

CACFP Tuesday Talks: Veggie and Fruit Ideas Questions and Answers

If you have additional questions, contact your [assigned consultant](#). If you are a family day care home provider, contact your home sponsor.

1. Are smoothies now creditable?

Smoothies are creditable in CACFP. Refer to the [Smoothie Handout](#) for more information, including how to credit components in smoothies and a creditable smoothie recipe.

2. Are raisins and craisins now creditable?

Yes, dried fruit such as raisins and craisins have always been creditable. Dried fruit credits for twice the amount of volume served, i.e., 1/4 cup raisins credit as a 1/2 cup fruit.

3. I order from a local distributor that will deliver apples and oranges if another fruit I ordered is not in season. Is this ok?

Programs that order from a local distributor may receive substitutions due to a variety of reasons, including running out of product that is not in season. That is ok as long as the substitute is creditable, and you update the menu and production record with the actual item served at the meal or snack. Work with your supplier to see what other fruit and vegetable options may be available to provide as substitutions, instead of always the same ones (apples, oranges). Another option is to ask for frozen fruit as substitutions, such as frozen mango, blueberries, strawberries, or pineapple.

In terms of serving a variety of fruits and vegetables, the DPI recommends ordering fruits and vegetables when they are in season, as they will most likely be more available. Check out the [Cycle Menus for Child Care](#) for a list of seasonal fruits and vegetables. Also, the [Celebrating Seasonality: Wisconsin-Grown Recipes for the Early Childhood Setting](#) has a list of Wisconsin vegetables by subgroup and they're seasonal availability.

4. Are home canned fruits and vegetables allowed?

No. For safety reasons, home-canned foods may not be served in meals reimbursed under the CACFP because they may contain harmful bacteria even when there is no evidence of spoilage.

5. How do I get picky eaters to eat vegetables?

Hopefully you got a lot of inspiration and learned many fun ways to serve fruits and vegetables in the webinar that can help with getting picky eaters to eat vegetables. Some ideas include hiding them in foods, so children are being served vegetables but don't know it. You can make vegetables fun by serving colorful vegetable kabobs, veggie pizzas or have children make faces or animals with different kinds of vegetables. Get kids involved in gardening and growing their own food. Kids are more inclined to eat foods they have grown. Introduce a new vegetable each month, and read stories, do activities, or taste testing outside of mealtime where they feel less pressure to try a vegetable and can spend an activity time identifying how the food tastes, feels, and smells. Also try cooking fruits and vegetables in different ways. As discussed, some children do not like the taste or texture of raw vegetables, so cooking them to change

the flavors, or adding parmesan cheese or seasonings can help! Last, provide encouragement to try vegetables, and have staff model positive eating behaviors and messages, do not force.

6. What if I can't find certain fruits and vegetable at my store?

If you are seeking out a specific new fruit or vegetable but cannot find it at your local store, ask a store employee if the store carries it or ask if they can order it for you in the future. Many times, stores are willing to purchase new products when there is interest. Another idea for finding new fruits and vegetables is to walk through the produce section and keep your eyes open for fruits or vegetables that you have not served before. Or, ask other providers or centers in your area where they shop to find different fruits and vegetables.

Some stores have special sections for ethnic foods where you may find fruits and vegetables you haven't served. Or try shopping at an ethnic grocery store to find some of the more uncommon fruits and vegetables. Some are more commonly served in specific cultures and ethnic groups and therefore may be found at Asian or Mexican grocery stores.