



Child and Adult Care Food Program  
(CACFP)

FY2026 Optional Training

Third Trimester

Serving Fruits and Vegetables in the CACFP

6/1/2026-9/14/2026

Self-Study

½ hour of credit

Please send completed quiz for each provider/assistant to

[kellyr@four-c.org](mailto:kellyr@four-c.org)

Or mail:

4-C Community Coordinated Child Care

Attn: CACFP Food Program

444 E. Hillcrest Dr. Suite 300

Dekalb, IL 60115



# Focus on Fruits and Vegetables

Choose a variety of fruits and vegetables each day. Fruits and vegetables will help you stay healthy. Most fruits and vegetables are low in fat and calories. They can help with weight control. Eat fruits and vegetables *instead of* higher-calorie foods.

Here are some ways to include fruits and vegetables:

- ◆ Top your cereal with strawberries, peaches, blueberries, or other fruit.
- ◆ Add a variety of fresh, frozen, or canned vegetables to your favorite soup.
- ◆ Add steamed broccoli, green peas, or cauliflower to your pasta.
- ◆ Top your yogurt with some chopped fruit, sliced banana, or berries.
- ◆ Add beans to your salad. For a sweeter taste, you can add chopped apples, pears, or mangoes to your salad.
- ◆ Add tomatoes, cucumbers, onion, lettuce, or other greens to your sandwich.
- ◆ Eat dried fruits for a quick and easy snack. You can also add them to your salad. Note: Dried fruits, such as raisins, should not be given to children under 4 years of age due to possible choking.

Other tips for eating fruits and vegetables:

- ◆ Steam your vegetables. You can use low-fat dressings, herbs, and spices to add flavor.
- ◆ Fruits and vegetables that are canned or frozen are also good choices. Check the label to be sure that these products do not have added sugar, syrup, cream sauces, or butter sauces.
- ◆ Choose whole fruit instead of fruit juices. Whole fruit contains fiber that helps you feel full.

Try new fruits and vegetables. Most food stores and farmers' markets have a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables that are healthy and delicious. Try new kinds of fruits and vegetables. Then, try new ways to prepare them. You will be amazed at how many ways you can serve tasty fruits and vegetables to your family!

How will you add some new fruits and vegetables to your family's meals and snacks?

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## Here are some recipes to get you started.

### Skillet Zucchini with Chopped Tomatoes

- 1 teaspoon margarine
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 4 small zucchini, thinly sliced
- 2 medium tomatoes, chopped
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper

**Directions:** In a large nonstick skillet, melt margarine over medium heat; add onions and cook, stirring until onions are softened. Add zucchini and cook for 2 minutes. Add tomatoes and cook for 3 to 5 minutes or until the zucchini is tender-crisp. Season with black pepper.

Makes 4 servings.

### Breakfast Sundae

- 2 (8 ounce) containers of fat-free flavored yogurt of your choice
- 1 cup WIC cereal of your choice
- 2 medium, firm bananas, sliced
- 1 cup of mixed fruit of your choice

**Directions:** In four separate glasses, layer 2 tablespoons each of yogurt, cereal, bananas, and mixed fruit. Repeat layers. Serve immediately.

Makes 4 servings.





United States Department of Agriculture

Food and Nutrition Service

# Serving Vegetables in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

## Offering vegetables at meals and snacks:

- Helps children and adults get important nutrients like potassium, folate (folic acid), vitamin A, and vitamin C.
- Provides dietary fiber, which contributes to a feeling of fullness.
- Adds color, crunch, and flavor to meals and snacks.
- Helps reduce the risk of certain diseases, like heart disease and Type 2 diabetes, later in life.



## Adding Vegetables to Your CACFP Menu

You can serve vegetables as part of a reimbursable breakfast, lunch, supper, or snack in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).

### Breakfast

#### Example 1



#### Example 2



#### Example 3



(up to three times per week)

### Lunch and Supper

#### Example 1



#### Example 2



▲ A second vegetable can be served in place of fruit at lunch and supper.

### Snacks

#### Example 1



#### Example 2



#### Example 3



#### Example 4





## Test Your CACFP Vegetable Knowledge!

Does this food count as a vegetable in the CACFP? Mark Yes or No, and then check your answers on page 4.

- |                        |  |                                      |  |
|------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1. White Potatoes      | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | 8. Canned Tomatoes (store-bought)    | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 2. Avocados            | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | 9. Ketchup                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 3. Macaroni and Cheese | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | 10. Black Beans                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 4. Strawberry Jelly    | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | 11. Rice                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 5. Cornbread           | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | 12. Canned Green Beans (home-canned) | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| 6. Pumpkin             | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |                                      |  |
| 7. Hominy (whole)      | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No |                                      |  |

## Meal Planning Considerations

The chart below shows examples of amounts of food needed to credit as  $\frac{1}{4}$ -cup and  $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup of vegetables in the CACFP. For more information, visit the Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs at <https://foodbuyingguide.fns.usda.gov>.

