

## Mid Michigan Child Care Food Program

Mid Michigan Child Care Centers, Inc.

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[www.midmichigancc.com](http://www.midmichigancc.com)

Dear Child Care Provider:

## **National CACFP Week is March 16-22, 2025!!!**

National CACFP Week is a national education and information campaign sponsored annually the third week of March by the National CACFP Sponsors Association. It is designed to raise awareness on how the USDA's Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) works to combat hunger.

We appreciate each of our CACFP providers for all the time, energy, and effort put into serving nourishing meals in your programs!

During CACFP Week it is a great time to promote the Child and Adult Care Food Program in your community and beyond. Enclosed in this packet you will find a sample press release you can submit to local media as well as a sample letter to write to your representatives. With all the uncertainty in Washington these days, it is super important that representatives understand how important the CACFP is to operating your child care home or center. Please consider using the letter to implore your representatives to keep the CACFP fully funded.

Enjoy the rest of the enclosed materials to celebrate CACFP Week with the children in your care!

Again, thank you so much for your commitment to the health of Michigan's children. We appreciate all that you do, more than you can possibly know!

Rachel L. Appold

CEO

Mid Michigan Child Care Food Program

## PRESS RELEASE

**“This program provides over  
1.8 billion meals and snacks to over  
4.5 million children and adults daily.”**

**DATE:** Date  
**TO:** Local Newspaper  
**FROM:** Your Organization Name  
Address

**FOR: IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**SUBJECT:** National Child & Adult Care Food Program Week: March 16-22, 2025

The primary goal of the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) is to serve nutritious meals to children in family child care homes, child care centers, and afterschool programs. The CACFP also serves children under the age of 18 in emergency shelters and adults in day care. Secondary goals of the food program include: 1. the establishment of positive eating habits at the earliest stages of development, 2. a reduction of future health care and education costs due to lack of proper early development, and 3. training and support for local child care personnel.

During National CACFP Week, (Your Organization Name) joins with all other organizations nation-wide working in the CACFP in acknowledging the many ways our community benefits from the program.

Children and adults that are cared for by providers participating in the CACFP benefit from nutritious meals that ensure proper development. Children in CACFP care settings receive meals that are nutritionally superior to those served to children in comparable child care settings not participating in the CACFP. These children also benefit from early nutrition education that helps them establish positive eating habits that will enrich the quality of their diet throughout their life. Research shows that CACFP reduces food insecurity and plays a vital, clear role in promoting nutrition security.

Parents of children in child care are assured that their child(ren) receives high quality meals. With proper nutrition, the child is less likely to experience illness and fatigue and will develop at a normal physical and intellectual pace. Good nutrition is the recipe for an all-around happier child. By expanding access and strengthening CACFP, working families can ensure that their children are well cared for and receive the nutrient-rich diet and tools they need to be healthy.

Providers receive nutrition education and support services from their CACFP sponsor that help them serve nutritious meals and create a positive eating environment for children. Research shows that the CACFP is an indicator of an overall higher quality of child care. Reimbursement for CACFP participation supports providers in offering nutritious meals to those in their care. As a result, CACFP providers serve more fruits, vegetables, and milk than non-CACFP child care providers.

This program provides over 1.8 billion meals and snacks to over 4.5 million children daily in child care centers, family day care homes, after-school programs, and emergency shelters, and over 137,000 adults in adult day care. Over 80,000 child care centers and 72,000 family day care providers work with 500 sponsors to use CACFP to provide children with high quality nutrition and learning experiences.

Please join us in honoring all CACFP providers for their invaluable work done on behalf of (Your State) children.

**CONTACT:** (Your Name, Phone, Email Address)

**MORE INFO:** [www.cacfp.org](http://www.cacfp.org)



**CACFP is an Indicator of Quality Care**

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

**Learn more at [www.cacfp.org](http://www.cacfp.org)**

# LETTER TO CONGRESS

(Date)

Senator (First and Last Name)

(Address)

(City, State Zip)

Dear Senator (Last Name):

March 16-22, 2025 is National Child & Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Week. The CACFP is a federal program that provides reimbursements for nutritious meals and snacks to participating child care centers, afterschool programs, family day care homes, emergency shelters, and adult day care centers. The CACFP has been cited both in academic studies and in government reports for the contributions it makes to the well-being of children being cared for in our child care system. This program provides over 1.8 billion meals and snacks to over 4.5 million children and adults and is an indicator of quality child care.

Because this program is so important to the constituents in your state, I would love you to join me in celebrating the goals of the program and am requesting your support during National CACFP Week.

The primary goal of the CACFP is to serve nutritious meals that contribute to the wellness, healthy growth, and development of young children, especially those in low-income areas, and the health and wellness of older adults and chronically impaired disabled persons. The CACFP also aims to promote the establishment of lifelong, positive eating habits; reduce future health care and education costs due to lack of proper early development; and train and support local child care personnel. The CACFP benefits our state in the following ways:

## FOR THE CHILD

Proper nutrition during the early years of childhood ensures appropriate development and reduces physical and educational challenges later in life. Eating patterns and habits established during these years are vital to positive health outcomes. Children participating in the CACFP enjoy meals that meet the evidence-based USDA nutrition requirements that help combat hunger and improve nutrition security.

## FOR THE PARENT

Parents are assured that their children receive high quality, well-balanced meals. A well-nourished child is less likely to experience fatigue and illness, which requires parents to be absent from work. Children are more likely to be healthy, happy and develop at a normal physical and intellectual pace. Resources sent home with the children, like easy and highly nutritious recipes that they can make at home, contribute to the nutrition security of the entire household.

## FOR THE PROVIDER

Providers receive valuable nutrition education that helps them identify the proper foods and proportions necessary to provide nutrient-rich meals and snacks to the children and adults in their care. They obtain help in understanding how to encourage positive, lifelong eating habits. The financial reimbursement helps them to afford to serve meals that are nutritionally superior to those served to children in comparable child care settings not participating in CACFP.

## FOR THE COMMUNITY

Within our state, approximately (enter number) children and adults directly benefit from the food program. The CACFP in our state meets the nutritional needs of children and older adults while they are in care, resulting in significant enrichment and improvement of the quality of child care provided in our community.

We must all work together to continue to strengthen and provide equitable access to the CACFP.

Sincerely,

(Your Name)

(Your Organization)



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This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

**Learn more at [www.cacfp.org](http://www.cacfp.org)**

# CERTIFICATE OF APPRECIATION

This certificate is presented to:



For your extraordinary service and dedication to the  
Child and Adult Care Food Program

  
Chief Executive Officer

3/1/2025  
Date

# Provider Promotion

## The purpose of the National CACFP Week is:

1. To educate parents and the community about how the CACFP helps child care providers serve well balanced, nutritious meals,
2. To promote proper nutrition for growing children,
3. To ensure long-term health benefits by creating healthy eating habits.

Celebrate and promote National CACFP Week in your home or center together with the children you serve!

Here is a list of activities to promote community awareness of the CACFP and its importance to the quality of available child care:

- Plan an activity with children. Take a picture of the children doing the activity. Send the picture to your U.S. Congressperson and Senators along with a short note about how the CACFP helps promote lifelong healthy eating habits in young children. Better yet, invite someone from your TV, radio, newspaper or legislature to be a part of the activity.
- Host an open house for families celebrating the CACFP. Serve a few of the children's favorite recipes. Display any crafts you may have done with the children. Invite your legislative representative to join you and your guests. Try to get media coverage.
- Encourage the children to complete their activity flyer throughout the week.
- Send an activity flyer home with children so their families can review how the CACFP supports good nutrition and physical activity in child care.
- Plan at least one nutrition activity this week and inform the parents. Need ideas? Check out [www.facebook.com/NationalCACFP](http://www.facebook.com/NationalCACFP)
- Involve the parents and children in planning this week's meals and snacks.
- Talk about the menu each day in relation to MyPlate. Did you meet the recommended number of servings?
- Talk with the children about how eating nutritious foods now will help them to be healthier adults later. Example: Eating foods that are good for you will help you stay healthy and strong.
- Try a new recipe. Ask parents if they have a recipe that they would like to share.
- Compile your own recipe book. Hand out your recipe book at a parent appreciation brunch or snack.
- Make a commitment to improve menus during March, also National Nutrition Month, by:
  - Using more fresh fruits and vegetables
  - Evaluating the menus for plate appeal
  - Adding new vegetables to the menu
  - Make healthy eating fun
  - Increasing the use of whole grain products



