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Other Foods

Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs

6 Other Foods

Description of Other Foods that DO NOT Meet the Meal Pattern Requirements

The foods in this section do not meet the requirement for any component in the meal patterns. These items are included for your convenience since they are frequently used as condiments and seasonings to round out the meal, improve acceptability, and satisfy children's or adults' appetites. Child Nutrition Program operators may include these foods in small portions.

While these extra foods do not credit toward meal pattern components, school program operators do need to make sure they are counted in dietary specifications. If menus exceed any of the dietary specifications for calories, saturated fat, or sodium, the menu planner should evaluate how these noncreditable foods contribute to the excess calories and other nutrients.

The calories supplied by these foods help to meet the energy needs of growing children. They also contribute varying amounts of protein, vitamins, and minerals essential to good nutrition. However, many of these foods are high in salt, sugar, and/or fat. For that reason, you may want to consider carefully how often and in what amount you serve them. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend eating patterns that are low in added sugars, saturated fats, and sodium.

Foods are designated as "USDA Foods" or "Market pack" in Column 1. USDA Foods are not normally available on the market. Market pack foods are commercially available.