

Smoothies and Parfaits

Studies show that the nutrients found in dairy, fruit and vegetables are often missing in kids' diets¹ – but getting kids excited about consuming those nutritious foods can be a challenge. Smoothies and parfaits are a trendy, appealing solution that's both kid-friendly and dietitian-approved.

Why are smoothies and parfaits important?

Adding smoothies and yogurt parfaits to your school menus can help enhance the image of your program, increase student participation and increase your department's revenue. They are extremely versatile, with numerous flavor combinations that keep menus fresh.

Smoothies and yogurt parfaits can be incorporated during breakfast, lunch or supper service as a part of the reimbursable meal or served as an a la carte option. Additionally, both menu items can count for multiple food components – smoothies can count for milk, meat alternatives, fruits and vegetables. Yogurt parfaits might count for meat alternatives, fruits and grains.



Increased Child Nutrition Revenue

Schools that added smoothies to their menus increased breakfast ADP by 7% on average and lunch ADP by 5% on average.²



Increased Fruit Consumption

Smoothies could increase the number of students eating a full serving of fruit by 40%.³



Enhances the Image of Your Nutrition Program

"Irving ISD conducted a pilot at two sites to see how the students would accept smoothies and to get an idea of how feasible they would be from an operational standpoint. After this pilot, we decided to implement smoothies at all secondary schools. The smoothies were successful, so we decided to expand the options in the next school year and offer breakfast parfaits as well. We chose to implement these items to give more grab-and-go options to our secondary students and to align our menus with the trends that we see in the restaurants."

– Amber Marvel, M.S., SNS, Purchasing, Nutrition and Menu Operations Coordinator
Irving ISD, Irving, Texas



Frequently Asked Questions



Can smoothie and yogurt parfaits count toward a reimbursable meal?



Yes! Schools participating in USDA Child Nutrition Programs, including supper, for the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) may credit the following at any meal or snack:

- Smoothies – fruit, vegetables, yogurt and milk
- Parfaits – yogurt, fruit and granola

For more details on crediting specific components, see USDA memo SP 40-2019, CACFP 17-2019, SFSP 17-2019.



Can smoothies and yogurt parfaits be sold a la carte?



Smoothies and yogurt parfaits that are served as part of a reimbursable menu may also be sold a la carte on the day they are served and the day after. Smoothies may also be served a la carte any day if they meet Smart Snacks in School guidelines, but consider the difference between beverage smoothies and food smoothies. See more details on smoothies as smart snacks in USDA memo SP 23-2014 (V. 3).



Will preparing smoothies and yogurt parfaits be time-consuming for my staff?



There are many options for preparing and serving smoothies, and those will vary based on your district/campus. Thorough planning, plus the right equipment, will help ensure that preparation is not labor-intensive. Many components of smoothies and yogurt parfaits can be prepared the night before, limiting the work needed on the morning of service.



What equipment will I need to prepare smoothies?



Equipment needs will vary by district/campus. Consider the quantity you will need to produce, your storage facilities and your budget to implement a new program. However, commercial immersion blenders are a great, budget-friendly option when preparing a large quantity of smoothies, such as those served as part of a reimbursable meal. Commercial immersion blenders allow your staff to easily prepare large batches of smoothies prior to meal service and are typically lightweight enough to be used by any staff member.

More questions?

Reach out to your Dairy MAX [School Wellness Consultant](#).

References:

1. <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/nutrition/facts.htm> 2. Average ADP increases seen by schools in the Dairy MAX territory who implemented smoothies using a Dairy MAX grant between 2014-2019 3. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/270908629_Impact_of_Fruit_Smoothies_on_Adolescent_Fruit_Consumption_at_School