

# Choosing Alternatives to Deep-Fat Frying

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**CACFP iTrain  
Simple Lesson Plan**

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## CACFP iTrain Simple Lesson Plan

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**  
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**Intended Audience:** CACFP personnel and other child care staff

**Description:** This lesson explains the meaning of deep-fat frying and alternative cooking methods.

## Institute of Child Nutrition The University of Mississippi

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## Lesson-at-a-Glance

Time	Topic	Activity	Materials
<b>Introduction</b>			
5 minutes	▶ Introduction and Overview		▶ PowerPoint Presentation ▶ Computer ▶ Projector (if available) ▶ Pens or Pencils
<b>Objective:</b> Define the meaning of deep-fat frying.			
15 minutes	▶ Deep-Fat Frying	▶ Is It Reimbursable?	▶ Worksheet: Is It Reimbursable?
<b>Objective:</b> Identify at least two alternative cooking methods to deep-fat frying.			
10 minutes	▶ Alternative Cooking Methods to Deep-Fat Frying	▶ Case Study: Deep-Fat Frying	▶ Case Study: Deep-Fat Frying
<b>Conclusion</b>			
10 minutes	▶ Lesson Summary ▶ Training Evaluation	▶ Speed Action Planning ▶ Training Evaluation (Optional)	▶ Worksheet: Speed Action Planning ▶ Optional: Training Evaluation & Training Certificate
<b>Total Time: 40 minutes</b>			

## References

American Heart Association. (2018). *Healthy cooking oils*. <https://www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-eating/eat-smart/fats/healthy-cooking-oils>

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Services. (2017, March 10). *Questions and answers on the updated meal pattern requirements for the Child And Adult Care Food Program*. <https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/cacfp/CACFP08-2017os.pdf>

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. (2018). *Methods for healthy cooking*. <https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/methods-healthy-cooking>

## Internet Resources

▶ Institute of Child Nutrition: [www.theicn.org](http://www.theicn.org)

▶ USDA's Team Nutrition: [www.fns.usda.gov/tn](http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn)

## Supplemental Resources

CACFP 15-2016, Optional Best Practices to Further Improve Nutrition in the Child and Adult Care Food Program Meal: <https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/cacfp/CACFP15-2016os.pdf>

Chicken Stir-Fry recipe: <https://theicn.org/cnrb/recipes-for-centers-main-dishes/chicken-stir-fry-usda-recipe-for-cacfp/>

Cod Olé recipe: <https://theicn.org/cnrb/recipes-for-centers-main-dishes/baked-cod-ole-usda-recipe-for-cacfp-multicultural/>

Barbecue Chicken recipe: <https://theicn.org/cnrb/recipes-for-centers-main-dishes/barbecued-chicken/>

## Preparation Checklist

**Instructions:** Use the Preparation Checklist to prepare for the training session. Keep track of your progress by checking off tasks as they are completed.

Done <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Lesson Tasks
<b>Gather Materials</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	▶ Training Script
<input type="checkbox"/>	▶ Computer and Projector Screen
<input type="checkbox"/>	▶ Worksheets and Handouts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is It Reimbursable? worksheet</li> <li>• Is It Reimbursable? Answer Key</li> <li>• Case Study: Deep-Fat Frying Scenario</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/>	▶ Pens or pencils (one per participant)
<input type="checkbox"/>	▶ Optional: Training Certificate/Evaluation/Feedback Form (one per participant)
<b>Prepare for Lesson</b>	
<b>Before the training day:</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	▶ Review the training script and research any relevant State or local requirements. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The content reflects the Federal regulations and/or national best practices or standards. However, it's essential to include any additional State or local requirements when presenting this training.</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/>	▶ Make enough copies of the handouts for each participant.
<input type="checkbox"/>	▶ Test the PowerPoint on the computer and projector screen.
<input type="checkbox"/>	▶ Optional: Develop and print a session certificate/evaluation/feedback form (one per participant).
<b>On the training day:</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	▶ Place pens or pencils on tables (one per participant).
<input type="checkbox"/>	▶ Distribute materials to each participant.
<b>On the instructor's table:</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	▶ Training Script
<input type="checkbox"/>	▶ Instructor's copy of handouts and/or worksheets
<input type="checkbox"/>	▶ Optional: Session Evaluation/Feedback Forms

## Training Script

**Instructor’s Note:** Each section below has an accompanying slide(s). Review and share the content for each PowerPoint slide.

