

Vegetable Subgroups in the National School Lunch Program

The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) meal patterns for grades K-12 in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) require weekly servings of five vegetable subgroups. These subgroups are based on the recommendations of the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* and the [vegetables group](#) in Choose MyPlate. The chart below identifies commonly eaten vegetables in each subgroup.

All vegetables credit based on volume, except raw leafy greens such as spinach and lettuce credit as half the volume served, and tomato paste and puree credit based on the volume as if reconstituted. For more information, see the USDA’s *Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs*. Vegetable juice must be pasteurized 100 percent full-strength juice and cannot exceed than half of the weekly vegetables served.

Dark Green Fresh, frozen, and canned		Red/Orange Fresh, frozen, and canned	Beans and Peas (Legumes)* Canned, frozen, or cooked from dry	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Arugula ■ Beet greens ■ Bok choy ■ Broccoli ■ Broccoli rabe (rapini) ■ Broccolini ■ Butterhead lettuce (boston, bibb) ■ Chicory ■ Cilantro ■ Collard greens ■ Endive ■ Escarole ■ Fiddle heads ■ Grape leaves ■ Kale ■ Mesclun ■ Mustard greens ■ Parsley ■ Spinach ■ Swiss chard ■ Red leaf lettuce ■ Romaine lettuce ■ Turnip greens ■ Watercress 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Acorn squash ■ Butternut squash ■ Carrots (orange only) ■ Cherry peppers ■ Hubbard squash ■ Orange peppers ■ Pimientos ■ Pumpkin ■ Red chili peppers ■ Red peppers ■ Salsa (all vegetables) ■ Spaghetti squash ■ Sweet potatoes/yams ■ Tomatoes ■ Tomato juice ■ Winter squash 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Black beans ■ Black-eyed peas (mature, dry) ■ Cowpeas ■ Edamame ■ Fava beans ■ Garbanzo beans (chickpeas) ■ Great northern beans ■ Kidney beans ■ Lentils ■ Lima beans, (mature, dry) ■ Mung beans ■ Navy beans ■ Pink beans ■ Pinto beans ■ Red beans ■ Refried beans ■ Soy beans (mature, dry) ■ Split peas ■ White beans 	<p>* Does not include green peas, green lima beans, wax beans, and green (string) beans</p>	
Starchy Fresh, frozen, and canned	Other Fresh, frozen, and canned			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Black-eyed peas, fresh (not dry) ■ Corn ■ Cassava ■ Cowpeas, fresh (not dry) ■ Field peas, fresh (not dry) ■ Green bananas ■ Green peas ■ Hominy, whole (canned, drained) ■ Jicama ■ Lima beans, green (not dry) ■ Parsnips ■ Pigeon peas, fresh (not dry) ■ Plantains ■ Potatoes ■ Poi ■ Taro ■ Water chestnuts ■ Yautia (tannier) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Artichokes ■ Asparagus ■ Avocado ■ Bamboo shoots ■ Bean sprouts, cooked only (for food safety), e.g., alfalfa, mung ■ Beans, green and yellow ■ Beets ■ Breadfruit ■ Brussels sprouts ■ Cabbage (green, red, celery, napa) ■ Cactus (nopales) ■ Cauliflower ■ Carrots, rainbow (e.g., pink, purple, red, white, and yellow) ■ Celeriac ■ Celery ■ Chayote (mirliton) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Cucumbers ■ Chives ■ Daikon (oriental radish) ■ Eggplant ■ Fennel ■ Garlic ■ Green chili peppers ■ Green onions (scallions) ■ Green peppers ■ Horseradish ■ Iceberg lettuce ■ Kohlrabi ■ Leeks ■ Mushrooms ■ Okra ■ Olives ■ Onions (white, yellow, red) ■ Peas in pod, e.g., snap peas, snow peas ■ Pepperoncini ■ Pickles (cucumber) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Purple peppers ■ Radishes ■ Rhubarb ■ Rutabagas ■ Shallots ■ Sauerkraut ■ Seaweed ■ Snap peas ■ Snow peas ■ Tomatillo ■ Turnips ■ Wax beans ■ White sweet Potatoes ■ Yellow peppers ■ Yellow summer squash ■ Zucchini squash 	

Vegetable Subgroups in the NSLP

Resources

Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-School-Nutrition-Programs>

Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/food-buying-guide-for-child-nutrition-programs>

Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Patterns-School-Nutrition-Programs>

Menu Planning for Child Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Menu-Planning>

Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12 (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Menu-Planning-Guide-for-School-Meals>

Product Formulation Statement for Vegetables and Fruits (USDA):

https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/resource-files/PFS_Documenting_Vegetables_Subgroups_Fruits.pdf

Product Formulation Statements (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/PFS.pdf>

Sample Completed Product Formulation Statement for Fruits (USDA):

<https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/resource-files/PFSsamplefruits.pdf>

Sample Completed Product Formulation Statement for Vegetables (USDA):

<https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/resource-files/PFSsamplevegetables.pdf>



For more information, review the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) *Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12* and visit the CSDE's [Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs](#) and [Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpages, or contact the [school nutrition programs staff](#) in the CSDE's Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841.

This document is available at <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/VegSubgroup.pdf>.

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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.

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