



## Virginia Farm to CACFP Week 2021 Toolkit

The Virginia Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) invites you to celebrate Farm to CACFP Week October 18-22, 2021.

Farm to CACFP aims to connect participants to nutrition education, Virginia grown foods, and gardening opportunities. Through these activities, CACFP participants learn about Virginia agriculture while building their knowledge of and interest in healthy foods.

Farm to CACFP Week is an opportunity to celebrate the connections between care providers and farms throughout the Commonwealth, and raise awareness to the importance of prioritizing access to healthy, local food and nutrition education.

**Who:** You! We encourage everyone to celebrate and promote linking Virginia grown foods with our littlest learners and the elderly.

**What:** Virginia Farm to CACFP Week

**When:** October 18-22, 2021

**Where:** In person at your center or family day care home, through virtual learning lessons, or at home with your family

**How:** There are a range of ways to celebrate. Try adding a local food item to your menu this week, integrating food and agricultural education into your curriculum, or conducting one of the activities included in our virtual toolkit.

**Why:** Farm to CACFP expands healthy food access, increases knowledge of seasonal food, promotes community and family engagement, and provides market opportunities for local farmers.

**Promote:** We will be highlighting celebrations throughout the week via social media. Don't forget to tag your posts with #VAFarmtoCACFP and follow us @cacfpvirginia so we can share!

Below you'll find resources to help celebrate the week at your center, including activity ideas and promotional materials.

### **Sample Social Media Posts**

Have you saved the date for #VAFarmtoCACFP Week? Celebrate with us by adding local food to your menu the week of Oct 18-22nd! @cacfpvirginia

It's #VAFarmtoCACFP Week! Child and Adult care centers around the Commonwealth are celebrating this week by highlighting #VAGrown food on their menus, and leading nutrition and agricultural lessons. @cacfpvirginia

This week we are celebrating #VAFarmtoCACFP Week! Join us as we highlight Virginia grown food and healthy eating with our littlest learners. @cacfpvirginia

This week we are celebrating #VAFarmtoCACFP Week! Join us as we highlight Virginia grown food and healthy eating with our elderly. @cacfpvirginia

We are adding local food to the menu for #VAFarmtoCACFP Week! @cacfpvirginia

Farm to CACFP Week is an opportunity to celebrate the connections between care providers and healthy, local food. Join us! #VAFarmtoCACFP @cacfpvirginia

Farm to CACFP (Child and Adult Care Food Program) introduces participants to experiential education opportunities, connecting and engaging them through healthy, local food. #VAFarmtoCACFP @cacfpvirginia

Farm to CACFP expands healthy food access, promotes community and family engagement, and provides market opportunities. #VAFarmtoCACFP #VACACFP @cacfpvirginia

### **Organizational Press Release Template**

Instructions:

- Customize to your organization. Add or delete items as applicable.
- Add on organizational letterhead.
- Email press release to local news outlets (note: publishing a press release is free).

#### **ORGANIZATION NAME CELEBRATES FARM TO CACFP WEEK**

##### *Activities Encourage Increased Awareness of Virginia Agriculture*

(City, VA) – Organization name will recognize Virginia Farm to Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Week October 18 through 22 with activities hosted throughout the week.

The CACFP provides nutritious snacks and meals that contribute to the wellness of young children, older adults, and chronically impaired or disabled persons enrolled at participating day care centers or facilities.

Farm to CACFP aims to connect participants to nutrition education, Virginia grown foods, and gardening opportunities. Through these activities, CACFP participants learn about Virginia agriculture while building their knowledge of and interest in healthy foods.

In recognition of the week, organization name will conduct activities for their participants that bring awareness to Virginia agriculture and seasonal food. Activities include add activities here. Additionally, organization name will feature local food on their menu.

For more information on organization's activities, visit contact information. For more information on Farm to CACFP Week, visit <http://vdh.virginia.gov/farm-to-cacfp>.

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## **Activity Ideas**

We know centers are working overtime to create safe learning spaces for their participants, while providing healthy, nutritious meals. We also know families with young ones at home are working overtime to provide exciting and engaging learning environments. To help you celebrate Farm to CACFP Week, we've included a few easy activities that integrate healthy food and agricultural education into your curriculum during the week.

This toolkit features a fruit or vegetable each day. You are welcome to use this toolkit to help you celebrate, or come up with your own activities or celebrations.

## **How to Source Local Food**

Interested in adding local, seasonal foods to your meals or snacks? Below are a few ways to source local food:

- Check in with your grocery store. They might already be selling local food! If they aren't, ask if they have plans to start.
- Ask your food distributor. Distributors often sell local items, and sometimes you just need to ask what is available. If they know you are interested in having a local item on the menu, they can work to source that item for you.
- Buy directly from the farm. Farm stands and farmer's markets are the best way to get a variety of items. Visit the Virginia Farmers Market Association at [www.vfma.org](http://www.vfma.org) to find a market near you and learn their COVID-19 safety procedures.

### ***Remember:***

- There is no one definition of "local." As an organization, you can define what "local" means to you. In the Virginia CACFP, we define it as anything grown or raised in Virginia.
- Farm to CACFP expenses like gardening supplies, nutrition education, and local food for meals are all allowable costs in the CACFP.

We look forward to celebrating with you! Please email [cacfp@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:cacfp@vdh.virginia.gov) with any questions.