

## Creditable and Noncreditable Foods in School Breakfast and Lunch Programs

Food Type	Creditable	Noncreditable
<p><b>Milk Products</b>            Only fluid milk. Must be pasteurized and meet state and local standards.</p> <p>Two varieties of fluid milk must be offered. Serving a variety of flavors of any of the allowable milks would count as a variety.<sup>1</sup></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fat-free milk</li> <li>• One percent low fat milk</li> <li>• Fat-free or low-fat lactose reduced or lactose-free milk</li> <li>• Fat-free or low-fat buttermilk</li> <li>• Fat-free or low-fat acidified milk</li> <li>• Fluid milk substitutes<sup>2</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ice milk</li> <li>• Ice cream</li> <li>• Cream cheese, sour cream</li> <li>• Custard</li> <li>• Evaporated milk</li> <li>• Powdered milk (<i>exception: Summer Food with state agency waiver</i>)</li> <li>• Half and Half</li> <li>• Pudding</li> <li>• Sherbet</li> <li>• Yogurt</li> <li>• Frozen yogurt</li> </ul>
<p><b>Meat/Meat Alternates</b>            Must be served as the main dish or in a main dish and only one other menu item.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nuts and seeds (one ounce)<sup>3</sup></li> <li>• Peanut butter</li> <li>• Lean meat, poultry, fish</li> <li>• Cheese</li> <li>• Cottage cheese</li> <li>• Cheese food, cheese spread<sup>4</sup></li> <li>• Eggs</li> <li>• Cooked dry beans and peas<sup>5</sup></li> <li>• Yogurt<sup>6</sup></li> <li>• Tofu<sup>7</sup></li> <li>• Alternate protein products<sup>8</sup></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acorns, chestnuts, coconut</li> <li>• Bacon and imitation bacon/bacon bits</li> <li>• Pepperoni, summer sausage</li> <li>• Gelatin</li> <li>• Pizza, commercial<sup>9</sup></li> <li>• Powdered cheese</li> <li>• Cheese sauce, commercial<sup>9</sup></li> <li>• Cheese product/imitation cheese</li> <li>• Meat in commercial soups<sup>9</sup></li> <li>• Cream cheese</li> <li>• Donations of meat, wild game, poultry, and fish if not inspected and approved by the appropriate federal/state agency</li> <li>• Yogurt products (frozen yogurt, homemade yogurt, yogurt-flavored products, yogurt bars, yogurt covered fruit and nuts)</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup>This applies to the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP) and Special Milk Program. **It does not apply to the Summer Food Service Program.**

<sup>2</sup>For all Child Nutrition Programs, **except the Summer Food Service Program**, fluid milk substitutes that are nutritionally equivalent to fluid cow's milk may be provided to non-disabled participants when supported by a written statement from a participant's parent or legal guardian. The state agency must be notified of a sponsor's intent to offer fluid milk substitutes.

<sup>3</sup>Nuts and seeds may provide no more than 50 percent of the meat/meat alternate requirement.

<sup>4</sup>“Cheese substitute,” “cheese food substitute” and “cheese spread substitute” must meet the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) standard of identity for substitute foods and be labeled as “cheese substitute,” “cheese food substitute” or “cheese spread substitute” to be creditable in Child Nutrition Programs. The standard requires that a “cheese substitute” is not nutritionally inferior to the standardized cheese for which it is substituting. Any item labeled with the wording “imitation” or cheese “product” does not meet the requirements for use in food-based menu planning approaches and is not creditable in the meal pattern.

<sup>5</sup>May be credited as either the meat or the vegetable in any one meal, but not creditable as both.

<sup>6</sup>Yogurt may be used to meet all or part of the meat/meat alternate requirement. Yogurt may be plain or flavored, unsweetened or sweetened. Noncommercial and/or nonstandardized yogurt products, such as frozen yogurt, homemade yogurt, yogurt flavored products, yogurt bars, yogurt covered fruit and/or nuts or similar products shall not be credited. Four ounces (weight) or one-half cup (volume) of yogurt fulfills the equivalent of one ounce equivalent of the meat/meat alternate requirement in the meal pattern.

<sup>7</sup>Commercially-prepared tofu and soy products may be used to meet all or part of the meat/meat alternate component. A 2.2 ounce (one-fourth cup) of commercially-prepared tofu containing at least five grams of protein equals one ounce equivalent of meat/meat alternate.

