



CREDITING FOODS GUIDE

Nutrition Programs Division
Illinois State Board of Education
Child and Adult Care Food Program

**Based on the United States Department of Agriculture's
Publication, *What's in a Meal*
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Introduction

A goal of the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) is to improve the health and nutrition of children in the Program. The Program also promotes good eating habits and nutrition education. The *Food Buying Guide (FBG) for Child Nutrition Programs* is the main resource used to determine the contribution foods make toward the meal requirements. The same rules apply for foods prepared on-site or purchased commercially.

Creditable foods are those foods that may be counted toward meeting the requirements for a reimbursable meal. The following factors are considered when determining whether a food is creditable:

- Nutrient content
- Function in a meal
- Regulations governing the Child Nutrition Programs (on quantity requirements and/or by definition)
- Food and Drug Administration (FDA) standards of identity
- United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) standards for meat and meat products
- Administrative policy decisions on crediting particular foods



Non-creditable foods are not creditable toward the meal pattern. Non-creditable foods do not meet the requirements for any component in the meal pattern. However, non-creditable foods may supply calories which help meet the energy needs of participants and may contribute additional protein, vitamins, and minerals. They can be used to supplement the required meal components, to improve acceptability, and to satisfy appetites.

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) reimburses child care institutions and family day care homes participating in the CACFP for the meals served, not for individual foods. A meal is reimbursable if it contains foods in the amounts required by the meal pattern for the specific age group. Meals that contain foods in addition to all components specified in the meal pattern are also reimbursable.

The Meal Pattern for Children Ages 1 through 12 years is available on the next page. It lists the portion sizes for each age group of children for each type of meal service.

Portion sizes for children under 1 year of age must use the Infant Meal Pattern. The Infant Meal Pattern can be found in the *Infants* section of this publication.

MEAL PATTERN FOR CHILDREN –

Ages 1 through 12 Years

Child and Adult Care Food Program

Illinois State Board of Education
 Nutrition Programs
 100 North First Street
 Springfield, Illinois 62777-0001
 800-545-7892

MEAL	FOOD COMPONENTS	AGE 1 ⁸ and 2	AGE 3 through 5	AGE 6 through 12
Breakfast	Fluid Milk¹	½ c	¾ c	1 c
	Juice or Fruit or Vegetable	¼ c	½ c	½ c
	Grains/Breads² Cold Dry Cereal	½ serving ¼ c or ⅓ oz	½ serving ⅓ c or ½ oz	1 serving ¾ c or 1 oz
Supplement/ Snack Select Two Different Components	Fluid Milk¹	½ c	½ c	1 c
	Juice³ or Fruit or Vegetable	½ c	½ c	¾ c
	Meat or Meat Alternate			
	Meat or Poultry or Fish ⁴ or Alternate Protein Product ⁵	½ oz ½ oz	½ oz ½ oz	1 oz 1 oz
	Cheese or Egg (large) or Cooked Dry Beans or Dry Peas or Peanut Butter or other Nut/Seed Butters or Nut and/or Seeds or Yogurt—Plain or Sweetened/ Flavored	½ oz ½ ⅛ c 1 T ½ oz ¼ c	½ oz ½ ⅛ c 1 T ½ oz ¼ c	1 oz 1 oz ¼ c 2 T 1 oz ½ c
	Grains/Breads² Cold Dry Cereal	½ serving ¼ c or ⅓ oz	½ serving ⅓ c or ½ oz	1 serving ¾ c or 1 oz
	Fluid Milk¹	½ c	¾ c	1 c
Lunch/Supper	Meat or Meat Alternate			
	Meat or Poultry or Fish ⁴ or Alternate Protein Product ⁵	1 oz 1 oz	1½ oz 1½ oz	2 oz 2 oz
	Cheese or Egg (large) or Cooked Dry Beans or Dry Peas or Peanut Butter or other Nut/Seed Butters or Nut and/or Seeds ⁶ or Yogurt—Plain or Sweetened/ Flavored	1 oz ½ ¼ c 2 T ½ oz ½ c	1½ oz ¾ ⅜ c 3 T ¾ oz ¾ c	2 oz 2 oz 1 ½ c 4 T 1 oz 1 c
	Vegetables and/or Fruits⁷ (2 or more)	¼ c total	½ c total	¾ c total
	Grains/Breads² Cold Dry Cereal	½ serving ¼ c or ⅓ oz	½ serving ⅓ c or ½ oz	1 serving ¾ c or 1 oz

¹ Children **two years and older** must be offered fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%) fluid milk. Serving whole milk to children between the ages of 1 and 2 years is recommended. (12 months through 23 months).

² Refer to the Grains/Breads Chart.

³ Juice may not be served when milk is served as the only other component.

⁴ Edible portions as served.

⁵ A manufacturer supplying an alternate protein product must provide documentation that the product meets all the following criteria.

- Processed so that some portion of the non-protein constituents of the food is removed;
- Safe and suitable edible products produced from plant or animal sources;
- Produced so the biological quality of the protein is at least 80 percent that of casein; and

▪ Contain at least 18 percent protein by weight when fully hydrated or formulated.

⁶ Nuts or seeds may not constitute more than 50 percent of the requirement. Instead, nuts or seeds shall be combined with another meat/meat alternate to fulfill the requirement. For purposes of determining combination, one ounce of nuts or seeds is equal to one-ounce cooked lean meat, poultry, or fish.

⁷ Full-strength vegetable or fruit juice may be counted to meet not more than one-half of the requirements.

⁸ For a period of one month, while a 12-month-old child is weaning from infant formula to cow's milk; one or both beverages may be served to claim the meal for reimbursement. A child receiving infant formula and not in the weaning stage must have a signed *Medical Exception Statement for Food Substitution* on file in order for meals to be claimed for reimbursement. Also, expressed breast milk can continue to be offered to a child over one year of age in place of cow's milk, since it is an alternate type of milk.

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Meeting the Meal Pattern Requirements

A meal component can consist of one or more creditable foods. The minimum portion sizes are listed below. These are the smallest amounts that can be served and still count towards meeting the requirements. For lunches or suppers served to children 3 through 5 years of age:

- At least $\frac{1}{4}$ ounce of meat/meat alternate must be served to count toward the 1.5 ounce meat/meat alternate requirement.
- At least $\frac{1}{8}$ cup of fruit or vegetable must be served to count toward the $\frac{1}{2}$ cup fruit and/or vegetable requirement. Any amount less than $\frac{1}{8}$ cup is considered a garnish.
- At least $\frac{1}{4}$ slice of bread or its equivalent must be provided to count toward the $\frac{1}{2}$ slice equivalent grains/breads requirement.
- A full serving of milk must be served to count toward the $\frac{3}{4}$ cup fluid milk requirement.

Portion Sizes—Consider the serving size of menu items when planning meals to meet the meal pattern. A small amount of food can often satisfy a young child's appetite.

Some foods will meet the meal pattern requirements only when very large serving sizes are provided. When large serving sizes are needed, serve a smaller portion and supplement with another food from the same component. For example, instead of serving 3 tablespoons of peanut butter to a three year-old, serve 1 tablespoon of peanut butter and 1 ounce of turkey to meet the meat/meat alternate requirement.

Combination Dishes—Dishes that contain foods from more than one food group are combination dishes. **It is recommended that combination dishes be credited for only one or two meal pattern components.** This is to ensure children do not go hungry when a dish is disliked. For example, if lasagna were to contribute toward the meat/meat alternate, the fruit/vegetable, and the grains/breads components, and if a child disliked the lasagna, he/she would not receive a sufficient amount of food.

Prepackaged combination dishes are creditable only if (1) the food has a CN label or (2) a product formulation sheet signed by an official of the manufacturer (not a salesperson) is on file stating the amount of meat/meat alternate, fruit/vegetable, and/or grains/breads in the product.

Grains/Breads

CACFP regulations require that breakfast, lunch, and supper contain a grains/breads serving in the amount specified for each age group served. A grains/breads item may also be served as one of the two components of a snack.

Grain and bread items may be credited when the products are enriched or whole-grain or made from enriched or whole-grain meal and/or flour. Bran and germ are credited the same as enriched or whole-grain meal or flour. If it is a cereal, the product must be enriched, whole-grain or fortified. Corn products must be labeled as whole ground corn, whole corn meal, whole corn flour, enriched corn meal, or enriched corn flour, etc.

The grains/breads item must serve the customary function of bread in a meal. For a lunch or supper, this means the item must be served as an accompaniment to the main dish (i.e., dinner rolls), or as a recognizable integral part of the main dish (i.e., taco shells, pot pie crust, or spaghetti).

Grains/breads items have been divided into nine groups (A through I). The required weight for each group is based on the key nutrients in one slice of bread (25 grams or 0.9 ounces) or an equal amount (14.75 grams) of whole-grain, bran, germ, or enriched flour. Within each group, all bread items have approximately the same nutrient and grain content in each serving. Items with fillings, toppings, etc. require larger serving sizes to meet minimum grain content. A chart classifying products by groups and crediting them according to product weights based on FNS Instruction 783-1, Revision 2, is included on the next two pages.

When planning menus, the practicality of the serving size for the age of the child being served should be taken into consideration. Also, **it is recommended that no more than two dessert-type items be served as a snack each week.** Examples of dessert-type items can be found in the grains/breads chart in this section.

Refer to *The Food Buying Guide* for a complete list of grains and breads used in the Child Nutrition Programs. If you have questions regarding the crediting of a particular item not listed here, contact ISBE or your sponsoring organizations for information.

GRAINS/BREADS CHART

Some of the following foods, or their accompaniments, may contain more sugar, salt, and/or fat than others. This should be a consideration when deciding how often to serve them.

GROUP A	MINIMUM SERVING SIZE FOR GROUP A
Breading-Type Coating Bread Sticks—hard Chow Mein Noodles Crackers—saltines, snack Croutons Melba Toast Pretzels—hard Rye Wafers Stuffing—dry	1 serving = 20 g or 0.7 oz ¾ serving = 15 g or 0.5 oz ½ serving = 10 g or 0.4 oz ¼ serving = 5 g or 0.2 oz
GROUP B	MINIMUM SERVING SIZE FOR GROUP B
Bagels or Bagel Chips Batter-Type Coating Biscuits Breads—white, wheat, whole wheat, French, Italian Buns—hamburger, hot dog Crackers—graham (all shapes), animal Egg Roll Skins or Wonton Wrappers English Muffins Pita Bread—white, wheat, whole wheat Pizza Crust Pretzels—soft Rolls—white, wheat, whole wheat, potato Tortillas—wheat, corn Tortilla Chips—wheat, corn Taco Shells	1 serving = 25 g or 0.9 oz ¾ serving = 19 g or 0.7 oz ½ serving = 13 g or 0.5 oz ¼ serving = 6 g or 0.2 oz
GROUP C	MINIMUM SERVING SIZE FOR GROUP C
Cookies ¹ —plain Cornbread Corn Muffins Crepes Croissants Hush Puppies Pancakes Pie Crust—dessert pies ¹ , meat/meat alternate pies Popovers Sopaipillas Turnover Crust ² Waffles	1 serving = 31 g or 1.1 oz ¾ serving = 23 g or 0.8 oz ½ serving = 16 g or 0.6 oz ¼ serving = 8 g or 0.3 oz
GROUP D	MINIMUM SERVING SIZE FOR GROUP D
Doughnuts ² —cake and yeast, raised, unfrosted Granola Bars ² —plain Muffins, all but corn Quick Breads Sweet Roll, Sticky Buns, Cinnamon Rolls, Danish Pastries, Caramel Rolls ² —unfrosted Toaster Pastry ² —unfrosted	1 serving = 50 g or 1.8 oz ¾ serving = 38 g or 1.3 oz ½ serving = 25 g or 0.9 oz ¼ serving = 13 g or 0.5 oz

¹Allowed only as a dessert for a snack.

²Allowed for breakfast and/or snack.

³Refer to Meal Pattern for Children Ages 1 through 12 years for appropriate serving sizes.

GROUP E	MINIMUM SERVING SIZE FOR GROUP E
Cookies ¹ —with nuts, raisins, chocolate pieces, fillings, and/or fruit purees Doughnuts ² —cake and yeast, raised, frosted or glazed French Toast Grain Fruit Bars Granola Bars ² —with nuts, raisins, chocolate pieces, and/or fruit Scones Sweet Rolls, Sticky Buns, Cinnamon Rolls, Danish Pastries, Caramel Rolls ² —frosted Toaster Pastry ² —frosted	1 serving = 63 g or 2.2 oz $\frac{3}{4}$ serving = 47 g or 1.7 oz $\frac{1}{2}$ serving = 31 g or 1.1 oz $\frac{1}{4}$ serving = 16 g or 0.6 oz
GROUP F	MINIMUM SERVING SIZE FOR GROUP F
Cake ¹ —plain, unfrosted Coffee Cake ²	1 serving = 75 g or 2.7 oz $\frac{3}{4}$ serving = 56 g or 2 oz $\frac{1}{2}$ serving = 38 g or 1.3 oz $\frac{1}{4}$ serving = 19 g or 0.7 oz
GROUP G	MINIMUM SERVING SIZE FOR GROUP G
Brownies ¹ —plain Cake ¹ —all varieties, frosted	1 serving = 115 g or 4 oz $\frac{3}{4}$ serving = 86 g or 3 oz $\frac{1}{2}$ serving = 58 g or 2 oz $\frac{1}{4}$ serving = 29 g or 1 oz
GROUP H	MINIMUM SERVING SIZE FOR GROUP H
Barley Breakfast Cereals—cooked Bulgur—cracked wheat Corn Grits Macaroni—all shapes Noodles, egg—all varieties Pasta—all shapes Ravioli—noodle only Rice—enriched white or brown	1 serving = $\frac{1}{2}$ c cooked or 25 g or 0.9 oz dry $\frac{3}{4}$ serving = $\frac{3}{8}$ c cooked or 19 g or 0.7 oz dry $\frac{1}{2}$ serving = $\frac{1}{4}$ c cooked or 13 g or 0.5 oz dry $\frac{1}{4}$ serving = 2 T cooked or 6 g or 0.2 oz dry
GROUP I	MINIMUM SERVING SIZE FOR GROUP I
Breakfast Cereal ³ —dry Rice Cakes	1 serving = $\frac{3}{4}$ c or 1 oz, whichever is less $\frac{1}{2}$ serving = $\frac{1}{3}$ c or 0.5 oz, whichever is less

¹Allowed only as a dessert for a snack.

