



The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) now allows all schools to offer low-fat (1%) flavored milk in school lunches, breakfast and Smart Snacks – and for children age 6 and older in the Child and Adult Care Food Program and Special Milk Program.<sup>1</sup>



## Frequently Asked Questions

### How can I purchase 1% flavored milk for my Child Nutrition Program (CNP)?

A certain number of districts will need to show interest in buying low-fat 1% flavored milk before the dairy processors can secure packaging and provide the product. Schools must be able to specify fat content required for both flavored and unflavored milk, so processors can provide accurate bids. If you are interested in a 1% flavored milk, please let your processor know as soon as possible.

### Why did USDA feel this was a necessary change?

Before the 2012 regulation on 1% flavored milk, it was the most frequently purchased milk by public school districts and was among the most commonly offered varieties of milk in National School Lunch Program menus (63 percent). Since the regulation, overall school milk volume has declined 7 percent nationally, but locally there are reports of greater decline: a school district in Texas has reported as much as a 50 percent decrease in milk volume annually since 2012. Based on this information, reintroducing 1% flavored milk across the CNP may increase student milk consumption.

***Improving students' overall milk experience through additional options, merchandising and more has been shown to increase average daily participation (ADP).<sup>2</sup>***

1. USDA FNS Child Nutrition Programs: Flexibilities for Milk, Whole Grains, and Sodium Requirements, 82 Fed. Reg. 56703 (November 20, 2017).

2. National Dairy Council and School Nutrition Association. The School Milk Pilot Test. Beverage Marketing Corporation for National Dairy Council and School Nutrition Association. 2002.

# 1% Flavored Milk

Frequently Asked Questions *continued*



## How many more calories are in 1% flavored milk vs. fat free flavored milk?

1% flavored milk contains 20-40 calories more per 8 ounces. The calorie difference is almost entirely due to a difference in fat content. Calories from added sugar vary by only 1-2 calories between the fat-free and 1% flavored milk varieties. Data from a recent survey of school food service professionals suggests that roughly a third of schools are well within the weekly calorie maximums for school meals – and some are below the weekly calorie minimums.

## Why is the decline in student milk consumption a concern?

Milk is a key source of calcium and vitamin D, nutrients necessary for optimizing bone health. Calcium and vitamin D were also identified as nutrients of concern by the 2015 Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA). Low calcium and vitamin D intake are linked to low dairy consumption.

## Will this new milk option cost more?

The fat content of milk does affect cost, so there might be a slight price increase for a 1% product. Schools must be able to specify fat content for both flavored and unflavored milk, so processors can provide accurate bids.

## Can a CNP offer 1% white and 1% flavored milk?

Yes, since a CNP needs to offer two varieties of milk, both flavored 1% and fat-free milk are consistent with recommendations in the DGA and meet milk requirements for National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs.

Allowable milk options include:

- fat-free (unflavored or flavored)
- 1% (unflavored or flavored)
- fat-free or 1% (lactose-reduced or lactose-free)

## How does the final rule affect the Head Start and Pre-K programs?

It **does not** affect Head Start and Pre-K programs, as the regulation only addresses flavored milk. Programs feeding students aged 2-5 are only allowed to provide unflavored fat-free or 1% milk.

## Questions?

[DairyMAX.org/school/expertise](http://DairyMAX.org/school/expertise)

Contact your **Dairy MAX School Wellness Consultant** for more information.

