggested Titles for October Farm to School Month*.



## 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 and 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 [here](#) to receive free resources and videos to prepare Rainbow Wraps in your classroom!

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## Ways to participate in Farm to School Month

- Register [here](#) to receive access to a free electronic toolkit filled with pepper-themed activities, standards-based lesson plans, fact sheets, recipes, and more!
  - Check out DECAL's October Farm to School Month [Pinterest](#) page for ideas and activities.
  - Check out the [Infant & Toddler](#) and [Pre-K](#) lesson plans created for October Farm to School & Early Care and Education Month.
  - Share your Pepper Palooza pictures and activities on social media with [#pepperpalooza](#). 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 from Georgia Organics.
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## Register Now for the 2023 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.

Questions? Contact [abbie@georgiaorganics.org](mailto:abbie@georgiaorganics.org).



## 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.

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 30 years of operation. Every year, the participants plant a variety of vegetables and fruits including tomatoes, cucumbers, radishes, green beans, squash, and watermelon. Ms. Mutter stated, “We put in a summer garden every year. For somebody with Alzheimer’s, they may have grown up gardening and it’s familiar and comforting to them. Our participants eagerly await trying our newly harvested produce items. Last year, they grew five huge watermelons that were a big hit amongst participants.”

Click [here](#) to read more!



Regards,

Nutrition Services

*Together, we can help feed Georgia's Children & Adults.*

***This institution is an equal opportunity provider.***

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