

Noncreditable Foods in the Meal Patterns for the Summer Food Service Program

This guidance applies to meals and snacks served in the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). For information on the SFSP meal patterns, visit the “[Meal Patterns](#)” section of the Connecticut State Department of Education’s (CSDE) SFSP webpage. For information on the crediting requirements, visit the CSDE’s [Crediting Foods in the Summer Food Service Program](#) webpage and [Crediting Documentation for the Child Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.



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Noncreditable Foods in the Meal Patterns for the Summer Food Service Program

Definition of Noncreditable Foods

Noncreditable foods are foods and beverages that do not count toward the meal components for reimbursable meals and snacks in the SFSP meal patterns. Noncreditable foods include the two categories below.

1. **Foods and beverages served in amounts too small to credit:** These are foods and beverages that are less than the minimum creditable amount for each meal component, such as 1 tablespoon of applesauce or $\frac{1}{8}$ ounce of cheese. The minimum creditable amounts are $\frac{1}{4}$ serving for the grains/breads component and MMA component, $\frac{1}{8}$ cup for the vegetables/fruits component, and 1 cup for the milk component, except for smoothies. The minimum creditable amount of milk in smoothies is $\frac{1}{4}$ cup.
2. **Foods and beverages that do not belong to any meal component:** These are foods and beverages that do not meet the crediting requirements for any meal component (meats/meat alternates (MMA), grains/breads, vegetables/fruits, and milk). Some examples include potato chips, pudding, ice cream, gelatin, cream cheese, bacon, condiments (e.g., syrup, jam, ketchup, mustard, mayonnaise, and butter), and water.

The "[Examples of Noncreditable Foods](#)" list in this document includes many examples of noncreditable foods for the FSFP meal patterns. This list is not all-inclusive.

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Requirements for Noncreditable Foods

Foods served in reimbursable meals and snacks must meet the [SFSP Meal Patterns](#). SFSP funds cannot be used to purchase noncreditable foods, except for condiments served with creditable foods. This requirement is addressed in [USDA Memo SP 06-2012: *Serving Additional Foods in the Summer Food Service Program*](#).

Condiments served in addition to the meal components can help add variety, improve acceptability in the meal, and satisfy appetites. For example, SFSP sponsors may use SFSP funds to purchase ketchup and mustard for sandwiches and other entrees, syrup for pancakes, and salad dressing for tossed greens; but cannot use SFSP funds to purchase pudding or potato chips.

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



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Additional Requirements for SFSP Sites Operated by School Food Authorities

Federal and state laws apply to SFSP sites operated by school food authorities (SFAs) when noncreditable foods are available for sale to children on school premises separately from reimbursable meals served through the USDA's Child Nutrition Programs (CNPs). The [state competitive foods regulations](#) also prohibit certain noncreditable foods from being given to students on school premises from 30 minutes before up through 30 minutes after the operation of any CNPs. All beverages available for sale to students as part of and separately from reimbursable meals and snacks in public schools must comply with the state beverage requirements of [Section 10-221q](#) of the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.).

The state and federal laws for competitive foods in schools are summarized in the CSDE's resources below.

- [Requirements for Competitive Foods in HFC Public Schools](#) (CSDE):
https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/hfc/requirements_competitive_foods_hfc.pdf
- [Requirements for Competitive Foods in Non-HFC Public Schools](#) (CSDE):
https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/hfc/requirements_competitive_foods_nonhfc.pdf
- [Requirements for Competitive Foods in Private Schools and Residential Child Care Institutions](#) (CSDE):
https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/hfc/requirements_competitive_foods_private_rcci.pdf

For more information, visit the CSDE's [Competitive Foods in Schools](#) webpage and [Beverage Requirements](#) webpage.

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Examples of Noncreditable Foods

The foods and beverages listed below do not credit in the SFSP meal patterns. This list is not all-inclusive. For additional guidance, refer to “[Menu Planning Notes](#)” in this document.