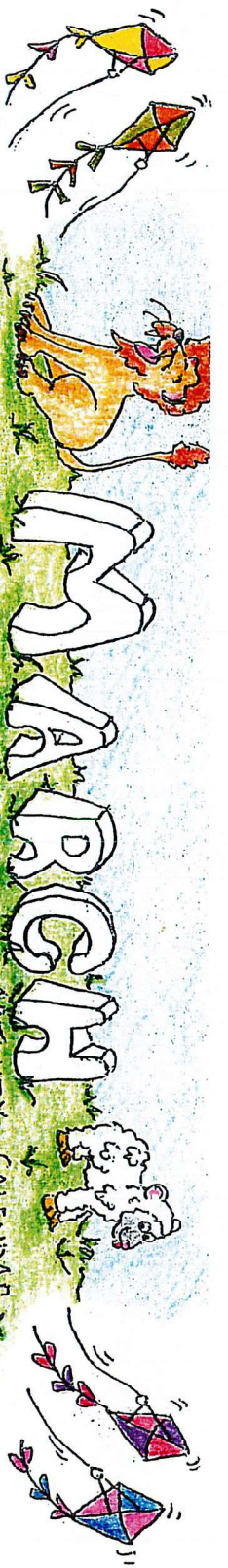
**There's nothing boring about participating in the CACFP.**

**Want to put a smile on your children's faces?**

**Here's a fun, and super easy, snack idea from [food.com](http://food.com). Serve with yogurt or cheese for a great snack!**

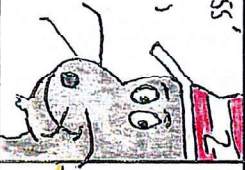


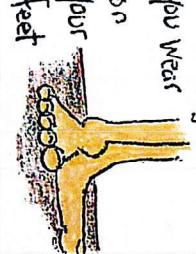

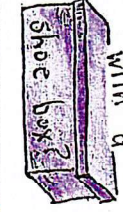


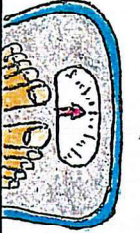


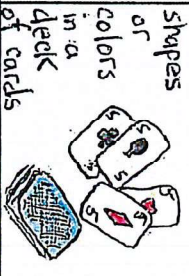
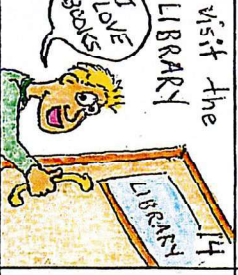

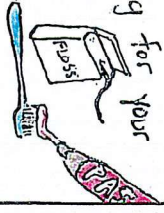






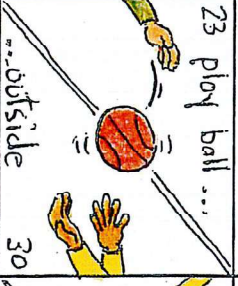
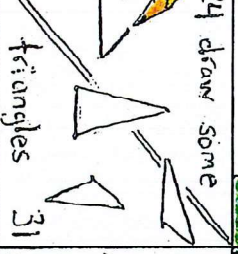





**Check out more snack, craft, and physical activity ideas at [www.facebook.com/NationalCACFP](http://www.facebook.com/NationalCACFP)**

***"A new study has indicated that children may learn lifelong eating habits which will affect their weight for life - before age five! CACFP is more important than ever."***



# MARCH

ACTIVITY CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>DR. SUESS' birthday, read your favorite book</p>  <p>2</p>	<p>how TALL are you?</p>  <p>3</p>	<p>wiggle, open, bend and name body parts</p>  <p>4</p>	<p>name things you wear on your feet</p>  <p>5</p>	<p>make a healthy snack together</p>  <p>6</p>	<p>what can you make with a shoe box?</p>  <p>7</p>	<p>decorate a cup, add seeds and dirt - make a crazy grass head</p>  <p>8</p>
<p>daylight Savings begins - set clocks ahead one hour!</p>  <p>9</p>	<p>how much do you weigh?</p>  <p>10</p>	<p>make up a story about dinosaurs</p>  <p>11</p>	<p>cut and glue... create a masterpiece</p>  <p>12</p>	<p>match numbers, shapes or colors in a deck of cards</p>  <p>13</p>	<p>visit the LIBRARY</p>  <p>14</p>	<p>count all of your shoes: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6...</p>  <p>15</p>
<p>talk about caring for your teeth</p>  <p>16</p>	<p>HAPPY St. Patrick's Day!</p>  <p>17</p>	<p>dance or exercise to music</p>  <p>18</p>	<p>talk about LONG and SHORT</p>  <p>19</p>	<p>FIRST day of SPRING.</p>  <p>20</p>	<p>READ a book about SPRING</p>  <p>21</p>	<p>Help wash the windows</p>  <p>22</p>
<p>23 play ball... outside</p>  <p>30</p>	<p>24 draw some triangles</p>  <p>31</p>	<p>draw a picture of SPRING flowers</p>  <p>25</p>	<p>talks about the beginning, middle and end of the day</p>  <p>26</p>	<p>LOOK for signs of SPRING</p>  <p>27</p>	<p>plant flowers seeds in dirt... watch them grow</p>  <p>28</p>	<p>take parents to the play - ground swing so high</p>  <p>29</p>

March 16-22, 2025

# CELEBRATE NATIONAL



## WEEK!

# SAMPLE MENU

Encourage trying new foods! The recipes in **Blue** are from our members-only CACFP Creditable Spotlight series, which you can find at [cacfp.org/everyday-education](http://cacfp.org/everyday-education).

	AGES 1-2	AGES 3-5	AGES 6-18	ADULTS	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	
BREAKFAST	Milk	1/2 cup	3/4 cup	1 cup	1 cup	Whole Milk (age 1) or Low/Fat-Free Milk (ages 2-5)	Whole Milk (age 1) or Low/Fat-Free Milk (ages 2-5)	Whole Milk (age 1) or Low/Fat-Free Milk (ages 2-5)	Turn Up the Beet Smoothie Whole Milk (age 1) or Low/Fat-Free Milk (ages 2-5)	
	Fruit/Vegetable	1/4 cup	1/2 cup	1/2 cup	1/2 cup	Mixed Berries	<b>Spinach Frittatas</b> Spinach	<b>Watermelon Parfait</b> Watermelon	Bell Peppers	
LUNCH/SUPPER	Grain or Meat/Meat Alternate <sup>1</sup>	1/2 oz eq	1/2 oz eq	1 oz eq	2 oz eq	<b>Oat Pancakes</b> WGR Pancakes	<b>Spinach Frittatas</b> Egg, Cheese	<b>Watermelon Parfait</b> Loose Granola <sup>2</sup> , Yogurt <sup>4</sup>	<b>Tofu Scramble</b> Tofu	<b>WGR Toast</b>
	Milk <sup>2</sup>	1/2 cup	3/4 cup	1 cup	1 cup <sup>3</sup>	Whole Milk (age 1) or Low/Fat-Free Milk (ages 2-5)	Whole Milk (age 1) or Low/Fat-Free Milk (ages 2-5)	Whole Milk (age 1) or Low/Fat-Free Milk (ages 2-5)	Whole Milk (age 1) or Low/Fat-Free Milk (ages 2-5)	
	Vegetable	1/8 cup	1/4 cup	1/2 cup	1/2 cup	<b>Orzo, Chicken and Tomato</b> Tomato	<b>Squashy Black Bean Quesadilla</b> Butterrut, Squash, Salsa	<b>Ground Beef Cheesesteak</b> Cabbage, Onion, Bell Pepper	<b>Savory Oat Bowl</b> Avocado, Spinach	<b>Watermelon Jicama Slaw</b> Jicama
	Fruit <sup>3</sup>	1/8 cup	1/4 cup	1/4 cup	1/2 cup	Cucumber Slices	<b>Colorful Cabbage Salad</b> Cabbage, Carrot	Halved Grapes	Green Apple Slices	<b>Watermelon Jicama Slaw</b> Watermelon
	Meat/Meat Alternate	1 oz	1 1/2 oz	2 oz	2 oz	<b>Orzo, Chicken and Tomato</b> Chicken	<b>Squashy Black Bean Quesadilla</b> Black Beans, Cheese	<b>Ground Beef Cheesesteak</b> Beef, Cheese	<b>Savory Oat Bowl</b> Egg, Pork Sausage	<b>Chili Lime Cod</b> Cod
SNACK	Grain	1/2 oz eq	1/2 oz eq	1 oz eq	2 oz eq	<b>Orzo, Chicken and Tomato</b> Orzo	<b>Squashy Black Bean Quesadilla</b> Whole Wheat Tortilla	<b>Ground Beef Cheesesteak</b> Hoagie Bun	<b>Savory Oat Bowl</b> Oatmeal	<b>WGR Roll</b>
	Milk	1/2 cup	1/2 cup	1 cup	1 cup	<b>Sinh Tô Bò Smoothie</b> Whole Milk (age 1) or Low/Fat-Free Milk (ages 2-5)				
	Vegetable	1/2 cup	1/2 cup	3/4 cup	1/2 cup	Celery Sticks			<b>Swift Salsa</b> Tomato, Onion	
	Fruit	1/2 cup	1/2 cup	3/4 cup	1/2 cup			Strawberry Slices		
	Meat/Meat Alternate	1/2 oz	1/2 oz	1 oz	1 oz	<b>Classic Egg Salad</b> Egg, Greek Yogurt <sup>4</sup>		<b>Tofu Musubi</b> Tofu	<b>Heavenly Chickpea Dip</b> Chickpeas	
Grain	1/2 oz eq	1/2 oz eq	1 oz eq	1 oz eq	Graham Crackers		<b>Tofu Musubi</b> Brown Rice		Pita Bread	

Grains in **bold** signify a whole grain-rich serving.

