Nutrition News

Happy Helpings

Georgia's Summer Food Service Program

June 1, 2023

Happy Helpings Application Due by June 15

Submit your application to participate this summer

If you have not submitted your Happy Helpings (HH) application, please make sure to do so by the federal deadline on Thursday, **June 15, 2023**. Applications not submitted by the deadline date will not be reviewed, and therefore, cannot be approved.

If your organization still has plans to participate this summer, you are strongly encouraged to complete and submit the application by the deadline date. For detailed instructions on completing the application, you may refer to the **FY 2023 HH Application Instruction Booklet**.

Reminder to Review Online HH Application

Sponsors are required to review and ensure that all sections of their online 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 Happy Helpings application update procedures. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your assigned Business Operations Representative.

Business Operations Representative	Institution Assignment	Email	Phone Number
Lavesia Ervin	0 (zero)-C H-P	Lavesia.Ervin@decal.ga.gov	(404) 293-5258
Edith Pierre	D-G, Q-Z	Edith.Pierre@decal.ga.gov	(404) 463-8314

Nutrition Services promotes Happy Helpings & Nutrition Education throughout the State

Morgan Chapman and Carl Glover of DECAL's Nutrition Services team recently attended several community events throughout the state to share child nutrition education information as well as the process for how families can locate Happy Helpings' meal sites in their area.

Nutrition Services partnered with the DeKalb County Department of Public Health by participating in their youth fair at Wade Walker Park in Stone Mountain. In addition to Happy Helpings information, children and parents received educational information, health screenings and learned about various summer camps for the upcoming summer.

The team also attended the The M.O.M.S (Maternal Outcomes Matter Showers) Tour in Atlanta and Macon. The two-year community baby shower tour plans to visit 50 cities across the U.S. targeting new and expectant mothers in communities with high maternal mortality and morbidity rates.

Carl Glover represented Nutrition Services at the Dekalb Youth Fair in Stone Mountain.

Morgan Chapman and Carl Glover pose in front of the M.O.M.S Tour banner in Macon.

Updated Guidance for 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***. Additional USDA guidance was issued on April 20, 2023, entitled ***Questions and Answers #2: Summer 2023 Non-Congregate Meal Service in Rural Areas***.

Nutrition Services, to provide further clarity, has re-issued the memorandum,***Rural Non-Congregate Meal Services in the Summer Food Service Program***. The memorandum has been revised to include:

- 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: The Nutrition Applications team will manage sponsors' usage of rural non-congregate meal service options. Sponsors' use of the Waiver Module in Atlas is not required in the process.

In addition, Nutrition Services has developed question and answer guidance (FAQs) on the implementation of rural non-congregate meal services. This guidance can be found **here**. Please also be on the lookout for a webinar to reflect the above-mentioned updates.

Reminder: In April, Nutrition Services issued a recorded webinar that incorporated other USDA guidance including information on racial and ethnic data collection, regulation changes as a result of the Final Rule, and DECAL's sponsor tiering system. You may access the webinar recording **here**.

Please email your questions, comments, concerns, and any feedback you may have to **Leatha.Bryant@decal.ga.gov** or the Nutrition TA Mailbox at **NutritionTA@decal.ga.gov**. The Nutrition Services Team will respond to all questions and make the responses available.

For questions regarding the memoranda, please contact **Robyn Parham**.

Stay Informed on Monitoring

New Memorandum on Initial Site Visits in the SFSP

On May 30, 2023, USDA issued the policy memorandum, ***Initial Site Visits in the Summer Food Service Program***. This memorandum addresses sponsors' monitoring requirements of its sites and food service operations in the SFSP. The guidance includes information specific to initial site visits (two-week site visits) and full reviews of food service operations (four-week visits).

"And Justice for All" Posters

Sponsors participating in Happy Helpings, Georgia's Summer Food Service Program are required to display the "And Justice for All" poster at meal sites where it can be viewed by the public.

Nutrition Services has placed an order for the current poster; however, the shipment has been delayed.

In the interim, you can download the poster **here**, and display it in the specific size of 11" width x 17" height.

The cost for printing posters is an approved Happy Helpings expense and should be allocated to the publication, printing and reproduction budget line item.

TURNIP THE BEET

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

Nominations open August 7

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.

This is an exciting opportunity for Happy Helpings Sponsors to demonstrate how you go 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@decal.ga.gov**.

Celebrate Farm to Summer Week

June 26-30

DECAL's Nutrition Services is celebrating Farm to Summer Week June 26-30, 2023. Farm to Summer engages kids and families through fun, hands-on experiential learning activities, improves the quality and appeal of summer meals, increases access to fresh fruits & vegetables, & nourishment while school is out.

