



Menu Planning and Meal Ideas



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Public Instruction
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List of ideas shared is posted on the CACFP Training Webpage



Menu Planning and Meal Ideas

Below is the list of ideas shared by attendees during the 2023 CACFP Training Meal Planning and Meal Ideas session. We hope you are inspired by many of the ideas.

When menu planning, remember, all foods served to meet CACFP meal pattern requirements must be creditable and amounts served must meet [CACFP meal pattern minimum serving sizes \(CACFP Adult Day Care Meal Pattern\)](#).

Some of the meal ideas shared during the session include commercially prepared / store-bought combination foods and processed meat/meat alternates. These items require a Child Nutrition (CN) Label or Product Formulation Statement (PFS) to credit the item to the CACFP meal pattern.

Homemade dishes with two or more components and/or other ingredients require a recipe to show how the dish meets the CACFP meal pattern (i.e., how much to serve to each participant, how the amount served meets CACFP meal pattern requirements, and whether additional foods must be served as part of the meal to meet the minimum amounts for each component). See the [CACFP Training Spotlight: Recipes for Foods Prepared From Scratch](#) for information.

VARIETY AND CONTRAST

What are some ways to add variety, color, contrast, and texture, etc. to menus?

- Varied vegetables (raw versus cooked)
- Make the foods of different colors
- Crackers with soup*
- Celery in casseroles
- Different colors
- Different textures
- Different shapes (use cookie cutters)
- Add vegetables to the main dish
- Use spices for color and flavor
- Use garnishes
- Be aware of how cut impacts taste
- Fruit salads
- Color milk (e.g., green milk for St. Patrick's Day)
- Serve chicken tenders* in different ways, i.e., in a wrap, on a bun, in a salad
- Serve a variety of fruits and vegetables
- Prepare foods that are liked the most with new items
- Always serve a colorful fruit or vegetable
- Pasta salad with lots of colorful vegetables
- Use a variety of condiments

VEGETARIAN

What vegetarian meals (meat alternates) do you currently serve? Or what vegetarian meals can you think of that could be served?

- Cheese Quesadillas
- Vegetarian Lasagna (Cheese, Cottage Cheese and/or Ricotta Cheese as meat alternate)
- Cheese Sandwiches / Grilled Cheese
- Red Beans And Rice
- Lentil Soup
- Tofu, Orange Tofu, BBQ Tofu, Lemon Baked Tofu
- Cheese, Cottage Cheese, String Cheese
- Black Beans, Chick Peas (Garbanzo Beans)

*Commercially prepared/Store-bought combination foods and processed meat/meat alternates are only creditable with a Child Nutrition (CN) Label or Product Formulation Statement (PFS) that provides information on how the item contributes to the meat/meat alternate component of the CACFP meal pattern.

Inspire Others!

Cultural / Ethnic Meals

Favorite Meals and Snacks

Foods not served

Fruits and Vegetables

Fun Names for Foods

Time Saving Meals

Variety

Vegetarian

VARIETY AND CONTRAST

What are some ways to add variety, color, contrast, and texture, etc. to menus?

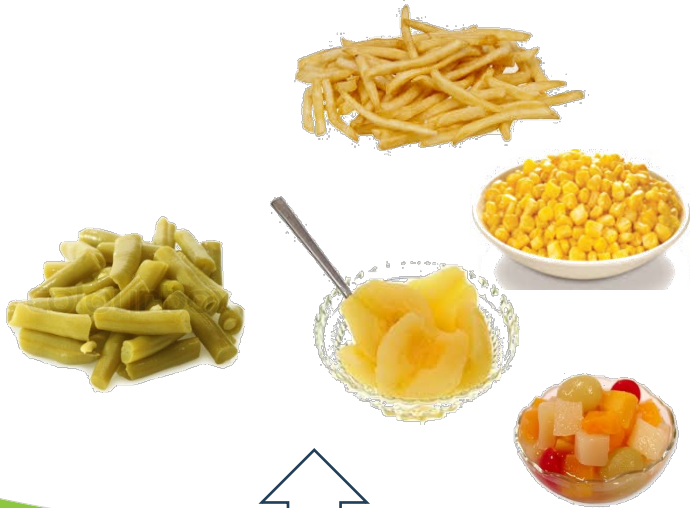
Variety and Contrast

- Include different foods daily over a week's time
 - Do not repeat the same food item in the week
 - Serve different foods at lunch and dinner
- Vary the main dish (different meat/meat alternate each day of the week)

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Cheese	Chicken	Beans/ Legumes	Pork	Eggs
Cod	Ground Beef	Turkey	Yogurt	Nut/seed butter
Chicken	Hummus	Shrimp	Ham	Beef Roast
Eggs	Turkey	Beans/ Legumes	Tilapia	Ground Beef
Yogurt	Chicken	Tofu	Nut/seed butter	Cheese

Variety and Contrast

- Include a variety of colors (at least 2-3 colorful foods per meal)



Foods are all similar in color



Incorporate colorful fruits and vegetables at each meal and snack

Variety and Contrast

- Include a variety of fruits and vegetables



Bad Cholesterol
Heart Disease Risk



Immune System
Eye Health



Heart Health



Memory



Cancer



Protect:
Bones, teeth, eyesight

Variety and Contrast



Set a goal to serve different fruits and vegetables throughout the week



Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Pineapple	Kiwi	Blackberries	Honeydew Melon	Apple Slices
Green peas	Roasted Sweet Potatoes	Broccoli	Eggplant	Red Bell Pepper

Variety and Contrast

Different textures

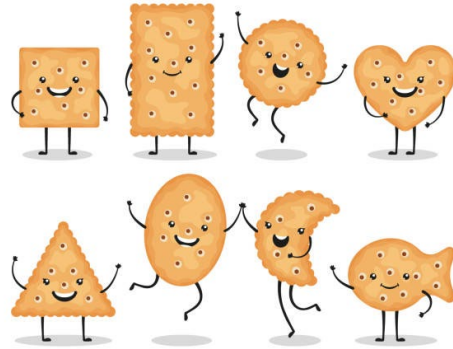


Not all food items on this slide are CACFP Creditable

Variety and Contrast

Different shapes

- Breakfast cereals
- Crackers
- Noodles
- Pretzels



Different flavors

Seasoning and Spices

Garlic Herb
Lemon
Parmesan
Mrs. Dash
Italian Seasoning
Adobo
Sazon
Cajun
Old Bay
Cinnamon

Sauces

Tomato/Marinara
Alfredo
Cheese
Teriyaki
Soy
BBQ
Buffalo
Gravy
Dressing
Salsa
Tzatziki

Cooking with Herbs and Spices

Cycle Menus for Child Care: Preschoolers



Cooking with Herbs and Spices

Using a variety of herbs and spices in cooking is a healthy way to add flavor to foods without adding a lot of sodium and sugar. The charts below are a starting point for thinking about how you can use herbs and spices to replace sodium and sugar in recipes.

