

June 2026

CACFP MONTHLY UPDATE

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April

Claim Submission

June 29, 2026 is the last day to
submit your **April 2026** claim

We strongly encourage you to submit claims as early as possible and not wait until the last minute. Planning ahead allows time to address any questions or issues that may arise, especially considering the two-step claim approval process.

CACFP Open Office Hours

Need Help with CACFP? We're Here for You!

Have questions about your CACFP budget, sponsor or provider agreements, provider sheets, or other program requirements? Join our monthly CACFP Office Hours from 2:00–3:00 p.m. on Microsoft Teams.

During this open session, CACFP staff will be available to answer your questions, provide technical assistance, and offer guidance to support your program's success!

June 10, 2026

[Use this link to join the CACFP Open Office Hours](#)

CACFP Annual Training

CACFP Annual Training Presentation Slides on CN Website

The Maine Department of Education- Child Nutrition (CN) hosted annual CACFP training at Jeff's Catering in Brewer, Maine, on April 28. Training presentation slides sets are available on the Child Nutrition website here under the [CACFP section](#).

Questions asked at Annual Training

WG/WGR Guidance for Late Arrivals and Early Dismissals

When unexpected schedule changes happen — such as delayed openings, late arrivals, early dismissals, weather events, or other emergencies — sponsors may wonder how this impacts the CACFP Whole Grain-Rich (WG/WGR) daily requirement.

If the planned WG/WGR item was listed on the menu for the meal or snack that was scheduled to be served but was ultimately skipped due to the partial closure, the requirement is still considered met for that day, even if no other WG/WGR item was served.

For example, if a center planned to serve WG cereal at breakfast but breakfast was canceled due to a delayed opening, the site would still meet the daily WG/WGR requirement as long as the WG/WGR item was included on the posted menu for that day.

As always, menus should accurately reflect what was planned and any changes related to emergencies or schedule disruptions should be documented as needed.

How long does a program hold a CN Label if menus change quarterly?

All CACFP documentation must be kept for three years plus the current.

Using Online CACFP Crediting Tools

Several providers have recently shared and used the Healthy Eating Research CACFP Calculator available at [Alliance for a Healthier Generation CACFP Calculator](#). This can be a helpful tool for estimating whether certain yogurts, cereals, or milk products may meet CACFP requirements.

While this website may be a useful resource, sponsors and providers are still responsible for ensuring that all foods served are CACFP creditable and compliant with current meal pattern requirements. A screenshot or result from the calculator alone does not replace the need to review product labels and documentation.

Providers should continue to:

- Review Nutrition Facts labels and ingredient lists
- Verify sugar limits for cereal and yogurt
- Ensure milk types meet CACFP age requirements
- Maintain required product documentation when applicable

Online tools can support decision-making, but the final responsibility for serving compliant foods remains with the sponsor and/or provider.

Expanding Fluid Milk Options in the Child Nutrition Programs

On May 8, 2026, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service published the final rule, [Expanding Fluid Milk Options in Child Nutrition Programs](#). This rule is effective June 8, 2026. It expands fluid milk options by allowing operators of the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, Child and Adult Care Food Program, and the Special Milk Program for Children to offer whole and reduced-fat milk to participants two years and older. This rule codifies milkfat requirements following enactment of the Whole Milk for Healthy Kids Act of 2025 ([P.L. 119-69](#)) and supports the statutory requirements for meals to align with the goals of the [Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2025–2030](#).



CACFP UPDATES

Fluid Milk Requirements Updated

The updated fluid milk requirements for each age group are summarized below:

MORE CHOICES

HEALTHY CHILDREN

1 YEAR OLD

Fluid milk served to children 1 year old must be **UNFLAVORED WHOLE MILK.**



2 THROUGH 5 YEARS OLD

Fluid milk served to children 2 through 5 years old may be **UNFLAVORED WHOLE, REDUCED-FAT, LOW-FAT, OR FAT-FREE MILK.**



6 YEARS AND OLDER & ADULT PARTICIPANTS

Fluid milk served to children 6 years and older and adult participants may be **UNFLAVORED OR FLAVORED, WHOLE, REDUCED-FAT, LOW-FAT, OR FAT-FREE MILK.**



CACFP Program Operators are **not required**, but **are encouraged**, to make changes to menus under this provision.

