



“Nut-checked” Frequently Asked Questions

QUICK REFERENCE

We have had several questions regarding what food can be brought into school and if it can be sent in baggies. Please use the following table as a quick reference when packing snacks or lunch.

I am packing ...	Please send in...
A snack to be eaten in the classroom by my child ONLY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food items listed on the Nut-checked Snack List, sent in unopened, original package, OR Food items listed on the Nut-checked Snack List, sent in a baggie, please send a note identifying that the food item is nut-checked
Snacks to be eaten in the classroom by all the children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Food items listed on the Nut-checked Snack List, sent in unopened, original packages, OR If the snack is fresh fruit or vegetables, always use thoroughly cleaned kitchen utensils and equipment (knives, cutting boards, serving containers, etc.) to wash and prepare the snack.
Lunch to be eaten in the cafeteria by my child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any food item, store-bought or homemade, please attach a label if the lunch does or does not contain peanuts/tree nuts (labels can be found on our website)
Lunch to be eaten somewhere other than the classroom by my child (“Brown Bag Day”)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any food item, store-bought or homemade, that is Nut-checked, please attach a label that the lunch is “Nut-checked” (labels can be found on our website)

NUT-CHECKED SNACK LIST – GENERAL QUESTIONS

1. What does it mean if a food item is “Nut-checked”?

A food item is considered “Nut-checked” if peanuts/tree nuts are not listed on the ingredients label AND there is not a peanut/tree nut warning on the package.

A peanut/tree nut warning will state something similar to “**may contain traces of peanuts or tree nuts**” or “**processed in a plant that process peanuts or tree nuts**” or “**processed on equipment that process peanuts or tree nuts**”. If a food item lists peanuts/tree nuts on the ingredients label or there is a peanut/tree nut warning on the package, the food item is NOT “Nut-checked”.

2. What is the difference between a peanut and tree nut?

Peanuts grow underground and are in the legume family (peas and lentils are also legumes). Tree nuts include all nuts that grow on trees (such as walnuts, almonds, pecans and cashews). Many people with a peanut allergy are also allergic to tree nuts. Therefore, we often group the both peanuts and tree nuts together when referring to food allergies.

- 3. I recently reviewed the list of Nut-checked items on the website. Are these the only products my children can bring to school in their lunches or is this a list for items to share in classrooms (i.e. preschool snacks)?**

The Nut-checked Snack List should be used when packing classroom snacks.

The Nut-checked Snack List can be used when packing for lunches, but it is not a requirement. If you pack a snack for lunch that is not on the Nut-checked Snack list, we will not automatically assume that it contains nuts. We have created labels (located on our website) for you to print and attach to your children's lunches. We will look for these labels to check if the snack is Nut-checked or the teachers will read the ingredients and determine if it is Nut-checked. If a snack packed in the child's lunch contains peanuts/tree nuts, the child should sit in the "Nut Zone" area to eat lunch.

- 4. I want to bring a food item into school as a classroom snack but it is not on the Nut-checked Snack List. I've checked the ingredients label and it does not contain peanuts/tree nuts and there is not a peanut/tree nut warning on the label. Since I've checked the ingredients label, can I bring the food item into school as a classroom snack?**

Some companies will always write on the ingredients label if there are peanuts/tree nuts or if they have a peanut/tree nut warning. However, not all companies take allergen labeling so seriously. If a product contains peanuts or tree nuts, companies must list peanuts/tree nuts in bold print or at the end of the ingredients label (this is a law). However, it is only voluntary for companies to add a peanut/tree nut warning on their labels such as "may contain peanuts" or "made on equipment that processes peanuts/tree nuts". Since it is not mandatory, some companies do not use the voluntary peanut/tree nut warning, making it difficult to know if a product could be cross-contaminated with peanuts or tree nuts.

Therefore, snacks that are sent into school as a classroom snack should be listed on the Nut-checked Snack List.

- 5. Can I add a food item to the Nut-checked Snack List?**

If you have any items that you buy regularly and you want to send it as a snack, please check the ingredients label. If the ingredients label does not list peanuts/tree nuts AND there is not a peanut/tree nut warning, we can add it to the Nut-checked Snack List. We are aiming to make this list as complete as possible so all parents/guardians have many choices snacks they provide to the children.

Send an e-mail to christine.sk@zoominternet.net with the food items and include that you checked the ingredients label and it does not contain peanuts/tree nuts or the peanut/tree nut warning.

- 6. Do the food items I bring for a classroom party have to be on the Nut-checked Snack List?**

All classroom parties are planned well in advance, and food items brought into the classroom party should be on the Nut-checked snack list.

If you have food items that you want to bring into the party but they are not on the Nut-checked snack list, please check the ingredients label. If the ingredients label does not list peanuts/tree nuts AND there is not a peanut/tree nut warning, we can add it to the Nut-checked Snack List.

