

Nutrition News

Summer Food Service Program



May 14, 2021

SFSP Sponsor Spotlight

Thomasville YMCA ensures children and families have what they need to make positive life changes



According to a [recent study](#), school food can be the healthiest meal a child eats in a day. With summer vacation just weeks away, thousands of children throughout Georgia could go hungry while school is not in session.

Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) Sponsor, **Thomasville YMCA**, saw a need to fill the gap during the summer months for children in Thomas County. The organization has been a SFSP Sponsor for 25 years and currently operates 37 meal sites. The City of Thomasville initially operated SFSP for the county before being picked up by Thomasville YMCA in 1996.

Cindy Quigg has been the HR Director and Summer Food Director for 22 years at Thomasville YMCA. “The Thomasville YMCA is more than a gym. We are a non-profit, cause-driven organization that helps fill the gaps we see in our community.” She added, “We always get positive feedback from members and donors that see the good work we are doing in the community.”

During FY20, the Thomasville YMCA served about 56,000 meals for breakfast and lunch all around Thomas County. Cindy believes organization and communication are essential to operating a successful program.

In preparation for this upcoming summer, they are working to provide more sites to rural municipalities by meeting with civic organizations to increase community involvement. On average, they employ a staff of 50 summer employees, therefore, hiring and training are a top priority during preparation for the program.

Parents and guardians are thankful knowing that their children can receive free nutritious meals while they are at work. Cindy says, “knowing that we are giving children healthy meals during the summer months when they otherwise would not have access [is the best part of participating in SFSP].”

For more information on the Thomasville YMCA, [click here](#)

Deadline to Submit SFSP Application - June 15

Submit your application by June 15 to participate this summer

If you have not submitted your Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) application, please make sure to do so by the federal deadline on **Tuesday, June 15, 2021**. 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 2021 SFSP Application Instruction Booklet](#).

Reminder to Review Online SFSP Application

Sponsors are required to review and ensure that all sections of their online SFSP 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 SFSP application update procedures.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your assigned Business Operations Representative.

Summer Meals Season Ends when School Starts

Sponsors can only operate the SFSP during the summer months when school is not in session. Once school reopens in the district where a site is located, SFSP operations must end.

Updated Application Assignments

For SFSP applications, contact:

Application Specialists	Institution Assignment	Email	Phone Number
Paula Lawrence	o (zero)-G,	Paula.Lawrence@decals.ga.gov	(404) 463-2111
Shericka Blount	H-P	Shericka.Blount@decals.ga.gov	(404)656-6411
Kenya Taylor	Q-Z	Kenya.Taylor@decals.ga.gov	(404) 463-4040

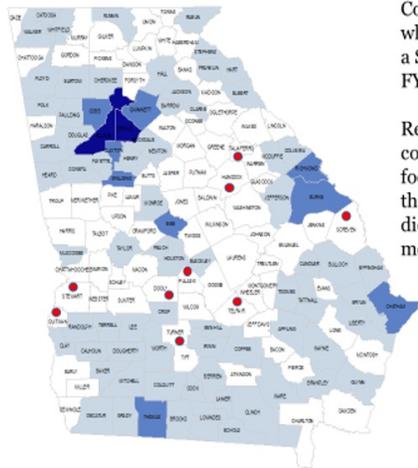
For SFSP add-a-site packages or updates, contact:

Business Operations Representatives	Institution Assignment	Email	Phone Number
Temika Moore	o (zero)-M,	Temika.Moore@decals.ga.gov	(404) 463-1494
Edith Pierre	N-Z	Edith.Pierre@decals.ga.gov	(404)463-8314

More SFSP Sites Needed Across GA

Does your organization have the capacity to expand meal service?

SFSP Need by County



Counties shaded in white **did not** have a SFSP meal site in FY20.

Red dot indicates counties with child food insecurity rates that are >30% and did not have SFSP meal site in FY20.

Rank	GA County NO SFSP	Child Food Insecurity Rate
1	Taliaferro	36.6%
2	Turner	35.9%
3	Telfair	35.6%
4	Quitman	35.0%
5	Stewart	34.4%
6	Hancock	32.6%
7	Dooly	32.4%
8	Screven	32.2%
9	Pulaski	32.1%



Feeding America: 2020 Proposed Child County Food Insecurity rates in Georgia

Last year, 78 Georgia Counties did not have SFSP meal sites leaving many children without access to nutritious meals when schools closed. COVID made a huge impact on child food insecurity and now there's an even greater need for additional meal sites throughout the state.

If your organization is administratively and financially capable of expanding your meal service, please consider serving additional counties throughout Georgia. As a reference, the counties shaded in white, on the map above, are areas where there was not a SFSP presence last summer.

There is a significant need for meals in the counties of Taliaferro, Turner, Telfair, Quitman, Stewart, Hancock, Dooly, Screven and Pulaski. They have an estimated child food insecurity rate above 30 percent.

If you have questions or need additional information, please reach out to [Cindy Kicklighter](#).