²Allowed for breakfast and/or snack.

³Refer to Meal Pattern for Children Ages 1 through 12 years for the appropriate serving sizes.

The following lists only those grains and breads about which crediting inquiries are often made or foods that are often credited incorrectly. Use of product brand names does not constitute ISBE approval or endorsement. Product names are used solely for clarification.

Grains/Breads				
Food Item	Creditable		Comments	Nutrition Information
	Yes	No		
Bagels	X		Use Group B of the Grains/Breads Chart Ages 1–5: one serving = 13 g or 0.5 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 25 g or 0.9 oz	Bagels are relatively low in fat and high in complex carbohydrates. Enriched bagels contain significant amounts of thiamin, riboflavin, iron, and niacin. Whole-grain varieties are good sources of fiber.
Banana Bread	X		See <i>Quick Bread</i> in this section.	
Bagel Chips	X		See <i>Chips</i> in this section.	
Barley	X		Use Group H of the Grains/Breads Chart Ages 1–5: one serving = 13 g or 0.5 oz dry or ¼ c cooked Ages 6–12: one serving = 25 g or 0.9 oz dry or ½ c cooked	
Batter-Type Coating	X		Batters may be credited when served as a part of the main dish of the meal. Crediting is based on the amount of whole-grain, bran, germ, and/or enriched meal or flour in the recipe. It may be difficult to determine the amount of batter on products. It is recommended that another bread item be served with the meal. Use Group B of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 13 g or 0.5 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 25 g or 0.9oz	Foods with a batter-type coating may be high in fat.
Biscuits	X		Homemade biscuits may be credited based on the amount of whole grain, bran, germ, and/or enriched meal or flour in the recipe. For commercial biscuits, use Group B of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 13 g or 0.5 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 25 g or 0.9 oz	Biscuits may be high in fat.
Boston Brown Bread	X		See <i>Quick Bread</i> in this section.	
Bread Pudding	X		Bread pudding may be credited for snack only, based on the amount of whole grain, bran, germ, or enriched bread in a serving.	It is recommended that no more than two dessert-type items be served as a snack each week.

Grains/Breads

Food Item	Creditable		Comments	Nutrition Information
	Yes	No		
Bread—white, rye, whole wheat, pumpernickel, seven grain, Italian, Roman meal, French, etc.	X		Breads may be credited based on the amount of whole-grain, bran, germ, and/or enriched meal or flour in the recipe. For commercial breads, use Group B of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 13 g or 0.5 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 25 g or 0.9 oz	Breads are excellent sources of complex carbohydrates and fiber along with thiamin, riboflavin, niacin, and iron. Breads are usually low in fat.
Bread Sticks—hard	X		Use Group A of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 10 g or 0.4 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 20 g or 0.7 oz	
Bread Stuffing/ Dressing—dry	X		Homemade stuffing may be credited based on the amount of bread in the recipe. For commercial stuffing made from croutons or quick stuffing mixes, use Group A of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 10 g or 0.4 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 20 g or 0.7 oz	Bread stuffing may be high in fat depending on the recipe used.
Breading	X		Breading may be credited when served as a part of the main dish of the meal. Crediting is based on the amount of whole-grain, bran, germ, and/or enriched meal or flour in the recipe. It may be difficult to determine the amount of breading on products. It is recommended that another bread item be served with the meal. For commercial breading, use Group A of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 10 g or 0.4 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 20 g or 0.7 oz	Breaded foods may be high in fat.
Brownies—plain	X		Plain brownies may be credited for snack only, based on the amount of whole-grain, bran, germ, and/or enriched meal and flour in the recipe. For commercial brownies, use Group G of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 58 g or 2 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 115 g or 4 oz	Since flour is not usually the main ingredient in brownies, a large serving will be needed. This may be impractical for young children. It is recommended that no more than two dessert type items be served as a snack each week.
Brownies—frosted or with fillers such as cream cheese, nuts, etc.		X		
Bulgur	X		Use Group H of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 13 g or 0.5 oz dry or ¼ c cooked Ages 6–12: one serving = 25 g or 0.9 oz dry or ½ c cooked	This item is 100 percent whole grain. It is recommended that one half of the grains consumed per day should be whole grains.

Grains/Breads

Food Item	Creditable		Comments	Nutrition Information
	Yes	No		
Buns—hamburger, hot dog	X		Homemade buns may be credited based on the amount of whole-grain, bran, germ, and/or enriched meal or flour in the recipe. For commercial buns, use Group B of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 13 g or 0.5 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 25 g or 0.9 oz	
Cake	X		Homemade cake may be credited based on the amount of whole-grain, bran, germ, and/or enriched meal or flour in the recipe. For commercial cake, unfrosted, use Group F of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 38 g or 1.3 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 75 g or 2.7 oz For commercial cake, frosted, use Group G of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 58 g or 2 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 115 g or 4 oz	Since flour is not usually the main ingredient in cake, a large serving will be needed. This may be impractical for young children. It is recommended that no more than two dessert-type items be served as a snack each week.
Caramel Corn		X	Popcorn does not meet the definition of grains/breads.	May cause choking.
Carrot Bread	X		See <i>Quick Bread</i> in this section.	
Cereal Bars	X		See <i>Granola Bars</i> in this section.	
Cereal—cooked	X		Use Group H of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 13 g or 0.5 oz dry or ¼ c cooked Ages 6–12: one serving = 25 g or 0.9 oz dry or ½ c cooked	
Cereal—dry	X		Use Group I of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–2: one serving = ¼ c or 0.3 oz* Ages 3–5: one serving = ⅓ c or 0.5 oz* Ages 6–12: one serving = ¾ c or 1 oz* *Whichever is less.	
Cheese Puffs		X	Updated 1/2012. Not Creditable	
Chips—corn, wheat	X		Chips made from whole-grain, bran, germ, and/or enriched meal or flour are creditable using Group B of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 13 g or 0.5 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 25 g or 0.9 oz	Chips may be high in fat and salt.
Chow Mein Noodles	X		Use Group A of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 10 g or 0.4 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 20 g or 0.7 oz	

Grains/Breads

Food Item	Creditable		Comments	Nutrition Information
	Yes	No		
Cinnamon Roll	X		See <i>Sweet Rolls</i> in this section.	These rolls may be high in fat and sugar. It is recommended that no more than two dessert-type items be served as a snack each week.
Cobbler—fruit	X		Updated 1/2012. The grain/bread portion of the cobbler is creditable for snack only, based on the amount of whole-grain, bran, germ, and/or enriched meal or flour in the recipe.	It is recommended that no more than two dessert-type items be served as a snack each week.
Coffee Cake	X		Homemade coffee cake is creditable for breakfast/snack only, based on the amount of whole-grain, bran, germ, and/or enriched meal or flour in the recipe. Commercial coffee cake may be credited using Group F of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 38 g or 1.3 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 75 g or 2.7 oz	It is recommended that no more than two dessert-type items be served as a snack each week.
Cookies	X		Homemade cookies may be credited for snack only, based on the amount of whole-grain, bran, germ, and/or enriched meal or flour in the recipe. For commercial cookies, plain, use Group C of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 16 g or 0.6 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 31 g or 1.1 oz For commercial cookies with nuts, raisins, chocolate pieces, peanut butter, fillings, and/or fruit purees, use Group E of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 31 g or 1.1 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 63 g or 2.2 oz	It is recommended that no more than two dessert-type items be served as a snack each week.
Corn		X	See the <i>Fruits and Vegetables</i> section.	Corn is considered a vegetable.
Cornbread	X		Homemade cornbread may be credited based on the amount of whole-grain and/or enriched meal or flour in the recipe. For commercial cornbread, use Group C of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 16 g or 0.6 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 31 g or 1.1 oz	
Corn Chips	X		See <i>Chips</i> in this section.	Must be labeled whole or enriched corn.
Corn Dog Batter	X		See <i>Batter-Type Coating</i> in this section.	
Cornmeal	X		If cornmeal is used in a recipe: Ages 1–5: one serving = 7.38 g Ages 6–12: one serving = 14.75 g	Must be labeled whole or enriched corn meal.

Grains/Breads

Food Item	Creditable		Comments	Nutrition Information
	Yes	No		
Corn muffin	X		Homemade corn muffins may be credited based on the amount of whole-grain and/or enriched meal or flour in the recipe. For commercial corn muffins, use Group C of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 16 g or 0.6oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 1 g or 1.1oz	
Couscous	X		See <i>Pasta</i> in this section.	
Crackers	X		For saltine or snack crackers, use Group A of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 10 g or 0.4 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 20 g or 0.7 oz For graham or animal crackers, use Group B of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 13 g or 0.5 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 25 g or 0.9 oz	Some crackers are high in fat and/or salt. They should be served in moderation.
Cream Puff Shells	X		Homemade cream puff shells may be credited for snack only based on the amount of whole-grain, bran, germ, and/or enriched meal or flour in the recipe. For commercial cream puff shells, use Group D of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 25 g or 0.9 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 50 g or 1.8 oz For commercial filled cream puffs, use Group E of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 31 g or 1.1 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 63 g or 2.2 oz	Cream puffs and traditional custard or cream fillings are high in fat. It is recommended that no more than two dessert-type items be served as a snack each week.
Crepes	X		Homemade crepes may be credited based on the amount of whole-grain, bran, germ, and/or enriched meal or flour in the recipe. For commercial crepes, use Group C of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 16 g or 0.6 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 31 g or 1.1 oz	
Crisp—fruit	X		The grains/breads portion of the crisp is creditable for snack only, based on the amount of cereal and/or whole-grain, bran, germ, and/or enriched meal or flour in the recipe. See the <i>Fruit/Vegetable</i> section for additional crediting information.	It is recommended that no more than two dessert-type items be served as a snack each week.
Croissants	X		Use Group C of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 16 g or 0.6 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 31 g or 1.1 oz	Croissants may be high in fat.
Croutons	X		Use Group A of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 10 g or 0.4 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 20 g or 0.7 oz	

Grains/Breads

Food Item	Creditable		Comments	Nutrition Information
	Yes	No		
Cupcakes	X		See <i>Cakes</i> in this section.	It is recommended that no more than two dessert-type items be served as a snack each week.
Danish Pastry	X		See <i>Sweet Rolls</i> in this section.	It is recommended that no more than two dessert-type items be served as a snack each week.
Doughnuts	X		Homemade doughnuts are creditable for breakfast/snack only based on the amount of whole-grain, bran, germ, and/or enriched meal or flour in the recipe. For commercial doughnuts, unfrosted, use Group D of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 25 g or 0.9 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 50 g or 1.8 oz For commercial doughnuts, frosted, glazed and/or filled, use Group E of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 31 g or 1.1 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 63 g or 2.2 oz	Doughnuts may be high in fat and sugar. It is recommended that no more than two dessert-type items be served as a snack each week.
Dressing	X		See <i>Bread Stuffing</i> in this section.	
Dumplings	X		Updated 1/2012. Crediting is based on the amount of whole-grain, bran, germ and/or enriched meal or flour in the recipe.	
Egg Roll or Wonton Wrappers	X		Use Group B of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 13 g or 0.5 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 25 g or 0.9 oz	
English Muffins	X		Use Group B of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 13 g or 0.5 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 25 g or 0.9 oz	
French Bread	X		See <i>Bread</i> in this section.	
French Toast	X		Homemade French toast may be credited based on the amount of whole-grain, bran, germ, and/or enriched bread in the recipe. For commercial French toast, use Group E of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 31 g or 1.1 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 63 g or 2.2 oz	
Fried Bread	X		Fried bread may be credited based on the amount of whole-grain, bran, germ, and/or enriched meal or flour in the recipe.	Fried bread is high in fat.
Ginger Bread	X		See <i>Cake</i> in this section.	It is recommended that no more than two dessert-type items be served as a snack each week.