Vegetable	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup
<b>Carrot, Baby</b>	3 baby carrots	6 baby carrots
<b>Carrot Stick</b> ( $\frac{1}{2}$ " by 4")	3 sticks	6 sticks
<b>Celery Stick</b> ( $\frac{1}{2}$ " by 4")	3 sticks	6 sticks
<b>Corn, on cob</b> (about 5" - 6" long)	$\frac{1}{2}$ ear	1 ear
<b>Cucumber Sticks</b> (3" by $\frac{3}{4}$ ")	3 sticks	6 sticks
<b>Leafy Greens (collard greens, kale, spinach, etc.), Cooked</b>	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup
<b>Leafy Greens (kale, lettuce, spinach, etc.), Raw</b>	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	1 cup
<b>Potato, Sweet</b> (2 $\frac{1}{4}$ " or more in diameter)	$\frac{1}{4}$ sweet potato	$\frac{1}{2}$ sweet potato
<b>Potato, White or Russet</b> (about 6 oz)	$\frac{1}{2}$ potato	1 potato
<b>Tomato, Cherry</b>	3 cherry tomatoes	6 cherry tomatoes
<b>Tomato Slice</b> ( $\frac{1}{8}$ " thick)	4-5 slices	8-10 slices



## Giving Vegetables Credit: How Vegetables Count in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

- ✓ **Vegetables in amounts** smaller than  $\frac{1}{8}$  cup do not credit toward a reimbursable lunch, supper, or snack.
- ✓ **Raw leafy green vegetables** (spinach, kale, collards, and lettuce) credit for half of the amount served. For example, one cup of raw leafy greens credits as  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of vegetables.  
**1 cup raw spinach =  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of vegetables**
- ✓ **Cooked leafy green vegetables** credit for the entire amount served.  
**1 cup steamed spinach = 1 cup of vegetables**
- ✓ **Dried vegetables** credit for twice the amount served. For example:  
 **$\frac{1}{4}$  cup sun-dried tomatoes =  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of vegetables**
- ✓ **Dry beans and peas** (legumes), including black beans, split peas, and lentils, can credit as vegetables or as meat alternates, but cannot credit toward both components in the same meal.
- ✓ **Pureed vegetables** used in smoothies credit as 100 percent vegetable juice. Juice may only be served once per day in the CACFP.
- ✓ **A second, different vegetable** can be served in place of the fruit component at lunch and supper.

### Other Considerations

Reduce the risk of choking by:

- Cutting raw vegetables into smaller pieces.
- Cooking raw vegetables until slightly soft.
- Cutting round, soft vegetables like cherry tomatoes into small pieces no larger than one-half inch ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ").





## Make Fridays Try-Days in the CACFP

Look for vegetables that are grown in your area and have a taste-testing event. Look for recipes, nutrition education resources, and Try Day stickers at: <https://teammnutrition.usda.gov>.



 <b>Spring</b>	 <b>Summer</b>	 <b>Fall</b>	 <b>Winter</b>
Asparagus	Bell Peppers	Brussels Sprouts	Beets
Broccoli	Corn	Cauliflower	Cabbage
Lettuce	Crookneck Squash	Pumpkins	Kale
Spinach	Tomatoes	Sweet Potatoes	Winter Squash

### Test Your CACFP Vegetable Knowledge Answers



1. White Potatoes: Yes
2. Avocados: Yes
3. Macaroni and Cheese: No
4. Strawberry Jelly: No
5. Cornbread: No
6. Pumpkin: Yes
7. Hominy (whole): Yes
8. Canned Tomatoes (store-bought): Yes
9. Ketchup: No
10. Black Beans: Yes
11. Rice: No
12. Canned Green Beans (home-canned): No

4-C Community Coordinated Child Care  
Child and Adult Care Food Program  
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Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

1. What are most fruits and vegetables low in?

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

2. What can fruits and vegetables help with?

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

3. What are three ways to include fruits and vegetables in meals?

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

4. When serving canned or frozen fruits or vegetables, you should always check the label to make sure that these products are not added?

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Why should you choose whole fruits instead of fruit juices?

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

6. What important nutrients do children receive from offering vegetables at meals and snacks?

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

7. What diseases can be reduced by offering vegetables at meals and snacks?

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

8. What food can be claimed as a vegetable or a meat alternate?

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

9. How many times a day can juice be served to non-infants?

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

10. What may be served in place of a fruit component at lunch and supper?

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_



# 4-C Community Coordinated Child Care CACFP Provider Training

Date Completed: \_\_\_\_\_ Training Hours: \_\_\_\_\_

Training Topics Covered: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Provider Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Provider Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of Training: \_\_\_\_\_

Provider Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_