<sup>1</sup>Meat and meat alternates may be served in place of the entire grain component at breakfast & maximum of three times per week.  
<sup>2</sup>A serving of milk is not required at supper meals for adults.  
<sup>3</sup>The fruit component at lunch and supper may be substituted by a second, different vegetable.

<sup>4</sup>Breakfast cereals and yogurts must meet the CACFP sugar limits.

oz eq = ounce equivalents

Did you receive this menu from an NCA member, but you're not a member yourself? Join today at [cacfp.org/members](http://cacfp.org/members) to access the recipes above and more.



CACFP Creditable Spotlight

# Oats



Oats are classified as a grain in the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program.

### A Blank Canvas for Flavor

Oats are a whole grain, which makes them a good source of fiber, vitamins and minerals. They can be used in savory or sweet dishes, and are a popular morning staple.

## 7 Ways to Try Oats



**Cinnamon Raisin Overnight Oats**



**Oat Pancakes**



**Savory Oat Bowl**



**Go Bananas! Oatmeal**



**Baked Blueberry Oatmeal Cups**

**Oat Crackers**



**Easy Fall Granola**



## Go on a Taste-Testing Adventure!

Before getting started, write down the child's name and the food they are exploring at the bottom of the page. How the adventure can begin!  
Have the children draw the food in the starting plate. Guide them they try the food, taste and taste again on up to the  
board's provided. Have children describe the face that expresses how they feel about the food being explored.

NATIONAL  
CACFP  
ASSOCIATION

## Don't Forget to Record the New Adventures!

It can take multiple tries and different ways for both children and adults to like a new food item. We've developed these seven recipes that you can add to your menu where oats are presented in different ways.

You can use our member resource "Go On a Taste-Testing Adventure" to document each child's experience with trying oats seven ways.



## Go Bananas! Oatmeal

- 1 cup (112 g) old fashioned oats
- 2 cups water or milk
- 3 large bananas, mashed
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon

Combine oats, water, mashed bananas and cinnamon in a medium pot. Bring to a boil over medium heat. Stir frequently until it reaches preferred thickness. Scoop ½ cup into each bowl. Makes 6 servings.

**Crediting:** ½ cup provides ½ oz eq. grains and ¼ cup fruit



## Easy Fall Granola

- 1 (112 g) cup old fashioned oats, packed
- 2 tbsp oil
- 4 tsp maple syrup
- ¼ tsp pumpkin spice seasoning

Preheat oven to 300°F. Add all ingredients to a small bowl and mix well. Evenly spread out the granola mixture onto a small sheet pan. Do not pack together. Bake for 20-25 minutes. Make sure at the halfway point, to stir the loose granola mixture in sheet pan. Remove from oven and let cool before serving. Makes 7 servings.

**Crediting:** ⅓ cup provides ½ oz eq. grains



## Baked Blueberry Oatmeal Cups

- 1 (112g) cup old fashioned oats
- 1 ripe banana, mashed
- 1 large egg
- ⅓ cup milk
- ½ tsp vanilla extract
- ¾ cup frozen blueberries, slightly thawed

Preheat oven to 350°F. Lightly spray vegetable oil on a mini muffin tray. In a large bowl, mix oats and banana together. Then add the egg, milk and vanilla. Stir until combined with oats. Gently fold the blueberries into batter. Scoop 2 tbsp per muffin cup. Bake for 18-20 minutes or until cooked thoroughly. Remove from oven and allow to cool for 5 minutes. Makes 8 servings.

**Crediting:** 2 muffin cups provide ½ oz eq. grains



Want more tips to use in the CACFP?  
Watch webinars on demand at [cacfp.org/learning-center](http://cacfp.org/learning-center).

[cacfp.org](http://cacfp.org) NATIONAL CACFP SPONSORS ASSOCIATION  
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## Oat Pancakes

- ½ cup milk
- 2 eggs
- 1 ripe banana
- 1 ½ cups (168 g) old fashioned oats
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp vanilla
- ¼ tsp salt

Blend oats, baking powder and salt together. Then add all remaining ingredients. Blend until just smooth. On a warmed non-stick skillet over medium heat, pour ⅓ cup batter and cook for 1-2 minutes. Then flip and cook for 1-2 more minutes. Both sides should be golden brown. Serve warm. Makes 8 servings.

**Crediting:** 2 pancakes provide ½ oz eq. grains



## Savory Oat Bowl

- 2 cups prepared oatmeal, warmed
- 4 boiled large eggs, halved
- ⅔ lb pork sausage, diced
- 1 cup sautéed spinach
- 1 cup avocado chunks
- Everything bagel seasoning

Create each savory bowl by adding ¼ cup oatmeal, half a boiled egg, ½ oz eq. diced sausage, ⅓ cup spinach, ⅓ cup avocado. Add everything bagel seasoning over top. Makes 8 servings.

**Crediting:** 1 bowl provides ½ oz eq. grains, 1½ oz eq. meat/meat alternate and ¼ cup vegetable



## Oat Crackers

- ¼ cup pumpkin seeds
- ¾ cup old fashion rolled oats
- ½ tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp garlic salt
- ¼ tsp onion powder
- ½ cup milk

Preheat oven to 350°F. Line a sheet pan with parchment paper. In a blender, pulse all dry ingredients until it appears to look like cornmeal in texture. Gradually add milk until it appears to be a thick pancake batter consistency. Spread evenly and thinly as possible. Bake for 10 minutes, then remove from oven and make cuts horizontally and vertically to make 56 cracker squares. Place back into the oven for another 15-20 minute or until crackers appear dried out and golden brown. Allow to cool and separate crackers before serving or storing. Makes 7 servings.

**Crediting:** 8 crackers provide ½ oz eq. grains



## Cinnamon Raisin Overnight Oats

- 1 cup (112 g) quick cooking oats
- 1 cup finely chopped raisins
- 2 cups unflavored milk
- 2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- ½ tbs brown sugar (optional)

In a small container with a lid, add 2 tablespoons of oats, ⅓ cup raisins, ¼ cup milk, ¼ teaspoon cinnamon, ⅓ teaspoon vanilla extract and ¼ teaspoon sugar (optional). Repeat seven more times. Add a lid to each container and shake well. Place all containers in the refrigerator overnight or for at least four hours. Makes 8 servings.

**Crediting:** 1 container provides ½ oz eq. grains and ¼ cup fruit



Looking for more #CACFPCreditable recipes?  
Check out [cacfp.org/recipes](https://cacfp.org/recipes).

[cacfp.org](https://cacfp.org) NATIONAL CACFP SPONSORS ASSOCIATION  
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# CACFP Creditable Spotlight **Spinach**



Spinach is classified as a vegetable in the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program.

### A Cool Season Crop

You'll find spinach more abundant during cooler months in the spring and fall. This versatile vegetable is rich in iron, zinc, vitamin A and vitamin C.

## 7 Ways to Try Spinach



**Spinach Frittatas**

**Spinach Strawberry Salad**



**Supercharged Breakfast Smoothie**



**Spinach Pasta Sauce**



**Tasty Bean Tostadas**

**Cheesy Spinach & Corn Sandwich**



**Sautéed Spinach**

## Go on a Taste-Testing Adventure!

Before getting started, write down the child's name and the food they are exploring at the bottom of the page. How the adventure can begin. Make the child draw the food in the starting plate. Each time they try the food, we record the meal, snack or taste test negative in the same way. Use the different styles for the face that expresses how they felt about the food being explored.

