

Identifying Grain-Based Desserts in the NC CACFP Tip Sheet

The CACFP meal patterns state that grain-based desserts cannot count towards the grain requirement at any meal or snack.¹ But, how do you know if a food is considered a grain-based dessert (GBD) in the NC CACFP? Read on for tips on identifying GBDs, examples of popular GBDs with misleading labels, and a list of foods that are considered GBDs in the NC CACFP.

How to Know if a Food is a Grain-Based Dessert

To identify grain-based desserts (GBDs), a menu planner should:

- 1) Look at the food item to see if it is made or coated with sweet treats.
 - If the food has sprinkles, chocolate-coating, caramel, frosting, candy pieces, flavored chips (e.g., chocolate chips), marshmallows, etc., the food item is a GBD.
- 2) Read the product name and description of the food.
 - Food companies may call the food by a misleading name. For example, a food labeled as a “breakfast biscuit” may really be a cookie.
 - Check the sides or back of the package for more information about the food item. If the item looks or sounds like a GBD, it must not be served as a grain component.
- 3) Review [Exhibit A](#).
 - If the item has a superscript 3 or 4, it is a GBD and must not be served as a grain component in the CACFP.
- 4) Contact the State agency or your Sponsoring Organization with questions about any food item.
 - Email the NC CACFP Training team at CACFPtraining@dhhs.nc.gov

¹ [7 CFR 226.20\(a\)\(4\)\(iii\)](#)

Examples of Grain-Based Desserts with Misleading Names

Not Creditable—Must not be served.	Creditable—May be served.
 <p>Soft-Baked Oatmeal Squares</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looks like a cookie • Has icing • Is a grain-based dessert 	 <p>Oatmeal Squares Cereal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meets the CACFP sugar limit for cereal • Whole grain-rich • Creditable grain and whole grain-rich component
 <p>Biscuits with Almond Butter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looks like a cookie • Has a sweet filling • Is a grain-based dessert 	 <p>Biscuits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Savory • Creditable grain component
 <p>Deluxe Grahamas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Covered in chocolate • 1st ingredient is sugar • Is a grain-based dessert 	 <p>Graham Crackers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plain • 1st ingredient is enriched flour • Creditable grain component
 <p>Circus Animal Cookies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dipped in frosting, icing, sprinkles • Sugar is the first ingredient • Is a grain-based dessert 	 <p>Animal Crackers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plain • 1st Ingredient is enriched flour • Creditable grain component
 <p>Sweet Chex Mix</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coated in caramel with chocolate candies • Is a grain-based dessert 	 <p>Savory Chex Mix</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st ingredient is whole wheat • Creditable grain component
 <p>Toasters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looks like a toaster pastry • Similar to a Pop-Tart • Has a pie filling • Is a grain-based dessert 	 <p>Toast with Apples</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creditable grain component • Creditable fruit component

Examples of Common Grain-Based Desserts*

- Belvita Breakfast Biscuits (cookies)
- Breakfast bars, commercial and homemade
- Brownies
- Biscuits, sweetened or sugar-coated
- Cake, cupcakes, and coffee cake
- Caramel popcorn and kettle corn
- Cereal bars, commercial and homemade
- Churros
- Cinnamon rolls
- Cookies (wafers, sandwich, bars, biscotti, and cookie-like biscuits)
- Cream puff shells
- Crisp and cobbler crust
- Doughnuts
- Fig or fruit bars
- Gingerbread
- Granola bars and oatmeal bars
- Ice cream cones
- Marshmallow cereal treats
- Nature Valley Biscuits (cookies)
- Pastries
- Pie crust for dessert pies
- Pop-Tarts, toaster pastries
- Rice pudding
- Sopapillas
- Sweet bread pudding and rice pudding, such as tapioca
- Sweet Chex Mix, such as Muddy Buddies
- Sweet croissants, such as chocolate filled
- Sweet pita chips, such as cinnamon-sugar flavored
- Sweet rice cakes
- Sweet rolls, buns, including cinnamon rolls
- Sweet scones with fruits, chocolate, icing, etc.
- Tapioca
- Turnover Crust
- Vanilla wafers (plain cookies)

*This list may not include ALL Grain-Based Desserts in the NC CACFP.

For more information on identifying grain-based desserts, please refer to the policy memo “Identifying Grain-Based Desserts in the NC CACFP” or email the NC CACFP Training Team at CACFPtraining@dhhs.nc.gov