

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), bur-reeds (Spartanium), cattails (Typha), coontail (Ceratophyllum), cordgrass (Spartina), duckweed (Lemna), floating hearts (Nymphaoides), naiads (Najas), pondweed (Potamogeton), rushes (Juncus), sedges (Carex and Cyperus), smartweed (Polygonum), spikerush (Eleocharis), waterlily (Nymphaea), watermeals (Wolffia), watermilfoil (Myriophyllum), waterprimrose (Ludwigia), waterweed (Elodea), wild millets (Echinochloa), and panic grasses (Panicum)

Bark: outermost layer of trees and shrubs

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

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

Carrión: 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

Centipedes and Millipedes: elongated arthropods having many body segments; millipedes have pairs of legs

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

Ferns: flowerless, seedless vascular plants with roots, stems and fronds; reproduce by spores; may be represented by the whole plant or a part of the plant that

defines it

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

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

Grains: will include only wheat, oats, rye, barley, rice, grain sorghum and corn; may be represented by the seed, seedhead, or entire plant, including the seedhead

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

Grassland: a land area dominated by herbaceous vegetation, especially grasses

Hard mast: includes nuts from walnut, hickory, oak, beech, pecan, American chestnut, Allegheny chinkapin, almond, hazelnut, and cypress; may be shown with or without the husk

Insects: small invertebrate (without a backbone) animals, except for spiders, centipedes and millipedes, which are segmented

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

Lichens: a fungus that grows symbiotically with algae, resulting in a composite organism that characteristically forms a crust-like or branching growth on rocks or tree trunks; lichens may be shown with a rock or branch or without

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 from flowers: represented by the flower with no other plant parts present

Salamanders: may be represented by the organism in any life stage except the egg

Scorpions: arachnid having a long-segmented tail ending in a venomous stinger

Seeds: a fertilized ovule containing an embryo, which forms a new plant upon germination

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

Soft Mast: fleshy fruits, such as but not limited to wild strawberry, blackberry, raspberry, dewberry, blueberry, pokeweed, persimmon, cherry, mulberry, blackgum, apple, pear, elderberry, grape, hackberry, dogwood, tupelo, and pawpaw

Spiders: arachnid 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

Tubers: represented by either the nutlet of the yellow nutsedge (chufa) or by potato, and duck potato

Turtle and Tortoise: animals with a special bony shell developed from their ribs; “turtle” is often used for aquatic species, but aquatic freshwater turtles also are 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