Send an e-mail to christine.sk@zoominternet.net with the food items and include that you checked the ingredients label and it does not contain peanuts/tree nuts or the peanut/tree nut warning.

- 7. I noticed the labels on the website stating if a lunch does or does not contain nuts. Do I have to use these labels on my child's lunch?**

We have created labels (located on our website) for your convenience to print and attach to your children's lunches. It is not mandatory that you use these labels, however, please indicate using a note attached to your child's lunch or writing directly on your child's lunch if the lunch is Nut-checked. This is needed so the teachers and parent volunteers can look for these labels or notes to know if the child should sit in the Nut Zone area.

SNACKS IN THE CLASSROOM

8. For the "no homemade food items" - does that only apply to shared snacks such as for preschool?

The "no homemade food items" requirement only applies to classroom snacks. Homemade items can be sent in children's lunches.

9. For "original, unopened package" - does that only apply to shared snacks? Can I send snacks into school in baggies?

For snacks that only your child will be eating in the classroom, the food items should come from the Nut-checked snack list but can be in a smaller baggie that came from a larger bag. We will look for a note from you stating that the snack does not contain nuts.

For snacks that you send in for all students in the classroom to eat, the food items should come from the Nut-checked snack list and be in its original, unopened package. If the snack is in a larger bag, please ask your teacher to distribute the snack to the class from the larger bag.

LUNCH

10. Based on what I have read, the students may bring "nut contain" items in their lunch if they sit at a separate table. How will that be enforced? Will the cafeteria volunteers be responsible for watching for something that contains and moving that child? My thoughts are that even if I told my child on a given day that some item required him to sit separately, it would not surprise me to learn he had forgotten by the time he got to lunch!

Every day, the classroom teachers will check which lunches contain nuts and where the students should sit during lunch. We have created labels (located on our website) for you to print and attach to your children's lunches. **IT WILL BE EXTREMELY HELPFUL** if you attach the label on or in your child's lunch stating if the lunch does or does not contain nuts. If a label is not included, the teachers will need to determine for themselves if the lunch contains nuts. The teachers hope to make this process as quick as possible every day, so your help by attaching a label will be very valuable.

If your child brings an item to lunch that contains nuts, the child should sit in the "Nut Zone" area to eat lunch.

11. If a child brings in an "nut containing" lunch item and must sit in the nut zone, will their friends be allowed to sit with them even if they bring lunches not containing nuts?

If we allow friends (with lunches without nuts) to sit with friends (with lunches containing peanuts/tree nuts) in the Nut Zone, it may become too difficult to manage the Nut Zone (who has lunches with nuts and who doesn't). Our goal of the Nut Zone area is to accommodate children who want to enjoy a peanut/tree nut product for their lunch.

12. Is any bread okay for a sandwich?

Any bread is ok for lunch, but you should still check the ingredients label to see if it contains peanuts/tree nuts. For example, there are several "Brownberry" Breads that contain tree nuts. If the bread contains peanuts/tree nuts, the child should sit in the "Nut Zone" area of the cafeteria.

13. Can our children bring homemade items in their lunches?

Homemade items can be sent in children's lunches. If you prepare a homemade item and it does not contain peanut/tree nut ingredients, the child does not need to sit in the "Nut Zone" area. However, if you prepare a homemade item that contains peanut/tree nut ingredients, the child should sit in the "Nut Zone" area. We have created labels (located on our website) for you to print and attach to your children's lunches. We will look for these labels to check if the homemade item contains nuts or the teachers will need to determine if it contains nuts.

14. Can we send a baggie of goldfish or pretzels in our child's lunch that came from a larger bag we have at home?

For lunch, you can send in smaller baggies (that came from a larger bag). These items do not need to be from the Nut-checked snack list. We have created labels (located on our website) for you to print and attach to your children's lunches. Since the smaller baggie will not include the ingredients label, we will look at these labels to check if the item contains nuts or the teachers will need to determine if it contains nuts. If the lunch item contains nuts, your child should sit in the "Nut Zone" area for lunch.

15. If I verify that my child's lunch does not contain nuts based on reading the labels (even if the item is not currently on the Nut-checked Snack list) and I send in the "I'm a NO-NUT kid today" tag, will I still need to label each item she brings if it is in a baggy and not an individually packaged product?

You do not have to label the individual "baggie" items inside the lunch. If you use a label on the outside of your child's lunch indicating the lunch does not contain nuts, then we trust that you have confirmed that the items in the baggies do not contain peanuts/tree nuts or have the peanut/tree nut warning.

However, if you send a snack with your child to eat in the classroom in a "baggie", please label it and make sure it is on the Nut-checked snack list.