

The Edible Editorial

August 2026

Happy August! Summer is winding down, and the back-to-school season is just around the corner. This month is full of fun food holidays, perfect craft weather, and great opportunities to help children build healthy routines before the school year begins. Whether you care for little ones year-round or welcome school-agers back in a few weeks, we hope this month brings plenty of laughter, creativity, and delicious meals to your program. Thank you for all you do to nourish the children in your care!

AUGUST MONTHLY THEMES

- National Peach Month
- National Sandwich Month
- Family Fun Month
- Kids Eat Right Month
- National Wellness Month
- Get Ready for Kindergarten Month

AUGUST HOLIDAYS & SPECIAL DAYS

August 3 — National Watermelon Day
Serve chilled watermelon cubes as a refreshing snack, then hold a melon taste test: watermelon vs. cantaloupe vs. honeydew. Chart the children's favorites with stickers!

August 9 — National Book Lovers Day
Build a cozy reading fort with blankets and pillows. Let each child pick a favorite book and enjoy story time somewhere new — under a table, outside on a blanket, or in the fort.

August 15 — National Relaxation Day
Practice calm-down skills: belly breathing, quiet stretching, and soft music. These are wonderful tools to introduce before the busier school-year season.

August 19 — National Aviation Day
Paper airplane day! Fold simple planes together, decorate them, and hold a gentle flying contest.

Talk about things that fly — planes, birds, butterflies, kites.

August 26 — National Dog Day

Read dog-themed books, practice animal movements (crawl, wag, roll over!), and talk about how pets — like people — need healthy food and water every day.

Late August — Back to School Season

Many Michigan schools start the last week of August. Use these weeks to re-establish routines: consistent meal times, hand washing habits, and calm, family-style dining.

AUGUST CRAFT CORNER

- **PAPER PLATE WATERMELONS:** Paint paper plates pink and green, then add black fingerprint "seeds." Fold in half for a juicy slice! Great for National Watermelon Day.
- **BACK-TO-SCHOOL BUSES:** Cut simple school bus shapes from yellow construction paper. Children add wheels, windows, and photos or drawings of themselves in the windows.
- **HANDPRINT SUNSHINE KEEPSAKES:** Trace and cut out hands in yellow and orange paper, then arrange them in a circle to make a sun. A sweet end-of-summer keepsake for families.
- **PUPPY EARS HEADBANDS:** For National Dog Day — paper strips with floppy construction paper ears. Instant puppy dress-up for movement games and pretend play.
- **NAME PRACTICE PLACEMATS:** Children decorate a sheet with their name in big letters, then laminate (or cover with clear contact paper) for a personal placemat. Builds name recognition before kindergarten!

AUGUST MEAL & SNACK IDEAS

All ideas below are designed to fit CACFP meal pattern requirements.

Always verify current guidelines with your sponsor.

1. PEACHY KEEN BREAKFAST

Whole grain waffle (grain) + sliced peaches (fruit) + milk. Warm the peaches with a dash of cinnamon for a special touch — it's National Peach Month!

2. SCHOOL BUS SNACK

Whole grain crackers (grain) + cheese slices cut into bus shapes with a cookie cutter (meat/meat alternate). A fun way to talk about the school year ahead.

3. RAINBOW VEGGIE SNACK

Cucumber slices, cherry tomato halves, and bell pepper strips (vegetable) + whole grain crackers (grain). Let children build color patterns before eating!

4. BLUEBERRY PARFAIT SNACK

Low-fat yogurt (meat/meat alternate) + fresh blueberries (fruit). Layer in clear cups so children can see the stripes.

5. BUILD-YOUR-OWN SANDWICH LUNCH

Whole grain bread (grain) + turkey or cheese (meat/meat alternate) + tomato slices and lettuce (vegetable) + melon cubes (fruit) + milk. It's National Sandwich Month — children assemble their own, which builds fine motor skills and food acceptance!

6. PUPPY CHOW BANANAS (DOG DAY SNACK)

Banana halves (fruit) + a smear of sunflower seed butter with a whole grain cereal "topping" (grain). Add two cereal-piece "eyes" for a puppy face.

