Fluid Milk Substitutions in Child Nutrition Programs

Definitions and Rules

Definition: A Fluid Milk Substitute is defined as a non-dairy beverage that is nutritionally equivalent to the level of nutrients found in one cup of cow's milk.

Regulations: Sponsors who participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), the Child and Adult Food Program (CACFP) and the Special Milk Program (SMP) may offer their participants a fluid milk substitute. School Food Authorities who participate in the Summer Food Service Program and follow the NSLP meal patterns may also offer a fluid milk substitute.

Requests: A Special Diet Statement is **not** required. Parents, guardians, adult participants or the caregivers of an adult participant, or a medical authority must provide a written and signed request that includes the reason for the substitution. Any reasonable request can be accepted (e.g. milk allergy or intolerance, dietary preference, religious, cultural or ethical reasons).

To be considered an allowable Fluid Milk Substitute, a product must meet or exceed the following nutrient standards.

Milk Substitute Nutrition Standards

Nutrient	Requirement per cup (8 fluid ounces)
Protein	8 grams
Calcium	276 mg
Vitamin A	150 mcg
Vitamin D	2.5 mcg
Magnesium	24 mg
Phosphorus	222 mg
Potassium	349 mg
Riboflavin	0.44 mg
Vitamin B12	1.1 mcg

NOTE: *In the NSLP and SBP, flavored milk substitutes are not subject to the product-based added sugar limit for flavored milk.*

Non-dairy beverages that meet U.S. Department of Agriculture's fluid milk substitution criteria

Manufacturer information was evaluated, and the following products meet the nutrient requirements as of 10/15/2025. If utilizing a product not listed below, sponsors are responsible for ensuring that it meets the nutrient requirements by comparing the nutrition label to the USDA nutrient requirements listed on this resource. Products included in the list are not endorsed by the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE). Manufacturers not currently included on the list may provide nutrient information to MDE to be included.

Soy-Free Milk Substitutes

Silk Kids • Oat Milk Blend, Original *59 oz container*	
Ripple (pea protein base) • Original *8 oz or 32 oz shelf stable containers* • Original, Unsweetened *32 oz shelf stable container* • Vanilla* *8 oz shelf stable container* • Chocolate* *8 oz shelf stable container* *48 oz refrigerated container*	
Ripple Kids (pea protein base) • Original *8 oz or 32 oz shelf stable containers* *48 oz refrigerated container* • Unsweetened Original *8 oz or 32 oz shelf stable containers* *48 oz refrigerated container* • Chocolate* *8 oz shelf stable container* *48 oz refrigerated container*	

Soy-Based Milk Substitutes

Pacific • Ultra Soy, Original *32 oz container*	
Bettergoods • Plant-Based Soymilk, Original *64 oz container*	
8th Continent • Original Soymilk *64 oz container*	
Your Good Foods • Organic Unsweetened Soymilk *32 oz container*	
Kikkoman Pearl • Organic Smart, Original Soymilk *8 oz shelf-stable containers* • Organic Smart Vanilla* *8 oz shelf-stable containers* • Chocolate Soymilk* *8 oz shelf-stable containers*	  
Silk • Original *32 oz shelf stable container* *64 oz refrigerated container* • Very Vanilla* *8 oz shelf-stable container* • Chocolate Soymilk* *8 oz shelf-stable container*	  

***IMPORTANT:** Flavored milk and flavored fluid milk substitutes are not creditable for infants and children ages 1-5 years old in CACFP and schools using the preschool meal patten. Refer to the CACFP and NSLP/SBP meal patterns for more information.