Name	Form	Taste	Uses
Anise seed	Whole, ground	Sweet licorice flavor	Cookies, cakes, fruit mixtures, chicken
Basil	Fresh, dried chopped leaves	Mint licorice flavor	Pizza, spaghetti sauce, tomato dishes, vegetable soups, meat pies, peas, zucchini, green beans
Bay leaves	Whole, ground	Pungent and sharp with a slight bitter taste	Fish, soups, tomato juice, potato salad dressing
Caraway seed	Whole	Sharp and pungent	Baked goods such as rye bread, cheeses, sauerkraut dishes, soups, meats, stews
Celery Seed	Whole, ground	Flavor distinctly different from celery	Fish, soups, tomato juice, potato salad
Chives	Fried, freeze-dried	In the onion family; delicate flavor	Baked potato topping, all cooked green vegetables, green salads, cream sauces, cheese dishes
Cilantro	Fresh, dried	Sweet aroma, mildly peppery	Ingredient in Mexican foods
Coriander seed	Whole, ground	Pleasant, lemon-orange flavor	Ingredient in curry; ground form used in pastries, buns, cookies, and cakes; in processed foods such as frankfurters
Cumin	Whole seeds, ground	Warm, distinctive, salty-sweet, resembles caraway	Ingredient in chili powder and curry powder; German cooks add to pork and sauerkraut, and Dutch add to cheese
Dill	Fresh, dried, seeds	Aromatic, like caraway but milder and sweeter	Dill pickles; seeds in meats, sauces, salads, coleslaw, potato salad, and cooked macaroni; dill weed in salads, sandwiches, and uncooked mixtures
Fennel seed	Whole	Flavor similar to anise, pleasant sweet licorice	Bread, rolls, apple pies, seafood, pork and poultry dishes; provides the distinctive flavor to Italian sausage

VEGETARIAN

What vegetarian meals (meat alternates) do you currently serve?
Or what vegetarian meals can you think of that could be served?

Vegetarian

CACFP Training Spotlight: Vegetarian Meals in the CACFP

Vegetarian Meals: Serving a meat alternate for the meat/meat alternate component



IN THIS HANDOUT:

Vegetarian Meals in the CACFP

This handout provides information on vegetarian meals for programs that accommodate participants requesting a vegetarian diet and/or programs that want to incorporate vegetarian meals as part of the regular menu.



Types of Vegetarian Diets

All vegetarian diets consume plant-based foods including grains, vegetables, fruits, legumes, soy, nuts, and seeds. In addition, the following vegetarian diets consume additional foods:

- Ovo-vegetarian: Eggs
- Lacto-vegetarian: Dairy products
- Lacto-ovo vegetarian: Eggs and dairy products
- Pescatarian: Fish. May or may not consume eggs and dairy products
- Semi-vegetarian: Small amounts of meat, chicken, fish, dairy products, and eggs
- Vegan: Consume only plant-based foods. They do not consume animal products.

Menu Planning for Vegetarian Meals

Because all types of vegetarian diets eat foods from the vegetable, fruit, and grain components, only the milk and meat/meat alternate (m/ma) components may need adjustments.

- **Milk:** If cow's milk is not a part of the participant's vegetarian diet, a non-dairy beverage nutritionally equivalent to cow's milk can be served as a creditable substitute. Refer to the [Creditable Non-Dairy Beverages](#) handout for a list of creditable non-dairy beverages.
- **M/MA:** Foods served as a meat alternate must be creditable to the CACFP meal pattern. Refer to the next page for list of creditable meat alternate options.
 - Note: Meatless substitutes made with alternate protein products, grain ingredients, vegetables, etc. are only creditable when accompanied by a Child Nutrition (CN) label or a Product Formulation Statement (PFS).



Options are below and on the next 2 pages.
Refer to the [CACFP Meal Pattern - ADC](#) for required amounts to serve.

up to 3 times/week.

Thursday	Friday
Cheerios Banana Milk	Breakfast burrito Hashbrowns Milk



quinoa.
quinoa and water in a large, covered pot, a boil. Reduce heat to low, uncovered for 10-15 minutes until water is fully absorbed. Fluff. Set aside for step 6. In a separate pot, add oil and crumbled tofu. Heat and over medium heat for 2-3 minutes, occasionally stirring.
cumin, red pepper flakes, salt, pepper, bell peppers, and onions. Heat uncovered in a medium heat for 1-2 minutes, stirring frequently.
vegetable mixture over quinoa.
to combine.
with 6 fl oz spoonful (1/4 cup).

(25/50 servings)
beans (25/50 servings)
squares (25/50 servings)



Eggs

- Scrambled, hard boiled, ingredient in breakfast burrito, egg muffins

Legumes

- Soups, casseroles, tacos, burritos, quesadilla

Nuts/Seeds/their Butters

- Sandwiches

Tofu

- [Tofu Recipes](#) (GM 12/M/MA tab)

Meat Alternate	Additional Information
Alternate Protein Products (AAP) (e.g., burgers or links made from soy or other vegetable protein sources)	A Child Nutrition (CN) label or Product Formulation Statement (PFS) from the manufacturer is required
Eggs	
Cheese	Refer to Creditable and Non-Creditable Cheeses . Not Creditable: Imitation cheese (e.g., soy, almond, and other vegan cheeses)
Legumes (cooked dry beans and peas, lentils) Black Beans, Black Eyed Peas, Kidney Beans, Cannellini Beans, Chickpeas (Garbanzo Beans), Lentils, Lima Beans, Navy Beans, Northern Beans, Pinto Beans, Refried Beans, Soybeans, Split Peas	One type of legume may not be served as both a meat alternate and vegetable in the same meal. If serving two different types of legumes, one may credit as a meat alternate and the other as a vegetable.
Nuts and Seeds, and their Butters Almonds, Peanuts, Cashews, Hazelnuts, Macadamia Nuts, Chestnuts, Pecans, Pine Nuts, Pistachios, Walnuts, Pumpkin Seeds, Sesame Seeds, Sunflower Seeds, Soy Nuts, Tahini (soy nut butter)	Nuts and seeds may be used to meet no more than half of the M/MA component at lunch/supper. Some participants may have nut/seed allergies or intolerances which require meal accommodations to ensure participants are receiving a safe meal. Nuts and seeds can pose a choking hazard for children under four years of age.
Pasta made of 100% bean/legume flour(s)	May not be served both a meat alternate or vegetable in the same meal. 1/2 cup cooked bean/legume pasta = 2 oz m/ma. Must be served with another 0.25 oz of visible meat alternate (ex. cheese).
Tempeh (Commercially Prepared)	
Tofu (Commercially Prepared)	2.2 oz (¼ cup) of commercially prepared tofu must contain at least 5 grams of protein
Yogurt (Dairy or Soy) (Commercially Prepared)	No more than 23 g of sugar per 6 ounces