Program operators have discretion to decide which varieties of fluid milk to offer. For example, program operators may choose to offer unflavored, whole milk as an option to all program participants to align with recommendations from the Dietary Guidelines to consume full-fat dairy and less added sugars.



The revised regulations under this rulemaking give menu planners more flexibility to offer fluid milk options that meet the dietary preferences of program participants and are compatible with product availability, cost considerations, and other local factors.

Accordingly, this final rule amends

7 CFR 210.10(d)(1)(i), 7 CFR 215.7a(a), 7 CFR 220.8(d), and 7 CFR 226.20(a)(1) of the regulatory text.



Offering the right milk options supports healthy choices and happy, thriving participants!



Serving Ham in the CACFP

In the April 2026 edition of the CACFP Monthly Newsletter, information was provided concerning “Crediting Luncheon Meat”. The article speaks to the USDA Food Buying Guide (FBG) being a tool that provides crediting information for over 2,100 food items, including meats and meat alternate foods, and that the FBG does not contain crediting information for luncheon meats; therefore, these products must be accompanied by a Child Nutrition (CN) label or a Product Formulation Statement.

The FBG provides additional information regarding “ham with water type products”, that may offer some flexibility to providers and sponsors when serving these types of products. In the FBG footnotes, it reads-

³⁵ For products labeled “Ham and Water Products X% of weight is added ingredients” to be properly utilized in Child Nutrition Programs, you should either 1) purchase a CN labeled product or 2) take out the percent of added water/ingredients by multiplying the finished weight by the percent added ingredients and then subtracting that amount from the finished weight, divide by the manufacturers cooking yield to obtain the raw weight of the product and then multiply the Food Buying Guide yield for the specific cut of pork used to process the product.

With cooked, ready-to-eat ham and water products, you can take out the percent of added water/natural juices/solution by multiplying the finished weight by the percent added water/natural juices/seasoning solution and then subtracting that amount from the finished weight product to calculate the amount of creditable meat product. Below are a few examples of ham products with water/solution added.



Lets' use the Great Value sliced honey ham as an example. It contains up to 20% of a seasoning solution.

9 oz package x .20 (20 percent) solution = 1.8 oz of solution

9 oz of product – 1.8 oz of solution = **7.2 oz of creditable meat**

7.2 oz of creditable meat yields:

- 14- .5 oz servings
- 7- 1 oz servings
- 4.8- 1.5 oz servings

Using 1 pound (16 ounces of product as purchased)-

16 oz purchased product x .20 (20 percent) solution – 3.2 oz of solution

16 oz of product – 3.2 oz of solution = **12.8 oz of creditable meat**

12.8 oz of creditable meat yields:

