Is it a Grain-Based Dessert? Perception Counts!

Grain-based desserts are not creditable in the CACFP and cannot be served as the grain component of a meal or snack. This includes store-bought grain-based desserts, homemade grain-based desserts including those made with healthy ingredients (i.e., whole grains or with less sugar, butter, oil, etc.), and whole grain-rich grain-based desserts. Items in the chart below are common grain-based desserts.

Grain-Based Desserts: NOT CREDITABLE IN THE CACFP

Biscotti, sweet, made with fruits, chocolate, icing	Doughnuts
Bread/breadstick with sweet filling (such as pie filling)	Fig or fruit-filled bars/rolls/cookies
Bread pudding, sweet	Gingerbread
Brownies	Granola bars, grain-fruit bars
Cake (including coffee cake, pound cake, cupcakes)	Ice cream cones
Caramel popcorn and kettle corn	Pita chips, sweet, such as cinnamon-sugar flavored
Cereal bars, breakfast bars, marshmallow cereal treats	Puppy chow
Churros	Rice pudding, sweet
Cinnamon rolls	Scones, sweet, made with fruits, chocolate, icing
Cookies	Sopapillas
Croissants, sweet, such as chocolate-filled	Sweet rolls/buns
Crusts of dessert pies, cobblers, fruit turnovers	Toaster pastries, Pop-tarts ®
Danish pastries (Danishes), sweet pastries	Vanilla wafers

Not sure if an item is a Grain-Based Dessert?

How a food item is perceived plays a role in determining if it is a grain-based dessert. Before adding an item to menus ask is the item:

- Commonly thought of as a dessert or sweet treat?
- Shaped like a grain-based dessert listed in the chart above (such as a cookie or granola bar)? Grain-based desserts may be labeled with a different name, i.e., breakfast flat instead of granola bar or breakfast round instead of cookie.

If you answered yes to either question above the item is a grain-based dessert and must not be served. Choose another option. Not sure if an item is a grain-based dessert? Contact your assigned Analyst.

Sweet Ingredients

Programs are discouraged from serving creditable foods that contain sweet ingredients, such as chocolate chips in muffins. Instead, purchase or prepare healthier alternatives to promote healthy eating habits.

Things to Consider When Selecting Foods for Your Menu.
If the answer to the questions below is yes, choose a healthier option.

Does the food item contain:	• Candy pieces? • Jam, fruit puree, or custard fillings? • Marshmallows? • Flavored chips (chocolate, caramel, white chocolate, strawberry, butterscotch)?
Is the food item:	• Dessert-flavored (chocolate, caramel, butterscotch, etc.)? • Coated with dessert-flavored coatings or toppings (cocoa, caramel, cinnamon-sugar, powdered sugar, glazes, etc.)? • Iced or frosted? • Covered with sprinkles, jimmies, or other sweet garnishes? • A cereal/trail mix with sweet ingredients such as marshmallows or candy pieces?