Information about Pre-Award Costs and Advance Requests

Pre-Award Costs

Sponsors with unused reimbursement from the prior year and have SFSP-related costs that would be incurred prior to the submission and approval of the SFSP application can use the funds on allowable costs. [Pre-Award Request Forms](#) along with supporting documentation should be submitted to the Budget Compliance Supervisor, [Shonda Franklin](#) for approval. Sponsors that submit requests prior to receiving access to complete the SFSP application are still required to enter the approved costs in the Budget Detail section in the B1. Pre-Award Costs Category once access is granted.

Advance Requests

An advance is a form of financial assistance made available for Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) costs prior to the month in which such cost will be incurred. The advance option is designed to help sponsors maintain a positive cash flow because they will have funds available to meet Program costs as they arise throughout the month. Upon approval and an executed Program agreement, sponsors may request advance payments. When determining the amount of the advance payment, DECAL will make the best possible estimate based on the sponsor's request and any other available data. Below are the specific requirements SFSP sponsors must following when seeking to request an advance payment:

- Sponsors must request each advance payment for operating costs at least 30 days before the payment dates of June 1, July 15, and August 15.
- Advance payments are issued by June 1, July 15, and August 15, or within 30 days upon receipt of a complete application, and upon execution of the Program Agreement (new

- sponsors only).
- Sponsors may not receive an advance for operating costs in any month when it will not be operating for at least 10 days
- Advance payments must be recouped/repaid in full prior to the next request.
- SFSP Advance Requests should be submitted through the Advance Request Link on the Sponsor's homepage in ATLAS located under additional forms. For more information Advance payments [click here](#).

If you have any questions, please contact the Budget Compliance Supervisor, [Shonda Franklin](#).

SFSP Resources

The following documents were covered in previous SFSP Newsletters:

SFSP Reimbursement Rates for 2021

[Updated SFSP Sponsor Monitoring Guidance during COVID-19](#)

[Process for Submitting New Waiver Requests](#)

[Waiver to Claim Meals Prior to SFSP Approval](#)

[Food Service Management Company Waiver Extended](#)

[How to File a SFSP Claim for Reimbursement](#)

[Budgeting for SFSP](#)

[USDA extends Flexibilities for Summer 2021](#)

[Suspension and Debarment Certification Requirement](#)

[Update: Procurement Templates \(Formal and Informal Documents\)](#)

[Virtual Vendor Summit Replay](#)

Get Informed: Upcoming Training Opportunities

**Upcoming Training and Technical Assistance
Register through ATLAS**

May 17, 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 and waiver requirements during our *May Memo Monday*.

- [SFSP Policy 20 - Financial Recordkeeping in the Child and Adult Care Food Program \(CACFP\) and the Summer Food Service Program \(SFSP\)](#)
- [COVID-19 Waiver\(s\) Implementation and Recordkeeping Requirements](#)

May 19, 2021 – Serving Safe Foods 101

Do you know the basic principles of food safety? Join this webinar to learn:

- the latest news and tips on safely handling and storing food to prevent foodborne illness outbreaks,
- how to increase food safety education and
- enhance food safety practices for program operators and participants.

June 15, 2021 – Procurement Readiness Webinar

Planning for proper procurement? Join this webinar session to learn:

- relevant procurement practices when procuring food & non-food items,
- how to develop formal solicitations,
- current program flexibilities related to procurement during COVID-19, and
- how to incorporate local sourcing practices into meal service.

June 16, 2021 – Disaster Preparedness Webinar

Are you prepared in the event of a natural disaster or emergency? Join this webinar session to learn:

- emergency preparedness and disaster management in Child Nutrition Programs,
- knowledge, skills, and resources for planning and preparing in the event of a natural disaster and/or emergency,
- processes established to assist with continuing or restoring meal service and guidance with determining required FNS approval.

June 21, 2021 - Memo Monday!

Regulations are constantly changing and interpreting all the policies and memorandums can be a challenge. Therefore, Nutrition Services will discuss procedure updates when requesting a Program waiver and the new improvements on the USDA Waivers feature in GA ATLAS.

Local Sourcing Spotlight

Let's go blue for Blueberries!



Fun fact: Blueberries were originally grown as a replacement crop. Now, according to [Georgia Grown](#), blueberries are the number #1 fruit grown here in Georgia.

Due to the acidic and sandy soil, Georgia has the perfect ground for growing this tasty blue fruit. Another fun fact, blueberries have replaced peaches as the top crop with over 18 acres of land usage totaling 39 million pounds.

Blueberries are not only delicious to eat but also available at many 'U-Pick' farms across Georgia. Just outside of Athens, [Buffalo Creek Berry Farm GA](#) is open (by appointment) for you to pick from a wide variety of berries. Not just blueberries but also strawberries, raspberries, and blackberries.

Also, visit [Georgia Blueberry Commission](#) for helpful tips on how to prepare blueberries, blueberry activity books and information on how to properly store and freeze them as well.

Bonus Spotlight: Vidalia Onions

Did you know, not all onions are created alike? This is especially the case with Vidalia Onions. Known as the [official state vegetable of Georgia](#), this particular type of onion can only be grown right here in Georgia.

