

Crediting Foods in **CACFP**



Department
of Health

Child and
Adult Care
Food Program

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Table of Contents



Purpose of this Guide	2
Eat Well Play Hard	3
Meal Pattern Requirements and Recommendations	4
Child Nutrition (CN) Label	6
Milk	7
Vegetables/Fruits.....	13
Grains/Bread.....	21
Meat/Meat Alternates	31
Infant Foods	39
Water	47
Appendix A: Sample Menus.....	49
Appendix B: Recipe Analysis	50
Appendix C: Meat Alternates for Vegetarian Menu Planning	51
Appendix D: Choking Prevention	52
Appendix E: Milk Substitutes	53
Appendix F: How to Identify Whole Grains	54
Index	55

Purpose of this Guide



Crediting Foods in CACFP is a guide to help you determine if a food counts toward the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Meal Pattern requirements.

Creditable foods are those that may be counted toward meeting the requirements for a reimbursable meal. Foods are creditable based on the following:

- nutrient content
- function of the food in a meal
- CACFP Meal Pattern requirements
- Food and Drug Administration and United States Department of Agriculture standards and policy decisions

Non-creditable foods are those that do not count toward the meal pattern requirements. However, these foods may supply additional nutrients and add color, taste and texture to meals.

A meal is reimbursable only if it contains creditable foods for each required component in the amounts outlined in the CACFP Meal Patterns.

This guide has a section for each meal pattern component:

- milk
- vegetables/fruits
- grains/bread
- meat/meat alternates

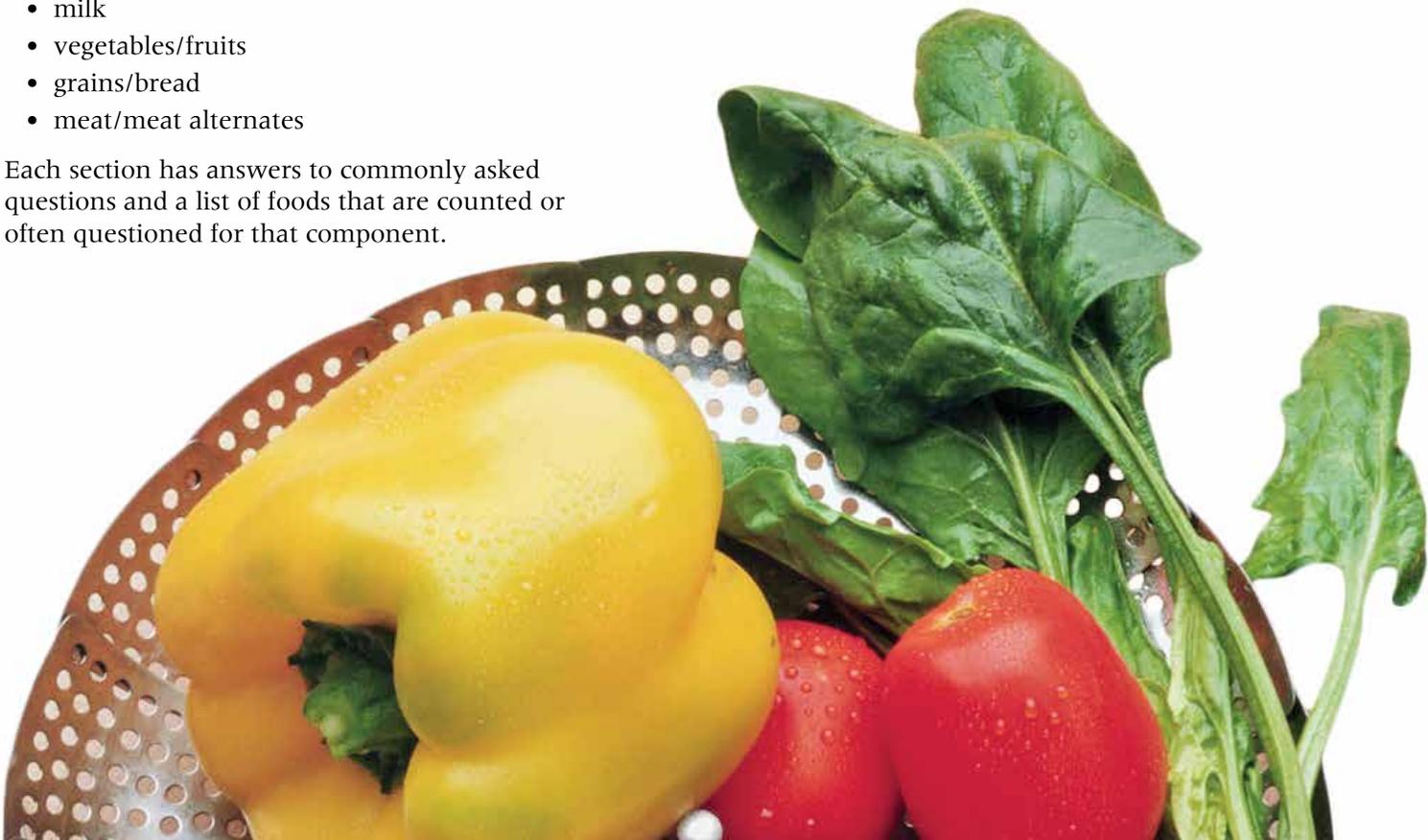
Each section has answers to commonly asked questions and a list of foods that are counted or often questioned for that component.

To help you make the healthiest choices for the children in your care, each food component list has three sections:

- **Recommended** – These are healthy food choices that meet CACFP Meal Pattern requirements. Serve these foods often.
- **Not Recommended but Allowed** – These are less healthy food choices that meet CACFP Meal Pattern requirements. Serve these foods only occasionally.
- **Not Allowed** – These foods do not count toward CACFP Meal Pattern requirements.

This guide does not include every food that may be served. For further information, check the United States Department of Agriculture's *Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs*. It is available at the following website: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/food-buying-guide-for-child-nutrition-programs>. This guide will help you decide how much food to prepare to meet CACFP Meal Pattern requirements.

If you have any further questions, please call **1-800-942-3858** or visit www.health.ny.gov/CACFP.



Eat Well Play Hard



Mealtime Environment for Children

An important part of promoting the health of children is providing healthy food served in a pleasant, enjoyable environment. Follow these tips to promote good eating habits in children.

- Serve food family style, with children serving themselves from common bowls and pitchers.
- Have adults sit with children and eat the same food that the children are eating.
- Let children decide how much and what foods they wish to eat.
- Encourage, but do not force, children to try new foods.
- Focus on each other and the food you are all eating. Keep the TV turned off.

Eat Well Play Hard

CACFP is concerned with the health of New York State children because:

- The most common nutrition concern is childhood obesity.
- In New York State, 29% of low-income preschoolers and 34% of school-age children are overweight or obese. Children who remain overweight through their teens are more likely to be overweight as adults.
- Overweight adults are at higher risk for diabetes, heart disease and other medical problems.

CACFP encourages New York State child care programs to get children and adults to Eat Well and Play Hard by adopting these five strategies. As a child care provider, you are a vital resource in reversing these statistics. From the foods and beverages you choose to serve, to the amount of time you allot for physical activity, you have a tremendous influence on the health and well-being of children in care.

1. Increase physical activity

appropriate for their age

- Provide opportunities for children to engage in daily active play. Children should play at least 60 minutes per day.
- Encourage caregivers and parents to be physically active with children

2. Decrease screen time

- Turn off the TV, video tapes, DVDs and screen games, tablets and phones
- No screen time for children under 2 years
- No screen time during meals and snacks

3. Increase fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%) dairy foods

for children 2 years of age and older

- Offer fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%) milk
- Select reduced-fat or part-skim cheeses
- Use low-fat dairy foods in cooking

4. Increase the number of vegetables and fruits served

- Choose vegetables or fruits for snacks
- Limit fruit juice to one serving per day
- Offer a variety of vegetables and fruits
- Provide fresh vegetables and fruits often
- Serve vegetables or fruits for breakfast
- Serve at least one vegetable at lunch and supper

5. Increase the initiation and duration of exclusive breastfeeding

Become a Breastfeeding-Friendly Child Care Center or Breastfeeding-Friendly Day Care Home. Contact CACFP for information or visit our website at www.health.ny.gov/CACFP.

Meal Pattern Requirements and Recommendations



Food Group	REQUIREMENTS	RECOMMENDATIONS
Milk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children 1-year-old: unflavored whole milk. • Children 2-18 years and adults: unflavored low-fat (1%) or unflavored fat-free (skim) milk. • Flavored milk served to children 6 years and older and adults must be fat-free. • The menu must specify the type of milk served (i.e., whole, low-fat or 1%, and fat-free or skim) and if it is flavored. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve only unflavored milk to all participants. • If flavored milk is served to children 6 years and older, or adults, check the Nutrition Facts Label to limit sugar to 22 grams or less per cup (8 ounces).
Vegetables/Fruits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One vegetable and one fruit, or two different vegetables must be served at lunch and supper to children 1-year-old and older and adults. • Juice is limited to one serving per day for children 1-year-old and older and adults. • Only 100% juice may be offered. • Juice must not be served to infants before age 1. • When developmentally ready, a vegetable or fruit, or both, must be served at meals and snack for infants 6 months of age to their first birthday. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve a variety of vegetables and fruits. • Serve vegetables and fruits as snacks. • Each week, provide at least one serving of dark green, red and orange vegetables. • One or more servings of vegetables/fruits per day should be high in Vitamin C. • Three or more servings of vegetables/fruits per week should be high in Vitamin A. • Three or more servings of vegetables/fruits per week should be fresh.

Meal Pattern Requirements and Recommendations



Food Group	REQUIREMENTS	RECOMMENDATIONS
Grains/ Bread	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least one serving of grains per day must be whole grain-rich. • Breakfast cereals cannot contain more than 6 grams of sugar per ounce. • Grain-based desserts no longer count toward the grain component. • Breakfast cereals may be served as a grain at snack for infants 6 months of age to their first birthday. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide at least two servings of whole grains per day. • All breads and cereals served should be whole grain.
Meat/ Meat Alternates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meat and meat alternates may be served in place of the grains component at breakfast a maximum of three times per week. • Tofu can be served as a meat alternate. • Yogurt can be plain, flavored, sweetened or unsweetened. • Yogurt cannot contain more than 23 grams of sugar per 6 ounces. • For infants 6 months of age to their first birthday, cheese, cottage cheese, yogurt, and whole eggs are allowable meat alternates. • Cheese foods and cheese spreads are not allowed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve only lean meats, nuts, and legumes. • Meat/meat alternates should be prepared without added fat. • Limit serving processed meats (e.g., hot dogs, corn dogs, chicken nuggets, fried chicken, fish sticks, Vienna sausages, or deli meat) to no more than one serving per week. • Serve only natural cheeses and choose low-fat or reduced-fat varieties.
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drinking water must be offered to children throughout the day and made available upon request. • Water is not counted as a component. • Food and beverage must not be used as a punishment or reward. • Frying food on-site is not allowed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support mothers who choose to breastfeed their infants. Encourage mothers to supply breast milk for their infants while in day care. • Offer a quiet, private area that is comfortable and sanitary for mothers who come to the center or day care home to breastfeed. • Incorporate seasonal and locally produced foods. • Limit purchase of pre-fried foods to no more than once per week. • Avoid serving non-creditable foods that are sources of added sugars, such as sweet toppings (e.g., honey, jam, syrup), mix-in ingredients sold with yogurt (e.g., honey, candy, or cookie pieces), and sugar sweetened beverages (e.g., fruit drinks or sodas).

Child Nutrition (CN) Label

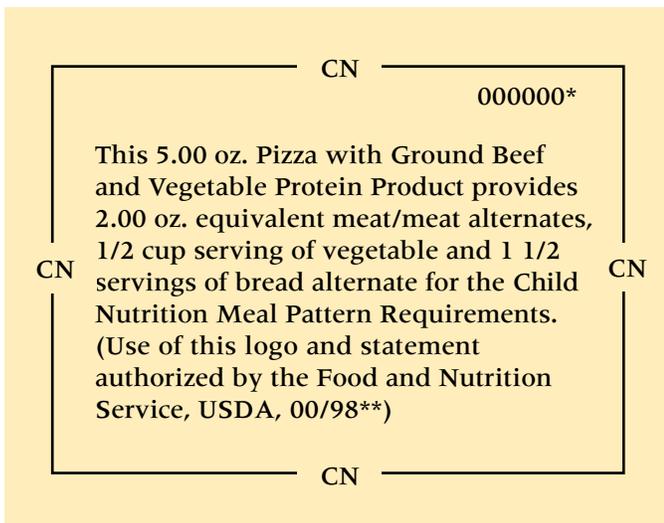


This voluntary federal labeling program for the Child Nutrition Programs allows manufacturers to state on the food label how the product contributes to meal pattern requirements. Products eligible for CN labels include commercially-prepared foods that contribute significantly to one or more meal components. If served in the amount stated on the label, all CN-labeled foods are creditable.

How to identify a CN Label

A CN label will always contain the following:

- the CN logo which is a distinct border
- USDA/FNS authorization
- the month and year of approval
- the serving size required to meet meal pattern requirements.



For a detailed explanation on CN Labeling, see the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) website: www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/cnlabeling.