Grains/Breads

Food Item	Creditable		Comments	Nutrition Information
	Yes	No		
Glorified Rice	X		See <i>Rice Pudding</i> in this section.	It is recommended that no more than two dessert-type items be served as a snack each week.
Grain Fruit Bars/Fruit and Cereal Bars	X		Grain fruit bars may be credited for breakfast/snack only using Group E of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 31 g or 1.1 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 63 g or 2.2 oz	Many cereal bars may be high in sugar.
Granola Bars	X		Granola bars may be credited for breakfast/snack only based on the amount of cereal and/or whole-grain, bran, germ, and/or enriched meal or flour in the recipe. For commercial granola bars, plain, use Group D of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 25 g or 0.9 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 50 g or 1.8 oz For commercial granola bars with nuts, raisins, chocolate pieces, and/or fruit, use Group E of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 31 g or 1.1 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 63 g or 2.2 oz	Granola bars may be high in sugar and fat. They can be a good source of fiber and complex carbohydrates.
Grits—corn, enriched	X		Corn grits must be enriched to be credited. If corn grits are served as a cooked cereal, use Group H of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 13 g or 0.5 oz dry or ¼ c cooked Ages 6–12: one serving = 25 g or 0.9 oz dry or 1½ c cooked If corn grits are used in a recipe: Ages 1–5: one serving = 7.38 g Ages 6–12: one serving = 14.75 g	
Hominy		X	Hominy is not creditable. It is not made from the whole kernel of corn and therefore, does not meet the criteria for grains/breads.	
Hush Puppies	X		Updated 1/2012. Homemade hush puppies may be credited based on the amount of whole-grain, bran, germ, and/or enriched meal or flour in the recipe. For commercial hush puppies, use Group C of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 16 g or 0.6 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 31 g or 1.1 oz	

Grains/Breads

Food Item	Creditable		Comments	Nutrition Information
	Yes	No		
Ice Cream Cones	X		Updated 1/2012. Ice cream cones may be credited for snack only. However, based on the product purchased, the portion size may be unreasonable. Use Group A of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 10 g or 0.4 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 20 g or 0.7 oz	It is recommended that no more than two dessert-type items be served as a snack each week.
Lefse	X		Lefse is un-leavened bread made primarily of potatoes and flour. Lefse is often rolled with butter, brown sugar, jams, or cinnamon and sugar. Lefse is credited based on the amount of whole-grain, bran, germ, and/or enriched meal or flour in the recipe.	
Macaroni—all shapes	X		Macaroni must be whole-grain, bran, germ, or enriched. Group H of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 13 g or 0.5 oz dry or ¼ c cooked Ages 6–12: one serving = 25 g or 0.9 oz dry or ½ c cooked	
Millet	X		Use Group H of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 13 g or 0.5 oz dry or ¼ c cooked Ages 6–12: one serving = 25 g or 0.9 dry or ½ c cooked	
Muffins	X		Homemade muffins may be credited based on the amount of whole-grain, bran, germ, and/or enriched meal or flour in the recipe. For commercial corn muffins, use Group C of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 16 g or 0.6 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 31 g or 1.1 oz For other muffins, use Group D of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 25 g or 0.9 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 50 g or 1.8 oz	
Nachos	X		See <i>Chips</i> in this section.	
Noodles	X		Noodles must be whole-grain, bran, germ, or enriched. Use Group H of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 13 g or 0.5 oz dry or ¼ c cooked Ages 6–12: one serving = 25 g or 0.9 oz dry or ½ c cooked	
Nut or Seed Meal or Flour		X	Nuts and seeds are not grains and there are no standards for enrichment.	

Grains/Breads

Food Item	Creditable		Comments	Nutrition Information
	Yes	No		
Oat Bran	X		If oat bran is used in a recipe: Ages 1–5: one serving = 7.38 g Ages 6–12: one serving = 14.75 g	A good source of fiber.
Oatmeal	X		If oatmeal is served as a cooked cereal, use Group H of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 13 g or 0.5 oz dry or ¼ c cooked Ages 6–12: one serving = 25 g or 0.9 oz dry or ½ c cooked If oatmeal is used in a recipe: Ages 1–5: one serving = 7.38 g Ages 6–12: one serving = 14.75 g	This item is 100 percent whole grain. It is recommended that one half of the grains consumed per day should be whole grains.
Pancakes	X		Homemade pancakes may be credited based on the amount of whole-grain, bran, germ, and/or enriched meal or flour in the recipe. For commercial pancakes, use Group C of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 16 g or 0.6 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 31 g or 1.1 oz	
Party Mix	X		Party mix may be credited based on the cereal content per serving. Use Group I of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–2: one serving = ¼ c or 0.3 oz* Ages 3–5: one serving = ⅓ c or 0.5 oz* Ages 6–12: one serving = ¾ c or 1 oz* *Whichever is less	
Pasta	X		Pasta must be whole-grain, bran, germ, or enriched. Use Group H of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving 13 g or 0.5 oz dry or ¼ c cooked Ages 6–12: one serving 25 g or 0.9 oz dry or ½ c cooked	
Pie Crust	X		Homemade pie crust served in dessert pies, meat/meat alternate pies, and turnovers may be credited based on the amount of whole-grain, bran, germ, and/or enriched meal or flour in the recipe. For commercial pie crust, use Group C of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 16 g or 0.6 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 31 g or 1.1 oz	Pie crust may be high in fat. Dessert pies may be credited for snack only. It is recommended, that no more than two-dessert type items be served as a snack each week.
Pineapple-Upside-Down Cake	X		Upside-down cakes may be credited for snack only, based on the whole-grain, bran, germ, and/or enriched meal or flour in the recipe. Crediting by weight may be impractical.	It is recommended that no more than two dessert-type items be served as a snack each week.

Grains/Breads

Food Item	Creditable		Comments	Nutrition Information
	Yes	No		
Pita Bread	X		Use Group B of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 13 g or 0.5oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 25 g or 0.9 oz	Pita bread is a good source of complex carbohydrates. Enriched pita is a good source of thiamin, riboflavin, thiamin, and iron. Whole wheat pita can be high in fiber.
Pizza Crust	X		Homemade pizza crust may be credited based on the amount of whole-grain, bran, germ, and/or enriched meal or flour in the recipe. Commercial pizza crust may be credited using Group B of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 13 g or 0.5 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 25 g or 0.9 oz	
Pop Tarts®	X		See <i>Toaster Pastry</i> in this section.	It is recommended that no more than two dessert-type items be served as a snack each week.
Popcorn		X	Popcorn does not meet the general requirements for grains/breads.	May cause choking.
Popovers	X		Homemade popovers may be credited based on the amount of whole-grain, bran, germ, and/or enriched meal or flour in the recipe. Commercial popovers may be credited using Group C of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 16 g or 0.6 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 31 g or 1.1 oz	
Potato Chips or Shoe String Potatoes		X	Potato chips are not grain-based chips and are not creditable.	
Potato Pancakes		X	Potato pancakes contain a minimal quantity of flour.	
Potatoes		X	See the <i>Fruits and Vegetables</i> section.	Potatoes are a vegetable.
Pound Cake	X		See <i>Cakes</i> in this section.	It is recommended that no more than two dessert-type items be served as a snack each week.
Pretzel Chips	X		See <i>Pretzels—hard</i> in this section.	
Pretzels—hard	X		Use Group A of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 10 g or 0.4 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 20 g or 0.7 oz	

Grains/Breads

Food Item	Creditable		Comments	Nutrition Information
	Yes	No		
Pretzels—soft	X		Soft pretzels may be credited based on the amount of whole-grain, bran, germ, and/or enriched meal or flour in the recipe using Group B of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 13 g or 0.5 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 25 g or 0.9 oz	
Puff Pastry	X		Homemade puff pastry may be credited based on the amount of whole-grain, bran, germ, and/or enriched meal or flour in the recipe. For commercial puff pastry, use Group D of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 25 g or 0.9 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 50 g or 1.8 oz	Puff pastry may be high in fat.
Pumpernickel Bread	X		See <i>Breads</i> in this section.	
Pumpkin Bread	X		See <i>Quick Bread</i> in this section.	
Quick Bread	X		Homemade quick breads may be credited based on the amount of whole-grain, bran, germ, and/or enriched meal or flour in the recipe. Commercial quick breads may be credited using Group D of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 25 g or 0.9 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 50 g or 1.8 oz	
Quinoa	X		Quinoa is a cereal-like plant product. Use Group H of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 13 g or 0.5 oz dry or ¼ c cooked Ages 6–12: one serving = 25 g or 0.9 oz dry or ½ c cooked	This item is 100 percent whole grain. It is recommended that one half of the grains consumed per day should be whole grains.
Raisin Bread	X		See <i>Bread</i> in this section.	
Ravioli	X		Updated 1/2012. The pasta in homemade ravioli is creditable based on the amount of whole-grain, bran, germ, or enriched meal or flour in the recipe. If commercial ravioli is served, a CN label may indicate if the product credits toward the meal pattern; or request Product Analysis worksheet from manufacturer.	
Rice—brown or wild	X		Rice must be whole-grain or enriched. Use Group H of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 13 g or 0.5 oz dry or ¼ c cooked Ages 6–12: one serving = 25 g or 0.9 oz dry or ½ c cooked	Rice is a good source of complex carbohydrates. This item is 100 percent whole grain. It is recommended that one half of the grains consumed per day should be whole grains.

Grains/Breads

Food Item	Creditable		Comments	Nutrition Information
	Yes	No		
Rice—white	X		Rice must be whole-grain or enriched. Use Group H of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 13 g or 0.5 oz dry or ¼ c cooked Ages 6–12: one serving = 25 g or 0.9 oz dry or ½ c cooked	Rice is a good source of complex carbohydrates.
Rice Cakes	X		Rice cakes must be enriched or whole-grain. Rice cakes which are made of puffed rice may be credited based on the serving size for cereal. Use Group I of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–2: one serving = ¼ c or 0.3 oz* Ages 3–5: one serving = ⅓ c or 0.5 oz* Ages 6–12 one serving = ¾ c or 1 oz* *Whichever is less	
Rice Cereal Bars	X		Use Group I of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–2: one serving = ¼ c or 0.3oz* Ages 3–5: one serving = ⅓ c or 0.5 oz* Ages 6–12: one serving = ¾ c or 1 oz* *Whichever is less	It is recommended that no more than two dessert-type items be served as a snack each week.
Rice Pudding	X		Rice pudding maybe credited for snack only based on the amount of whole-grain or enriched rice in a serving.	It is recommended that no more than two dessert-type items be served as a snack each week.
Rolls—all varieties	X		See <i>Breads</i> in this section.	
Rye Wafers	X		Use Group A of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 10 g or 0.4 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 20 g or 0.7 oz	
Scones	X		Homemade scones may be credited based on the amount of whole-grain, bran, germ, and/or enriched meal or flour in the recipe. For commercial scones, use Group E of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 31 g or 1.1 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 63 g or 2.2 oz	
Sopaipillas	X		Homemade sopaipillas may be credited for snack only based on the amount of whole-grain, bran, germ, and/or enriched meal or flour in the recipe. For commercial sopaipillas, use Group C of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 16 g or 0.6 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 31 g or 1.1 oz	It is recommended that no more than two dessert-type items be served as a snack each week.

Grains/Breads

Food Item	Creditable		Comments	Nutrition Information
	Yes	No		
Spoon Bread	X		Spoon bread may be credited based on the amount of whole-grain, bran, germ, and/or enriched meal or flour in the recipe.	
Squash Bread	X		See <i>Quick Bread</i> in this section.	
Stuffing—bread	X		See <i>Bread Stuffing</i> in this section.	
Sweet Rolls, Sticky Buns, Cinnamon Rolls, Danish Pastries, Caramel Rolls	X		Homemade sweet rolls may be credited for breakfast/snack only based on the amount of whole-grain, bran, germ, and/or enriched meal or flour in the recipe. For commercial rolls, unfrosted, use Group D of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 25 g or 0.9 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 50 g or 1.8 oz For commercial rolls, frosted, use Group E of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 31 g or 1.1 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 63 g or 2.2 oz	These rolls may be high in fat and sugar.
Taco Chips	X		See <i>Chips</i> in this section.	
Taco Shells	X		Use Group B of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 13 g or 0.5 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 25 g or 0.9 oz	
Tapioca Pudding		X		Tapioca is not a grain.
Toast	X		Use Group A of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 10 g or 0.4 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 20 g or 0.7oz	
Toaster Pastry	X		Toaster pastry may be credited for breakfast/snack only. For unfrosted toaster pastry, use Group D of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 25 g or 0.9 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 50 g or 1.8 oz For frosted toaster pastry, use Group E of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 31 g or 1.1 02 Ages 6–12: one serving = 63 g or 2.2 oz	
Tortilla Chips—wheat, corn	X		See <i>Chips</i> in this section.	
Tortillas—wheat, corn	X		Tortillas must contain whole-grain, bran, germ, or enriched meal or flour. Use Group B of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 13 g or 0.5 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 25 g or 0.9 oz	

Grains/Breads

Food Item	Creditable		Comments	Nutrition Information
	Yes	No		
Turnovers	X		See <i>Pie Crust</i> in this section.	Turnovers may be high in fat. It is recommended that no more than two dessert-type items be served as a snack each week.
Waffles	X		Homemade waffles may be credited based on the amount of whole-grain, bran, germ, and/or enriched meal or flour in the recipe. For commercial waffles, use Group C of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 16 g or 0.6 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 31 g or 1.1 oz	
Wheat Germ	X		If wheat germ is used in a recipe: Ages 1–5: one serving = 7.38 g Ages 6–12: one serving = 14.75 g	
Wild Rice	X		Use Group H of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 13 g or 0.5 oz dry or ¼ c cooked Ages 6–12: one serving = 25 g or 0.9 oz dry or ½ c cooked	
Zucchini Bread	X		See <i>Quick Bread</i> in this section.	
Zwieback	X		Use Group A of the Grains/Breads Chart. Ages 1–5: one serving = 10 g or 0.4 oz Ages 6–12: one serving = 20 g or 0.7 oz	

Fruits and Vegetables

CACFP regulations require that breakfast contain a serving of vegetable(s) or fruit(s) or full-strength (100 percent) vegetable or fruit juice, or an equivalent quantity of any combination of these foods.

