

Noncreditable Foods for Preschoolers in National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program

This guidance applies to the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) meal patterns for preschoolers (ages 1-4) in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), Seamless Summer Option (SSO) of the NSLP, and Afterschool Snack Program (ASP) of the NSLP. The SSO follows the NSLP and SBP preschool meal patterns. The requirements for the preschool meal patterns are the same as the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), and are defined by the USDA’s final rule, *Child and Adult Care Food Program: Meal Pattern Revisions Related to the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010*.

For information on the preschool meal patterns and crediting foods, refer to the CSDE’s guide, *Menu Planning Guide for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP*, and visit the CSDE’s [Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.



Noncreditable foods are foods and beverages that cannot credit in the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) 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 preschool meals and ASP snacks. 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 preschool meals and ASP snacks 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, refer to the CSDE’s competitive foods guides (*Guide to Competitive Foods in HFC Public Schools*, *Guide to Competitive Foods in Non-HFC Public Schools*, and *Guide to Competitive Foods in Private Schools and Residential Child Care Institutions*) and visit the CSDE’s [Competitive Foods](#) webpage and [Beverage Requirements](#) webpage.

Noncreditable Foods for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP

Examples of noncreditable foods for preschoolers (ages 1-4) ¹

| | |
|--|---|
| Almond milk ² | Rice milk ² |
| Bacon (pork) | Salad dressings |
| Bacon bits, regular or imitation | Scones, sweet, e.g., blueberry, raisin, or orange cranberry ⁵ |
| Banana chips | Gelatin, regular and sugar free |
| Bread products that are not whole grain or enriched ³ | Grain-based desserts, e.g., cookies, sweet pie crusts, doughnuts, cereal bars, granola bars, sweet rolls, pastries, toaster pastries, cake, and brownies ⁵ |
| Breakfast cereals (ready-to-eat and cooked) with more than 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce ⁴ | Grains that are not whole or enriched ³ |
| Brownies ⁵ | Granola bars ⁵ |
| Butter | Home-canned products, e.g., vegetables and fruits |
| Cake ⁵ | Honey |
| Candy ⁶ | Hot chocolate ⁵ |
| Candy-coated popcorn ⁶ | Ice cream |
| Chocolate milk-based drinks, e.g., Yoo-Hoo ⁶ | Ice cream novelties |
| Cereal bars ⁵ | Ice milk |
| Cinnamon buns or rolls ⁵ | Iced coffee ⁶ |
| Coconut flour | Iced tea ⁶ |
| Coconut milk | Jam and jelly |
| Coffee (regular, decaffeinated, and iced) ⁶ | Lemonade ⁶ |
| Commercial processed products without a Child Nutrition (CN) label or product formulation statement (PFS), e.g., entrees, smoothies, and breaded vegetables ⁷ | Limeade ⁶ |
| Commercial smoothies that contain dietary or herbal supplements | Liquid egg substitutes |
| Condiments, e.g., ketchup, mustard, relish, and barbecue sauce | Maple syrup |
| Cookies ⁵ , except for animal crackers and graham crackers | Margarine |
| Cranberry cocktail drink ⁶ | Marshmallows |
| Cream, half and half | Mayonnaise |
| Cream cheese | Mustard |
| Drinkable or squeezable yogurt ⁸ | Milk for age 1: Plain or flavored reduced fat (2%), plain or flavored low-fat (1%), and plain or flavored fat-free |
| Eggnog ⁶ | Milk for ages 2-5: Plain or flavored whole, plain or flavored reduced fat (2%), and flavored low-fat (1%) |
| Egg whites | Nondairy milk that does not meet the USDA's nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes ² |
| Frozen yogurt ⁸ | Nutrition supplement beverages, e.g., Abbott's Pediasure |
| Fruit drink, fruit beverage, powdered fruit drink mix ⁶ | Pastries ⁵ |
| Fruit leathers (100 percent fruit) | Pie ⁵ |
| Fruit punch (not 100 percent juice) ⁶ | Popsicles (not 100 percent juice) |
| Fruit snacks, e.g., fruit roll-ups, wrinkles, twists | |

