

Creditable Foods for Infants

Iowa Child and Adult Care Food Program

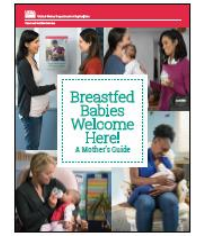
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USDA References for feeding infants:

- [Feeding Infants in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#), 2019.
- [Breastfed Babies Welcome Here! A Mother's Guide](#), 2019.

This resource is a summary of crediting information about infant foods from “Feeding Infants in the CACFP” and should be used to determine if infant foods are creditable.



Creditable foods count toward fulfilling component requirements for reimbursable infant meals.

Non-Creditable or “other” foods do not fulfill the food requirements listed on the CACFP Infant Meal Pattern. When these foods are used to fulfill component requirements, the meal must not be claimed for reimbursement.

NOTE: The CACFP Shopper free phone app can also be used to determine if infant foods are creditable and is based on the guidance presented in this document.

General requirements for feeding infants in CACFP:

1. The CACFP infant meal pattern is divided into two age groups, 0-5 months and 6-11 months (until the baby's first birthday). Creditable foods must be served to meet CACFP meal pattern requirements.
2. Care providers are required to offer at least one creditable iron-fortified infant formula and record it on the CACFP enrollment form prior to distributing to families. Parents decide whether to accept the formula or supply their own formula and/or breastmilk.
3. Care providers and parents should discuss infant's signs of hunger. Infants do not have a required time-feeding schedule and should be fed at the earliest signs of hunger.
4. Parents should be the first to introduce new foods to their infants. Communicate regularly with parents as infants become developmentally ready for solid foods. Use “Infant Foods Tried at Home” for parents to document foods they have introduced.
 - Solid foods are generally introduced to infants around six months of age depending on an infant's developmental readiness.
 - Solid foods may be served to infants under 6 months if the infant is developmentally ready and if the parent requests. Solid foods served at this age are considered extra foods.
 - Serving sizes of solid foods start at “0” to allow for gradual introduction.
 - Single foods should be introduced to infants first to watch for adverse reactions.
 - As solid foods are introduced, the texture must be modified to meet the infant's developmental needs starting with pureed, progressing to mashed, ground, then finely chopped.
 - Before serving food mixtures, the infant should first be introduced to all of the food's ingredients.
 - When a CACFP food component is regularly served at home, it is required to be served to the infant when in care.
 - Parents should indicate their wishes about who is providing the solid infant foods on the enrollment form.
5. Parents must not be required to supply formula or solid foods. However, parents may provide up to one component (formula or food) in order for the care provider to claim the meal. All meal components supplied by parents must be identified on infant menus. All but one component may be provided by the parent if the food is provided for special dietary needs. If the parent supplies more than the allowed components for any meal or snack, the meal or snack may not be claimed for reimbursement.
6. To claim meals not meeting the CACFP infant meal pattern requirements, documentation from a medical provider authorized to write prescriptions in Iowa must be on file explaining the need for the substitution, foods to avoid, and acceptable substitutions. Documentation may include the Diet Modification Request Form, letter, or prescription.
7. One month is allowed to transition from breastmilk or formula to whole cow's milk after the infant's first birthday. During this transition time, both unflavored whole milk and breastmilk or infant formula can be served to help infants get use to unflavored whole milk. Documentation from a prescribing medical authority is not required.
8. Parents may indicate when their infant is ready for “table” foods, meaning the infant eats some foods served to older children. These foods may contribute toward meeting the infant meal component requirements. When possible, remove the infant's portion before adding salt, sugar, sweeteners, etc.
9. Individual infant menus must be completed by the end of each child care business day, and must reflect the actual foods served to the infant. For example, record specific fruits and vegetables served, and “rice IFC” (iron-fortified infant cereal) rather than “cereal”.
10. Centers may receive donated infant foods. A record of donations must be kept. Parents may provide food they obtain through the WIC Program to their own infant. Parents may not donate WIC foods for other children.

