

Food Service Facts Table of Contents

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17. Food Based Menu Planning

The Food Based Menu Planning system uses meal patterns made up of food group components which must be served in specific amounts.

Food Based Meal Patterns

The Food Based Menu Planning option, also known as Enhanced Food Based Menus, is designed to provide a simple and easy to follow framework for planning nutritious and well-balanced meals. It allows for broad food choices that can include cultural, ethnic, religious and local food preferences.

The system uses a meal pattern that specifies minimum quantities of foods from each of four food components:

1. Meat/Meat Alternate
2. Fruits/Vegetables
3. Grains/Breads
4. Fluid Milk

The Food Based lunch and breakfast meal patterns define which food components must be included in a reimbursable meal.

Food Based Lunch Meal Pattern

<u>Components</u>	<u>Food Items</u>	<u>Menu Example</u>
Meat/Meat Alternate	Meat/Meat Alternate	Oven-Browned Chicken
Fruit & Vegetable	Vegetable* Fruit*	Whipped Potatoes Apple
Grain/Bread	Bread	Hot Roll
Fluid Milk	Milk	Milk

*Two sources of fruit and vegetable must be offered. Fruit and vegetable food items may be a combination of fruits and vegetables or two (2) vegetables or two (2) fruits.

Food Based Breakfast Meal Pattern

<u>Components/Food Items</u>	<u>Menu Example</u>
Milk	Milk
Fruit/Vegetable	Orange Juice
Two (2) servings from one of the following components OR One (1) serving from each component	Cereal and Toast OR
Grain/Bread	Toast
Meat/Meat Alternate	Sausage Patty
<i>Optional for grades 7-12:</i> Additional grain/bread	<i>and (optional)</i> Cereal

Minimum requirements for each component and age/grade group are specified on the Food Based Meal Pattern Requirements for Lunch (Form 17-A) and the Food Based Meal Pattern Requirements for Breakfast (Form 17-B). More than the minimum quantities of food for each age/grade group may be served, but not less. Foods that are creditable for each component are listed in the *USDA Food Buying Guide*. Creditable Foods for School Lunches and Breakfasts (Form 17-C) provides an abbreviated list of the common foods that are used to meet component requirements.

Detailed information about the requirements for the Food Based menu planning option is provided in the KSDE manual, *Planning Food Based Menus for Healthy School Meals*. This publication has been distributed to sponsors that have indicated use of the Food Based Menu Planning option on the Site Application of the Program Agreement. This guidance is located on www.kn-eat.org, School Nutrition Programs, Guidance, Menu Planning. The publication is updated periodically when changes in regulations or requirements occur. If additional copies are needed, contact KSDE.

Each production kitchen is required to use written recipes and maintain food production records documenting that the menus meet component requirements. In addition, each production kitchen must maintain files of product analyses and Child Nutrition (CN) labels for each pre-prepared item served. KSDE reviews the recipes, analyses, labels and food production records at the time of the Supervisory Technical Assistance Review (STAR), School Meals Initiative (SMI) Review and Coordinated Review Effort (CRE). KSDE conducts regional training for food service managers and directors on meeting requirements for Food Based Menus. For information concerning the dates and locations of Food Based Menu training workshops, contact KSDE.

Nutrient Analysis of Food Based Menus

Sponsors that use Food Based menu planning are not required to perform their own nutrient analyses but are required to meet established nutrient standards and the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. During the School Meals Initiative (SMI) Review, KSDE evaluates menus for meal component requirements, calories and nutrients. The SMI review includes a nutrient analysis of the meals served to determine compliance with the requirements. The KSDE child nutrition consultant will provide technical assistance regarding meeting the SMI goals and nutrient standards as needed.

USDA School Meals Initiative (SMI) Nutrient Standards

These targets should be met by the lunches served over the course of a school week:

- ◆ No more than 30% of total calories from fat
- ◆ No more than 10% of total calories from saturated fat
- ◆ No less than 100% of age/grade range standards for:
 - Calories
 - Vitamin A
 - Vitamin C
 - Iron
 - Calcium
 - Fiber
 - Protein
- ◆ No more than 100% of age/grade range standard for:
 - Sodium
 - Cholesterol

Other General Requirements

Milk Requirements

Students (1) must be offered fluid milk in a variety of fat contents and (2) may be offered flavored and unflavored fluid milk and lactose-free fluid milk. Encouraging students to select lower fat milk is consistent with the SMI nutrition goals. Fluid milk with fat content of .5 percent to 1 percent is considered to be low-fat.

“Offer or Serve”

The goals of the “Offer or Serve” provision are to minimize food waste and encourage sponsors to offer more food choices. Food service managers report that students like having choices and are more likely to eat food items they choose themselves. The following guidelines should be considered when implementing “Offer or Serve”:

Sponsors that select the “Offer” option must offer all of the component food items to all students. The students choose the foods that they intend to eat. When the “Serve” option is used, students are served the full portion of all component food items. In other words, students are not given the option to take less than a complete reimbursable meal.