NATIONAL CACFP ASSOCIATION

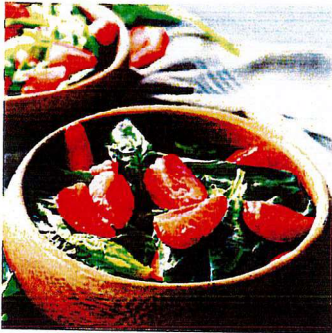
Name \_\_\_\_\_

I became a Taste Explorer by trying \_\_\_\_\_ seven times!

## Don't Forget to Record the New Adventures!

It can take multiple tries and different ways for both children and adults to like a new food item. We've developed these seven recipes that you can add to your menu where spinach is presented in different ways.

You can use our member resource "**Go On a Taste-Testing Adventure**" to document each child's experience with trying spinach seven ways.

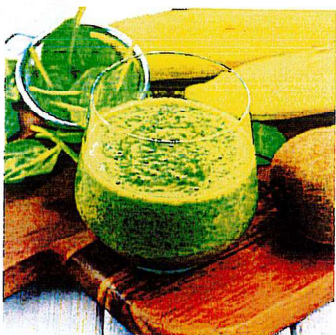


## Spinach Strawberry Salad

- ½ cup spinach
- ¼ cup strawberries
- 1-2 tbsp salad dressing

Build each salad by placing first the spinach, next the strawberries, and then drizzle the salad dressing on top. Makes 1 serving.

**Crediting:** 1 salad provides ¼ cup vegetable and ¼ cup fruit



## Supercharged Breakfast Smoothie

- 1 banana, chopped and frozen
- 1 cup kiwi, peeled and chopped
- 2 cups spinach
- 1 cup unflavored milk

Place all ingredients into a blender. Blend until smooth. Serve cold. Makes 4 servings.

**Crediting:** ⅝ cup provides ¼ cup vegetable, ¼ cup fruit and ¼ cup milk



## Spinach Frittatas

- 8 large eggs
- ½ cup milk
- 4 cups spinach, finely chopped
- ½ cup Parmesan cheese
- ¼ tsp paprika

Preheat oven to 450° F. In a large bowl, whisk together all ingredients, and you may add salt and pepper to taste. Pour egg mixture into each muffin tin about ⅔ of the way. Cook for 15 minutes or until golden brown and fully cooked. Makes 8 servings.

**Crediting:** 1 egg muffin provides ¼ cup vegetable and 2 oz eq. meat alternate



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## Spinach Pasta Sauce

- 1 cup chopped, packed spinach
- 1 (24 oz) jar tomato pasta sauce

In a microwave-safe bowl, add pasta sauce and spinach. Cover and microwave for one minute. Stir sauce. In increments of 20 seconds, continue microwaving until spinach has wilted and sauce is warmed to desired temperature. Add sauce to any pasta dish. Makes 10 servings.

**Crediting:** ¼ cup provides ¼ cup vegetable



## Cheesy Spinach and Corn Sandwich

- 10 (28 grams each) bread slices
- 2 ½ cups corn
- 2 ½ cups finely chopped spinach
- 5 (1 oz each) cheese slices
- 5 tbsp pesto
- Vegetable oil cooking spray

Preheat oven to 450° F. In a large skillet, sauté spinach and corn in butter or oil until spinach has wilted. Set it aside. Spray a little oil on one side of 5 bread slices. Place oiled side down on baking sheet. Spread 1 tablespoon of pesto to those 5 slices of bread and then layer with ¾ cup spinach corn mixture, 1 slice of cheese and another slice of bread. Spray a little oil on top of bread slices. Bake for 5 minutes on each side or until golden brown. Cut each sandwich in half. Makes 10 servings.

**Crediting:** ½ sandwich provides ¾ cup vegetable, ½ oz eq. meat alternate and 1 oz eq. grains



## Tasty Bean Tostadas

- 20 baked corn tostadas
- 2 ½ cups refried beans
- 2 ½ cups spinach, finely chopped
- 1 ¼ cups tomato, diced
- 1 ¼ cup queso fresco, crumbled or shredded mozzarella cheese

To assemble each tostada, spread 2 tablespoons of refried beans, then add ⅓ cup spinach, 1 tablespoon of tomato, and 1 tablespoon of cheese. Makes 10 servings.

**Crediting:** 2 tostadas provide ¼ cup vegetable, 1 oz eq. grains and 1 ½ oz eq. meat alternate



## Sautéed Spinach

- 1 lb spinach
- 2-3 tbsp olive oil
- 3 cloves garlic, minced

In a large skillet, heat 2 tablespoons of oil on medium-high heat. Add garlic and cook for 20 seconds or until garlic begins to brown. Place spinach into the pan. Using tongs, move spinach around to coat each leaf in oil. Then cover the pan and cook for one minute. Remove lid and turn spinach over. Cover again and cook for one more minute. Drain excess liquid and add salt to taste. Makes 12 servings.

**Crediting:** ¼ cup provides ¼ cup vegetable



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# CACFP Creditable Spotlight **Tomatoes**



**Tomatoes** are classified as vegetables in the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program.

### **A Benefit Booster**

Tomatoes are high in vitamin C, which helps the body maintain a healthy immune system. It also helps with the absorption of iron, so you can pair tomatoes with Iron-rich foods.

## **7 Ways to Try Tomatoes**

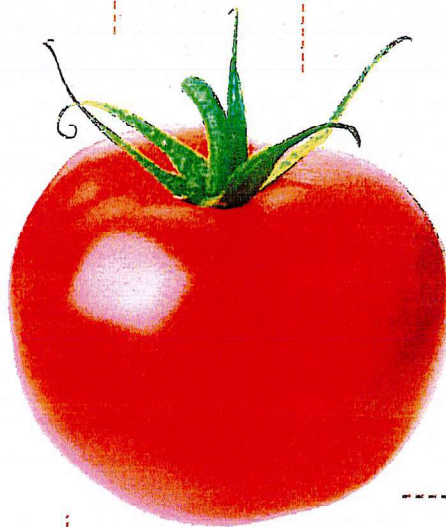


**Toasty  
Tomato  
Sandwich**

**Orzo, Chicken  
and Tomato**



**Afghan  
Salata**



**Pizza Kebab**

**Flower  
Power  
Snack**



**In-a-Pinch  
Pasta Sauce**



**Swift Salsa**

## Go on a Taste-Testing Adventure!

Before getting started, write down the child's name and the food they are exploring at the bottom of the page. Just as the adventure can be fun, it can be educational too! Have the child record on the food in the starting plate. Each time they try the food, write down the most, least or taste test activity in the space provided. Have fun! Have fun! Have fun! Have fun! Have fun! Have fun! Have fun! Have fun! Have fun! Have fun!

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ActivityMeal #1

ActivityMeal #2

ActivityMeal #3

ActivityMeal #4

ActivityMeal #5

ActivityMeal #6

ActivityMeal #7

Name \_\_\_\_\_

I became a Taste Explorer by trying \_\_\_\_\_ seven times!

## Don't Forget to Record the New Adventures!

It can take multiple tries and different ways for both children and adults to like a new food item. We've developed these seven recipes that you can add to your menu where tomatoes are presented in different ways.

You can use our member resource "Go On a Taste-Testing Adventure" to document each child's experience with trying tomatoes seven ways.



## Orzo, Chicken and Tomato

- 12 oz shredded rotisserie chicken (approximately 2 cups)
- 1 (14.5 oz) can diced tomatoes
- 1 cup chicken broth
- ¾ cup uncooked orzo pasta

Bring tomatoes, broth and pasta to a boil, reduce to a simmer and cover. Cook for 12-15 minutes or until liquid is absorbed. Add the chicken for the last 3 minutes of cooking. Add seasonings to taste. Makes 6 servings.

**Crediting:** ¾ cup provides 1¾ oz eq. meat/meat alternate, ½ oz eq. grains and ¼ cup vegetable



## Afghan Salata

- 2 cups tomatoes, diced
- 1 cup cucumber, peeled and diced
- 1 bunch fresh cilantro, chopped
- ½ small red onion, diced
- 1 lime, juiced
- A few leaves of fresh chopped mint (or pinch of dried mint) (optional)

Mix all the ingredients together in a bowl. Salt and pepper to taste. Makes 12 servings.

**Crediting:** ¼ cup provides ¼ cup vegetable



## Pizza Kebab

- 4 oz eq turkey pepperoni\*
- 8 (1 oz) mozzarella string cheese sticks
- 2 - 100% whole wheat pita bread
- 24 cherry tomatoes, halved
- 8 dull kebab sticks
- 1 cup marinara tomato sauce

Cut string cheese into 4 pieces each. Cut pita breads in half and then cut each half into 8 triangles. On the kebab stick, alternate sliding on pepperoni, cheese piece, pita bread and half a cherry tomato. Repeat until kebab has 1/2 oz eq of turkey pepperoni, 4 pieces of cheese, 3 cherry tomatoes, and 4 pita triangles. Add two basil leaves to each kebab if desired. Continue this pattern for the other 7 kebabs. Makes 8 servings.