CACFP Support for Breastfed Babies

CACFP supports breastfeeding mothers by encouraging them to supply breastmilk when their infants are in child care. It is recommended for care providers to have a quiet, private, comfortable, and sanitary area for mothers to breastfeed in the child care setting. Care providers are encouraged to share with parents, "Breastfed Babies Welcome Here! A Mother's Guide" as well as parent information from "Feeding Infants in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)".



Reimbursable Meals with Breastmilk

0 - 5 Months:

Infant meals including **only** breastmilk are reimbursable when:

- A mother comes to the child care to breastfeed her infant
- A mother provides expressed breastmilk for her infant, and a care provider feeds it to the infant.
- An eligible home provider breastfeeds her infant when other non-residential infants/children are present and served the same meal type.
- A center employee breastfeeds her infant at the center.



6 - 11 Months:

If solid foods have not yet been introduced, infant meals including **only** breastmilk are creditable when:

- A mother comes to the child care home or center to breastfeed her infant
- A mother provides expressed breastmilk for her infant, and a care provider feeds it to the infant.
- An eligible home provider breastfeeds her infant when other non-residential infants/children are present and served the same meal type.
- A center employee breastfeeds her infant at the center.

After solid foods have been introduced, infant meals including breastmilk are reimbursable when the care provider supplies the solid food(s).

12 Months and Older:

Breastmilk can be served in place of fluid cow's milk. Documentation from a medical professional is not required.

Reimbursable Meals with Iron-Fortified Formula

0 - 5 Month:

Infant meals including **only** iron-fortified formula are reimbursable when:

- Parents supply the formula and it is fed by the care provider.
- The care provider supplies the formula.
- Eligible home providers feed formula to their infants when other non-residential infants/children are present and served the same meal type.



6 - 11 Months:

After solid foods have been introduced, meals are reimbursable when:

- Parents supply the formula and the care provider supplies solid foods.
- The care provider supplies the formula, and parents supply no more than one solid food.
- The care provider supplies the formula and all solid foods.
- Eligible home providers supply the formula and all solid foods for their own infants when other non-residential infants/children are present and served the same meal type.

12th Month:

The 12th month is a time to transition the infant from iron-fortified formula to whole cow's milk.

After 12 Months:

Documentation signed by a prescribing medical authority explaining the need for the substitution is required to serve formula.

Creditable Formulas

Infant formula means: “any iron-fortified infant formula, intended for dietary use as a sole source of food for normal, healthy infants served in liquid state at manufacturer’s recommended dilution.”

Use the following criteria to determine if a formula is creditable:

- Ensure the formula is not a Food and Drug Administration (FDA) Exempt Infant Formula ([FDA website](#)).
- Look for “Infant Formula with Iron” or a similar statement on the front of the formula package. All iron-fortified infant formulas must be labeled with this type of statement.
- Use the Nutrition Facts Label to ensure the formula is iron-fortified (1 milligram of iron or more per 100 calories of formula) when prepared in accordance with label directions.
- Make sure the formula is manufactured in the U.S. If a formula is purchased outside of the U.S. the formula is probably not regulated by FDA and therefore not creditable in CACFP.



In addition to iron-fortified milk and soy-based formulas, other formulas are creditable if they are iron-fortified including milk or soy-based low-lactose, and lactose-free formulas.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) does not maintain a current list of iron-fortified infant formulas because new products are continually being developed.

Selecting an Iron-Fortified Formula

Care providers are required to offer at least one creditable iron-fortified formula and list it in writing on the CACFP enrollment form. Families may accept or decline the formula offered. Considerations when selecting a formula to offer are the type of formula(s) parents prefer, cost, and storage. Three types of formula are available on the market: powdered, liquid concentrate, and ready to feed (RTF). Powdered formula is easy to store, has a long shelf life, and costs less. All infant formulas must meet strict Food and Drug Administration (FDA) requirements, so cost does not necessarily equate to quality.

