



## The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)

### Serving Vegetarian and Vegan Meals

The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) meal pattern provides organizations with the flexibility to serve vegetarian or vegan meals while still complying with all of the nutrition requirements. Participating organizations are required to provide specific food groups in specific quantities in order to receive reimbursement for the meals served. The required CACFP food groups are: milk, bread/bread alternate, fruit, vegetable, and meat/meat alternate.

#### Accommodating Vegetarian and Vegan Diets

Organizations can easily comply with the fruit, vegetable and bread/bread alternate requirements when serving vegetarian and vegan meals. Serving the milk and meat/meat alternate component will require special accommodations. Guidance is provided below. If you have additional questions, contact the CACFP Manager at (202) 442-4010 or [norma.birckhead@dc.gov](mailto:norma.birckhead@dc.gov).

#### Meeting the milk requirement

##### **May I serve soy milk to the children in my care?**

**YES.** CACFP recognizes five soy milks as creditable substitutions for cow's milk if the parent or guardian submits a written request. The following soy milks are the only non-dairy beverages that may be credited as part of reimbursable CACFP meals.

- 8<sup>th</sup> Continent Original Soy Milk
- Pacific Natural Ultra Soy Milk
- Pacific Natural Ultra Soy Milk, Vanilla
- Kikkoman Pearl Organic Soymilk Smart Creamy Vanilla
- Kikkoman Pearl Organic Soymilk Smart Chocolate

##### **May I serve rice, nut or hemp milk to the children in my care?**

**NO.** CACFP does not recognize any other non-dairy beverage as creditable for CACFP reimbursement except the five soy milks listed above.

#### Meeting the meat/meat alternate requirement

##### **What kind of meat alternates may I serve the children in my care?**

The CACFP meal pattern allows organizations to serve meat alternates, such as beans and cheese, in place of animal protein.

##### **May I serve veggie burgers or other like products to the children in my care?**

**YES,** but the products must have Child Nutrition (CN) Labels\* in order to be credited as part of reimbursable CACFP meals. There are a variety of meatless entrée items that are authorized to carry the CN Label. Visit the [Child Nutrition Labeling website](#) to find some options.

If you want to serve a product that does not have a CN Label, you must have the manufacturer complete a product formulation statement. Click here for a [sample statement](#).

\*The CN Labeling program is a voluntary system established by the United States Department of Agriculture to allow manufacturers the opportunity to prove that their products can meet the requirements of federal nutrition program.