

**To:** Authorized Representatives of Child Nutrition Programs  
School Nutrition Programs  
Child and Adult Care Food Programs  
Summer Food Service Program

**From:** Child and Adult Nutrition Services

**Date:** June 14, 2017

**Subject:** Leftover Food Items

**Memo Number:** SNP 220-1  
CACFP 220-1  
CACFP DCH 220-1  
SFSP 220-1

This memo replaces the previous memo on this topic dated September 27, 1999, memo number NSLP-30. The purpose of this memo to provide clarification of the requirements for working with leftover food items in the School Nutrition Programs (National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, Afterschool Snack, and Special Milk Program), and the Child and Adult Care Food Program.

This information should be shared with the person who processes leftover food items, as well as any kitchen staff that determine or work with reimbursable meals. Questions about this memo can be referred to a SD Dept. of Education Child and Adult Nutrition Services staff member.

Schools may claim reimbursement for only one meal served per child whether it be the Breakfast Program, the Lunch Program (noon or after school snack). Nutrition personnel are required to plan and prepare based on participation trends, sufficient amounts of food to achieve this objective. When the amount of food actually prepared exceeds the amount needed for the reimbursable meal service, agency staff may dispose of the extra food as they wish as long as they comply with applicable State and local health standards. Thus, schools may donate leftover foods to appropriate eligible local food banks or charitable organizations such as soup kitchens or homeless shelters provided State or local laws or regulations do not prohibit this practice. All alternatives permitted by Program regulations and State and local health and sanitation codes should be exhausted before discarding food.

If over-preparation is a consistent occurrence, evaluate the quantities prepared and reduce that accordingly. Leftover foods should, when possible, be labeled and properly store for future use or completely discarded. It is recommended that local school food authorities establish a policy to handle how or who should be in charge of disposing leftovers, or donating to the above-mentioned institutions. Excessive leftovers are a major cost to the program.

It is also recommended that the local school food authorities have a policy in place that addresses sharing of food from the student trays to avoid the possibility of food being contaminated and then consumed by the receiving person(s). The implementation of Offer versus Serve helps to alleviate this situation in most cases. If the student knows he/she will not eat a certain food, he/she has the choice to decline that food item. It is also recommended that staff be reminded that policy that is put in place for students to abide by should be respected by faculty staff as well.

In no instance can leftover food be taken home to feed an employee's families or be used to feed their animals. USDA donated food may never be sold, given away, or traded.