



North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services  
Division of Public Health's & Children's Health Section

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Michael F. Easley, Governor

Carmen Hooker Odom, Secretary

April 5, 2002

**CACFP 02-13**

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Institutions Participating in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

**FROM:** Arnette Cowan, MS, RD, LDN  
Head, Special Nutrition Program

**SUBJECT:** **Crediting Fruit and Vegetable Juice Combination  
In the Infant Meal Pattern, 226.20-04**

The use of vegetable juice in the Infant Meal Pattern for infants eight to 11 months old is not allowed. The use of Gerber's Fruit and Veggie Juice in the Child and Adult Care Food Program is not permitted.

The CACFP regulations specifically require that allowable juices in the Infant Meal Pattern be composed of 100 percent fruit juice. If the regulations were amended to allow vegetable juices, it is fair to assume that vegetable juice would have to be 100 percent vegetable juice. This requirement for 100 percent juice stems from the need to ensure that the most nutritious juice products are provided to program participants. Allowing juice products with less than 100 percent fruit or vegetable juice would allow for approval of products with additives that lower the nutritional integrity of the product. Gerber's Fruit and Veggie Juice appears to be a nutritious product but is not 100 percent fruit and vegetable juice. It contains sweet potato puree in addition to fruit juice. Thus, under amended regulations as suggested above, this Gerber product would not be approved.

The rationale for excluding vegetable juices from the Infant Meal Pattern is that the high level of sodium in these juices makes them inappropriate for infants. For many years, the only vegetable juices widely available have been tomato juice and mixed vegetable juice "V-8 Juice," with added salt. These juices contain approximately 500 to 700 mg. of sodium per six (6) ounces of juice, a sodium level far exceeding the Estimated Sodium Minimum Requirement for six to 11 month-old infants (120 mg.), and one-year old children (225 mg). The high level of sodium in juices is not necessary nutritionally, and increases the renal solute load of an infant's diet (a diet with a high renal solute load places a strain on an infant's kidneys. Further, the American Academy of Pediatrics has indicated that infants do not need a high level of sodium in their diets.

Only recently have "no salt added" varieties of these juices been available (one low-salt tomato juice contains 20 mg. sodium per 6 ounces, while low salt "V-8 Juice" contains 45 mg.).



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The low-salt vegetable juices do not contain excessive quantities of sodium, but do contain a higher level of potassium than fruit juices (the approximate amount of potassium in 6 ounces of juice is 460 mg. for tomato juice, 430 mg. for "V-8 juice," 324 mg. for orange juice, and 222 mg. for apple juice). This suggests that the vegetable juices could raise the renal solute load of an infant's diet to a greater extent than fruit juices. However, the literature does not appear to cite specific problems for infants consuming foods or juices high in potassium. Also, as an infant gets older, he or she can tolerate foods with a higher renal solute load. Thus, the older infant may be able to consume the potassium in low-salt vegetable juices with no detriment to health.

If you have questions, please contact your regional consultant.

AC/ERB/clg

cc: SNP Staff  
Auditors