



VEGETABLES

The CACFP regulations require that lunch and supper meals contain a serving of vegetables as specified in the meal patterns. A serving of vegetables that contribute to the meal pattern includes:

- fresh vegetables
- frozen vegetables
- dried vegetables
- canned vegetables
- cooked dry beans and peas (legumes)
- full-strength vegetable juice

A second, different vegetable may be served in place of the fruit requirement. Two servings of the same vegetable provided at the same meal do not count as two different vegetables and cannot be served in place of the fruit requirement. For example, two servings of broccoli count as one serving of vegetables and not two different vegetables. Similarly, the same vegetable served in different forms, such as raw carrots and cooked carrots, count as only one serving of vegetable.

Vegetable Mixtures

Mixtures of different types of vegetables, whose quantities are not known, such as frozen carrots and peas, credit as one serving of vegetables. However, if the program operator has documentation from the manufacturer that provides information about the quantity of each vegetable in the mixture, then the food may be credited as two servings of vegetables, provided the minimum serving amount of each vegetable offered is an $\frac{1}{8}$ cup. Please note minimum creditable amounts do not apply to the infant meal pattern.

Cooked dry beans or peas (legumes) may be used to meet all or part of the vegetables component. Beans and peas include, but are not limited to, black beans, fresh edamame, garbanzo beans, lentils, kidney beans, mature lima beans, navy beans, pinto beans, and split peas. Beans and peas may also count as a meat alternate, but not as both a vegetable and a meat alternate in the same meal. Roasted soy beans (soy nuts) may also be credited as either a vegetable or as a meat alternate but not as both in the same meal. When crediting roasted soy beans as a vegetable, volume must be used for crediting purposes (for example, a $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of roasted soy beans is equivalent to a $\frac{1}{4}$ cup vegetable, regardless of the weight).

Snack chips, such as potato chips, are not creditable. These products do not meet the vegetables component requirements. These processed food items are typically high in sodium, fat, and/or sugar and low in nutrients.

Home-canned vegetable products are not allowed for service in the CACFP due to health and safety reasons. See the Resource Section on pages 133-135 for additional information on produce safety. Home frozen vegetable products are allowed. For example, when sweet corn is in season (when it is the most economical to buy and tastes the best), you may freeze cobs on a sheet pan for use in the winter months when fresh corn is not available or is very expensive.



Serving Size and Yield for Selected Vegetables

This chart is a snapshot of commonly used vegetables that can be found in the *Food Buying Guide*. Please note that the serving sizes and yields are approximate. Double check to ensure that your serving sizes meet meal pattern requirements. The information in the *Food Buying Guide* can assist you in menu planning and purchasing. See the Resource Section on pages 133-135 for information on the *Food Buying Guide* Interactive Web-Based Tool.

Vegetable	Serving Size and Yield
Carrot Stick	1 stick is 4 inches long and ½ inch wide. 3 sticks = ¼ cup
Cauliflower	1 medium head = about 6 cups florets
Celery Sticks	1 stick is 4 inches long and ½ inch wide. 3 sticks = ¼ cup
Cucumber Sticks	1 stick is 3 inches long and ¾ inch wide. 3 sticks (pared or unpared) = ¼ cup
Lettuce Head (Iceberg)*	¼ cup raw, shredded vegetable or ¼ cup raw vegetable pieces
Lettuce, Leaf*	¼ cup raw vegetable pieces
Olives, Ripe	8 (large) olives = ¼ cup
Pickles	⅓ (large) pickle = ¼ cup
Radishes	7 small radishes = ¼ cup
Tomatoes, Large/Extra Large	4 slices, ⅛ inch thick = ¼ cup
Tomatoes, Small/Medium	5 slices, ⅛ inch thick = ¼ cup
Tomatoes, Cherry	3 tomatoes = about ¼ cup

For simplicity, this table of serving sizes for vegetables is based on a ¼ cup serving.

*Raw leafy greens credit half of the volume served. For example, a ¼ cup raw leafy greens credits as a ⅛ cup vegetable.



VEGETABLES

Use this section as a guide to identify creditable vegetables and products that contain creditable vegetables. This is NOT an all-inclusive list. For information on creditable vegetables commonly served in Child Nutrition Programs, see the *Food Buying Guide*.

Details in the “Additional Information” column help you to determine if the product is creditable and where to go to get more information, for example the *Food Buying Guide*.

