



# 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.

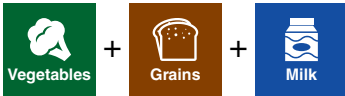


## Adding Vegetables to Your CACFP Menu

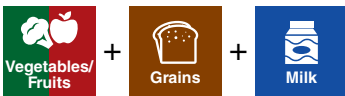
You can serve vegetables as part of a reimbursable breakfast, lunch, supper, or snack in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).

### Breakfast

#### Example 1



#### Example 2



#### Example 3



(up to three times per week)

### Lunch and Supper

#### Example 1



#### Example 2



A second, different 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 [fns.usda.gov/tn/fbg](https://fns.usda.gov/tn/fbg).

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 served in amounts** smaller than  $\frac{1}{8}$  cup do not credit toward a reimbursable breakfast, 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**
- ✓ **Snack-type vegetable products**, such as potato chips, do not contribute toward the vegetable component.
- ✓ **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% 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.
- ✓ **Institutions and facilities that serve** primarily American Indian or Alaska Native participants may substitute vegetables for grains. Additionally, all institutions, and facilities in American Samoa, Guam, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands may serve substitute vegetables for the grains component. Any creditable vegetable, including vegetables such as breadfruit, prairie turnips, plantains, sweet potatoes, and yams, can be substituted for grains.

### 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 [fns.usda.gov/teamnutrition](https://fns.usda.gov/teamnutrition).

Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter
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. Canned Tomatoes (store-bought): **Yes**
7. Pumpkin: **Yes**
8. Hominy (whole): **Yes**
9. Ketchup: **No**
10. Black Beans: **Yes**
11. Rice: **No**
12. Canned Green Beans (home-canned): **No**