Milk Requirements

To be creditable, milk must be pasteurized and meet state and local standards for fluid milk. All milk should contain Vitamin A and Vitamin D at levels specified in FDA regulation 21 CFR 131.110. Milk is an excellent source of calcium, phosphorus, protein, Vitamin A and Vitamin D.

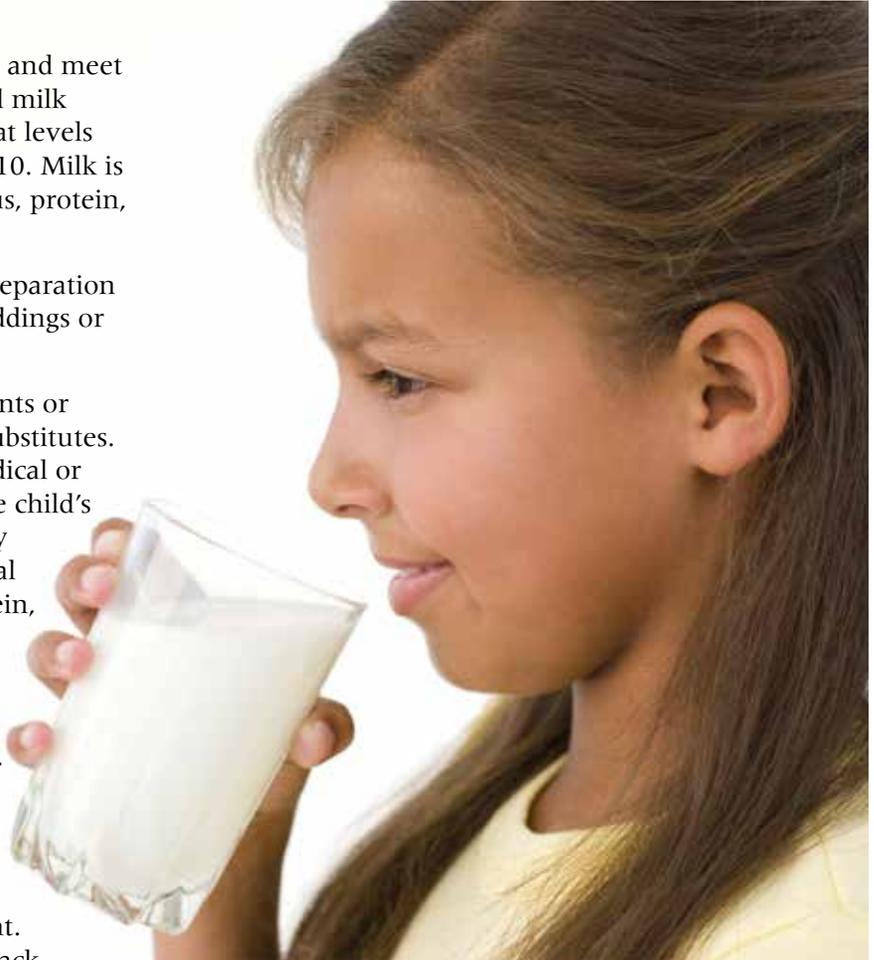
Milk is not creditable when used in the preparation of products such as hot cereals, soups, puddings or other foods.

If a child cannot consume fluid milk, parents or guardians may request, in writing, milk substitutes. The written request must identify the medical or other special dietary need that restricts the child's diet. Milk substitutes must be nutritionally equivalent to milk and meet the nutritional standards for fortification of calcium, protein, Vitamin A, Vitamin D and other nutrients to levels found in cow's milk.

At breakfast or snack, fluid milk can be served as a beverage, on cereal or both.

At lunch and supper, fluid milk must be served as a beverage.

At snack, if fluid milk is served, juice cannot be counted as the other component. Two beverages cannot be served at one snack.



Child Meal Pattern Requirements

- Fluid milk must be served for breakfast, lunch and supper.
- One-year-olds must be served whole milk.
- Children 2-18 years must be served fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%) milk.
- Unflavored milk must be served to children 1-5 years.
- If flavored milk is served to children 6 years old and older, it must be fat-free (skim) milk.
- The menu must specify the type of milk served and if it is flavored.

Adult Meal Pattern Requirements

- Fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%) milk must be served at least once per day at meal or snack. Six ounces (or $\frac{3}{4}$ cup) of yogurt may be served in place of one cup of milk at other meals. At supper, neither milk nor yogurt are required.
- Yogurt cannot contain more than 23 grams of sugar per 6 ounces.
- Unflavored milk is recommended. If flavored milk is served, it must be fat-free.
- The menu must specify the type of milk served and if it is flavored.



Questions and Answers about Milk

Q: Can milk used in puddings, sauces and soups count toward the milk requirement?

A: No. Milk used in the preparation of foods is not creditable.

Q: If a child cannot have milk, may I serve soy milk instead?

A: Yes, soy milk may be served to children or adults with medical or special dietary needs as long as it is nutritionally comparable to milk. Milk substitutes must meet the standards listed in Appendix E, but they are not required to be low-fat or fat-free when served to children 2 years old and older and adults. Parents or guardians must request milk substitutes in writing (no medical statement is needed). However, a medical statement is required for milk substitutes that do not meet the nutrition standards outlined in Appendix E. Lactose-reduced milk does not require a written request from parents or guardians.

Q: Can milk be purchased directly from a farm?

A: Yes, as long as it is pasteurized fluid milk, which meets state and local health standards. Also, it must include vitamin A and vitamin D levels consistent with state and local standards.

Q: Can flavored milk be served?

A: Yes, but only fat-free (skim) flavored milk can be served to adults and children 6 years and older. If served, it is recommended that flavored milk contain 22 grams of sugar or less per cup (8 ounces).

Q: Why is dry milk mixed with water not creditable?

A: USDA only allows use of dry milk in emergency situations when the center is unable to obtain a supply of fluid milk on a continuing basis (7 CFR 226.20(f)).

Q: Can smoothies be offered to meet the milk components?

A: Yes. Milk used in smoothies may be credited toward the milk requirement when prepared by program operators. If yogurt is used, it may be credited as a meat alternate (not as a substitute for milk). If vegetables and fruits are used, they are credited as juice. Please note that juice is limited to one serving per day for children 1-year-old and older and adults.

Q: What type of milk must be used when making smoothies?

A: The type of milk used must be consistent with the age group being served.

Q: How do store bought smoothies count toward meal pattern requirements?

A: Store bought smoothies may only be credited as juice toward the vegetable or fruit component. They cannot count toward the milk component because it is impossible to determine the amount of milk used.





RECOMMENDED AS MILK	
Food Item	Comments
Acidified Milk	For adults and children 2 years old and older, must be fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%). Acidified milk is made by souring fluid milk with an acidifying agent. Examples: acidified kefir milk and acidified acidophilus milk.
Buttermilk, cultured	For adults and children 2 years old and older, must be fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%). Must be cultured and meet state and local standards. See: Cultured Milk.
Cultured Milk	For adults and children 2 years old and older, must be fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%). Cultured milk is produced by adding selected micro-organisms to fluid milk under controlled conditions to produce a product with specific flavor and/or consistency. Examples: cultured buttermilk, cultured kefir milk and cultured acidophilus milk.
Fat-free Milk (Non-fat, Skim)	Not creditable for children less than 2 years of age. See: Milk, fluid.
Lactose-reduced Milk, Lactose-free Milk	Children or adults who cannot digest the lactose in milk may benefit from lactose-reduced or lactose-free milk. See: Milk, fluid.
Low-fat Milk (1%)	Not creditable for children under 2 years of age. See: Milk, fluid.
Milk Substitutes	Milk Substitutes must be nutritionally equivalent to milk and meet the nutritional standards for fortification of calcium, protein, Vitamin A, Vitamin D and other nutrients to levels found in cow's milk. Parents or guardians must request milk substitutes in writing.
Milk, fluid (unflavored)	Type of milk required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 to 24 months old: Whole • 2 years old and older: Fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%)
Rice Milk	See: Milk Substitutes.
Smoothie, homemade	Milk may be credited toward the milk requirement. The type of milk used must be consistent with the age group being served. Vegetables and fruits may be credited as juice. Yogurt may be credited as a meat alternate. Grains cannot be credited. Store bought smoothies may only credit as juice toward the vegetable and fruit components.
Soybean or Soy Milk	See: Milk Substitutes.
Ultra High Temperature (UHT) Milk	UHT is Grade A pasteurized milk that has been heated to about 280°F. See: Milk, fluid.
Whole Milk	Required for children 12 to 24 months old. Not creditable for adults and children 2 years old or older. See: Milk, fluid.



NOT RECOMMENDED BUT ALLOWED AS MILK

The foods listed below are creditable for adults and children 6 years old and older but are not recommended. These foods are high in added sugar.

Food Item	Comments
Chocolate Milk or Cocoa Milk	See: Flavored Milk.
Eggnog-flavored Milk	See: Flavored Milk.
Flavored Milk	Creditable for adults and children 6 years or older. Must be made with fat-free (skim) milk. Limit due to the high sugar content. As a best practice, it is recommended that flavored milk contain 22 grams of sugar or less per cup (8 ounces).
Hot Chocolate/Hot Cocoa	See: Flavored Milk.





NOT ALLOWED AS MILK

The foods listed below are not creditable.
These foods do not count toward the CACFP Meal Pattern requirements.

Certified Raw Milk

Cheese – allowed as a meat alternate

Coconut Milk

Cream

Cream Sauce

Cream Soup

Custard

Evaporated Milk

Frozen Yogurt

Goat's Milk –
medical exception only

Half and Half

Ice Cream/Ice Milk

Imitation Milk

Non-fat Dry Milk, reconstituted – allowed in emergencies only with USDA approval

Pudding Pops

Pudding

Reduced-fat Milk (2%) – medical exception only

Sherbet

Sour Cream

Yogurt - allowed as a meat alternate; may be counted as milk for adults only

Vegetables/Fruits



Vegetables and Fruits Requirements

The CACFP Meal Pattern requires vegetables and/or fruits to be served for breakfast, lunch and supper. Vegetables and fruits may also be served as components for snack. The combined vegetable and fruit component has been separated into two groups for lunch, supper and snack. Refer to the CACFP Meal Pattern for serving size requirements.

- Breakfast must include a serving of vegetable or fruit or both.
- Lunch and supper must include a serving of a vegetable and fruit OR two servings of different vegetables.
- At snack, two different components must be served. Offering a vegetable and fruit counts as two different components. However, offering two different items from the same component does not count as a reimbursable snack. For example, sliced apples and celery sticks would count as a reimbursable snack, but orange juice and apple slices would not.
- Beans may be counted as a vegetable or a meat alternate. However, one serving of dried peas or beans cannot be counted as a vegetable and a meat alternate in the same meal.
- The minimum creditable amount for vegetables and fruits is 1/8 cup. Small amounts (less than 1/8 cup) used as garnishes or in soups, stews, sandwiches and salads may not be counted to meet the vegetable or fruit requirement.
- Only one serving of 100% juice may be served per day to children 1-year-old and older and adults. Beverages that have Vitamin C added and state 100% Vitamin C on the label may or may not be 100% juice.
- A snack cannot consist of only two beverages (Example: juice and milk).
- Home-canned products are not allowed because of food safety concerns.

Vegetables and Fruits Recommendations

Vegetables and fruits are excellent sources of vitamins, minerals and fiber. CACFP recommends that:

- Vegetables and fruits should be fresh, frozen or canned and prepared with no added sugar, salt or fat.
- Vegetables and fruits are served at snack.
- At least one serving of dark green, red and orange vegetables are served each week.
- One or more servings of vegetables/fruits per day should be high in Vitamin C.
- Three or more servings of vegetables/fruits per week should be high in Vitamin A.
- Three or more servings of vegetables/fruits per week should be fresh.
- Local and seasonal vegetables/fruits are offered whenever possible.

Adding vegetables and fruits to meals is an excellent way to enhance flavors, add color and offer opportunities to try new foods. While small amounts (less than 1/8 cup) of vegetables and fruits are not creditable toward meeting meal pattern requirements, CACFP encourages you to include various vegetables and fruits whenever possible:

- Chopped onion, celery or carrots in soups, stews or casseroles
- Pureed pumpkin mixed with yogurt
- Sliced tomato in grilled cheese sandwiches
- Lettuce on sandwiches
- Lemon juice on fish or salads



Vegetables/Fruits



Vegetables and Fruits High in Important Nutrients

Vegetables and fruits are excellent sources of vitamins, minerals and fiber. CACFP recommends that:

- **VITAMIN A** – serve at least one of these foods three times a week
- **VITAMIN C** – serve at least one of these foods every day
- **CALCIUM** – serve these foods daily
- **IRON** – serve these foods often

VEGETABLES

Foods	Vitamin C	Vitamin A	Iron	Calcium
Asparagus	●	●		
Broccoli	●	●		●
Brussels Sprouts	●			
Cabbage	●			
Carrots		●		
Cauliflower	●			
Dark, leafy greens:				
Beet Greens		●	●	●
Chard		●	●	
Collards	●	●	●	●
Dandelion Greens				●
Kale	●	●	●	●
Mustard Greens		●	●	
Spinach	●	●	●	●
Turnip Greens	●	●	●	
Mixed Vegetables		●		
Okra	●			
Parsnips			●	
Peas and Carrots		●		
Peas, green			●	
Peppers	●			
Potatoes, sweet	●	●		
Potatoes, white	●			
Pumpkin		●		
Squash, winter		●	●	
Tomatoes/tomato juice	●	●		
Turnips	●			
Vegetable Juice	●			

FRUITS

Foods	Vitamin C	Vitamin A	Iron	Calcium
Apricots		●		
Cantaloupe	●	●		
Dried Fruits (apple, apricots, dates, figs, peaches, prunes or raisins)			●	
Grapefruit/ grapefruit juice	●			
Nectarines		●		
Oranges/orange juice	●			
Plums		●		
Prunes		●		
Raspberries	●			
Strawberries	●			
Tangerines	●			

Vegetables/Fruits



Questions and Answers about Vegetables and Fruits

Q: If one serving of mixed vegetables is offered at lunch, does it meet the meal pattern requirement for serving two vegetables?