Vegetarian

- **Meatless Mondays!**

Serve meat alternate foods at all meals and snacks on Mondays

- **BREAKFAST: Serve meat alternates in place of the grain component at breakfast up to 3 days per week**

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Southwest Tofu Scramble Kiwi Milk	Oatmeal Blueberries Milk	Cottage cheese Pineapple Milk	Cheerios Banana Milk	Breakfast burrito Hashbrowns Milk

Vegetarian

SNACK: Serve meat alternate foods at snack

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Cheese cubes Baby tomatoes	Nut/seed butter Apple slices	Hard-boiled egg Toasted bagel	Hummus Baby carrots	Yogurt Strawberries
Pureed beans Toasted pita	Cottage cheese Diced peaches	Baked tofu Banana slices	Grilled cheese sandwich	Pancake topped with nut/seed butter

Vegetarian

LUNCH/SUPPER: Incorporate vegetarian recipes

Many recipes linked to in [Training Spotlight: Vegetarian Meals in the CACFP](#)

Additional Lunch/Supper Recipes to Try:



- Bean Burrito Bowl ([6 servings](#)) ([25/50 servings](#))
- Chinese Style Vegetables with Tofu ([6 servings](#)) ([25/50 servings](#))
- Purple Power Bean Wrap ([6 servings](#)) ([25/50 servings](#))
- Sauteed Tempeh with Vegetables ([6 servings](#)) ([25/50 servings](#))
- Vegetable Chili ([6 servings](#)) ([25/50 servings](#))
- Recipes from DPI's [CACFP Tofu Recipe Guide](#)

MULTICULTURAL MEALS

What are some cultural and ethnic meals your program incorporates into its menus?

Cultural / Ethnic Meals

Cultural and Ethnic Meals

- Celebrate different cultures
- Create a sense of belonging
- Families share recipes
- Include festivals and celebrations



Around the World Sample Cycle Menu
 with creditable recipes. Remember to check with your sponsor for any
 may be additional restrictions to your menu planning

Cultural / Ethnic Meals

South America	Africa	Asia & Oceania	North America
DAY 1	TUESDAY - DAY 2	WEDNESDAY - DAY 3	THURSDAY - DAY 4
Whole (age 1) or Low/Fat Free Milk (2-5)	Whole (age 1) or Low/Fat Free Milk (2-5)	Whole (age 1) or Low/Fat Free Milk (2-5)	Whole (age 1) or Low/Fat Free Milk (2-5)
Sweet Potato Hash Sweet Potato	Sweet Potato Hash Eggs	Star Fruit WGR Naan	Strawberry Parfait Strawberries Strawberry Parfait Yogurt
Whole (age 1) or Low/Fat Free Milk (2-5)	Whole (age 1) or Low/Fat Free Milk (2-5)	Whole (age 1) or Low/Fat Free Milk (2-5)	Whole (age 1) or Low/Fat Free Milk (2-5)
Watermelon	Watermelon	Kiwi	Grapes
TN Chicken/Veggie Couscous Carrots, Onion, Olives	TN Chicken/Veggie Couscous WGR Couscous	Asian Chicken Wraps Cabbage, Carrots, Lettuce	Celery
TN Chicken/Veggie Couscous Chicken	TN Chicken/Veggie Couscous Chicken	Asian Chicken Wraps WGR Tortilla Asian Chicken Wraps Chicken	TN Creamy Wild Rice Brown & Wild Rice TN Creamy Wild Rice Turkey
Orange Wedges	Orange Wedges	Samurai Banana Sushi Roll Bananas	Cantaloupe
TN Veggie Mash Up Swiss Chard, Potato, Peas, Corn	TN Veggie Mash Up Swiss Chard, Potato, Peas, Corn	Samurai Banana Sushi Roll WGR Tortilla	TN Squash Eggs
Whole (age 1) or Low/Fat Free Milk (2-5)	Whole (age 1) or Low/Fat Free Milk (2-5)	Whole (age 1) or Low/Fat Free Milk (2-5)	Whole (age 1) or Low/Fat Free Milk (2-5)

- 10 days of menus
 Team Nutrition
 Multicultural recipes
- Around the World
 Wednesday

[Around the World Menu](#)

[USDA Multicultural Recipes](#)

USDA Multicultural Recipes



Tabbouleh

Tabbouleh is a popular Middle Eastern salad that is served as part of a mezze (assortment of appetizers). A primary ingredient in Tabbouleh is bulgur, which is a whole grain.

CACFP CREDITING INFORMATION

½ cup (No. 8 scoop) provides ¼ cup vegetable and ½ oz equivalent grains.

SOURCE

Team Nutrition CACFP Multicultural Recipe Project.

INGREDIENTS	25 SERVINGS		50 SERVINGS		DIRECTIONS
	Weight	Measure	Weight	Measure	
Water	32 oz	1 qt	64 oz	2 qt	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> In a small stockpot, bring water to a rolling boil. Add bulgur; cover, and turn heat off. Leave the stockpot on the hot burner. Keep covered, and let stand for 30 minutes. Drain any excess liquid, fluff with a fork, and allow bulgur to cool. Critical Control Point: Cool to 40 °F or lower within 4 hours. In a large bowl, mix together cooled bulgur, cucumber, tomato, parsley, mint, green onions, and garlic.
Bulgur, dry	12¼ oz	2 cup	1 lb 9 oz	1 qt	
*Cucumber, fresh, peeled, ¼" diced	14¼ oz	3 cup 2 Tbsp	1 lb 13 oz	1 qt 2¼ cup	
*Tomatoes, fresh, ½" diced	1 lb 7 oz	3 cup 2 Tbsp	2 lb 14 oz	1 qt 2¼ cup	



Arroz Con Pollo

Arroz Con Pollo (Rice With Chicken) is a classic dish that is enjoyed throughout Spain and Latin America. Each country has its own version, but it remains a family favorite. Try this hearty, flavorful recipe today.

CACFP CREDITING INFORMATION

1 chicken tenderloin and ½ cup (No. 8 scoop) rice and vegetable mixture provides 1½ oz equivalent meat, ¼ cup vegetable, and ½ oz equivalent grains.

SOURCE

Team Nutrition CACFP Multicultural Recipe Project.