**Crediting:** 1 pizza kebab with 1/8 cup marinara provides 1/2 oz eq. meat alternate, 1/2 oz eq. grains and 1/2 cup vegetable

\* Need a CN Label or PFS to determine correct serving size for ounce equivalency



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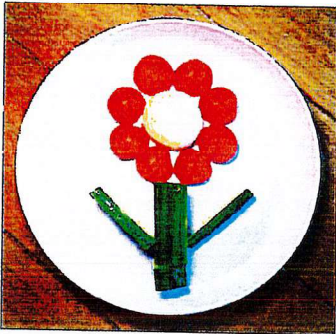


## Toasty Tomato Sandwich

- 10 (28 g) slices whole wheat bread
- 10 (1 oz eq) slices cheddar cheese
- $\frac{3}{4}$  lb medium tomatoes

Cut tomatoes into  $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch-thick slices. You should have 60 slices in total. To build each sandwich, follow the layering instructions: a slice of bread, add one cheese slice, then evenly space out 6 tomato slices, add another cheese slice, and finally place a slice of bread on top. On a non-stick skillet over medium heat, cook on one side for 3 minutes or until golden brown, then flip over and cook for another 2-3 minutes. Cut in half and serve as a delicious snack. Makes 10 servings.

**Crediting:**  $\frac{1}{2}$  sandwich provides  $\frac{3}{4}$  oz eq. meat/meat alternate, 1 oz eq. grains and  $\frac{1}{8}$  cup vegetable



## Flower Power Snack

- 5 large, hard-boiled eggs, halved
- 2  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups cucumber sticks
- 2  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups cherry tomatoes, halved

On each plate, place one halved hard-boiled egg,  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup tomatoes and  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup cucumber sticks. Invite children to create their own flower using the egg as the center piece, placing tomatoes around it like petals, and the cucumber sticks as the stem of the plant. Makes 10 servings.

**Crediting:** 1 flower power snack provides  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup vegetable and 1 oz eq. meat alternate



## In-a-Pinch Pasta Sauce

- 1 (29 oz) can tomato puree
- 1-2 tbsp all-purpose flour
- 1 tbsp Italian seasoning blend
- 1 tbsp balsamic vinegar

In a medium saucepan, add tomato puree, flour, Italian seasoning, vinegar and salt and pepper to taste. Mix well until flour is well incorporated without lumps. Over medium heat, bring sauce to boil then lower to simmer. Cook for 5 minutes. Makes 12 servings.

**Crediting:**  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup provides  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup vegetable



## Swift Salsa

- 1 (28 oz) crushed tomatoes
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup onion, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 lime juiced
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup cilantro, minced
- 1 jalapeño, seeds removed, diced (optional)

In a large bowl, add all the ingredients. Mix well. Salt and pepper to taste. Cover and place in the refrigerator overnight to allow flavors to marinate. Serve salsa with pita chips, add it on top of baked chicken or over scrambled eggs. Makes 10 servings.

**Crediting:**  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup provides  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup vegetable



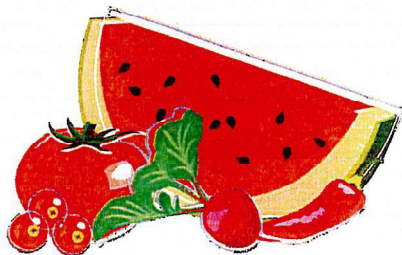
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# Anytime Rainbow Super Foods

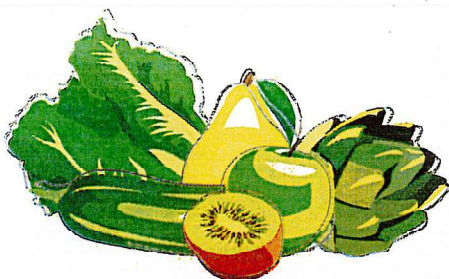
You can serve these foods in various forms, such as fresh, canned, frozen or dried.



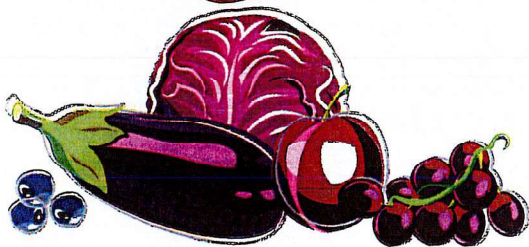
**Red & Pink:** beets, cherries, cranberries, pink grapefruit, pomegranates, radicchio, radishes, raspberries, red apples, red grapes, red peppers, red potatoes, rhubarb, strawberries, tomatoes, watermelon



**Orange & Yellow:** acorn or butternut squash, apricots, cantaloupe, carrot, corn, grapefruit, lemons, mangoes, nectarines, oranges, orange bell peppers, papaya, peaches, pineapple, pumpkin, summer squash, sweet potatoes, tangerines, yams, yellow apples, yellow bell peppers, yellow squash



**Green:** artichokes, asparagus, avocados, bok choy, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, celery, collard greens, cucumber, green beans, green cabbage, green grapes, green onions, green peppers, kale, kiwi, leeks, limes, mustard greens, okra, pears, peas, romaine lettuce, snow peas, spinach, sugar snap peas, watercress, zucchini



**Blue & Purple:** blackberries, blueberries, currants, dates, eggplant, purple grapes, plums, prunes, purple figs, raisins



**White:** bananas, cauliflower, garlic, Jerusalem artichoke, mushrooms, onion, potatoes, parsnips, shallots



# Everything Broccoli

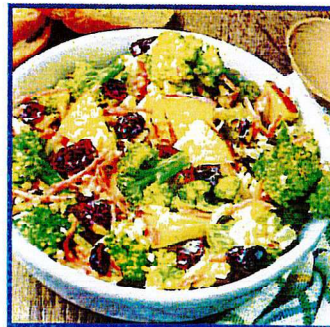


## Fourteen Ways to TRY Broccoli

Pizza



Mac n' Cheese



Salad



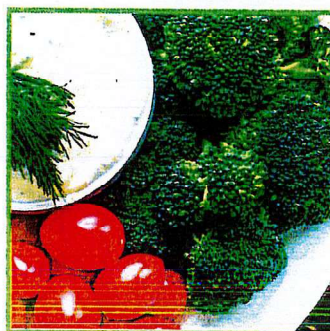
Stir Fry



Casserole



Chicken & Rice



With Veggie Dip



Roasted with Olive Oil



Soup

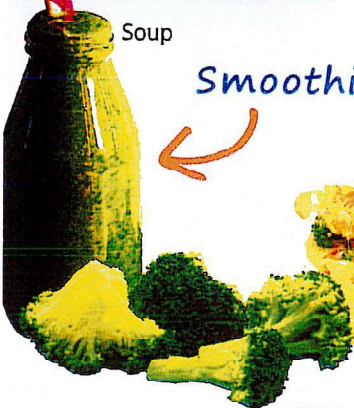


Baked Fritters



Quiche

Smoothie



Omelet



Steamed

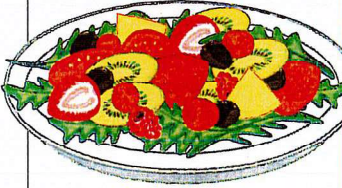
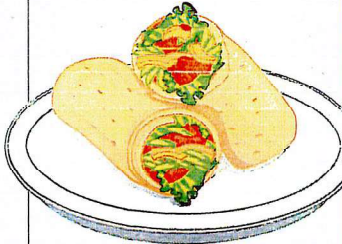
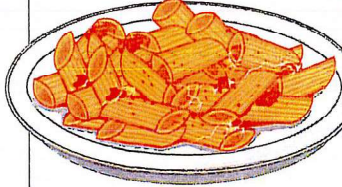




# Trying New Foods

## Making Classic Meals with New Ingredients

Replacing even one item in a classic meal with a new food can lead to fun, favorite recipes. Here are some ideas to get you started.