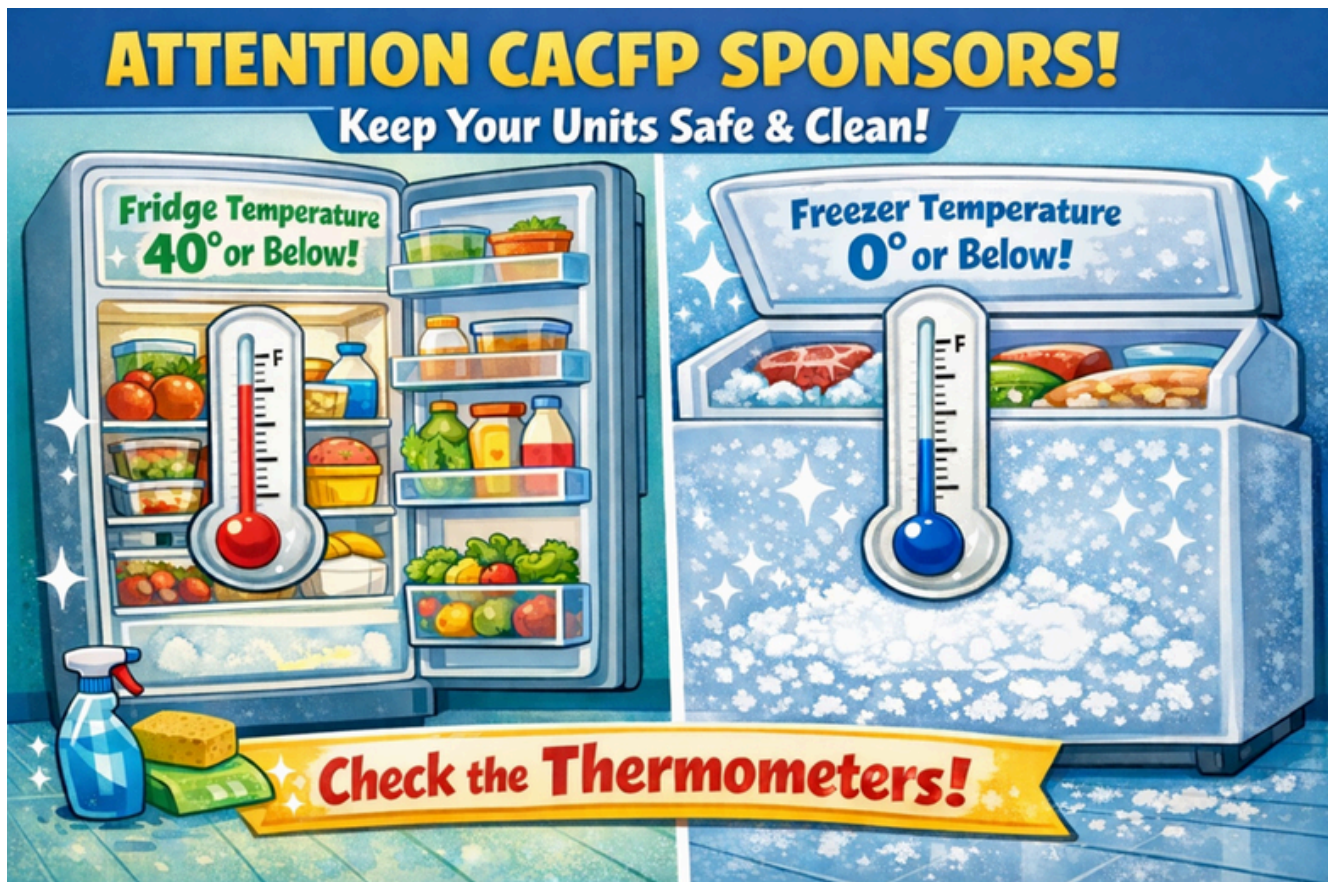
- 25- .5 oz servings
- 12- 1 oz servings
- 8.5- 1.5 oz servings

Food Safety Reminder

Proper refrigerator and freezer maintenance are essential for keeping food safe in the CACFP program.

- Refrigerators should stay at 40°F or below.
- Freezers should stay at 0°F or below.
- Best practice is to check and record temperatures daily.
- Clean spills immediately to prevent bacteria and odors.
- Remove expired or spoiled foods regularly.
- Label and rotate foods using the “first in, first out” method.

These simple daily practices help prevent foodborne illness, maintain a clean kitchen, and keep meals safe for everyone served through CACFP.

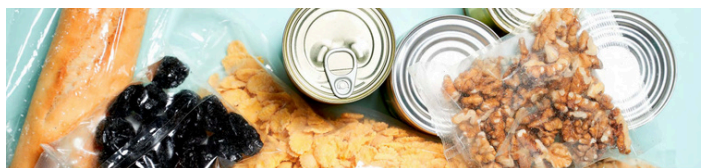


Shelf-Stable Superstars: Your CACFP Creditable Lifesavers

CACFP Creditable shelf-stable foods are the unsung heroes of every CACFP kitchen. Whether you serve children or adults, they're there when fresh foods run out, storage space is tight, or menus need a quick change. Reliable, convenient, and compliant, they help keep meals on track and stress levels down.