A: No. Mixed vegetables, fruit cocktail and similar combinations only count as one vegetable or fruit.

Q: Does the sauce on pizza count as a vegetable?

A: No. There is not enough sauce on a serving of pizza to count as a vegetable.

Q: How are vegetables, fruits and other foods counted in mixed dishes such as beef stew or chili?

A: Mixed dishes vary greatly on how they may be credited. Up to three food components can be counted if the recipe includes enough of each ingredient to be considered as a serving. For example, a serving of beef stew for a 3-5-year-old needs to include at least 1 ½ ounces of meat and a ¼ cup vegetables.

For canned or frozen beef stew, the label will not tell you how much meat, carrots or potatoes are in each serving. Therefore, the stew would not meet the vegetable or meat components unless the item has a Child Nutrition (CN) label.

Q: Can canned pumpkin be added to tomato sauce and be counted toward the vegetable component?

A: Yes, pureed vegetables and fruits may contribute toward meal pattern requirements as long as the dish also provides an adequate amount (1/8 cup) of recognizable, creditable vegetables and fruits. In this example, canned pumpkin could be counted toward the vegetable component because tomato sauce is recognizable.

Q: Are foods like coleslaw or potato salad creditable?

A: Yes, but only the actual amounts of the vegetable and fruit ingredients can be counted toward the

vegetable and fruit meal pattern requirement. Other ingredients such as mayonnaise, pasta or nuts cannot be counted in the serving size.

Q: Are dried vegetables and fruits creditable?

A: Yes. The serving size for dried vegetables and fruits is half that of fresh or canned. For example, if a 1/2 cup of fruit is required, 1/4 cup of raisins may be served. Please be aware that dried fruits might pose a choking hazard to young children (See: Appendix D).

Q: How do leafy greens count toward the vegetable component?

A: One cup of leafy greens (i.e., lettuce, raw spinach, etc.) counts as ½ cup of vegetables.



Vegetables/Fruits



RECOMMENDED AS VEGETABLES/FRUITS	
Food Item	Comments
Apple Cider	Must be pasteurized. No more than one serving of juice may be served per day.
Applesauce, unsweetened	
Beans, canned or dry	Examples include: black beans, black-eyed peas, cannellini beans, garbanzo beans, kidney beans, lentils, navy beans, northern beans, pigeon beans, pinto beans, soy beans or split peas. A serving of beans may count as a vegetable or as a meat alternate, not both.
Berries	Examples include: blackberries, blueberries, raspberries or strawberries.
Coleslaw	
Cranberry Juice Blend	Cranberry juice in a blend with another 100% juice is creditable. Cranberry Juice Cocktail is not creditable. No more than one serving of juice may be served per day.
Frozen Fruit Juice Bars	Must be 100% fruit and/or fruit juice.
Fruit, canned in 100% juice or water	
Fruit, dried	Examples include: apricots, cranberries, dates, figs, prunes or raisins. The serving size for dried fruit is half that of fresh or canned. Example: for a 1/2 cup vegetables/fruits requirement, 1/4 cup of raisins may be served. Not recommended for children under four years old due to the risk of choking.
Fruit, fresh	Examples include: apples, apricots, bananas, berries (all types), clementines, grapes, grapefruit, guava, kiwi, kumquats, mangos, melons (all types), oranges, papayas, passion fruit, peaches, pears, persimmons, pineapples, plantains, pomegranates, plums, star fruit or tangerines. Three or more servings of fresh fruits are recommended per week.
Fruit, frozen, unsweetened	
Greens	Examples include: broccolini, collard greens, endive, escarole, kale, mustard greens, spinach, Swiss chard or turnip greens.
Juice Blends	Must be blends of 100% vegetables/fruits juices. No more than one serving of juice may be served per day.
Potatoes	Examples include: sweet, yellow or white. Boiled, mashed or baked are recommended.
Potato Pancakes	
Salsa, fresh	At least 1/8 cup must be served.

Vegetables/Fruits



RECOMMENDED AS VEGETABLES/FRUITS	
Food Item	Comments
Smoothies, homemade	Examples include: smoothies prepared with milk and/or yogurt, vegetables and/or fruits. Grains (i.e., cereal, granola or oatmeal) can be added but they will not be credited when served in a smoothie. If smoothies are prepared with milk, the type of milk used must be consistent with CACFP guidelines for each age group being served. Vegetables and fruits used in smoothies may be credited as juice. No more than one serving of juice may be served per day.
Soups, homemade	Calculate quantities of vegetables in the recipe to determine that enough vegetable is provided by the soup. An 1/8 cup of each vegetable must be served to be counted as a serving. Example: An 1/8 cup of carrots per serving, not 1/8 cup carrots, onions and celery. For split pea, bean or lentil soup, see Meat/Meat Alternates section.
Spaghetti Sauce	At least 1/8 cup must be served.
Sprouts – alfalfa, bean	Sprouts should be cooked. Food-borne illness caused by eating uncooked sprouts is possible.
Tomato Paste	One tablespoon counts as 1/4 cup vegetable.
Tomato Sauce	At least 1/8 cup must be served.
Vegetable Juice	No more than one serving of juice may be served per day.
Vegetable Juice Blends	Must be blends of 100% vegetable juices. Recommend low-sodium or no added salt. No more than one serving of juice may be served per day.
Vegetables, canned	Recommend low-sodium or no added salt.
Vegetables, fresh	Examples include: artichokes, avocado, bamboo shoots, beans (all types), beets, bok choy, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, celery, corn, cucumbers, eggplant, greens (all types), jicama, kohlrabi, lettuce (all types), mushrooms, okra, parsnips, peas, peppers, potatoes, pumpkin, radishes, rhubarb, spinach, sprouts (all types), squash (all types), sweet potatoes, tomatillos, tomatoes, turnips, watercress or yams. Three or more servings of fresh vegetables are recommended per week.
Vegetables, frozen, plain	Avoid serving vegetables in butter or cheese sauce.
Water Chestnuts	

Vegetables/Fruits



NOT RECOMMENDED BUT ALLOWED AS VEGETABLES/FRUITS

The foods listed below are creditable but are not recommended.
These foods are high in added sugar and/or fat and salt.

Food Item	Comments
Cranberry Sauce	Only sauces with crushed or whole berries are creditable. Limit due to high added sugar content.
French Fries	Limit due to high fat content.
Fruit, canned in syrup	Limit due to high added sugar content.
Fruit Cobbler/Fruit Crisp	Limit due to high added sugar content. Must contain at least 1/8 cup of fruit per serving.
Fruit, frozen, sweetened	Limit due to high added sugar content.
Fruit Pie	Limit due to high added sugar content. Must contain at least 1/8 cup of fruit per serving.
Fruit Sauce, homemade	Only the fruit portion of the sauce is creditable. Limit due to high added sugar content. Must contain at least 1/8 cup of fruit per serving.
Gerber® Mini Fruits	
Gerber® Mini Vegetables	
Hash Brown Potatoes	Limit due to high fat and salt content.
Potato Skins	Limit due to high fat content.
Salsa, commercial	Limit due to high salt content. At least 1/8 cup must be served.
Soups, canned, condensed (1 part soup to 1 part water) or dehydrated mix	Examples include: minestrone, tomato, tomato rice, vegetable, vegetable beef or vegetable chicken. Limit due to high salt content. A 1 cup reconstituted serving counts as 1/4 cup vegetable.
Soups, canned, ready-to-serve	Examples include: minestrone, tomato, tomato rice, vegetable, vegetable beef or vegetable chicken. Limit due to high salt content. A 1 cup serving counts as 1/4 cup vegetable.
Tater Tots®	Limit due to high fat and salt content.

Vegetables/Fruits



NOT ALLOWED AS VEGETABLES/FRUITS
The foods listed below are not creditable.
These foods do not count toward the CACFP Meal Pattern requirements.

Apple Butter

Banana Bread (allowed as Grains/Bread component). See Vegetables/Fruits Bread in this list.

Banana Chips

Barbecue Sauce

Cake, containing fruit

Catsup (ketchup)

Chili Sauce

Chocolate-covered Fruit

Coconut

Corn Chips

Cranberry Juice Cocktail

Cranberry Sauce, jellied

Cream Soups

Fig Cookies

Fruit-flavored beverages – ades, juice drinks (bottled, canned or powdered mix)

Fruit Gushers®

Fruit Punch (bottled, canned or powdered mix)

Fruit Snacks (roll-ups, wrinkles or gummy bears)

Hominy, canned

Jell-O® Salad with fruit or juice

Lemonade, Limeade

Ice Cream, fruit-flavored

Jam, Jelly or Preserves

Kool-Aid®

Lemon Pie Filling

Vegetables/Fruits



NOT ALLOWED AS VEGETABLES/FRUITS

The foods listed below are not creditable.
These foods do not count toward the CACFP Meal Pattern requirements.

Nectar – apricot, pear or peach

Olives

Onion Rings

Onions

Pesto

Pickles

Popsicles® or other frozen fruit-flavored pops

Pop-Tarts® or other toaster pastries with fruit

Posole

Potato Chips

Puffs, fruit and vegetable

Sherbet/Sorbet

Syrup, fruit-flavored

V-8 Splash®

Vegetables/Fruits Bread or Muffins – apple, banana, blueberry, carrot, pumpkin or zucchini

Vegetables in butter or cheese sauce

Yogurt-covered Fruit

Yogurt, fruited – allowed as a meat alternate

Grains/Bread



Grains/Bread Requirements

The CACFP Meal Pattern requires grains and/or bread to be served at breakfast, lunch and supper. A grains/bread component may also be served as one of the two components of a snack. Grains/bread are good sources of B vitamins, minerals and fiber. Refer to the CACFP Meal Pattern for serving sizes.

- All grains/bread must be whole grain or enriched.
- At least one serving of grains per day must be whole grain-rich.
 - Whole grain-rich foods contain 100% whole grains, or at least 50% whole grains and the remaining grain in the food are enriched.
 - Menus must specify when whole grain-rich foods are offered (i.e., whole wheat bread, whole grain-rich English Muffin, brown rice or oatmeal).
- The grain/bread must be recognizable as part of the dish (such as a dinner roll, spaghetti, rice or taco shells). Items such as breadcrumbs in meatloaf do not qualify as meeting the Grains/Bread requirement.
- Instead of serving grains at breakfast, meat/meat alternates may be served a maximum of three times per week.
- Cereals cannot contain more than 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce (21.2 grams of sugar per 100 grams).

Grain-Based Desserts

- Grain-based desserts are not creditable.
- Grain-based desserts include cookies, sweet pies, doughnuts, cereal bars, breakfast bars, granola bars, sweet rolls, toaster pastries, cake and brownies.

Grains/Bread Recommendations

CACFP recommends that all breads and cereals served should be whole grain. Offer a variety of whole grain options to allow children the opportunity to try new foods.



Grains/Bread



Questions and Answers about Grains/Bread

Q: How do we identify whole grain-rich foods?

A: Whole grain-rich foods can be identified in a variety of ways:

1. The easiest way is to read the ingredient list.
 - Look for items that list a whole grain as the first ingredient (such as whole wheat, oat flour or brown rice).
 - It is also allowable if water is listed as the first ingredient and a whole grain is listed as the second ingredient.
2. Refer to the list of whole grains found in Appendix F.
3. Providers can also look for one of the following whole grain claims found on packaging labels:
 - “Diets rich in whole grain foods and other plant foods and low in total fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol may reduce the risk of heart disease and some cancers.”
 - “Diets rich in whole grain foods and other plant foods, and low in saturated fat and cholesterol, may help reduce the risk of heart disease.”
4. For foods prepared homemade by a provider, the recipe can be used to determine if whole grains are the main grain ingredient.

Q: Can providers choose which meals to include a whole grain?

A: Yes. Providers may choose which meal (or snack) to serve a whole grain-rich item.

Q: Are corn products whole grains?

A: Corn products must specifically state whole grain cornmeal or whole-corn flour.

Q: Are homemade granola bars allowed?

A: No. Homemade and store bought granola bars cannot count toward the grain component because they are considered grain-based desserts.

Q: Are pancakes and waffles considered grain-based desserts?

A: No. Pancakes and waffles are not considered to be grain-based dessert.

Q: Can batter and breadcrumb coating on a fish filet be counted as a Grains/Bread component?

A: Batters and breading may be counted as part of the main dish. Crediting is based on the amount of whole grain, bran, germ and/or enriched meal or flour in the recipe. Because it may be difficult to determine the amount of batter/breading on store bought products, CN labeling is required to count this as a Grains/Bread component.



