

Meal Patterns and Creditable Foods

In the Child and Adult Care Food Program

CACFP

Where Healthy Eating Becomes a Habit



CHILD & ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM

The goal of the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) is to improve the health and nutrition of children and adults in the program, while promoting the development of good eating habits through the use of nutrition education.

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Child and Adult Care Food Program Meal Patterns

Amounts and Types of Foods To Be Served to Children

Meal Components	Ages 1-2	Ages 3-5	Ages 6-12
Breakfast:			
Milk, fluid	1/2 cup	3/4 cup	1 cup
Juice or fruit or vegetable	1/4 cup	1/2 cup	1/2 cup
Bread/Grains:	1/2 slice	1/2 slice	1 slice
cornbread, biscuits, rolls, muffins	1/2 serving	1/2 serving	1 serving
cereal cold, dry or	1/4 cup or 1/3 ounce	1/3 cup or 1/2 ounce	3/4 cup or 1 oz
cereal hot, cooked	1/4 cup	1/4 cup	1/2 cup
Snack: select 2 of the 4 groups			
Milk, fluid	1/2 cup	1/2 cup	1 cup
Juice or fruit or vegetable	1/2 cup	1/2 cup	3/4 cup
Meat or meat alternate	1/2 ounce	1/2 ounce	1 ounce
Bread/Grains:	1/2 slice	1/2 slice	1 slice
cereal cold, dry or	1/4 cup or 1/3 ounce	1/3 cup or 1/2 ounce	3/4 cup or 1 oz
cereal hot, cooked	1/4 cup	1/4 cup	1/2 cup
Lunch or Supper:			
Milk, fluid	1/2 cup	3/4 cup	1 cup
Meat or alternate:			
Meat or poultry or fish	1 ounce	1 1/2 ounces	2 ounces
or egg	1	1	1
or cheese	1 ounce	1 1/2 ounces	2 ounces
or cooked dry beans or peas	1/4 cup	3/8 cup	1/2 cup
peanut butter	2 Tbsp.	3 Tbsp.	4 Tbsp.
other "butters"	1/2 ounce	3/4 ounce	1 ounce
nuts and seeds or yogurt	4 ounces	6 ounces	8 ounces
Vegetables and/or fruits (2 or more)	1/4 cup	1/2 cup	3/4 cup
Bread/Grains	1/2 serving or 1/2 slice	1/2 serving or 1/2 slice	1 serving or 1 slice

**Nuts and seeds may be credited towards meeting only 50% of the meat/meat alternate requirement. Nuts and seeds are not recommended for children under three.

Vitamin A -- Serve Foods High in Vitamin A at Least Twice a Week

Vegetables		Fruits	
Broccoli	Carrots	Apricots	Cantaloupe
Chard	Collards	Mango	Nectarined
Kale	Mustard Greens	Purple Plums	Watermelon
Plantain, Green or Ripe	Pepper, Sweet, Red	Watermelon	Honey Dew melon
Peas and Carrots	Pumpkin		
Spinach	Squash, Winter		Other
Sweet Potatoes	Tomatoes	Liver	Mackerel, canned
Tomato Juice, Paste, Puree	Turnip Greens	Cold Cereals, Fortified	Oatmeal, fortified
Vegetable Juice		Whole Milk and Its Products	

Serve Foods That Are a Good Sources of Iron Daily

Vegetables		Meat/Meat Alternates
Lima Beans	Spinach	Beef, Liver and other organ meats
Bread/Bread Alternates		Turkey, Chicken
Wheat Bread, Bagels, Pita, Soft Pretzels	Farina	Clams, Mussels, Oysters and other shellfish
Muffin, Bran; Noodles, cooked, Rice, White		Mackerel, Tuna Peanut Butter
Oatmeal, Fortified	Pretzels, soft	Dried Beans and Peas, Soybeans, Lentils

Definitions and/or Explanations



Creditable Foods: are those foods that may be counted toward meeting the meal pattern requirements for a reimbursable meal. Foods are determined to be creditable based upon the following factors: (1) nutrient content; (2) customary function in a meal; (3) compliance with regulations governing the Child Nutrition Programs (in quantity requirements and/or by definition); (4) compliance with FDA's Standards of Identity; (5) (if they are meat or meat products) compliance with USDA's standards for meat and meat products; and (6) compliance with administrative policy decisions on the crediting of popular foods.

Non-Creditable Foods: are those foods that do not count toward meeting meal pattern requirements because they do not meet the above criteria. Nevertheless, non-creditable foods often may supply additional nutrients and calories that help meet the energy and nutritional needs of participants. For example, the service of protein (such as eggs) at breakfast is not required but it contributes additional nutrients, improves the acceptability of meals, and satisfies appetites. USDA reimburses child and adult care centers and family day care home sponsors participating in the CACFP for the meals served to young children, not for individual foods. A meal is reimbursable if it contains those creditable foods in the amounts outlined in the CACFP meal patterns.

Child Nutrition Programs - Programs funded by the United States Department of Agriculture which include: the Child and Adult Care Food Program; the National School Lunch Program; the School Breakfast Program; the Nutrition Education and Training Program; the Special Milk Program; and the Summer Food Service Program.

Combination Foods - A single serving of a food item that contains two or more of the required meal components.

Commercial Gelatin Dessert - (powdered form or prepared) Gelatin is considered an "other food." The gelatin itself is not a creditable food item. Under certain circumstances the fruits, vegetables or juices used in gelatin products may be credited.

Component - A food grouped in a certain category according to the CACFP meal pattern. These categories are the milk component, meat/meat alternate component, fruit/vegetable component and the grain/bread component.

Fish - Self-caught fish are not creditable in the CACFP. Self-caught fish can be a safety hazard because of the danger of pollution and contamination.

Game - Venison, Squirrel, Rabbit, etc. For safety reasons, game is not creditable under the CACFP unless it is inspected and approved by the appropriate State or Federal agency.

Home Canned Foods - Again, for safety reasons, home canned foods are not allowed in meals reimbursed under the CACFP. Clostridium botulism is dangerous and can produce a deadly toxin in canned food. This poison can be present even when there is no evidence of spoilage.

Honey -A sweetener that must not be given or used in foods for infants under one year of age because it may contain botulism spores. In addition, it is very strongly recommended that corn syrup and maple syrup not be given or used in foods for infants since studies regarding their safety for this age group are still inconclusive.

Medical Exceptions - Substitutions for participants who are unable to consume regular program meals because of medical or other special dietary needs, may be made when supported by a statement from a recognized medical authority. **The statement must be signed by a licensed physician if the allergy or condition is severe and life threatening.** The medical statement should specify the food or foods to be omitted from the child or adult's diet and specify a choice of foods that may be substituted.

Reimbursement - is money received from the USDA for serving creditable meals and snacks to eligible participants.

Serving Size or Portion - is described by the weight, measure, or number of pieces, or slices. The serving size specified in the meal patterns can be credited toward meeting the meal pattern requirements.