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Barbecue Sauce			X	Barbecue sauce is a condiment and is not creditable.
Bean Flour		X		Pasta products made of flour(s) from one vegetable subgroup may credit toward the appropriate vegetable subgroup.
Beans or Peas (Legumes), Canned or Dry	X			Cooked, dry or canned beans or peas (kidney, garbanzo, black, lentils, etc.) may be credited as either a vegetable or as a meat alternate, but not as both in the same meal. See the Vegetables section in the <i>Food Buying Guide</i> .
Bean Sprouts (canned or cooked)	X			See the Vegetables section in the <i>Food Buying Guide</i> for canned or cooked sprouts. Please be aware, for food safety reasons, raw sprouts are not creditable.
Carrot Bread		X		Carrot bread must contain at least an 1/8 cup (2 tablespoons) of visible vegetable per serving. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a Product Formulation Statement. Generally, these products contain an insufficient amount of vegetable per serving.
Catsup or Chili Sauce			X	Catsup and chili sauce are condiments and are not creditable. See the Other Foods section in the <i>Food Buying Guide</i> for purchasing information.



VEGETABLES

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Chickpeas, Roasted (Roasted Garbanzo Beans)	X			Roasted chickpeas may be credited as either a vegetable or a meat alternate, but not as both in the same meal. A ¼ cup of roasted chickpeas credit as a ¼ cup of vegetable or a 1 oz eq of meat alternate, but not as both at the same meal. Please note they may be a choking hazard for some populations.
Coleslaw		X		The vegetable portion of coleslaw, without condiments or other ingredients, is creditable. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a Product Formulation Statement. See the Vegetables section in the <i>Food Buying Guide</i> .
Corn, Fresh (Kernel or On-the-Cob)	X			See the Vegetables section in the <i>Food Buying Guide</i> .
Corn Chips			X	Corn chips are classified as a grain (not a vegetable) when made from creditable ingredients. See the Grains section in the <i>Food Buying Guide</i> .
Corn Syrup			X	Corn syrup is a sugar, not a vegetable. See the Other Foods section in the <i>Food Buying Guide</i> for purchasing information. Please note that corn syrup is not recommended for children under 1 year of age.
Dehydrated Vegetables	X			Dehydrated vegetables are creditable based on the volume served. See the Vegetables section in the <i>Food Buying Guide</i> .
Dry Spice Mixes			X	Spices do not contribute toward meal pattern requirements.
French-Fried Potatoes		X		French-fried potatoes that are air-fried, pre-fried, flash-fried, or par-fried by a commercial manufacturer may be served, when reheated by a method other than frying. Foods deep-fat fried onsite are not creditable. See the Vegetables section in the <i>Food Buying Guide</i> .



VEGETABLES

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Gelatin Containing Vegetables (Aspic)		X		Gelatin containing vegetables must contain at least an 1/8 cup (2 tablespoons) of visible vegetable per serving. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a Product Formulation Statement.
Gravy Base			X	Gravy base is not a vegetable and is not creditable.
Greens, All Varieties (such as Mustard, Collard, and Chard)	X			See the Vegetables section in the <i>Food Buying Guide</i> .
Hominy, Canned	X			See the Vegetables section in the <i>Food Buying Guide</i> . A 1/4 cup of canned, drained hominy credits as 1/4 cup vegetable. See Grains Section for information on crediting dried hominy.
Juice Blends -100% Vegetable and/or Fruit	X			Vegetable and fruit juice blends that are combinations of full-strength 100% fruit juices are creditable. May be credited toward the vegetables component when vegetable is the most prominent ingredient.
Ketchup (Catsup)			X	Ketchup is a condiment and is not creditable. See the Other Foods section in the <i>Food Buying Guide</i> for purchasing information.
Macaroni Salad (also Pasta Salads)		X		Macaroni Salad containing vegetables must contain at least an 1/8 cup (2 tablespoons) of visible vegetable per serving. Document with a standardized recipe or a Product Formulation Statement. See Grains section for documenting meal components of pasta ingredients.
Mayonnaise, Salad Dressing, Margarine, Salad Oil, and Butter			X	These products are condiments and are not creditable. See the Other Foods section in the <i>Food Buying Guide</i> for purchasing information.
Mustard			X	Mustard is a condiment and is not creditable. See the Other Foods section in the <i>Food Buying Guide</i> for purchasing information.



