

## U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) School Nutrition Programs

# NONCREDITABLE FOODS

Noncreditable foods are foods and beverages that cannot credit toward the USDA meal patterns for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP). Schools and institutions may serve noncreditable foods in addition to the meal components to add variety, help improve acceptability in the meal and satisfy appetites. Some examples include maple syrup on pancakes, salad dressing on tossed greens, and condiments such as ketchup or mustard on sandwiches and other entrees.

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) encourages schools to limit noncreditable foods in school menus. These foods often contain little nutritional value and are high in fat, sugars, and sodium. Menu planners should read labels, be aware of the ingredients in foods, and limit the frequency and amount of less nutritious choices.



All noncreditable foods offered as part of reimbursable meals must count toward the weekly dietary specifications (nutrition standards) for school meals. They must contain zero trans fat and their inclusion cannot cause the menu to exceed the average weekly limits for calories, saturated fat, and sodium. For more information, see the CSDE’s [Meal Patterns](#) Web page.

The chart below lists some examples of noncreditable foods. This list does not include all possible noncreditable foods. For more information, see the CSDE’s [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals](#) and [Crediting Foods](#) Web page.

Examples of Noncreditable Foods *			
Bacon and bacon bits	Dried meat or poultry snacks, e.g., jerky or nuggets	Iced coffee **	Pudding pops
Banana chips	Eggnog **	Iced tea **	Salad dressings
Bran, e.g., oat bran	Egg whites	Jam, jelly	Sherbet
Bread products that are not whole grain-rich	Frozen yogurt	Jerky, e.g., meat, poultry or fish	Smoked snack sticks made with beef and chicken
Butter	Fruit drink, fruit beverage, powdered fruit drink mix **	Lemonade **	Soda, regular and diet **
Candy **	Fruit punch (if not 100 percent juice) **	Limeade **	Soups, canned, e.g., beef barley, beef noodle, turkey or chicken noodle, and turkey or chicken rice
Candy-coated popcorn	Fruit snacks, e.g., fruit roll-ups, wrinkles, twists	Maple syrup	Sour cream
Caramel popcorn	Fruit leathers (100% fruit)	Margarine	Sports drinks
Chocolate drinks, e.g., Yoo-Hoo **	Gelatin, flavored or sugar free	Marshmallows	Spreadable fruit
Coffee (regular, decaffeinated, iced) **	Germ, e.g., wheat germ	Mayonnaise	Summer sausage
Condiments, e.g., ketchup, mustard, relish, barbecue sauce	Honey	Mustard	Syrup
Cranberry cocktail drink **	Hot chocolate **	Nectar drinks **	Tea, regular, herbal, iced **
Cream, half and half	Ice cream	Pepperoni sticks	White rice
Cream cheese	Ice milk	Popcorn	
Cream soups, canned, e.g., cream of mushroom, cream of celery, cream of broccoli		Popcorn cakes	
		Popsicles (not 100% juice)	
		Potato chips	
		Pudding	

\* Snack foods sold a la carte must meet the USDA [Smart Snacks](#) nutrition standards or the [Connecticut Nutrition Standards](#), depending on whether the district participates in [Healthy Food Certification](#) under Section 10-215f of the Connecticut General Statutes.

\*\* These competitive foods and beverages cannot be sold in the USDA school nutrition programs due to federal or state requirements. For more information, see the CSDE’s [Competitive Foods](#) Web page.

## NONCREDITABLE FOODS, continued

### RESOURCES

Competitive Foods (CSDE Web Page):  
[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=333772](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=333772)

Connecticut Nutrition Standards (CSDE Web Page): [www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=320754](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=320754)

Crediting Foods (CSDE Web Page):  
[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=333796](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=333796)

*Food Buying Guide for School Meal Programs:*  
[www.fns.usda.gov/tn/food-buying-guide-school-meal-programs](http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/food-buying-guide-school-meal-programs)

Healthy Food Certification (CSDE Web Page):  
[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322420](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=322420)

Meal Patterns (CSDE Web Page):  
[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=333770](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=333770)

Menu Planning (CSDE Web Page):  
[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=333780](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=333780)

*Menu Planning Guide for School Meals:*  
[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=334320](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=334320)

*Product Formulation Statements:*  
[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/nslp/crediting/pfs.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/nslp/crediting/pfs.pdf)

Smart Snacks Nutrition Standards (CSDE Web Page):  
[www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&pm=1&Q=335400](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&pm=1&Q=335400)



For more information, see the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals](#) and [Meal Patterns](#) and [Crediting Foods](#) Web pages or contact the [school nutrition programs](#) staff in the CSDE Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education, 25 Industrial Park Road, Middletown, CT 06457.

This handout is available at [www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/nslp/crediting/noncreditsnp.pdf](http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/nslp/crediting/noncreditsnp.pdf).

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- (1) *mail:* U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) *fax:* (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) *email:* [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

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