Below is a cost comparison of different formulas from one store. Generally, a large container of powdered store brand formula is most economical. Cost comparisons for one-ounce (oz) are in Column F. The cost for 4, 6, and 8 oz servings are in Column G:

Column A	Column B	Column C	Column D	Column E	Column F (Col D/Col E)	Column G		
Formula Name (Examples)	Store Date	Container Size	Container Cost	Yield	Cost per Ounce (oz)	Cost of 4 oz. feeding (Col F Xs 4oz)	Cost of 6 oz. feeding (Col F Xs 6 oz)	Cost of 8 oz. feeding (Col F Xs 8 oz)
Similac Advance Complete Nutrition	HyVee May 2019	352 gm	\$18.99	90.00 oz.	\$.211	\$.844	\$1.266	\$1.688
Tippy Toes Advantage	HyVee May 2019	658 gm	\$17.99	169.00 oz.	\$.106	\$.424	\$.636	\$.848
Similac Advance	HyVee May 2019	873 gm	\$34.99	234.00 oz.	\$.150	\$.600	\$.900	\$1.200

Non-Creditable Milk-Based Foods

Breastmilk or Iron-fortified formula in a bottle with infant cereal Buttermilk Cow’s milk (all types) Cream Cream soups Creamer (dairy and non-dairy) Custard Evaporated cow’s milk Formulas (exempt, follow-up, home-made, low iron, and weaning) creditable only with a medical statement	Goat’s milk (all types) Half and half Ice cream Milk substitutes (such as almond milk, coconut milk, hemp milk, rice milk, soy milk or soy beverage) Pudding Raw (unpasteurized) milk * Reconstituted dry milk Sweetened condensed milk
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* Prohibited (poses a danger to the infant)

Exempt Infant Formulas

Exempt infant formulas are labeled for use by infants who have inborn errors of metabolism, low birth weight, or who otherwise have unusual medical or dietary problems as defined in 21 CFR 107.3.

A Diet Modification Request Form, letter, or prescription signed by an authorized medical authority, must be on file for FDA approved Exempt Infant Formulas to be creditable.

Below is a partial list of exempt infant formulas. The list does not represent FDA or Iowa CACFP endorsement of these companies or their products. Refer to the [FDA website](#) for the current complete list of Exempt Infant Formulas.

Non-Creditable Exempt Infant Formulas

May 2019

Abbott Nutrition

Metabolic Formulas

- Cyclinex-1
- Glutarex-1
- Hominex-1
- Ketonex-1

Formulas for Premature Infants

- Similac Special Care with iron (20 Cal or 24 Cal)
- Similac Special Care 24 Cal High Protein
- Similac Special Care 30 Cal w/Iron
- Similac NeoSure

Protein Hydrolysate Formulas

- Similac Alimentum

Amino Acid-Based Formula

- EleCare

Miscellaneous

- Calcilo XD
- Liquid Protein Fortifier
- Pro-Phree
- ProViMin
- RCF No Added Carbohydrate Soy Infant Formula Base
- Similac For Diarrhea
- Similac Human Milk Fortifier
- Similac Extensively Hydrolyzed Protein Human Milk Fortifier Concentrated Liquid
- Similac Human Milk Fortifier Concentrated Liquid
- Similac PM 60/40

PBM Nutritionals

Formulas for Premature Infants

- 22 calories/oz milk-based infant formula with DHA and ARA for Conditions such as Prematurity (sold under private labels)

Mead Johnson Nutritionals, Bristol-Myers Squibb

Metabolic Formulas

- Phenyl Free 1
- BCAD 1
- GA
- OA 1

Formulas for Premature Infants

- Enfamil Premature Low Iron 20 Calorie or 24 Calorie
- Enfamil Premature w/Iron 20 Calorie or 24 Calorie
- Enfamil EnfaCare
- Enfamil Premature High Protein 24 Calorie
- Enfamil Premature 30 Calorie

