

**Alabama State Department of Education
Child Nutrition Programs
Child and Adult Care Food Program**

Donated Food and Milk Policy

Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) sponsors of centers and homes, independent centers, and family day care homes (FDCH) may occasionally receive donated food or milk for use in reimbursable meals or snacks. For example, a grocery store may donate day-old bread, a staff member may share tomatoes from a home garden, or a parent may donate a carton of unopened milk before leaving on vacation. Food items that are safe and sanitary may be accepted and served unless specifically prohibited.

Common Criteria

1. Donations may not be solicited, requested, or required.
2. Donations may not be provided only for one child or a few children. Meal components provided by parents or guardians only for their own children are not considered donations.
3. Sponsors must verify the food is safe for consumption.
 - a. Packaged food should be sealed and in the original packaging.
 - b. Home-canned products may not be served as part of a reimbursable meal or snack or as an extra.
 - c. Donated foods may not be served after the product end date. Common terms are expiration date, best if used by date, best if used before date, or sell by date.
4. CACFP operators are responsible for checking with the local health department to ensure any requirements for donated foods are met.
5. Donated food or milk that meets meal pattern requirements may be claimed as part of a reimbursable meal or snack. If donated food or milk does not meet meal pattern requirements, it may be served as an extra.
6. A maximum of one component per meal or snack may be donated.
7. Each donation must be documented on the ALSDE form for donated food and milk which must be included with the required monthly records.¹ Documentation must include:
 - a. Date of donation.
 - b. Description of donated food or milk.
 - c. Amount of food or milk.
 - d. Name of donor and daytime contact information.
 - e. An invoice or proof of purchase for purchased items.
8. Donors may be contacted by reviewers to verify donations. If donations cannot be verified or if reviewers cannot reach donors, the meals and snacks made with the donated food are disallowed.
9. Meals are disallowed if documentation is missing or incomplete or if reviewers cannot reach donors.

¹ Emergency shelters are not required to document food donations or keep production records.

10. Donated food must be recorded on the production record.
11. Donations should not result in an excessive balance in the non-profit food service account.
12. Food obtained through the other federal programs, such as the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, & Children (WIC) or the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), cannot be accepted as donations.
13. Food and milk may not be donated by the sponsoring organization or business owner.

Donated Food

1. Donated produce may not be processed. For example, apples may not be made into applesauce prior to donation.
2. Donated wild game is prohibited unless processed in a state- or federally-inspected processing plant.²

Policy Approved: 7-27-2026

Appendix: Links to Resources

CACFP 01-2016 Procuring Local Meat, Poultry, Seafood, Game, and Eggs for Child Nutrition Programs—Revised (November 30, 2023)

[CACFP 01-2016 Procuring Local Meat, Poultry, Seafood, Game, and Eggs for Child Nutrition Programs—Revised](#)

CACFP 11-2007 Accommodations for Non-Traditional Program Operators

[CACFP 11-2007 Accommodations for Non-Traditional Program Operators](#)

TA 101-2024 Crediting Traditional Indigenous Foods in Child Nutrition Programs

[TA 101-2024 Crediting Traditional Indigenous Foods in Child Nutrition Programs](#)

FD-107 Donated Food Storage, Distribution, and Product Dating (Revised)

[FD-107 Donated Food Storage, Distribution, and Product Dating \(Revised\)](#)

USDA FNS Crediting Handbook for the Child and Adult Care Food Program

[USDA FNS Crediting Handbook for the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#)

² Section 4033 of the Agricultural Act of 2014 (Farm Bill) allows for the use of donated traditional Indigenous foods, including wild game, at public and nonprofit facilities that primarily serve Native Americans. Slaughter and inspection requirements are provided in the USDA technical assistance memorandum TA 01-2024 *Crediting Traditional Indigenous Foods in Child Nutrition Programs*. ([TA 01-2024 Crediting Traditional Indigenous Foods in Child Nutrition Programs](#)).