- Almond flour
- Almond milk ¹
- Alternate protein products (APPs) that do not meet the USDA requirements specified in [Appendix A of the SFSP regulations](#) (7 CFR 225)
- Bacon (pork)
- Bacon bits, regular or imitation
- Banana chips
- Bread products that are not whole grain, enriched, or contain a blend of creditable grains ²
- Breakfast cereals (ready-to-eat and cooked) that are not whole grain, whole grain-rich, enriched, or fortified ³
- Butter
- Candy
- Candy-coated popcorn
- Chili sauce
- Chocolate milk-based drinks, e.g., Yoo-Hoo
- Coconut flour
- Coconut milk
- Coffee (regular, decaffeinated, and iced)
- Commercial processed products without a Child Nutrition (CN) label or product formulation statement (PFS), e.g., entrees, smoothies, and breaded vegetables ⁴
- Commercial smoothies that contain dietary or herbal supplements
- Condiments, e.g., ketchup, mustard, relish, barbecue sauce
- Cranberry cocktail drink
- Cream, half and half
- Cream cheese
- Cream soups, canned, e.g., cream of mushroom, cream of celery, cream of broccoli
- Dehydrated vegetables used for seasoning
- Drinkable or squeezable yogurt and yogurt drinks ⁵

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- Eggnog
- Egg whites without the yolk
- Frozen yogurt
- Fruit drink, fruit beverage, powdered fruit drink mix
- Fruit leathers
- Fruit punch (not 100 percent juice)
- Fruit snacks, e.g., fruit roll-ups, wrinkles, and twists
- Gelatin, regular and sugar free
- Grain-based desserts at lunch and supper, e.g., cookies, granola bars, cakes, and pastries ⁷
- Grain products and recipes that are not whole grain, enriched, or a blend of creditable grains ²
- Home-canned products, e.g., vegetables and fruits
- Honey
- Hot chocolate
- Ice cream and ice cream novelties
- Ice milk
- Iced coffee
- Iced tea
- Imitation cheese
- Jam and jelly
- Ketchup
- Lemonade
- Limeade
- Liquid egg substitutes
- Maple syrup
- Margarine
- Marshmallows
- Mayonnaise
- Milk made from reconstituted milk powder unless approved for use by the CSDE based on the continuing unavailability of milk ([7 CFR 225.16\(f\)\(7\)](#))
- Mustard

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- Nectar drinks
- Nondairy milk substitutes, e.g., almond milk, rice milk, cashew milk, oat milk ¹
- Nutrition supplement beverages, e.g., Abbott's Pediasure
- Oat milk ¹
- Pickle relish
- Popsicles (not 100 percent juice)
- Potato chips
- Powdered milk beverages, e.g., Nestle's NIDO
- Probiotic dairy drinks
- Pudding
- Pudding pops
- Rice milk ¹
- Salad dressings
- Salt pork
- Scrapple
- Sherbet
- Soda, regular and diet
- Soups, commercial cream of vegetable, e.g., cream of broccoli, cream of mushroom, and cream of celery
- Soups, commercial non-vegetable, e.g., beef barley, beef noodle, turkey or chicken noodle, and turkey or chicken rice
- Sour cream
- Soy milk ¹
- Sports drinks, regular and diet
- Spreadable fruit
- Syrup
- Tea (regular, herbal, and iced)
- Tofu with less than 5 grams of protein in 2.2 ounces (weight) or ¼ cup (volume) ⁵
- Water
- Yogurt products, e.g., drinkable or squeezable yogurt, frozen yogurt, yogurt bars, and yogurt-covered fruits and nuts ⁶