The themes for the week are as follows:

- Monday – What is Farm to Summer?
- Tuesday – Gardening & Physical Activity with Young Children
- Wednesday – Cooking & Taste Testing with Young Children
- Thursday – Locally Grown in Meals & Snacks
- Friday – Literacy, Music & Movement

Share your photos with us throughout the week of your program participating in Farm to Summer activities using #GAFarmtoSummer or via email to **morgan.chapman@decal.ga.gov**

Determining Duty Allocation in the Management Plan

The duty allocation identifies what percentage of time each staff member will operate in the program compared to the time spent in other duties unrelated to Happy Helpings.

Happy Helpings Sponsors Only:

The allocation duty should be split between administrative and operating function only on the SFSP% line.

- *Ex: 15/40 hours per week are spent completing HH related tasks. Of the 15 hours 10 hours (25%) are spent for operating duties and 5 hours (75%) are administrative duties.*

Combo Sponsors (CACFP/SFSP):

The allocation duty should be split by administrative and operating function between both CACFP% and SFSP% lines. The total should not exceed 100% for ***all combined programs.***

- *Ex: First allocate time of the program months from total months. 2/12 months (17%) are spent in the Happy Helpings program. 17% should be allocated between administrative and operational functions.*
- *The remaining 83% for CACFP should be allocated by administrative and operating function.*

For both types of Sponsors:

Be sure all funding sources are included if the program allocation is less than 100% or other funds are used to cover labor costs. All staff operating the program must be listed in this section, even if their salaries will not be reimbursed with program funds.

The Management Plan should be updated on a regular basis throughout the duration of the program. You are encouraged to make updates regularly to reflect any changes to the organization.

For questions, email **nutritionbudget@decal.ga.gov**.

Is Your Vendor in Good Standing?

Knowing the vendor status is vital whether your sponsoring organization uses informal procurement, formal procurement, or soliciting business from a food service management company or a food vendor. The status of an entity ranges from good standing, debarment and suspension.

What exactly do the terms debarment and suspension mean? Debarment and suspension are tools the Federal Government uses to ensure that it does business with only responsible persons and entities.

- A **debarment** is an action taken to exclude persons or entities from doing business with the Government for up to three years for specific causes, such as the commission of fraud or certain other crimes or violations of specific statutes. Specific statutes are legislation that has already been introduced in a legislative body and a specific legislative proposal that an organization either supports or opposes.
- **Suspension**, which can precede a debarment, is a temporary action. A suspension can be used pending the completion of an investigation or legal proceeding. Subpart 9.4 of the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) covers procurement suspension and debarment; these regulations are supplemented at the Department of Agriculture (USDA) through USDA Acquisition Regulation, 48 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), subpart 409.4.2

What can sponsoring organizations do to ensure the business contracted out is not disbarred or suspended from USDA programs? Along with the agreement or Invitation for Bid, the contractor, vendor, or Food Service Management Company completes the Certification Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility, and Voluntary Exclusion AD-1048 Lower Tier Covered Transactions form.

This form certifies the prospective entity, nor its principals is presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by any Federal department or agency.

Lastly, the General Services Administration (GSA) maintains the list of companies and individuals debarred, suspended, or otherwise excluded from doing business with the government on a publicly available website at **www.SAM.gov**.

For questions regarding procurement, please contact Tempest Harris, Procurement Compliance Specialist at **Tempest Harris**.

Summer Resources for GA's Children

Keeping Kids Fed, Safe, Healthy & Learning

It's officially summer and**georgiasummer.org** offers helpful resources to keep kids fed, healthy, safe and learning while they are out of school.

Please help spread the word so that every child in Georgia has access to all the fun and practical resources our partners offer. Here's what you can do:

- Share **our flyer** with your networks.
- Upload the **virtual billboard** to your website and share it.
- Add our **Facebook cover photo** and **Twitter header photo** to your social media accounts.
- Lead the children, families, and teachers in your network to free learning and literacy tools offered by **Capstone**—PebbleGo, PebbleGo Next, and Capstone Interactive eBooks—that they can access through Aug. 30. The username is **gasummer23** and the password is **school** to access all digital content.
- Tell Georgians to **Look Again**. Never leave a child unattended in your vehicle. If you see a child alone in a vehicle, call 911.
- Share pictures, videos, stories, news, and summer book reviews using the **#SchoolsOutGA** hashtag.

GeorgiaSummer.org helps families find healthy food, safety tips, learning resources, summer camp, and child care information. Connect with other Georgians by using the hashtag **#SchoolsOutGA** to share photos, videos, and stories that show how you're incorporating these tools into everyday life.

