



# Your Guide to the Lunch Line

Delicious & Nutritious!

## How to Choose a Reimbursable Lunch in High School

What is a Reimbursable Lunch?



### What are the Goals of the National School Lunch Program?

- Safeguard the health & well being of the nation's children
- Encourage domestic consumption of nutritious agricultural foods
- Give children an understanding of the relationship between proper eating habits & good health

- The National School Lunch Program allows schools to receive money & foods from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) for each meal served.
- To receive the money and food schools must serve lunches meeting Federal requirements regarding nutrient content and portion sizes.
- A complete meal, meeting the requirements, allows a school to receive benefits and is referred to as a "reimbursable lunch".

It must include a fruit or vegetable!

# What Makes Up a Reimbursable Lunch?

5 Possible Components

5. Milk



3.

Fruit

\*Allowed up to 2 servings

4.

Vegetable

\*Allowed up to 2 servings

1.

2.

Entrée

Comprised of:

- Meat or Meat Alternate (pepperoni & cheese)
- Grain (whole grain crust)

1. Meat or Meat Alternate (included within the entrée)

2. Grain (included within the entrée)

3. Fruit \*Allowed up to 2 servings

4. Vegetable \*Allowed up to 2 servings

5. Milk

The 5 Meal Components

## Did You Know?

High school students must take at least 1 serving of a fruit **or** vegetable. However, they may take up to 2 servings of fruit **and** 2 servings of vegetables in a meal for the same price!

A student needs 3 out of 5 components in order for a meal to be reimbursable. 1 of these 3 components must be a fruit or vegetable.



1. Meat/Meat Alternate 2. Grain  
3. Fruit



1. Meat/Meat Alternate 2. Grain  
3. Fruit 4. Vegetable 5. Milk



1. Meat/Meat Alternate 2. Grain  
3. Fruit 4. Vegetable 5. Milk



1. Meat/Meat Alternate 2. Grain  
3. Vegetable 4. Milk

All of these are considered a reimbursable lunch!

# Why Choose a Reimbursable Meal?

## Benefits for Students:

- Students learn how to build a balanced meal, a lifelong skill important for healthy living.
- Research shows when a child's nutritional needs are met, the child is more attentive in class, has better attendance, & fewer disciplinary problems.
- USDA research shows children who participate in National School Lunch Programs eat healthier compared to those who do not participate.
- School districts participating in the National School Lunch Program are required to have a wellness policy which addresses obesity, promotes healthy eating, and encourages physical activity among students.

## Benefits for the School:

- The National School Lunch Program provides cash reimbursements, on a per meal basis, to schools providing free & reduced price lunches to eligible children.
- Schools receive USDA commodity foods for each lunch served.



## Benefits for Parents:

- School lunch offers parents a convenient way to provide a nutritious lunch for their children at the lowest possible price.
- If the above meal was purchased separately, it would cost \$6.50, but when purchased as a reimbursable meal it is available free of charge for the 2021-2022 school year. This will save you \$32.50 per week. That is over \$1,100 saved over the whole school year!

## Grains

- Grains are made up of carbohydrates, which are an important energy source for the nervous system & red blood cells.
- Soluble fibers, found in grains, have been shown to lower cholesterol levels & blood glucose levels. This reduces the risk of cardiovascular disease & diabetes.
- Insoluble fibers, found in grains allow foods to move through the intestine faster. This can lower the risk of constipation, diverticular disease, & colon cancer
- Repeated studies have shown whole grains can reduce the risk of stroke, type 2 diabetes, heart disease, as well as improve weight management.

## Milk

- Milk is a great source of calcium, which is needed for lifelong healthy bones and teeth.
- Calcium is important for young people because 90% of bone

# The Fantastic Five!

## The 5 Components of a Meal Help Build a Strong Body & Mind

### Fruits & Vegetables

- Fruits & vegetables provide essential vitamins & minerals, & other nutrients that are important for growth.
- Fruits & vegetables are a good source of fiber which promotes healthy digestion & may help prevent colon cancer.
- Most fruits & vegetables are naturally low in fat & calories & keep you feeling full longer.
- Eating fruits & vegetable has been shown to reduce the risk of certain chronic disease. These diseases include stroke, type 2 diabetes, some types of cancer, & heart disease.



### Meat

- Meat is a valuable source of protein. Proteins provide structural support to vital body tissues and structures.
- Proteins also support the immune system.
- Meat & soy are the only foods that contain all 9 essential amino acids the body needs.



# References

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/lunch/aboutlunch/NSLPFactSheet.pdf>

<http://frac.org/federal-foodnutrition-programs/national-school-lunch-program/>

<http://frac.org/newsite/wp-content/uploads/2009/09/cnslp.pdf>

<http://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/everyone/fruitsvegetables/index.html>

<http://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/everyone/fruitsvegetables/results/women.html?age=22&gender=female&activity=sed>

<http://www.wholegrainscouncil.org/whole-grains-101/what-are-the-health-benefits>

<http://www.nichd.nih.gov/milk/prob/bone.cfm>



In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, and reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.)

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible State or local Agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information is available in languages other than English.

To file a complaint alleging discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), or at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410

fax: (202) 690-7442; or

email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.