The Facts About Milk

New Milk Requirements

Now, all individuals 2 years of age and older that participate in CACFP must receive either fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%) fluid milk. Whole milk and reduced-fat (2%) milk may **not** be served to participants over 2 years of age. With a doctor's prescription or a Statement for Special Diet Prescription, if a child can't consume milk for medical or dietary reasons they may be served a nutritionally equivalent non dairy alternative.

What Makes Milk Healthy?

Milk provides 9 vitamins, minerals, and nutrients that are important for maintaining a healthy body.

- **Calcium and Vitamin D:** builds and maintains strong bones and teeth
- **Protein:** helps muscle growth and gives you energy
- **Potassium:** maintains a healthy heart by supporting a healthy blood pressure
- **Vitamin A:** helps keep your skin healthy
- **Vitamin B12:** builds new red blood cells to carry oxygen in your body
- **Riboflavin:** gives you energy
- **Niacin:** helps your body break down sugars
- **Phosphorus:** helps to build strong bones

Fitting Milk into a Healthy Diet: The current dietary guidelines for milk are:

3- 8oz cups per day for individuals ages 9 and older.

2 ½ -8oz cups per day for children 2-8.

2- 8oz cups per day for children ages 2-3.

Drinking 3 cups of milk each day has the same amount of:

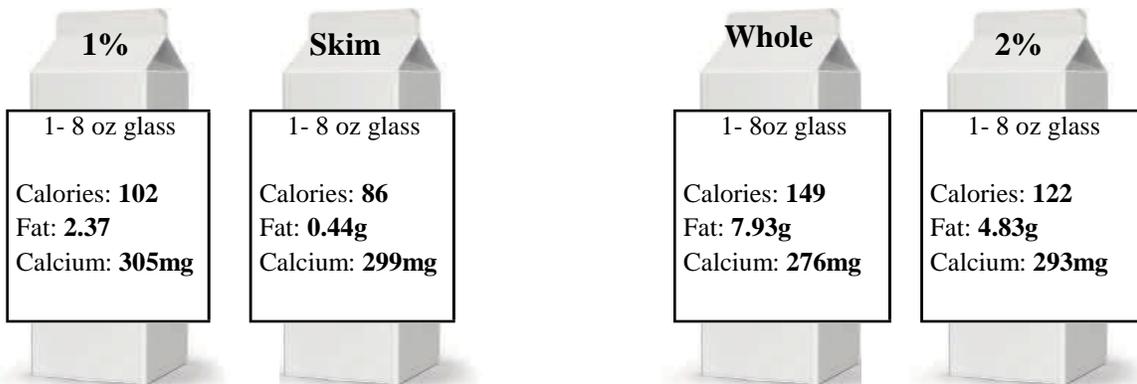
- Calcium as 22 cups of raw broccoli
- Potassium as 3 small bananas
- Protein as ½ of a chicken breast
- Vitamin A as 5 large hardboiled eggs



Low Fat and Skim Milk

vs.

Whole and 2% Milk



*Both low fat and skim milk have the same essential nutrients as whole and 2% milk, but with fewer calories and less fat. Helping you maintain a healthy body and weight. Fat free and skim milks are also fortified so they provide even **more calcium** than whole and 2%.

Alternatives to Milk

What is nondairy milk? Non dairy milk is a type of milk that is not produced from cows, but is made from different food products, such as soy. This type of milk does not contain lactose or any of the proteins that are present in cow’s milk, like casein.

What kind of non dairy milks are there? There are many different varieties of non dairy milks available such as goat, almond, rice, soy, hemp, and coconut milk. While there are many different types of non dairy milks available, only certain kinds are good alternatives that will provide the same nutrients as cow’s milk.

Why drink nondairy milk? If you are allergic to milk or lactose intolerant, certain non dairy milks are a good alternative that will provide the same nutrients as cow’s milk.

Nutrient Requirements for Non Dairy Alternatives

Nutrient	Quantity Per Cup	Recommended Daily Amount	Required % of Daily Value
Protein (g)	8g	50g	16.00%
Vitamin A (IU)	500IU	5000IU	10.00%
Vitamin D (IU)	100IU	400IU	25.00%
Vitamin B12 (mcg)	1.1mcg	6mcg	18.33%
Riboflavin (mg)	0.44mg	1.7mg	25.88%
Calcium (mg)	276mg	1000mg	27.60%
Magnesium (mg)	24mg	400mg	6.00%
Phosphorus (mg)	222mg	1000mg	22.20%
Potassium (mg)	349mg	3500mg	9.97%

Nutritionally Comparable to Milk

	8 oz. 8th Continent Soy Milk	8 oz. Pacific Ultra Soy Milk
Protein	8g, 16%	Protein 10g, 20%
Vit A	500IU, 10%	Vit A 500IU, 10%
Vit D	100IU, 25%	Vit D 100IU, 25%
Vit B12	1.2mcg, 20%	Vit B12 1.5mcg, 25%
Riboflavin	0.51mg, 30%	Riboflavin 0.51mg, 30%
Calcium	300mg, 30%	Calcium 500mg, 50%
Magnesium	24mg, 6%	Magnesium 0mg, 0%
Phosphorus	250mg, 25%	Phosphorus 150mg, 15%
Potassium	350mg, 10%	Potassium 380mg, 11%

Keep in mind, only enriched soymilk contains comparable amounts of calcium and other vitamins and minerals. Both brands featured are enriched, if you selected another product from those companies, you might not purchase a product that was nutritionally comparable to milk.

Nutrition Calculations

Turning a Quantity into a Percent
(Quantity ÷ Rec. Daily Amount) x 100%

Ex: Protein (g): $8g \div 50g = 0.16 \times 100\% = 16\%$

Turning a Percent into a Quantity
(% x 0.01) x Rec. Daily Amount

Ex: Calcium (mg): $27.6 \times 0.01 = 0.276 \times 1000mg = 276mg$

*Example of turning a percent into a quantity:

Vitamin A: $10 \times 0.01 = 0.1 \times 5000 = 500$ IU

*Example of turning a quantity into a percent:

Vitamin D: $100IU \div 400IU = 0.25 \times 100\% = 25\%$

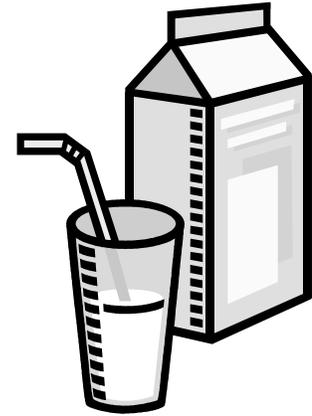
NOT Nutritionally Comparable to Milk

	8 oz. Almond Milk	8 oz. Rice Milk
Protein	1g, 0.2%	Protein 1g, 0.2%
Vit A	500IU, 10%	Vit A 500IU, 10%
Vit D	100IU, 25%	Vit D 100IU, 25%
Vit B12	0mcg, 0%	Vit B12 0mcg, 0%
Riboflavin	.51mg, 30%	Riboflavin 0mg, 0%
Calcium	0mg	Calcium 300mg
Magnesium	0 mg	Magnesium 0 mg
Phosphorus	0 mg	Phosphorus 0 mg
Potassium	40mg, 0.1%	Potassium 0 mg

MILK

CACFP regulations require that in order to be eligible for cash reimbursement, each breakfast, lunch, and supper must include fluid milk. Milk means pasteurized fluid types of unflavored or flavored 1% low fat milk or skim milk which meet State and local standards for such milk. It is recommended that children be served whole milk until two years old.

