

# 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 [Menu Planning Guide for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program](#) and visit the CSDE’s [Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.



Noncreditable foods are foods and beverages that do not count toward the meal patterns for the USDA 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.



# Noncreditable Foods for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP

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

## Examples of noncreditable foods for the preschool meal patterns <sup>1</sup>

For additional guidance, refer to the footnotes on page 4.

|                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                      |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Almond flour                                                                                                                                                             | Condiments, e.g., ketchup, mustard, relish, and barbecue sauce                                                                                                       |
| Almond milk <sup>2</sup>                                                                                                                                                 | Cookies <sup>5</sup> , except animal crackers and graham crackers                                                                                                    |
| Bacon (pork)                                                                                                                                                             | Cranberry cocktail drink                                                                                                                                             |
| Bacon bits, regular or imitation                                                                                                                                         | Cream cheese                                                                                                                                                         |
| Banana chips                                                                                                                                                             | Cream soups, canned, e.g., cream of mushroom, cream of celery, and cream of broccoli                                                                                 |
| Bread products that are not whole grain, whole grain-rich (WGR), or enriched <sup>3</sup>                                                                                | Cream, half and half                                                                                                                                                 |
| Breakfast cereals (ready-to-eat and cooked) that are not whole grain, whole grain-rich, enriched, or fortified <sup>4</sup>                                              | Drinkable or squeezable yogurt and yogurt drinks <sup>7</sup>                                                                                                        |
| Breakfast cereals (ready-to-eat and cooked) with more than 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce <sup>4</sup>                                                                   | Egg whites without the yolk                                                                                                                                          |
| Brownies <sup>5</sup>                                                                                                                                                    | Eggnog                                                                                                                                                               |
| Butter                                                                                                                                                                   | Frozen yogurt                                                                                                                                                        |
| Cake <sup>5</sup>                                                                                                                                                        | Fruit drink, fruit beverage, powdered fruit drink mix                                                                                                                |
| Candy                                                                                                                                                                    | Fruit leathers (100 percent fruit)                                                                                                                                   |
| Candy-coated popcorn                                                                                                                                                     | Fruit punch (not 100 percent juice)                                                                                                                                  |
| Caramel popcorn                                                                                                                                                          | Fruit snacks, e.g., fruit roll-ups, wrinkles, twists                                                                                                                 |
| Cashew milk <sup>2</sup>                                                                                                                                                 | Gelatin, regular and sugar free                                                                                                                                      |
| Cereal bars <sup>5</sup>                                                                                                                                                 | Grain-based desserts, e.g., cookies, sweet piecrusts, doughnuts, cereal bars, granola bars, sweet rolls, pastries, toaster pastries, cake, and brownies <sup>5</sup> |
| Chocolate milk-based drinks, e.g., Yoo-Hoo                                                                                                                               | Grains that are not whole grain, WGR, or enriched <sup>3</sup>                                                                                                       |
| Cinnamon buns or rolls <sup>5</sup>                                                                                                                                      | Granola bars <sup>5</sup>                                                                                                                                            |
| Coconut flour                                                                                                                                                            | Home-canned products, e.g., vegetables and fruits                                                                                                                    |
| Coconut milk                                                                                                                                                             | Honey                                                                                                                                                                |
| 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 <sup>6</sup> |                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Commercial smoothies that contain dietary or herbal supplements                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                                                      |

## Noncreditable Foods for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP

### Examples of noncreditable foods for the preschool meal patterns, *continued*

|                                                                                                                          |                                                                                                                                     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Hot chocolate                                                                                                            | Puffs, fruit and vegetable                                                                                                          |
| Ice cream and ice cream novelties                                                                                        | Rice milk <sup>2</sup>                                                                                                              |
| Ice milk                                                                                                                 | Salad dressings                                                                                                                     |
| Iced coffee                                                                                                              | Salt pork                                                                                                                           |
| Iced tea                                                                                                                 | Scones, sweet, e.g., blueberry, raisin, or orange<br>cranberry <sup>5</sup>                                                         |
| Jam and jelly                                                                                                            | Scrapple                                                                                                                            |
| Ketchup                                                                                                                  | Sherbet                                                                                                                             |
| Lemonade                                                                                                                 | Soda, regular and diet                                                                                                              |
| Limeade                                                                                                                  | Soups, commercial cream of vegetable, e.g.,<br>cream of broccoli, cream of mushroom,<br>and cream of celery                         |
| Liquid egg substitutes                                                                                                   | Soups, commercial non-vegetable, canned, e.g.,<br>beef barley, beef noodle, turkey or chicken<br>noodle, and turkey or chicken rice |
| Maple syrup                                                                                                              | Sour cream                                                                                                                          |
| Margarine                                                                                                                | Soy milk that does not meet the USDA's<br>nutrition standards for fluid milk<br>substitutes <sup>2</sup>                            |
| Marshmallows                                                                                                             | Sports drinks, regular and diet                                                                                                     |
| Mayonnaise                                                                                                               | Spreadable fruit                                                                                                                    |
| Milk for age 1: Plain or flavored reduced fat<br>(2%), plain or flavored low-fat (1%), and<br>plain or flavored fat-free | Sweet rolls <sup>5</sup>                                                                                                            |
| Milk for ages 2-5: Plain or flavored whole,<br>plain or flavored reduced fat (2%), and<br>flavored low-fat (1%)          | Syrup                                                                                                                               |
| Mustard                                                                                                                  | Tea, regular, herbal, and iced                                                                                                      |
| Nondairy milk that does not meet the<br>USDA's nutrition standards for fluid milk<br>substitutes <sup>2</sup>            | Toaster pastries <sup>5</sup>                                                                                                       |
| Nutritional beverage supplements,<br>e.g., Abbott's Pediasure                                                            | Tofu with less than 5 grams of protein in 2.2<br>ounces (weight) or ¼ cup (volume) <sup>8</sup>                                     |
| Oat milk that does not meet the USDA's<br>nutrition standards for fluid milk<br>substitutes <sup>2</sup>                 | Water <sup>9</sup>                                                                                                                  |
| Pastries <sup>5</sup>                                                                                                    | Yogurt or soy yogurt with more than more<br>than 3.83 grams of total sugars per ounce <sup>6</sup>                                  |
| Pickle relish                                                                                                            | Yogurt products, e.g., drinkable or squeezable<br>yogurt, frozen yogurt, yogurt bars, and<br>yogurt-covered fruits and nuts         |
| Pies, e.g., coconut, fruit, pecan <sup>5</sup>                                                                           |                                                                                                                                     |
| Popsicles (not 100 percent juice)                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                     |
| Potato chips                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                     |
| Powdered milk beverages, e.g., Nestle's NIDO                                                                             |                                                                                                                                     |
| Probiotic dairy drinks                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                     |
| Pudding                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                     |
| Pudding pops                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                     |

