

# GRAB AND GO LESSON

## Purchasing Large Equipment in the CACFP

Procurement | Equipment Purchasing

**Purpose:** This handout provides factors to consider before making large equipment purchases.

Quality meals are produced when you have the right equipment. Purchasing large equipment may be necessary for creating quality meals in a timely fashion. But what is large equipment? Large equipment is defined as an item of non-expendable personal property with a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit (FNS Instruction 796-2, Revision 4). Not only does large equipment assist in preparing quality meals, but it also increases employee efficiency.

There are many benefits to purchasing large equipment.

- The purchased equipment is wholly owned by the facility.
- The purchased equipment increases productivity.
- The business funds are not tied up in long-term agreements.
- The equipment becomes an asset to the program.

### Basic Factors for Purchasing Large Equipment

Large equipment purchases are determined by several factors:

- Facility needs
- Menus
- Cost
- Safety measures
- Warranty and repair

### Facility Needs

Examine the needs of your program by answering the following questions:

- Where can improvements be made in providing higher-quality foods and increase production?
- Can time devoted to preparation be improved by using large equipment?
- Can utility costs be reduced by preparing larger food quantities at the same time?
- Is there a need for the equipment, and will it perform the task needed in your facility?

### Menus

Review your menus and the types of foods served. The frequency of items on the menu determines the type of large equipment to purchase. Examine the current menus and the staff available to prepare the menus. Consider how food is prepared, such as dry-heat or moist-heat. Dry-heat cooking includes baking, broiling, grilling, and roasting, whereas moist-heat cooking includes braising, steaming, or poaching.

Equipment needs will also differ for meals that are prepared from scratch than those that are convenience type items (heat and serve).

### Cost

Cost is also a factor in purchasing large equipment. When considering large equipment, consult with your State agency or sponsoring organization to determine required procedures for making large equipment purchases. All equipment costs must be necessary for program operations and reasonable for the type of equipment purchased. Factor utility costs in the price because some large equipment may have higher utility costs than others.

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### Safety Measures

Safety measures are a significant factor when considering equipment. Before making purchases, shop around. Gather information on various types of similar equipment. Research each item to determine if the equipment is made of non-toxic materials. When inspecting equipment, ask questions about employee safety, such as guards for covering sharp edges and moving parts. Examine all wheels to determine if there are locking capabilities in mobile equipment. Determine if the equipment can be sanitized to prevent cross-contamination. Avoid purchasing equipment that poses a danger.

### Warranty and Repair

Consider warranty and repair costs when purchasing large equipment. Without a warranty, broken equipment can negatively affect the budget. A great way to know just what to expect is to request a copy of the equipment's standard warranty before purchasing the equipment. The warranty should include the total length of service as well as the parts and labor. Also, request extended warranty information regarding standard warranty expirations, and the timeframe required to repair or replace items.

Always request information on the repairing process before you purchase the equipment. Some topics include:

- Equipment defects
- Replacement parts
- total time to repair equipment

Focusing on these details when purchasing large equipment can help you to buy just what you need for your program. For more information, review your state's policies on purchasing large equipment. You can find this information by contacting your State agency or sponsoring organization.

### References

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