Find out how shelf-stable options can simplify menu planning and keep your program running smoothly in the articles linked below. Keeping a mix of fresh, frozen, canned, and packaged foods on hand can help you stay prepared for all your cooking and meal service needs. These versatile staples can help reduce the frequency of grocery trips, minimize food waste, and ensure you always have nutritious options available. Read on to discover foods that can keep your pantry stocked and ready for weeks, months, or even longer.

[12 Nutrient Dense, Shelf-Stable Foods- National CACFP Association](#)



Shelf-Stable Superstars: Your CACFP Creditable Lifesavers

In any CACFP setting, whether you're serving children or adults, #CACFPCreditable shelf-stable foods are your kitchen's quiet champions. They're always ready to step in when fresh items spoil, fridge space runs low or menus need a quick pivot. Best of all, they can help keep your meals compliant and stress-free.

Why Shelf-Stable Items Deserve a Spot in Every Pantry

- **Fridge Space Saver:** Reduces reliance on refrigeration, freeing up space for perishable foods.
- **Always Available:** Ideal for unexpected menu changes, low inventory days or delayed deliveries.
- **Cost-Effective:** Can be purchased in bulk and have a longer shelf life, which can minimize waste and maximize your food budget.
- **Works Well with Others:** Easily pairs with fresh, frozen or other shelf-stable ingredients to create balanced, reimbursable meals and snacks.

Shelf-Stable Solutions That Keep You on Track

Even with the best planning, things can go wrong in the kitchen. Shelf-stable foods are ready to step in and help you serve reimbursable meals and snacks without missing a beat.

Kitchen Challenge	Shelf-Stable Swap
Fresh fruit spoiled	Use canned fruit or applesauce
No milk in the refrigerator	Serve age-appropriate shelf-stable milk
Ran out of cooked chicken	Replace with canned chicken
Fresh vegetable order was delayed	Heat canned carrots, peas or corn
Bread went moldy	Deconstruct meal and substitute with crackers

Pantry Picks for Every CACFP Meal Component

These shelf-stable ingredients are smart staples to keep on hand, making it easier to build reimbursable meals and snacks across all CACFP meal components. See which food items are the best fit for your center or family child care home and add them to your next purchase!



Age-appropriate shelf-stable milk



Crackers
Whole grain-rich cereal*
Brown rice
Whole wheat pasta
Old-fashioned or one-minute oats



Canned tuna or chicken
Nut, seed or soy nut butter
Canned or dried beans
Shelf-stable yogurt*



100% Shelf-stable, pasteurized vegetable juice
Canned vegetables
• Mixed vegetables
• Carrots
• Green beans
• Sweet potatoes
• Peas
• Pureed pumpkin
• Tomato sauce
• Corn



100% Shelf-stable, pasteurized fruit juice
Canned fruits
• Peaches
• Pears
• Pineapple
• Mandarin oranges
• Applesauce
• Mixed fruit
Dried fruit
• Raisins
• Cranberries
• Apricots
• Prunes

*Breakfast cereals must contain no more than 6 grams of added sugars per dry ounce.
*Yogurts must contain no more than 12 grams of added sugars per 6 ounces.

Confirming a Product Formulation Statement is Valid

Recently, Tyson recently informed us through a general inquiry, their product formulation statements are only good for a year after the signed date. Below, example guidance for contacting a vendor to validate the purchased processed item in question credits and contributes to the meal pattern.

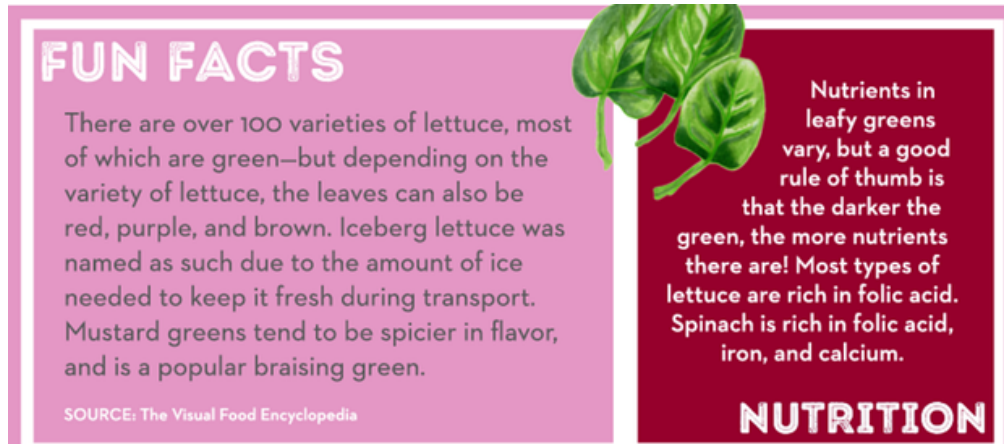
1. Identify the UPC on the bag of the purchased item.