AUGUST ACTIVITIES

- **INDOOR "CAMP DAY":** Set up a pretend campsite with blankets, flashlights, and stuffed animals. Sing songs, tell gentle stories, and enjoy the S'mores Day snack by "campfire" (a paper craft fire, of course).
- **BACK-TO-SCHOOL ROUTINE CHARTS:** Create simple picture charts of daily routines (wash hands,

eat breakfast, brush teeth) to help children transition into the school-year rhythm.

- **WATER PLAY OLYMPICS:** On hot days, set up sponge tosses, cup pouring stations, and "wash the toys" bins outside. Great sensory play that keeps everyone cool.
- **ALPHABET SCAVENGER HUNT:** Hide letter cards around your space and have children find them and match them to a posted alphabet. Perfect kindergarten prep for Get Ready for Kindergarten Month.

PROVIDER TIP OF THE MONTH: SUMMER HYDRATION

August heat means children need plenty of fluids. Remember: drinking water must be offered and available to children throughout the day — this is a CACFP requirement, not just a best practice. Keep cups and a pitcher within children's reach, offer water at outdoor play, and serve water alongside (not instead of) required milk at meals. Watch for signs of dehydration during outdoor play: flushed cheeks, fatigue, and crankiness. Hydrating snacks like watermelon, cucumbers, and melon help too!

PROGRAM REMINDERS

- **MENU SUBMISSIONS:** July menus and meal counts are due by August 5th. Please submit on time to avoid claim delays.
- **DAILY MEAL COUNTS:** Record meal counts at the point of service (centers, providers who have been SD, and providers with more than 12 children present during a day) — not at the end of the day (end of the day attendance is allowed for home providers with less than 12 children present during a day). Accurate, timely counts are the foundation of a clean claim.
- **ENROLLMENT FORMS:** Back-to-school is a great time to review enrollment forms. Make sure schedules are current for any children whose care hours change when school starts.
- **QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS?** We are here to help!

Scalloped Potatoes—Recipe for Centers

CACFP Crediting Information: 1 piece equals 1/2 cup vegetable. Makes 25 servings.

Ingredients:

4 lbs. 2 oz. Fresh Yukon Gold potatoes, unpeeled, sliced
1/3 cup 2 tsp. Margarine, trans-fat free
7 oz. Fresh onions, chopped
1 cup Whole-wheat flour
2 qt. Low-fat (1%) milk
1 tsp. Salt
3/4 tsp. Ground black pepper
1/4 cup Dried parsley
1 Tbsp. Garlic powder



Directions:

1. Place potatoes in a steam table pan lightly coated with pan-release spray.
2. Sauce: Melt margarine in a medium stock pot.
3. Add onions. Cook uncovered over medium-high heat for 1-2 minutes until onions become translucent, stirring occasionally. Reduce heat to medium.
4. Add flour. Cook uncovered over medium heat for 30 seconds, stirring constantly to moisten flour.
5. Add 1 qt. milk. Cook uncovered over medium heat for 3-5 minutes allowing bubbles to form around the edge of the pot. Set remaining milk aside for Step 6.
6. Add remaining milk, salt, pepper, parsley, and garlic powder.
7. Cook uncovered over medium heat for 5-10 minutes until sauce begins to simmer, stirring occasionally. Simmer for 1 minute.
8. Pour sauce over potatoes. Spread evenly.
9. Bake at 350 degrees F for 45-60 minutes.
10. Cut each pan 5 x 5 (25 pieces per pan).
11. Serve 1 piece.

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1. **mail:** U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
 2. **fax:** (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
- email:** program.intake@usda.gov

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Fruit

LEARN IT

Most kids like eating fruit, but do they know how important fruit is for their growing bodies? Fruits provide important nutrients such as Vitamin C, Vitamin A, potassium, fiber, and folic acid. They can also reduce the risk of heart disease and stroke. Fruits are a convenient anytime snack and can be eaten in any form – fresh, frozen, canned, and dried. There are so many different varieties – the possibilities are endless!

GROW IT

Did you know strawberries are one of the easiest fruits to grow? They can be planted in hanging baskets, containers, or in a garden. They love the sunshine and need well-drained soil to flourish. For a hanging basket, plant 3-6 small plants per basket, fertilize regularly, and remember to keep the soil moist.

