

## Attachment: Share Tables Food Safety Requirements and Other Best Practices

This resource provides a list of food safety requirements and other best practices to consider when establishing a share table.

<b>Step 1 (REQUIRED): Follow Federal, State, and local health and food safety requirements:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comply with FNS food safety requirements outlined in 7 CFR 210.13, 226.20(1), and 225.16(a).</li> <li>• Comply with all local and State health and food safety codes, including storage of reused items.</li> <li>• <u>Schools only</u>: Ensure policies for saving and sharing food or beverage items are consistent with the local educational agency’s Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) plan.</li> </ul>	
<b>Step 2: Establish clear guidelines for food components that may and may not be shared or reused as part of a later reimbursable meal:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Food components FNS recommends sharing:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Unopened pre-packaged items, such as a bag of baby carrots or sliced apples stored in a cooling bin.</li> <li>○ Whole pieces of fruit, such as apples or bananas.</li> <li>○ Unopened milk, if immediately stored in a cooling bin maintained at 41°F or below.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Food components FNS does not recommend sharing:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Unpackaged items, such as a salad bowl without a lid.</li> <li>○ Packaged items that can be opened and resealed.</li> <li>○ Open items, such as an opened bag of baby carrots or sliced apples.</li> <li>○ Perishable foods, when a temperature control mechanism is not in place.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Step 3: If sharing items that require cooling is permissible under local and State laws, establish strict food safety guidelines to prevent the risk of foodborne illness:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain proper temperature (and temperature logs) (<i>41 degrees Fahrenheit or colder</i>) by storing food components in a temperature controlled storage bin, such as an ice tub or cooler.</li> <li>• Make note of expiration dates on packaged foods, and do not intermix reused items with items that have not yet been prepared and served yet.</li> <li>• Decide how many times a food item can be re-used (recommended just once).</li> </ul>	
<b>Step 4: Supervise the share table at all times to ensure compliance with food safety requirements:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask supervisors to make sure packaging of items placed on the share table is not open, punctured, or otherwise compromised.</li> <li>• If cooling bins are used, have supervisors monitor the bin to ensure that time and temperature control requirements are met.</li> <li>• Invite children to participate as “share table helpers,” or assistant monitors, teaching them about the importance of food safety and recycling.</li> </ul>	
<b>Step 5: Promote the share table to children and families:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide children and families with information about share table guidelines.</li> <li>• Ask for input from parents and guardians, and make sure families are comfortable with their children participating in the share table option.</li> <li>• Explain the share table concept to children, taking care to emphasize the importance of healthy eating and trying new foods whenever possible.</li> <li>• Display signage outlining share table “rules” and encouraging recycling.</li> </ul>	