Grains/Bread



LOW-SUGAR CEREALS*

Cereal cannot contain more than 6 grams of sugar per ounce (28 grams). The cereals in this chart contain 6 grams of sugar or less. In addition, CACFP recommends serving whole grain cereals. Whole grain cereals are marked with a ✓ in the *Whole Grain* column. WIC-approved cereals are also creditable in CACFP.

Low-Sugar Cereals	Whole-Grain	Low-Sugar Cereals	Whole-Grain
All Bran® Original	✓	Kellogg's® Corn Flakes	
All-Bran® Complete Wheat Flakes	✓	Kellogg's® Mini-Wheats Unfrosted Bite Size	✓
Cheerios® Multi Grain	✓	King Vitaman®	
Cheerios® Original	✓	Kix®	✓
Chex® Corn	✓	Kix® Honey	✓
Chex® Rice	✓	Life®	✓
Chex® Wheat	✓	Malt-O-Meal® Creamy Hot Wheat	
Cream of Rice®		Malt-O-Meal® Crispy Rice	
Cream of Wheat® Healthy Grain Original	✓	Malt-O-Meal® Honey and Oat Blenders	
Cream of Wheat® Original		Malt-O-Meal® Honey and Oat Blenders with Almonds	
Cream of Wheat® Whole Grain	✓	Malt-O-Meal® Original Hot Cereal	
Crispix®		Post® Bran Flakes	✓
Fiber One®	✓	Post® Shredded Wheat Original	✓
Fiber One® Honey Clusters	✓	Post® Shredded Wheat Spoon Size Original	✓
GOLEAN® Original		Post® Shredded Wheat Spoon Size Wheat 'n Bran	✓
Grape-Nuts®	✓	Product 19®	
Grape-Nuts® Flakes	✓	Quaker® Instant Oatmeal, Original	✓
Heart to Heart® Honey Toasted Oat	✓	Quaker® Old Fashioned Quaker Oats	✓
Heart to Heart® Warm Cinnamon Oat	✓	Quaker® Puffed Rice	
Honey Bunches of Oats® Honey Roasted		Quaker® Puffed Wheat	
Honey Bunches of Oats® with Almonds		Quaker® Quick Oats	✓
Honey Bunches of Oats® with Cinnamon Bunches		Quaker® Whole Hearts Original	✓
Honey Bunches of Oats® with Pecan Bunches		Rice Krispies®	
Kashi® 7 Whole Grain Flakes	✓	Rice Krispies® Gluten Free	✓
Kashi® 7 Whole Grain Honey Puffs	✓	Special K® Original	
Kashi® 7 Whole Grain Nuggets	✓	Special K® Protein Plus	
Kashi® 7 Whole Grain Puffs	✓	Total®	
		Wheaties®	✓

*The above information was obtained from the product websites. Please double-check the package nutrition label upon purchase.

Grains/Bread



RECOMMENDED AS GRAINS/BREAD

Food Item	Whole-Grain	Comments	Serving Size
Bagels		Whole wheat variety is whole-grain.	Ages 1-5: 1/2 mini-bagel; 1/4 large bagel Ages 6-18: 1 mini-bagel; 1/2 large bagel
Barley	✓	Hulled barley is whole-grain. Pearl barley is not whole-grain. See: Grains, cooked.	
Biscuits			Ages 1-5: 1/2 small (2 inch) biscuit (0.5 oz) Ages 6-18: 1 small (2 inch) biscuit (1.0 oz)
Bran		Examples include: oat bran or wheat bran.	If bran is used in a recipe: Ages 1-5: 3 tablespoons Ages 6-18: 1/4 cup
Bread		Examples include: French, Italian, potato, raisin or white.	Ages 1-5: 1/2 slice (0.5 oz) Ages 6-18: 1 slice (1.0 oz)
Bread, whole-grain	✓	Examples include: multi-grain, pumpernickel, rye or whole-wheat.	Ages 1-5: 1/2 slice Ages 6-18: 1 slice
Bread Sticks, hard			Ages 1-5: 1 stick (7 3/4 inches long, 3/4 inch thick) Ages 6-18: 3 sticks (7 3/4 inches long, 3/4 inch thick)
Bread Stuffing/Dressing, homemade		Homemade stuffing may be credited based on the amount of whole-grain or enriched bread in the recipe.	
Bulgur or Cracked Wheat	✓	See: Grains, cooked.	
Buns, hamburger & hot dog			Ages 1-5: 1/2 (0.5 oz.) bun Ages 6-18: 1 (1 oz.) bun
Cereal, cooked			Ages 1-5: 1/4 cup cooked Ages 6-18: 1/2 cup cooked
Cereal, dry, ready to eat, less than 6 g sugar per serving			Flakes or rounds Ages 1-5: 1/2 cup Ages 6-18: 1 cup Puffed cereal Ages 1-5: 3/4 cup Ages 6-18: 1 1/4 cup Granola Ages 1-5: 1/8 cup Ages 6-18: 1/4 cup
Club Crackers			Ages 1-5: 2 squares Ages 6-18: 4 squares

Grains/Bread



RECOMMENDED AS GRAINS/BREAD

Food Item	Whole-Grain	Comments	Serving Sizes
Cornbread			Ages 1-5: 1 small piece (1 1/2 × 1 inch) Ages 6-18: 1 medium piece (2 1/2 × 1 1/2 inches)
Corn Meal, enriched or whole-grain, cooked	✓	See: Grains, cooked.	
Corn Muffins			Ages 1-5: 1/2 small (2 1/2 inch) muffin Ages 6-18: 1 small (2 1/2 inch) muffin
Couscous	✓	See: Grains, cooked.	
Crackers		See: Club Crackers, Goldfish®, Matzo, Melba Toast®, Oyster Crackers, Ritz® Crackers, RyKrisp®, Saltines, Sociables®, Triscuit®, Wasa Crispbread® or Wheat Thins®.	
Crepes, homemade		May be credited based on the amount of whole-grain or enriched flour in the recipe.	
Dressing, bread-type, homemade		See: Bread Stuffing/Dressing, homemade.	
Dumplings, homemade		Homemade dumplings may be credited based on the amount of whole-grain or enriched flour in the recipe.	
Egg Roll Skins			
English Muffins		Whole wheat variety is whole-grain.	Ages 1-5: 1/4 English Muffin (0.5 oz) Ages 6-18: 1/2 English Muffin (1.0 oz)
French Bread		See: Bread.	
French Toast, homemade			Ages 1-5: 1/2 slice Ages 6-18: 1 slice
Germ			If germ is used in a recipe: Ages 1-5: 3 tablespoons Ages 6-18: 1/4 cup
Goldfish®			Ages 1-5: 20 crackers (1/2 oz) Ages 6-18: 36 crackers (3/4 oz)
Grains, cooked			Ages 1-5: 1/4 cup cooked (0.5 oz dry) Ages 6-18: 1/2 cup cooked (1.0 oz dry)

Grains/Bread



RECOMMENDED AS GRAINS/BREAD

Food Item	Whole-Grain	Comments	Serving Size
Grits, corn, enriched or whole-grain		Ground corn kernels that are boiled with water or milk.	
Italian Bread		See: Bread.	
Kasha	✓	Also called buckwheat groats. See: Grains, cooked.	
Lefse		Lefse is unleavened bread made mostly from potatoes and flour. Lefse is creditable based on the amount of whole-grain or enriched flour in the recipe.	
Macaroni, all shapes		Whole wheat variety is whole-grain. See: Pasta, all shapes.	Ages 1-5: 1/4 cup cooked or 0.5 oz dry Ages 6-18: 1/2 cup cooked or 1.0 oz dry
Matzo			Ages 1-5: 1/2 large Ages 6-18: 1 large
Melba Toast			Ages 1-5: 3 crackers Ages 6-18: 5 crackers
Millet	✓	Small round seeds with a nutty flavor.	
Noodles		See: Pasta, all shapes.	
Oatmeal	✓		Ages 1-5: 1/4 cup cooked Ages 6-18: 1/2 cup cooked
Oyster Crackers			Ages 1-5: 1/4 cup Ages 6-18: 1/3 cup
Pancakes			Ages 1-5: 1 small (3 inch) pancakes Ages 6-18: 2 small (3 inch) pancakes
Pasta, all shapes		Whole wheat variety is whole-grain.	Ages 1-5: 1/4 cup cooked Ages 6-18: 1/2 cup cooked
Pita Bread		Whole wheat variety is whole-grain.	Ages 1-5: 1/4 5-inch pita (0.5 oz dry) Ages 6-18: 1/2 5-inch pita (1.0 oz dry)
Pizza Crust			Ages 1-5: 1/24 of a 12-inch pizza Ages 6-18: 1/12 of a 12-inch pizza
Polenta, enriched or whole-grain		Boiled cornmeal. It may be eaten as a hot dish or cooled and made into a loaf, which is then baked, grilled or pan-fried.	
Popovers, homemade		May be credited based on the amount of whole-grain or enriched flour in the recipe.	
Pumpernickel Bread	✓	See: Bread.	

Grains/Bread



RECOMMENDED AS GRAINS/BREAD

Food Item	Whole-Grain	Comments	Serving Size
Pretzels, hard, unsalted		May be a choking hazard for young children.	Ages 1-5: 7 mini twists Ages 6-18: 13 mini twists
Pretzels, soft, unsalted			Ages 1-5: 1/4 pretzel (0.5 oz) Ages 6-18: 1/2 pretzel (1.0 oz)
Quinoa	✓	Seeds that are high in protein and cooked like grains.	
Raisin Bread		See: Bread.	
Ravioli		See: Pasta, all shapes. Only the pasta portion is creditable.	
Rice, white or brown		Brown rice and red rice are whole-grain. See: Grains, cooked.	
Rice Cakes	✓	If brown rice is the first ingredient, it is whole-grain.	Ages 1-5: 2 regular size cakes Ages 6-18: 3 regular size cakes
Ritz® Crackers			Ages 1-5: 4 crackers Ages 6-18: 7 crackers
Rolls, all types		Whole wheat variety is whole-grain.	Ages 1-5: 1/2 small roll (0.5 oz) Ages 6-18: 1 small roll (1.0 oz)
RyKrisp®	✓		Ages 1-5: 5 crackers Ages 6-18: 10 crackers
Saltines			Ages 1-5: 4 squares Ages 6-18: 8 squares
Sociables®			Ages 1-5: 5 crackers Ages 6-18: 10 crackers
Stuffing, bread, homemade		See: Bread Stuffing/Dressing, homemade.	
Tortillas, corn or flour		If whole wheat or whole corn is the first ingredient, it is whole-grain.	Ages 1-5: 1/2 6-inch tortilla (0.5 oz) Ages 6-18: 1 6-inch tortilla (1.0 oz)
Triscuit®	✓		Ages 1-5: 4 crackers Ages 6-18: 7 crackers
Waffle, commercially-prepared (Eggo®)			Ages 1-5: 1/2 waffle Ages 6-18: 1 waffle
Wasa Crispbread®	✓		Ages 1-5: 1 large Ages 6-18: 2 large
Wheat Berries		Whole, unprocessed wheat kernels.	
Wheat Thins®	✓		Ages 1-5: 5 crackers Ages 6-18: 10 crackers
Wild Rice	✓	See: Grains, cooked.	
Won Ton Wrappers			
Zwieback			Ages 1-5: 2 slices Ages 6-18: 3 slices

Grains/Bread



NOT RECOMMENDED BUT ALLOWED AS GRAINS/BREAD

The foods listed below are creditable but are not recommended.
These foods are high in fat, salt and/or sugar.

Food Item	Comments	Serving Size
Animal Crackers		Ages 1-5: 5 crackers Ages 6-18: 10 crackers
Banana Bread	See: Quick Bread.	
Batter-type coating	Batters and breading may be served as part of the main dish of a meal. May be credited based on the amount of whole-grain or enriched flour in the recipe.	
Boston Brown Bread	See: Quick Bread.	
Breading-type coating	See: Batter-type coating.	
Carrot Bread	See: Quick Bread.	
Cheez-It®/Cheese Nips®		Ages 1-5: 9 crackers Ages 6-18: 18 crackers
Chow Mein Noodles		Ages 1-5: 1/4 cup Ages 6-18: 1/2 cup
Corn-Dog Batter	See: Batter-type coating.	
Crackers	See: Animal Crackers, Cheez-It®/Cheese Nips® or Graham Crackers.	
Croissants		Ages 1-5: 1/4 medium (2 oz) croissant Ages 6-18: 1/2 medium (2 oz) croissant
Croutons		Ages 1-5: 1/4 cup Ages 6-18: 1/2 cup
Fried Bread, plain, not sugared	May be credited based on the amount of whole-grain or enriched flour in the recipe.	
Graham Crackers		Ages 1-5: 2 squares Ages 6-18: 4 squares
Hushpuppies, homemade	May be credited based on the amount of whole-grain or enriched flour in the recipe.	

Grains/Bread



NOT RECOMMENDED BUT ALLOWED AS GRAINS/BREAD

The foods listed below are creditable but are not recommended.
These foods are high in fat, salt and/or sugar.