- ◆ Senior high schools participating in the National School Lunch Program are required to implement the “Offer” option for lunch.
- ◆ Sponsors may implement “Offer” in their breakfast programs, but are not required to do so.
- ◆ Using “Offer” is a local option in elementary and junior high/middle schools. The sponsor also has the option of requiring that the students choose a minimum of either three (3) or four (4) food items for these grade groups.

The sponsor completes a “Site Application” for each food service site as part of the annual Program Agreement renewal process. On the “Site Application” the sponsor indicates how the site is implementing “Offer” and/or “Serve”. A site could use “Serve” for breakfast and “Offer” for lunch, or vice versa. At an elementary site, some grades may use “Serve” and others may use “Offer”. The After School Care Snack Program must always use the “Serve” option.

Reimbursable meals must always be priced as a unit. With the “Offer” option, the meal charge remains the same whether the student takes the minimum number of food items or the maximum number offered.

Key Points of “Offer” for Breakfast with Food Based Menus

- ◆ All four (4) food components and all four (4) food items must be offered to all students.
- ◆ The serving sizes must equal the minimum required quantities for the age/grade group.
- ◆ The student must take a full portion of three (3) of the four (4) creditable food items. If the breakfast selected by the student contains less than three (3) full portions of creditable food items, the breakfast is not eligible for reimbursement.
- ◆ The student decides which food item to decline.

Key Points of “Offer” for Lunch with Food Based Menus

- ◆ All four (4) food components and all five (5) food items must be offered to all students.
- ◆ The serving sizes must equal the minimum required quantities for the appropriate age/grade group.
- ◆ A student must take a full portion of three (3) of the five (5) creditable food items. If the lunch selected by the student contains less than three (3) full portions of creditable food items, the lunch is not eligible for reimbursement.
- ◆ The student decides which food item(s) to decline.

Students and their parents should be informed of "Offer" annually. Posting of menu requirements in the food service area helps students understand which items must be taken for a reimbursable meal. The Sample Letter to Explain "Offer or Serve" for Breakfast and the Sample Letter to Explain "Offer or Serve" for Lunch (Forms 17-D and 17-E) may be sent to students and their parents.

Multiple servings of the same food may be counted only once toward meeting the component requirements. For example, two cartons of milk would only count as providing one component.

If a student selects multiple foods that are part of the same component, these selections can only be counted as one required serving.

- ◆ If a student selects cottage cheese, deviled egg and ham, only the meat/meat alternate component has been met.
- ◆ If a student selects rice, tortilla chips and a cookie, only the grain/bread component has been met.

Meals served to students that do not contain the minimum number of food items may not be claimed for reimbursement. Menu planners need to make sure cashiers, tray monitors and students can identify at the "point-of-service" which combinations of food items qualify as a reimbursable meal. If a student takes less than the required number of items or required amounts of those items, the student must either return to the serving area to obtain the required foods or the meal may not be claimed for reimbursement.

Serving Whole Milk

Q *Is it necessary to offer whole milk?*

A No. Sponsors are encouraged to control fat content of menus by offering lower fat milk choices.



Student Takes Incomplete Meal

Q *When the "Offer" option is implemented and the student does not take full portions of three meal components at breakfast or at lunch, what should the tray monitor do?*

A A meal is reimbursable only if it meets the minimum requirements. The student must take three (3) full portions of the four (4) required component items at breakfast and three (3) full portions of the five (5) required component items at lunch. If the student takes less than the required number at either meal, the student may be asked to take the additional items to meet the meal requirements or the tray monitor must ensure that the meal is not claimed for reimbursement.

“Serve” Option

Q-1 *What are the requirements for a “Serve” program?*

A A “Serve” school must serve all students full portions of all food items that meet meal pattern component requirements. That is, students must accept full portions of Meat/Meat Alternate, Fruit/Vegetable, Grain/Bread and Milk. Students may decline condiments. A student’s tray must include all menu items, even if the student dislikes a menu item and does not intend to eat it. Under “Serve” all components must be served to all students, unless a form from a medical authority is on file identifying foods that are to be omitted from the student’s diet.



Q-2 *Our elementary school does not permit students to decline food items, but not all students eat everything on their tray. Should cafeteria monitors make students eat specific items?*

A Some sponsors prefer to require students to take all menu items. This helps expose students to new foods and new ways of preparing foods. School personnel in “Serve” programs will control what foods are on the menu and ensure that all components are served in full size portions. Personnel should encourage students to “try a taste” of the foods offered, but should not force children to eat specific foods or force children to eat certain foods before others.



Sack Lunches

Q *May reimbursable sack lunches be prepared for students to take on field trips?*

A Yes, sack lunches prepared by the school food service staff may be reimbursable if all requirements are met. Each of the Food Based Menu food components, including milk, must be offered in the sack lunch. There are additional requirements concerning meal accountability, foods of minimal nutritional value, record keeping, sanitation and serving times that are addressed in Chapter 4, Meal Service Policies.