Both lunch and supper must contain two separate servings of vegetables or fruits. Full-strength vegetable or fruit juice may be counted to meet no more than one-half of this requirement.

A serving of vegetable or fruit may be credited as one component of the required two components of a snack. Juice may not be credited as one of the components of a snack when milk is served as the only other component.

Full-strength (100 percent) fruit juice is a product which contains no additional water or other ingredients such as sweeteners, spices, or flavorings. Examples of full-strength fruit juices are apple (including cider), grape, grapefruit, orange, pineapple, prune, tangerine, and any combination of any of these full-strength juices. Fruit juice labels should be read carefully. Look for 100 percent fruit juice.

Fruit drinks are beverages that contain full-strength juice along with added water, and possibly other ingredients such as corn syrup, spices, or flavorings. Some commonly seen fruit drinks that cannot count toward the meal pattern include nectars, lemonade, or cranberry juice cocktail. These drinks contain less than 50 percent full-strength juice.

ISBE recommends using only full-strength juices (100 percent). However, fruit drinks are creditable when they contain at least 50 percent fruit juice and twice the required amount is served. Only 100 percent full-strength juice may be used as a breakfast component.

Cooked dry beans or peas may be counted as a vegetable or as a meat alternate, but not as both in the same meal.

Smaller amounts than $\frac{1}{8}$ cup of vegetables and fruits are considered garnishes and may not be counted toward the vegetable/fruit requirement.

Fruit or vegetable dishes that contain more than one fruit or vegetable, such as fruit cocktail, mixed fruit, or mixed vegetables, may be credited toward only one of the two required components for lunch and supper.

Home canned products are not creditable because of health and safety reasons. Either fresh or frozen, home-grown fruits and vegetables are creditable and may be served in the CACFP.

Refer to *The Food Buying Guide* for a complete list of fruits and vegetables used in the Child Nutrition Programs. If you have questions regarding the crediting of a particular item not listed here, contact ISBE or your sponsor for information.



The following lists only those fruits and vegetables about which crediting inquiries are often made or foods that are often credited incorrectly. Use of product brand names does not constitute ISBE approval or endorsement. Product names are used solely for clarification

Fruits and Vegetables				
Food Item	Creditable		Comments	Nutrition Information
	Yes	No		
"Ade" Drinks—lemonade, limeade, etc.		X	"Ade" drinks are not 100 percent full-strength juice.	"Ade" drinks are usually high in sugar.
Apple Butter		X	Apple butter does not contain enough fruit for crediting purposes.	
Apple Cider	X		Apple cider is a full-strength juice. Only pasteurized apple cider should be served.	
Apple Fritters—homemade	X		Apple fritters may be credited as part of the total requirement for fruits/vegetables if each serving has at least ¼ cup of apples.	Apple fritters are high in fat.
Artichoke	X		¼ c cooked vegetable from leaves and/or bottoms	
Aspic	X		See: <i>Gelatin Salads</i> in this section.	
Avocado	X			
Bamboo Shoots	X			
Banana Bread		X	Fruit and vegetable breads, such as banana bread or zucchini bread, do not contain enough fruit/vegetable to be credited toward the fruit/vegetable requirement. They contain less than ⅛ cup per serving. See: Grains/Breads section for additional crediting information.	
Banana Pudding	X		Banana pudding may be credited based on the amount of fruit in each serving of pudding. Fruit may be credited as a fruit/vegetable if each serving has at least ⅛ cup of bananas.	
Barbecue Sauce		X	Barbecue sauce does not contain enough vegetable per serving to be credited.	Barbecue sauce may be high in salt. Choose lower sodium varieties or limit the use of barbecue sauces.
Bean Sprouts—cooked	X		Bean sprouts can be credited if at least ⅛ cup are served.	Due to increasing number of illnesses associated with raw sprout consumption, raw sprouts are intentionally omitted.
Beans—canned, dry	X		Beans and peas, canned or cooked dried beans (kidney, garbanzo, black beans, pinto etc.) may be credited as vegetables. They cannot be credited toward the meat/meat alternate and the fruit/vegetable requirement in the same meal.	Beans and peas are good sources of protein, fiber, and iron and are naturally low in fat.

Fruits and Vegetables

Food Item	Creditable		Comments	Nutrition Information
	Yes	No		
Beverages—fruit		X	Fruit beverages (juice drinks, punches) contain less than 50 percent full-strength juice. Fruit drinks are primarily sugar, flavors, and water.	
Bok Choy	X			
Breadfruit	X			
Cactus	X		See prickly pear cactus.	
Cake—containing fruit	X		Cakes containing at least 1/8 cup fruit per serving can be credited. See <i>Pineapple Upside Down Cake</i> in the grains/breads section for additional crediting information.	
Carrot Bread		X	See <i>Banana Bread</i> in this section.	
Catsup		X	There is not enough vegetable present to be credited.	
Chayote (Mirliton)	X			
Chicory	X			
Chili Sauce		X	Chili sauce does not contain enough vegetable to be credited.	
Coconut		X	Coconut does not contribute towards the meal pattern. Coconut is considered a nut or seed product.	In comparison to other fruits, coconut is high in fat with approximately 7 grams of fat per every 1/4 cup serving. Most other fruits have less than 1 gram of fat per serving.
Coleslaw	X		Only the vegetable/fruit ingredients can be counted toward the fruit/vegetable requirement.	Cabbage is a good source of vitamin C.
Corn Chips		X	See <i>Chips</i> in grains/breads section.	Chips are high in fat and salt.
Corn Syrup		X	Corn syrup is primarily sugar and does not make a contribution to the fruit/vegetable requirement.	
Cranberries	X			Cranberries are a good source of vitamin C and fiber.
Cranberry Juice—blend	X		Cranberry juice (not cocktail) in a blend with another full-strength juice is creditable (for example, 100 percent cranberry juice mixed with 100 percent apple juice). Cranberry juice (100 percent) that is not blended with other juices is not commercially available as a fruit juice.	
Cranberry Juice—cocktail		X	Cranberry juice cocktail contains less than 50 percent full-strength juice.	
Cranberry Relish or Sauce	X		Only sauces with whole or crushed berries can be credited. Jellied sauces are up to half sugar and cannot be credited.	

Fruits and Vegetables

Food Item	Creditable		Comments	Nutrition Information
	Yes	No		
Drinks—fruit		X	Fruit drinks contain less than 50 percent full-strength juice. Fruit drinks are primarily sugar, flavors, and water.	
Dry Spice Mixes		X		
Fig Bar Cookies		X	The amount of fig in the cookies is too small to count toward the fruit/vegetable component. See <i>Cookies</i> in the grains/breads section for additional crediting information.	
Frozen Fruit-Flavored Bars—commercial		X	Frozen fruit-flavored bars do not contain enough fruit juice to be creditable.	
Frozen Fruit Juice Bars—homemade, commercial	X		The fruit juice portion of the bars may be counted to meet the fruit/vegetable requirement. Commercial fruit juice bars containing 100 percent juice can be credited. Other commercial fruit juice bars cannot be credited because it is impossible to determine the amount of fruit juice in each bar.	
Fruit Cobblers—homemade	X		The fruit may contribute toward the fruit/vegetable requirement if one serving contains at least ¼ cup fruit. See <i>Cobblers</i> in the grains/breads section for additional crediting information.	Depending on the recipe, fruit cobblers may be high in sugar and fat.
Fruit Crisps—homemade	X		The fruit may contribute towards the fruit/vegetable requirement if one serving contains at least ¼ cup. See: <i>Fruit Pie Filling and Crisps</i> in the grains/breads section for additional crediting information.	Fruit crisps may be high in fat.
Fruit—dried	X		See <i>Raisins</i> in this section or check the Food Buying Guide for serving sizes of various dried fruits.	
Fruit Drinks		X	See: <i>Drinks—fruit</i> in this section.	
Fruit Flavored Punch		X	Fruit flavored punch does not contain a sufficient amount of full-strength juice.	Fruit punch is high in sugar.
Fruit Flavored Powders and Syrups		X	Fruit flavored powders and syrups do not contain a sufficient amount of fruit to contribute toward the fruit/vegetable requirement.	Fruit flavored powders are primarily sugar and flavoring.
Fruit Juice Bases		X	Fruit juice bases do not contain a sufficient amount of fruit per serving to contribute toward the fruit/vegetable requirement.	
Fruit Pie Filling—commercial	X		If the first item listed in the ingredient list is fruit, the filling may provide one-half credit (½ cup of fruit pie filling will provide ¼ cup of fruit credit).	The use of fruit pies and pastries to meet the fruit/vegetable requirement should be limited due to high fat and sugar contents.

Fruits and Vegetables

Food Item	Creditable		Comments	Nutrition Information
	Yes	No		
Fruit Pie Filling—homemade	X		In a homemade or center-made pie, the amount of fruit can be credited based on the amount of fruit in each serving.	The use of fruit pies to meet the fruit/vegetable requirement should be limited due to high fat and sugar contents.
Fruit Sauces—homemade	X		The fruit portion of the sauce may be credited. One serving must provide a minimum of ½ cup of fruit (2 tablespoons).	
Fruit Snacks		X	It is impossible to determine the amount of fruit in products such as fruit bars, roll-ups, wrinkles, or candy.	
Gelatin Salads or Desserts With Fruit/Fruit Juice/Vegetable	X		The fruit/vegetable in gelatin salads or desserts may be credited toward the fruit/vegetable requirement if each serving contains a minimum of ½ cup fruit or vegetable or full-strength fruit or vegetable juice.	
Grape Leaves	X			
Gravy Bases		X		
Herbs		X		Considered a seasoning.
Honey		X		
Ice Cream—fruit flavored		X	Fruit flavored ice cream contains an insufficient amount of fruit to credit toward the meal pattern.	.
Jam		X	Jam contains an insufficient amount of fruit per serving to credit toward the meal pattern.	Jams are high in sugar.
Jelly		X	Jelly contains an insufficient amount of fruit per serving to credit toward the meal pattern.	Jellies are high in sugar.
Jicama(Yam bean)	X			
Juice Bars	X		Juice bars made from 100 percent juice can be credited.	
Juice Blends—all fruit juice	X		Juice blends that are combinations of full-strength 100% juices may be credited. Only pasteurized fruit juices should be served.	
Ketchup		X	There is not enough vegetable present to be credited.	Ketchup has high sodium content.
Kiwi Fruit	X		About six ¼-inch slices equals ¼ cup serving.	Kiwi fruit is a good source of vitamin C.
Kohlrabi	X			
Kool-Aid®		X	See <i>Fruit Flavored Powders</i> .	

Fruits and Vegetables

Food Item	Creditable		Comments	Nutrition Information
	Yes	No		
Lefse	X		Lefse is un-leavened bread made primarily of potatoes and flour. Lefse containing at least 1/8 cup of potato per serving is creditable as a fruit/vegetable. See <i>Lefse</i> in the grains/breads section for optional crediting information.	Lefse is often served with butter, brown sugar, jams, or cinnamon and sugar. These toppings are high in fat and/or sugar.
Lemon Pie Filling		X	Lemon pie filling contains an insufficient amount of fruit per serving to credit toward the meal pattern.	
Lemonade		X	For lemonade to be palatable the lemon juice must be diluted beyond the 50 percent fruit juice level and sugar must be added.	
Malanga (Taro)	X			
Maple Syrup		X		
Mayonnaise		X		
Muffins With Fruit		X	See <i>Banana Bread</i> in this section.	
Mustard		X		
Nectar—apricot pear, peach, etc.		X	Nectars usually contain less than 50 percent full-strength juice.	
Oil—salad		X		
Olives	X		Olives can be credited if each serving is at least 1/8 cup (2 tablespoons).	Olives are high in salt and fat. This serving size is impractical for small children.
Onion Rings	X		Onion rings are creditable if they are homemade or if a product specification sheet is available which states the amount of onion.	Because they are fried, onion rings are high in fat.
Pickles	X		Pickles can be credited if each serving is at least 1/8 cup (2 tablespoons).	Pickles are high in sodium.
Pickle Relish		X	Pickle relish is considered a garnish or condiment.	
Pineapple Upside Down Cake	X		See <i>Cake Containing Fruit</i> in this section.	
Pizza Sauce	X		At least 1/8 cup (2 tablespoon) per serving is needed. 1/8 c of pizza sauce = 1/8 c of vegetable.	
Poi—undiluted	X			
Pomegranate	X			
Pop Tart® Filling		X	See <i>Toaster Pastry Filling</i> .	
Popsicles		X	Popsicles do not contain a sufficient amount of fruit juice to be credited.	Popsicles are high in sugar.
Posole (Pozole)		X	Posole is a thick soup. It usually contains pork or chicken, broth, hominy, onion, garlic, dried chili peppers, and cilantro.	
Potato Chips		X		Potato chips are high in fat and salt.

