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Making a Difference for California

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# NUTRITION NEWS

CalFresh Healthy Living, UCCE Placer and Nevada Counties



## COVID-19 WAIVERS FREE SCHOOL MEALS EXTENDED



**O**n March 9, 2021, the USDA announced the extension of the COVID-19 Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) waivers through September 30, 2021. The waiver extension addresses ongoing challenges during the pandemic and ensures all hungry students continue to have safe access to healthy school meals.

The COVID-19 waivers were set to expire on June 30, threatening to derail summer meal service. The waivers are critical to ensuring schools can continue to offer grab-and-go meals to children while adhering to pandemic safety measures. The waivers most importantly ensure that children continue to receive free school breakfast and lunch when millions of families are struggling economically due to the pandemic.

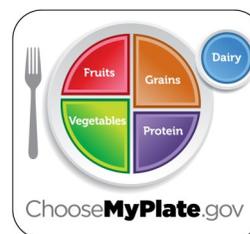
The School Nutrition Association is pushing to extend COVID-19 waivers through School Year 2021/2022 to maintain grab-and-go meal options and pandemic safety measures for students and staff. Further waiver extensions will ensure hungry students receive the nutrition they need to focus on their studies without requiring overwhelmed schools to distribute, collect, and process free and reduced price meal applications. School nutrition programs could minimize touch points and promote social distancing and not be required to verify eligibility for free meals, collect payment or use student pin pads.



### Spring 2021

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#### More Resources

Visit our website -  
**Let's Eat Healthy:**  
[http://  
ceplacer.ucanr.edu](http://ceplacer.ucanr.edu)



## APRIL IS KIDS GARDEN MONTH

### What Do You Love about Your Garden?

The hands-on experience of gardening has endless benefits for kids. But what gets kids hooked is that gardening is fun! To celebrate kids in the garden this April, *KidsGardening* is asking kids to tell them what they love about their garden! Sharing food with your neighbors? Finding cool bugs? Being outside? They can't wait to read, see, and hear kids' answers!

**Teachers, caregivers, and parents:** Send a photo, drawing, video, or other creative medium (really, the sky's the limit!) to *KidsGardening* on behalf of the kids you garden with. The kid(s) entry should tell what they love about their garden or gardening, whether it is tangible or intangible. Entries can be submitted by individuals, or by a class or group. Group entries can be a collaboration, or a collection of entries.

**Contest Rules:** *KidsGardening* asks kids (0-18) to submit photos, video, song, drawing, artwork, or words (essay, poem) about what grows in their garden. Creativity is encouraged. If you work with kids who aren't verbal or who don't write, an adult can caption their entry (or not). **Entries must be submitted following the link below.**



Each week they'll choose a favorite entry to receive a prize package, and at the end of the month they'll award two grand prize winners – one to an individual and one to a group or class. In addition, schools are eligible to win one of six \$500 prizes to build or enhance their school garden.

Schools that wish to be eligible for the \$500 award will additionally be asked to describe how they would use the award to build or enhance their school garden. You will be asked to include the school's EIN number. Any public, private, or charter school in the United States serving students grades K-12 may enter.

Submitting an entry gives *KidsGardening.org* permission to use the entry in the future. Entries from around the world are welcomed, but only U.S. entries will be considered for prizes.

The Kids Garden Month 2021 contest is open from April 1 - April 30, 2021.

#### Enter Here:

[https://kidsgardening.org/kids-garden-month-2021/?mc\\_cid=217233d70e&mc\\_eid=d4214d14ca](https://kidsgardening.org/kids-garden-month-2021/?mc_cid=217233d70e&mc_eid=d4214d14ca)

# PLANT POLLINATOR JOURNAL

**Overview:** Cultivate writing and observation skills by encouraging kids to track pollinator sightings through journaling.

**Materials:** Journal of any kind (can be purchased or homemade) Pencils, pens, markers and/or crayons

**Instructions:**

1. Pollinators play an important role in our ecosystem as many plants rely on them to help move pollen from flower to flower in order to make seeds to produce the next generation. Animals depend on pollinators for the role they play in producing many of our common foods. So who are these essential workers? Begin by researching pollinators in your area with your kids. Look up pictures of these garden workhorses online or in books to help with identification.
2. Next obtain a pollinator journal. You can buy a journal or make your own by simply stapling scrap paper today into a booklet form.
3. Before traveling out to your observation station, explain to your kids that loud noises and a lot of movement may scare off the pollinators they are trying to watch. Also, remind students to focus on using their sight and hearing for this lesson.
4. Next visit your school garden or a nearby natural space to observe pollinators in action. Look for areas with large plantings of blooming flowers. Different pollinators will be active at different times of the day. For optimum observation, choose a comfortable spot to sit (bring a chair or blanket to sit on). Plan your observation time based on the age and attention of your kids. Younger children may only sit for a minute or two at a time, while older children may be able to focus for 15 to 30 minutes or maybe more.
5. Make note of the temperature and sunlight during your visits and other conditions like traffic and noise. Although a one-time observation session is certainly a fun exercise, it is a skill that will improve with practice and observations over time help kids to understand patterns and cycles. Make journaling a regular activity to gain the most from your garden and outdoor activities.



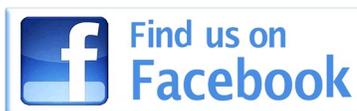
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## **Happy Healthy Me...Moving, Munching & Reading Around MyPlate for 4 to 6 Years Olds**

Combines stories and literacy with nutrition education.

## **Eating Healthy from Farm to Fork...Promoting School Wellness**

A nutrition education curriculum that makes the connection between local food systems, garden-based learning, school food service, and the establishment of healthy habits.  
(K-2nd Grade)

## **My Amazing Body - 1st Grade**

**Good for Me and You - 2nd Grade**

**It's My Choice...Eat Right! Be Active! - 3rd  
Grade**

These curricula promote healthy eating and physical activity. Children will gain skills to practice appropriate healthy behaviors.

## **Nutrition to Grow On**

A garden-enhanced nutrition education curriculum. Objectives: 1) Teach the importance of making healthful food choices; and 2) improve children's preference for fruits and vegetables by giving them an opportunity to work with the land and grow their own produce. (4th-6th Grade)

**DAN MACON, County Director**  
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