Protein Hydrolysate Formulas

- Nutramigen
- Pregestimil 20 Calorie or 24 Calorie
- Nutramigen with Enflora LGG

Amino Acid-Based Formula

- PurAmino

Miscellaneous

- Product 3232A
- Enfamil Human Milk Fortifier Acidified Liquid
- Enfamil Human Milk Fortifier Powder
- EnfaPort

Nestle Infant Nutrition

Formulas for Premature Infants

- Gerber Good Start Nourish
- Gerber Good Start Premature 20, 24 or 30
- Gerber Good Start Premature 24 High Protein

Prolactin Biosciences, Inc.

Miscellaneous

- Prolact CR Human Milk Caloric Fortifier

Vegetables and Fruits

1. Vegetables and fruits can be store-bought or home-prepared.
2. Remove pits, seeds, tough skins and peels from vegetables and fruits.
3. Cook if needed, and prepare all vegetables and fruits to the appropriate texture before serving.
4. Single vegetables and fruits may be served, or they may be combined when the infant has been introduced to each food individually.
5. Creditable vegetables and fruits packaged in pouches must be served with a spoon.

Creditable

Baby foods, store-bought

- single component (plain fruits and vegetables)
- mixed fruits and vegetables
- mixed component foods (fruit and/or vegetable with grains, meat or meat alternate) ^{1,2}
- containing DHA (docosahexaenoic acid)

Beans and split peas,

- Canned ^{3,4,5}
- Dried, cooked ^{4,5}

Fruits

- commercially canned, drained
- fresh
- frozen

Soybeans (edamame) ^{4,5}

Vegetables ⁶

- commercially canned, drained
- fresh
- frozen



Non-Creditable

Baby fruit desserts

- Canned vegetable soups
- Deep-fat fried vegetables
- Dried fruits and vegetables
- Drinks - lemonade, soda pop, sugar water, sport drinks
- Dry iron-fortified infant cereals with fruit ¹
- Freeze-dried fruit and vegetable snacks
- Fruit and yogurt combinations
- Fruit drinks, flavored powders
- Fruit juices 100%
- Fruit juice blends
- Fruit or vegetable wheels or puffs ¹
- Fruit punch
- Fruit snacks
- Fruit syrup
- Home canned fruits or vegetables ⁷
- Jarred Iron-fortified infant cereals with fruit ¹
- Vegetable juice 100%
- Vegetable juice blends



¹ Not recommended unless quantities of vegetables, fruits, grains, or meat/meat alternates are known. Look for labels stating amounts of each component in the product. May contain foods that do not credit toward the infant meal pattern such as rice or pasta.

² Make sure the infant has been introduced to all ingredients in combination foods.

³ Rinse before serving.

⁴ Do not serve whole to prevent choking.

⁵ May be credited as a vegetable or as a meat alternate but not for both in the same meal.

⁶ Homegrown spinach, beets, turnips, carrots, and collard greens should not be fed to infants less than 6 months.

⁷ Prohibited (poses a danger to the infant).

Meat and Meat Alternates

1. Meat/meat alternates must be of appropriate consistency and texture for the individual infant's developmental abilities to prevent choking.
2. Eggs must be federally inspected, whole, and fully cooked.
3. Fish must be purchased from a commercial source.
4. All meat, eggs, poultry, and fish must be well-cooked.
5. All meats must be USDA inspected, and can be purchased canned, fresh, or frozen.
6. Poultry and fish must be served without skin and bones.
7. Texture of meats, poultry, fish and shellfish must be modified according to each baby's developmental abilities.
8. Yogurt may be flavored or plain, Greek or regular, and any fat level. Total sugar must be limited to 23 grams per 6 ounces. Refer to Nutrition Facts Labels, use the CACFP Shopper phone app, or the Team Nutrition Training Worksheet ([Choose Yogurts That Are Lower in Added Sugars](#)) to determine if the yogurt meets the sugar criteria.
9. Creditable yogurt packaged in tubes must be served with a spoon.