Fruits and Vegetables

Food Item	Creditable		Comments	Nutrition Information
	Yes	No		
Potatoes and Potato Skins	X			Potato skins are high in fiber. Potatoes and potato skins can be high in fat if fried. Toppings such as sour cream, cheeses, butter, or margarine are also high in fat.
Preserves		X	Preserves do not contain a sufficient amount of fruit per serving.	
Prickly Pear Cactus (Nopales)	X		Leaves or petals peeled without thorns; whole fruit	
Pumpkin in Bread		X	See <i>Banana Bread</i> in this section.	
Puddings With Fruit	X		A serving must contain at least $\frac{1}{8}$ cup or 2 tablespoons of fruit per serving.	
Raisins	X		$\frac{1}{4}$ c raisins = $\frac{1}{4}$ c fruit. Larger serving sizes may be impractical. Serve raisins with other fruits or vegetables.	Raisins are high in sugar ($\frac{1}{4}$ cup is equivalent to almost 3 tablespoons sugar). Raisins are high in iron and fiber.
Rice		X	Rice is a grain. See <i>Rice</i> in the grains/breads section for crediting information.	
Salad Dressing		X		
Salsa	X		Salsa that contains all vegetable ingredients plus minor amounts of spices or flavorings is creditable. At least $\frac{1}{8}$ cup (2 tablespoons) per serving is needed. $\frac{1}{8}$ c salsa = $\frac{1}{8}$ c vegetable. If salsa contains non-vegetable components like gums, starches, or stabilizers, only the vegetable portion may be credited.	
Sherbet		X	Sherbet does not contain a sufficient amount of fruit per serving to be creditable.	
Sorbet	X		Sorbet made from 100 percent juice is creditable.	
Soup—canned, condensed (1 part soup to 1 part liquid): clam chowder, minestrone, split pea, tomato, tomato with other basic components such as rice or vegetables, vegetable with other basic components such as meat or poultry	X		Based on reconstituted soup: 1 c serving = $\frac{1}{4}$ c vegetable $\frac{1}{2}$ c serving = $\frac{1}{8}$ c vegetable A serving of less than $\frac{1}{2}$ cup soup does not contribute to the fruit/vegetable requirement.	Soups made from broths containing a variety of vegetables can be a nutritious, low-calorie main dish or accompaniment to a meal. Cream soups are high in fat. Some canned soups are high in sodium.

Fruits and Vegetables

Food Item	Creditable		Comments	Nutrition Information
	Yes	No		
Soup—canned, ready-to-serve: clam chowder, minestrone, split pea, tomato, tomato with other basic components such as rice or vegetables, vegetable with other basic components such as meat or poultry	X		1 c serving = $\frac{1}{4}$ c vegetable $\frac{1}{2}$ c serving = $\frac{1}{8}$ c vegetable A serving of less than $\frac{1}{2}$ cup soup does not contribute to the fruit/vegetable requirement.	Soups made from broths containing a variety of vegetables can be a nutritious, low-calorie main dish or accompaniment to a meal. Cream soups are high in fat. Some canned soups are high in sodium.
Soup—canned: beef (with vegetables and barley); beef, chicken, or turkey noodle; chicken gumbo; chicken with stars; cream of celery; cream of chicken; cream of mushroom; French onion; home-style beef or chicken; pepper steak; chicken; corn chowder		X	Canned soups, such as these, do not contain a sufficient amount of vegetable to contribute toward the fruit/vegetable requirement.	Soups made from broths containing a variety of vegetables can be a nutritious, low-calorie main dish or accompaniment to a meal. Cream soups are high in fat.
Soup—dehydrated soup mixes	X		Dehydrated vegetables may be credited. Yields for dehydrated vegetables must be based on the re-hydrated volume, not the dry volume stated on the label. Re-hydration yields vary from brand to brand. To determine the re-hydrated volume for vegetables: 1. Re-hydrated the dehydrated vegetable according to the manufacturer's directions by adding water or other liquid. 2. Measure the re-hydrated volume of the vegetables. 3. Calculate the number of servings provided. 4. Keep a record of yield data for referral.	Dry soups may be high in sodium.
Soup—homemade	X		When making homemade soup, use a quantity of vegetables that results in at least $\frac{1}{8}$ cup (2 tablespoons) vegetable per serving.	

Fruits and Vegetables

Food Item	Creditable		Comments	Nutrition Information
	Yes	No		
Spaghetti Sauce	X		At least 1/8 cup (2 tablespoons) per serving is needed 1/8 cup of spaghetti sauce equals 1/8 cup of vegetable.	
Sprouts—cooked alfalfa, bean, etc.	X		Sprouts can be credited if at least 1/8 cup are served.	Due to increasing number of illnesses associated with raw sprout consumption, raw sprouts are intentionally omitted.
Squash in Bread		X	See <i>Banana Bread</i> in this section.	
Toaster Pastry Filling		X	These do not contain enough fruit to count toward the fruit/vegetable requirement. See <i>Toaster Pastry</i> in the grains/breads section for additional crediting information.	
Tomatillo	X			
Tomato Paste	X		1 T = 1/4 c vegetable	
Tomato Puree	X		2 T = 1/4 c vegetable	
Tomato Sauce	X		1/4 c = 1/4 c vegetable	
Tropical Fruits—guava, mango, papaya	X			
V-8 Juice®	X		See <i>Vegetable Juice Blends</i> in this section.	
Vegetable Juice Blends	X		Vegetable juice blends are mixed, full-strength vegetable juices.	Vegetable juice blends may contain a variety of nutrients. However, they may be high in sodium.
Vegetables—chopped	X		Vegetables may be credited toward the meal pattern when at least 1/8 cup (2 tablespoons) is provided per serving.	
Vinegar		X		
Water Chestnuts	X			
Wild Plants	X		The USDA does not recommend using wild plants due to the possibility of gathering look-alikes or poisonous plants. Mustard or dandelion greens, if used, should be purchased from a reputable commercial source.	Dark green leafy vegetables and greens are good sources of iron and vitamin A.
Yautia (Tannier)	X			
Yogurt With Fruit—commercial		X	Commercially prepared yogurt with fruit contains less than 1/8 cup fruit per serving. Fruit added to yogurt is creditable. See Meat/Meat Alternates section for crediting yogurt.	
Yucca (Cassava)	X			
Zucchini Bread		X	See <i>Banana Bread</i> in this section.	

Meat and Meat Alternates

CACFP regulations require that all lunches and suppers contain a serving of meat or meat alternate as specified in the meal pattern. A meat or meat alternate may also be served as one of the two components of a snack.

Meat includes lean meat, poultry, or fish. Meat alternates include cheese, eggs, cooked dry beans or peas, nuts and seeds and their butters (except for acorn, chestnut, and coconut), and yogurt. These foods must be served in a main dish, or in a main dish with one other item, to meet this requirement.

The usual serving size of meat or meat alternate for preschool (1–5 years of age) children ranges from 1 to 1.5 ounces. To be counted toward meeting any part of the meat/meat alternate requirement, a menu item must provide a minimum of $\frac{1}{4}$ ounce of cooked lean meat or equivalent. The rest of the required serving must be met by adding other meat or meat alternates.



Frankfurters, bologna, knockwurst, and Vienna sausage may be served in the CACFP. **Only the meat in these products can be credited.** Many processed meats contain large amounts of binders and extenders. Therefore, the composition of these processed meats must be known in order to properly credit the meat/meat alternate portion.

Nuts and seeds may fulfill no more than one-half of the meat/meat alternate requirement for lunch and supper or the entire meat/meat alternate requirement for a supplement.

Vegetable protein products may be counted as meeting part of the meat or meat alternate requirement. Illinois State Board of Education Nutrition Programs staff or sponsors can provide information on the preparation, serving, and crediting of vegetable protein products.

Refer to *The Food Buying Guide* for a complete list of meats and meat alternates used in the Child Nutrition Programs. If you have a question regarding the crediting of a particular item not listed here, contact ISBE or your sponsor for information.

The following lists only those meats and meat alternates about which crediting inquiries are often made or foods that are often credited incorrectly. Use of product brand names does not constitute ISBE approval or endorsement. Product names are used solely for clarification.

Meat/Meat Alternates				
Food Item	Creditable		Comments	Nutrition Information
	Yes	No		
Acorns		X		Acorns have low protein content.
Bacon, Imitation Bacon Products and bacon bits		X		Bacon is low in protein and high in fat. Also, since the meat is cured and/or smoked, it is high in sodium.
Bacon—turkey	X		<i>See Processed Meat and Poultry Products</i> in this section.	
Beans—canned or dry	X		Beans and peas cooked from dry may be credited as a meat/meat alternate. Canned black, garbanzo, kidney, pinto, etc. beans may be credited as a meat/meat alternate or as a fruit/vegetable, but not both. Canned green or yellow beans and green peas may be credited only as vegetables.	Beans and peas (those that can be credited as meat/meat alternates) are good sources of protein and fiber and are low in fat.
Beef Jerky		X		Beef jerky does not serve the customary function of meat in a meal.
Bologna	X		<i>See Processed Meat and Poultry Products</i> in this section.	Bologna and other processed meats are commonly high in fat and sodium. Like all processed meats, bologna is lower in protein than fresh meat by weight.
Canadian Bacon	X		One pound (16 ounces) will yield 11 one-ounce servings of cooked meat. Refer to the <i>Food Buying Guide</i> , ISBE Nutrition Programs, or sponsor for information.	Canadian bacon is high in sodium.
Canned or Frozen Food—commercial: beef stew, chili mac, meat stew, pizza, pot pies, ravioli, etc.	X		These combination items are creditable only if (1) the food is CN labeled or (2) a product analysis sheet signed by an official of the manufacturer (not a salesperson), stating the amount of cooked lean meat/meat alternate in the product per serving, is on file.	Processed combination foods such as these are usually higher in fat and sodium than homemade foods.
Canned Pressed Luncheon Meat	X		<i>See Processed Meat and Poultry Products</i> in this section.	Canned pressed luncheon meat is usually high in fat and sodium.
Cheese—cottage	X		A 2 ounce (¼ cup) serving of cottage cheese is equivalent to a 1 ounce serving of meat.	Cottage cheese contains less protein per ounce; therefore, required serving size is greater.
Cheese—cream		X	Due to low-protein and high-fat content, a serving size that would provide enough protein would be excessive, especially for preschool children.	Cream cheese is high in fat and low in protein in comparison to other cheeses.

Meat/Meat Alternates

Food Item	Creditable		Comments	Nutrition Information
	Yes	No		
Cheese Food and Cheese Spread— (includes reduced-fat, light, or non-fat substitutes)	X		A 2 ounce serving of these products is equivalent to a 1 ounce serving of meat.	Cheese food and cheese spread are often high in sodium. Try to watch for lower sodium varieties. These foods are higher in moisture content and lower in protein content than natural cheeses.
Cheese—imitation		X	Products labeled “imitation” are not creditable.	
Cheese—natural or processed (American, brick, cheddar, Colby, Monterey Jack, mozzarella, Muenster, provolone, and Swiss, includes reduced-fat, light, or non-fat substitutes)	X		A 1 ounce serving of natural or processed cheese is equivalent to one ounce of meat.	Some cheeses are high in fat and cholesterol. Cheese is a good source of protein, calcium, vitamin A, and vitamin D.
Cheese— Neufchatel		X	Due to low protein and high fat content, a serving size that would provide enough protein would be excessive, especially for preschool children.	Neufchatel cheese contains less protein and more fat than other creditable cheeses.
Cheese— Parmesan	X		6 tablespoons equals one ounce of meat. If served as a garnish, the cheese is not creditable because the serving size is too small.	
Cheese—pimento	X		2 ounce serving of pimento cheese is equivalent to 1 ounce of meat.	
Cheese Products		X		Cheese product is a category name.
Cheese—ricotta	X		2 ounce (¼ cup) serving of ricotta cheese is equivalent to a one-ounce serving of meat.	Ricotta cheese has less protein and greater moisture content than natural cheeses per ounce.
Cheese—Romano	X		6 tablespoons equals one ounce of meat. If served as a garnish, the cheese is not creditable because the serving size is too small.	
Chestnuts		X		Chestnuts are very low in protein.
Chicken Nuggets	X		See <i>Processed Meat and Poultry Products</i> in this section.	
Chitterlings		X	Chitterlings have low protein content.	Chitterlings are high in fat.
Coconuts		X	Coconut cannot be credited as a meat/meat alternate or as a fruit/vegetable.	Coconut is very low in protein.

Meat/Meat Alternates

Food Item	Creditable		Comments	Nutrition Information
	Yes	No		
Corn Dogs	X		The frankfurter can be credited as a meat/meat alternate if it meets the criteria for frankfurters. See <i>Processed Meat and Poultry Products</i> . See <i>Batter-Type Coatings</i> in the grains/breads section for additional crediting information.	Corn dogs are high in fat.
Crab—imitation		X	See <i>Imitation Seafood</i> in this section.	
Cream Cheese		X	See <i>Cheese—cream</i> in this section.	
Deviled Eggs	X		Cooked eggs may be credited. See <i>Eggs</i> in this section.	Due to the egg and the addition of mayonnaise, deviled eggs are high in cholesterol and fat. Rather than preparing deviled eggs with mayonnaise, try a lower fat variety of the spread.
Dried Meat, Poultry, and Seafood snack Products (Shelf-stable)		X	<i>Non-creditable meat snacks include but are not limited to the following products: smoked snack sticks made with beef and chicken; summer sausage; pepperoni sticks; meat, poultry, or seafood jerky such as beef jerky, turkey jerky, and salmon jerky; and meat or poultry nuggets (shelf-stable, non-breaded, dried meat or poultry snack made similar to jerky) such as turkey nuggets.</i>	<i>These products do not serve as the usual and customary part of the meat/meat alternate portion of a meal and therefore not reimbursable.</i>
Eggs	X		Cooked eggs may be credited. Eggs cannot be credited when part of a homemade custard or pudding.	Eggs are a good source of protein. However, eggs also contain a significant amount of cholesterol.
Fish	X			Fish is a good source of protein and iron. Many varieties of fish are lower in fat than other types of meat. Try to broil or bake fish, rather than frying it which increases the amount of fat.
Fish—non-commercial (home caught)		X	Should not be served.	
Fish Sticks or Nuggets	X		Only the edible fish portion is creditable toward the meat requirement.	
Frankfurters—imitation		X		
Frankfurters, Meat, and Poultry	X		See <i>Processed Meats and Poultry Products</i> in this section.	Up to 80 percent of the calories in frankfurters may be from fat. They can be high in cholesterol and are high in sodium.

