

Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services	Policy
	MT CACFP 1996-9 Rev 3
	Section: All Institutions
Child and Adult Care Food Program	Subject: Creditable Food Guidance
	Effective Date: 4/1/2016

CREDITABLE FOOD GUIDANCE

Creditable food refers to foods counted toward the meal components in the CACFP meal pattern. Non-creditable food refers to foods that do not count as meal components in the CACFP meal pattern. For details, see the Requirements for Meals found in 7 CFR Part 226.20 of the USDA Food and Nutrition Service and *Crediting Foods in the CACFP* by the Mountain Plains Regional Office, Food and Nutrition Service, Denver, Revised August 2001, USDA Memo: CACFP 21-2011.

The guidance below is provided by the State agency. To be claimed for reimbursement, meals served must meet federal CACFP meal requirements and creditable foods policies. Guidance provided is encouraged but is not a federal requirement. Where the guidance below may be different than, or greater than USDA's, USDA's policies and guidance will prevail.

Milk

In the CACFP, milk means fluid milk that is pasteurized and meets State and local standards. Examples include whole milk, low-fat milk, skim milk, lactose-free, or acidophilus milk. Whole milk is recommended for children up to two years of age. Fluid milk served to participants two years of age and older must be: fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%) fluid milk.

When is milk non-creditable?

Milk is not creditable when flavored or when used in cooking. Milk with any flavoring or flavored syrup added is not creditable. Milk as an ingredient in soup or in pudding is not creditable. See Montana Creditable Food Guidance for more information.

Fruits and Vegetables

Fruits and vegetables include fresh, frozen and canned fruits and vegetables, including beans, peas, lentils and 100% juice. Juice shall be served only once per week.

When fruits and vegetables are non-creditable?

Fruits and vegetables are not creditable when they are filling in bars or pies; gummy style fruit snacks or roll-ups; condiments such as jam, jelly, preserves, relish, pickles, olives, fruits and vegetables in breads such as banana bread and blueberry muffins. Frozen, pre-packaged potatoes of all types and potatoes that are canned and dehydrated, including instant potatoes, are not creditable. Home canned products are not creditable due to food safety concerns.

Bread and Bread Alternate

Breads and bread alternates include enriched or whole grain products including breads, plain rolls, flours and grains, hot and cold cereals, rice, tortillas, noodles, macaroni, muffins, dumplings, fry bread, plain crackers, granola, cornbread, gingerbread, bread as stuffing, and baked goods. Dough and crusts in savory recipes and products such as pizza, pasties, quiches and shepherd's pie, for example, are creditable. On-site-made cookies are creditable. For all baked items, recipes or product labels must be on file to demonstrate that the primary ingredient is enriched or whole grain.

When are breads and bread alternates non-creditable?

The following are not creditable as bread or bread alternate: toaster pastry products, flavored crackers, boxed macaroni and cheese, highly sweetened cereals, sweet rolls, cakes, doughnuts, popcorn, hominy, tapioca, potato (potato is a vegetable, and not a bread or a grain), shortbread, dough and crusts of sweet pies, and all purchased cookies. In some cases, bread or grains as an ingredient would not count as a meal component because there is too little quantity, such as bread crumbs in meat loaf.

Meat and Meat Alternate

Meats that are creditable include beef, chicken, turkey, pork, ham, lamb, bison and fish that are 100% meat. Sliced or fillet cuts of these meats are also creditable. Creditable meat alternates include eggs, dry beans and peas, lentils, cheeses, yogurt, nuts, seeds and their butters. Creditable cheeses are natural cheeses including, but not limited to cheddar, mozzarella, Swiss, provolone, ricotta, feta cheese and cottage cheese. Yogurt and flavored yogurt are both creditable as meat alternate but in snack meals only.

When meat and meat alternates are non-creditable?

Meat and meat alternatives are not creditable when they are not 100% meat. Hot dogs and frankfurters are not creditable because the majority of product in this category is not 100% meat. Corn dogs, chicken nuggets and fish sticks are not creditable because they are not 100% meat. Imitation cheese, powdered cheese, cheese spread, cheese food, American cheese, and frozen yogurt are not creditable. Wild game meat is not permitted due to safety concerns.

References:

1. CFR 226.20. Requirements for Meals
2. *Crediting Foods in the Child and Adult Care Food Program*, Mountain Plains Region, USDA Food and Nutrition Service, Revised August 2001.
3. *Crediting Foods in the Child and Adult Care Food Program*, Mid-Atlantic Region, USDA Food and Nutrition Service, Revised August 2008.
4. USDA Memo: CACFP 21-2011
5. USDA FNS Crediting Handbook for the Child and Adult Care Food Program, FNS-425, March 2013
6. Montana Addendum to the USDA FNS Crediting Handbook for the Child and Adult Care Food Program, FNS-425, August 2014.