



SUMMER MEALS SPOTLIGHT

\$69

for NCA Members

\$99

for Non-Members

Thursday, January 22

Discover how your organization can help close the summer nutrition gap through USDA's SUN Meals, also known as the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). SUN Meals provides free meals and snacks to children ages 0–18 in schools, parks and community sites, with non-congregate options supporting rural communities.

Earn up to 3.5 hours of CEUs; Certificate(s) provided.
Available on demand through February 2, 2026.

Topics Include:

- » Launch Your SUN Meals Program
- » SUN Meals in Action: Best Practices in Summer Meal Service
- » Increasing Summer Meals Impact Through Partnerships
- » On Demand: SFSP Overview

Register today at

cacfp.org/summer-meals-spotlight

SUMMER MEALS SPOTLIGHT



All times listed are Eastern

11:00 am – 11:30 am

Launch Your SUN Meals Program

Get ready to launch a SUN Meals program in your community! Learn what it takes to participate in a USDA summer food program, explore key resources and understand the difference your involvement can make. Take the first step toward ensuring children have access to healthy meals all summer long.

- Identify the key requirements, resources and steps needed to participate in a USDA summer food program.
- Understand how implementing a SUN Meals program can increase access to healthy meals and positively impact children in your community.

McKenzie Brunner, MGPS, National CACFP Association

11:45 am – 12:45 pm

SUN Meals in Action: Best Practices in Summer Meal Service

Hear about real solutions from SUN Meals operators making it happen every day. This panel brings together sponsors and sites to share their best tips, creative solutions and practical advice to help you deliver strong, effective summer food programs in your community.

- Identify effective strategies used by SUN Meals sponsors and sites to overcome common challenges.
- Explore ways to build and strengthen community partnerships that expand access to summer meals and increase program sustainability.
- Apply outreach and engagement techniques to boost program participation and promote awareness in your community.

Moderated by: Carolyn Wait Vega, MPH, RD, No Kid Hungry Center for Best Practices, Share Our Strength

Panelists: Deborah Gillison-Wilson, CCNP, CMP, Georgia Nutritional Services, Inc.

Sarah Smith-Holmes, Level One Consulting

Melanie McGuire, Houston Food Bank

1:00 pm – 2:00 pm

Increasing Summer Meal Impact Through Partnerships

Are you not sure where to start with partnerships for your summer meals program? Discover tips on building relationships and finding strategic partners. Learn a variety of ways you can collaborate with partners to expand your summer meal program's impact. Hear real-world examples, including local and statewide partnerships that cover tactics from site-planning to effective promotion.

- Understand the benefits of partnerships for your meal program.
- Get tips on building relationships with partners.
- Identify numerous partnership opportunities from small scale to large.

David Robinson, Arizona Food Bank Network

Fernando Jimenez, MEd, RD, Arizona Department of Education

Meet Our Speakers



McKenzie Brunner, MGPS

Senior Policy & Outreach Specialist
National CACFP Association

McKenzie is responsible for tracking nutrition policy trends and legislation and serving as a subject matter expert for CACFP. She is also tasked with developing nonprofit partnerships and promoting collaboration among CACFP providers. McKenzie received her master's degree in global policy from the University of Texas at Austin. With a background in international development and foreign policy, McKenzie is passionate about increasing food security through promoting equitable policy and cross-sector collaboration.



Carolyn Wait Vega, MPH, RD

Associate Director, Policy Analysis, No Kid Hungry Center for Best Practices, Share Our Strength

Carolyn directs the development of Share Our Strength's state and federal policy priorities, analyzes policy opportunities, and supports government relations. She leads a team working across federal nutrition assistance and anti-poverty programs, but has a special focus on summer nutrition programs. She joined Share Our Strength's No Kid Hungry campaign in 2015.



Deborah Gillison-Wilson, CCNP, CMP

Executive Director, Georgia Nutritional Services, Inc.