<https://teamnutrition.usda.gov>

INGREDIENTS	25 SERVINGS		50 SERVINGS		DIRECTIONS
	Weight	Measure	Weight	Measure	
Brown rice, long-grain, uncooked	12½ oz	2 cup	1 lb 9 oz	1 qt	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Preheat oven to 400 °F Combine brown rice and water in a large stockpot. Stir once. Heat on medium-high heat to a rolling boil. Cover and reduce heat to medium. Cook for 20–30 minutes over low heat until water is absorbed. Fluff the rice gently with a fork. In a small bowl combine seasonings: salt, black pepper, garlic powder, and cumin.
Water	32 fl oz	1 qt	64 fl oz	2 qt	
Salt, table		2 tsp		1 Tbsp 1 tsp	
Black pepper, ground		2 tsp		1 Tbsp 1 tsp	
Garlic powder		2 tsp		1 Tbsp 1 tsp	
Cumin, ground		1 Tbsp 1 tsp		2 Tbsp 2 tsp	

Asia and Pacific Islands Recipe

Central and South America Recipe

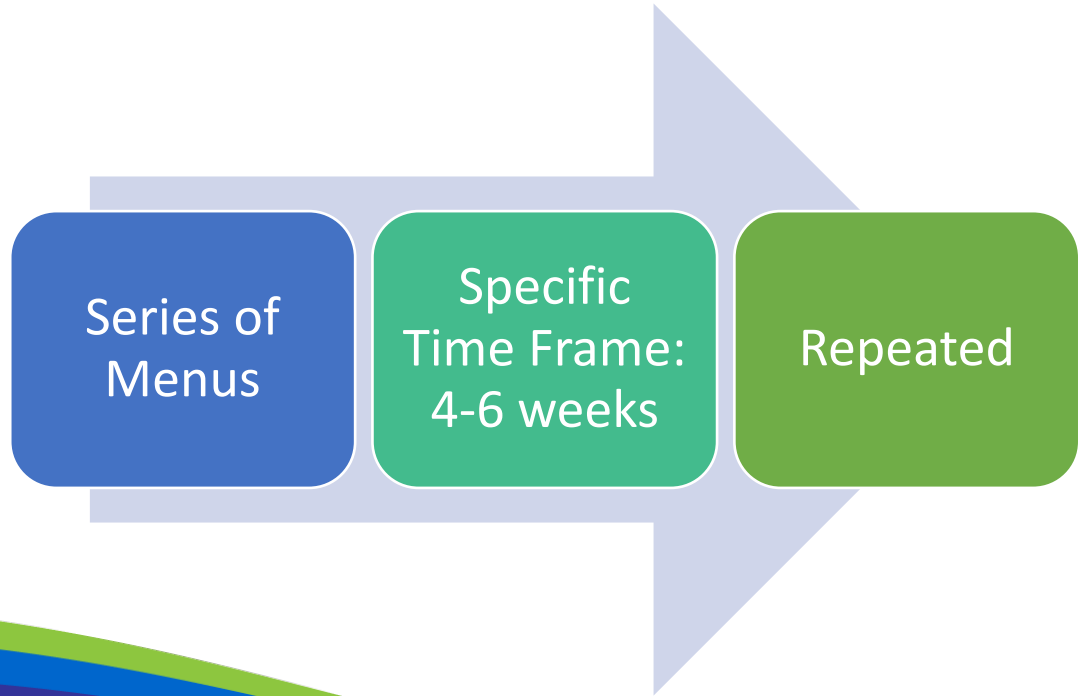
TIME SAVING / QUICK MEALS

How do you save time when preparing meals?

What are some easy, quick meals made at your program?

Time Saving / Quick Meals

Cycle Menus



Time Saving / Quick Meals



Saves time



Efficient
food
shopping



Familiar
food
preparation

TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
Breakfast Wheat Bagel Cranberry Jib	Breakfast Wheat Panini Strawberry Jib	Breakfast Egg-10-Tost Sliced Grapes Jib
Morning Snack Rice Krippy Treat 100% Juice and/or Bottled Water	Morning Snack Yogurt with Berries 100% Juice and/or Bottled Water	Morning Snack Trail Mix 100% Juice and/or Bottled Water
Lunch Tuna Sandwich Applesauce Carrot Sticks Jib	Lunch Meatloaf & Cheese Chicken Vegetables Steamed Corn Jib	Lunch Grilled Cheese Steamed Broccoli Watermelon Jib
Snack Yogurt w/ Fresh Berries 100% Juice and/or Bottled Water	Snack Cheese-10-Crackers Sliced Watermelon 100% Juice and/or Bottled Water	Snack Rice Krippy Treat Sliced Fruit 100% Juice and/or Bottled Water

Provide
variety



Time Saving / Quick Meals

Batch Cook / Freeze

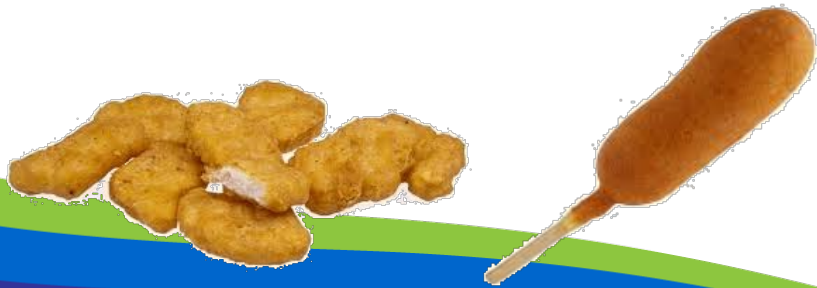
- Hamburger / Turkey
- Chicken breast
- Soups / Casseroles
- Waffles / Pancakes
- Muffins
- Grains (rice, quinoa)

Time Saving / Quick Meals

Convenience Foods

Pre-Cooked Foods

Child Nutrition (CN) Label or Product Formulation Statement



Time Saving / Quick Meals

Convenience Foods

Frozen Foods

- Pancakes
- Waffles
- Fruits / Vegetables

Canned Foods

- Canned vegetables and fruit
- Fruit in individual cups
- Canned beans



Time Saving / Quick Meals

Convenience Foods

- Pre-sliced cheese

Creditable: Pasteurized Process

Not Creditable: Cheese Product

- Cheese sticks
- Yogurt (tubs or individual cups)



Creditable and Non-Creditable Cheese

Time Saving / Quick Meals

Individual Pre-packaged items:

- Popcorn
- Rice Cakes
- Graham Crackers
- Muffins



Time Saving / Quick Meals

Canned meats

- Tuna
- Chicken
- Salmon



Time Saving / Quick Meals



Crockpot

- Roasts
- Chicken (baked/shredded)
- Soups (recipes)
- Meatballs (CN/PFS)
- Oatmeal

AWARD WINNING MEALS!

What are some favorite meals or snacks your program makes (and why)?

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

What are creative ways your program prepares fruits and vegetables to make them exciting, tasty, etc.? Or what creative ways can you think of?