# Noncreditable Foods for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP

## Footnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Foods sold separately from reimbursable meals (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 [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). Beverages sold as part of and separately from reimbursable meals in public schools must comply with the state beverage requirements of [Section 10-221q](#) of the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) and the USDA [Smart Snacks](#) nutrition standards. Some sales of foods and beverages are prohibited due to federal or state requirements. Review all noncreditable foods to ensure compliance before selling to students. For more information, visit the CSDE's webpages, [Competitive Foods in Schools](#) and [Beverage Requirements](#) webpages.
- <sup>2</sup> Milk substitutes for children without a disability must meet the USDA's nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes. For more information, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Allowable Milk Substitutes for Children without Disabilities in School Nutrition Programs](#).
- <sup>3</sup> For guidance on identifying creditable grains, refer to the CSDE's resources, [Crediting Whole Grains in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program](#), [Crediting Enriched Grains in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program](#), and [Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program Meal Patterns for Grades K-12](#).
- <sup>4</sup> For guidance on creditable cereals, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Crediting Breakfast Cereals for Grades K-12 in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program](#).
- <sup>5</sup> These items are grain-based desserts and do not credit in the preschool meal patterns. For more information, refer to the USDA's webpage, [Grain-based Desserts in the CACFP](#).
- <sup>6</sup> Commercial products without a CN label or PFS do not credit in the preschool meal patterns. For more information, refer to the CSDE's resources, [Using Product Formulation Statements in the School Nutrition Programs](#) and [Using Child Nutrition \(CN\) Labels in the School Nutrition Programs](#), and [Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program](#); and the USDA's [Tips for Evaluating a Manufacturer's Product Formulation Statement](#). Additional guidance is available in the "Crediting Commercial Processed Products in Preschool Menus" section of the CSDE's [Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage. Training on the requirements for CN labels and PFS forms is available in Module 6: Meal Pattern Documentation of the CSDE's training program, [What's in a Meal: National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program Meal Patterns for Grades K-12](#).
- <sup>7</sup> For guidance on crediting yogurt, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Crediting Yogurt for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program](#).
- <sup>8</sup> For guidance on crediting tofu, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Crediting Tofu and Tofu Products in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program](#).
- <sup>9</sup> SFAs 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, refer to [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](#). Training on the water requirement is available in Module 14: Water Availability during Meal Service of the CSDE's training program, [What's in a Meal: National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program Meal Patterns for Grades K-12](#).

# 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](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](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](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/SpecDiet/Milk_Substitutes_SNP.pdf)

Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/Grain\\_Calculation\\_SNP\\_preschool.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/Grain_Calculation_SNP_preschool.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 National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/Credit\\_Cereals\\_SNP\\_preschool.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/Credit_Cereals_SNP_preschool.pdf)

Crediting Commercial Meat/Meat Alternate Products in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/Credit\\_Commercial\\_MMA\\_SNP.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/Credit_Commercial_MMA_SNP.pdf)

Crediting Enriched Grains in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/Credit\\_Enriched\\_Grains\\_SNP.pdf](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](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/Crediting/Crediting_Summary_Charts_SNP_Preschool.pdf)

Crediting Tofu and Tofu Products in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/Credit\\_Tofu\\_SNP.pdf](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 National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/Credit\\_Whole\\_Grains\\_SNP.pdf](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>

Healthy Food Certification (CSDE webpage):

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

How to Identify Creditable Grains for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program:

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/Identify\\_Creditable\\_Grains\\_Preschool.pdf](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 National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Preschool/Menu\\_Planning\\_Guide\\_Preschool.pdf](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](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Preschool/Resources_Preschool_Meal_Patterns.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>

Using Child Nutrition (CN) Labels in the School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CN\\_Labels\\_SNP.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CN_Labels_SNP.pdf)

Using Product Formulation Statements in the School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/Product\\_Formulation\\_Statements.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/Product_Formulation_Statements.pdf)

# 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, 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/NSLP/Crediting/Noncreditable\\_Foods\\_SNP\\_preschool.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/Noncreditable_Foods_SNP_preschool.pdf).

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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](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

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