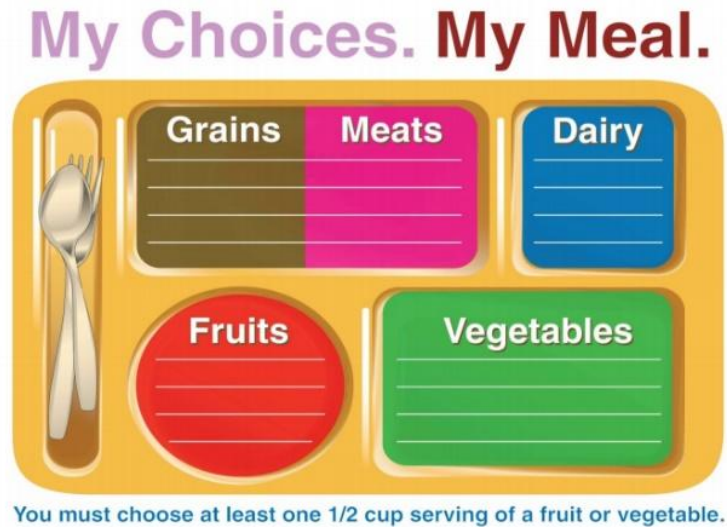


What is a Reimbursable Meal?

A reimbursable meal is a meal that offers all the USDA daily *meal components* required for each age/grade group (PreK to 12th grade). A *meal component* is one of the five food groups: meat/meat alternate, fruit, vegetables, grains, and milk.



The meal pattern is divided into four age/grade groups

- Pre-Kindergarten students
- Grades K-5 (ages 10-12)
- Grades 6-8 (ages 11-13)
- Grades 9-12 (ages 14-18)

What is “Offer vs. Serve”?

“Offer versus Serve” is a plan of the National School Breakfast Program (NBP) and of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) that allows students to decline some of the food offered. The goal of this plan is to reduce food waste.

Below you will see how the “Offer versus Serve” plan works in both the breakfast and lunch meal patterns.

Breakfast Meal Pattern - 3 food components

- Fruit
- Grains (with optional meat/meat alternative allowed)
- Milk

Under “Offer versus Serve” for breakfast, students will be served at least 4 food items, but they only need to take 3 of these. One of these food items must be ½ cup of fruit or vegetables.

Examples of a Reimbursable Breakfast

- Whole grain cereal (1 oz container), ½ cup of milk, and a carton of milk.
- 2 oz muffin, small apple, and a carton of milk (see picture).



Note: at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of a fruit or vegetable must be chosen for the meal to qualify as a reimbursable meal!

In this example the apple counts as $\frac{1}{2}$ cup for fruit.

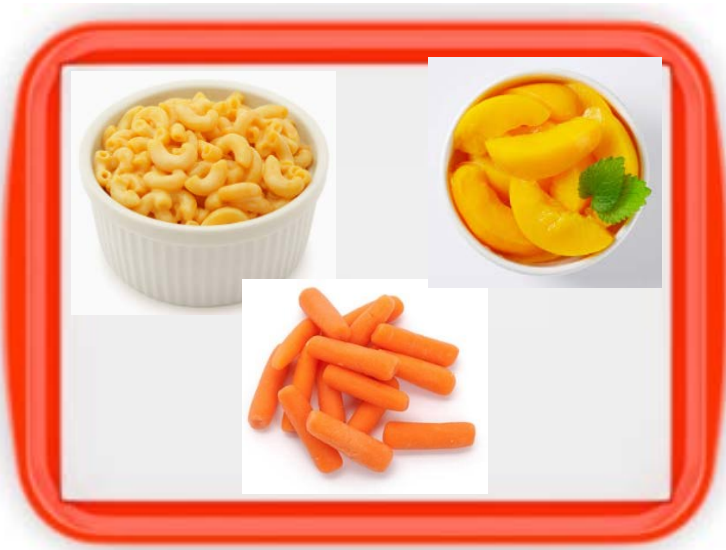
Lunch Meal Pattern - 5 food components

- Fruit
- Vegetables
- Grains
- Meat/Meat alternatives
- Milk

Schools will offer all the required 5 food components. Under “Offer versus Serve” for lunch, students must take at least 3 food components in the required serving sizes. One choice must be at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup from either the fruit or vegetable *component*.

Examples of a Reimbursable Lunch

- 2 oz turkey with roll (meat & grain), $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruit or vegetable, and a carton of milk.
- 2 oz mac & cheese (grain), $\frac{3}{4}$ cup baby carrots, and small ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup) peaches (fruit) (see picture).



Note: at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of a fruit or vegetable must be chosen for the meal to qualify as a reimbursable meal!

In this example the $\frac{1}{2}$ cup peaches meet this fruit/vegetable requirement

References

Lunch Meals. (2020). Home.

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