

Noncreditable Foods for Grades K-12 in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program

This information applies to the meal patterns for grades K-12 in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), and Seamless Summer Option (SSO) of the NSLP. For information on the meal pattern requirements and crediting foods for grades K-12, see the CSDE's guide, [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12](#), and visit the CSDE's [Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs](#) and [Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpages. For more information on the ASP meal patterns, visit the CSDE's [ASP](#) webpage.



Noncreditable foods are foods and beverages that cannot credit in USDA's meal patterns for Child Nutrition Programs. They include foods and beverages in amounts too small to credit (i.e., less than the minimum creditable amount), and foods and beverages that do not belong to the meal pattern components. Examples include potato chips, pudding, ice cream, gelatin, cream cheese, bacon, condiments (e.g., syrup, jam, ketchup, mustard, mayonnaise, and butter), and water. The chart on page 2 lists additional examples of noncreditable foods for grades K-12. This list is not all-inclusive.

School food authorities (SFAs) may serve noncreditable foods in addition to the meal components to add variety, help improve acceptability in the meal, and satisfy appetites. Examples include maple syrup on pancakes, salad dressing on tossed greens, and condiments such as ketchup or mustard on sandwiches and other entrees.

To ensure that school meals meet children's nutritional needs, the CSDE encourages SFAs to use discretion when serving noncreditable foods. Noncreditable foods typically contain few nutrients and are higher in added sugars, saturated fats, and sodium. Menu planners should read labels, be aware of the ingredients in foods, and limit the frequency and amount of less nutritious choices.

Some noncreditable foods (such as candy, soda, coffee, tea, and sports drinks) cannot be sold in school nutrition programs due to federal or state requirements. For more information, see the CSDE's webpages, [Competitive Foods in Schools](#) and [Beverage Requirements](#).



Noncreditable Foods for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

Noncreditable foods offered as part of reimbursable meals for grades K-12 must count toward the weekly dietary specifications (nutrition standards) for school meals. They must contain zero trans fat and their inclusion cannot cause the menu to exceed the average weekly limits for calories, saturated fat, and sodium. For information on the dietary specifications, see section 6 of the CSDE’s *Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12*, and the “Dietary Specifications (Nutrition Standards for School Meals)” section of the CSDE’s *Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs* webpage.

Examples of noncreditable foods for grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP ¹

Almond milk ²	Fruit drink, fruit beverage, powdered fruit drink mix ³
Bacon and bacon bits	Fruit leathers
Banana chips	Fruit punch (not 100 percent juice) ³
Bran, e.g., oat bran, wheat bran, corn bran, rice bran, and rye bran	Fruit snacks, e.g., fruit roll-ups, wrinkles, and twists
Bread products that are not whole grain-rich (WGR)	Gelatin, regular and sugar free
Butter	Germ, e.g., wheat germ
Candy ³	Grain products that are not WGR or enriched ³
Candy-coated popcorn ³	Honey
Chili sauce	Hot chocolate ³
Chocolate milk-based drinks, e.g., Yoo-Hoo ³	Ice cream
Coffee (regular, decaffeinated, and iced) ³	Ice cream novelties
Commercial processed products without a Child Nutrition (CN) label or product formulation statement (PFS), e.g., entrees, smoothies, and breaded vegetables ⁴	Ice milk
Commercial smoothies that contain dietary or herbal supplements	Iced coffee ³
Condiments, e.g., ketchup, mustard, relish, barbecue sauce	Iced tea ³
Cranberry cocktail drink ³	Imitation cheese
Cream, half and half	Jam
Cream cheese	Jelly
Cream soups, canned, e.g., cream of mushroom, cream of celery, cream of broccoli	Ketchup
Dehydrated vegetables used for seasoning	Lemonade ³
Drinkable or squeezable yogurt ⁵	Limeade ³
Eggnog ³	Maple syrup
Egg whites	Margarine
Frozen yogurt ⁵	Marshmallows
	Mayonnaise
	Milk, low-fat (1%) flavored
	Milk, reduced fat (2%)
	Milk, whole
	Mustard
	Nectar drinks ³

Noncreditable Foods for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

Examples of noncreditable foods for grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP ¹, *continued*

Nondairy milk that does not meet the USDA's nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes ²	Sour cream
Pickle relish	Soy milk that does not meet the USDA's nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes ²
Popsicles (not 100 percent juice)	Sports drinks, regular and diet ³
Potato chips	Spreadable fruit
Probiotic dairy drinks	Syrup
Pudding	Tea (regular, herbal, and iced) ³
Pudding pops	Tofu with less than 5 grams of protein in 2.2 ounces (weight) or 1/4 cup (volume) ⁶
Rice milk ²	Water ⁷
Salad dressings	
Sherbet	
Soda, regular and diet ³	
Soups, non-vegetable (canned or frozen), e.g., beef barley, beef noodle, turkey or chicken noodle, and turkey or chicken rice	