At breakfast, fluid milk must be served as a beverage or used on cereal, or used in part for each purpose. Both lunch and supper must contain a serving of fluid milk as a beverage. Refer to the CACFP meal pattern for the quantity requirements by age. If milk is one of the two components served for a snack, it must be fluid milk served as a beverage or used on cereal, or used in part for each purpose. For children, milk may not be credited for snacks when juice is served as the other component. Milk is not credited when used in cooking for such foods as cooked cereals, custards, puddings, or other foods. Breast milk is creditable under certain circumstances. Providers serving infants should refer to the Infant Feeding booklet for detailed guidance.



Questions and Answers about Milk

- Q: Why is reconstituted dry milk (powdered, dry milk) not creditable as fluid milk?

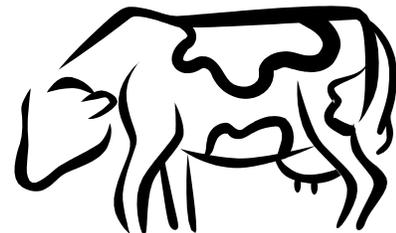
A: Reconstituted milk is not included in the definition of milk in the Program regulations. It is impossible to ensure that the quantities of dry milk and water used are adequate to provide the nutritional equivalent of fluid milk. Reconstituted milk may be used in an emergency situation where the availability of fluid milk has been affected.
- Q: If a child cannot have milk, can I still be reimbursed for breakfast and lunch?

A: Yes, if you obtain a completed “Statement for Special Diet Prescription” (attached).
- Q: Can the milk used in the preparation of products such as puddings, cream sauces, and ice cream count toward the milk requirement?

A: No, for children, the milk served must be served as a beverage and/or poured over cereal at breakfast or snack in order to be credited toward the milk requirement.
- Q: Can milk be purchased directly from a farm?

A: Yes, as long as it is pasteurized, fluid milk that meets State and local health standards. Also, it must include Vitamins A and D at levels consistent with State and local standards.
- Q: Can milkshakes be served to meet the milk requirement?

A: Yes, milkshakes served as a part of a reimbursable snack, lunch, or supper must contain a serving of milk. Only the milk portion of the milkshake is creditable.



Food	Creditable Yes / No	Explanation
Milk, fluid (unflavored or flavored)	YES	The milk served as part of any meal or snack for the purpose of reimbursement must be fluid milk. Not creditable for infants (under 12 months).
Chocolate Milk (cold)	YES	Chocolate milk is creditable if it meets State and local standards for milk.
Goats milk	YES	It must be pasteurized and meet State & local standards.
Lactose Reduced Milk	*	Lactose reduced milk is a fluid milk modified by the addition of lactase enzymes. The lactose (milk sugar) in this milk has been broken down into simple sugars. Children or adults who can not digest the lactose in milk may benefit from the use of lactose reduced milk. A medical statement must be on file for the person using lactose reduced milk.
Lowfat Milk/Light Milk or Reduced Fat Milks	YES	Lowfat 1% or fat-free skim mil is required for all children age 2 and older.
Skim Milk-Non/Fat Free Milk	YES	Skim milk is not recommended for children under two years of age.
Soy Beverages/Drinks	NO	Soy drinks and beverages are not fortified and do not contain Calcium, Niacin or Vitamins D, E, or C.
Soy or Soybean Milk, Fortified	*	Soybean milk may be used as a substitute because of medical or other special dietary needs. A medical statement must be on file for the person using soybean milk.
UHT (Ultra High Temperature) Milk	YES	UHT is a Grade A pasteurized milk that has been heated to about 280 degree F, cooled and packaged. It can be stored without refrigeration until opened.
Whole Milk	YES	For children age 1 only.
Chocolate (hot)	YES	Hot chocolate must be made with fluid milk; only the fluid milk portion is creditable.
Cocoa	YES	Cocoa must be made with fluid milk; only the fluid milk portion is creditable.
Cream	NO	Cream does not meet the definition of milk.
Cream Sauces	NO	Cream sauces do not meet the definition of milk.
Cream Soups	NO	Cream soups do not meet the definition of milk.
Custard	NO	Custard does not meet the definition of milk.
Eggnog, Commercial	YES	For commercial eggnog, only the fluid milk portion is creditable, and it must be 1% or fat-free.
Eggnog, Homemade	NO	Homemade eggnog requires the use of raw eggs which can present a health hazard.
Evaporated Milk	NO	Evaporated milk does not meet the definition of milk.
Half and Half	NO	Half and Half does not meet the definition of milk.
Ice Cream	NO	Ice cream does not meet the definition of milk.
Ice Milk	NO	Ice milk does not meet the definition of milk.
Imitation Milk	NO	Imitation milk does not meet the definition of milk.
Milkshakes	YES	Milkshakes may be used to meet the milk component of lunches, suppers, and supplements (snacks) served in the CACFP, if those milkshakes contain the minimum quantity of fluid milk per serving appropriate for the age group being served.
Pudding	NO	Pudding does not meet the definition of milk.
Pudding Pops	NO	Pudding pops do not meet the definition of milk.
Rice Milk	NO	Rice milk does not meet the definition of milk
Sherbet/Sorbet	NO	Sherbet does not meet the definition of milk.
Sour Cream	NO	Sour cream does not meet the definition of milk.
Yogurt	NO	Yogurt does not meet the definition of milk. Please refer to the crediting of yogurt under the meat/meat alternate component selection.

VEGETABLES AND FRUITS

Home canned fruit and vegetable products are **NOT** allowed for health and safety reasons. Fresh or frozen homegrown fruits and vegetables are creditable.



Questions and Answers about Fruit/Vegetables

1. Q: Can combination items such as fruit cocktail, mixed vegetables, or peas and carrots be used to meet the requirement of serving two or more fruits/vegetables at lunch and supper?

A: No, combination items are considered as only one item for crediting purposes.

2. Q: How are fruits and vegetables counted in combination dishes such as beef stew?

A: Only one fruit/vegetable component can be counted in a combination dish. For example, if beef stew contains stew meat, potatoes, carrots, and onions; the vegetables could only count for one fruit/vegetable component and an additional fruit or vegetable would need to be served.

3. Q: How do I prepare a homemade pizza so that it is creditable as a fruit/vegetable component?

A: This may be counted as one fruit/vegetable, and should include both pizza sauce **and** vegetable or fruit toppings. The amount of sauce on a commercial pizza is not sufficient.



