

# 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.

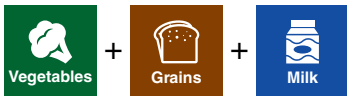


## Adding Vegetables to Your CACFP Menu

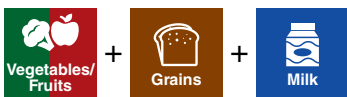
You can serve vegetables as part of a reimbursable breakfast, lunch, supper, or snack in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).

### 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://teamnutrition.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**