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Menu Planning Notes

- ¹ **Applies only to SFSP sites operated by SFAs:** Nondairy milk substitutes credit only for children with a disability based on a medical statement from a recognized medical authority. For additional guidance, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Requirements for the Milk Component of the Summer Food Service Program Meal Patterns](#), and visit the "Milk Substitutes" section of the CSDE's Special Diets in School Nutrition Programs webpage. Training on the crediting requirements for the milk component is available in the CSDE's Summer Meals annual training module, [Crediting Foods in the Summer Food Service Program Meal Patterns Part 2: Milk Component](#).
- ² For guidance on creditable grains, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Requirements for the Grains/Breads Component of the Summer Food Service Program Meal Patterns](#). Training on the crediting requirements for the grains/breads component is available in the CSDE's Summer Meals annual training module, [Crediting Foods in the Summer Food Service Program Meal Patterns Part 4: Grains/Breads Component](#).
- ³ For guidance on creditable breakfast cereals, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the Summer Food Service Program](#).
- ⁴ Commercial processed products do not credit in SFSP meals and snacks unless they are listed in the USDA's [Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs](#) or have a CN label or PFS. The USDA requires that SFSP sponsors must verify PFS forms for accuracy prior to purchasing, serving, and claiming the food product in reimbursable meals and snacks. For information on crediting documentation, refer to the CSDE's resources, [Using Child Nutrition \(CN\) Labels in the Summer Food Service Program](#), [Using Product Formulation Statements in the Summer Food Service Program](#), and [Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the Summer Food Service Program](#). The USDA's guidance is provided in [USDA Memo SP 05-2025, CACFP 04-2025, and SFSP 02-2025: Guidance for Accepting Processed Product Documentation for Meal Pattern Requirements](#) and on the USDA's webpage, [Child Nutrition Programs: Tips for Evaluating a Manufacturer's Product Formulation Statement](#). Additional guidance is available on the CSDE's [Crediting Documentation for the Child Nutrition Programs](#) webpage. Training on the crediting documentation requirements is available in the CSDE's Summer Meals annual training module, [Crediting Documentation for Summer Meals](#). Training on the requirements for CN labels and PFS forms is available in [Module 8: Meal Pattern Documentation for Crediting Commercial Processed Products](#) of the CSDE's training program, *What's in a Meal: Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs*.

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- ⁵ For guidance on crediting tofu, refer to the CSDE's resource, [*Crediting Tofu and Tofu Products in the Summer Food Service Program*](#).
- ⁶ For guidance on crediting yogurt, refer to the CSDE's resource, [*Crediting Yogurt in the Summer Food Service Program*](#).
- ⁷ For guidance on crediting grain-based desserts, refer to the CSDE's resource, [*Crediting Grain-based Desserts in the Summer Food Service Program*](#)..

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Resources

[Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the Summer Food Service Program](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/crediting/sfspaccepting_processed_product_/documentation_sfsp.pdf) (CSDE):
https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/crediting/sfspaccepting_processed_product_/documentation_sfsp.pdf

[Child Nutrition Programs: Tips for Evaluating a Manufacturer's Product Formulation Statement](https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/labeling/tips-evaluating-pfs) (USDA webpage):
<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/labeling/tips-evaluating-pfs>

[Commercial Processed Products](https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/crediting-documentation-for-the-child-nutrition-programs#Commercial) (CSDE's Crediting Documentation for the Child Nutrition Program webpage):
<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/crediting-documentation-for-the-child-nutrition-programs#Commercial>

[Competitive Foods in Schools](https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/competitive-foods) (CSDE webpage):
<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/competitive-foods>

[Crediting Beans, Peas, and Lentils in the Summer Food Service Program](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nslp/crediting/credit_beans_peas_lentils_snp.pdf) (CSDE):
https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nslp/crediting/credit_beans_peas_lentils_snp.pdf

[Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the Summer Food Service Program](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/crediting/sfsp/credit_cereals_sfsp.pdf) (CSDE):
https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/crediting/sfsp/credit_cereals_sfsp.pdf

[Crediting Deli Meats in the Summer Food Service Program](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/crediting/sfsp/credit_deli_sfsp.pdf) (CSDE):
https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/crediting/sfsp/credit_deli_sfsp.pdf

[Crediting Documentation for the Child Nutrition Programs](https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/crediting-documentation-for-the-child-nutrition-programs) (CSDE webpage):
<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/crediting-documentation-for-the-child-nutrition-programs>

[Crediting Enriched Grains in the Summer Food Service Program](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/crediting/sfsp/credit_enriched_grains_sfsp.pdf) (CSDE):
https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/crediting/sfsp/credit_enriched_grains_sfsp.pdf