4. Q: How can I tell if juice is 100% full strength juice?

A: The label will state "juice, full strength juice, single strength juice, 100% juice, reconstituted juice, juice from concentrate or juice concentrate." Juices that have the words cocktail, beverage, or drink are not 100% juice.

5. Q: Can we purchase homemade juices such as apple cider from local farm stands?

A: Yes, however, for safety reasons, we require that only pasteurized juice products be served. Most local farmers now pasteurize these products.

6. Q: Can the fruit in pudding or the fruit or vegetable in gelatin be counted?

A: Yes, however, at least 1/8 cup fruit/vegetable or fruit juice must be present in each serving. Gelatin or pudding alone will not meet CACFP requirements.

7. Q: Are edible wild plants such as dandelion greens, burdock, lambs quarters (pig weed), and seaweed creditable?

8. A: Yes, they are considered to be vegetables. However, caution should be used. These plants are grown in the wild and considered by some individuals to be weeds, therefore toxic pesticides may have been sprayed upon these plants. Safeguards for the use of wild plants should be developed.

Food	Creditable Yes / No	Explanation
Ade drinks	NO	These drinks do not contain at least 50% full strength juice.
Apple Cider	YES	Cider must be pasteurized.
Apple Fritters	*	Fritters must be homemade and have at least 1/8 cup of apples per serving.
Baked Beans	YES	Beans may not be credited both as a meat/meat alternate and as a vegetable in the same meal.
Banana in Bread	NO	It has less than 1/8 cup fruit per serving and may not be counted toward meeting requirements.
Banana in Pudding (fruit added)	YES	The pudding must have at least 1/8 cup banana (fruit) per serving
Barbecue Sauce	NO	
Bean Sprouts	YES	
Berries	*	Yes, if specific types(i.e. strawberries, blueberries etc.) are listed.
Cake Containing Fruit	NO	There is not enough fruit present.
Carrot Bread	NO	The bread contains less than 1/8 cup of carrot per serving and may not be counted to meet the vegetable/fruit requirement.
Catsup or Chili Sauce	NO	These products are condiments.
Corn Chips	NO	These are not classified as a fruit/ vegetable
Corn Syrup	NO	This is a sugar and is not recommended for children under one.
Cranberry Juice Blend	YES	Cranberry juice (not cranberry cocktail) in a blend with another 100% juice is creditable; for example cranberry juice mixed with apple juice.
Cranberry Juice Cocktail	NO	Cocktails contain less than 50% full strength juice.
Cranberry Sauce	YES	
Drinks, Fruit	NO	Fruit drinks contain less than 50% full strength juice.
Dried Fruit (I.e. Raisins, Apricots, Prunes)	YES	Dried fruits are concentrated.
Dry Spice Mixes	NO	
Fig Bar Cookies	NO	The amount of figs per serving is insufficient to count toward the fruit/vegetable component.
Frozen Fruit-flavored Bars	NO	These bars do not contain enough, if any, fruit juice.
Frozen Fruit Juice Bars	*	Fruit juice bars must contain a minimum of 50% full strength juice. Only the juice portion may be counted to meet the fruit/vegetable requirement. Specific fruit must be listed
Fruit Cobblers/Crisps	*	These must be homemade and contain at least 1/8 cup of fruit per serving. Specific fruit must be listed.
Fruit Juice Concentrates	*	Specific fruit must be listed.
Fruit Juice Bases	NO	Juice bases do not contain sufficient fruit per serving.
Fruit Drinks	NO	Drinks contain less than 50% full strength juice.
Fruit-flavored Canned Punch	NO	This product contains less than 50% full strength juice.
Fruit-flavored Powders (Kool-Aide)	NO	Fruit-flavored powders do not meet the definition of fruit.
Fruit Pie	*	Fruit pies must be homemade and contain at least 1/8 cup of fruit per serving. Specific type of fruit must be written.
Fruit Pie Filling	*	These products have a high sugar content. If the predominant ingredient is fruit, it will provide 1/2 credit; that is 1/2 cup fruit pie filling will provide 1/4 cup of fruit, unless otherwise documented. Specific fruit must be listed.
Fruit Sauces (Homemade)	*	The sauce must contain at least 1/8 cup or 2 Tbsp. of fruit or full strength fruit or vegetable juice per serving. Generally, commercial sauces have insufficient fruit content. These products are high in sugar. Specific fruit must be listed.

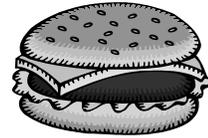
Fruit Snacks	NO	For example, bars, roll ups, wrinkles, cakes, gummy style products. These products do not contain sufficient amounts of fruit per serving.
Gelatin Deserts with Fruit and/or Vegetables	*	These desserts must contain at least 1/8 cup or 2 Tbsp. of fruit or full strength fruit or vegetable juice per serving. "Fruit flavored" gelatins are not creditable. Specific fruit must be listed.
Gravy Base	NO	This is not a vegetable.
Hominy	NO	Hominy is a grain/bread. It has no nutritional value other than minimal amounts of fiber and starch.
Honey	NO	Honey is a sugar not a fruit. This product is not recommended for children under one year of age.
Ice Cream, fruit flavors	NO	No fruit flavoring is creditable.
Jam	NO	Jam has insufficient fruit content per serving.
Jelly	NO	Jelly has insufficient fruit content per serving.
Juice Bars	*	With 100% juice only (see frozen fruit juice bars). Specific fruit must be listed.
Juice Blends- All Fruit	YES	These are combinations of full-strength juices. Specific fruits must be listed.
Juicy Juice	*	The specific type of juice must be listed (grape, apple, etc.)
Ketchup (Catsup)	NO	This is a condiment.
Lemon Pie Filling	NO	Lemon pie filling does not contain fruit solids, the juice contained requires dilution beyond the 50% limit for palatability.
Lemonade	NO	Lemonade is not 100% juice.
Macaroni Salad	NO	This is not a vegetable. Only the documented amount of vegetables in the salad may be credited if at least 1/8 cup per serving is prepared.
Maple Syrup	NO	Maple syrup is a sugar not a fruit.
Mayonnaise, Salad Dressing, Margarine, Salad Oil and Butter	NO	Mayonnaise, margarine, butter, salad oils and salad dressings are fats, not fruits or vegetables.
Melon	*	Specific types(i.e., watermelon, honeydew, cantaloupe, etc.) must be listed.
Mixed fruit, fruit salad, fruit cup	*	Specific fruit must be listed.
Onion Rings	*	They may be credited if they are homemade, or if a product specification sheet is available.
Olives	YES	They must have at least 1/8 cup per serving. High salt content should be noted.
Pickles	YES	They must have at least 1/8 cup per serving. High salt content should be noted.
Pineapple Upside-Down Cake	NO	There is less than 1/8 cup fruit per serving.
Pizza Sauce	YES	Pizza sauce may be credited as tomato sauce 'if at least 1/8 cup (2 TBSP) per serving is provided.
Pop Tart Filling	NO	There is not enough fruit present.
Popsicles	NO	These are not 100% juice.
Posole	NO	Posole is not made from the whole kernel corn.
Potato Chips	NO	These are "other foods". Fruit/vegetable chips are not creditable.
Preserves	NO	
Puddings with Fruit, Commercial	NO	Puddings have less than 1/8 cup of fruit per serving.
Pumpkin in Bread	NO	This has less than 1/8 cup of fruit per serving.
Rice, Whole Grain or Enriched	NO	Rice is not a vegetable. It is as a grain/bread.
Salsa both homemade and commercial	*	Salsa may be credited if the recipe documents that 1/8 cup (2 Tbsp.) of vegetables per serving is provided. For products that contain all vegetable ingredients plus minor amounts of spices or flavorings, 100% of the product may be used to meet the serving requirement.
Sherbet or Sorbets	NO	