With experience working with CACFP since the 1990s, Deborah has been a CACFP sponsor since 1996. She has led over 40 annual CACFP and Civil Rights trainings and has an overwhelming internal library of knowledge of CACFP. Under her directive, GNSI exists to improve and maintain the sound nutritional health of children and adults by promoting the development of good eating habits for participants enrolled in their clients' facilities.



Sarah Smith-Holmes

Founder & Principal Consultant
Level One Consulting

Sarah is a seasoned leader with experience in USDA federal nutrition programs since 1990. As the founder of Level One Consulting, she leverages her expertise to create innovative solutions and strengthen food systems. Driven by a passion for child nutrition, Sarah has played a key role in all of the Child Nutrition Programs, ensuring access to healthy meals for millions of children, reaching 38 million recipients across multiple agencies with billions in funding.



Melanie McGuire

Senior Director of Programs, Houston Food Bank

Melanie has experience in community and coalition building, nonprofit management, disaster response, and programmatic design, and has been part of the Feeding America network since 2014. Prior to her role at Houston Food Bank, she held executive roles at Second Harvest Food Bank of Greater New Orleans and Acadiana and San Antonio Food Bank. Melanie holds a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology from Goucher College.

SUMMER MEALS SPOTLIGHT



ON DEMAND

SFSP Overview

Unsure about what SFSP even means? Are you brand new to child nutrition food programs? Do you run one program and are thinking about sponsoring another? Learn how this summer food program provides healthy food access for children in child care, afterschool and out-of-school time during the summer months when school is out of session.

- Understand the basics of SFSP.
- Identify the need for summer meals.
- Learn the types of sites and how areas of eligibility are determined.

Melinda Nguyen, MS, RDN, LD, National CACFP Association

Meet Our Speakers



David Robinson

Community Partners Manager
Arizona Food Bank Network

David is dedicated to supporting the Child Nutrition Programs and Food Bank Programs to alleviate childhood hunger in Arizona. In his current role, he provides technical assistance and resources to schools and community organizations to add or expand feeding programs, including CACFP and SFSP. David collaborates with community-level, statewide, and national partners to leverage expertise and funding opportunities to support expansion efforts.



Melinda Nguyen, MS, RDN, LD

Nutrition Education Specialist
National CACFP Association

Melinda is dedicated to showing her passion for nutrition education by developing creative ways to reinforce knowledge. She began her career in Massachusetts by obtaining her Master of Science in Food and Nutrition from Framingham State University. She worked at Head Start, planning meals for toddlers before moving to Texas to work for Whole Foods Market as a Recipe Data Specialist then taking on a role with a State agency. Melinda joined NCA's education team in 2025.



Fernando Jimenez, MEd, RD

Health & Nutrition Services Specialist
Arizona Department of Education

Growing up in Phoenix, Fernando attended ASU where he discovered he had a passion for helping people. He became a registered dietitian and began working at St Vincent de Paul's community health clinic seeing patients, teaching nutrition classes and getting involved in a research study to prevent diabetes in adolescents. Seeking new ways to grow and improve food insecurity on a wider scale, he began working at ADE where he serves as chair of the AZ SNAC SFSP Workgroup. Fernando holds an MEd from ASU.

Register today at

cacfp.org/summer-meals-spotlight



SUMMER MEALS SPOTLIGHT



Schedule At-a-Glance by Time Zone

Thursday, January 22

11:00 am – 2:00 pm Eastern

	Central	Mountain	Pacific	Session
11:00 am - 11:30 am	10:00 am - 10:30 am	9:00 am - 9:30 am	8:00 am - 8:30 am	Launch Your SUN Meals Program
11:45 am - 12:45 pm	10:45 am - 11:45 am	9:45 am - 10:45 am	8:45 am - 9:45 am	SUN Meals in Action: Best Practices in Summer Meal Service
1:00 pm - 2:00 pm	12:00 pm - 1:00 pm	11:00 am - 12:00 pm	10:00 am - 11:00 am	Increasing Summer Meal Impact Through Partnership

Register today at

cacfp.org/summer-meals-spotlight