<b>Introduction</b>
<p><b>Welcome!</b></p> <p>Complete the following tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Distribute handouts to the participants.</li> <li>▶ Welcome the participants to the training.</li> <li>▶ Introduce yourself to the participants. Allow the participants to introduce themselves by sharing their name and one thing they would like to get from this training.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Deep-Fat Frying</b></p> <p><b>Ask posing question:</b> What are the dangers of eating too many fried foods?</p> <p><b>Share core content:</b> Consuming too many fried foods can lead to chronic illnesses, such as heart disease, obesity, diabetes, and stroke. Because of these risks and the need to provide nutritious meals, deep-fat frying on-site is no longer allowed in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) meal patterns. However, there are healthier cooking methods that can be used instead.</p>
<p><b>Overview</b></p> <p><b>Share core content:</b> In today’s training, you will discover what it means to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Deep-fat fry and review healthier cooking methods.</li> <li>▶ Recall methods for preparing healthier meals and snacks for the children in the child care setting.</li> </ul>
<b>Objective:</b> Define the meaning of deep-fat frying.
<p><b>Deep-Fat Frying: What Does It Mean?</b></p> <p><b>Share core content:</b> Deep-fat frying means cooking foods by submerging (covering) them in hot oil or other fats—for example, using a deep fryer to prepare popular foods like chicken nuggets and French fries.</p> <p>Deep-fat frying is not allowed on-site in the CACFP because of the dangers of a diet high in fried foods.</p>
<p><b>On-Site Settings</b></p> <p><b>Share core content:</b> Deep-fat frying is not allowed on-site in the CACFP On-site means prepared at a child care center, family child care home, or central, satellite kitchen. Any meals or snacks featuring deep-fat fried foods that are prepared on-site are not reimbursable.</p> <p>You may still purchase and serve foods that are pre-fried, flash-fried, or par-fried by the manufacturer, such as fried fish sticks or potato wedges. However, you must reheat these foods using a method other than deep-fat frying.</p>

<p><b>Vended Meals</b></p> <p><b>Share core content:</b> While deep-fat frying is not allowed as a way of preparing foods on-site, vended meals are not considered to be prepared on-site. Therefore, you may claim a vended meal that contains deep-fat fried foods if the items are prepared by the vendor off-site. When working with vendors, always encourage them to prepare foods using healthy cooking techniques, such as baking or steaming. This approach can help to meet the CACFP best practice of serving pre-fried foods no more than once per week.</p>
<p><b>Activity: Is It Reimbursable?</b>  <b>Time: 5 minutes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <b>Purpose:</b> The purpose of this activity is to understand what foods may be claimed as part of a reimbursable meal.</li> <li>▶ <b>Materials Needed:</b> Is It Reimbursable? worksheet</li> <li>▶ <b>Instructions:</b> Read the list of foods on the Is It Reimbursable? worksheet to the participants. Allow the participants to respond yes or no if the foods may be served as part of a reimbursable meal in the CACFP.</li> </ul> <p><b>Share core content:</b> It’s important for family child care homes or centers to know what foods can and cannot be served to ensure healthy meals are prepared and reimbursed.</p>
<b>Objective:</b> Identify at least two alternative cooking methods to deep-fat frying.
<p><b>Sauté, Stir-Fry, or Pan-Fry</b></p> <p><b>Share core content:</b> Choosing to sauté, stir-fry, or pan-fry means to rapidly cook foods over medium or high heat with a small amount of hot oil, enough oil to coat the bottom of the pan. When cooking with one of these methods, it’s best to choose healthy oils, such as olive oil or canola oil, instead of using fats such as butter and lard.</p>
<p><b>Alternative Cooking Method: Grilling</b></p> <p><b>Share core content:</b> Grilling is another alternative cooking method that can be used in a child care setting. It involves placing vegetables, meat, poultry, or fish on a pre-heated grill or grill pan, using dry heat from above or below to cook the foods.</p>
<p><b>Alternative Cooking Method: Roasting or Baking</b></p> <p><b>Share core content:</b> Other alternative cooking methods are roasting and baking. These methods cook foods at high heat using an oven, open flame, or another heat source.</p> <p><b>Ask posing question:</b> What are some common items that you could bake in place of deep-fat frying?</p>

**Activity: Case Study: Deep-Fat Frying Scenario**  
**Time: 5 minutes**

- ▶ **Purpose:** This activity aims to understand what it means to deep-fat fry foods in the CACFP.
- ▶ **Materials Needed:** Case Study
- ▶ **Instructions:** Divide the class into 4–6 groups. Review a case study that describes a situation that may take place in a child care setting. Display and read the case study to the participants. After reading it, allow the participants to answer the question with the individuals in their group.