According to [VidaliaOnion.org](#), in order for this tearful veggie to be considered a part of the Vidalia family it must first meet specific criteria such as shape, variety, identification and location.



There are a host of purchasing options to choose from when deciding where to buy locally grown Vidalia Onions. Whether opting to visit a local farm or talk to the produce manager at your local grocery store about where their Vidalia's are grown, here is a list of [licensed Vidalia Onion farms](#) across the state.

For questions regarding procurement, please contact [LaMonika Jones](#), Procurement Compliance Officer.

Nutrition Ed Nook

Roses are Red & Blueberries are Blue

Blueberries are luscious this



month as our May Harvest of the Month (**English** and **Spanish**) spotlight!

Blueberries provide a wealth of nutrition with their fiber and vitamin C content. They are a warm season crop and blueberry bushes can produce up to 6,000 blueberries a year!

Blueberries are one of the only naturally occurring blue foods

and the bright blue color is caused by the pigment, anthocyanin. According to the Blueberry Council, blueberries were called “star fruits” by North American indigenous peoples because of the five-pointed star shape that is formed at the blossom end of the berry. Learn about how various cultures use blueberries in their meals and serve blueberries on your menus. Enjoy them with yogurt and granola for a parfait, baked in pancakes, or blended and frozen into popsicles!

Integration:

- **Oatmeal Muffin Squares**
- **Fun Fruit Breakfast Pizza**
- **Herry’s Blueberry Lemon Parfait**

Education:

- *Encourage* families to visit a Pick-Your-Own blueberry farm in Georgia. This allows children the opportunity to see how blueberries grow and meet a farmer!
- *Taste* blueberries in a variety of ways. Taste them raw, baked into pancakes, or blended into a smoothie.
- *Read* different books themed around broccoli. Examples include *Blueberry Mouse* by Alice Low and *One Little Blueberry* by Tammi Salzano. Find more blueberry book recommendations [here!](#)

Conversation:

- What are your participant’s favorite way to eat blueberries?
- Have your participants ever seen blueberries growing on a bush? Have they ever picked their own blueberries to try?
- Can your participants name a fruit or vegetable for every color of the rainbow?

Bonus Item: Vidalia Onions

Vidalia onions are a vegetable component of Child Nutrition Programs and are the Harvest of the Month Bonus Item in May! Did you know that Vidalia onions are named after the town they are grown in, Vidalia, Georgia? Introduce your participants to fun this exciting Georgia fact while serving Vidalia onions on your menu! Top them on sandwiches and burgers, sauté them in a stir fry, or add them to soups and stews for a nutritious addition.

Share your springtime Harvest of the Month stories and menu integration of blueberries and Vidalia onions by emailing Nutrition Health Educator, **Diana Myers, MS, RD, LD.**



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 September 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 September 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 September 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 Time 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 September 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 September 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 September 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.

New requests for waivers must be completed through an online Waiver Participation Form in the new **USDA Waivers Module** in GA ATLAS. Operators will still be required to complete the applicable Waiver Request Form located on DECAL's website under **COVID-19 Resources**; however, these forms must now be uploaded to the USDA Waivers Module as part of the new process.

For any waiver-related questions, please contact [Sonja Adams](#)

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.

Dates to Remember

Date	Topic
May 17	Memo Monday
May 19	Serving Safe Foods 101
June 15	Procurement Readiness Webinar
June 15	Deadline to submit SFSP Applications
June 16	Disaster Preparedness Webinar
June 21	Memo Monday

NEW DECAL Download

POWER Supplemental Payments

It's almost time to turn on the POWER! Starting May 17, applications will be open for the \$1,000 POWER Supplemental Payments, that is Providing Our Workforce Essential Recognition. The one-time \$1,000 bonus payment to early learning professionals and staff was announced earlier this year by Governor Brian Kemp and Commissioner Jacobs. The bonuses will be funded through the federal Coronavirus Aid Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act.

Joining us this week to talk about POWER, give some important updates and answer some common questions on supplemental payments is Christi Moore, Director of Professional Learning here at DECAL; Barbara McWethy, the Workforce Support Manager; and Nina Bryant-Hunter, Early Childhood Center Director at the Coastal Georgia Area Community Action Authority in Brunswick.

As always stay tuned for a water cooler question and the DECAL Download Quiz for your chance to win a nice prize!

<https://decaldownload.buzzsprout.com/211637/8500208-update-on-power-supplemental-payments>

On the next ...

DECAL
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New Episodes Every Wednesday!

This Week's Guests



Christi Moore
Director of Professional Learning
Georgia Department of Early Care
and Learning



Barbara McWethy
Workforce Support Manager
Georgia Department of Early
Care and Learning



Nina Bryant-Hunter
ECE Director
Coastal Georgia Area
Community Action Authority

This Week's Topic:

POWER
Providing Our Workforce
Essential Recognition



Nutrition Division
Marketing & Outreach Team

Cindy Kicklighter



**Georgia Dept
of Early Care
and Learning**
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