

Share Table (Sample SOP)

PURPOSE: To provide clarification on types of foods and procedures to use for foods not consumed by the original student customer.

SCOPE: Procedures apply to child nutrition programs that allow specific approved foods to be returned to a share table.

KEY WORDS: Returned foods, re-service, share table, cross-contamination.

Share tables are carts or tables where children can place selected but unconsumed food and beverage items that are pre-packaged, un-opened, wrapped or with a peel. A share table can reduce the amount of waste and is especially helpful in programs with no option for students to choose the components in their meal. Examples of foods include cereal packs, milk cartons, cheese sticks, yogurt, washed and wrapped fruit and vegetables; washed fruit with a nonedible peel such as bananas and oranges, wrapped crackers or wrapped whole grain cookies.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Share tables must follow safe food handling procedures and follow health regulations.
2. Plans for the share table should be cleared with the local health department prior to implementation.
3. The designated share table or cart should be clearly labeled and placed at the end of the serving line or as close as reasonably possible where a designated supervisor can monitor the table or cart.
4. Supervision of the share table or cart must be supervised by an individual who can demonstrate food safety knowledge as required in [Missouri Food Code 2-102.11](#).
5. The designated supervisor should identify any food, beverage or condiment to make sure it has not been contaminated (e.g., opened, partially eaten, in contact with soiled hands or bodily discharges from ill children, etc.) and the original packaging is in sound condition.
6. Students who wish to have more to eat may take food from the share table to eat on-site or take back to the classroom.
7. Washed and wrapped fruit and vegetables. Washed fruit with a nonedible peel such as bananas and oranges. Unwrapped edible peel fruits must be rewashed in order to be placed on the share table.
8. Unopened individual containers of dairy products (e.g., string cheese, yogurt sticks or containers) maintained under temperature control can be placed on ice on the share table.
9. Re-service of unopened cartons of milk is permitted if the following criteria are met:
 - a. Within 30 minutes after an unopened container of milk is placed on the share table, the container shall be:
 - i. Served to another student as second milk with their meal.
 - ii. Placed on ice for other students to consume later in that serving period.

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- iii. Placed in refrigeration separate from unserved milks, kept at 41°F or colder and marked in some way (e.g. marked with green sticker) to designate that they are the returned product.
 - iv. Milk returned to appropriate storage may be served and claimed for reimbursement during another meal service.
 - v. Once unopened milk is marked as returned, it is placed on the shared table one time only.
- b. Returned unopened containers of milk shall not be intermixed with fresh milk in storage.
 - c. Expiration date of returned milks shall be monitored and product discarded when expiration date is reached.
10. Students with allergies are cautioned not take food from the share table. If the student is elementary school age or is unable to manage his/her own decision making, it is the responsibility of those supervising the students in the cafeteria to provide guidance. Otherwise, it is the responsibility of the student to not trade food with others and not consume anything with unknown ingredients. This includes foods available from the share table since they may contain ingredients with an allergen or may have been handled by another student who had contact with an allergen.
11. Students must not be allowed to put items brought from home on the share table.
12. Recovered food or beverage items left on the share table should be clearly labeled (e.g. marked with green sticker) and returned to storage separate from unsold foods.
13. Foods and beverages to be re-served to students can be claimed for reimbursement during another meal service such as an afterschool snack program or evening meal ([USDA SP 41-2016](#)).

MONITORING:

A supervisor or other designated employee will visually observe to ensure that food from the share table or any returned food approved for re-service is being handled and re-served correctly.

CORRECTIVE ACTION:

Retrain any food service employee found not following the procedures in this SOP. Do not re-serve any food item that has not been handled properly. Ensure food that is set aside for re-service meets the proper criteria and is served to students.

VERIFICATION and RECORD KEEPING:

School nutrition program personnel will identify what food can be safely shared or set aside for re-service. The supervisor or other designated employee will verify that proper procedures for handling returned foods are being followed and that potentially hazardous cold foods that require time and temperature control for safety are held at 41 °F or colder.

Date Implemented: _____ **By:** _____

Date Reviewed: _____ **By:** _____

Date Revised: _____ **By:** _____