**Ask posing question:** What alternative cooking methods could Erica have used to prepare the plantains?

**Conclusion**

**Lesson Conclusion**

**Share core content:** This training covered what it means to deep-fat fry foods and explored alternative cooking methods such as sautéing, grilling, and baking. It is important to know how foods should be prepared in the CACFP to help you serve healthy meals on-site.

**Ask posing question:** What questions do you have?

**Activity: Speed Action Planning**  
**Time: 5 minutes**

- ▶ **Purpose:** The purpose of this activity is to establish future steps for applying the information in their workplace.
- ▶ **Materials Needed:** Speed Action Planning worksheet, Planner or Cell Phone Calendar App, and Pencil/Pen
- ▶ **Instructions:** Distribute the Speed Action Worksheet. Inform participants that it is important to develop a plan for using the training’s information. Ask them to take 1–2 minutes to answer the following three questions to establish an action plan.
  - What did you learn in this training?
  - How will you apply this information in your current or future role?
  - When will you apply this information?

Once the participants have finished, encourage them to save this goal to a planner, calendar app, or other sources to ensure they follow through with their plan. Following this activity, dismiss the participants from the training.

**Thank You!**

Complete the following tasks:

- ▶ Conclude the training.
- ▶ Refer participants to the Institute of Child Nutrition for additional information at [helpdesk@theicn.org](mailto:helpdesk@theicn.org) or 800-321-3054.
- ▶ Distribute any certificates or evaluations.

**Activity: Is It Reimbursable?**

Foods	Reimbursable?
Packaged par-fried or flash-fried foods purchased from a grocery store (such as par-fried frozen potatoes)	
Deep-fat fried food from a restaurant or vendor	
Pan-fried foods prepared at the child care center or family child care home	
Deep-fat fried foods prepared at a child care center’s central kitchen	
Stir-fried or sautéed foods prepared at the child care center or family child care home	

## Activity: Is It Reimbursable? Answer Key

Foods	Reimbursable?
Packaged par-fried or flash-fried foods purchased from a grocery store (such as par-fried frozen potatoes)	Yes, if heated on-site by baking, microwaving, or another method that is not deep-fat frying. Compare foods and choose those lower in saturated fats.
Deep-fat fried food from a restaurant or vendor	Yes, if reheated on-site by baking, microwaving, or another method that is not deep-fat frying. Try to switch to healthier options.
Pan-fried foods prepared at the child care center or family child care home	Yes, the food is not covered with oil when pan-frying.
Deep-fat fried foods prepared at a child care center's central kitchen	No
Stir-fried or sautéed foods prepared at the child care center or family child care home	Yes, the food is not covered with oil when stir-frying or sautéing.

## Case Study: Deep-Fat Frying Scenario

**Instructions:** Allow participants to read the case study. Then, ask if anyone would share their answer with the large group. After responses, share the correct answer with the group.

Erica, the cook in a child care center, purchases frozen, pre-fried chicken strips. She also purchases plantains and sweet potatoes to make homemade fries. Erica reheats the chicken strips in the oven, cooks the sweet potatoes in an air fryer that does not use oil, and pan-fries the plantains submerged in oil. Based on the cooking methods she chose, would the chicken strips, sweet potatoes, and plantains be allowed as part of a reimbursable meal?

**Feedback:** The chicken strips would be allowed because they were pre-fried off-site, frozen, and reheated using an alternative cooking method. The sweet potatoes would be allowed because they were cooked using an alternative cooking method and not submerged in hot oil or fat. The plantains were pan-fried, which is an alternative cooking method, but they were submerged (covered) in hot oil or fat. Therefore, they would not be allowed because they were deep-fat fried.



## Speed Action Planning

**Instructions:** Today's training featured key information on what is deep-fat frying and alternative cooking methods to deep-fat frying. Answer the following three questions to establish a plan for using the information.

**1. What did you learn in this training?**

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**2. How will you apply this information in your current or future roles?**

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**3. When will you apply this information (e.g., one week, one month, six months, etc.)?**

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