Soup: Canned, condensed, frozen, ready to eat or homemade	*	These must be all vegetable or vegetable with some meat or poultry. 1 cup will yield 1/4 cup of vegetable. Specific vegetables must be listed.
Soup Mixes, dehydrated	NO	
Spaghetti Sauce (Tomato Sauce)	YES	Spaghetti sauce is credited as tomato sauce if 1/8 cup (2 Tbsp.) per serving is provided.
Stir-fry vegetable	*	The specific vegetables must be listed.
Syrup (Fruit Flavored)	NO	
Vegetable Juice Blends e.g. V-8 Juice	YES	This is a mixed, full strength vegetable juice. Creditable only for children age 1 or older.
Vegetables, Chopped	*	Vegetables such as celery, onions in prepared dishes, may be credited, provided that at least 1/8 cup (2 Tbsp.) per serving is supplied. Specific vegetables must be listed.
Yogurt, Commercial (Fruit Added)	YES	The yogurt must contain at least 1/8 cup fruit per serving.
Yogurt with Fruit, Commercial	NO	Commercial fruit yogurt has less than 1/8 cup fruit per serving.
Zucchini in Bread (Squash in Bread)	NO	This product has less than 1/8 cup per serving and may not be counted to meet the fruit requirement.

Vitamin C -- Serve Foods High in Vitamin C Daily		
Fruits	Vegetables	
Apples	Asparagus	Peppers, Sweet
Apple Juice	Bean Sprouts	Plantain, Green or Ripe Boiled
Banana	Broccoli	Poke Greens
Blackberries	Brussel Sprouts	Potatoes, White
Blueberries	Cabbage	Pumpkin
Cantaloupe	Cauliflower	Radishes
Grapefruit	Chard	Rutabagas
Grapefruit Juice	Collards	Snow Peas
Grape Juice	Green and Yellow Peas	Spinach
Honeydew melon	Kale	Squash, Summer
Kiwi	Lima Beans	Squash, Winter
Mandarin Oranges	Kohlrabi	Sweet Potatoes
Oranges	Mustard greens	Tomatoes
Orange Juice	Okra	Tomato Juice
Nectarines	Onion, Spring	Turnip Greens
Papaya	Parsnips	Turnips
Peaches		
Pears		
Pineapple		
Pineapple Juice		
Plums		
Pomegranates		
Raspberries		Other
Strawberries		Liver
Tangelos		Clams
Tangerines		Mussels
Watermelons		

MEAT / MEAT ALTERNATES

CACFP regulations require that a lunch or supper must contain the required serving amount of meat or meat/alternate specified in the meal pattern. A serving of meat or meat/alternate may be used as one of the two components of a snack. When a meat meat/alternate is served for snack, the amount specified in the snack pattern must be served. A meat/meat alternate is not required as part of a breakfast but it may be served as an optional component.



Meat and meat/alternates include lean meat, poultry, fish, cheese, an egg; yogurt, cooked dry beans or peas; nuts and seeds and their butters (except for acorn, chestnut and coconut). When cooked, if dried beans or peas are counted as a meat alternative they may not also be credited as a vegetable in the same meal.

Nuts and seeds may fulfill no more than one-half of the meat/meat alternate requirement for lunch/supper. You also should be aware of potential food intolerance or allergies with some populations. In such circumstances, you should make appropriate accommodations under the medical substitution requirement.

Questions and Answers About Meat/Meat Alternates

- Q: Why are nuts and seeds and nut and seed butters allowed as a meat alternate?

A: Food consumption habits and food preferences are influenced by many cultural, ethnic, economic, religious, and environmental factors. These habits constantly are changing and therefore, affect how foods are used in meals. In the past, nuts had always been considered a snack food. Now nuts, seeds, and a variety of nut or seed butters are becoming more popular at meal times in main dishes. The use of these products as a meat alternate reflects current food consumption habits and nutrition information. **Nuts are not recommended for children under three years of age because choking may occur. Some individuals may have food intolerance or allergies to these foods.**
- Q: Are grated romano and parmesan cheeses creditable?

A: Yes, however, small amounts of these cheeses, when used as a garnish or seasoning, or in a breading, should not be counted toward meeting the meat/meat alternate requirement of a meal. For both romano and parmesan cheeses, a 3/8 cup serving provides 1 oz. of meat alternate.
- Q: Can pizza be credited as a meat/meat alternate?

A: Yes. It should be either a homemade pizza with a recipe on file or should have additional cheese added.
- Q: Can vegetarian meals be served in the CACFP?

A: Yes, but they must meet meal pattern requirements. Examples of acceptable vegetarian meat alternates that are creditable in the CACFP include natural and processed cheese, cheese foods, cheese spreads, cottage cheese, eggs, yogurt, cooked dry beans and peas, nut and seed butters or any combination of the above. Meat alternatives such as tofu, seitan and tempeh are **not** creditable meat alternatives.
- Q: We have several children that attend our day care that cannot eat certain foods because of religious reasons. Can we claim these children on the food program?

A: Yes. In many cases substitutions to accommodate religious dietary restrictions can be made within existing meal pattern requirements. In those cases, the provider may make such adjustments as are needed.
- Q: Must yogurt be offered in four-ounce portions in order to be credited?

A: Although yogurt is credited at a ratio of four ounces of yogurt to one ounce of meat, this does not mean that programs are limited to offering yogurt in four ounce or eight ounce servings.
- Q: How are cups of commercially prepared yogurt containing fruit to be credited? Does the volume of fruit have to be subtracted from the total weight of the containers?

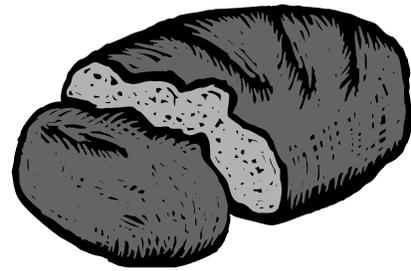
A. Commercially prepared fruit and non-fruiting yogurt products both receive full crediting toward the meat/meat alternate requirement, based on the portion size by weight/volume in the carton: e.g., four ounces of either fruited or non-fruiting yogurt fulfill the equivalent of one ounce of meat/meat alternate.