EAT IT

Rainbow Fruit Salad

Watermelon
Cantaloupe
Pineapple
Kiwi
Blueberries

This is sure to be a favorite for kids and great way to get them involved in the kitchen where age appropriate. Wash, peel, and dice fruit as needed. To keep the fruit looking fresh, squeeze a lemon or lime over the fruit. Mix together and enjoy!

Snack Crediting: Serve 1/2 cup for ages 1-5

READ IT

Mrs. Peanuckle's Fruit Alphabet

by Mrs. Peanuckle and Jessie Ford

Apples by Gail Gibbons

A Fruit is a Suitcase for Seeds

by Jean Richards, Anca Hariton (Illustrator)

The Fruits We Eat by Gail Gibbons

SING IT

I Like to Eat Apples and Bananas

Use this fun childhood song to practice the vowel sounds. The lyrics are repetitive, but each time the children start a new verse, try a different vowel sound. There are many versions online you can watch and practice along with.

Verse:

I like to eat, eat, eat apples and bananas.

I like to eat, eat, eat apples and bananas.

Vowel Practice with soft e:

I like to eat, eat, eat, epples and benenes.

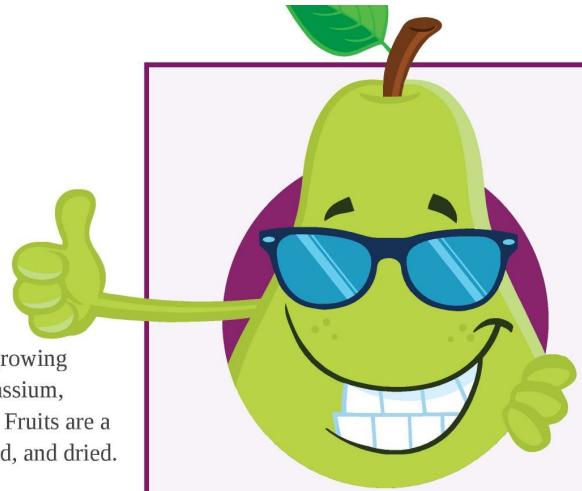
I like to eat, eat, eat, epples and benenes.

Vowel Practice with long e:

I like to eat, eat, eat, EEpples and Beeneenees.

I like to eat, eat, eat, EEpples and Beeneenees.

Continue to repeat the verse for each vowel sound.



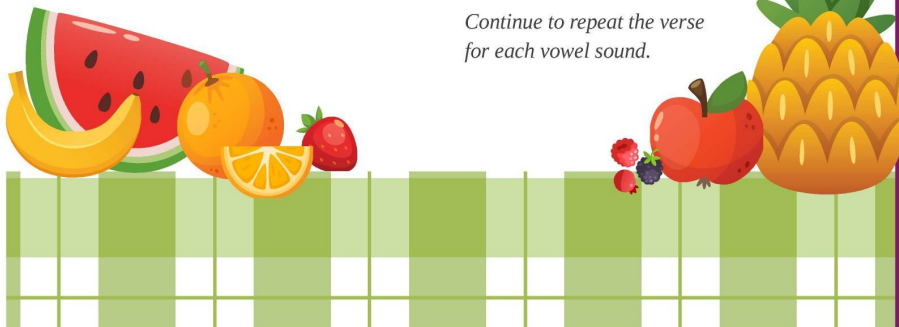
CRAFT IT

Paper Plate Fruit Basket The children will love making their own fruit basket with all of their favorite fruits. Using the templates on @cacfp.org, ask the children to color the fruits and practice their fine motor skills by cutting them out. To make the fruit basket, cut half of the center out of a paper plate in a Capital D shape. The children can paint and decorate their basket. Then have them glue their fruits onto the back where they show through the front to make them look like the fruits are in the basket.