Meat/Meat Alternates

Food Item	Creditable		Comments	Nutrition Information
	Yes	No		
Game—venison, squirrel, rabbit, etc.		X	For health and safety reasons, these are not creditable unless they are inspected and approved by the appropriate Federal, State, or local agency.	
Garbanzo Beans	X		See <i>Beans—canned or dry</i> in this section.	
Ham Hocks		X		Ham hocks are high in fat and low in protein by weight.
Home-Slaughtered Meat		X	To be credited, home-raised animals must be slaughtered at a USDA facility that has a USDA inspector on duty. Poultry is subject to State inspection.	
Hot Dogs	X		See <i>Processed Meat and Poultry Products</i> in this section.	
Imitation Seafood		X		
Kidney	X			
Kidney Beans	X		See <i>Beans—canned or dry</i> in this section.	
Legumes	X		See <i>Beans—canned or dry</i> in this section.	
Liver	X			Liver is high in cholesterol and fat.
Liverwurst	X		See <i>Processed Meat and Poultry Products</i> in this section.	Liverwurst is high in cholesterol and fat.
Luncheon Meat	X		See <i>Processed Meat and Poultry Products</i> in this section.	
Macaroni and Cheese—commercial		X	The powdered cheese in commercial macaroni and cheese mixes cannot be credited toward the meat requirement. To credit the macaroni only, see <i>Macaroni</i> in the grains/bread section.	
Macaroni and Cheese—homemade	X		The cheese in homemade macaroni and cheese may be credited based on the amount of cheese in each serving. To credit the macaroni only, see <i>Macaroni</i> in the grains/breads section.	
Meat Sauce—commercial		X	The meat in commercial sauce cannot be credited.	
Meat Sauce—homemade	X		The meat in homemade sauce can be credited based on the amount of meat in each serving.	
Nuts	X		Nuts and seeds may be credited as a serving of meat alternate for snack, but only one-half serving is creditable as a meat alternate at lunch or supper. Serve only ground or finely chopped nuts and seeds to children less than 3 years of age to avoid choking.	Nuts and seeds are good sources of protein. Nuts and seeds do not contain cholesterol, as they are of plant origin. However, nuts and seeds are high in fat and have low iron content.

Meat/Meat Alternates

Food Item	Creditable		Comments	Nutrition Information
	Yes	No		
Nut or Seed Meal or Flour		X	Nut or seed meal or flour cannot be credited unless it meets the requirements for vegetable protein products. Contact ISBE Nutrition Programs or sponsor for information.	
Pasta Products With Meat—commercial	X		See <i>Canned or Frozen Food—commercial</i> in this section.	
Pasta Products With Meat—homemade	X		Pasta products with meat may be credited based on the amount of meat in each serving. See <i>Pasta</i> in the grains/breads section.	
Peanut Butter—reduced fat	X		It is suggested that peanut butter be served in combination with another meat/meat alternate since the serving size may be too large for preschool children.	
Peanut Butter—regular	X		Unlike nuts, peanut butter and other 100 percent nut butters can fulfill 100 percent of the meat/meat alternate requirement for lunch or supper. However, it is suggested that peanut butter be served in combination with another meat/meat alternate since the serving size may be too large for preschool children.	Peanut butter is high in fat. It does not contain cholesterol as it is of plant origin.
Peanut Butter Spreads		X	Peanut butter spreads do not meet the FDA's standard of identity for peanut butter.	
Peas—dry or canned	X		See <i>Beans—dry or canned</i> in this section.	
Pepperoni	X		See <i>Processed Meat and Poultry Products</i> in this section.	Pepperoni is high in fat and sodium.
Pig's Feet		X	Pig's feet do not contain sufficient meat content.	Pig's feet are high in fat.
Pig Neck Bones		X	Pig neck bones do not contain sufficient meat content.	Pig neck bones are high in fat.
Pig Tails		X	Pig tails do not contain sufficient meat content.	Pig tails are high in fat.
Pimento Cheese	X		See <i>Cheese—pimento</i> in this section.	
Pinto Beans	X		See <i>Beans—canned or dry</i> in this section.	
Pizza—commercial	X		See <i>Canned or Frozen Food—commercial</i> in this section.	
Pizza—homemade	X		Homemade pizza may be credited based on the amount of meat/meat alternate in each serving. See <i>Pizza Crust</i> in the grain/breads section.	

Meat/Meat Alternates

Food Item	Creditable		Comments	Nutrition Information
	Yes	No		
Polish Sausage	X		See <i>Processed Meat and Poultry Products</i> in this section.	Polish sausage, like most sausage products, is high in fat and sodium.
Pot Pies—commercial	X		See <i>Canned or Frozen Food—commercial</i> in this section.	
Pot Pies—homemade	X		Homemade pot pies can be credited based on the amount of meat/meat alternate in each serving. See <i>Pie Crust</i> in the grains/breads section.	The crust and sauce may both be high in fat.
Potted Meat	X		See <i>Processed Meat and Poultry Products</i> in this section.	Potted meat is high in sodium.
Powdered Cheese in Macaroni		X	See <i>Macaroni and Cheese—commercial</i> in this section.	
Pressed Meat Products	X		See <i>Processed Meat and Poultry Products</i> in this section.	Use pressed meat products infrequently as they are high in sodium.
Processed Meat and Poultry Products	X		Processed meat, poultry products, and sausages may be served in the CACFP. Only the meat in these products can be credited. Since many processed meats contain large amounts of binders and extenders, the composition of these processed meats must be known in order to properly credit the meat/meat alternate portion. Meat products without binders/ extenders may be fully credited based on weight. Products with a CN Label are creditable.	In order to provide a reasonable serving size, it is recommended that all-meat or all-poultry products be purchased. Processed meats are generally high in salt (sodium). Read product labels to avoid purchasing processed meats and chicken with binders/extendere. Examples of binders/extendere include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soy flour* • Starchy vegetable flour • Calcium reduced dried skim milk • Soy protein concentrate* • Cereal • Isolated soy protein* • Dried milk • Carrageenan
Processed Meat and Poultry Products containing vegetable protein products (VPP) binders	X		Processed meats and poultry may include vegetable protein products (VPP). VPP may be counted as meeting part of the meat or meat alternate requirement. Refer to the <i>USDA regulations 7 CFR Part 226, Appendix A, Alternate Foods for Meals, Alternate Protein Products</i> .	Processed meats are generally high in salt (sodium).
Quiche	X		The eggs, meat, and/or cheese in quiche may be credited based on the amount of meat/meat alternate in each serving. See <i>Pie Crust</i> in the grains/breads section for crediting the crust on quiche.	
Ravioli—commercial	X		See <i>Canned or Frozen Food—commercial</i> in this section.	
Salt Pork		X	Salt pork is not creditable due to its high-fat and low-protein content.	

Meat/Meat Alternates

Food Item	Creditable		Comments	Nutrition Information
	Yes	No		
Sausage	X		See <i>Processed Meat and Poultry Products</i> .	
Scrapple		X	Scrapple does not contain a sufficient amount of meat to be credited.	
Seeds	X		See <i>Nuts</i> in this section.	
Shellfish	X		Only the edible portion of shellfish is creditable. The shellfish must be fully cooked.	
Soups—homemade	X		Homemade soups may contribute toward the meat requirement if a minimum of ¼ ounce meat/meat alternate per serving is provided.	
Soups—commercial (bean, lentil, or split pea only)	X		¾ cup of bean, lentil, or split-pea soup may be credited as 1½ ounces (¾ cup) meat alternate.	Commercial soups are often high in sodium.
Soups—commercial, other than bean, lentil, or split pea		X	These soups contain insufficient quantities of meat.	
Soy Burgers or Other Soy Products with meat/chicken/seafood	X		Refer to USDA Regulation 7 CFR Part 226 Appendix A—Alternate Protein Products	
Soy Butter	X		Soy butter made from 100 percent soy nuts is creditable. It is a good alternate to peanut butter for those who are allergic to peanuts and is nutritionally comparable to meat or other meat alternates. It is suggested that soy butter be served in combination with another meat/meat alternate since the serving size may be too large for preschool children.	
Sunflower Seed Butter	X			Good alternative to peanut butter.
Tempeh		X	Tempeh is fermented soybean. Because there is no standard of identity for this food, and it could vary from manufacturer to manufacturer, it is not creditable.	
Tofu		X	Tofu is soybean curd. Because there is no standard of identity for this food, and it could vary from manufacturer to manufacturer, it is not creditable.	
Tripe	X			Tripe has low-quality protein.
Veggie Burgers	X		Refer to USDA Regulation 7 CFR Part 226 Appendix A—Alternate Protein Products	

Meat/Meat Alternates

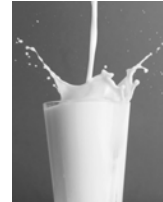
Food Item	Creditable		Comments	Nutrition Information
	Yes	No		
Vienna Sausage	X		See <i>Processed Meat and Poultry Products</i> in this section.	
Yogurt—plain or sweetened and flavored	X		Yogurt is creditable as a meat/meat alternate. 4 ounces (weight) or ½ cup (volume) of plain or sweetened and flavored yogurt is equivalent to 1 ounce of meat/meat alternate.	Yogurt is a good source of calcium and phosphorus.
Yogurt Products—frozen yogurt, yogurt bars, yogurt coating on fruit or nuts		X	There is not enough yogurt in these products to be creditable.	

Milk

The CACFP meal pattern requires **fluid milk** to be served for breakfast, lunch, and supper. Additionally, fluid milk may be served as one of the meal pattern components for snacks.

Fluid milk served to children two years of age and older is required to be fat-free or low-fat milk (1%), fat-free or low-fat (1%) lactose reduced milk, fat-free or low-fat (1%) lactose free milk, fat-free or low-fat (1%) buttermilk, or fat-free or low-fat (1%) acidified milk. Milk served must be pasteurized fluid milk that meets State and local standards, and may be flavored or unflavored.

Whole milk is recommended for children 1 up to 2 years of age.



Non-dairy Beverages

If children cannot consume fluid milk due to medical or other special dietary needs, other than a disability, non-dairy beverages may be served in place of fluid milk. Non-dairy beverages 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. The non-dairy beverage must meet the nutrient standards listed in the chart below.

Nutrient	Amount
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

Parents or guardians may now request in writing non-dairy milk substitutions without providing a medical statement. As an example, if a parent has a child who follows a vegan diet, the parent can submit a written request to the child's caretaker asking that soy milk be served in lieu of cow's milk. The written request must identify the medical or other special dietary need that restricts the diet of the child. Such substitutions are at the option and expense of the facility.

The requirements related to milk or food substitutions for a participant who has a medical disability and who submits a medical statement signed by a licensed physician remain unchanged. Refer to the Medical Exception Statement (ISBE form 67-44)

At breakfast, fluid milk can be served as a beverage, used on cereal, or used in part for each purpose.

Both lunch and supper must contain a serving of fluid milk as a beverage.

If milk is one of the two components served for a snack, it must be fluid milk as a beverage or used on cereal, or used in part for each purpose. Milk may not be credited for snacks when juice is served as the only other component.

Milk may never be credited when cooked in cereals, puddings, or other foods.

The following lists only milk products about which crediting inquiries are often made or foods that are often credited incorrectly. Use of product brand names does not constitute ISBE approval or endorsement. Product names are used solely for clarification.

Milk				
Food Item	Creditable		Comments	Nutrition Information
	Yes	No		
Acidified Milk	X		Acidified milk is fluid milk produced by souring fluid milk with an acidifying agent. Examples of acidified milk include acidified kefir milk and acidified acidophilus milk.	
Breast Milk—expressed	X		Meals containing breast milk instead of fluid milk are creditable for reimbursement when all other components are served to a child 12 months of age and older. A Medical Exception Statement is not required.	
Buttermilk	X			Buttermilk is low in fat.
Certified Raw Milk		X	Certified raw milk is not pasteurized. Regulations require the use of pasteurized milk. Pasteurized milk is heated at a high temperature for a period of time to destroy microorganisms.	
Cheese		X	Cheese cannot be credited toward the milk requirement as it does not meet the definition of milk. To be credited, the milk provided must be fluid. Cheese can be counted toward the meat/meat alternate requirement.	
Chocolate Milk	X			It is recommended that the use of flavored milk be limited due to the high sugar content.
Cocoa	X		Cocoa made with fluid milk is creditable. Credit the fluid milk portion only. Cocoa made from water is not creditable.	
Cream		X	Cream does not meet the definition of milk.	
Cream Sauces		X	To be credited, milk must be provided as a serving of fluid milk, not cooked in cereals, puddings, cream sauces, or other foods.	
Cream Soups		X	To be credited, the milk must be provided as a serving of fluid milk, not cooked in cereals, puddings, cream sauces, or other foods.	
Cultured Milk	X		Cultured milk is fluid milk produced by adding selected microorganisms to fluid milk under controlled conditions to produce a product with specific flavor and/or consistency. Examples of cultured milk include cultured buttermilk and cultured kefir milk.	
Custard		X	To be credited, the milk must be provided as a serving of fluid milk, not cooked in cereals, puddings, cream sauces, or other foods.	