[Crediting Foods in the Summer Food Service Program](https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/crediting-foods-in-the-summer-food-service-program) (CSDE webpage):
<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/crediting-foods-in-the-summer-food-service-program>

[Crediting Grain-based Desserts in the Summer Food Service Program](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/crediting/sfsp/credit_grain_based_desserts_sfsp.pdf) (CSDE):
https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/crediting/sfsp/credit_grain_based_desserts_sfsp.pdf

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[Crediting Juices in the Summer Food Service Program](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/creditingfsfp/credit_juices_sfsp.pdf) (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/creditingfsfp/credit_juices_sfsp.pdf

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[Crediting Nuts and Seeds in the Summer Food Service Program](#) (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/creditingfsfp/credit_nuts_seeds_sfsp.pdf

[Crediting Smoothies in the Summer Food Service Program](#) (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/creditingfsfp/credit_smoothies_sfsp.pdf

[Crediting Summary Charts for the Summer Food Service Program Meal Patterns](#) (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/creditingfsfp/crediting_summary_charts_sfsp.pdf

[Crediting Tofu and Tofu Products in the Summer Food Service Program](#) (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/creditingfsfp/credit_tofu_sfsp.pdf

[Crediting Whole Grains in the Summer Food Service Program](#) (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/creditingfsfp/credit_whole_grains_sfsp.pdf

[Crediting Yogurt in the Summer Food Service Program](#) (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/creditingfsfp/credit_yogurt_sfsp.pdf

[Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs](#) (USDA):

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

[Meal Patterns](#) (CSDE's SFSP webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/summer-food-service-program/meal-patterns>

[Requirements for the Grains/Breads Component of the Summer Food Service Program Meal Patterns](#) (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/creditingfsfp/component_grains_breads_sfsp.pdf

[Requirements for the Meat/Meat Alternates Component of the Summer Food Service Program Meal Patterns](#) (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/creditingfsfp/component_mma_sfsp.pdf

[Requirements for the Milk Component of the Summer Food Service Program Meal Patterns](#) (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/creditingfsfp/component_milk_sfsp.pdf

[Requirements for the Vegetables/Fruits Component of the Summer Food Service Program Meal Patterns](#) (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/creditingfsfp/component_vegetables_fruits_sfsp.pdf

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[Summer Food Service Program Administration Guide](#) (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/administration-guide>

[Summer Meals Annual Training Module: Crediting Documentation for Summer Meals](#) (“Annual Training” section of CSDE’s SFSP webpage)

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/summer-food-service-program/annual-training#CreditingDocumentation>

[Summer Meals Annual Training Module: Crediting Foods in the SFSP Meal Patterns:](#)

[Introduction to Crediting](#) (“Annual Training” section of CSDE’s SFSP webpage)

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/summer-food-service-program/annual-training#CreditingFoods>

[USDA Memo SP 05-2025, CACFP 04-2025, and SFSP 02-2025: Guidance for Accepting Processed Product Documentation for Meal Pattern Requirements:](#)

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/labeling/guidance-accepting-processed-product-documentation>

[Using Child Nutrition \(CN\) Labels in the Summer Food Service Program](#) (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/creditingfsfp/cn_labels_sfsp.pdf

[Using Product Formulation Statements in the Summer Food Service Program](#) (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/creditingfsfp/product_formulation_statements_sfsp.pdf

[What’s in a Meal Module 8: Meal Pattern Documentation for Crediting Commercial Processed Products](#) (CSDE’s Training Program, What’s in a Meal: Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs:

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/meal-pattern-training-materials#module8>

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For more information, visit the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in the Summer Food Service Program](#) webpage or contact the [Summer Meals staff](#) at the Connecticut State Department of Education, Bureau of Child Nutrition Programs, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841. This document is available at https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/creditingfsfp/noncreditable_foods_sfsp.pdf.



Noncreditable Foods in the Meal Patterns for the Summer Food Service Program

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1. mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. fax: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. email: program.intake@usda.gov

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