Food Item	Comments	Serving Size
Muffins, all types		Ages 1-5: 1 small (2 1/2 inch) muffin OR 1/2 large (3 1/2 inch) muffin Ages 6-18: 2 small (2 1/2 inch) muffins OR 1 large (3 1/2 inch) muffin
Party Mix	May be credited based on the amount of dry cereal or grain in a serving. May be high in salt.	
Pie Crust, meat/meat alternate pies		Ages 1-5: 1/24 of a single crust 9 inch pie Ages 6-18: 1/12 of a single crust 9 inch pie
Puff Pastry	See: Pie Crust.	
Pumpkin Bread	See: Quick Bread.	
Quick Bread		Ages 1-5: 1/2 slice (3/4 inch thick) Ages 6-18: 1 slice (3/4 inch thick)
Scones, savory		Ages 1-5: 1/4 large (4 oz) scone Ages 6-18: 1/2 large (4 oz) scone
Squash Bread	See: Quick Bread.	
Taco Shells		Ages 1-5: 1 shell Ages 6-18: 2 shells
Trail Mix	May be credited based on the amount of dry cereal or grain in a serving. May be high in salt and added sugar.	
Turnovers, savory	See: Pie Crust.	
Zucchini Bread	See: Quick Bread.	

Grains/Bread



NOT ALLOWED AS GRAINS/BREAD

The foods listed below are not creditable.
These foods do not count toward the CACFP Meal Pattern requirements.

Arrowroot Biscuit	Lorna Doone
Bagel Chips	Nachos
Bread Pudding	Nilla wafers
Brownies, plain, frosted or with fillers such as cream cheese or nuts	Nut or Seed Meal Flour
Cake, unfrosted or frosted	Oatmeal Raisin cookie
Cereal Fruit Bars	Pastries, frosted or unfrosted
Cereal, dry, ready to eat, more than 6 grams sugar per serving	Pie Crust, dessert and fruit pies
Cheese Puffs (Cheetos®, Cheez Doodles®)	Pita Chips
Chips	Popcorn
Chips Ahoy	Popcorn Cakes
Cinnamon Rolls	Potato (creditable as a vegetable)
Coffeecake, homemade or commercial	Pop Tarts
Cookies, Plain	Potato Chips
Cookies with nuts, raisins, chocolate pieces or fruit	Potato Pancake (may be creditable as a vegetable)
Corn (creditable as a vegetable)	Pound Cake
Corn Chips (Doritos®, Fritos®, Tostitos®)	Pretzel Chips
Corn Starch	Rice Cereal Bars, homemade
Cream Puff Shells	Rice Krispy Treats
Cupcakes, unfrosted or frosted	Rice Pudding
Danish pastry	Scones, sweet
Doughnuts	Shoe-string Potatoes
Fig Newtons	Sticky Buns
Gingerbread	Sun Chips®
Gingersnaps	Sweet Rolls
Grain Fruit Bars	Taco Chips
Granola Bars	Teddy Soft Bakes
Hominy	Toaster Pastries
Ice Cream Cones	Turnovers, sweet
Ice Cream Sandwich Wafers	Tortilla Chips, corn or wheat (Doritos®, Fritos®, Sun Chips®, Tostitos®)

Meat/Meat Alternates



Meat/Meat Alternates Requirements

The CACFP Meal Pattern requires a meat or meat alternate to be served at lunch and supper. A meat/meat alternate may also be served as one of the two components of a snack. In addition, meat and meat alternates may be substituted for grains at breakfast up to three times per week. Refer to the CACFP Meal Patterns for serving size requirements.

- Meat includes lean red meat, poultry or fish that has been inspected and approved by the appropriate State or Federal agency. Meat is an excellent source of high-quality protein, iron and zinc. Examples of meat alternates that are creditable include: cheese, yogurt, cottage cheese, eggs, commercially-prepared tofu, cooked dried beans, nuts and seeds and their butters (except for acorn, chestnut or coconut).
- Tofu that is incorporated into drinks (such as smoothies), or added to dishes to improve texture (such as baked desserts), may not be credited toward the meal pattern requirement.
- Yogurt can be plain, flavored, sweetened or unsweetened; but it cannot contain more than 23 grams of sugar per 6 ounces. Yogurt is a good source of protein and calcium.
- Examples of legumes include: black beans, garbanzo beans, kidney beans, or pinto beans, may be counted as a meat alternate. They are an excellent source of protein, dietary fiber, iron and do not have cholesterol.
- Nuts and seeds may fulfill no more than one-half of the meat alternate requirement for lunch and supper. Nuts and seeds may fulfill the entire meat alternate requirement for snack.
- A menu item must provide a minimum of 1/4 ounce of cooked, lean meat or the equivalent to meet any part of the meat/meat alternates requirement.
- Frankfurters, bologna, knockwurst or Vienna sausage must be 100% meat or contain alternate protein products (APP) as the only binder or extender. However, due to the high salt and fat content, these meats are

not recommended.

- Processed meats with binders and extenders such as starchy vegetable flour, dried milk, calcium-reduced skim milk and cereal are not allowed.
- Natural cheeses may count as all or part of the meat alternate requirement.
- Cheese items labeled 'cheese products' or 'imitation cheese' may not be counted as the meat alternate.
- Cheese foods and cheese spreads (Velveeta®, Cheez Whiz® or pimento cheese) may not be counted as the meat alternate.

Meat/Meat Alternates Recommendations

- Meat (chicken, turkey, beef, pork, lamb or fish) should be lean or low-fat.
- Canned beans should not contain added fat.
- No more than one serving of processed or high-fat meat should be served per week. This includes hot dogs, chicken nuggets, fish sticks, fried chicken, Vienna sausages, corn dogs or cold cuts.
- Serve only natural cheeses and choose low-fat or reduced-fat cheeses.
- Meat/meat alternates should be prepared using small amounts of oil, if needed.
 - Monounsaturated fats lower cholesterol. Good sources are olive oil, canola oil and peanut oil.
 - Polyunsaturated fats improve blood fats. Good sources are sunflower oil, safflower oil and vegetable oil.
 - Saturated fats and trans fats increase cholesterol. Limit margarine, shortening, animal fat and butter.

Meat/Meat Alternates



Meat/Meat Alternates High in Important Nutrients

Meat/Meat Alternates are excellent sources of iron and calcium.

MEAT/MEAT ALTERNATES

Foods	Iron	Calcium
Almonds		●
Brazil Nuts		●
Dried beans and peas	●	
Eggs	●	
Meat	●	
Peanut Butter	●	
Shellfish	●	
Sunflower Seeds		●
Tofu	●	●
Turkey	●	
Tuna	●	



Meat/Meat Alternates



Questions and Answers about Meat/Meat Alternates

Q: Can pizza be credited as a meat alternate?

A: Yes, if it is CN-labeled. All CN-labeled foods are creditable. If it is homemade, it must contain the required amount of meat/meat alternates per serving to be creditable.

Q: We have children who cannot eat certain meats because of religious reasons. How do we claim these children on the food program?

A: Substitute a creditable meat alternate. See: Can vegetarian meals be served?

Q: Is American cheese creditable?

A: Only if the label states pasteurized process cheese. Labels stating 'imitation cheese' and 'cheese product' are not creditable.

Q: Can vegetarian meals be served?

A: Yes. The meals must meet CACFP Meal Pattern requirements. Examples of meat alternates that are creditable include: natural and processed cottage cheese, yogurt, eggs, tofu, cooked dried beans, nut and seed butters or any combination of the above. See: Appendix C.

Q: Is yogurt creditable?

A: Yes, yogurt is creditable as a meat alternate. Yogurt can be plain, flavored, sweetened or unsweetened but it cannot contain more than 23 grams of sugar per 6 ounces. Four ounces of either fruited or non-fruited yogurt is equal to one ounce of the meat alternate. The fruit in yogurt cannot be credited toward the fruit component.



Meat/Meat Alternates



RECOMMENDED AS MEAT/MEAT ALTERNATES

Food Item	Comments
Beans, canned or dry	A 1/4 cup serving equals 1 oz of meat alternate. Canned green or yellow beans count as a vegetable, not as a meat alternate.
Beef, lean	Trim visible fat and broil rather than frying. Choose ground beef that is at least 90% lean.
Cheese, American	Creditable only if the label states pasteurized process cheese. Labels stating 'imitation cheese' and 'cheese product' are not creditable. A 1 oz serving of pasteurized process cheese equals a 1 oz serving of meat alternate.
Cheese, natural, reduced fat	Examples include: Cheddar, Colby, Monterey Jack, mozzarella, Muenster, Provolone or Swiss. A 1 oz serving of natural cheese equals a 1 oz serving of meat alternate. Limit to one serving per week due to the high fat and salt content.
Chicken	Broil or bake chicken without skin. Choose ground chicken that is at least 90% lean.
Cottage Cheese, fat-free or low-fat	A 1/4 cup serving equals 1 oz of meat alternate.
Eggs	Cooked eggs are a good source of protein. 1/2 large egg equals 1 oz of meat alternate. Raw eggs are not allowed.
Fish	Broil or bake fish.
Gefilte fish, homemade	Gefilte fish may be credited based on the amount of fish in each serving.
Gefilte fish, commercial	Since this item is generally 50% fish, 4 oz of gefilte fish equals 2 oz of fish.
Hummus	A spread made of mashed garbanzo beans/chickpeas. The volume of beans or other meat alternate in each serving may count toward the requirement. A 1/4 cup serving equals 1 oz of meat alternate.
Lamb	Trim lamb of all visible fat and bake or broil.
Lentils	See: Beans, canned or dry.
Meat Sauce, homemade	Homemade only. Must supply the required serving size of meat in each portion.
Nuts	Nuts may be credited as a serving of meat alternate for snack; and one-half serving of meat alternate at lunch or supper. Do not serve nuts to children less than 4 years of age due to choking hazard.
Nut and Seed Butter	CACFP recommends serving nut and seed butters in combination with other meat/meat alternates since the serving size of nut and seed butters alone may be too large for children.
Peanut Butter	See: Nut and Seed Butter

Meat/Meat Alternates



RECOMMENDED AS MEAT/MEAT ALTERNATES

Food Item	Comments
Peas, dry	See: Beans, canned or dry.
Pork, lean	Trim pork of all visible fat and bake or broil.
Quiche	The egg and cheese portion is creditable as a meat alternate.
Refried Beans	Choose canned refried beans that are lower in fat or a low-fat homemade recipe. A 1/4 cup serving equals 1 oz of meat alternate.
Ricotta Cheese, fat-free or part skim	A 1/4 cup serving equals 1 oz of meat alternate.
Seeds	See: Nuts
Seafood/Shellfish	Must be fully cooked; only the edible fish portion is creditable.
Soups, bean	Examples include: split pea soup, navy bean soup or lentil soup. 1/2 cup counts as 1/4 cup of beans or 1 oz of meat/meat alternates.
Soups, homemade	Soups that contain meat, fish, poultry or other meat alternates, are creditable as a source of meat/alternates if minimum required amount of 1/4 oz of meat/meat alternates per serving can be identified.
Soups, commercially prepared	Examples include: bean, lentil or split pea. 1/2 cup equals 1 oz of meat alternate for reconstituted canned. For homemade, use amounts of split pea, beans or lentils in recipe to calculate creditable portion.
Soy Butter	Soy butter made from 100% soy nuts is a creditable portion. It is a good alternate to peanut butter for those who are allergic to peanuts. CACFP recommends serving soy butter in combination with other meat/meat alternates since the serving size of soy butter alone may be too large for children.
Tahini	A paste made from ground sesame seeds. See: Nut and Seed Butter.
Tofu	Tofu is made from soybeans. Creditable as a meat alternative. However, tofu that is added into drinks (such as smoothies) or dishes to improve texture (such as baked desserts) may not be credited toward the meal pattern requirement.
Tuna, canned	Choose low-sodium tuna, packed in water.
Turkey, lean	Broil or bake turkey without skin. Choose ground turkey that is at least 90% lean.
Yogurt, sticks or tubes	Creditable for meals and snacks when it contains no more than 23 grams of sugar per 6 ounces. Two tubes (or 4 oz.) of yogurt equals 1 ounce of meat alternate.
Yogurt	Creditable for meals and snacks. Can be plain, flavored, sweetened or unsweetened but cannot contain more than 23 grams of sugar per 6 ounces. Four ounces of yogurt equals 1 ounce of meat alternate.

Meat/Meat Alternates



NOT RECOMMENDED BUT ALLOWED AS MEAT/MEAT ALTERNATES

The foods listed below are creditable but are not recommended. Processed meat should not be served more than once per week due to the high fat and salt content.

Food Item	Comments
Canadian Bacon	1 lb (16 oz) will yield 11 1-oz servings of cooked meat.
Canned or Frozen Foods	Examples include: beef stew, burritos, chili, meat stew, pizza, pot pies or ravioli. These items count only if CN-labeled. Check the CN label for correct serving size. Processed combination foods such as these are usually higher in fat and salt than homemade foods.
Cheese, natural, regular	Examples include: American, brick, Cheddar, Colby, Monterey Jack, mozzarella, Muenster, Provolone or Swiss. A 1 oz serving of natural cheese equals a 1 oz serving of meat alternate. Due to its high fat content, cheese is not recommended more than once per week unless it is low-fat.
Chicken Nuggets	Only the chicken is creditable. If CN-labeled, check the label to find the correct serving size. If it does not have a CN label, 2 oz of chicken nuggets equals 1 oz of meat.
Chicken Wings	Must serve 6 oz cooked weight to provide 1.5 oz of meat.
Corndogs, Frankfurters, Hot Dogs	Must be 100% meat or contain alternate protein products (APP) as the only binder or extender. High in salt and fat.
Corned Beef	
Deviled Eggs	High in cholesterol and fat. Rather than preparing with mayonnaise, try a lower fat variety of the spread. See: Eggs.
Fish Sticks/Fish Nuggets	See: Chicken Nuggets.
Frankfurters, meat and poultry	See: Corn Dogs.
Hot Dogs	See: Corn Dogs.
Kidney	Kidney is high in cholesterol and fat.
Liver	Liver is high in cholesterol and fat.
Liverwurst	Cannot contain binders or extenders.
Luncheon Meats	Cannot contain by-products, cereal or extenders.
Macaroni and Cheese, homemade	The cheese used in the homemade recipe may count toward the meat alternate requirement.

