Serving Meat and Meat Alternates at Breakfast

Breakfasts in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) include milk, vegetables and/or fruits, and grains. You can also serve meat and/or meat alternates instead of grains at breakfast up to 3 times per week. This option gives you more choices for menu planning.

Here’s how to include meat or meat alternates as part of a reimbursable breakfast meal:

- Substitute 1 ounce equivalent of meat/meat alternate for 1 serving of grains; or
- Substitute 1 ounce equivalent of meat/meat alternate for 1 ounce equivalent of grains.

Ounce equivalents are a way to measure amounts of food. In the CACFP, 1 ounce equivalent of a meat or meat alternate is equal to 2 tablespoons of peanut butter, ½ of a large egg, or 1 ounce of lean meat, poultry, or fish. If you want to serve meat/meat alternates more than 3 days a week, you must offer them as additional foods, which do not count toward the reimbursable meal.

A Closer Look at Menu Planning

If you plan to offer a meat or meat alternate at breakfast in place of grains, it must replace the entire required amount of grains. The table below shows the minimum amount of a meat or meat alternate you would need to serve in place of grains at breakfast.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minimum amount of meat/meat alternates required when served instead of grains at breakfast</th>
<th>Ages 1 - 2 years and 3 - 5 years</th>
<th>Ages 6 - 12 years and 13 - 18 years</th>
<th>Adults</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>is equal to:</td>
<td>is equal to:</td>
<td>is equal to:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beans or peas (cooked)</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
<td>¼ cup</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural or processed cheese</td>
<td>½ ounce</td>
<td>1 ounce</td>
<td>2 ounces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cottage or ricotta cheese</td>
<td>⅛ cup (1 ounce)</td>
<td>¼ cup (2 ounces)</td>
<td>½ cup (4 ounces)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eggs</td>
<td>¼ large egg</td>
<td>½ large egg</td>
<td>1 large egg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lean meat, poultry, or fish</td>
<td>½ ounce</td>
<td>1 ounce</td>
<td>2 ounces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peanut butter, soy nut butter, or other nut or seed butters</td>
<td>1 tablespoon</td>
<td>2 tablespoons</td>
<td>4 tablespoons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tofu (store-bought or commercially prepared)</td>
<td>⅛ cup (1.1 ounces) with at least 2.5 grams of protein</td>
<td>¼ cup (2.2 ounces) with at least 5 grams of protein</td>
<td>½ cup (4.4 ounces) with at least 10 grams of protein</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yogurt (including soy yogurt)</td>
<td>¼ cup of yogurt (2 ounces)</td>
<td>½ cup of yogurt (4 ounces)</td>
<td>1 cup of yogurt (8 ounces)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: When you serve beans and peas as a vegetable, they cannot also count as a meat alternate in the same meal.

More training, menu planning, and nutrition education materials for the CACFP can be found at https://teamnutrition.usda.gov.
Mix It Up at Breakfast

You can serve a meat or meat alternate as a standalone item, such as eggs, yogurt, cottage cheese, turkey sausage, and ham. As a best practice, choose foods that are lower in saturated fat and sodium. Meat and meat alternates can be served together, such as eggs (a meat alternate) and ham (a meat). Meat and meat alternates can also be served in a dish mixed with other foods, such as apple slices spread with peanut butter, yogurt topped with fruit, or a tofu scramble with vegetables.

Bacon, imitation bacon products, scrapple, and salt pork are not creditable in the CACFP. Turkey bacon, Canadian bacon, and some types of sausage are creditable only if the product has a Child Nutrition label, or if you have a Product Formulation Statement (PFS) signed by the manufacturer. For more information on crediting foods in the CACFP, please see the Crediting Handbook for the CACFP and the Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs at https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/cacfp-meal-pattern-training-tools.

For Adult Day Care Only: You can serve 6 ounces of yogurt in place of 8 ounces of milk once per day when yogurt is not served as a meat alternate in the same meal. If you serve yogurt to adults as a meat alternate at breakfast, you must also serve fluid milk.

Try It Out!

Test Yourself

1. Your adult day care center is open 4 days a week. How many times per week may you serve meat and meat alternatives in place of grains at breakast?

2. Your child care home is open 7 days per week. How many times per week may you serve meat and meat alternatives in place of grains at breakast?

3. You want to serve yogurt at breakfast to your 3-5 year olds once per week. If you are serving the yogurt in place of a grain, what’s the minimum amount you must serve to this age group to meet the meal pattern requirement?

