

Memorable Memo

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA RALEIGH



December 10, 1984

TO: Child Nutrition Program Sponsors
FROM: USDA Food and Nutrition Services
John M. Murphy, III, Director, Division of Child Nutrition
SUBJECT: ~~X~~ Crediting Taco Shells and Pieces

In the past, the crediting of taco pieces in the Child Nutrition Program has been inconsistent and the cause of some confusion. This letter clarifies agency policy on crediting taco pieces and explains the rationale for this position.

We consider taco pieces in the same category as taco shells and they are creditable under USDA criteria as such. Taco pieces are simply smaller bits of taco shells. Taco shells, made from whole-grain corn and served as an accompaniment to, or as a recognizable integral part of the main dish, qualify as a bread component of reimbursable meals. Therefore, whole-grain taco pieces served in a like-manner are also creditable. Two recent Food and Nutrition Service publications contain references to taco shells and taco pieces as a bread product which can be credited as a bread requirement. Information about purchasing and serving taco shells or pieces can be found in the Food Buying Guide (PA-1311).

However, taco chips with a coating of salt and spices, produced for use as a snack item do not qualify as a bread component. The amount of salt, or sodium, on the chips is relatively high; therefore, the use of taco chips as a meal component is inconsistent with the USDA guidelines which recommend reducing the consumption of sodium. The goals of the Child Nutrition Program are to provide wholesome foods children need, and to provide a model for establishing good eating habits. We feel the inclusion of a snack item high in sodium as an integral part of a meal is not consistent with either the USDA guidelines or the purpose of the Child Nutrition Program.

In summary, whole taco shells or taco pieces made from whole-grain corn and served as part of a meal are creditable in the Child Nutrition Program. Taco chips are not.

If you have any questions, please contact Cherie Woodward at (919) 733-7162.

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