Meat/Meat Alternates



NOT RECOMMENDED BUT ALLOWED AS MEAT/MEAT ALTERNATES

The foods listed below are creditable but are not recommended. Processed meat should not be served more than once per week due to the high fat and salt content.

Food Item	Comments
Pizza, homemade	Homemade pizza may be credited based on the amount of meat/meat alternates in each serving.
Pot Pies, homemade	Homemade pot pies may be credited based on the amount of meat/meat alternates in each serving.
Pressed/Potted Meat Products	Must be 100% meat or contain alternate protein products (APP) as the only binder or extender. High in salt and fat.
Ricotta Cheese, whole milk	A 1/4 cup serving equals 1 oz of meat alternate.
Sausage, bulk, link or patty including Polish and Vienna	Cannot contain meat by-products or poultry by-products, cereals, binders or extenders. Cannot contain more than 50% trimmable fat.
Tripe	Low quality protein.
Turkey Wings	Must serve 5 oz cooked weight to provide 1.5 oz of turkey meat.

Meat/Meat Alternates



NOT ALLOWED AS MEAT/MEAT ALTERNATES

The foods listed below are not creditable.
These foods do not count toward the CACFP Meal Pattern requirements.

Acorns	Oxtails
Bacon, imitation bacon or turkey bacon	Parmesan Cheese
Cheese Foods/Cheese Spreads (Velveeta, Cheese Whiz, pimento cheese)	Pepperoni
Cheese Product (some American cheese)	Pig Feet, Neck Bones or Tails
Chestnuts	Pizza, commercial. Dough portion may count as a grains/bread component. (See: Canned or Frozen Food).
Chitterlings	Pot Pies, commercial (See: Canned or Frozen Food)
Coconuts	Ravioli (See: Canned or Frozen Food)
Cream Cheese and Neufchatel Cheese	Romano Cheese
Fish, home-caught	Salt Pork
Ham hocks	Scrapple
Home-Slaughtered and any non USDA-inspected Meat	Soups, commercially prepared (other than split pea, bean or lentil)
Imitation Cheese	Soy Burgers or Other Soy Products (See: Appendix C)
Imitation Frankfurters	Tempeh
Imitation Seafood	Wild Game/Fowl
Macaroni and Cheese, boxed	Yogurt Products (frozen yogurt, drinkable yogurt, yogurt bars, yogurt-covered fruit or nuts)
Meat, Poultry or Seafood Jerky (beef jerky, turkey jerky, salmon jerky)	Yogurt, homemade

Infant Foods



CACFP requires all participating day care homes and child care centers to offer meals to all infants enrolled in care if the child is in care during the meal service period. Breast milk or iron-fortified formula (or a combination of both) must be included in all meals and snacks served to infants up to one year of age. Breast milk is the optimal choice and it is recommended that breast milk be served through the infant's first birthday. For infants consuming formula, child care facilities must offer at least one iron-fortified formula that would satisfy the needs of one or more infants in care.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life and continued breastfeeding through 12 months and beyond. Childcare facilities play an important role in promoting breastfeeding. They can:

- encourage mothers to supply breast milk for their infants
- offer a quiet, private area for mothers who come to the day care to breastfeed

To further support breastfeeding, reimbursement for meals is allowed when a breastfeeding mother comes to the day care home or center and directly breastfeeds her infant.

Infants are categorized into two age groups: 0 through 5 months and 6 months to their first birthday. Breast milk and/or infant formula are served to infants 0 through 5 months old. The introduction of solid foods can begin around 6 months of age if the infant is developmentally ready. The decision to feed specific foods should always be made with the infant's parent or guardian.

The CACFP Infant Meal Pattern uses ranges for portion sizes (e.g., 0-2 tablespoons vegetables) to allow for flexibility in the types and amounts of foods that must be served to infants when claimed for reimbursement.

- An amount showing 0 tablespoons (Tbsp.) means that the item is optional if the infant is not developmentally ready for that food
- It also means that less than 1 Tbsp. can be served

Solid foods are only required for infants 6 months to their first birthday when they are developmentally ready to accept them. Feeding on demand is recommended as some babies may have small appetites.



The amounts listed in the meal pattern are the minimum portions. Infants may need to eat every two hours or more frequently, and they may eat less than the amount offered. Foods served should be of appropriate texture and consistency.

CACFP will reimburse for meals and snacks containing only breast milk or iron-fortified formula, whether supplied by the caregiver or the parent. Once a parent requests their infant be fed solid foods, the parent may only supply one component of a reimbursable meal. This may be either the breast milk/formula or a solid food.

Requirements:

- Parents may request that caregivers continue feeding their baby breast milk after their first birthday. Breast milk is an allowable milk substitute for children of any age in CACFP.
- For infants who regularly consume less than the minimum amount of breast milk or formula per feeding, a serving of less than the minimum amount may be offered. Additional breast milk or formula must be offered at a later time if the infant is still hungry.
- A vegetable or fruit, or both, must be served at all meals including snacks for infants 6 months to their first birthday when they are developmentally ready to accept them.
- All vegetables and fruits must be pureed, mashed or chopped to appropriate consistency depending on individual development needs.

Infant Foods



- At snack only, ready-to-eat breakfast cereals may be served as a grain for infants 6 months to their first birthday when developmentally ready. Breakfast cereals cannot contain more than 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce.
- Iron-fortified infant cereal may be served in place of bread/crackers/breakfast cereal at snack, depending on individual development needs and eating habits.
- Cheese, cottage cheese, yogurt and whole eggs are allowable meat alternates for infants 6 months and older.
- Cow's milk must not be served before age 1 based on recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics.
- Juice must not be served before age 1.
- Whole milk may be served beginning at 1 year of age.

Cautions:

- Never prop a bottle or give a bottle to a baby during naptime. This can cause choking, tooth decay and ear infections.
- NYS Office of Children and Family Services regulations do not allow heating bottles and solid foods in a microwave oven. Uneven heating can occur and burn the infant's mouth.

Food Substitution Note:

When an exception to the meal pattern is necessary (such as serving low-iron fortified formula), a statement from a recognized medical authority must be kept on file by the provider/center. It must state the required food substitution(s). Only then is the meal/snack eligible for reimbursement.

For More Information:

For more information on infant development, nutrition for infants and safe food handling, please check USDA's *Feeding Infants: A Guide for Use in the Child Nutrition Programs* at the following website: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/feeding-infants-guide-use-child-nutrition-programs>.

Protecting, promoting and supporting breastfeeding is an important part of public health. The Child and Adult Care Food Program invites you to join a national effort to support breastfeeding mothers and babies. If you would like your child care center or day care home to be designated as Breastfeeding Friendly, please contact CACFP at 1-800-942-3858.

Infant Foods



ACCEPTABLE AND RECOMMENDED FOOD ITEMS FOR INFANTS, 6 MONTHS TO 1ST BIRTHDAY

The items below must be prepared in a form that is suitable for an infant to consume safely as a finger food, reducing the chances of choking. For example:

- Cut soft tortilla into small thin strips
- Mash soft ripe vegetables and fruits (such as avocados, bananas and peaches)
- Cook and mash apples, pears, green beans or sweet potatoes

GRAINS/BREAD

Breads (French, Italian, rye, white, whole wheat)

Biscuits

Crackers (animal crackers, graham crackers made without honey [even in baked goods honey could contain harmful spores which could cause a serious illness in infants], matzo crackers, saltines)

Iron-fortified infant cereal

English muffins

Pita bread (wheat, white, whole wheat)

Rolls (potato, wheat, white, whole wheat)

Soft tortillas (corn, wheat)

Teething biscuits

Toasted oat cereal, plain (Cheerios®)

Zwieback

FRUITS

Applesauce

Banana

Melon

Peaches

Pears

Plums

VEGETABLES

Avocados

Beets

Carrots

Green Beans

Peas

Spinach

Squash

Sweet Potatoes

Turnips

MEAT/MEAT ALTERNATES

Cheese

Cottage Cheese

Dried beans, peas or lentils

Egg (whole)

Lean Meats, Poultry or Fish



RECOMMENDED AS INFANT FOODS

Food Item	Comments
Beans, canned or dried	Cooked dried or canned beans count as a meat alternate for developmentally ready infants 6 months of age and older. Dried or canned beans should be prepared to the appropriate texture (mashed or pureed) for infants. Examples include: kidney, pinto, navy and black beans. Green or yellow beans count as vegetables, not as a meat alternate.
Bread	SNACK ONLY for developmentally ready infants 6 months of age and older. Must be whole grain-rich or enriched. Examples include: bagel, French, Italian, rye, white or whole wheat breads.
Breast milk	Warm on stove or under warm running water. Never heat in a microwave.
Cereal, iron-fortified infant	Infant's first cereal. Select plain iron-fortified infant cereals such as rice, barley, oatmeal and mixed cereals. May be served at breakfast, lunch, supper and snack.
Cereal, ready to eat	SNACK ONLY. Counts as a grain/bread. Ready-to-eat cereals may be served as snack to developmentally ready infants around 6 months of age and older. Cereals cannot contain more than 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce. Examples include: Cheerios, Kix, Puffed Rice.
Cheese	Counts as a meat/meat alternate. May be served to developmentally ready infants 6 months of age and older. Examples include: natural cheeses such as Cheddar, Colby, Monterey Jack or mozzarella.
Cottage Cheese	Counts as a meat/meat alternate. May be served to developmentally ready infants 6 months of age and older.
Crackers	SNACK ONLY for developmentally ready infants 6 months of age and older. Counts as a grain/bread alternate. Examples include: Club Crackers, Goldfish, Matzo, Melba Toast, Oyster Crackers, Ritz Crackers, RyKrisp, Saltines, Sociables, Wasa or Crispbread.
Egg (whole)	Counts as a meat/meat alternate. May be served to developmentally ready infants 6 months of age and older. All eggs should be properly refrigerated, washed with water, then cooked thoroughly (no runny, soft eggs) to avoid Salmonella.
Fish	Counts as a meat/meat alternate. Examples include haddock or cod. Examine fish closely and remove bones. Serve only after it has been introduced with no problems, around 6 months of age and older. Avoid shark, swordfish, king mackerel or tilefish due to possible high levels of mercury.
Fruit	A vegetable or fruit, or both, must be served at breakfast, lunch, supper and snack for developmentally ready infants 6 months of age and older. Commercially-prepared infant fruit must have fruit listed as the first ingredient on the label. Fruits may need to be cut, mashed, pureed, and/or cooked to reduce the risk of choking in infants.

Infant Foods



RECOMMENDED AS INFANT FOODS

Food Item	Comments
Grains	May be served to developmentally ready infants 6 months of age and older. Some examples include bread, crackers, and ready-to-eat cereals.
Infant Food, commercially-prepared	See Vegetables, Fruit, or Meat
Infant Food, homemade	Avoid adding salt, fat, sugar and other seasonings.
Infant Formula (includes soy-based)	Must meet the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) definition for iron-fortified infant formulas. The label must state "with iron" or "iron-fortified." The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that during the first year of life, the only acceptable alternative to breast milk is iron-fortified infant formula and that low-iron formulas should not be used. A medical statement is required in order to serve formula that does not meet the FDA definition of iron-fortified.
Meat	May be served at breakfast, lunch or supper to developmentally ready infants around 6 months of age and older. Select plain lean meat, fish and poultry. Commercially-prepared infant food meat must have a meat listed as the first ingredient on the label.
Soy Formula	See Infant Formula
Teething Biscuits	SNACK ONLY for developmentally ready infants 6 months of age and older. Counts as a grain/bread.
Vegetables	A vegetable or fruit, or both, must be served at breakfast, lunch, supper and snack for developmentally ready infants 6 months of age and older. Fresh, frozen or canned vegetables must be prepared (cooked, if necessary). Commercially-prepared infant vegetables must have a vegetable listed as the first ingredient on the label. Raw vegetables may cause choking in infants.
Yogurt	Counts as a meat/meat alternate. May be served at breakfast, lunch or supper to developmentally ready infants around 6 months of age and older. Cannot contain more than 23 grams of sugar per 6 ounces.

Infant Foods



NOT ALLOWED AS INFANT FOODS

The foods listed below are not creditable.
These foods do not count toward the CACFP Meal Pattern requirements.