Food	Creditable Yes / No	Explanation
Acorns	NO	Acorns have a low protein content.
Baco-Bits	NO	This may be a soy product.
Bacon, Imitation Bacon Products	NO	These products are considered as fats with little protein.
Barbecue	*	Must note type of meat (pork, beef, chicken, etc)
Beef Jerky	YES	Beef Jerky made with pure beef may be credited. 1 ounce of dried jerky equals 1 ounce lean, cooked meat. High sodium content and is difficult to chew.
Bologna	YES	All meat (or poultry) products that do not contain by products, cereal or extenders. Please see the entry under hot dogs.
Canadian Bacon or Mild Cured Pork	YES	1 lb. (16 oz.) will yield 11 servings of 1 oz. each of cooked, lean meat.
Canned or Frozen Stew, Beef-a-Roni, Chili Macaroni, Pot Pies, Ravioli, Pizza	NO	These must be homemade to be creditable as a meat serving.
Canned, Pressed Luncheon Meat (Potted/ Deviled)	NO	This product has a high salt and fat content.
Cheese Foods, Cheese Substitutes and Cheese Spreads	YES	A 2 oz. Serving equals 1 oz of meat alternate.
Cheese, Imitation	NO	
Cheese, Products	NO	While cheese foods and spreads have a Standard of Identity, cheese products do not.
Cheese, Natural or Processed	YES	
Cheese, Cottage or Ricotta	YES	The portion size must be doubled. (A 2 ounce serving equals 1 once meat/meat alternate).
Chestnuts	NO	Chestnuts have a low protein content.
Chicken Nuggets	YES	Only the edible chicken portion is creditable as a meat.
Chicken Wings	YES	
Chitterlings	NO	
Coconuts	NO	Coconuts have a low protein content.
Corn Dogs	YES	The crust is credited like cornbread. The frankfurter is credited as a meat/meat alternate.
Crab, Imitation	NO	The processing washes away all vitamins
Cream Cheese	NO	Cream cheese contains less protein and more fat than creditable cheeses.
Deviled Eggs	YES	
Eggs	YES	Eggs are credited only when cooked. Raw eggs are a potential health hazard.
Fish Sticks	YES	Only the edible fish portion is creditable as a meat alternate.
Frankfurters or Hot Dogs	YES	All meat (or poultry) products that do not contain by products, cereal or extenders. Remember to serve hot dogs in small pieces to prevent a potential choking hazard.
Frankfurters, Imitation	NO	
Game, I.e. Squirrel, Venison, etc.	NO	Game, for safety reasons, is not creditable.
Home Slaughtered Meat	NO	Home Slaughtered Meat, for safety reasons, is not creditable.
Ham Hocks	NO	Ham hocks are high in fat and low in protein.
Kidney	YES	
Liver	YES	
Liverwurst or Luncheon Meat	YES	All meat or poultry products that do not contain by-products, cereal or extenders may be credited.
Meat Sauce, Meatballs, Meatloaf, Sloppy Joes	*	Only homemade may be credited. Type of meat used (beef,pork, turkey, etc.) must be noted.

Neufchatel Cheese	NO	A soft, un-ripened cheese, similar to cream cheese.
Nuts	*	Count as a half serving and must be served with another meat/meat alternate. Choking hazards to children under 3.
Oxtails	NO	This product has an insufficient amount of meat.
Peanut Butter	YES	Peanut butter has to be served in combination with another meat/meat alternate during lunch and/or dinner to meet required portions.
Reduced Fat Peanut Butter	YES	It must contain 90% peanuts or peanut flour.
Peas or Lentils (dried)	YES	
Pepperoni	NO	Only CN labeled pepperoni may be credited.
Pig's Feet, Neck bones or Tails	NO	These products contain small amounts of meat and are high in fat products.
Pimento Cheese	YES	A 2 oz. serving equals 1 oz. of meat/meat alternate.
Pizza, Homemade	YES	The amounts of meat/meat alternate ingredients must be identified and documented.
Pizza, Commercial	NO	Crust is creditable as bread but you must add additional meat or cheese in order for it to be creditable as meat.
Polish Sausage	YES	A cooked, smoked sausage, similar in composition to frankfurters, knockwurst and similar sausage products.
Pot Pies, Commercial	NO	These products do not contain adequate amounts of meat.
Pot Pies, Homemade	YES	The meat in homemade pot pies can be credited if there is sufficient meat/meat alternate.
Potted Meat I.e. "Deviled" Meats	NO	These products are high in sodium and include binders and extenders.
Powdered Cheese in Boxed Macaroni and Cheese	NO	Powdered cheese mix is not creditable. Macaroni, if enriched, can be credited toward the grain/bread requirement.
Pressed Meat Products; I.e. "Spam"	YES	This product is high in sodium and fat.
Quiche, homemade	YES	The egg, cheese, and/or meat may be credited if there is sufficient meat/meat alternate per serving.
Roast	*	Specific meat must be listed (chicken, beef, pork, etc)
Salt Pork	NO	This product is extremely high in fat.
Scrapple	NO	Scrapple has insufficient meat content.
Seeds	YES	Seeds may receive no more than one-half credit. Be careful, avoid choking hazards with preschoolers.
Shellfish	YES	Shellfish must be fully cooked. Caution: allergies to these foods are common.
Shellfish, Imitation	NO	
Soups, Homemade with Meat or Meat Alternate	YES	Homemade soups are creditable as a source of meat/meat alternate if the amount of meat per serving can be identified and documented.
Soups, Commercial	NO	Commercial soups contain insufficient meat/meat alternate content per serving.
Soy Butter	YES	Soy butter provides a good alternative to peanut butter. Soy butter is credited like peanut butter.
Spare Ribs	*	Only the lean meat portion is creditable.
Tempe	NO	Tempe is fermented soybean.
Tofu	NO	Tofu is soy bean curd.
Tripe	YES	
Vienna Sausage	YES	This product is high in sodium and fat.
Yogurt, Commercial Plain, Un-flavored, Flavored, Sweetened	YES	Yogurt, low fat, and nonfat yogurt may be credited. 8 oz of yogurt equals 2 oz of meat/meat alternate.
Yogurt, Homemade	NO	There are potential safety concerns with this product
Frozen Yogurt, Bars, Yogurt coating on fruit or nuts	NO	These are considered "other" foods. There is insufficient yogurt in the coating mixtures.

BREAD / BREAD ALTERNATE / GRAINS

Bread products are important dietary sources of iron, thiamin, niacin, riboflavin and often, of fiber. Grains / breads served in the CACFP must meet the following criteria to be creditable: The grain/bread must be whole grain or enriched or made from whole-grain or enriched meal or flour or if it is a cereal, the product must be whole grain, enriched, or fortified. Bran, cornmeal and germ are credited in the same way as are enriched or whole grain meals or flours. The product label must indicate that the product is enriched or whole grain, made from enriched or whole grain meal or flour as well as bran and/or germ, or is fortified.



