

because they may contain bacteria (Salmonella) that can cause illness. See page 88 for more information on proper handling of home-prepared eggs.

Cheese and Yogurt

Cheese may be introduced to infants 8 months or older. Small thin slices or strips of cheese are easier and safer. Do not feed chunks of cheese, which can cause choking. If serving cheese, regular cheese (such as natural cheddar, colby, or mozzarella) and cottage cheese are the best choices. Cheese food, cheese spread, and pasteurized process cheese are generally higher in salt than regular cheeses or cottage cheese. **Commercially prepared plain yogurt, made from low-fat or whole milk, may be introduced and served in small amounts to infants 8 months and older.** Since cheeses and yogurt are made from cow's milk, observe babies closely for reactions if fed these foods.

NOTE: In accordance with CACFP Policy Memos #130C and #130H dated (04/09), yogurt may not be credited for infants under 12 months of age.

Dried Beans or Peas

Any cooked dry beans and dry peas, such as kidney beans, lima beans, pinto beans, or chick peas, may be served to babies 8 months or older. Serve small quantities (1 to 2 teaspoons) of mashed or pureed cooked beans or peas at first. Modify the texture of cooked dry beans and dry peas for a baby (cooked whole beans or peas could cause choking). Home-prepared dry beans or dry peas are more economical and lower in sodium than commercially canned beans. However, if canned beans are used, drain the salty water and rinse the beans with clean water before using. As with any food, if a baby does not like beans or appears to have difficulty digesting them, do not serve them. To prepare dry beans and peas, follow cooking instructions found on the package label or in many basic cookbooks.

Bread and Crackers

Bread or crackers may be served at the snack or with meals throughout the course of the day. Consult with each baby's parent about bread and crackers being introduced at home so that you can serve the same food at the same time. At 8 or 9 months of age, babies enjoy having finger foods so they can practice picking up the foods. Also, at that age a baby's risk of having a reaction to wheat decreases. Examples of foods to serve babies include:

- Strips or small pieces of dry bread or toast or crackers,
- Plain crackers preferably low in salt such as low salt soda crackers (avoid crackers with seeds, nuts, or whole grain kernels),
- Small pieces of soft tortilla or soft pita bread, or
- Teething biscuits.