Get Informed: Upcoming Training Dates

June 12, 2023 – *Memo Monday*
Are you ready to grow your Farm to Summer program with gardening tips and Georgia grown foods? Join this webinar to learn:

- ideas to incorporate local foods,
- hands-on food education activities, and
- tools to increase garden-based education.
- ***Participants can earn two [2] state-approved hours for attending this training in its entirety.***

BONUS: Learn about USDA's Turnip the Beet Award and how to become involved!

June 29, 2023 – *Happy Helpings Reconciliation Training*
Are you using the correct process to reconcile your budget? Join this webinar to learn:

- the annual Year-End Reconciliation process,
- how to complete the Reconciliation Form, and
- documents required for submission.

Training Resources

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 **SFSP Updates** webinar recording. It discussed guidance on the rural non-congregate meal service option; final rule; collection of racial and ethnicity data and the new tiering process.

- **Note: USDA has released new guidance regarding the rural non-congregate meal service option. Please ensure to view the revised SFSP Updates Webinar Recording (Part 2) that will be released early June.**

Food Buying Guide (FBG) for Child Nutrition Programs Interactive Web-based Tool *New Yields!*
New yields are now available in the Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs Interactive Web-based (FBG) Tool and FBG Mobile App! New yield data is available for these highly requested foods: apple bananas, chokecherries, taro, and fresh apples. Stay tuned for additional yield data releases coming soon. Explore the **Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs** today!

Nutrition Ed Nook
Cool as a Cucumber

Cucumbers are the June Harvest of the Month (**English** and **Spanish**) spotlight! During the hot summer months when children are outside more often, it is important to make sure they are replenishing the water their bodies lose throughout the day. Some foods contain high amounts of water which is great for good hydration and digestion. Cucumbers are one way to "eat your water" as they are 96% water. Fiber, vitamins A, C and K and potassium are other important nutrients found in this green vegetable.

Fresh Georgia cucumbers are available for six months each year, from May through November. Some types are used for slicing, which is most common in grocery stores. English, Persian (or cocktail) and pickling are some slicing varieties. When purchasing, choose cucumbers that are firm, unbroken and have a dark-green skin with a waxy appearance.

Enjoy raw cucumbers as a snack along with a yogurt dip or hummus. You can also add them on top of sandwiches and include them in wraps for some extra crunch.

Fun Fact: Cucumbers belong to the same plant family as melons, pumpkins and squashes.

Integration:

- **Corn and Cucumber Salad**
- **Cucumber Tuna Boats**
- **Strawberry Cucumber Salad**
- **Cucumber Flavored Water**
- **Cucumber Yogurt Dip**

Education:

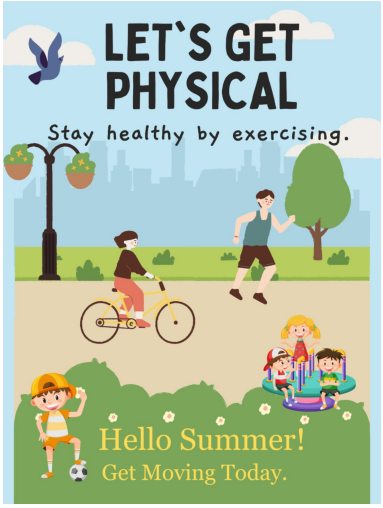
- ***Watch*** a video on **Georgia Cucumbers by Georgia Fruit & Vegetable Growers Association** to learn how cucumbers are grown and harvested in Georgia!
- ***Read*** the book **The Adventures of Jackson: Jackson's Cucumbers by Amanda L, Green** or **Cucumbers Are Delicious by Rhythm Lynn Johnson** .
- ***Grow*** cucumbers. They are relatively easy to grow and require lots of sunlight and well drained, nutrient rich soil. The seeds are sensitive to cool weather so it's important to plant the seeds when the soil is warm from the spring sun.
- ***Talk*** with families about how participants can help with meal preparation such as scrubbing cucumbers under running water or safely peeling cucumbers using a vegetable peeler. **Bonus:** Send recipes home with families for them to incorporate cucumbers into their meals!

Conversation:

- Have your program participants eaten cucumbers before?
- What is their favorite way to eat cucumbers?
- What are cucumbers full of?

Share your Harvest of the Month stories and menu integration of cucumbers with Nutrition Education Specialist, Morgan Chapman, MPH, MCHc at **morgan.chapman@decal.ga.gov**.

