***Personalize this sample letter and make it your own!***

Don’t forget to delete all of the highlighted content and this section of instructions.

When your letter is complete, submit it online as a Word doc or PDF. [Click here to submit](http://www.regulations.gov/#!submitComment;D=FNS-2011-0029-3284).

For more information and resources about the proposed changes, visit [CFPA’s website](http://cfpa.net/proposed-cacfp-meal-pattern-changes).

[Date your letter]: April 1, 2015

[Address your letter]: Tina Namian, Branch Chief

Policy and Program Development Branch, Child Nutrition Programs
Food and Nutrition Service, Department of Agriculture
Post Office Box 66874

St. Louis, Missouri 63166

Docket ID: FNS-2011-0029

[Give your letter a subject]: **Help Make the Child and Adult Care Food Program Even Healthier!**

[Write your letter]:

Dear Ms. Namian:

[Tell them who you are and why you care]:

As a [child care provider, parent, teacher, administrator, community organization, concerned citizen], the changes to the Food Program are important to me because… [Add your personal comments here].

[A “thank you” is always nice! Here are a few suggestions]:

* Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments on these proposed changes.
* I commend Secretary Vilsack and the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for their efforts to improve the health and wellbeing of children participating in the Food Program.

[Make a few comments. Below are some key topics you may want to discuss]:

I respectfully submit the following comments.

**Support Breastfeeding!**

Supporting the health of mothers and babies is of the utmost importance. The changes proposed for the infant meal pattern are a step in the right direction. I encourage USDA to continue upholding American Academy of Pediatrics recommendation to only serve breast milk or formula to infants under 6 months of age. Please provide clear, comprehensive guidance to make sure child care providers are supported in transitioning babies from breast milk and/or formula to solid foods. Additionally, please ensure the final rule clarifies that child care providers can be reimbursed when a mother breastfeeds her child on site, regardless of age.

**More Vegetables!**

I support efforts to increase the consumption of vegetables served through the Food Program. Separating the fruit and vegetable components for lunch and supper, as proposed, ensures that a vegetable will be served with each of those meals. USDA should also allow providers to be reimbursed for either (a) a fruit or vegetable or (b) two servings of vegetables. This will help increase the amount and variety of vegetables that children consume.

**Less Juice and More Healthy Beverages!**

I do not support the proposed change that would allow fruit or vegetable juice to comprise the entire fruit or vegetable component for meals and snacks. Research shows that fruit juice is the number-one source of children’s excessive caloric intake from beverages and should not be served in place of whole fruits or vegetables. USDA should adopt California’s Healthy Beverages in Child Care Law by (1) limiting juice to one age-appropriate serving of 100% juice per day; (2) ensuring clean, safe drinking water is readily available throughout the day; (3) serving only fat-free or low-fat (1%) unsweetened, plain milk; and (4) prohibiting beverages with added sweeteners, either natural or artificial.

**More Whole Grains!**

As a first step toward increasing whole grains in the Food Program, I support the proposed requirement to offer at least one serving of whole grain-rich products per day. The health benefits of eating whole grains are well known and it is important to teach our young children that eating whole grains is part of a healthy diet. In the future, when direct costs to providers decrease, I would like to see more whole grains served through the Food Program.

[Make a closing statement such as]:

Thank you for developing this much-needed update to the Food Program. I urge USDA to build upon your current proposal to ensure that health-focused, feasible standards are put into place. Such changes are needed to safeguard and support the health of our youngest, most vulnerable children.

Respectfully,

[Make sure to include your name, organization (if applicable), city, and state.]