

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