The grain / bread must be served as an accompaniment to, or as a recognizable integral part of the main dish and not just an ingredient. Toaster pastries, coffeecakes, doughnuts, and sweet rolls are allowed for breakfast and snacks. Cookies (including bar cookies, brownies, rice krispy treats, granola bars, nutrigain bars) are creditable at snacks only and no more than twice a week. All breads must be made with enriched or whole grain meal or flour, and enriched flour or whole grain must be the first listed ingredient on the label.

Questions and Answers about Grain/Breads

1. Q: Are Fig bar cookies creditable as a grain/bread?

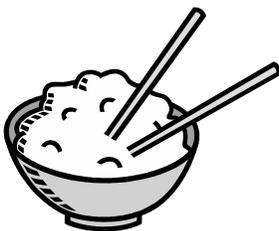
A: Yes, however, cookies may be used for snack only and no more than twice weekly.

2. Q: Can nut or seed meal or flour be used to meet the grain/bread requirement for a meal?

A: No. Nuts and seeds are not grains and there are no standards of enrichment for these products.

3. Q: Can pie crusts, crisps, and cobblers be credited as a grain/bread?

A: Pie crust can be credited when it is being served as an accompaniment to, or as an integral part of the main dish. Dessert pies are creditable only as snack. Fruit turnovers may be served for snacks and breakfasts only. Crisps or cobbler crusts served as a part of a dessert are not creditable.



4. Q: Is granola cereal an acceptable grain/bread equivalent?

A: Yes, commercial and homemade granola cereals are acceptable

5. Q: Can crackers be served as a grain/bread equivalent?

A: Yes, both sweet and non-sweet crackers can be served as a grain/bread equivalent for breakfast, lunch, supper or snack.



Food	Creditable Yes / No	Explanation
Bagel	YES	
Bagel Chips	YES	high in fat and sodium. Potential choking hazards.
Banana Bread	YES	
Barley	YES	It must be enriched or whole grain.
Biscuits	YES	
Boston Brown Bread	YES	
Bread Pudding, "HM"	YES	Must be homemade, creditable for snack only
Breading / Batter	NO	
Brownies	YES	Counts as a bar cookie. See "Cookies"
Cakes, cupcakes	NO	Does not fit the definition of bread.
Carrot Bread	YES	
Cereal	*	First ingredient must be enriched flour or whole grain. Specific cereal (Cheerios, Kix, etc.) must be listed.
Chips, Corn/cornmeal	YES	Must use whole grain or enriched flours.
Chips, Potato	NO	Fruit and vegetable chips are not creditable.
Chow Mein Noodles	YES	
Coffee Cake, Rolls, Cinnamon/Danish	YES	These may be credited for breakfast and snacks only.
Cookies	*	First ingredient must be enriched flour or whole grain. Specific type (choco. chip, oatmeal, etc.) must be listed. Snacks only and no more than twice a week.
Cornbread	YES	
Corndog Breading	YES	Breading is creditable and must be listed on bread line.
Cornpone	YES	
Couscous	YES	This pasta product must be enriched or whole grain.
Crackers	*	Specific type (i.e.. Graham, saltine) must be listed
Cream Puff Shells	YES	This item may be credited for snack only.
Crepes	YES	
Croissants	YES	These are high in fat.
Croutons	YES	
Danish / Doughnuts	YES	Creditable for breakfast and snack only.
Dumplings	YES	
Egg Roll Or Won Ton Wrappers	YES	
English Muffins	YES	
Fig Bar	YES	This item is credited the same as cookies, snack only.
French Toast	YES	
Fried Bread	YES	
Gingerbread	YES	Snack only.
Granola Bars	YES	Counts as a bar cookie. See "Cookies"
Grits	YES	This product must be whole grain or enriched.
Hominy	NO	Hominy is not made from the whole kernel of corn.
Hushpuppies	YES	
Ice Cream Cones	NO	
Ice Cream Sandwich Wafers	YES	The wafers may be credited as a serving of cookies, for snack only.
Italian Bread	YES	
Johnny Cake	YES	
Macaroni (in Boxed Macaroni & Cheese)	YES	The powdered cheese mix is not creditable. The macaroni, if enriched, can be credited as a bread.

Muffins	YES	
Nachos	YES	This product must be enriched or whole grain.
Noodles	YES	
Nutri-grain bar	YES	Creditable for snack only. Counts as a bar cookie.
Pie Crust (with meat and/or vegetables)	YES	Must be an integral part of, or an accompaniment to the main dish as in beef or chicken pot pies.
Pie Crust (dessert)	YES	This item may be credited as a snack only.
Pita	YES	
Pizza Dough	YES	
Pop Tarts	YES	For breakfast or snack only.
Popcorn	NO	Little nutritional value. Choking hazard.
Popover	YES	Creditable as a bread only.
Potato Pancakes	NO	These count as a vegetable.
Pretzel, Soft or Hard	YES	
Puff Pastry	YES	See "pie crust". Puff pastry is high in fat.
Pumpernickel Bread	YES	
Pumpkin Bread	YES	
Quinoa	YES	A whole-grain flour. Seeds may be red, black or white.
Raisin Bread	YES	
Rice, White or Brown	YES	This product must be enriched or whole grain.
Rice Cakes	YES	
Rice Krispy Treats	YES	Creditable as snack only. Counts as a bar cookie.
Sapodillas	YES	Considered a doughnut. See "doughnuts".
Spoon Bread	YES	Credited in the same group as cornbread.
Squash Bread, Zucchini Bread	YES	Quick breads are credited in the same group as those muffins other than corn. See banana bread.
Stuffing, Bread, Dry	YES	
Sweet Rolls/Buns	YES	Creditable for breakfast and snacks only.
Turnover Crust	YES	See "pie crust".
Tapioca	NO	
Taco / Tortilla Shells	YES	The shells must be enriched, fortified, or whole grain.
Taco Chips	YES	The chips must be enriched, fortified, or whole grain.
Wafers, Vanilla	YES	These are cookies. Credited for snacks only.
Wheat Germ/Bran	YES	Credited like whole grain meal or flour.

A Menu Checklist

Use this checklist as a reminder when planning menus. Remember, menus must meet the CACFP Meal Requirements in order to be reimbursed for those meals or snacks.

Variety in Meals:

- Prepare a type of food in different ways. For instance, instead of always serving mashed potatoes, try scalloped potatoes, oven baked potatoes, etc.
- Offer more fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Offer unusual fruits or vegetables such as kiwi, jicama, etc.
- Serve special menus for holidays, theme days or serve cultural or ethnic foods.
- Serve foods with a variety of color, texture, shape, flavor, and food temperature.
- If you are using cycle menus, review for changes periodically. Use seasonal foods.
- Make use of common foods in different ways. For instance, instead of always serving cheese cubes, try serving a cheese dip or use cheese in cooking.
- Serve a variety of meat or meat alternates during the week. For example, during one week serve fish, dried beans, chicken, beef and pork.

