

Noncreditable Foods for Grades K-12 in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program

This information applies only to grades K-12 in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), and Seamless Summer Option (SSO) of the NSLP. For guidance on meeting the meal pattern requirements for the NSLP, SBP, and SSO, see the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12](#).

For information on noncreditable foods for grades K-12 in the Afterschool Snack Program (ASP), see the CSDE's handout, [Noncreditable Foods for Grades K-12 in the ASP](#). For information on noncreditable foods for preschoolers (ages 1-4) in the SBP, NSLP, ASP, and SSO, see the CSDE's handout, [Noncreditable Foods for Preschoolers in the NSLP, SBP, and ASP](#).



Noncreditable foods are foods and beverages that cannot credit in the USDA's meal patterns for Child Nutrition Programs. They include foods and beverages in amounts too small to credit (i.e., foods and beverages that do not provide the minimum creditable amount of a meal pattern component) and foods and beverages that do not fit into one of the meal pattern components. For information on the NSLP and SBP meal patterns for grades K-12, visit the CSDE's [Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

Examples of noncreditable foods 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 grades K-12. 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. Some examples include maple syrup on pancakes, salad dressing on tossed greens, and condiments such as ketchup or mustard on sandwiches and other entrees.

Noncreditable foods offered as part of reimbursable meals for grades K-12 must count toward the weekly dietary specifications (nutrition standards) for school meals. They must contain zero trans fat and their inclusion cannot cause the menu to exceed the average weekly limits for calories, saturated fat, and sodium. For information on the dietary specifications, see section 6 of the CSDE's [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12](#).



Noncreditable Foods for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

Some noncreditable foods (such as candy, soda, coffee, tea, and sports drinks) cannot be sold in the NSLP, SBP, and SSO due to federal or state requirements. For more information, see the CSDE's webpages, [Competitive Foods in Schools](#) and [Beverage Requirements](#).

To ensure that school meals 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. For information on crediting foods in school meals for grades K-12, see the CSDE's [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12](#) and the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

Examples of noncreditable foods for grades K-12 ¹

Almond milk ²	Fruit drink, fruit beverage, powdered fruit drink mix ³
Bacon and bacon bits	Fruit leathers
Banana chips	Fruit punch (not 100 percent juice) ³
Bran, e.g., oat bran, wheat bran, corn bran, rice bran, and rye bran	Fruit snacks, e.g., fruit roll-ups, wrinkles, and twists
Bread products that are not whole grain-rich (WGR) or enriched	Gelatin, regular and sugar free
Butter	Germ, e.g., wheat germ
Candy ³	Grain products that are not WGR or enriched ³
Candy-coated popcorn ³	Honey
Chili sauce	Hot chocolate ³
Chocolate milk-based drinks, e.g., Yoo-Hoo ³	Ice cream
Coffee (regular, decaffeinated, and iced) ³	Ice cream novelties
Condiments, e.g., ketchup, mustard, relish, barbecue sauce	Ice milk
Cranberry cocktail drink ³	Iced coffee ³
Cream, half and half	Iced tea ³
Cream cheese	Imitation cheese
Cream soups, canned, e.g., cream of mushroom, cream of celery, cream of broccoli	Jam
Dehydrated vegetables used for seasoning	Jelly
Drinkable or squeezable yogurt	Ketchup
Eggnog ³	Lemonade ³
Egg whites	Limeade ³
Frozen yogurt	Maple syrup
	Margarine
	Marshmallows

Noncreditable Foods for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

Examples of noncreditable foods for grades K-12 ¹, *continued*

Mayonnaise	Soups, non-vegetable, canned, e.g., beef
Milk, reduced fat (2%)	barley, beef noodle, turkey or chicken
Milk, whole	noodle, and turkey or chicken rice
Mustard	Sour cream
Nectar drinks ³	Soy milk that does not meet the USDA's
Nondairy milk that does not meet the	nutrition standards for fluid milk
USDA's nutrition standards for fluid milk	substitutes ²
substitutes ²	Sports drinks, regular and diet ³
Pickle relish	Spreadable fruit
Popsicles (not 100 percent juice)	Syrup
Potato chips	Tea (regular, herbal, and iced) ³
Pudding	Tofu with less than 5 grams of protein in
Pudding pops	2.2 ounces (weight) or ¼ cup (volume)
Rice milk ²	Water ⁴
Salad dressings	Yogurt or soy yogurt in commercial
Sherbet	smoothies
Soda, regular and diet ³	

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. For more information, see the CSDE's handout, [Allowable Milk Substitutes for Children without Disabilities in School Nutrition Programs](#).

³ These competitive foods and beverages cannot be sold to students due to federal or state requirements. For more information, review the CSDE's [Guide to Competitive Foods in Schools](#) and visit the CSDE's webpages, [Competitive Foods in Schools](#) and [Beverage Requirements](#).

⁴ The [Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act \(HHFKA\)](#) requires that schools 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 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 Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

Resources

Allowable Milk Substitutes for Children without Disabilities (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/SpecDiet/Milksub.pdf>

Beverage Requirements (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Beverage-Requirements>

Calculation Methods for Whole Grain-Rich Ounce Equivalent for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/GrainCalc.pdf>

Child Nutrition (CN) Labeling Program (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CNlabel.pdf>

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschool and Grades K-12 in the ASP:

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/ASP/ASPComparisonPreschoolK12.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 Commercial Meat/Meat Alternate Products in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CreditMMA.pdf>

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

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CreditDeli.pdf>

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

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CreditEnrichedGrains.pdf>

Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-School-Nutrition-Programs>

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

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CreditTofu.pdf>

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

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CreditWholeGrains.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/CompetitiveFoodsGuideHFC.pdf>

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

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CompFoods/CompetitiveFoodsGuideNonHFC.pdf>

Noncreditable Foods for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP

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

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CompFoods/CompetitiveFoodsGuidePrivateRCCI.pdf>

Healthy Food Certification (CSDE webpage):

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

Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/healthy-hunger-free-kids-act>

List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages (CSDE webpage):

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

Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):

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

Menu Planning for Child Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Menu-Planning>

Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Menu-Planning-Guide-for-School-Meals>

Smart Snacks Nutrition Standards (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Smart-Snacks-Nutrition-Standards>

Sodium Reduction Timeline for NSLP and SBP Meal Patterns (CSDE)

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/MealPattern/SodiumTimeline.pdf>

USDA Final Rule (83 FR 63775): Child Nutrition Programs: Flexibilities for Milk, Whole Grains, and Sodium Requirements:

<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2018-12-12/pdf/2018-26762.pdf>

USDA Memo SP 08-2019, CACFP 02-2019 and SFSP 02-2019: Update of Food Crediting in the Child Nutrition Programs:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/update-food-crediting-child-nutrition-programs>

USDA Memo SP 19-2018: Clarification on the Milk and Water Requirements in the School Meal Programs.

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Memos/OM2018/SP19-2018s.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>

Whole Grain-rich Criteria for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/WGRCriteria.pdf>

Noncreditable Foods for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP



For more information, review the CSDE's *Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12* and visit the CSDE's *Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs* and *Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs* webpages, or contact the *school nutrition programs staff* in the CSDE's Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841.

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

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