Milk				
Food Item	Creditable		Comments	Nutrition Information
	Yes	No		
Eggnog—commercial or homemade	X		Eggnog made with cooked eggs is creditable. Only the fluid milk portion of eggnog may be credited. Eggnog made with uncooked eggs is NOT creditable due to the possibility of contracting Salmonella Enteritidis, a food-borne illness related to the consumption of uncooked or undercooked eggs.	
Eggnog Flavored Milk	X			It is recommended that the use of flavored milks be limited due to high sugar content.
Evaporated Milk		X	Evaporated milk does not meet the definition of milk.	
Flavored Milk	X			It is recommended that the use of flavored milks be limited due to high sugar content.
Frozen Yogurt		X	Frozen yogurt does not meet the definition of milk.	
Goats Milk	X		Goat's milk must meet State standards for fluid milk to be creditable.	
Half and Half		X	Half and half does not meet the definition of milk.	
Hot Chocolate	X		Hot chocolate made with fluid milk is creditable. Credit the fluid milk portion only.	It is recommended that the use of flavored milks be limited due to high sugar content.
Ice Cream		X	To be credited, milk must be provided as fluid milk.	Ice cream contains 11–20 percent fat.
Ice Cream—low-fat (ice milk)		X	To be credited, milk must be provided as fluid milk.	Ice cream contains 2–6 percent fat.
Imitation Milk		X	Imitation milk does not meet the definition of milk.	
Milk and Fruit Drink	X		When milk is combined with a full-strength juice, either the fruit juice or milk may be credited as a snack component not both.	
Lactose-Reduced Milk or Low-fat (1%) Lactose free Milk	X			Persons who cannot digest lactose found in standard milk may be able to drink lactose-reduced milk.
Low-Fat Milk—1% or fat-free	X			Whole, reduced-fat, and nonfat milk provide equal amounts of the same nutrients. The difference is the fat content and therefore, the number of calories per serving.
Milkshakes—homemade, commercial	X		Milkshakes containing the minimum required quantity of fluid milk per serving for the appropriate age group are creditable. Only the fluid milk portion is creditable	

Milk				
Food Item	Creditable		Comments	Nutrition Information
	Yes	No		
Non-dairy beverages	X		Parents or guardians may request in writing non-dairy milk substitutions without providing a medical statement. The written request must identify the medical or other special dietary need that restricts the diet.	Non-dairy beverages 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.
Nonfat Milk—fat free, skim	X			Nonfat milk contains virtually no fat. Nonfat milk provides equal amounts of the same nutrients as whole, reduced fat and low-fat milk.
Nonfat Dry Milk—reconstituted		X	Nonfat dry milk may be used only in emergency situations where the availability of milk has been affected. Contact ISBE Nutrition Programs or sponsor for approval.	
Pudding		X	To be credited, milk must be provided as a serving of fluid milk, not cooked in cereals, puddings, cream sauces, or other foods.	
Pudding Pops		X	To be credited, milk must be provided as a serving of fluid milk, not cooked in cereals, puddings, cream sauces, or other foods.	
Reduced-Fat Milk—2%	X		Reduced-fat milk and whole milk are creditable for children 1 year up to 2 years of age. Not creditable for children 2 years and older.	Whole, reduced fat, low-fat, and skim milk provide equal amounts of the same nutrients. The difference is the fat content and therefore, the number of calories per serving.
Sherbet		X	Sherbet does not meet the definition of milk.	
Skim Milk—nonfat, fat-free	X		Skim or low-fat (1%) milk are creditable for children 2 years of age and older	Skim milk contains virtually no fat. Skim milk provides equal amounts of the same nutrients as whole, reduced-fat, and low-fat milk.
Sour Cream		X	Sour cream does not meet the definition of milk.	Sour cream is high in fat.
Soy Milk	X		Parents or guardians may request in writing non-dairy milk substitutions without providing a medical statement. The written request must identify the medical or other special dietary need that restricts the diet.	Non-dairy beverages 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.
UHT (Ultra-High Temperature) Milk	X		UHT milk is Grade A pasteurized milk heated to 280°F, then cooled. It can be stored without refrigeration until it is opened.	
Whole Milk	X		Allowed only for children 1 up to 2 years of age. Not creditable for children 2 years and older.	Whole milk contains 3.3 percent fat. Reduced-fat, low-fat, and skim milk provide equal amounts of the same nutrients with less fat.

Milk

Food Item	Creditable		Comments	Nutrition Information
	Yes	No		
Yogurt		X	Yogurt does not meet the definition of milk. Yogurt can be credited as a meat alternate. See <i>Yogurt</i> in the meat/meat alternate section.	Yogurt is a good source of calcium, phosphorus, and protein.

Infant Meal Pattern

Birth through 11 Months

Child and Adult Care Food Program

Illinois State Board of Education
 Nutrition Programs
 100 North First Street
 Springfield, Illinois 62777-0001
 800-545-7892

The Infant Meal Pattern lists the food to be offered infants from birth through 11 months. The infant meal must contain each of the following components in the amounts indicated for the appropriate age group in order to qualify for reimbursement.

Child care institutions and family day care home providers should:

- Work closely with parents to decide what foods to serve infants.
- Offer food with texture and consistency appropriate for the development of the infant
- Serve food during times consistent with the infant's eating habits. For example, lunch components may be served at two feedings between 12 noon and 2 p.m.
- Introduce solid food gradually to infants when developmentally ready and as instructed by the parent.

MEAL	FOOD COMPONENTS	AGE Birth through 3 Months	AGE 4 Through 7 Months	AGE 8 through 11 Months
Breakfast	Iron Fortified Infant Formula or Breast Milk ^{1,2}	4-6 fluid ounces	4-8 fluid ounces	6-8 fluid ounces
	Vegetable or Fruit (or both)			1-4 Tbsp
	Iron Fortified Infant Cereal		0-3 Tbsp (When developmentally ready)	2-4 Tbsp
Supplement/ Snack	Iron Fortified Infant Formula or Breast Milk ^{1,2}	4-6 fluid ounces	4-6 fluid ounces	2-4 fluid ounces OR
	Fruit Juice ³			2-4 fluid ounces
	Crackers ⁴ (When developmentally ready)			0-2 crackers
	Bread ⁴ (When developmentally ready)			0-1/2 slice
Lunch/Supper	Iron Fortified Infant Formula or Breast Milk ^{1,2}	4-6 fluid ounces	4-8 fluid ounces	6-8 fluid ounces
	Vegetable or Fruit (or Both)		0-3 Tbsp (When developmentally ready)	1-4 Tbsp
	Iron Fortified Infant Cereal		0-3 Tbsp (When developmentally ready)	2-4 Tbsp (And/or) ⁵
	Meat/Meat Alternate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meat, fish, poultry, egg yolk, cooked dry beans or peas OR • cheese OR • cottage cheese OR • cheese food or cheese spread 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-4 Tbsp • ½ -2 oz • 2-8 Tbsp • 1-4 oz

¹Breast milk, formula, or portions of both, may be served; however, it is recommended breast milk be served in place of Formula from birth through 11 months.

²For some breastfed infants who regularly consume less than the minimum amount of breast milk per feeding, a serving of less than the minimum amount of breast milk may be offered with additional breast milk offered if the infant is still hungry.

³Fruit juice shall be 100 percent or full-strength.

⁴Bread and bread alternates shall be made from whole-grain or enriched meal or flour.

⁵Age 8 through 11 months, Iron fortified infant cereal may be served and/or a meat/meat alternate.

Required Guidelines for Infant Meals

Responsibilities of the Child Care Providers—All child care providers participating in the Child and Adult Care Food Program must provide all the infant components appropriate for the age of the infant according to the Infant Meal Pattern. This includes:

- At least one iron-fortified infant formula which meets the definition of infant formula. It is recommended the child care provider select an infant formula that satisfies the needs of one or more of the infants in your care.
- Iron-fortified dry infant cereal.

The child care provider must feed the infant themselves to receive reimbursement. When a parent comes to the child care institution/home to feed the infant, the meal cannot be claimed for reimbursement.



Infants birth through 11 months of age **must** be offered food from the Infant Meal Pattern. When they reach 12 months of age, follow the Meal Pattern for Children 1 through 12 years of age.

Infant Formula—Offer any iron-fortified infant formula, milk-based or soy-based, intended solely as a food for normal, healthy infants served in a liquid state according to manufacturer's recommended dilution. An infant's meal containing **only** formula, as specified on the Infant Meal Pattern, can be claimed for reimbursement, regardless of who purchases the formula.

To claim the meals when the formula is provided by the parent/guardian, an *Infant Formula/Food Waiver Notification* form signed by the parent/guardian must be on file. Refer to the Solid Infant Foods section when an infant becomes developmentally ready for other foods.

Breast Milk—The decision whether to breast-feed an infant is up to the infant's mother. Parents may elect to decline the offered infant formula and supply their own breast milk. This must be documented on the *Infant Formula/Food Waiver Notification*.

An infant's meal containing **only** breast milk (expressed by the mother), as specified on the Infant Meal Pattern, can be claimed for reimbursement. It is acceptable to serve the infant less than the stated minimum portion of breast milk. If the full portion is not initially offered and the infant drinks all of it, additional breast milk must be offered if the infant is still hungry.

A meal served to an infant that contains a portion of breast milk and an additional amount of infant formula is reimbursable as long as the total number of ounces offered to the infant meets, or exceeds, the minimum amount for breast milk/formula as specified on the Infant Meal Pattern.

Developmentally Ready—An infant's developmental readiness determines which foods should be fed, what texture the foods should be, and which feeding style to use. All infants develop at their own rate. Although age and size often correspond with developmental readiness, these should not be used as sole considerations for deciding what and how to feed infants. It is important to be aware of infants rapidly developing mouth abilities and hand and body control so you know the appropriate food and texture to serve them at each stage of their development. On the Infant Meal Pattern for 4 through 11 months of age, you will see foods listed under the

category *When Developmentally Ready*. If an infant is developmentally ready, you must offer these foods to the infant.

Infant Cereal—Any iron-fortified dry cereal specially formulated for and generally recognized as cereal for infants that is routinely mixed with breast milk or iron-fortified infant formula prior to consumption.

Solid Infant Foods—The decision to begin offering infant solid foods should be made by the infant's doctor and parent/guardian. When the infant is 4 through 7 months of age and developmentally ready for solid foods, those foods listed on the Infant Meal Pattern under *When Developmentally Ready* must be served to the infant. Infants 8 through 11 months of age are able to eat a wider variety of solid foods as listed on the Infant Meal Pattern. If a parent brings in solid foods for their infant, the meal can be claimed **only** when the meal meets the Infant Meal Pattern requirements and the child care provider purchases and serves at least one of the components according to the Infant Meal Pattern.

A child care provider may puree/grind regular food to the appropriate consistency for infants. However, a child care center must meet food service sanitation requirements to prepare infant food. If commercial baby food is purchased, it must meet the specified requirements. See the following section on *Commercial Baby Food*.

Infant Formula/Food Waiver Notification—The *Infant Formula/Food Waiver Notification*, which follows in this document, lets the parent know the specific brand of iron-fortified infant formula and types of baby food purchased by the child care institution. The notification provides official documentation of the parent's decision to accept and decline the infant formula, infant cereal, and/or baby food offered by the child care provider. For child care institutions, this document must be completed and signed by the parent and kept on file for **all** infants.

The day care home provider will use a waiver as instructed by the sponsoring organization. The day care home provider must have the parent complete and sign the waiver when the parent is providing their own formula/breast milk or infant food.

Medical Statement—If the parent provides an infant formula that does not meet the USDA definition of infant formula such as, infant formula labeled *low-iron* or those specifically formulated for infants with inborn errors of metabolism or digestive or absorptive problems do not meet the infant meal pattern requirement or if the parent wants the infant to receive cow's milk before one year of age, a medical statement signed by a physician is required in order to receive reimbursement. The medical statement must be kept on file. *The Medical Exception Statement for Food Substitutions* can be found on our website.

For more information, refer to [Feeding Infants, A Guide for Use in the Child Nutrition Programs](#) (FNS-258) publication.

Commercial Baby Foods

Combination Baby Food Dinners—Combination baby food dinners are not reimbursable in the infant meal pattern because the actual amount of various food components in the dinners is difficult to determine. Combination baby food dinners generally have less nutritional value by weight than single ingredient meats, vegetables, or fruits.

Grains and Breads—The only grain/bread products included in the Infant Meal Pattern are infant cereal, crusty bread, and cracker-type products. The Grains/Breads Chart for children ages 1 through 12 years is not applicable for infants because they may contain ingredients which could cause allergies or choking. Since infants develop their eating, chewing, and swallowing skills slowly, infants should be gradually introduced to a variety of foods during the first year of life. The bread and cracker-type products made from whole-grain or enriched meal or flour should not contain nuts, seeds, or hard pieces of whole-grain kernels. The products must be appropriate for an infant's development, and suitable for an infant to consume as finger food. The best way to serve breads to infants is to cut into small, thin strips to reduce the chance of choking.

