

Noncreditable Foods for Adult Day Care Centers in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

July 1, 2024, through October 30, 2025

This guidance applies to reimbursable meals and snacks served in adult day care centers that participate in the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). For information on meeting the requirements for the CACFP adult meal patterns, visit the CSDE’s [Meal Patterns for CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) webpage and [Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) webpage.



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Noncreditable Foods for Adult Day Care Centers in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

Definition of Noncreditable Foods

Noncreditable foods are foods and beverages that do not count toward the five meal components (meats/meat alternates, grains, vegetables, fruits, and milk) required by the USDA's CACFP adult meal patterns. Noncreditable foods include foods and beverages in amounts that are too small to credit (i.e., less than the minimum creditable amount required by the CACFP adult meal patterns), such as 1 tablespoon of applesauce or 1/8 ounce of cheese. They also include foods and beverages that do not belong to the five meal components. 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 list on pages 3-4 includes additional examples of noncreditable foods for the CACFP meal adult patterns. This list is not all-inclusive.

Allowable Noncreditable Foods

Adult day care centers may serve noncreditable foods in addition to the meal components to add variety, help improve acceptability in the meal, and satisfy appetites. Some 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 CACFP meals and snacks meet participants' nutritional needs, the CSDE encourages adult day care centers 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.

CACFP Best Practices for Noncreditable Foods

The USDA's [CACFP best practices](#) recommend that CACFP menus avoid noncreditable foods that are sources of added sugars. Examples include sweet toppings (e.g., honey, jam, and syrup), mix-in ingredients sold with yogurt (e.g., honey, candy, and cookie pieces), and sugar-sweetened beverages (e.g., fruit drinks and sodas).

Use of CACFP Funds for Noncreditable Foods

CACFP funds cannot be used to purchase noncreditable foods, except for condiments served with creditable foods, and herbs and spices used to prepare and enhance the flavor of meals. For example, CACFP funds cannot be used to purchase grain-based desserts, gelatin, pudding, or canned cream soups.

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Examples of Noncreditable Foods

The foods and beverages below do not credit in the for CACFP adult meal patterns. This list is not all-inclusive. For additional guidance, refer to the menu planning notes on page 4.

Almond flour	Cookies ⁴ , except animal crackers and graham crackers
Almond milk ¹	Cranberry cocktail drink
Bacon (pork)	Cream cheese
Bacon bits, regular or imitation	Cream soups, canned, e.g., cream of mushroom, cream of celery, and cream of broccoli
Banana chips	Cream, half and half
Bread products that are not whole grain, whole grain-rich (WGR), or enriched ²	Drinkable or squeezable yogurt and yogurt drinks ⁶
Breakfast cereals (ready-to-eat and cooked) that are not whole grain, whole grain-rich, enriched, or fortified ³	Egg whites without the yolk
Breakfast cereals (ready-to-eat and cooked) with more than 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce ³	Eggnog
Brownies ⁴	Frozen yogurt
Butter	Fruit drink, fruit beverage, powdered fruit drink mix
Cake ⁴	Fruit leathers (100 percent fruit)
Candy	Fruit punch (not 100 percent juice)
Candy-coated popcorn	Fruit snacks, e.g., fruit roll-ups, wrinkles, twists
Caramel popcorn	Gelatin, regular and sugar free
Cashew milk ¹	Grain-based desserts, e.g., cookies, sweet piecrusts, doughnuts, cereal bars, granola bars, sweet rolls, pastries, toaster pastries, cake, and brownies ⁴
Cereal bars ⁴	Grains that are not whole grain, WGR, or enriched ²
Chocolate milk-based drinks, e.g., Yoo-Hoo	Granola bars ⁴
Cinnamon buns or rolls ⁴	Home-canned products, e.g., vegetables and fruits
Coconut flour	Honey
Coconut milk	Hot chocolate
Coffee (regular, decaffeinated, and iced)	Ice cream and ice cream novelties
Commercial processed products without a Child Nutrition (CN) label or product formulation statement (PFS), e.g., entrees, smoothies, and breaded vegetables ⁵	Ice milk
Commercial smoothies that contain dietary or herbal supplements	Iced coffee
Condiments, e.g., ketchup, mustard, relish, and barbecue sauce	Iced tea
	Jam and jelly