Breakfast

- Smoothies



cacfp.org

#cacfpcreditable

peach, pineapple,
orange smoothie



Teddy Bear Smoothie



Smoothies in the CACFP

Smoothies prepared by the program:

- Milk, fruit, vegetables, fruit/vegetable juice and yogurt can credit in a smoothie
- Milk used in smoothies must meet the federal requirements of fluid milk for each age group
- Pureed fruit and vegetables **credit as juice** when served in a smoothie
 - Amount based on volume after pureeing, before including in smoothie
 - Juice can only be served at one meal or snack per day, this includes when served in a smoothie
- Yogurt may be regular or soy
 - Yogurt credits as meat/meat alternate, not fluid milk
 - Yogurt must meet the sugar limits of no more than 23 grams of total sugars per 6 ounces
- Grains and other meat/meat alternates (such as peanut butter or tofu) do not credit to the meal pattern when served in a smoothie, but may be included to improve flavor and consistency
- All components must be offered in the required quantities to meet the meal pattern requirements
- Smoothies may be served at any meal or snack
 - Breakfast, Lunch and Supper: A smoothie containing milk, fruit/vegetable and yogurt may count towards three meal components
 - Snack: A smoothie containing fruit/vegetable and milk can credit as either juice or milk, not both. There must be a separate, second creditable component served in addition to the fruit/vegetable and milk smoothie. Juice may not be served when milk is the only other component.

Recipe for a Creditable Smoothie

Ingredients

- 4 fluid oz. fat free milk
- ½ cup blueberry puree, frozen
- 4 oz. low fat yogurt

Crediting Information

- ½ cup milk
- ½ cup fruit juice
- 1 oz. meat alternate

*Refer to the CACFP meal pattern for required minimum amounts for each age



Commercially-prepared smoothies:

- May credit towards the meat/meat alternate (yogurt only), fruit, vegetable, and milk components
- Must have a Child Nutrition (CN) Label or Product Formulation Statement (PFS) from the manufacturer to credit to the CACFP meal pattern

Probiotic dairy drinks, drinkable yogurt, and yogurt drinks are not creditable.

Rev. 8/2021

This institution is an equal opportunity provider

<https://www.cacfp.org/recipes-menus/recipes/>

Smoothies in the CACFP

Fruits and Vegetables



Breakfast

- Make it a topping!
Waffles, pancakes, oatmeal, yogurt
- Add peppers, tomatoes, or spinach to omelets, eggs, hash browns, breakfast potatoes
- Add avocado and tomato to eggs
- Breakfast tacos with fruits or vegetables
- Fruit “roll-up” (tortilla with fresh fruit) or fruit pizza



Fruit & Vegetable Preparation & Variety

Lunch/Dinner

- Add vegetables to sandwich or wrap
- Make homemade vegetable soup
- Make a salad with leafy greens and chopped up vegetables/fruit
- Get creative with salad ingredients



Lunch/Dinner

- Stir fry
- Top a baked potato with salsa or broccoli
- Add to pasta sauces, casseroles
- Steam, microwave, or roast vegetables

Snacks

- Dippers: Apples slices, carrots and celery sticks, cucumbers in yogurt, hummus, nut or seed butters
- Fruit or vegetable kabobs
- Fruit pizza
- Baked fruit (cinnamon apples)
- Look in *Snack Inspiration*





Fruit and Vegetable Serving Size Guide

This guide provides the amounts of whole fruits and vegetables needed to credit as $\frac{1}{2}$ cup and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup. The "count" number in the Size column is how many pieces of fruit or vegetable fit in a specific-sized box. The smaller the count number, the larger the piece of fruit or vegetable. Measurements in the Size column are the number of inches the fruit is in diameter.

Fruit	Size	1 whole fruit is equal to amount below	Amount to credit as $\frac{1}{2}$ cup	Amount to credit as $\frac{1}{4}$ cup
Apple	100 count (3 $\frac{1}{4}$ inch), large	$\frac{1}{2}$ cups	$\frac{1}{2}$ large apple	$\frac{1}{4}$ large apple
	125-138 count (2 $\frac{7}{8}$ - 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ inch), med	1 cup	$\frac{1}{2}$ medium apple	$\frac{1}{4}$ medium apple
	163 count (2 $\frac{1}{2}$ inch), small	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	$\frac{1}{2}$ small apple	$\frac{1}{4}$ small apple
Apricot	Fresh, medium	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	1 apricot	2 apricots
Banana	100-120 and 150 count	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	$\frac{1}{2}$ banana	1 banana
Cantaloupe	Whole, medium	2 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups	$\frac{1}{10}$ cantaloupe	$\frac{1}{4}$ cantaloupe
Cherries	Whole		7 cherries	14 cherries
Clementine	Whole	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	$\frac{1}{2}$ clementine	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ clementine
Dried Fruit			$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup
Grapefruit	27-32 count	1 cup	$\frac{1}{2}$ grapefruit	$\frac{1}{4}$ grapefruit
Grapes	Seedless, whole		7 grapes	14 grapes
	Whole, with seeds		6 grape halves	12 grape halves
Kiwi	33-39 count		1 kiwi	2 kiwis
Nectarine	88-96 count (small, 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ inch)	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	$\frac{1}{2}$ small nectarine	1 small nectarine
	56-64 count (medium, 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ inch)	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	$\frac{1}{2}$ medium nectarine	$\frac{1}{2}$ each medium nectarine
Orange	113 and 125 count, large	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	$\frac{1}{2}$ large orange	1 large orange
	126 and 138 count, medium	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	$\frac{1}{2}$ medium orange	1 medium orange
Peach	88 or 84 count (small, 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ inch)	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	$\frac{1}{2}$ small peach	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ small peach
	80 count	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	$\frac{1}{2}$ peach	1 peach
	64 or 60 count (medium, 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ inch)	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	$\frac{1}{2}$ medium peach	$\frac{1}{2}$ medium peach
Pear	56 count (large)	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	$\frac{1}{2}$ large peach	$\frac{1}{2}$ large peach
	150 count, small	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	$\frac{1}{2}$ small pear	1 small pear
	120 count, medium	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	$\frac{1}{2}$ medium pear	$\frac{1}{2}$ medium pear
Plums	100 count, large	1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups	$\frac{1}{4}$ large pear	$\frac{1}{2}$ large pear
	1.5 x 2 inch, small	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	1 $\frac{1}{4}$ small plum	2 $\frac{1}{2}$ small plum
	2 x 2 inch, medium	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	$\frac{1}{2}$ medium plum	1 medium plum
Tangerine	2.5 x 2.5 inch, large	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	$\frac{1}{2}$ large plum	1 large plum
	Medium	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	$\frac{1}{2}$ medium tangerine	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ medium tangerine
	Large	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	$\frac{1}{2}$ large tangerine	1 large tangerine