<sup>8</sup>The biological quality of the protein in the alternate protein must be at least 80 percent that of casein and contain at least 18 percent protein by weight when fully hydrated or formulated. Manufacturers supplying an alternate protein product to participating schools or institutions must provide documentation that the product meets this criteria.

<sup>9</sup>Commercially-prepared main dish products that are supported by a Child Nutrition (CN) label or product formulation statement indicating how the product credits toward meal pattern requirements in U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Child Nutrition Programs are creditable as stated.

Food Type	Creditable	Noncreditable
<p><b>Grains/Breads</b>            Must be at least 50 percent whole grain or meet whole grain-rich criteria. A whole grain-rich product must be made from 50 percent or more whole grains with all remaining grains (whole grain meal and/or flour) be enriched.</p> <p>Whole grains consist of the entire cereal grain seed or kernel. The kernel has three parts – the bran, the germ, and the endosperm. Usually the kernel is cracked, crushed, or flaked during the milling process. If the finished product retains the same relative proportions of grain, germ, and endosperm as the original grain, it is considered a whole grain.</p> <p>The grain crediting chart is included in the USDA memo <a href="#">Grain Requirements for the NSLP and SBP</a> which includes <i>Exhibit A: School Lunch and Breakfast Whole Grain-Rich Ounce Equivalency (oz. eq.) Requirements for School Meal Programs</i> posted on our website.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whole wheat and enriched flours</li> <li>• Amaranth</li> <li>• Barley</li> <li>• Bran</li> <li>• Bulgur or cracked wheat</li> <li>• Cornmeal<sup>10</sup></li> <li>• Couscous</li> <li>• Dry cereals</li> <li>• Pasta</li> <li>• Corn grits<sup>10</sup></li> <li>• Oatmeal</li> <li>• Quinoa</li> <li>• Wheat germ</li> <li>• Enriched white or brown rice</li> <li>• Wheat berries or oat groats</li> <li>• Weekly limit of two ounce equivalent for grain-based desserts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Potato chips</li> <li>• Shoestring potatoes</li> <li>• Popcorn</li> <li>• Starchy vegetables (potatoes, corn, peas)<sup>13</sup></li> <li>• Hominy</li> <li>• Lefse</li> <li>• Nut or seed flour</li> </ul>
<p><b>Fruits/Vegetables</b>            At least one fruit and one vegetable must be planned to meet the fruit/vegetable requirement. Each fruit/vegetable must contribute at least 1/8 cup to be considered creditable.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any fresh, frozen without added sugar, canned in light syrup, canned or dried fruit/vegetable<sup>11</sup></li> <li>• 100 percent fruit or vegetable juice<sup>11</sup></li> <li>• Cooked dry peas/beans<sup>12</sup></li> <li>• Pickled fruits and vegetables if served in quantities of 1/8 cup or more</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Catsup, pickle relish</li> <li>• Juice drinks with less than 100 percent fruit juice</li> <li>• Home canned fruits/vegetables</li> <li>• Jam, jelly</li> <li>• Hominy</li> <li>• Popsicles, gelatin with fruit juice<sup>11</sup></li> <li>• Potato chips</li> <li>• Fruit snacks or fruit leather<sup>14</sup></li> <li>• Raw sprouts</li> </ul>

<sup>10</sup>To be credited towards meeting the Grains/Breads Meal Pattern Requirements, corn products must be labeled as either:

- “Whole corn” or other “whole” corn designations, such as whole grain corn, whole ground corn, whole cornmeal, whole corn flour, etc.
- “Enriched” corn or other “enriched” corn designations, such as enriched yellow corn meal, enriched corn flour, enriched corn grits, etc.

<sup>11</sup>Any liquid or frozen product labeled “juice,” “full-strength juice,” “single-strength juice” or “reconstituted juice” is considered full-strength juice. Only 100 percent full-strength juice may be used in the NSLP and SBP.

For the NSLP and SBP, you may meet no more than one-half of the total fruit or vegetable requirement with full-strength vegetable or fruit juice. You may not serve juice if you serve milk as the only other component of a snack.

<sup>12</sup>May be credited as either the meat or the vegetable component in any one meal, but not both.

<sup>13</sup>Creditable as a vegetable component but not as a grain/bread component.

<sup>14</sup>Noncreditable unless supported by a CN label or product formulation statement that indicates how the product credits towards meal pattern requirements in USDA Child Nutrition Programs.