Ready-to-eat breakfast cereal (cold dry) and cooked cereal (oatmeal and farina) are not considered *iron-fortified, dry infant cereal*.

Fruits and Vegetables—Child care providers should carefully read the ingredient listing on commercial baby fruits and vegetables. Fruit or vegetable must be the first ingredient on the jar label. Some brands of commercial baby fruits and vegetables contain food starch, tapioca, cheese, or rice with water listed as the first ingredient. Remember, if a label states the first ingredient is water, then the product is not reimbursable.

Citrus fruits and juices should not be introduced to infants before six months of age. These foods may cause allergic reactions.

Honey—Do not serve honey, including that cooked or baked in products such as honey graham crackers, to infants less than one year of age. Honey may contain clostridium botulinum spores, which can be extremely harmful to infants.

Introducing New Foods—Before giving an infant a new food, check with the parents to be certain the infant has been offered the food previously and had no reaction to the food. If the child is allergic to certain food(s) which prevents the child care provider from meeting the meal pattern, have a *Medical Exception Statement for Food Substitutions* completed by a medical physician and keep on file.

Non-Reimbursable Foods—Non-reimbursable foods can be served to infants but cannot be counted towards meeting the meal pattern requirement. Remember, these food items would be fed as an additional food along with the required components for the specific meal.

Refer to [Feeding Infants, A Guide for Use in the Child Nutrition Programs](#) (FNS-258) publication). If you have a question regarding the crediting of a particular item not listed here, contact ISBE or your sponsor for information.

The chart below is a useful tool to determine when an infant's meal is reimbursable. Not all infant meals can be claimed for reimbursement, it depends on who is providing the infant formula/food and the age and development of the infant.

Are These Infant Meals Reimbursable?	Infant 0 through 3 months	Infant 4 through 7 months—drinking only formula/breast milk, NOT developmentally ready for solid foods	Infant 4 through 7 months—developmentally ready for solid foods	Infant 8 through 11 months—drinking only formula/breast milk, NOT developmentally ready for solid foods	Infant 8 through 11 months—developmentally ready for solid foods
Infant receives <u>center/home</u> purchased iron-fortified infant formula and <u>center/home</u> purchased baby food.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes—must have <i>Medical Exception Statement</i> on file since infant cannot eat solid foods.	Yes
Infant receives <u>center/home</u> purchased iron-fortified infant formula and <u>parent</u> provided baby food.	Yes ¹	Yes ¹	Yes ¹ —center/home provides at least one of the required components.	Yes ¹ —must have <i>Medical Exception Statement</i> on file since infant cannot eat solid foods.	Yes ¹ —center/home provides at least one of the required components.
Infant receives <u>parent</u> provided iron-fortified infant formula/breast milk and <u>center/home</u> provided baby food.	Yes ¹	Yes ¹	Yes ¹ —center/home provides at least one of the required components.	Yes ¹ —must have <i>Medical Exception Statement</i> on file since infant cannot eat solid foods.	Yes ¹ —center/home provides at least one of the required components.
Infant receives <u>parent</u> provided iron-fortified infant formula/breast milk and <u>parent</u> provided baby food	Yes ¹	Yes ¹	No, center/home did not provide at least one of the required components.	No—center/home did not provide at least one of the required components.	No—center/home did not provide at least one of the required food items.
Infant receives <u>parent</u> provided low-iron infant formula and <u>center/home</u> provided baby food.	Yes ¹ —must have <i>Medical Exception Statement</i> on file for low-iron formula.	Yes ¹ —must have <i>Medical Exception Statement</i> on file for low-iron formula.	Yes ¹ —must have <i>Medical Exception Statement</i> on file for low-iron formula.	Yes ¹ —must have <i>Medical Exception Statement</i> on file for low-iron formula and infant cannot eat solid foods.	Yes ¹ —must have <i>Medical Exception Statement</i> on file for low-iron formula.
Infant receives <u>parent</u> provided low iron-fortified infant formula and <u>parent</u> provided baby food.	Yes ¹ —must have <i>Medical Exception Statement</i> on file for low-iron formula.	Yes ¹ —must have <i>Medical Exception Statement</i> on file for low-iron formula.	No—center/home did not provide at least one of the required components.	Yes ¹ —must have <i>Medical Exception Statement</i> on file since infant cannot eat solid foods.	No—center/home did not provide at least one of the required components.

¹Day care home parents must complete and sign the *Infant Formula/Food Notification Waiver* when the parent is providing the formula/breast milk/food as indicated.

Special Note: All child care institutions must have an *Infant Formula/Food Waiver Notification* on file for all infants in their care.

The following lists only infant foods about which crediting inquiries are often made or foods that are often credited incorrectly. Use of product brand names does not constitute ISBE approval or endorsement. Product names are used solely for clarification.

Infant				
Food Item	Creditable		Comments	Nutrition Information
	Yes	No		
Bread	X		Bread, including dry bread, toast, biscuits, bagels, English muffins, pita bread, rolls, and soft tortillas, are creditable as supplements for infants 8–11 months of age. Bread must be made from whole-grain, bran, germ, and/or enriched meal or flour to be creditable. Bread should not contain nuts, seeds, or hard pieces of whole grain kernels.	
Breast Milk—expressed	X		Breast milk is a creditable meal component for infants from birth through 11 months of age and may continue to be offered to children 12 months of age and older.	Breast milk is the best food for infants; it provides energy and all important nutrients in appropriate amounts for infants.
Cereal—adult		X	“Adult” cereals, including oatmeal and farina, are not creditable for infants. Other non-creditable infant cereals include dry ready to eat cereals.	Iron and other nutrients in adult cereals are provided to meet the needs of older children and adults rather than infants. Raisins and nuts in adult cereals may cause choking.
Cereal—infant with fruit		X	It is difficult to determine the amount of cereal and fruit.	
Cereal—iron-fortified infant	X		Iron-fortified dry cereals specially formulated and recognized for infants are creditable.	The iron in iron-fortified infant cereals is designed to be easily absorbed by infants.
Cheese—natural cheese, cottage cheese, cheese food, cheese spread	X		Natural cheese, cottage cheese, cheese food, and cheese spread are creditable when served at lunch or supper to infants 8–11 months of age.	
Chocolate		X	Chocolate should not be served to infants less than one year of age as it may cause allergic reactions.	
Citrus Fruits and Juices	X			Should not be introduced to infants before 6 months of age; may cause allergic reaction.
Combination Dinners/Foods—commercial baby food		X	The amount of each component in combination meals is difficult to determine. After measuring the appropriate amount of each item, plain meats may be mixed with vegetables.	Commercial combination baby food dinners/foods have less nutritional value by weight than single ingredient foods.

Infant				
Food Item	Creditable		Comments	Nutrition Information
	Yes	No		
Crackers/Wafers	X		Crackers, including saltine, snack, or matzo crackers; animal crackers; graham crackers; and vanilla wafers may be credited as snack only when served to developmentally ready infants 8–11 months of age. Crackers must be made from whole-grain, bran, germ, and/or enriched meal or flour. Crackers should not contain nuts, seeds, hard pieces of whole grain kernels, or honey.	Bread and bread alternatives shall be made from whole grain or enriched meal or flour. Only plain wafers are considered creditable.
Desserts—baby food		X		Desserts may be high in sugar and/or fat and often contain less of the key nutrients needed by infants, even if fruit is listed first on the ingredient label.
Egg White		X	Egg whites should not be served to infants less than one year of age because they may cause allergic reactions.	
Egg Yolk	X		Egg yolk is creditable when served at lunch or supper to 8–11 month old infants. Commercial baby food egg yolk or properly cooked and prepared (pureed or mashed) egg yolk may be served.	
Fish or Seafood		X	Canned with bones, breaded, or battered.	
Fish Sticks		X	Fish sticks and other commercial breaded or battered fish or seafood products are not intended for infant consumption. These foods may cause choking.	
Formula—follow-up	X		Follow-up formulas are designed for older infants or toddlers consuming solid foods. Follow-up formulas are creditable when served to infants 6 months of age or older. Follow-up formulas are not creditable when served to infants less than 6 months of age, except when served as substitutions supported by a <i>Medical Exception Statement</i> .	
Formula—iron-fortified or with iron	X		Iron-fortified infant formulas, including soy-based formulas, may be served. Iron-fortified formula recommended by the infant's health care provider should be served. 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 not be used.	Iron-fortified infant formula contains 1 milligram or more of iron in a quantity of product that supplies 100 kilo-calories when prepared in accordance with label directions for infant consumption. The amount of iron in a product is specified on the label.

Infant				
Food Item	Creditable		Comments	Nutrition Information
	Yes	No		
Formula—low iron		X	Only iron-fortified infant formula is creditable. If low-iron formula is required, a <i>Medical Exception Statement for Food Substitution</i> must be on file.	Low-iron infant formulas contain less than 1 milligram of iron per 100 kilo-calories of formula. Infants need to receive an adequate amount of iron in the first year to maintain health.
Formula—powdered	X			
Fruit	X		Raw fruits may cause choking if not prepared (cooked, if necessary, and/or pureed or mashed) to the appropriate texture for an infant. Plain commercial baby food fruits are creditable when served at lunch or supper to infants 4–7 months of age or when served at breakfast, lunch or supper to infants 8–11 months of age.	
Fruit and Vegetable Juice Blend		X	Fruit and vegetable juice blends are not creditable for infants. Only 100 percent fruit juices are creditable for infants.	
Fruit Drink		X	Fruit drinks are not creditable. Juices must be 100 percent fruit juice to be credited.	Fruit drinks are high in sugar.
Fruit Juice	X		Full-strength (100 percent) fruit juice, including infant and adult varieties, is creditable when served to infants when they are ready to drink the juice from a cup.	Choose juices that are fortified with vitamin C.
Fruit Punch		X	Fruit punch is not creditable.	Fruit punch is high in sugar.
Home-Canned Infant Foods		X	Home-canned infant foods should not be served due to the risk of food-borne illness.	
Honey		X	Honey (including that cooked or baked in products such as honey graham crackers) should not be served to infants less than one year of age. Honey is sometimes contaminated with <i>Clostridium botulinum</i> spores. If these spores are ingested by a baby, they can produce a toxin which may cause severe food-borne illness called infant botulism.	
Hot Dogs—frankfurters		X	Hot dogs are not intended for infant consumption. Hot dogs may cause choking.	
Juice	—	—	See <i>Fruit and Vegetable Juice Blend, Fruit Juice, or Vegetable Juice</i> in this section.	
Legumes—dry or canned beans and peas	X		Cooked dry beans and dry peas are creditable when served at lunch or supper to infants 8–11 months of age. Dried or canned legumes should be prepared (mashed or pureed) to the appropriate texture for infants. Whole cooked legumes may cause choking in infants.	

Infant				
Food Item	Creditable		Comments	Nutrition Information
	Yes	No		
Meat	X		Plain commercial baby food meats are creditable when served at lunch or supper to infants 8–11 months of age. Fresh or frozen meats should be cooked thoroughly and then prepared (pureed, ground, or finely chopped) to the appropriate texture for infants.	
Meat Sticks—finger sticks, miniature hot dogs		X	Meat sticks are not intended for infant consumption. Meat sticks may cause choking.	
Milk—low-fat (1%, light)		X	Low-fat milk is not creditable for infants.	Low-fat milk should not be served to infants. Babies need adequate amounts of fat for normal growth and development.
Milk—nonfat (fat-free or skim)		X	Nonfat milk is not creditable for infants.	Nonfat milk should not be served to infants. Babies need adequate amounts of fat for normal growth and development.
Milk—reduced fat (2%)		X	Reduced-fat milk is not creditable for infants.	Reduced-fat milk should not be served to infants. Babies need adequate amounts of fat for normal growth and development.
Milk—whole		X	Whole cow's milk is not creditable for infants.	Whole milk, unlike breast milk and formula, does not contain all nutrients needed for an infant's growth and development. Also, whole milk can place stress on an infant's kidneys, cause allergic reactions, and cause blood loss through the intestines which can lead to iron deficiency anemia.
Nuts		X	Nuts, seeds, and nut and/or seed butters may cause choking or an allergic reaction and should never be served to infants.	
Peanut Butter		X	Peanut butter should not be served to children less than one year of age because it may cause choking or an allergic reaction.	
Pudding		X		
Sausage		X		
Seafood		X	See <i>Fish or Seafood</i> in this section.	
Shellfish		X	Shellfish may cause allergic reactions in infants less than one year old.	
Soy Formula	X		See <i>Formula, Iron-Fortified, or With Iron</i> in this section.	
Teething Biscuits	X			

Infant

Food Item	Creditable		Comments	Nutrition Information
	Yes	No		
Vegetables	X		Plain commercial baby food vegetables are creditable when served to infants 4–7 months of age at lunch or supper and infants 8–11 months of age at breakfast, lunch, or supper. Fresh or frozen vegetables should be cooked and then prepared (pureed or mashed) to the appropriate texture for infants. Raw vegetables are not recommended for infants because they may cause choking.	
Vegetable Juice		X	Vegetable juice is not creditable for infants.	
Yogurt		X	Yogurt is not creditable for infants.	
Zwieback	X			