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Nebraska's Child and Adult Care Food Program

Darlene Martin, Extension Nutrition Specialist

Child Nutrition Programs, funded by the United States Department of Agriculture, include: Child and Adult Care Food Program, National School Lunch, School Breakfast, Special Milk and Summer Food Service Program.

The Child Care Food Program was established in 1968 to provide adequate nutrition to a growing number of children in day care. In 1987, eligible adults were included in the program, which is now referred to as the Child and Adult Care Food Program.

The goal of the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) is to improve the health and nutrition of children and adults participating while promoting the development of good eating habits and to advance nutrition education.

The CACFP is administered by the Nebraska Department of Education. Funding for the program is provided through the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The Nebraska Department of Education reimburses child and adult care centers and family day care home sponsoring organizations participating in the CACFP for the meals served to participants.

Eligibility requirements to participate in the CACFP in Nebraska are:

1. Institutions must meet licensing standards.
2. Private institutions must have tax exempt status from Internal Revenue Service and receive benefits from Title XX of the Social Security Act for at least 25 percent of enrolled participants or 25 percent of licensed capacity.
3. Child care centers, adult care centers and outside school hours centers may participate in the program either with a sponsor or as independent centers.
4. Family day care home providers must participate in the CACFP with a sponsoring organization.

Reimbursement is determined by the number of eligible enrolled participants who are served creditable meals at rates set by USDA.

A meal is reimbursable if it contains those foods in the amounts outline in the CACFP meal pattern requirements.

Creditable foods are those foods that may be counted toward meeting the requirements for a reimbursable meal. Foods are determined to be creditable by:

1. nutrient content;
2. customary function in a meal;
3. whether they meet regulations governing child nutrition programs;
4. whether they meet the FDA's Standards of Identity;
5. whether they meet the USDA standards for meat/meat alternate; and
6. agreements with administrative policy decisions on the crediting of particular foods.

Noncreditable, or "other," foods are those that do not meet the above criteria. "Other" foods do not meet the requirements for any components in the meal patterns. Noncreditable foods may supply calories and may contribute additional nutrients. They can be used to supplement the required meal components to improve acceptability and to satisfy appetites.

The CACFP serves: children through age 12; children of migrant workers, through age 15; persons with physical and mental handicaps receiving care in a center where most children are 18 years old and under; adults with disabilities; and those over 60 years of age in nonresidential day care settings.

For more information please contact:

Nebraska Department of Education Nutrition Services
301 Centennial Mall South
P.O. Box 94987
Lincoln, Nebraska 68509-4987
Telephone: (402) 471-2488; (800) 731-2233

Child and Adult Care Food Program Meal Pattern Requirements

	Age 1-2	*Age 3-5*	*Age 6-12*
Breakfast			
Fluid Milk	1/2 cup	3/4 cup	1 cup
Juice or Fruit or Vegetable	1/4 cup	1/2 cup	1/2 cup
Bread or bread alternative	1/2 slice (or 1/2 oz.)	1/2 slice (or 1/2 oz.)	1 slice (or 1 oz.)
or cold dry cereal	1/4 cup (or 1/3 oz.)	1/3 cup (or 1/2 oz)	3/4 cup (or 1 oz.)
or cooked cereal	1/4 cup	1/4 cup	1/2 cup

Snack (Select two of the following four components)

Fluid Milk	1/2 cup	1/2 cup	1 cup
Juice or fruit or vegetable	1/2 cup	1/2 cup	3/4 cup
Meat or meat alternative	1/2 oz.	1/2 oz.	1 oz.
Yogurt	2 oz. (or 1/4 cup)	2 oz. (or 1/4 cup)	4 oz. (or 1/2 cup)
Bread and grains	1/2 slice	1/2 slice	1 slice

Lunch/Supper

Fluid Milk	1/2 cup	3/4 cup	1 cup
Meat or poultry or fish	1 oz.	1 1/2 oz.	2 oz.
or cheese	1 oz.	1 1/2 oz.	2 oz.
or cottage cheese, cheese food	2 oz.	3 oz.	4 oz.
or cheese spread	1/4 cup	3/8 cup	1/2 cup
or egg	1	1	1
or cooked dry beans or peas	1/4 cup	3/8 cup	1/2 cup
or peanut butter, soynut butter	2 T.	3 T.	4 T.
or nut or seed butters			
or peanuts, soynuts, tree nuts or seeds	1/2 oz. = 50%	3/4 oz. = 50%	1 oz. = 50%
or yogurt	4 oz. (or 1/2 cup)	6 oz. (or 3/4 cup)	8 oz. (or 1 cup)
or an equivalent quality of any combination of the above meat/meat alternative			
Vegetables and/or fruits (2 or more)	1/4 cup	1/2 cup	3/4 cup
Breads/Grains	1/2 slice (or 1/2 serving)	1/2 slice (or 1/2 serving)	1 slice (or 1 serving)

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