

Massachusetts' School Meal Programs Share Table Guidance

Getting Started

- Contact and obtain written approval from your local board of health regarding the use of share tables in your district.
- Develop written Standard Operating Procedures for saving and sharing food or beverage items that are consistent with the School Food Authority's Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) plan.
- Comply with all local and state health and food safety codes.
- Provide children and families with information about share table guidelines.
- Explain the share table concept to children and staff.
- Display signage outlining share table "rules."

Food Safety

- Maintain proper temperature (and temperature logs) by storing appropriate food components in a temperature controlled storage bin, such as an ice tub or cooler.
- Food items must be tracked and labeled and may only be redistributed for sale or reimbursement one additional time.
- Do not intermix food items from the share table with items that have not yet been prepared and served.
- Assign an employee other than the cashier to monitor the share table and to ensure food items have not been contaminated.

Updated as of January 2017.

Allowable Foods

- Unopened pre-packaged items, such as a bag of baby carrots or sliced apples, stored in a cooling bin.
- Whole pieces of fruit with a peel, such as bananas or oranges.
- Whole pieces of fruit with an edible peel, such as apples and pears, must be rewashed unless wrapped.
- Unopened milk, if immediately stored in a cooling bin maintained at 41°F or below.

Unallowable Foods

- Foods not provided by the School Meal Programs (e.g., foods brought from home.)
- Unpackaged items, such as a salad bowl without a lid.
- Packaged items that can be opened and resealed.
- Open Items, such as an opened bag of baby carrots or sliced apples.
- Perishable foods, when a temperature control mechanism is not in place.