

Things to Consider When Serving Local Foods in Child Care Settings

Q1: Can providers serve fresh produce purchased directly from growers (fruits, vegetables, herbs/spices)?

A: Yes! Produce growers are an approved source if the food is grown on a farm or garden, and has NOT been prepared or stored in a private home. Growers are responsible to ensure that all produce (food) that they sell or donate complies with the appropriate regulations. Responsibility includes proper handling and that the food is safe and wholesome.

Q2: Can providers serve produce from a home or child care center garden?

A: Maybe. Check with your local health department to ensure that local regulations permit produce from a private garden to be served in child care meals and snacks.

Q3: Can milk purchased directly from a farm, farm stand, or farmers market be served?

A: Maybe. Only pasteurized fluid milk that meets State and local health standards may be served. Make sure the milk has been processed in an approved facility that regularly tests for adequate Vitamin A and D levels. Raw milk may NOT be served in child care meals and snacks.



Q4: Can home-caught fish be served?

A: No. Home-caught fish is not creditable due to food safety concerns.

Q5: Can eggs purchased directly from a farm, farm stand, or farmers market be served?

A: Maybe. Only eggs that are federally inspected and properly cleaned, candled, graded, sized, packed and stored may be served. They also must be cooked thoroughly before serving. Most eggs for sale at farmers markets in Minnesota are NOT federally inspected.



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Q6: Can home-canned foods be served (including those available at the Farmers Market)?

A: No. For safety reasons, home-canned foods are not allowed in child care meals and snacks. Home canned foods are defined as those that are canned in the home or by institutions that are not under federal inspection. Clostridium botulinum is a dangerous bacteria that can produce deadly toxins in home-canned food. However, child care providers are allowed to preserve foods by freezing.

Q7: Can homemade yogurt be served?

A: No. There are potential safety concerns with this product.



Q8: Can hunted game be served?

A: Maybe. Game such as venison, rabbit, etc. is not creditable unless it is inspected and approved by the appropriate state or federal agency. Hunted game is defined as meat that is hunted for food but not normally domesticated. See pages 8 and 24 of the Crediting Handbook for CACFP for more details: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/crediting-handbook-child-and-adult-care-food-program>

Q9: Can homemade fruit juices such as apple cider from local farm stands be served?

A: Maybe. Only pasteurized juice and juice products may be served due to significant safety problems with unpasteurized ciders and juices. Unpasteurized juice may contain harmful bacteria. Children and the elderly are particularly susceptible to the bacteria found in the unpasteurized juice.

Q10: Are vegetable gardening supplies an allowable cost with the Child and Adult Care Food Program?

A: Yes. Costs associated with growing food to be used in meal service are allowable. These costs include seeds, fertilizer, labor, plot rental, etc. Costs associated with nutrition activities that include growing food which will be used in the meal service are allowable.



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