Classic Meals	Pick Your Favorite! Mix & Match			New Favorites
<p><b>Create a Special Salad</b></p>	<p><b>Vegetables</b> Cucumber Zucchini Radish Carrot Broccoli Cherry Tomatoes Spinach Jicama Avocado Corn Beets</p>	<p><b>Meat/Meat Alternate</b> Sliced Turkey Broiled Chicken Grilled Fish Natural Low-Fat Cheese Mozzarella Cheese Sliced Hard Boiled Egg Garbanzo Beans Low-Fat Cottage Cheese</p>	<p><b>Fruits</b> Berries Cherries Mandarin Oranges Apples Mango Peaches Pears Oranges</p>	
<p><b>Superpower Your Sandwich</b></p>	<p><b>Grains</b> Whole-Grain Bread Whole-Grain Tortilla Multi-Grain Bagel Whole-Wheat Pita</p>	<p><b>Meat/Meat Alternate</b> Sliced Turkey Broiled Chicken Grilled Fish Natural Low-Fat Cheese Hummus Sliced Lean Beef Sliced Hard Boiled Egg</p>	<p><b>Vegetables</b> Fresh or Grilled Onion Avocado Lettuce Spinach Cucumber Tomato Bell Peppers</p>	
<p><b>Pasta Extravaganza</b></p>	<p><b>Pasta</b> Rotini Bowtie Spaghetti Orzo Rigatoni Penne Elbow Macaroni</p>	<p><b>Meat/Meat Alternate</b> Baked or Grilled Chicken Baked or Grilled Fish Grilled Shrimp Turkey Breast Low-Fat Cheese</p>	<p><b>Stir-Fry / Steamed Vegetables</b> Broccoli Carrot Zucchini Winter Squash Asparagus Peas / Snow Peas Tomatoes Corn Artichoke</p>	

## Tips for Getting Kids to Try New Foods

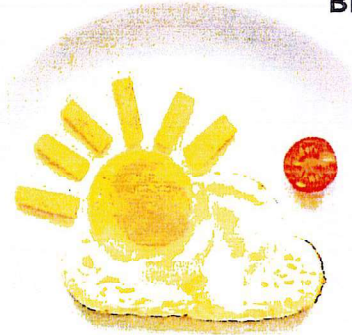
- Involve children in the meal preparation.
- Build trying new foods into lesson plans.
- Pick new fruits and vegetables that are in season.
- Change how they eat, ie, chopsticks verses a fork.
- Make meals more colorful and fun.
- Keep it simple and be patient.

# Breakfast

## Why Breakfast is the Most Important Meal of the Day



Eating breakfast gives our bodies the strength and energy to get through the day.

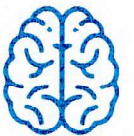


Breakfast encourages healthier eating habits and stops us from overeating at lunch or grabbing unhealthy snacks in between meals.



A healthy breakfast supports our attitude; we are less tired and more energetic which leads to being happier.

Breakfast helps us concentrate on school and work so we can be more active and productive.



## Fun Facts About Breakfast

- There are more than a dozen ways to cook an egg.
- Cereal was introduced in 1863 and was called granula.
- February is National Hot Breakfast month.



**123 SESAME STREET** in Communities

**CREDITABLE**

### recipe *Big Bird's Happy Day Sunrise Smoothie*

**ingredients**

- 2 cups plain yogurt*
- 2 cups pineapple juice*
- 16 ounce bag frozen pineapple*

**directions**

*Add all ingredients to a blender, mix on high until smooth. Serve 1/2 cup per child immediately as a frosty smoothie or let sit for five minutes before serving.*

Breakfast Crediting: 8 Servings for ages 1-5  
cacfp.org

## Breakfast Meal Patterns Serve Milk, Grains\*, Vegetables or Fruit

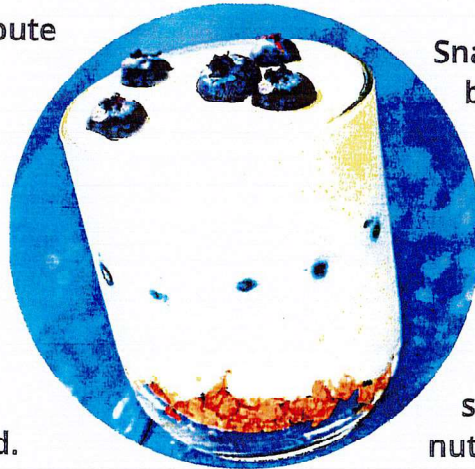
COMPONENT	AGES 1-2	AGES 3-5	AGES 6-18	ADULTS
Milk	1/2 cup	3/4 cup	1 cup	1 cup
Vegetables, Fruit or Both	1/4 cup	1/2 cup	1/2 cup	1/2 cup
Grains*	1/2 oz eq	1/2 oz eq	1 oz eq	2 oz eq

\* Meat and meat alternates may be served in place of the entire grains component at breakfast a maximum of three times per week.

## Stay Energized Throughout the Day



Healthy snacks contribute to the emotional and physical well-being of children.



Snacking supports healthy bone growth and brain development.



Vegetables and fruit provide important vitamins such as vitamin C and folic acid.

Well-timed snacks help control hunger, supply fuel and boost nutrition.



### Fun Facts About Snacks

- Apples are a member of the rose family of plants.
- Popcorn has existed for about 6000 years.
- Bananas share about 60% of the same DNA as humans.
- Americans consume more than 300,000 tons of yogurt each year.



123 **SESAME STREET** in Communities



### recipe Herry's Blueberry Lemon Parfait

#### ingredients

- 1 cup lemon yogurt \*Make sure your yogurt is #CACFPcreditable!
- 2 cups blueberries
- 4 tablespoons crushed graham crackers

#### directions

In each of four plastic cups, layer 1 tablespoon graham crackers, ¼ cup yogurt and ½ cup blueberries.



Snack Crediting: 4 Servings for ages 1-5  
cacfp.org

### Snack Meal Patterns

Serve 2 of the 5 components

COMPONENT	AGES 1-2	AGES 3-5	AGES 6-18	ADULTS
Milk	1/2 cup	1/2 cup	1 cup	1 cup
Meat & Meat Alternates	1/2 oz	1/2 oz	1 oz	1 oz
Vegetables	1/2 cup	1/2 cup	3/4 cup	1/2 cup
Fruit <sup>1</sup>	1/2 cup	1/2 cup	3/4 cup	1/2 cup
Grains	1/2 oz eq	1/2 oz eq	1 oz eq	1 oz eq

oz eq = ounce equivalents




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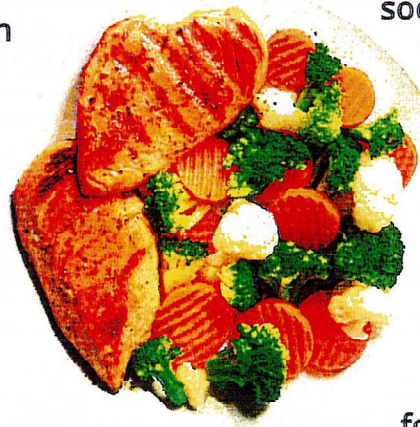
in Communities [ssic.org](http://ssic.org)


# Lunch/Supper


## Why Do We Need To Eat Lunch?

 With all five required meal pattern components, lunch helps us get a variety of vitamins and minerals to stay healthy and strong.

 Lunch is a great time to introduce new, healthy foods to children.



Taking time for lunch can also have social benefits for children, especially with family style dining, which is shown to increase vocabulary and interaction with friends. 

Eating lunch helps maintain good blood sugar levels so we can focus for the rest of the day. 

## Fun Facts About Lunch

- “Lunch” is an abbreviation of “luncheon” and has been in common use since 1823.
- In some countries, lunch is considered the most important meal of the day.
- The Guinness World Record for largest sandwich weighed 5,440 pounds!



**123**  
**SESAME STREET** in Communities



**recipe** *Veggies First, Cookie Monster*

**ingredients**

17 oz. chicken breast, 1 inch pieces      2 cups small broccoli florets  
2 cups sliced carrots      2 tablespoons olive oil

**directions**

Toss veggies and chicken with olive oil, salt, and pepper (seasoning optional). Place on a baking sheet and bake at 450 degrees for 20 minutes. For a complete meal, serve with ¾ cup milk and a roll.



 Lunch/Supper Crediting:  
8 Servings for ages 1-5  
cacfp.org

## Lunch/Supper Meal Patterns Serve All 5: Milk, Vegetables, Fruit, Meat/Meat Alternate and Grains

COMPONENT	AGES 1-2	AGES 3-5	AGES 6-18	ADULTS
Milk	1/2 cup	3/4 cup	1 cup	1 cup*
Meat/Meat Alternate	1 oz	1 1/2 oz	2 oz	2 oz
Vegetables	1/8 cup	1/4 cup	1/2 cup	1/2 cup
Fruit <sup>^</sup>	1/8 cup	1/4 cup	1/4 cup	1/2 cup
Grains	1/2 oz eq	1/2 oz eq	1 oz eq	2 oz eq

\*A serving of milk is not required at supper meals for adults  
^ A vegetable may be used to meet the entire fruit requirement. When two vegetables are served at lunch or supper, two different kinds of vegetables must be served.