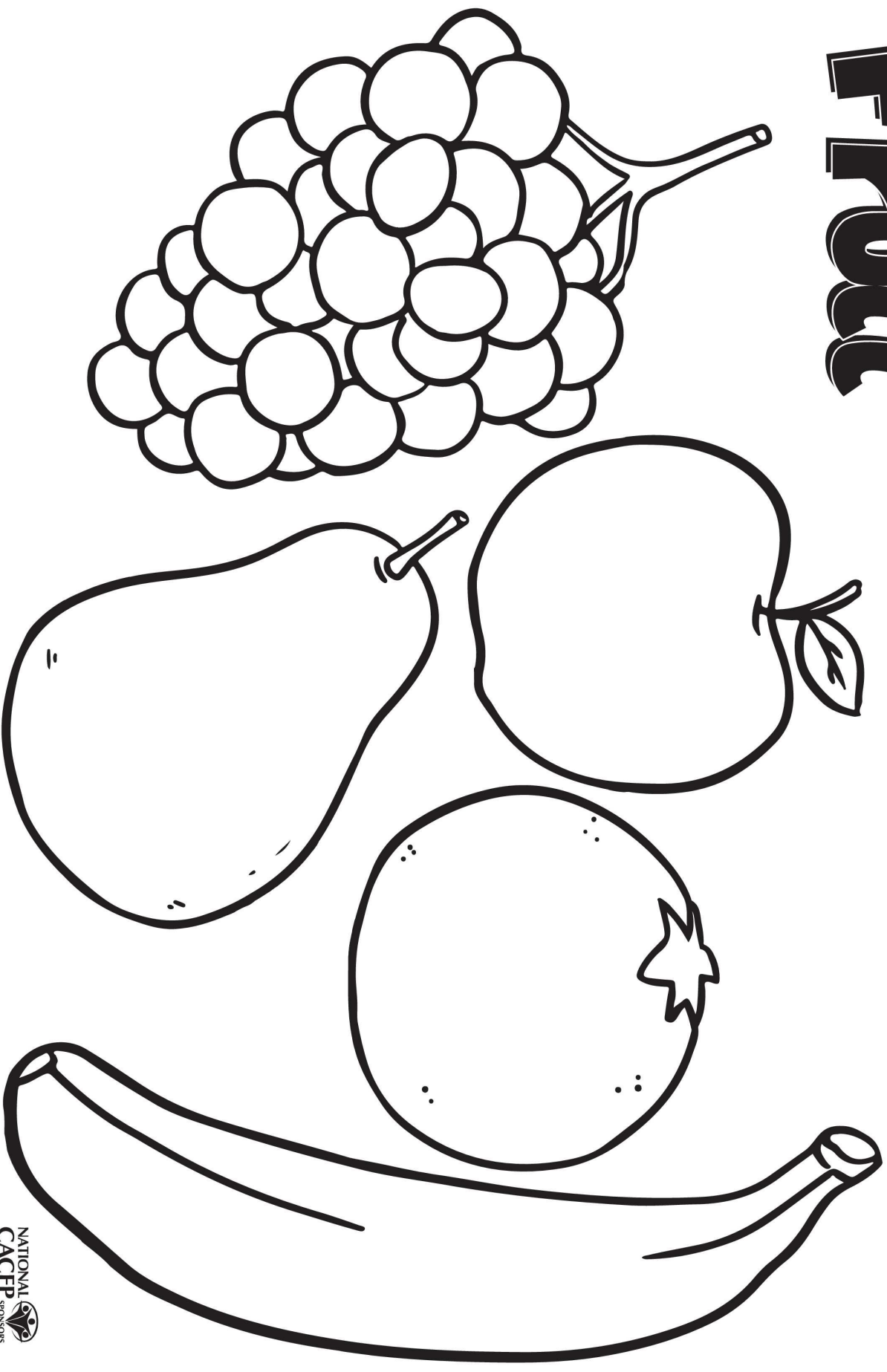
PLAY IT

Fruit Basket Turn Over Create a circle of chairs with enough chairs for all but one child. The standing child will start the game from the center as the fruit announcer and will call out fruit. The children will be given a fruit card. The children with that fruit called out will stand up and quickly try to find a new seat. The child in the center will try to sit in one of the empty seats. The child without a seat will then become the fruit announcer.



Fruit

COLOR the fruit and then cut out to add to your paper plate fruit basket or to play Fruit Basket Turn Over.



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