Buttermilk	Should not be given to infants.
Cheese Foods	Cheese foods are high in salt and low in nutrients.
Cheese Spreads	Cheese spreads are high in salt and low in nutrients.
Chicken Nuggets	Includes commercially-prepared breaded or battered chicken products.
Chocolate	May cause allergic reactions.
Combination Dinners, commercially-prepared infant food	See: Infant Food, commercially-prepared combination dinner.
Cream	
Dessert, infant food	See: Infant Food, dessert.
Dry Milk, reconstituted	
Evaporated Milk	Medical exception: Must have a signed statement from a recognized medical authority on file.
Fish Sticks	Includes commercially-prepared breaded or battered fish or seafood products.
Fruit Juice	No juice before age 1.
Half and Half or Cream	
Honey	Honey (including honey cooked or baked in products such as honey graham crackers) should not be served to infants less than 1 year of age. Honey is sometimes contaminated with <i>Clostridium botulism</i> spores. If an infant ingests these spores, they can produce a toxin that may cause a severe food-borne illness called infant botulism.
Hot Dogs	May cause choking. Not intended for infants.
Infant Cereal, dry, with Fruit	It is difficult to determine the amount of cereal and the amount of fruit.
Infant Cereal, in jars, with or without Fruit	

Infant Foods



NOT ALLOWED AS INFANT FOODS

The foods listed below are not creditable.
These foods do not count toward the CACFP Meal Pattern requirements.

Food Item	Comments
Infant Food, commercially-prepared combination dinner	Examples include: meat/vegetable dinners, meat dinners or dehydrated dinners. The amount of meat, fruit or vegetable cannot be determined. Often water is the first ingredient.
Infant Food, dessert	Examples include: infant puddings, infant custards, infant cobblers or infant fruit desserts. Not 100% fruit. Often high in sugar, fat and low in nutrients.
Infant Food, home-canned	Not creditable due to the risk of food-borne illness.
Infant Food, pudding	High in sugar, fat and low in nutrients.
Infant Formula, follow-up	Medical Exception: May be served to infants 6 months of age and older only with a signed statement from a recognized medical authority on file.
Infant Formula, low-iron (includes soy based)	Only iron-fortified formula is creditable. Medical Exception: Must have a signed statement from a recognized medical authority on file.
Infant Formula, manufactured outside of the United States	
Meat Sticks	May cause choking. Not intended for infants.
Milk, whole, reduced-fat (2%), low-fat (1%) or fat-free (skim)	The American Academy of Pediatrics does not recommend cow's milk to infants under 1 year of age. Cow's milk can place stress on an infant's kidneys, cause allergic reactions and cause blood loss through the intestines, leading to iron deficiency anemia. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends infants consume breast milk and/or iron-fortified infant formula during the first year of life. Medical Exception: Must have a signed statement from a recognized medical authority on file.
Nuts	May cause choking. Not intended for infants.
Peanut Butter or Other Nut and Seed Butters	May cause choking. Not intended for infants.
Pudding, infant food	See: Infant Food, pudding.
Puffs, fruit and vegetable	Includes Gerber Graduates Lil' Crunchies, Gerber Graduates Wagon Wheels, and similar infant snack products
Sausages	May cause choking. Not intended for infants.
Shellfish	Shellfish may cause a severe allergic reaction in some babies.
Vegetables/Fruits Juice Blends	See: Fruit Juice
Vegetable Juice	See: Fruit Juice

Infant Foods



Infant Foods Questions and Answers

Q: What is the best way to introduce solid foods?

A: The introduction of solid foods can begin around 6 months of age if the infant is developmentally ready. Introduce solid foods gradually, offering one food at a time over the span of a few days. The decision to feed specific foods should always be made with the infant's parent or guardian.

Q: How do we know if an infant is developmentally ready to eat solid foods?

A: Infants who are developmentally ready for solid foods will show the following signs:

- Sit in a chair with good head control
- Open their mouth for food
- Move food from a spoon into their throat
- Double their birth weight

Q: Can solid foods be served to infants younger than 6 months of age?

A: Yes, meals containing solid foods are reimbursable when the infant is developmentally ready to accept them, including infants younger than 6 months of age. A written note from a parent or guardian stating his or her infant should be served solid foods is recommended as a best practice.

Q: If an infant does not finish the required minimum serving of breast milk or formula offered, is the meal still reimbursable?

A: Yes, as long as the infant is offered the minimum required serving of breast milk or formula, the meal is reimbursable. For infants who regularly consume less than the minimum amount of breast milk or formula per feeding, a serving of less than the minimum amount may be offered. Additional breast milk or formula must be offered at a later time if the infant is still hungry. Infants do not eat on a strict schedule and should not be force fed. Instead, infants should be fed at times that are consistent with their usual eating habits. It is common for infants who consume breast milk to eat small amounts at each feeding.

Q: Can parents or guardians supply any food for their infant?

A: Yes, but parents or guardians may supply only one of the components in a reimbursable meal.

Q: How do we handle a parent who supplies breast milk/formula and also wants to bring in baby food?

A: Parents have the right to choose what foods are given to their children. Centers and daycare home providers may only claim a meal or snack for reimbursement when up to one component is supplied by the parent/guardian. In situations where the parent/guardian chooses to provide more than one component, the center/daycare home provider should exclude the meal or snack from reimbursement.

Q: If a doctor prescribes cow's milk for an infant younger than 12 months of age, is the meal reimbursable?

A: Yes, cow's milk may be served as a substitute for breast milk and/or infant formula and be part of a reimbursable meal, if:

- The request is supported by a medical statement signed by a licensed physician or a State licensed medical professional who is authorized to write medical prescriptions
- The medical statement explains the need for the substitution
- The medical statement is kept on file by the center or day care home

Q: Is there a whole grain-rich requirement for infants?

A: No, the requirement to serve at least one whole grain-rich food per day is only required under the CACFP children and adult meal patterns.

Q: Are tofu and soy yogurt allowed in the infant meal pattern?

A: No. Tofu and soy yogurt are only allowed as a meat alternate in the child and adult meal patterns.



Water Requirements

All CACFP-participating programs must offer and make drinking water available to children throughout the day.

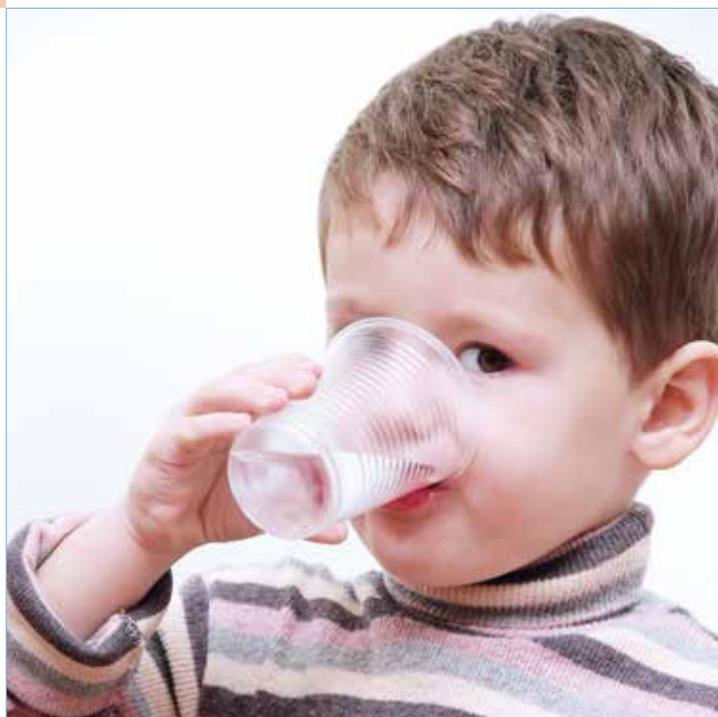
Water can help children stay hydrated, and it is a healthy alternative to sugar-sweetened beverages. Child care centers and day care homes can make water available to children in a variety of ways, including:

- putting cups next to the faucet
- placing pitchers and cups on a counter or table
- serving water with snacks
- providing water when it is requested

A good time to offer water more frequently might be during or after physical activity, on hot summer days, or cold winter months when the air is drier because of indoor heating.

While drinking water must be made available to children during meal times, it does not have to be served alongside the meal. Water is not part of the reimbursable meal and may not be served instead of milk.

There are no water requirements for adults. However, adult day care centers are encouraged to ensure drinking water is offered and made available to adult participants throughout the day.



Appendix A: Sample Menus



BREAKFAST	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Milk	1% or fat-free milk	1% or fat-free milk	1% or fat-free milk	1% or fat-free milk	1% or fat-free milk
Vegetable or Fruit	Diced apple	Blueberries	Peaches	Raspberries	Roasted sweet potato hash
Grains/Bread	Oatmeal	Whole wheat bagel	Waffles	Wheat Chex (WGR)	
Meat/Meat Alternate		Egg omelet			Scrambled egg
LUNCH/SUPPER	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Milk	1% or fat-free milk	1% or fat-free milk	1% or fat-free milk	1% or fat-free milk	1% or fat-free milk
Vegetable	Green beans	Garden salad	Mashed potatoes	Butternut squash	Sautéed carrots
Fruit or Vegetable	Plum	Cantaloupe	Cherries	Fresh pear slices	Kidney beans
Grains/Bread	Whole wheat bread (WGR)	Brown rice (WGR)	Whole wheat roll (WGR)	Barley Casserole	Whole corn tortilla (WGR)
Meat/Meat Alternate	Hot turkey sandwich	Cod fillet	Chicken breast	Roast beef	Tofu Chili
SNACK	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Milk					
Vegetable		Broccoli & cauliflower florets		Cucumber slices	Celery sticks
Fruit	Strawberries				
Grains/Bread			Pretzel rods	Whole grain crackers (WGR)	
Meat/Meat Alternate	Low-fat vanilla yogurt	Cottage cheese ranch dip	Cheddar cheese cubes		Tuna salad

Appendix B: Recipe Analysis



CACFP sponsors must ensure that all meals served meet the CACFP meal pattern requirements. All recipes used must document that they provide a sufficient amount of the meal pattern component(s) credited. USDA's Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs is a valuable tool to determine the contribution foods make toward the meal pattern requirements.

For homemade dishes, an appropriate standardized recipe should be used to ensure that enough of each planned CACFP meal pattern component is provided. For example, to meet the meat/meat alternates and grains/bread requirements for children ages 3-5 years, a macaroni and cheese casserole recipe must document that each serving provides 1-1/2 ounces of cheese and 1/4 cup cooked pasta.

Macaroni and Cheese

From "Meals Without Squeals" by Christine Berman, MPH, RD & Jack Fromer

Ingredients:

8 oz. dry macaroni or other pasta	1/2 tsp. dry mustard
2 cups low-fat milk	1/4 tsp. paprika
1 1/2 tsp. starch	12 oz. sharp Cheddar cheese, grated
3/4 tsp. salt	2 scallions, green part only, thinly sliced (optional)
1/4 tsp. pepper	

Steps:

1. Cook macaroni. While macaroni is cooking, combine milk and dry ingredients in a jar and shake very well.
2. When macaroni is tender, drain it and return to pan.
3. Add milk mixture and stir gently over medium heat until sauce thickens.
4. Add cheese and optional scallions or chives, stir until melted, and serve.

SAMPLE

Steps:

1. List CACFP components in the recipe.
2. Look in the USDA Food Buying Guide to determine the number of servings from each component. Use the serving size appropriate for the age of the children in your care.
3. The number of servings will be determined by the most limiting component. In the example below, the cheese is the most limiting component.
4. A recipe may have to be modified to increase the amount of meat/meat alternates in the recipe to reduce the total size of the serving for young children.

Comments:

1. The milk used in this recipe cannot be credited to any food component. Milk is required at meals as a beverage.
2. The scallions do not contribute the minimum of 1/8 cup per serving, so are not considered as a component.
3. To determine the portion size, measure the total volume and divide by 8 for 1-1/2 oz. servings of cheese (3-5 year olds) or 6 for 2 oz. servings of cheese (6 and older).
4. The most limiting component of this recipe is the cheese. The total number of servings in the recipe is determined by the number of servings of cheese.

Sample Recipe Analysis

COMPONENT INGREDIENTS	elbow macaroni	sharp Cheddar cheese
AMOUNT	8 oz. (dry)	12 oz.
MEAT/ MEAT ALTERNATES	none	8 (1-1/2 oz. servings) or 6 (2 oz. servings)
VEGETABLES/FRUITS	none	none
GRAINS/BREAD	19* (1/4 c. servings) or 9 (1/2 c. servings)	none

*Food Buying Guide

Meal Components in this recipe:

YIELD:

3-5 year olds: 8 servings;
each serving = 1 meat alternate and 2 grains/bread
6 and older: 6 servings;
each serving = 1 meat alternate and 1.5 grains/bread

Appendix C: Meat Alternates for Vegetarian Menu Planning

- Meat alternates include cheese, eggs, cooked dried beans, nuts, seeds and nut and seed butters.
- Nuts and seeds may fulfill only 1/2 of the meat alternates requirement at lunch and supper.
- An additional meat alternate must be served with nuts and seeds at lunch and supper.
- Nuts, seeds and nut butters may fulfill the entire meat alternate requirement at snack.
- Dried beans may be credited as a meat alternate, or as a vegetable/fruit, but not as both in the same meal.
- Tofu is creditable. Most soy burgers and veggie burgers are not creditable.



Adapted from Making Nutrition Count for Children, USDA

Appendix D: Choking Prevention



Young children, ages 1 to 3, are at risk of choking on food. They remain at risk until they can chew and swallow better, by about age 4.