Vegetable	Size	Amount to credit as $\frac{1}{2}$ cup	Amount to credit as $\frac{1}{4}$ cup
Raw leafy greens		$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	1 cup
Cooked leafy greens		$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup
Carrots	4 inch x $\frac{1}{2}$ inch sticks	3 sticks	6 sticks
Celery	4 inch x $\frac{1}{2}$ inch sticks	3 sticks	6 sticks
Corn	Medium ear	$\frac{1}{2}$ ear of corn	1 ear of corn
	3 inch x $\frac{1}{4}$ inch sticks (pared or unpared)	3 sticks	6 sticks
Potato	120 count (6 ounces by weight)	$\frac{1}{2}$ (6 oz potato)	1 (6 oz potato)
	100 count (8 ounces by weight)	$\frac{1}{2}$ (8 oz potato)	$\frac{1}{2}$ (8 oz potato)
	80 count (10 ounces by weight)	$\frac{1}{4}$ (10 oz potato)	$\frac{1}{2}$ (10 oz potato)
Radish	Fresh, without tops, small	7 radishes	14 radishes
	Cherry, whole	3 cherry tomatoes	6 cherry tomatoes
Tomato	Small or medium, $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick slices	5 slices	10 slices
	Large, $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick slices	4 slices	8 slices
Turnip	2 inch x $\frac{1}{2}$ inch sticks	7 sticks	14 sticks
Zucchini (summer squash)	3 inch x $\frac{1}{2}$ inch raw sticks	3 sticks	6 sticks



Fruit and Vegetable Serving Size Guide



Fruit and Vegetable Serving Size Guide



This guide provides the amounts of whole fruits and vegetables needed to credit as $\frac{1}{4}$ cup and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup. The "count" number in the Size column is how many pieces of fruit or vegetable fit in a specific-sized box. The smaller the count number, the larger the piece of fruit or vegetable. Measurements in the Size column are the number of inches the fruit is in diameter.

Fruit	Size	1 whole fruit is equal to amount below	Amount to credit as $\frac{1}{4}$ cup	Amount to credit as $\frac{1}{2}$ cup
Apple	100 count (2 $\frac{1}{4}$ inch), large	1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups	$\frac{1}{2}$ large apple	$\frac{1}{2}$ large apple
	125-138 count (2 $\frac{7}{8}$ - 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ inch), med	1 cup	$\frac{1}{4}$ medium apple	$\frac{1}{2}$ medium apple
	165 count (2 $\frac{1}{2}$ inch), small	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup	$\frac{2}{3}$ small apple	$\frac{2}{3}$ small apple
Apricot	Fresh, medium	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup	1 apricot	2 apricots
Banana	100-120 and 150 count	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	$\frac{1}{2}$ banana	1 banana
Cantaloupe	Whole, medium	2 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups	$\frac{1}{10}$ cantaloupe	$\frac{1}{5}$ cantaloupe
Cherries	Whole		7 cherries	14 cherries
Clementine	Whole	$\frac{3}{8}$ cup	$\frac{2}{3}$ clementine	1 $\frac{1}{3}$ clementine
Dried Fruit			$\frac{1}{8}$ cup	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup
Grapefruit	27-32 count	1 cup	$\frac{1}{4}$ grapefruit	$\frac{1}{2}$ grapefruit
Grapes	Seedless, whole		7 grapes	14 grapes
	Whole, with seeds		6 grape halves	12 grape halves
Kiwi	33-39 count		1 kiwi	2 kiwis
Nectarine	88-96 count (small, 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ inch)	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	$\frac{1}{2}$ small nectarine	1 small nectarine
	54-64 count (medium, 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ inch)	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	$\frac{1}{4}$ medium nectarine	$\frac{1}{2}$ each medium nectarine



Purchasing, Measuring, and Serving Fresh Fruits and Vegetables



Measuring Cups



Fruits and Vegetables: Credit Different

Fruits and Vegetables	Crediting Information
Raw leafy green vegetables (ex. spinach, kale, collard greens, and lettuce)	Credit for half of the amount served 1 cup raw spinach = $\frac{1}{2}$ cup vegetables
Cooked leafy green vegetables	Credit for entire amount served 1 cup steamed spinach = 1 cup vegetables
Dried fruits and vegetables (ex. raisins, craisins, sun-dried tomatoes)	Credit for twice the amount served $\frac{1}{4}$ cup raisins = $\frac{1}{2}$ cup fruit
Tomato paste and tomato puree credit based on their whole food equivalency	1 Tablespoon tomato paste = $\frac{1}{4}$ cup vegetable 2 Tablespoons tomato puree = $\frac{1}{4}$ cup vegetable

Disguise Fruits and Vegetables

Pureed vegetables or fruits may contribute to the CACFP meal pattern if the dish also provides $\frac{1}{8}$ cup or more of visible, creditable fruits or vegetables



- Pureed or finely chopped vegetables into soups, sauces and casseroles
- Mashed black beans, added to ground beef (chili, burgers, meatloaf, meatballs)
- Cauliflower crust, rice, mashed “potatoes”
- Salsa
- Smoothies



Fun and Creative Veggies and Fruits

- Serve vegetable noodles or mix with pasta
- Veggie Pizza
- Mini fruit pizzas
- Roast/bake veggie "fries"
- Colorful fruit kabobs



Add Flavor!

- Add flavors: Parmesan cheese, Cinnamon, Soy sauce
- Roast vegetables
- Bake fruit



Knife Skills Videos

- Cutting Bell Peppers
- Cutting Vegetables Slicing and Rocking Method
- Dice and Julienne Onions
- Kiwis and Oranges
- Dicing Tomatoes
- Peeling and Cutting Squash
- Watermelon and Cantaloupe

[Oregon Department of Education CACFP
Training Center Culinary Skills Videos](#)



Best Practices for Fruits & Vegetables

Serve a fruit or vegetable for at least one of the two components of snack



Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Mini cheddar rice crisps topped with Slices of natural cheese	WGR tortilla chips Refried beans and salsa mix	Oatmeal Peaches	Deviled eggs Yellow cherry tomatoes	Honeycrisp apple Roasted soy nuts
Carrot coins Kiwi slices	Ham and cheese rollup on WGR tortilla	Warmed bread sticks Baked spaghetti squash (with marinara & cheese)	Whole grain cereal Craisins	Baked Zucchini 'Chips'* Deli ham or turkey slices
Blueberry yogurt Crushed pineapple	Sliced bell peppers Strawberries	Cheese sandwich on WGR bread (hot or cold)	Rice cake topped with Tomato slices and corn salsa	Cantaloupe Banana Chip Muffins*
Vegetarian baked beans Scrambled eggs	Raspberries Cheese cubes	Peach slices Roasted edamame	Breakfast burrito: WGR tortilla with cheesy scrambled eggs	Roasted Cauliflower 'Popcorn'* Bread 'sticks' (WGR bread toasted and cut into sticks)
Homemade pumpkin muffin Fresh pear slices	White Bean Ranch Dip* Dipping veggies (carrot sticks, celery, jicama)	Fruit Salad* Canadian bacon	Minty Watermelon Cucumber Salad*	Vanilla yogurt Granola or other WGR cereal
Sweet potato grain bowl: Quinoa and roasted diced sweet potato	Raisins Mini bagels (spread cream cheese or nut or seed butter on bagel)	Baked zucchini spears Cheese stick	Canned peaches Cottage cheese	Crockpot Apples with Cinnamon* Tomato wedges
Mini chocolate rice crisps Vanilla yogurt	Whole Wheat Corn Bread* Roasted asparagus spears	Oatmeal with Cinnamon applesauce	Sweet potato 'fries' Hard-boiled egg	Honeydew melon Shredded cheese