VEGETABLES

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Olives	X			Olives may be credited if a minimum of an 1/8 cup (2 tablespoons) is provided. Please note that most olives are high in sodium.
Onion Rings		X		Onion rings that are air-fried, pre-fried, flash-fried, or par-fried by a commercial manufacturer may be served but must be reheated by a method other than frying. Foods deep-fat fried onsite are not creditable. To credit as a vegetable, this product must contain at least an 1/8 cup (2 tablespoons) of cooked onion per serving. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a Product Formulation Statement. Please note that most onion rings are high in fat.
Pasta/Noodles (made from Beans/Peas)		X		Pasta/noodles (made from 100% bean/pea flour) is creditable toward the vegetables component based on volume served. For pasta/noodles made with less than 100% bean/pea flour, document meal pattern contribution with a CN label or a Product Formulation Statement.
Pickle Relish			X	Pickle relish is a condiment and is not creditable. See the Other Foods section in the <i>Food Buying Guide</i> for purchasing information.
Pickles	X			Pickles may be credited if a minimum of an 1/8 cup (2 tablespoons) is provided. Please note that most pickles are high in sodium.
Pie Filling: Sweet Potato, Pumpkin		X		Pie fillings containing vegetables must contain at least an 1/8 cup (2 tablespoons) of visible vegetable per serving. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a Product Formulation Statement.



VEGETABLES

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Pizza Sauce		X		Pizza sauce may be credited if a minimum of an 1/8 cup (2 tablespoons) is provided. An 1/8 cup of pizza sauce equals an 1/8 cup of vegetable. See the Vegetables section in the <i>Food Buying Guide</i> . Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a Product Formulation Statement.
Potato Chips (and Other Vegetable Chips), Fried			X	Potato chips and other vegetable chips contain many different variations in ingredients and are not creditable. These products are high in fat and sodium and should be served on a limited frequency. See the Other Foods section in the <i>Food Buying Guide</i> for purchasing information.
Potatoes and Potato Skins	X			See the Vegetables section in the <i>Food Buying Guide</i> .
Potatoes, Dehydrated	X			See the Vegetables section in the <i>Food Buying Guide</i> .
Pumpkin Bread			X	Pumpkin bread typically does not contain at least an 1/8 cup (2 tablespoons) of visible vegetable per serving.
Salsa	X			Salsa is creditable toward the vegetables component. See the Vegetables section in the <i>Food Buying Guide</i> .
Soups: Canned, Condensed, or Ready-To-Serve (Minestrone, Tomato, Tomato with other basic components such as Rice and Vegetable, and Vegetable with basic components such as Meat and Poultry)	X			1 cup of reconstituted or ready-to-serve soup provides a 1/4 cup of vegetable. See the Vegetables section in the <i>Food Buying Guide</i> . Please note that 1 cup of soup may be an excessive volume for young children.



VEGETABLES

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Soups, Homemade		X		Homemade soups must contain at least an ⅛ cup (2 tablespoons) of visible vegetable per serving. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe.
Soy Beans, Roasted (Soy Nuts)	X			Roasted soy beans may be credited as either a vegetable or a meat alternate, but not as both in the same meal. A ¼ cup of roasted soy beans credit as a ¼ cup of vegetable or a 1 oz eq meat alternate, but not both at the same meal. Please note they may be a choking hazard for some populations. When including soy and soy products in menus, you should consider the potential food allergies or intolerances.
Spaghetti Sauce (Meatless)	X			Spaghetti sauce is creditable toward the vegetables component. See the Vegetables section in the <i>Food Buying Guide</i> .
Vegetable Juice Blends		X		Vegetable juice blends that are full-strength 100% juice are creditable.
Vegetable Spirals (from Fresh Vegetables such as Carrot or Squash)	X			Creditable toward vegetables component based on the volume served.
Vegetable Sticks/ Straws			X	Generally, these products contain an insufficient amount of vegetable per serving.
Vegetables, Fresh, Frozen, Canned, or Dried (All Varieties)	X			See the Vegetables section in the <i>Food Buying Guide</i> .
Zucchini Bread (Squash in Bread)		X		Zucchini bread must contain at least an ⅛ cup (2 tablespoons) of visible vegetable per serving. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a Product Formulation Statement. Generally, vegetable breads contain an insufficient amount of vegetable per serving.