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{1. If serving yogurt in place of 1/4 cup of yogurt to the 3-5 year olds, you must serve at least 2 ounces of yogurt.} \\
&\text{2. If serving meat alternates in place of grains at breakfast, you may serve meat alternatives up to 3 times per week.} \\
&\text{3. If serving yogurt in place of a grain at breakfast, you must serve at least 2 ounces (1/4 cup) of yogurt to the 3-5 year olds.}
\end{align*}
\]

Answer Key:

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Offer Versus Serve in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

If your site serves meals to at-risk afterschool or adult participants in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), you may use a type of meal service called Offer Versus Serve (OVS). OVS allows children and adults to decline some of the food offered in a reimbursable breakfast, lunch, or supper. OVS may not be used at snacks or in other CACFP settings. OVS can help reduce food waste and give children and adults more choices.

Understanding OVS: Know the Terms

• **Food component**—the name of a group of foods in a reimbursable meal. Food components include milk, vegetables, fruits, grains, and meat and meat alternates. At breakfast only, vegetables and fruits are one combined component. This means you can serve vegetables, fruits, or a combination of both to meet this requirement.

• **Food item**—foods that are part of a food component. For example, broccoli is a food item in the vegetables food component.

How to Use OVS at Meals

**OVS at Breakfast**
1. Offer these 3 food components at breakfast:
   - Milk
   - Vegetables and/or Fruits
   - Grains
2. Offer at least 4 different food items at breakfast, at least 1 from each food component above. The 4th food item can come from the vegetables or fruits, grains, or meat/meat alternates component.
3. Ask the child or adult to choose at least 3 different food items.

*Note: The 4th food item can be selected as well.*

**OVS at Lunch and Supper**
1. Offer these 5 food components at lunch and supper:
   - Milk*
   - Vegetables
   - Fruits
   - Grains
   - Meat and meat alternates
2. Offer at least one food item from each component.
3. Ask the child or adult to choose food items from 3 or more food components.

*For Adult Participants Only: Milk is optional at supper. If milk is not offered, the adult still needs to select food items from 3 different food components to have a reimbursable meal.

*Note: The child or adult can select food from all 5 components. Foods from at least 3 components are needed for a reimbursable meal.*

More training, menu planning, and nutrition education materials for the CACFP can be found at [https://teamnutrition.usda.gov](https://teamnutrition.usda.gov).
Tips About Food Items
– All food items offered at breakfast, lunch, and supper must be different food items. For example, while apple slices and applesauce are two forms of apples, they are considered the same food item. Likewise, oranges and orange juice are the same food item.
– The full minimum serving size of a food item must be taken in order for it to count towards a reimbursable meal.

Try It Out!
Use the information on this worksheet to answer the questions below.

1. Your adult day care center uses OVS at breakfast and offers low-fat (1%) milk, apple slices, oatmeal, and bananas. Karen is a participant who chooses milk, oatmeal, and apple slices, and took the full minimum serving size of each item. Is Karen’s breakfast reimbursable? Why or why not?

2. Your at-risk afterschool site uses OVS at supper and offers non-fat (skim) milk, roasted turkey, roasted broccoli, steamed carrots, fruit salad, and whole-wheat rolls. David is a participant who chooses the turkey, broccoli, and carrots, and took the full minimum serving size of each item. Is this supper reimbursable? Why or why not?

3. Your at-risk afterschool site uses OVS at supper, and offers tuna salad, sliced tomatoes, peaches, pita bread, and low-fat (1%) milk. Your participant Anna would like all the food offered, but only wants half of the minimum serving size of each food. Would this supper be reimbursable? Why or why not?

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Methods for Healthy Cooking

How a food is cooked can make a difference in how healthy it is. Try some of the cooking methods below instead of deep-fat frying. Cooking with oils instead of butter or lard can be better for heart health.

**Roast, Bake, or Broil:**
Cooking foods, usually at high heat, in the oven.

**Sauté, Pan Fry, and Stir-Fry:**
Cooking foods with a small amount of hot oil over medium or high heat.

**Grill:**
Cooking foods by placing them on a pre-heated metal grill, or grill pan, with high heat coming from below the food.

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**As of October 1, 2017,**
foods that are deep-fat fried onsite cannot count toward a reimbursable meal in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).

- Deep-fat frying means cooking by fully covering (submerging) food in hot oil or other fat.
- “Onsite” means at your child care center, family child care home, or your child care center’s central or satellite kitchen.

More training, menu planning, and nutrition education materials for the CACFP can be found at [https://teamnutrition.usda.gov](https://teamnutrition.usda.gov).
### Which foods may be served as part of a reimbursable meal in the CACFP?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food</th>
<th>Reimbursable?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Packaged par-fried or flash-fried foods purchased from a grocery store (such as par-fried frozen potatoes).</td>
<td>Yes, if heated onsite by baking, microwaving, or another method that is not deep-fat frying. Compare foods and choose those lower in saturated fats.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fried food from a restaurant or vendor.</td>
<td>Yes, if reheated onsite by baking, microwaving, or another method that is not deep-fat frying. Try to switch to healthier options.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pan-fried foods prepared at the child care center or family child care home.</td>
<td>Yes, the food is not covered with oil when pan-frying.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fried foods prepared at a child care center’s central kitchen.</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stir-fried or sautéed foods prepared at the child care center or family child care home.</td>
<td>Yes, the food is not covered with oil when stir-frying or sautéing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Try It Out!

