

The Power of the Food Program in Tribal Nations

Celebrating Culture Through the CACFP

ROUND ROCK, TX, UNITED STATES, February 13, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) is playing a critical role in addressing food insecurity in Tribal Nations, ensuring nutritious meals for children and adults across the U.S. With food insecurity rates among Native American individuals at [1 in 4](#) – more than double the national average – CACFP provides essential support to tribal communities through child care and education programs.



The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs (CTWS) have been leaders in leveraging CACFP for over 30 years, serving two meals and a snack daily to 140 children at their early childhood education center and Head Start program. Under the leadership of Louisa Fuentes, Food Service Manager, CTWS has embraced the program's flexibility to incorporate traditional indigenous foods, such as Chinook Salmon and Huckleberries, into their menus. These culturally significant meals not only nourish young children but also foster a deeper understanding of tribal heritage.

"Incorporating indigenous foods allows us to teach our children about culture and traditions while providing them with nutritious meals," said Fuentes. "I encourage all child care operators, regardless of their community's demographic, to consider including indigenous foods in their menus as a way to celebrate diverse cultures."

Recent updates to the CACFP Food Buying Guide have expanded options for tribal foods, making it easier for Native communities to integrate culturally relevant meals. Despite these advances, participation among the 500+ federally recognized tribes remains limited due to lack of awareness and outreach challenges. Tribal leaders emphasize that increasing participation in CACFP can significantly improve food security and provide critical nutrition education to young

children.

Since 1986, the [National CACFP Association](#) (NCA) has been a leading national organization offering support to thousands within the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) community. Its overarching goal is to ensure nutritional security for families by facilitating access to vital food programs.

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