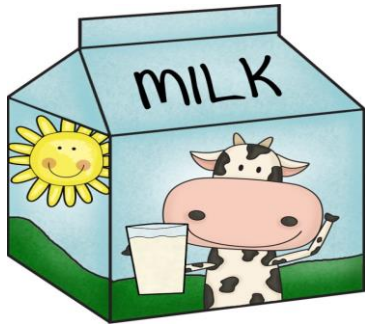




## Food Sharing Tables-Guidance for Schools



Share tables help reduce food waste and encourage consumption of foods served at schools. These guidelines are intended to assist school staff who implement share tables. The Department is exercising its authority per 8-103.10 10-144 CMR Ch. 200 to grant a variance to the Maine Food Code to allow for the following procedure for share tables. Health Inspectors will review compliance with this variance during their inspections.

Prior to sitting down, students or staff may place unwanted served food on the share table, so that another student may select the food item.

- A school staff person must be designated to monitor the share table.
- \*Only food served by the school nutrition program may be placed on the share table.
- \*\*Only intact packaged items (i.e., pre-packaged crackers, fruit snacks, juices, etc.) or fruits with thick skins that can be peeled, such as oranges, bananas or tangerines, are suggested for placement on the share table. Fruits having thin skins in which the skins are normally consumed, such as apples, pears, grapes and plums are not allowed.
- \*\*\*Temperature-controlled intact packaged foods (i.e., milk, yogurt) must be held at proper temperature. Students may place milk, etc. in a small refrigerator, cooler or ice bath (provided by the school nutrition program) to prevent temperature abuse.
- \*\*\*\*Food may not be returned to the kitchen for re-service and shall be disposed at the end of the 4-hour period or the end of the meal service.
- Share tables should be used in combination with Offer Versus Serve and careful portion control to combat excess waste on trays. For more information about Offer Versus Serve visit [www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/guidance-and-resources](http://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/guidance-and-resources)