Creditable

Cheese, natural and processed (e.g., American, Cheddar, Colby, Co-Jack, Monterey Jack, Mozzarella, Muenster, Provolone, Swiss)

Chicken, breaded (e.g., nuggets, patties) ^{1,2,3,4,8}

Commercially-prepared combination dinners ^{1,2}

Cottage Cheese

Eggs – fresh, pasteurized liquid or dried whole eggs

Fin fish

Fish, breaded (e.g., fillets, sticks) ^{1,2,3,4,8}

Fresh sausage, Italian or pork

Hot dogs or frankfurters ^{3,4,8}

Legumes, cooked dry or canned beans or split peas, lentils, black beans, pinto beans, black-eyed peas, or chickpeas. ^{3,5,6}

Meat (e.g., beef, pork, lamb)

Meat and/or poultry sticks, (jarred) labeled for infants ^{3,4}

Meats, store-bought baby food, single component (with or without broth or gravy)

Poultry (e.g., chicken, turkey)

Sausage, fresh pork or fresh Italian ³

Sausage, Vienna ^{3,4,8}

Shellfish (e.g., crab, shrimp, clams, mussels)

Soybeans (edamame) ^{3,5}

Yogurt, store-bought

Yogurt in a tube, 2.2 oz. = ½ oz. meat alternate



Non-Creditable

Bacon

Cheese food, cheese substitutes, cheese spreads, cheese powder, cheese product

Cheese, imitation

Cream cheese

Deep-fat fried cheese, meat, fish, poultry

Dried or semi-dried meat and poultry sticks

Fish (canned with bones, shark, swordfish, king mackerel, tilefish, bigeye tuna, orange roughy, marlin) ⁷

Green peas, green lima beans, green beans (credit as vegetable)

Home canned meats ⁷

Nuts and Seeds ⁷

Nut and Seed butters (e.g., peanut butter, tahini, sunflower seed butter)

Tofu

Yogurt, homemade and soy

Yogurt products, commercial (yogurt blends ¹, frozen yogurt, or liquid yogurt, yogurt smoothies, yogurt flavored products, yogurt bars, freeze-dried yogurt snacks, yogurt covered fruits or nuts).

- ¹ Only the edible meat portion credits. Not recommended unless quantities of meat or meat alternates are known. Look for products with a CN label or Product Formulation Statement stating the amounts of each component in the product.
- ² Make sure the infant has been introduced to all ingredients in the combination food. May contain foods that do not credit toward the infant meal pattern such as rice, breading or pasta.
- ³ Cook and alter the shape, size and texture for the development of the infant.
- ⁴ Credits only if no byproducts, cereals, and extenders included. Not recommended due to high fat and sodium.
- ⁵ May be credited as a vegetable or as a meat alternate but not for both in the same meal.
- ⁶ Rinse canned beans before serving.
- ⁷ Prohibited (poses a danger to the infant).
- ⁸ Not recommended due to sodium, saturated fat and/or nitrate content.

Grains

1. All bread, cracker, and ready to eat (RTE) cereal products must be made with enriched or whole grain meal or flour. They must also be made without nuts, seeds, or hard pieces of whole grain kernels or other hard food items, dried fruits, and honey. RTE cereals must be fortified if not made from enriched or whole grain meal or flour.
2. Select grain, bread, cracker, and cereal products of appropriate shape and texture for an infant's eating abilities to prevent choking.
3. RTE cereal may be flakes, rounds, or o-shaped products suitable for infant finger food.
4. Breads and crackers must be broken into small manageable pieces.
5. RTE cereals should be easy for older infants to pick up and eat.
6. RTE cereals must contain no more than 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce (no more than 21 grams sucrose and other sugars per 100 grams of dry cereal).
 - Refer to cereal Nutrition Facts Label, CACFP Shopper phone app, or the Team Nutrition Worksheet ([Choose Breakfast Cereals that are Lower in Added Sugar](#)) to determine if the cereal meets the sugar criteria.
 - Cereals on the WIC list of approved cereals are acceptable.
7. RTE cereal, bread, cracker and other creditable grain products can be served at snacks for infants 6 – 11 months who are developmentally ready.
8. Infant cereal includes only iron-fortified dry infant cereal (IFC). "Iron-fortified" should appear on the package or any of the following should appear in the Ingredient list: iron, ferric fumarate, electrolytic iron, or iron (electrolytic).
9. IFC can be offered as a creditable food for infants 6 – 11 months who are developmentally ready, at breakfast, lunch, supper, and snacks.
10. Single-grain iron-fortified infant cereals (e.g., barley, oatmeal, rice, wheat) should be introduced before mixed infant cereals to check for any allergic reactions.
11. IFC "multiple grains" products are creditable if the infant has been introduced to the individual grains in the ingredient list.
12. The CACFP whole grain-rich requirement does not apply to infants.