# Attention Parents!

Did you know we are a CACFP Provider?

We participate in the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) which means your children get daily access to healthy and nutritious foods at no extra cost to you!

## Celebrating CACFP Week March 16-22, 2025

### Time to Celebrate

Dear Parents,

As we celebrate CACFP Week, you should know one of the most important lessons a child will learn are healthy eating habits. Did you know your child is learning these habits in an environment that recognizes the importance of participating in the Child and Adult Care Food Program as a way to help children grow and develop to their fullest potential?

Together, with caregivers and parents, we can work to establish and encourage healthy eating habits. Receiving nutritious meals early in life, as well as being physically active, is critical to the establishment of positive lifelong habits.

Questions? Contact us at anytime!



### What does CACFP mean for you and your children?

Research shows that child care providers, like yours, who participate in the CACFP offer more fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean meats than providers who do not participate in the CACFP.



These high quality meals mean children are getting many of the nutrients needed to stay healthy and active. This helps build a strong immune system.

Children served a nutritious diet, as regulated by the program, are also more likely to be healthy, happy and develop at a normal physical, emotional, and intellectual pace.

CACFP providers create an atmosphere that instills a positive, curious attitude about food from the earliest years.

Participation means that not only are well-balanced meals and snacks served, but that other requirements such as safety regulations, child-to-staff ratios, and other health guidelines are being followed.

To remain in the program, homes and centers are continually monitored and held to the highest health and nutrition standards.



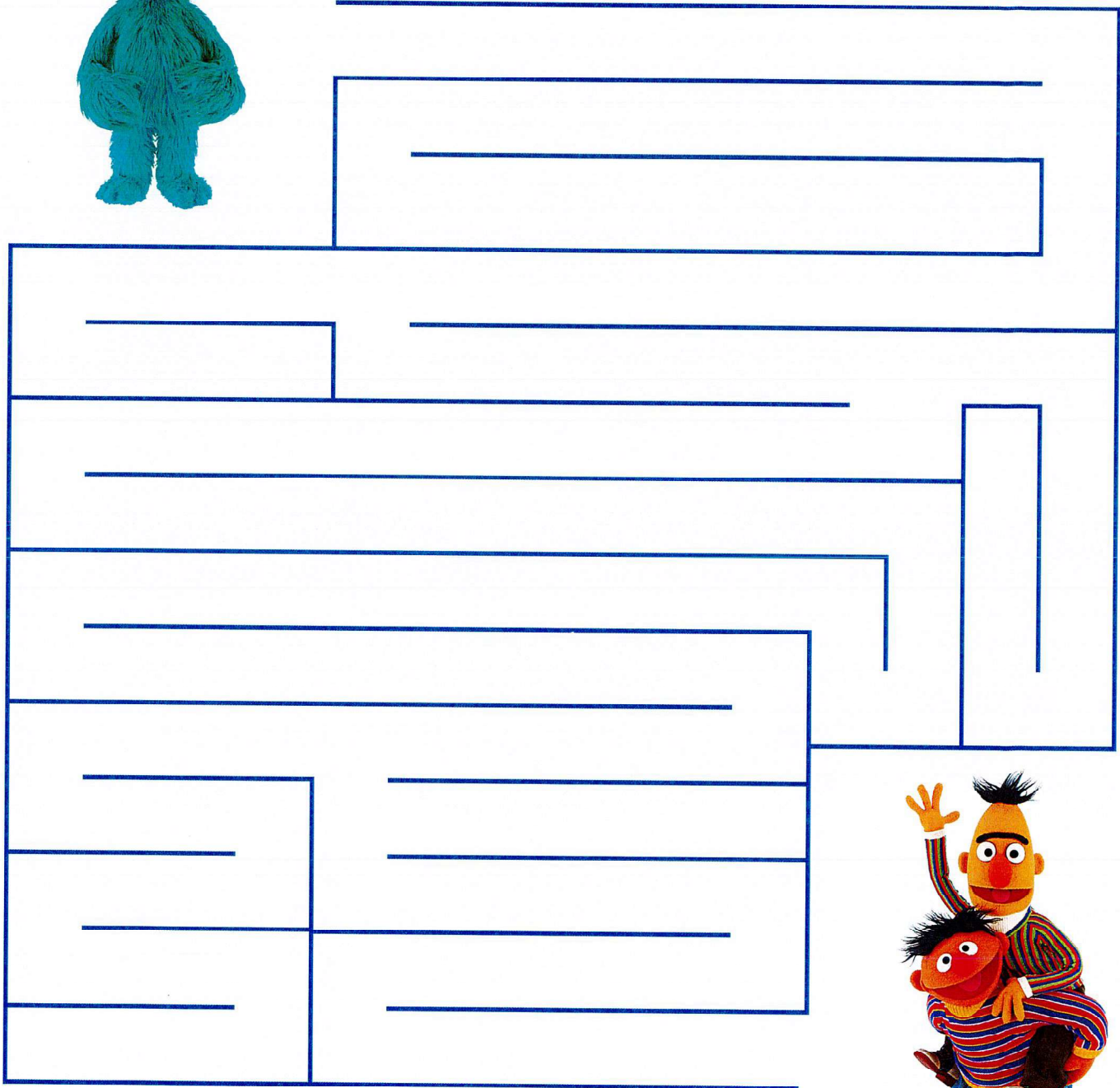
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[www.CACFPWEEK.org](http://www.CACFPWEEK.org)

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# HELP ROSITA GET TO HER FRIENDS

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## C IS FOR COMMUNITY

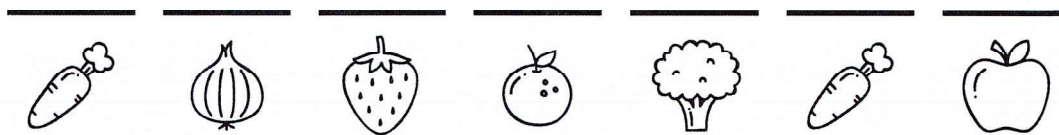
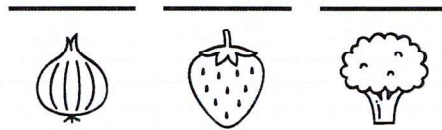
The CACFP community works to ensure that all children have access to healthy foods.



# TELLY'S SECRET MESSAGE

Use the fruit and vegetables to figure out rest of the secret message.

**CACFP**  
WEEK 2025



**AND YOU WILL GROW BIG AND STRONG!**

### The Key



= **Y**



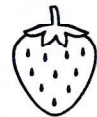
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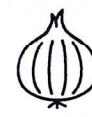
= **H**



= **L**



= **A**



= **E**

## **A IS FOR AWARENESS**

Together we can raise awareness of how the CACFP works to combat hunger.



ssic.org

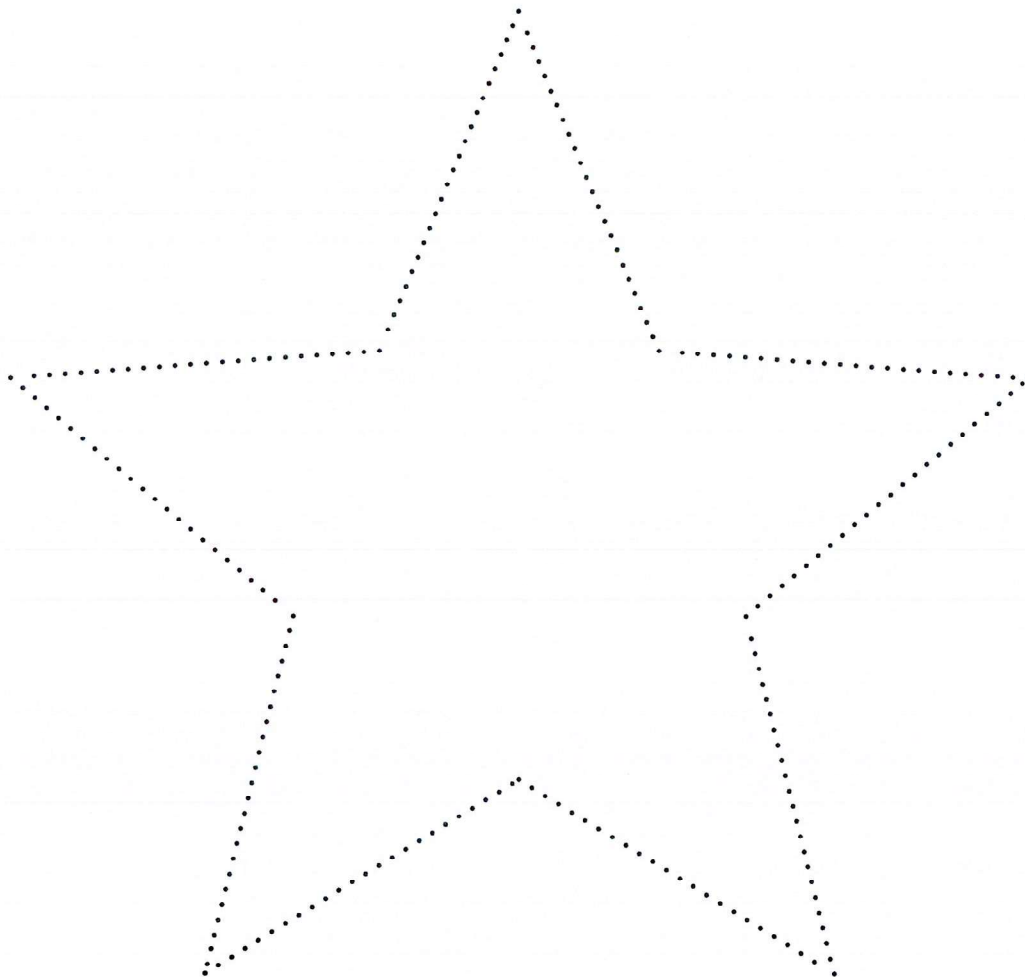
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# CONNECT-THE-DOTS WITH BIG BIRD

