

## Definitions of Food Groups

**Aquatic Plants:** a plant that grows partly or wholly in water, whether rooted in the mud, or floating without anchorage; plants that require constantly moist conditions without standing water are included in this group; for the purpose of this contest, only examples from the following genera will be considered. algae of various genera; American lotus, *Nelumbo*; arrowhead/duck potato, *Sagittaria*; big duckweed, *Spirodela*; bladderworts, *Utricularia*; bulrushes, *Scirpus*; burreeds, *Sparganium*; cattails, *Typha*; coontail *Ceratophyllum*; cordgrass, *Spartina*; duckweed, *Lemna*; floating hearts, *Nymphoides*; naiads, *Najas*; pondweed, *Potamogeton*; rushes, *Juncus*; sedges, *Carex*; smartweed, *Polygonum*; spikerush, *Eleocharis*; waterlily, *Nymphaea*; watermeals, *Wolffia*; watermilfoil, *Myriophyllum*; waterprimrose, *Ludwigia* and waterweed, *Elodea*

**Bark:** tough outer covering of trees and shrubs

**Birds:** may be represented by feathers, bones, skulls, feet or any part that distinguishes the class

**Buds:** a small protuberance on a stem or branch, sometimes enclosed in protective scales and containing an undeveloped shoot, leaf or flower; the bud may be represented on the branch or stem, or removed from the branch or stem

**Carrion:** stinking, rotting flesh; to be considered in this group, the item must have a definite odor of decomposition, be presented in a plastic bag or have the words “this stinks” on the display; a dry bone, a dry skin, or other body part does not represent carrion, but will represent other food groups; maggots are a natural occurrence with decomposition and may be present on the carrion, but they should not be considered in grouping the specimen as carrion

**Crayfish:** small freshwater decapod crustacean that resembles a lobster; regionally, they have many names including crawdads and crawdaddys

**Earthworms:** terrestrial worm that burrows into and helps aerate soil; often surfaces when the ground is cool or wet; used as bait by those who fish

**Eggs:** only the eggs of vertebrate species (mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish) are considered in this category; invertebrate eggs (insect and spider) represent the group of the adult invertebrate

**Fish:** a poikilothermic (cold-blooded) water-dwelling vertebrate with gills

**Forbs:** broad-leaved herbaceous plant, not including grasses, sedges, rushes or ferns; forbs may be represented by a single leaf or by the entire plant including the flower

**Frogs & salamanders:** includes toads; may be represented by the organism in any life stage except the egg

**Fungi:** kingdom of plantlike spore-forming organisms that grow in irregular masses without roots, stems, leaves and that lack chlorophyll

**Grain:** includes production agricultural crops of wheat, oats, rye, barley, rice, soybeans and corn; may be represented by the seed, seed head or entire plant including the seedhead. Other crops such as sunflower and milo are classified as “seeds” for purposes of this contest

**Grass:** leaves of grasses are usually tall and thin with a mid-rib and parallel veins; grasses may be represented by the entire plant including the seedhead, or by a single leaf or group of leaves

**Hard mast:** includes nuts from walnut, hickory, oak, beech, pecan, almond, and common hazel; may be shown with or without the husk

**Insects and spiders:** small invertebrate (*without a backbone*) animals; spiders are arachnids that usually has silk-spinning organs at the back end of the body; they spin silk to make cocoons for eggs or traps for prey

**Leaves and twigs:** this food group is represented by leaves and/or twigs of woody species only; *not* forbs, grasses or other herbaceous plants

**Lizards:** lizards are reptiles of the order Squamata, which they share with the snakes (Ophidians); they are usually four-legged, with external ear openings and movable eyelids

**Mammals:** any mammal regardless of size fits in this category; may be represented by a photograph, live animal, museum mount or any part of the mammal representative of the class, such as teeth or hair

**Mussels:** freshwater mollusks that may be represented by the whole organism or just a single shell or group of shells

**Nectar:** represented by the flower with no other plant parts present; or from a honey bee or hornet nest

**Seeds:** a fertilized ovule containing an embryo, which forms a new plant upon germination; seeds other than grain (commonly cultivated agriculture crops) – see definition of “grain” for comparison

**Soft mast:** display must include the soft, fleshy, pulp-covered seed of fruits or berries

**Snails:** applies to most members of the molluscan class Gastropoda that have coiled shells

**Snakes:** cold-blooded legless reptiles, which share the order Squamata with lizards

**Tubers:** represented by either the nutlet of the yellow nutsedge (chufa) or by potato

**Turtles:** animals with a special bony shell developed from their ribs; “turtle” is often used for aquatic species, but aquatic freshwater turtles are also often called “terrapins;” in North America, “turtle” is usually used to refer to all members of the order, including tortoises, which are predominantly land based