Find these yummy recipes that offer a healthier spin on your favorite dishes at: [https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/cacfp-meal-pattern-training-tools](https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/cacfp-meal-pattern-training-tools). Circle the ones you plan to try.

#### Instead of Fried Chicken
- **Try:** Oven-Fried Chicken
  - Italian Garden Salsa with Crunchy Chicken Tenders

#### Instead of Chimichangas
- **Try:** Bean and Rice Burritos
  - 15-Minute Enchiladas
  - Turkey Tostadas

#### Instead of Fried Fish
- **Try:** Oven-Fried Fish
  - Roasted Fish Crispy Slaw Wrap

#### Instead of Fried Tortilla Chips
- **Try:** Baked Tortilla Chips
  - Corn Toasties

#### Instead of Taquitos
- **Try:** Chicken Fiesta Taco Bake
  - Delicious Tacos
  - Eagle Pizza

#### Instead of Fried Potatoes
- **Try:** Delicious Oven French Fries
  - Tasty Tots
Grain-Based Desserts in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

Kids need the vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients in foods such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy, and lean protein foods. Too often, kids are filling up on foods high in added sugars and low in nutrients.

As of October 1, 2017, grain-based desserts no longer count toward the grain component of meals and snacks offered through the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). This small change helps reduce the amount of added sugars kids eat in child care.

What Are Grain-Based Desserts?

The chart below lists some common grain-based desserts:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grain-Based Desserts (Not Reimbursable in the CACFP):</th>
<th>Not Grain-Based Desserts (Reimbursable in the CACFP):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brownies</td>
<td>Banana bread, zucchini bread, and other quick breads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cakes, including coffee cake and cupcakes</td>
<td>Cereals that meet the sugar limit and are whole grain-rich, enriched, and/or fortified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cereal bars, breakfast bars, and granola bars</td>
<td>Cornbread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cookies, including vanilla wafers</td>
<td>Crackers, all types</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doughnuts, any kind</td>
<td>French Toast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fig rolls/bars/cookies and other fruit-filled rolls/bars/cookies</td>
<td>Muffins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gingerbread</td>
<td>Pancakes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ice cream cones</td>
<td>Pie crusts of savory pies, such as vegetable pot pie and quiche</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marshmallow cereal treats</td>
<td>Plain croissants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pie crusts of dessert pies, cobblers, and fruit turnovers</td>
<td>Plain or savory pita chips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweet bread puddings</td>
<td>Savory biscotti, such as those made with cheese, vegetables, herbs, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweet biscotti, such as those made with fruits, chocolate, icing, etc.</td>
<td>Savory bread puddings, such as those made with cheese, vegetables, herbs, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweet croissants, such as chocolate-filled</td>
<td>Savory rice puddings, such as those made with cheese, vegetables, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweet pita chips, such as cinnamon-sugar flavored</td>
<td>Savory scones, such as those made with cheese, vegetables, herbs, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweet rice puddings</td>
<td>Teething biscuits, crackers, and toasts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweet scones, such as those made with fruits, icing, etc.</td>
<td>Tortillas and tortilla chips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweet rolls, such as cinnamon rolls</td>
<td>Waffles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toaster pastries</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Whole grain-rich and homemade grain-based desserts are also not creditable in the CACFP.

More training, menu planning, and nutrition education materials for the CACFP can be found at https://teamnutrition.usda.gov.
Still Too Sweet?

• Even if a food is not listed as a grain-based dessert, it can still be high in added sugars. As a best practice, compare grains and choose those that are lower in sugars. For instance, the amount of added sugars in a muffin can vary from recipe to recipe. Some muffins are as sweet as cupcakes and include ingredients such as candy and chocolate pieces or cinnamon-sugar toppings.

• Look for alternatives to sweet toppings (such as syrups, honey, and cinnamon sugars). For example, try topping pancakes with fruits instead of syrup. Starting these practices early helps kids develop healthy habits.

Try It Out!

1. Think about some grain-based desserts that you used to serve. Add them to the “Instead of serving” column on the left.
2. What are some other foods you can serve instead? Add them to the “Try” column in the middle.
3. Think of other foods you could substitute for the examples listed below. Add them to the right column under “Other Choices.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instead of serving:</th>
<th>Try:</th>
<th>Other Choices:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Doughnuts or cinnamon rolls</td>
<td>Pancakes or waffles topped with sliced fruit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marshmallow cereal treat</td>
<td>Whole-grain tortilla chips or fruit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cookies</td>
<td>Whole-wheat crackers or graham crackers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cake or brownies</td>
<td>Banana bread</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toaster pastries</td>
<td>Whole-wheat toast</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Use your “Try” and “Other Choices” lists to help you plan new menus at your site!

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