Physical Activity Corner:
Be Active All Summer Long



Hello, Summer Activities! This is the perfect time to venture outdoors, bring out those running shoes, get ready to play and get in some physical activity.

It is recommended that children and adults get at least one hour of physical activity every day. Physical activity doesn't have to mean structured *exercise,* and instead can be a way to integrate movement in your day while being outdoors. Unstructured and structured play are both forms of physical activity.

Be prepared with activity ideas when children say, "I'm bored." Have less screen time, turn off TVs, and electronic devices and get everyone moving at set times during the day. It may be helpful to brainstorm with the children a list of activities in advance that your family enjoys.
Here are a few of summer activities for the children and families:

- Go on a group bike ride.
- Go on a trail walk, jog, or run with your family.
- Take time to go to local community pools early in the morning.
- Play games like *Freeze Tag* and *Red Light/Green Light.*
- Have a backyard garden party—invite the neighbors and friends to harvest a variety of fruits and vegetables.
- Draw different shapes with sidewalk chalk and practice moving over, around, frog hops, and counting numbers like hopscotch.
- Play catch with a water balloon.

- Walk like different animals—bear, crab, chicken, dog, snake, etc.
- Set up a variety of targets— old bottles, cans, buckets. Then work on throwing a ball at them from different distances.

Integration:

- **Getting Started: Georgia Farm to ECE Guide**
- **Georgia Master Gardeners: Gardens of Georgia**
- **Quality Care for Children's Farm to ECE Webpage**
- **UGA Extension's Community and School Gardens**

Education:

- Read out loud, **"And Then Comes Summer" by Tome Brenner.**
- ***Watch*** the video on **Summer Safety Tips – Outdoor Exercise.**
- **Talk** with families about ways to get moving in the summer, whether at home, outside, in their local community, at your childcare site, or at their local recreational areas. **Bonus:** Share #GetMoving, #BeActive, #SummerMoves, #InstaMoves, #KeepKidsMoving pictures and events that are happening in your communities.

Conversation:

- What are some fun physical activities for preschoolers?
- What are some of your favorite summer indoor/outdoor activities?
- How do you beat the heat in sports?
- Why is being hydrated in summer important?

Share your **#GetMoving, #BeActive, #SummerMoves, #KeepKidsMoving, #InstaMoves** stories and pictures with Physical Activity Specialist, Tina McLaren at **tina.mclaren@decal.ga.gov**.

DECAL's Nutrition Spotlight:

Meet Demetria Thornton, Application Services Manager

Demetria Thornton is currently the Application Services Manager for Decal's Nutrition Services Division. She has worked in the Nutrition Services Division for the past ten years in various roles; serving as Application Specialist, Program Supervisor and now, Application Services Manager.

In her current role, Demetria provides frontline management over the application process for both federal nutrition programs, Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and Happy Helpings, Georgia's Summer Food Service Program. "I find this job to be rewarding because I help ensure that Georgia's children and adults are receiving healthy meals and snacks," said Demetria.

Demetria is originally from Chesapeake, Virginia. She earned her bachelor's degree in Public Administration from Virginia State University and a master's degree in Public Administration from Walden University.

In her leisure time, she enjoys Do-It-Yourself home décor projects and spending time with her husband and adult daughter.

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 findtips and tricks for preparing produce items, curriculum connections, activity lists and book alignment for your early care classrooms.

Dates to Remember

DATE	EVENTS
June	Harvest of the Month: Cucumbers
June 12	Memo Monday!
June 13	Kick-off event: Rabun County Family Connection
June 15	Deadline to submit Happy Helpings Application
June 21	Farm to Summer Webinar
June 27	Kick-off event: Bryan County BOC
June 29	Happy Helpings Reconciliation Training

Happy Helpings Resources:

The following documents were covered in previous newsletters:

- **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

Summer Transition Program

Entering year 12, DECAL is offering an intensive academic program for rising Pre-K and rising Kindergarten students called the Summer Transition Program.

The program was created to support students who either did not attend Georgia's Pre-K Program or Head Start or who need additional help before taking that next step.

Joining us on this episode of DECAL Download to talk about the Summer Transition Program is Meghan McNail, the Summer Transition Program and Outreach Manager and Yehymmy Mora, who is a transition coach who works with families during the Summer Transition Program at the North Fulton Child Development Center. We are also joined by Lakeisha McClendon, a rising kindergarten teacher in Newton County head start and Deana Snowden, a lead teacher for the Rising Pre-K class at Cornelia Elementary School in Habersham County

Listen to the episode **here**.

Nutrition Division
Marketing & Outreach Team

Cindy Kicklighter

Carl Glover

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