Healthier Menus:

- ❑ Serve foods lower in salt, fat, and sugar.
- ❑ Serve foods higher in fiber, such as whole grains, fruits, vegetables, and beans.
- ❑ Enhance flavors with spices, herbs, or lemon juice instead of with salt or fat.
- ❑ When serving canned or frozen fruit, use fruit packed in its own juice, light syrup or water. If fruit is packed in heavy syrup, drain the syrup and rinse fruit.
- ❑ Only serve dried fruits (such as raisin, prunes, and apricots) occasionally since they stick to children's teeth and promote tooth decay.
- ❑ Reduce serving highly processed foods such as hot dogs and bologna, which are high in fat, salt, and sugar.
- ❑ Bake, broil, or steam foods instead of pan frying or deep-frying them.
- ❑ Serve lean meats, trim visible fat, and drain grease from meat.

Crediting Combination Foods

You may credit some combination foods for a maximum of three different meal components.

1. Meat/meat alternate
2. Grain/bread
3. Fruit/vegetable (count as one component only)

Example: Hamburger on a bun with lettuce and tomatoes

Credit as:

Meat/meat alternate	hamburger
Grain/bread	hamburger bun
Fruit/vegetable	lettuce and tomatoes

Example: Taco

Credit as:

Bread	taco shell
Meat	ground beef/cheese/refried beans
Vegetable	lettuce and tomato

Example: Stew/soup (homemade only)

Credit as:

Meat	stew beef
Vegetable	potatoes, carrots, onions, etc.
Bread	egg noodles/barley/etc.

Example: Fruit Smoothie (homemade)

Credit as:

Milk	fluid milk
Fruit/vegetable	strawberries/banana/etc.

Combination foods, in beverage form made from milk and solid fruits (or juice concentrates), may be credited at all meals and snacks as meeting the above meal components. However, the amounts served must meet meal pattern requirements.

Crediting Some Popular Foods

Snack/Party Mixes, Trail Mixes: (sometimes also called “bird seed”). These are snack food mixtures with a variety of items including such items as nuts, cereals, seeds, dried fruits etc. These items cannot be credited unless the menu contains an explanation of the creditable ingredients included in the mix on the menu.

Gelatin with Fruit: Only the fruit or vegetable portion of a fruited gelatin will contribute toward the fruit/vegetable component if it is made with water as directed. To be creditable, each serving must include at least 1/8 cup (2 Tbsp.) of fruit or vegetable.

Peanut Butter and Jelly Sandwich: The minimum portion size for 3-4 year olds is three Tbsp. of peanut butter which is often too much to be consumed by a preschool child. We require that a second meat/meat alternate (such as cheese cubes or ½ of a hard cooked egg) be served along with a smaller serving of the peanut butter.

Pickle Slices: Since pickles are high in sodium and low in nutrients. We encouraged you to serve pickles as a garnish with other fruits and/or vegetables.

Popcorn: Popcorn is not credited in the CACFP because of its low nutritive value. Three cups of non-fat popped corn are equivalent to one slice of bread. The use of popcorn as an “other” food for this age group is also discouraged because of the potential risk of choking with preschoolers.

Quiche: Homemade quiche may be credited toward the meat/meat alternate if it contains sufficient egg, cheese or meat to meet portion size requirements. Please note that bacon is considered an “other” food and may not be credited. The crust may be credited toward meeting the bread/bread alternate if it is a recognizable, integral part of the main dish or is served as an accompaniment to the main dish.

Raisins: We recommend that smaller portions of raisins be served, such as 1/8 cup (2 Tbsp.), because preschoolers may not be able to digest larger portions of dried fruit. In addition, since raisins have a sweet, sticky consistency, potentially increasing the risk of dental cavities, you may wish to consider adding a crunchy item to the menu to help preclude this concern.

Seasonings, Garnishes and Condiments: Condiments, garnishes and seasonings are not creditable food items. They serve as extras to enhance the acceptability of the meal.

Ways to Encourage Children to Have Positive Attitudes Toward Food

- Have a positive attitude toward foods and the mealtime experience. Remember, a negative attitude expressed by adults and other children may influence children not to try that food.
- When introducing a new food to children, serve a small amount of the new food along with more popular and familiar foods.
- Include children in food activities to encourage them to try new foods and also to gain self-confidence.
- Encourage children to eat food or new foods in a low-key way. For instance, read a book about a new food and serve the new food at snack when children are more hungry.
- Expose children to new foods ten to fifteen times instead of only once or twice. The more exposure that children have to a food, the more familiar and comfortable it becomes, and the more likely that they will try the food.

- Offer the new food first to a child who eats most foods. Children will often follow other children and try the food.
- Have staff eat with the children. Have them eat the same foods that have been prepared for the children.
- Serve finger foods such as meat or cheese cubes, vegetable sticks, or fruit chunks. Foods that are cut into smaller pieces are easier for children to handle.
- Do not force a child to eat. Children often go through food jags. It is normal for a child to ask for second helpings of food one day and yet eat very lightly the next day.
- Provide a comfortable atmosphere at mealtime. Mealtime is also a social activity, so allow children to talk with others.
- Present food attractively. Remember that we all make decisions to try or not to try food depending upon how food looks and smells. Think about colors, textures and temperatures.
- Do not offer bribes or rewards for eating foods. This practice only reinforces the idea that certain foods are not desirable.

Safety and Sanitation Tips

- Wash your hands before preparing food—and see that children wash before eating.
- Food should be kept at the proper temperature. Hot foods should be kept at a temperature of 140 degrees or higher. Cold foods should be kept at 40 degrees or lower. Frozen foods should be kept at 0 degrees or lower.
- Do not serve foods made with raw eggs, nor allow children to eat raw batters; such products are at risk for bacterial contamination.
- Wash all produce with running water—even food in bags marked pre-washed. Such a label does not guarantee that the produce is free of bacteria or microscopic parasites.
- Rinse fruits such as melons and oranges just before cutting them. This prevents bacteria from spreading from the surface to the inside.
- Remove stems which collect dirt.
- Discard broken fruit.
- Keep cut fruit refrigerated. Bacteria multiply rapidly at room temperature.
- Food should never remain unrefrigerated for extended periods of time, (i.e., in the kitchen, at a barbecue or picnic, or on a salad bar). Maximum time food can be unrefrigerated or unheated is 2 hours. After that, food should be discarded.
- Wash utensils and surfaces that have touched raw meat or poultry with soap and hot water to avoid contaminating other food. Do not use the same platters and/or utensils for uncooked and cooked meat or poultry dishes. Follow local or State health codes regarding sanitation solutions.
- Hamburgers and poultry should be completely cooked so that the interior has no pink coloration and juices are clear. Follow local or State health codes regarding interior temperatures.
- Do not use left over marinades to baste meats. Prepare and reserve a separate batch to baste. Do not reuse marinades.