- ¹ Snack foods sold a la carte must meet the [Connecticut Nutrition Standards](#) (which apply to public school districts that participate in the healthy food option of [Healthy Food Certification \(HFC\)](#)) or the USDA's [Smart Snacks](#) nutrition standards (which apply to public school districts that do not participate in the healthy food option of HFC, and to private schools and residential child care institutions).
- ² Milk substitutes must meet the USDA's nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes. For more information, see the CSDE's handout, [Allowable Milk Substitutes for Children without Disabilities in School Nutrition Programs](#).
- ³ These competitive foods and beverages cannot be sold to students due to federal or state requirements. For more information, visit the CSDE's webpages, [Competitive Foods in Schools](#) and [Beverage Requirements](#) webpages.
- ⁴ Commercial products without a CN label or PFS cannot credit in CACFP meals and snacks. For more information, see the CSDE's handouts, [Using Child Nutrition \(CN\) Labels in the CACFP](#), [Using Product Formulation Statements in the CACFP](#), and [Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the CACFP](#); and visit the "Crediting Commercial Processed Products in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers" section of the CSDE's CACFP webpage.
- ⁵ For more information, see the CSDE's handout, [Crediting Yogurt for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP](#).
- ⁶ For more information, see the CSDE's handout, [Crediting Tofu and Tofu Products in the NSLP and SBP](#).
- ⁷ The [Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act \(HHFKA\)](#) requires that schools make drinking water available to children at no charge where meals are served during the meal service (including the ASP). However, SFAs cannot promote or offer water or any other beverage as an alternative selection to fluid milk throughout the food service area. For more information, see [USDA Memo SP 49-2016 and CACFP 18-2016: Resources for Making Potable Water Available in Schools and Child Care Facilities](#) and [USDA Memo SP 19-2018: Clarification on the Milk and Water Requirements in the School Meal Programs](#).

Noncreditable Foods for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

Resources

Allowable Milk Substitutes for Children without Disabilities (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/SpecDiet/MilkSubstitutesSNP.pdf>

Beverage Requirements (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Beverage-Requirements>

Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalent for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/GrainCalculationSNPgradesK-12.pdf>

Child Nutrition (CN) Labeling Program (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CNlabel.pdf>

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschool and Grades K-12 in the ASP:

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/ASP/ASPComparisonPreschoolK12.pdf>

Competitive Foods in Schools (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Competitive-Foods>

Connecticut Nutrition Standards (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Connecticut-Nutrition-Standards>

Crediting Commercial Meat/Meat Alternate Products in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CreditCommercialMMASNP.pdf>

Crediting Deli Meats in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CreditDeliSNP.pdf>

Crediting Enriched Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CreditEnrichedGrainsSNP.pdf>

Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-School-Nutrition-Programs>

Crediting Tofu and Tofu Products in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CreditTofuSNP.pdf>

Crediting Whole Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CreditWholeGrainsSNP.pdf>

Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/food-buying-guide-for-child-nutrition-programs>

Guide to Competitive Foods in HFC Public Schools (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CompFoods/CompetitiveFoodsGuideHFC.pdf>

Noncreditable Foods for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

Guide to Competitive Foods in Non-HFC Public Schools (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CompFoods/CompetitiveFoodsGuideNonHFC.pdf>

Guide to Competitive Foods in Private Schools and Residential Child Care Institutions (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CompFoods/CompetitiveFoodsGuidePrivateRCCI.pdf>

Healthy Food Certification (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Healthy-Food-Certification>

Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/healthy-hunger-free-kids-act>

List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/List-of-Acceptable-Foods-and-Beverages>

Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Patterns-School-Nutrition-Programs>

Menu Planning for Child Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Menu-Planning>

Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Menu-Planning-Guide-for-School-Meals>

Menu Planning Resources for School Meals (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/MealPattern/MenuPlanResourcesSchools.pdf>

Smart Snacks Nutrition Standards (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Smart-Snacks-Nutrition-Standards>

USDA Memo SP 19-2018: Clarification on the Milk and Water Requirements in the School Meal Programs.

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Memos/OM2018/SP19-2018s.pdf>

USDA Memo SP 49-2016 and CACFP 18-2016: Resources for Making Potable Water Available in Schools and Child Care Facilities:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/resources-making-potable-water-available-schools-and-child-care-facilities-0>

Whole Grain-rich Criteria for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/WGRCriteriaSNPgradesK-12.pdf>

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For more information, review the CSDE's guide, *Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12*, and visit the CSDE's [Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs](#) and [Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpages, or contact the [school nutrition programs staff](#) in the CSDE's Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841.

This document is available at <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/NoncreditableFoodsSNPgradesK-12.pdf>.

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