**CACFP**  
WEEK 2025



## **C IS FOR CHILDREN**

Children receive healthy and nutritious meals through the CACFP.

[ssic.org](http://ssic.org)

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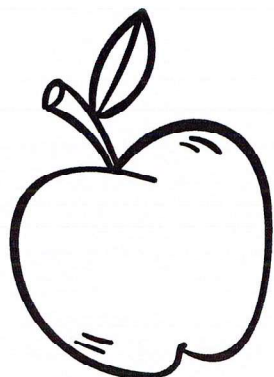
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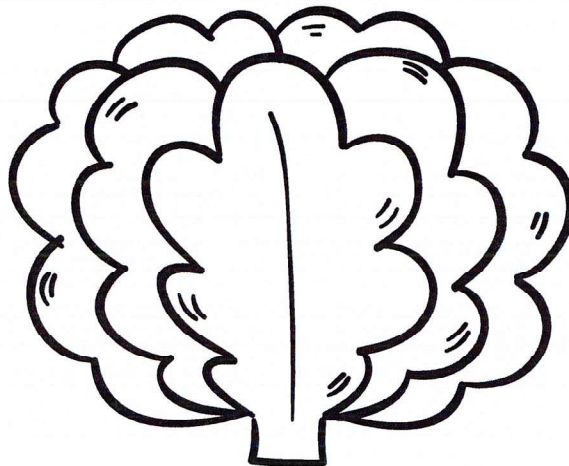
# ELMO LOVES A HEALTHY SALAD!

Color in each of the items that make up a delicious salad.

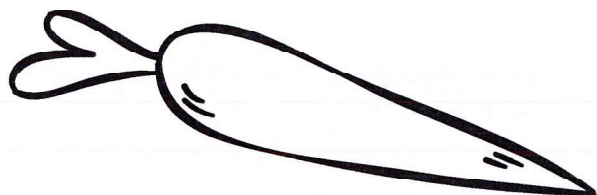
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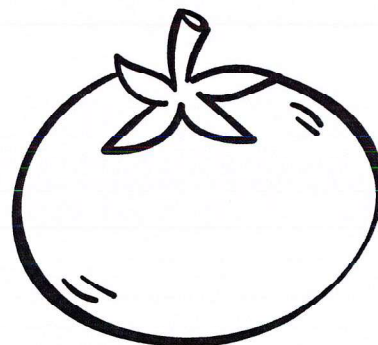
apple



lettuce



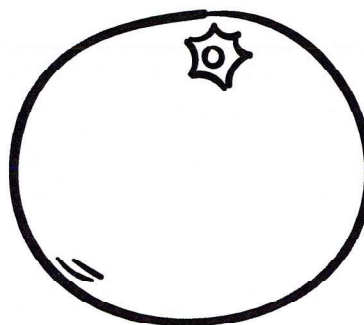
carrot



tomato



cucumber



orange



## F IS FOR FOOD PROGRAM

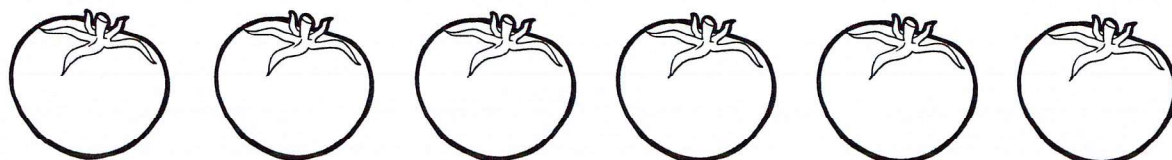
The CACFP helps children learn healthy eating habits.

# HERRY'S COUNT & COLOR

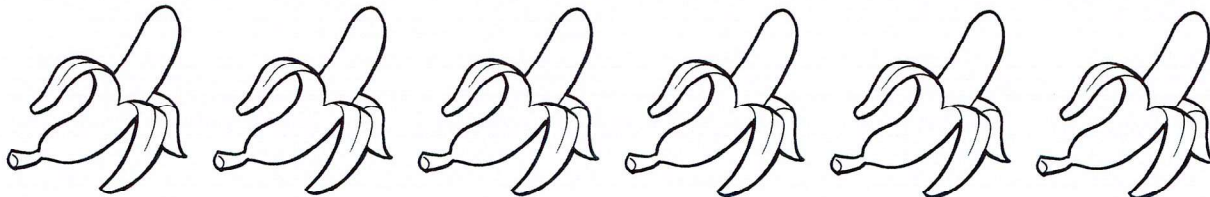
Read the number and color as many as you have read.

**CACFP**  
WEEK 2025

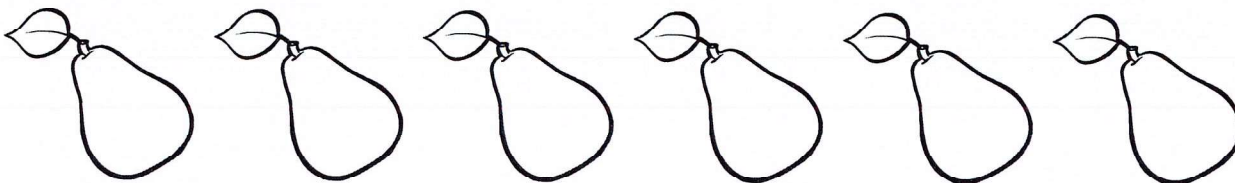
4



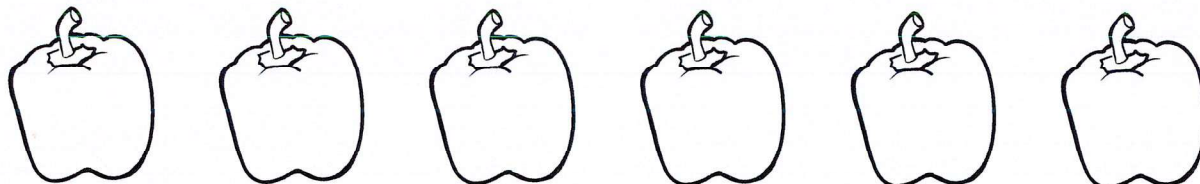
1



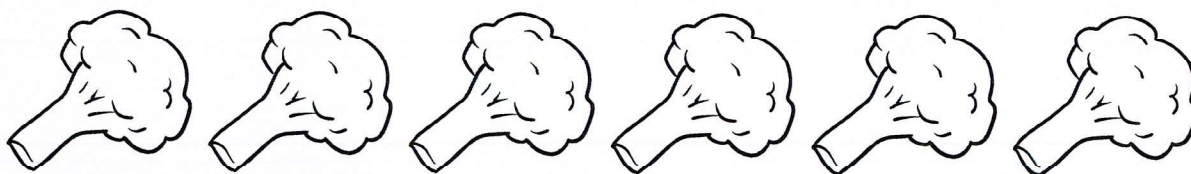
2



5



3



## P IS FOR PARTICIPATE

Hundreds of thousands of people participate in the CACFP administering the program or caring for children and adults.