KEY: ■ Meat/Meat Alternate & Grain ■ Vegetable & Grain ■ Fruit & Grain ■ Vegetable & Meat/Meat Alternate ■ Fruit & Meat/Meat Alternate ■ Fruit & Vegetable
WGR = Whole Grain Rich * Snack Inspiration Recipe

[Snack Inspiration](#)

Best Practices for Fruits & Vegetables

Serve a variety
of whole fruits
(fresh, canned,
frozen, or dried)
more often than
juice



Best Practices for Fruits & Vegetables

One serving of the following vegetables each week:

- Dark green
- Red and orange
- Beans and peas (legumes)
- Starchy
- Other vegetables

Vegetable Subgroups



Vegetable Subgroups

Below are lists of vegetables categorized into five subgroups. It is best practice to serve vegetables from different subgroups. For information about crediting and yields, visit the [USDA Food Buying Guide](#).

Dark Green
Fresh, frozen, and canned

- Beet greens
- Bok choy
- Broccoli
- Broccolini
- Chicory
- Collard greens
- Endive (escarole)
- Grape leaves
- Kale
- Lettuce (e.g., butterhead, bibb, boston, arugula, spring mix, etc.)
- Mustard greens
- Spinach
- Swiss chard
- Romaine lettuce
- Turnip greens
- Watercress

Other
Fresh, frozen, and canned

- Artichokes
- Asparagus
- Avocado
- Bamboo shoots
- Bean sprouts [cooked for food safety] (e.g., mung)
- Beets
- Bell peppers (green, yellow)
- Breadfruit
- Brussels sprouts
- Cabbage (green, red, celery, napa)
- Cactus (nopales)
- Carrots, rainbow (e.g., purple, yellow)
- Cauliflower
- Celery
- Chayote (mirliton)
- Cucumbers
- Eggplant
- Green beans
- Green chilies (anaheim, jalapeño)
- Green onions
- Iceberg lettuce
- Kohlrabi
- Mushrooms
- Okra
- Olives
- Onions (white, yellow, red)
- Pepperoncini
- Pickles (cucumber)
- Radishes
- Rutabagas
- Sauerkraut
- Seaweed
- Snow peas
- Sugar snap peas
- Tomatillo
- Turnips
- Wax beans
- Yellow summer squash
- Zucchini squash

Red/Orange
Fresh, frozen, and canned

- Acorn squash
- Bell peppers (orange, red)
- Butternut squash
- Carrots
- Cherry peppers
- Hubbard squash
- Pimientos (pimentos)
- Pumpkin
- Salsa
- Spaghetti squash
- Sweet potatoes
- Tomatoes
- Tomato products (e.g., puree, paste, sauce, juice)

Beans and Peas (Legumes)
Canned, frozen, or cooked from dry

- Baked beans
- Black beans
- Black-eyed peas
- Edamame (soy beans)
- Garbanzo beans (chickpeas)
- Great northern beans
- Kidney beans
- Lentils
- Lima beans
- Mung beans
- Navy beans (pea bean)
- Pink beans
- Pinto beans
- Red beans
- Refried beans
- Soy beans
- Split peas
- White beans

Starchy
Fresh, frozen, and canned

- Cassava (yuca)
- Corn
- Green peas
- Hominy, canned
- Jicama (yam bean)
- Lima beans, green
- Parsnips
- Plantains
- Poi
- Potatoes
- Taro (malanga)
- Water chestnuts
- Yautia (tannier)

Best Practices for Fruits & Vegetables

Incorporate seasonal and locally produced foods



Spring

- Apples
- Apricots
- Asparagus
- Avocados
- Bananas
- Blueberries
- Broccoli
- Cabbage
- Carrots
- Celery
- Corn
- Collard Greens
- Garlic
- Kale
- Kiwifruit
- Lemons
- Lettuce
- Limes
- Mushrooms
- Onions
- Peas
- Pineapples
- Radishes
- Rhubarb
- Spinach
- Strawberries
- Swiss Chard
- Turnips



Summer

- Apples
- Apricots
- Avocados
- Bananas
- Beets
- Bell Peppers
- Blackberries
- Blueberries
- Cantaloupe
- Carrots
- Celery
- Cherries
- Corn
- Cucumbers
- Eggplant
- Garlic
- Green Beans
- Honeydew Melon
- Lemons
- Lima Beans
- Limes
- Mangos
- Okra
- Peaches
- Plums
- Raspberries
- Strawberries
- Summer Squash
- Tomatillos
- Tomatoes
- Watermelon



Fall

- Apples
- Bananas
- Beets
- Bell Peppers
- Brussels Sprouts
- Cabbage
- Carrots
- Cauliflower
- Celery
- Collard Greens
- Cranberries
- Garlic
- Ginger
- Grapes
- Green Beans
- Kale
- Kiwifruit
- Lemons
- Lettuce
- Limes
- Mangos
- Mushrooms
- Onions
- Parsnips
- Peas
- Peas
- Pineapples
- Potatoes
- Pumpkin
- Radishes



Winter

- Apples
- Avocados
- Bananas
- Beets
- Brussels Sprouts
- Cabbage
- Carrots
- Celery
- Collard Greens
- Grapefruit
- Kale
- Kiwifruit
- Leeks
- Lemons
- Limes
- Onions
- Oranges
- Parsnips
- Peas
- Pineapples
- Potatoes
- Pumpkin
- Rutabagas
- Sweet Potatoes & Yams
- Swiss Chard
- Turnips
- Winter Squash


Best Practices for Fruits & Vegetables

Limit serving pre-fried
foods to no more than one
serving per week (ex. store-
bought frozen French fries)



WHAT IS A FOOD YOU HAVE NEVER SERVED... BUT WANT TO

What is a food or meal you have never served but want to?
Bonus points for including why you haven't served it yet!



Foods Not Served and Why?

- Find recipes or inspiration for an ingredient

Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN) Recipe Box (<https://theicn.org/cnr/>)

USDA Recipes



United States Department of Agriculture



Local Harvest Bake
USDA Recipe for CACFP

Local Harvest Bake is root vegetables roasted with garlic, salt, and olive oil.

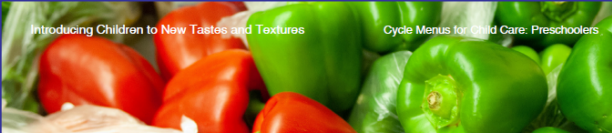
CACFP CREDITING INFORMATION
½ cup (No. 4 fl oz spoodle) provides ½ cup vegetable.