2. Call the customer support number
3. Provide customer support with the UPC number
4. Ask if there is a UPC match with a PFS
5. Ask customer support to email/mail the PFS document
6. Retain PFS records and inquiry/update as applicable

June Harvest of the Month

Leafy Greens



[Child Nutrition- Harvest of the Month Leafy Greens Fact Sheet- 12.17.2024.pdf](#)

[Child Nutrition- Harvest of the Month Leafy Greens Recipes for Schools- 12.17.2024.pdf](#)

Join the Maine Harvest of the Month (HOM) Program! Take the pledge and join dozens of schools and childcare sites in bringing more healthy, local food to Maine children while supporting Maine farmers and producers!

By participating in the Maine Harvest of the Month program, CACFP Sponsors are pledging for the school year to:

- Serve the local HOM product at least 2x per month (local = Maine grown or caught)
- Display HOM materials provided by the Department of Education's Child Nutrition team

In return, the DOE Maine Harvest of the Month team pledges to provide participating Sponsors with:

- Printed marketing materials (IE: posters, recipe cards, stickers)
- Program training and ongoing technical support, as needed
- A monthly newsletter
- Recognition in participating in HOM

Training Opportunities



The Maine Farm and Sea to School Network is excited to host the 7th Maine Farm and Sea to School Conference, the first state-wide convening since 2019.

This event is open to everyone and is dedicated to Farm and Sea to School in Maine. Join schools, early childhood education (ECE) sites, farmers, fishermen, advocates, and partners from across the state for a full day of networking, hands-on workshops, and learning.

Together we'll explore increasing local food in cafeterias, growing school gardens, and integrating agriculture and food systems into the curriculum all while building the connections that make farm and sea to school thrive in Maine.

Together, we can nourish our students, support our farmers and fishermen, strengthen our local economy, and ensure every child in Maine grows up with the food and agricultural literacy to build a more resilient, just local food system for all.

When: July 17, 2026

Where: The Ecology School, Saco, Maine

Learn more and register today at mainefarmtoschool.org/mefarmtoschoolconference

CACFP: Nurturing Healthy Habits: Promoting Positive Eating Behaviors in Children

June 16th 2026 3pm EST

Establishing healthy eating habits early in life sets the foundation for children's growth, development, and lifelong well-being. In this webinar, participants will explore how nutrition in the early years influences health outcomes and why those early food experiences matter. This session will provide practical, easy-to-apply strategies to help children develop positive relationships with food. Participants will learn how to create supportive mealtime routines, build encouraging food environments, and use interactive activities to make healthy eating enjoyable. Whether working in child care settings or supporting families, attendees will leave with tools and ideas they can immediately implement to promote healthy eating behaviors in children.

To Register: <https://ilearn.theicn.org/learn/courses/791/cacfp-nurturing-healthy-habits-promoting-positive-eating-behaviors-in-children-june-16th-2026-3pm-est>



Dignity at the Table: Nutrition and Compliance in Adult Day Care

Thursday, July 16, 2026 | 2:00 pm - 2:30 pm Eastern

Adult Day Care programs serve participants with diverse nutrition needs, functional abilities, and health conditions. In this webinar, you'll explore practical strategies for supporting the health and dignity of adult participants while maintaining CACFP compliance. Topics include therapeutic diets, texture modifications, functional dining considerations, and how to navigate documentation and regulatory requirements within the program. Learning Objectives: Identify common nutrition needs and functional dining considerations for adults participating in CACFP programs. Recognize key CACFP compliance considerations for Adult Day Care programs.