Noncreditable Foods for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP

Examples of noncreditable foods for preschoolers (ages 1-4) ¹, *continued*

| | |
|--|---|
| Potato chips | Sports drinks, regular and diet ⁶ |
| Powdered milk beverages | Sweet rolls ⁵ |
| Probiotic dairy drinks | Syrup |
| Pudding | Tea, regular, herbal, and iced ⁶ |
| Pudding pops | Toaster pastries ⁵ |
| Puffs, fruit and vegetable | Tofu with less than 5 grams of protein in 2.2 ounces (weight) or ¼ cup (volume) ⁹ |
| Salt pork | Water ¹⁰ |
| Scrapple | Yogurt or soy yogurt in commercial smoothies ⁷ |
| Sherbet | Yogurt or soy yogurt with more than more than 3.83 grams of total sugars per ounce ⁸ |
| Soda, regular and diet ⁶ | Yogurt products, e.g., drinkable or squeezable yogurt, frozen yogurt, yogurt bars, and yogurt-covered fruits and nuts |
| Soups, cream of vegetable, e.g., cream of broccoli, cream of mushroom, and cream of celery | |
| Soups, non-vegetable, e.g., beef barley, beef noodle, turkey or chicken noodle, and turkey or chicken rice | |
| Sour cream | |
| Soy milk that does not meet the USDA's nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes ² | |

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 (refer to the CSDE's resource, [Allowable Milk Substitutes for Children without Disabilities in School Nutrition Programs](#)).

³ For more information, refer to the CSDE's resources, [How to Identify Creditable Grains for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP](#) and the CSDE's guide for the CACFP, [Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the CACFP](#).

⁴ For more information, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Crediting Breakfast Cereals for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP](#).

⁵ These items are grain-based desserts and cannot credit in the preschool meal patterns. For more information, refer to the USDA's webpage, [Grain-based Desserts in the CACFP](#):

⁶ These competitive foods and beverages cannot be sold in the USDA's school nutrition programs due to federal or state requirements. For more information, visit the CSDE's [Competitive Foods](#) webpage and [Beverage Requirements](#) webpage.

⁷ Commercial products without a CN label or PFS cannot credit in preschool meals and snacks. For more information, refer to the CSDE's resources, [Product Formulation Statements](#) and [Child Nutrition \(CN\) Labeling Program](#), and [Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the NSLP and SBP](#); and visit the "Crediting Commercial Processed Products in Preschool Menus" section of the CSDE's [Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

⁸ Refer to the CSDE's resource, [Crediting Yogurt for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP](#).

⁹ Refer to the CSDE's resource, [Crediting Tofu and Tofu Products in the NSLP and SBP](#).

¹⁰ Schools must 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 Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP

Resources

Afterschool Snack Program Handbook (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/ASP/ASP_Handbook.pdf

Afterschool Snack Program Meal Pattern for Preschoolers (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/ASP/Meal_Pattern_ASP_Preschool.pdf

Allowable Milk Substitutes for Children without Disabilities in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/SpecDiet/Milk_Substitutes_SNP.pdf

Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/Grain_Calculation_SNP_preschool.pdf

Child Nutrition (CN) Labeling Program (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CN_Labeling_Program.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 Breakfast Cereals for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/Credit_Cereals_SNP_preschool.pdf

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

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/Credit_Commercial_MMA_SNP.pdf

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

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/Credit_Deli_SNP.pdf

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

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/Credit_Enriched_Grains_SNP.pdf

Crediting Foods in Preschool Menus (CSDE webpage):

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

Crediting Summary Charts for the Preschool Meal Patterns of the School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/Crediting/Crediting_Summary_Charts_SNP_Preschool.pdf

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

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/Credit_Tofu_SNP.pdf

Noncreditable Foods for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP

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

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/Credit_Whole_Grains_SNP.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/Competitive_Foods_Guide_HFC.pdf

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

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CompFoods/Competitive_Foods_Guide_NonHFC.pdf

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

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CompFoods/Competitive_Foods_Guide_Private_RCCI.pdf

Healthy Food Certification (CSDE webpage):

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

How to Identify Creditable Grains for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP:

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/Identify_Creditable_Grains_Preschool.pdf

List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages (CSDE webpage):

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

Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):

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

Menu Planning Guide for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Preschool/Menu_Planning_Guide_Preschool.pdf

Resources for the Preschool Meal Patterns (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Preschool/Resources_Preschool_Meal_Patterns.pdf

USDA Final Rule (81 FR 24347): CACFP Meal Pattern Revisions Related to the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/fr-042516>

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>

Noncreditable Foods for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP



For more information, refer to the CSDE's *Menu Planning Guide for the NSLP and SBP Preschool Meal Patterns* and visit the CSDE's [Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage, or contact the [school nutrition programs staff](#) at the Connecticut State Department of Education, School Health, Nutrition and Family Services, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841.

This document is available at https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/Noncreditable_Foods_SNP_preschool.pdf.

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Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
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Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
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