Always watch children during meals and snacks to make sure they:

- Sit quietly.
- Eat slowly.
- Chew food well before swallowing.
- Take only one bite at a time.
- Finish swallowing before leaving the table.

Prepare foods so that they are easy to chew:

- Cut food into small pieces or thin slices.
- Cut round foods, like hot dogs, lengthwise into thin strips.
- Remove all bones from fish, chicken and meat.
- Cook food such as carrots or celery until slightly soft. Then cut into sticks.
- Remove seeds and pits from fruit.
- Spread peanut butter thinly.

Foods that may cause choking

Firm, smooth, or slippery foods like:

- hot dog rounds
- carrot rounds
- hard candy
- large pieces of fruit
- granola
- peanuts
- whole grapes
- cherries with pits
- cherry tomatoes

Small, dry or hard foods that are difficult to chew and easy to swallow, like:

- popcorn
- small pieces of raw carrot, celery or other raw hard vegetables
- nuts and seeds
- potato and corn chips
- pretzels

Sticky or tough foods that do not break apart easily, like:

- spoonfuls or chunks of peanut butter or other nut or seed butters
- chunks of meat
- marshmallows
- raisins and other dried fruit

Choking Hazards

< 6 months of age

No cereal in bottles

0-1 year olds

Do not serve:

- Nuts (including peanut butter)
- Chips, pretzels, popcorn
- Raw carrots 
- Tossed salad **1/4 inch**
- Raw fruits and vegetables, unless modified into 1/4-inch bite-sized pieces BEFORE serving
- Large chunks or stringy meat, unless modified into 1/4-inch bite-sized pieces BEFORE serving

1-3 year olds

Do not serve:

- Hotdogs or sausage rounds
- Whole grapes
- Whole cherry or grape tomatoes 
- Nuts
- Popcorn
- Raw carrot rounds **1/2 inch**
- Raw vegetables, unless modified into 1/2-inch bite-sized pieces BEFORE serving
- Dried fruit, including raisins
- Marshmallows
- Large chunks or stringy meat, unless modified into 1/2-inch bite-sized pieces BEFORE serving

Classroom Staff Responsibilities

- Infants should be fed solid foods only while they are sitting up.
- Always supervise children while they are eating.
- Insist that children eat calmly and while they are sitting down.
- Encourage children to chew their food well.
- Make sure that the foods served are appropriate in size for their chewing and swallowing abilities.

Food Service Responsibilities

- No bones or skin
- Remove pits from fruit before it goes to the classroom

Appendix E: Milk Substitutes



- CACFP regulations require that each child's breakfast, lunch and supper include milk. Children and adults who cannot drink cow's milk due to medical or other special dietary needs may be served milk substitutes in place of milk.
- Milk substitutes must have the same nutrients found in cow's milk, as outlined in the chart below.

NUTRIENT	PER 8-OUNCE CUP
Calcium	276 mg*
Protein	8 g*
Vitamin A	500 IU*
Vitamin D	100 IU*
Magnesium	24 mg*
Phosphorus	222 mg*
Potassium	349 mg*
Riboflavin	0.44 mg*
Vitamin B-12	1.1 mcg*

*mg = milligrams; g = grams; IU = international units; mcg = micrograms

- The following milk substitutes below meet required nutritional standards for approved milk substitutions:

Products								
Product Name	8 th Continent Soy milk	Pacific Natural Ultra Soy milk	Silk Soy milk	Sunrich Naturals Soy milk	Westsoy Organic Plus Soy milk	Kirkland Signature Organic Soy milk	Pearl Organic Smart Soy milk	Great Value Soy milk
Flavors	Original and Vanilla	Plain and Vanilla	Original	Plain and Vanilla	Plain and Vanilla	Plain	Original, Creamy Vanilla and Chocolate	Original

*Please note: Product information was obtained from manufacturer websites. Please double check the package nutrition label upon purchase.

- Milk substitutes served to children 1 through 5 years old must be unflavored.
- Milk substitutes are not required to be low-fat or fat-free when served to children 2 years old and older and adults.
- Parents or guardians may request milk substitutes, in writing, without providing a medical statement.
- A medical statement is only required for milk substitutes that do not meet the nutritional standards of cow's milk. Medical statements must be signed by a State recognized medical authority.

Appendix F: How to Identify Whole Grains



Grains Basics

Grains are divided into two groups: whole grains and refined grains.

- Whole grains contain all parts of the grain (bran, germ and endosperm) and supply the most nutrients including fiber, B vitamins and minerals.
- Refined grains are missing one or more of their three key parts (bran, germ or endosperm), and they have less protein, fiber and vitamins. Most refined grains are also enriched. This means that some vitamins and minerals are added back after processing.

WHOLE GRAINS	REFINED (NOT WHOLE GRAINS)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amaranth • Bromated Whole-Wheat Flour • Brown Rice • Brown Rice Flour • Buckwheat • Buckwheat Flour • Cracked Wheat or Bulgur • Crushed Wheat • Graham Flour • Millet or Millet Flakes • Oats (including old-fashioned, quick-cooking, and instant oatmeal) • Oat Flour • Quinoa • Teff • Triticale • Wheat Berries • Wheat Flour • Whole-Wheat Flour • Whole-Durum Wheat Flour • Whole-Wheat Pasta • Whole-Grain Barley • Whole-Grain Cornmeal • Whole-Grain Corn Flour • Whole Rye or Rye Berries • Wild Rice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All-Purpose Flour • Bread Flour • Bromated Flour • Cake Flour • Corn Flour • Corn Grits • Corn Meal • Durum Flour • Enriched Flour • Enriched Rice • Enriched Self-Rising Flour • Enriched Wheat Flour • Farina • Instantized Flour • Long-Grain White Rice • Pearl or Pearled Barley • Phosphated Flour • Rice Flour • Self-Rising Flour • Self-Rising Wheat Flour • Unbleached Flour • White Flour • Whole Flour

Serve whole grains whenever possible. Purchase, prepare and serve foods that contain a whole grain as the first ingredient in the ingredient list.

	K		Nut and Seed Butter	33, 34, 35, 45, 51		Q		Tempeh	38
Kasha		26	Nut or Seed Meal Flour	30	Quiche		35	Toaster Pastries	20, 21, 30
Kidney	16, 31, 36, 42, 45, 49		Nuts	5, 15, 30, 31, 32, 34, 35, 38, 45, 51, 52	Quick Bread		28, 29	Tofu	5, 31, 32, 33, 35, 46, 49, 51
Knockwurst		31			Quinoa		27, 54	Tomato Paste	17
Kool Aid®		19	O			R		Tomato Sauce	15, 17
	L		Oatmeal	17, 21, 23, 26, 30, 42, 49, 54	Raisin Bread		27	Tortilla	27, 30, 41, 49
Lactose-free Milk		9	Oatmeal Raisin Cookies	30	Ravioli		27, 36, 38	Tortilla Chips	30
Lactose-reduced Milk		8,9	Olive	20	Reduced-fat (2%) Milk		11, 45	Tostitos®	30
Lamb		31, 34	Onion	13, 17, 20	Refried Beans		35	Trail Mix	29
Lefse		26	Onion Ring	20	Rice	18, 21, 22, 23, 27, 42, 49, 54		Tripe	37
Legume		5, 31	Oxtail	38	Rice Cake		27	Triscuit®	25, 27
Lemon Pie Filling		19	Oyster Cracker	25, 26, 42	Rice Cereal Bar		30	Tuna	32, 35, 49
Lemonade		19			Rice Krispies® Treat		30	Turkey	31, 32, 35, 49
Lentils	16, 17, 34, 35, 38, 41		P		Rice Milk		9	Turkey Bacon	38
Limeade		19	Pancake	22, 26	Rice Pudding		30	Turkey Wing	37
Liver		36	Parmesan Cheese	38	Ricotta Cheese		35, 37	Turnovers	29, 30
Liverwurst		36	Party Mix	29	Ritz® Cracker		25, 27, 42		U
Lorna Doone®		30	Pasta	15, 26, 27, 50, 54	Roll	21, 27, 28, 41, 49		Ultra High Temperature (UHT) Milk	9
Low-fat (1%) Milk	3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 45		Pastries	20, 21, 30	Romano Cheese		38		V
Low-Sugar Cereal		23	Peanut Butter	32, 34, 35, 45, 52	RyKrisp®		25, 27, 42	V-8 Splash®	20
Luncheon Meat		36	Peas	13, 14, 16, 17, 32, 35, 41		S		Vegetable Bread	19, 20
	M		Pesto	20	Salsa		16, 18	Vegetable Juice	14, 17, 45
Macaroni		26, 50	Pickle	20	Salt Pork		38	Vegetable Juice Blend	17
Macaroni and Cheese		36, 38, 50	Pie Crust	29, 30	Saltine		25, 27, 41, 42	Vegetable Muffin	20
Matzo		25, 26, 41, 42	Pig Feet	38	Sausage	5, 37, 45, 51, 52		Vegetables	2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 30, 34, 39, 41, 42, 43, 45, 49, 50, 51, 52
Meal Pattern Requirements and Recommendations		4, 5	Pig Neck Bone	38	Scone		29, 30	Vegetables/Fruits Section	13-20
Meat Sauce		34	Pig Tail	38	Scrapple		38	Vegetables/Fruits Section Not Allowed as Vegetables/Fruits	19, 20
Meat Stick		45	Pimento Cheese	31, 38	Seafood		35, 38, 44	Vegetables/Fruits Section Not Recommended but Allowed as Vegetables/Fruits	18
Meat/Meat Alternates Section		31-38	Pita Bread	26, 41	Seeds	2, 6, 27, 31, 32, 35, 51, 52		Vegetables/Fruits Section Recommended as Vegetables/Fruits	16, 17
Meat/Meat Alternates Section Not Allowed as			Pita Chips	30	Shellfish		32, 35, 45	Vegetarian	33, 51
Meat/Meat Alternates		38	Pizza	6, 15, 26, 33, 36, 37, 38	Sherbet		11, 20	Velveeta®	31, 38
Meat/Meat Alternates Section Not Recommended but Allowed as Meat/Meat Alternates		36-37	Pizza Crust	26	Shoe-string Potato		30	Vienna Sausage	5, 31, 37
Meat/Meat Alternates Section Recommended as			Pizza Sauce (sauce on Pizza)	15		T			W
Meat/Meat Alternates		34-35	Polenta	26	Skim Milk	3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 31, 45		Waffle	22, 27, 49
Melba Toast		25, 26, 42	Pop-Tarts®	20, 30	Smoothie	8, 9, 17, 31, 35		Wasa Crispbread®	25, 27, 42
Milk	2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 17, 26, 31, 40, 45, 46, 47, 49, 50, 53		Popcorn	30, 52	Sociables®		25, 27, 42	Water	5, 8, 16, 18, 22, 26, 35, 42, 45, 47
Milk Section		7-11	Popcorn Cake	30	Sorbet		20	Water Chestnut	17
Milk Section Not Allowed as Milk		11	Popover	26	Soup	7, 8, 11, 13, 17, 18, 19, 35, 38		Wheat Berries	27, 54
Milk Section Not Recommended but Allowed as Milk		10	Popsicles®	20	Sour Cream		11	Wheat Thins®	25, 27
Milk Section Recommended as Milk		9	Pork	31, 35	Soy Burger		38, 51	Whole Grain	5, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 42, 49, 54
Milk, fluid		9	Posole	20	Soy Butter		35	Whole Grain Rich	5, 21, 22, 42, 46
Milk Substitutes		7, 8, 9, 39, 53	Pot Pie	36, 37, 38	Soy Milk		8, 9, 53	Whole Milk	4, 7, 9, 40
Millet		26, 54	Potato	14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 26, 30, 49	Soy Product		38	Wild Fowl	38
Mixed Vegetables		14, 15	Potato Chips	20, 30, 52	Soy Yogurt		46	Wild Game	38
Muffin		20, 21, 25, 29, 41	Potato Pancake	16, 30	Soybean Milk		9	Wild Rice	27, 54
	N		Potato Salad	15	Spaghetti		21	Won Ton Wrapper	27
Nacho		30	Potato Skin	18	Spaghetti Sauce		17		Y
Nectar		20	Potatoes	14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 26, 30, 41, 49	Sprout		17	Yogurt	5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 13, 17, 20, 31, 33, 35, 38, 40, 43, 46, 49
Neufchatel Cheese		38	Potted Meat Product	37	Squash Bread		29	Yogurt-covered Fruit	20, 38
Nilla Wafers®		30	Pound Cake	30	Sticky Bun		30		Z
Non USDA-inspected Meat		38	Preserves	19	Stuffing		24, 25, 27	Zucchini Bread	29
Non-fat Dry Milk		11	Pressed Meat Product	37	Sun Chips®		30	Zwieback	27, 41
Non-fat Milk		9	Pretzel	27, 30, 32, 49, 52	Sweet Roll		21, 30		
Noodle		26, 28	Pretzel Chips	30	Syrup		5, 18, 20		
			Pudding	7, 8, 11, 30, 45		T			
			Pudding Pop	11	Taco Chips		30		
			Puff Pastry	29	Taco Shell		21, 29		
			Puffs	20, 23, 30, 45	Tahini		35		
			Pumpnickel Bread	24, 26	Tater Tots®		18		
			Pumpkin Bread	29	Teddy Soft Bakes®		30		
					Teething Biscuit		41, 43		

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