To Register: <https://info.cacfp.org/ap/Events/Register/AnFxDXKfVCdCN>



Thursday, July 30, 2026 | 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm Eastern

Did you know that the CACFP provides nutritious meals and snacks to over 4.5 million children and adults every day? This program is more than a meal—it's a powerful way to strengthen your program while making a meaningful difference in your community. By participating in the CACFP, you can empower your program to serve healthy and nutritious meals, receive valuable reimbursement, and access a nationwide network of caregivers and resources. This not only helps enhance nutrition security but also makes your program more competitive by showing families your commitment to their well-being.

Join us to explore how the CACFP can transform your program and help you create a lasting impact on the children and families you serve!

To Register: <https://info.cactfp.org/ap/Events/Register/nvFOjn4iECNCZ>

Serving Vegetables in the CACFP

USDA has a free, on-demand webinar available titled [CACFP Halftime: Serving Vegetables in CACFP | Food and Nutrition Service](#). This webinar presents creative and appealing ways to offer vegetables in CACFP meals and snacks. It highlights menu planning flexibilities and features a frequently asked questions section that addresses common concerns about serving vegetables as part of reimbursable breakfasts, lunches, suppers, and snacks in the CACFP. USDA has additional resources regarding serving vegetables in the CACFP here- [Serving Vegetables in the CACFP | Food and Nutrition Service](#)

Maine Office of Child and Family Services
Early Care and Education Division's Listening Tour

VIRTUAL TOWN HALLS 2026

Join Maine's Office of Child and Family Services virtually by stake holder group for a focused conversation based on needs and opportunities.

OCFS warmly invites you to share your experiences and insights. We want to hear from those who are closest to and most impacted by the early care and education sector, including parents and families of children from birth to age 12, employers, and community partners. Join us for a series of virtual town halls where your voice can help shape the future of early care and education in Maine. This series is part of a wider effort of in-person events.

Two virtual town halls will be offered monthly organized by group.

May: Higher Education, Training, Career Technical Professionals

May 18th 1PM-2:30PM OR May 21st 9AM-10:30AM

June: Business / Employers

June 8th 2:00PM-3:30PM OR June 18th 9:00AM-10:30AM

July: Out of School Time Professionals / Representatives of Municipalities

July 20th 12:00PM-1:30PM OR July 30th 3:00PM-4:30PM

August: Early Childhood Community Partners / Non-Profits / SAUs

August 6th 2:00PM-3:30PM OR August 10th 9:00AM-10:30AM

September: Families

September 16th 5:30PM-7:00PM OR September 21st 5:30PM-7:00PM

October: Early Childhood Provider staff, leadership, owners and operators

October 15th 5:30PM-7:00PM OR October 20th 2:00PM-3:30PM

REGISTRATION REQUIRED



Questions? Contact megan.swanson@maine.gov



All Maine Children & Families

**SAFE, STABLE,
HAPPY, HEALTHY**

Maine Office of Child and Family Services invites you to join leadership and key program staff for an in-person event to share how early care and education affects your employment, your family, and your community.

COMMUNITY CIRCLES

5:30-7PM

family friendly - child care provided!

New Locations Added!

PORTLAND: June 2nd The Opportunity Alliance - 50 Lydia Lane, Portland

BELFAST: June 10th Waldo County YMCA - 157 Lincolnville Avenue, Belfast

BATH: June 16th Mid Coast Community Action Program - 34 Wing Farm Parkway, Bath

FARMINGTON June 30th Judith Frost Hope Center (WMCA) 20 Church Street, East Wilton

CARIBOU: July 8th Caribou Parks & Recreation Center – 55 Bennett Drive, Caribou

CALAIS: July 28th Washington County Community College – College Drive, Calais

ELLSWORTH: July 29th ACAP Service Center – 27 Avery Lane, Ellsworth

LEWISTON: August 19th Connors Elementary – 400 Bartlett Street, Lewiston

DOVER-FOXCROFT: August 26th Central Hall Commons 152 East Main Street

RSVP HERE



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