Foods Not Served and Why?

- **Exposing children to new foods is an ongoing effort!**

Children may need to be exposed to a new food 10-15 times before they decide to try it and/or like it.

- **Model positive eating behaviors: remember, kids learn from you!!**



Introducing Children to New Tastes and Textures

Childhood is an exciting time. Children love to discover and explore. They also like to exert control, often over the foods they will eat. Here are some tips to help young children willingly explore new tastes and textures.

Introducing Children to New Tastes and Textures

No Pressure

- Children (and adults!) are less likely to eat and enjoy food when pressured to eat it. A new food to a child may be a familiar food to you. Allow the children to explore the food at their own pace.
- Encourage children to eat or try a new food in a non-pressuring manner. For instance, read a book about a new food that will be served that day. Serve the new food at snack time when children are hungrier and have fewer food choices. Notice the cycle menus include menu items at the snack that might be served as part of a larger meal.
- Offer new foods to children many times instead of only once or twice. The more exposure that children have to a food, the more familiar and comfortable it becomes. Thus, the more likely it is that they will try the food. One way to introduce new fruits and vegetables is through a Mystery Box/Bag Activity; find one in Grow It, Try It, Like It! Available from Team Nutrition (www.fns.usda.gov/tn/grow-it).

Explore and Learn

- Engage children in food experiences. Visit farmer's markets or make one of your own from grocery store purchases. Try cooking with children; snack time is a great time to have children involved with food. Do a demonstration of the snack recipe or allow children to make a sample tray; your staff can prepare the snack served to all if food safety is a concern.
- Take children on a walking tour that includes the kitchen. Help them learn about the way foods are prepared. Introduce the staff to the children to create a personal connection.


Families Can Help

- Enlist help from home. When children have similar foods at home, they are more likely to eat them at child care. The recipes in the cycle menus are available in smaller, home size recipes. Share these resources with families.
- Consider having samples of new recipes available to parents to taste during conferences or special events. Chances are your families are looking for new recipes, too.

RENAME A MEAL!

Do you have fun names for the foods you serve? What are they?

Or list a main dish or side dish served on your menu, then give it a fun name. For example, 'Say "Cheese" Sandwich' or 'Monster Mashed Potatoes'



Rename a Meal / Food

Give menu items creative, descriptive names to increase excitement. It's cheap, easy, and effective--what more could you ask for?

Brainstorm fun names with kitchen staff and CACFP participants.



Cauliflower Clouds

Rename a Meal / Food

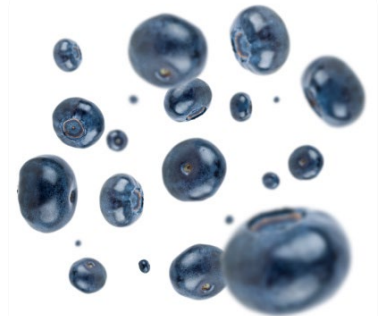
Vegetables

- Tasty Tiny Tree Tops (Broccoli)
- X-Ray Vision Carrots
- Zesty Zucchini



Fruits

- All-Mixed-Up Fruit Cup
- Blueberry Bursts
- Perfectly Plump Peaches



Rename a Meal / Food

Main Dish

- Fish Sticks Of The Sea
- Kickin' Chicken Nuggets
- Super Tuna Noodles



Milk

- Snowy White Milk
- Real Cold Cow's Milk
- White Moo Milk



Rename a Meal / Food

CREATIVE, FUN, AND DESCRIPTIVE NAMES



Giving menu items creative, descriptive names is one of the most efficient ways to increase sales in your lunchroom. It's cheap, easy, and effective-- what more could you ask for? Brainstorm fun names with kitchen staff, ask students to contribute their own unique ideas through a school- or class-wide naming competition, or take advantage of this handy list we've put together for you.

NUDGING CHILDREN TO EAT HEALTHIER
SMARTERLUNCHROOMS.ORG

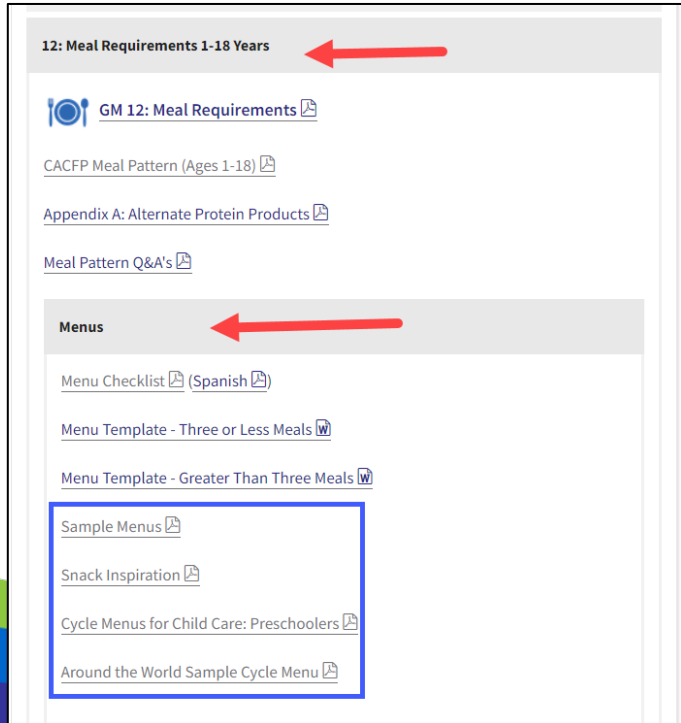


- **Words in alphabetical order**
- **Words that reflect**
 - Positivity
 - Taste and aroma
 - Texture
 - Temperature
 - Taste
 - Appearance
 - Adverbs
 - Other

Sample Menus

[Guidance Memorandum 12](#)

- 6-Week Sample Menus
- Snack Inspiration (240 snack ideas)
- Cycle Menus for Child Care: Preschoolers (four 4-week seasonal cycle menus) from the Institute of Child Nutrition
- Around the World Sample Cycle Menu



12: Meal Requirements 1-18 Years

[GM 12: Meal Requirements](#)

[CACFP Meal Pattern \(Ages 1-18\)](#)

[Appendix A: Alternate Protein Products](#)

[Meal Pattern Q&A's](#)

Menus

[Menu Checklist \(Spanish\)](#)

[Menu Template - Three or Less Meals](#)

[Menu Template - Greater Than Three Meals](#)

[Sample Menu](#)

[Snack Inspiration](#)

[Cycle Menus for Child Care: Preschoolers](#)

[Around the World Sample Cycle Menu](#)



Final Thoughts

- **Think Outside the Box**
- **Accommodate Special Dietary Needs**
- **Be Aware of Choking Hazards**
- **Serve Minimal Processed Foods**

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Thank you!

Thank you!

Thank you!

Thank you!