Creditable

Animal crackers
 Bagels ¹
 Breads (French, Italian, and similar breads)
 Breakfast cereals, ready-to-eat ¹
 Biscuits ²
 Buns (hamburger and hot dog)
 Cornbread and corn muffins
 Croissants ²
 English muffins
 Graham crackers (no honey) ²
 Iron-fortified infant cereal
 Pancakes ²
 Pita bread
 Pizza crust
 Pretzels, soft
 Puff cereal snacks ^{1, 3, 4}
 Rolls
 Savory crackers ^{1, 2}
 Soft tortillas (flour, whole wheat, and corn)
 Teething crackers, biscuits, toasts (no honey) ¹
 Toast
 Waffles ²



- ¹ Some ready-to-eat cereals, grain, bread and cracker products may be a choking hazard.
- ² Product may be high in sodium, sugar, or fat.
- ³ Credited only if recognizable as a ready-to-eat cereal.
- ⁴ May resemble puffed rice or whole grain O's cereals. The snack should easily dissolve in an infant's mouth. Must meet sugar requirements.
- ⁵ Not recommended unless quantities of fruits or infant cereals are known. Look for labels that state amounts of each component in the product.
- ⁶ May be served as an extra food, but are not creditable.
- ⁷ Prohibited (poses a danger to the infant).



Non-Creditable

Baby desserts
 Breakfast bars
 Brownies
 Cakes, commercial or homemade
 Cereal bars
 Cooked rice, barley, bulger, wheat, and other cooked grains ^{1, 6}
 Cookies
 Croutons
 Desserts
 Doughnuts
 Farina ⁶
 Fruit or vegetable wheels or puffs ⁶
 Grain bars
 Grain based desserts
 Granola bars
 Grits, all types ⁶
 Iron-fortified infant cereals with fruit (dry) or formula ^{5, 6}
 Iron-fortified infant cereals with or without fruit in a jar (wet) ^{5, 6}
 Muffins, other than corn ⁶
 Oatmeal, regular, minute, old-fashioned ⁶
 Pasta – noodles, macaroni, spaghetti, and other shapes ⁶
 Popcorn ⁷
 Pretzels, hard ⁷
 Sweet pastries and rolls
 Sweet pie crusts
 Tapioca
 Toaster pastries



Other Non-Creditable Foods

Foods not appropriate for infants.

Carefully read ingredient lists and nutrition labels to avoid infant foods including added salt, fat, sugar, and other extra ingredients with little nutritive value.

Artificial sweeteners
Caffeinated drinks
Candy, any kind
Chips, any kind
Chocolate
Cocoa
Coffee
Deep-fat fried foods prepared on-site
Food textures – small, sticky or hard

Home canned baby foods ¹
Honey as separate food or an ingredient ¹
Marshmallows
Soft drinks, energy drinks, or sports drinks
Sugar, syrups and sweeteners added to foods
Sugar substitutes; aspartame, sucralose, stevia, saccharin
Tea, sweetened and unsweetened

¹ Prohibited (poses a danger to the infant).