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Ketchup	Scrapple
Lemonade	Sherbet
Limeade	Soda, regular and diet
Liquid egg substitutes	Soups, commercial cream of vegetable, e.g., cream of broccoli, cream of mushroom, and cream of celery
Maple syrup	Soups, commercial non-vegetable, canned, e.g., beef barley, beef noodle, turkey or chicken noodle, and turkey or chicken rice
Margarine	Sour cream
Marshmallows	Soy milk that does not meet the USDA's nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes ¹
Mayonnaise	Sports drinks, regular and diet
Milk, reduced fat (2%), unflavored or flavored	Spreadable fruit
Milk, whole, unflavored or flavored	Sweet rolls ⁴
Mustard	Syrup
Nondairy milk that does not meet the USDA's nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes ¹	Tea, regular, herbal, and iced
Nutritional beverage supplements, e.g., Abbott's Pediasure	Toaster pastries ⁴
Oat milk that does not meet the USDA's nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes ¹	Tofu with less than 5 grams of protein in 2.2 ounces (weight) or $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (volume) ⁷
Pastries ⁴	Water
Pickle relish	Yogurt or soy yogurt with more than 3.83 grams of total sugars per ounce ⁶
Pies, e.g., coconut, fruit, pecan ⁴	Yogurt products, e.g., drinkable or squeezable yogurt, frozen yogurt, yogurt bars, and yogurt-covered fruits and nuts ⁶
Popsicles (not 100 percent juice)	
Potato chips	
Powdered milk beverages, e.g., Nestle's NIDO	
Probiotic dairy drinks	
Pudding	
Pudding pops	
Puffs, fruit and vegetable	
Rice milk ¹	
Salad dressings	
Salt pork	
Scones, sweet, e.g., blueberry, raisin, or orange cranberry ⁴	

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Menu Planning Notes

- ¹ Milk substitutes for children without a disability must meet the USDA's nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes (refer to the CSDE's resource, [Allowable Milk Substitutes for Adult Participants without Disabilities in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#)).
- ² For guidance on identifying creditable grains, refer to the CSDE's resources, [How to Identify Creditable Grains in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#) and [Guide to Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the CACFP](#).
- ³ For guidance on creditable cereals, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#).
- ⁴ Grain-based desserts do not credit in the CACFP adult meal patterns. For more information, visit the USDA's [Grain-Based Desserts in the CACFP](#) webpage.
- ⁵ Commercial products without a CN label or PFS do not credit in the CACFP. For information on CN labels and PFS forms, refer to the CSDE's resources, [Using Product Formulation Statements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#), [Using Child Nutrition \(CN\) Labels in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#), and [Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#), and the USDA's [Tips for Evaluating a Manufacturer's Product Formulation Statement](#). Additional guidance is available in the "Crediting Commercial Processed Products" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) webpage.
- ⁶ For guidance on crediting yogurt, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Crediting Yogurt in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#).
- ⁷ For guidance on crediting tofu, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Crediting Tofu and Tofu Products in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#).

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Resources

Allowable Milk Substitutes for Children without Disabilities in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (USDA):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/cacfp/specdiet/milk_substitutes_cacfp.pdf

CACFP Meal Pattern Updates (CSDE's CACFP webpage):

https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/child-and-adult-care-food-program#CACFP_Meal_Pattern_Updates

Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/cacfp/crediting/credit_cereals_cacfp.pdf

Crediting Commercial Processed Products (“Documents/Forms” section of CSDE’s Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/crediting-foods-in-cacfp-adult-day-care-centers/documents#CommercialProducts>

Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/crediting-foods-in-cacfp-adult-day-care-centers/how-to>

Crediting Summary Charts for the CACFP Meal Patterns for Children (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/cacfp/crediting/crediting_summary_charts_cacfp.pdf

Crediting Tofu and Tofu Products in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/cacfp/crediting/credit_tofu_cacfp.pdf

Crediting Yogurt in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/cacfp/crediting/credit_yogurt_cacfp.pdf

Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs (USDA):

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

Grain-based Desserts in the CACFP – Handouts and webinars in English and Spanish (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/grain-based-desserts-cacfp>

Guide to Meeting the Meal Pattern Requirements for CACFP Adult Day Care Centers (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/cacfp/mealpattern/guide_cacfp_meal_patterns_adults.pdf

Guide to Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the CACFP (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/cacfp/crediting/wgr_requirement_cacfp.pdf

How to Identify Creditable Grains in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/cacfp/crediting/identify_creditable_grains_cacfp.pdf

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Resources for the CACFP Meal Patterns (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/cacfp/mealpattern/resources_cacfp_meal_patterns.pdf

Standardized Recipes (“Documents/Forms” section of CSDE’s Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/crediting-foods-in-cacfp-adult-day-care-centers/documents/#StandardizedRecipes>

Tips for Evaluating a Manufacturer’s Product Formulation Statement (USDA):

<https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/manufacturerPFStipsheet.pdf>

USDA Final Rule: Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans (89 FR 31962):

<https://www.federalregister.gov/Documents/2024/04/25/2024-08098/Child-Nutrition-Programs-Meal-Patterns-Consistent-With-The-2020-2025-Dietary-Guidelines-For>

USDA Memo CACFP 15-2016: Optional Best Practices to Further Improve Nutrition in the CACFP:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/optional-best-practices-further-improve-nutrition-cacfp>

Using Child Nutrition (CN) Labels in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/cacfp/crediting/using_cn_labels_cacfp.pdf

Using Product Formulation Statements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE):

http://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/cacfp/crediting/using_product_formulation_statements_cacfp.pdf

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For more information visit the CSDE's [Meal Patterns for CACFP Adult Care Centers](#) and [Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) webpages, or contact the [CACFP 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/cacfp/crediting/noncreditable_foods_cacfp_adults.pdf.

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