

Foods Not to Use

The following foods, although acceptable in moderation, **will not be used** in the Head Start classroom. Reasons for their exclusion are explained below.

FOOD	REASON
Hot dogs	High in fat and sodium and are a choking hazard.
Snack Chips (Corn, Potato, etc.)	Most are high in salt and/or fat content and low in nutrients.
Bacon	Low in protein and high in fat and sodium.
Cheese spread/cheese food	Processed cheeses are often high in sodium. Added ingredients make cheese food and spread lower in protein than natural cheeses.
Any commercial foods for which the amounts of components cannot be determined.	Most have high sodium and/or fat content. Homemade products are preferred for their superior nutritional quality and lower cost. Examples: Commercially canned soups including “chunky” contain little meat and few vegetables. Macaroni & cheese mix contains little cheese.
Fruit Fillings (Cherry, Apple, Blueberry, etc.)	These items contain added sugar and are not as nutrient dense as non-processed fruits.
Popcorn	Does not supply the nutrients associated with grain products in a reasonable serving size for children. Also a choking hazard.
Pre-Breaded Chicken Strips, Nuggets, Patties and Pre-breaded Fish Sticks	Not creditable for USDA as amount of meat cannot be determined unless product has CN label.
Donuts/Pastries/Desserts	High fat and sugar content.
Pre-made Dips	High in salt and fat content.

The following foods are to be used in **limited** amounts in our Head Start centers. All foods, when used in moderation, fit in a balanced diet. However, our goal is to ensure that children are receiving the most nutrient dense foods possible while they are in our Head Start classrooms as we have no control over what they are served outside the centers.

FOOD	APPROVED USE
Processed meat products.	Choose all-meat products that are low in fat and sodium.
Nuts, all kinds	Nuts can be a choking hazard and are generally not eaten at meals in considerable amounts. Serve only ground or finely chopped nuts and seeds to children under the age of 5 to avoid choking.
Jello	May only be served when it contains at least 1/4 cup of fruit, fruit juice or vegetable per serving per child. May be offered up to two times a year only. Must be called in to inform supervisor.
Cookies	Should be homemade. The cookies must contain whole- grain or enriched meal or flour. May be included on the menu now and then, no more than once a month or up to two times per school year.
Cream cheese	To be used as a condiment only. It is high in fat and low in protein in comparison to other cheeses.
Sour Cream, Margarine, Butter, Mayonnaise	To be used as condiments to enhance the flavor of food.
Raisins	May be used when on the menu. Raisins are high in sugar, but are also a good source of iron and fiber. Possible choking hazard.
Sugar, honey, syrups, molasses, jam, jelly	May be used in cooking when recipe calls for it, but may not be served alone to children unless menu specifies it. Amount used will be limited to (1) teaspoon per serving, per child. Honey should not be given to children under one year of age. Honey may contain botulism spores which can cause serious illness in young children.
Fruits canned in heavy syrup	Purchase fruits canned in heavy syrup only when fruits canned in water or their own juice are not available. Fruits canned in heavy syrup must be drained and rinsed before they are served.
Tofu	Tofu is soybean curd. There is no standard of identity for tofu so it is not creditable.