

# ‘Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs 2’ Wins with Foodimals, Overemphasizes Humans

Submitted by [HollywoodChicago.com](http://www.hollywoodchicago.com) [1] on September 26, 2013 - 11:01pm

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Rating: **3.5/5.0**

CHICAGO – I was paying attention to the movie. **Correction:** I was *mostly* paying attention to the movie. It was challenging to ignore my angry, empty stomach and fully enjoy the food coma that is “Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs 2”. Just don’t make the same mistake I did and eat before you do.

To justify a sequel four years later, a mostly new filmmaking team converted inanimate food that rained from the sky to living, breathing and speaking “foodimals”.

Sydney's Sidebar  
A 9-year-old's 2-line review



Kid Critic Rating: ★★★★★ 3.5/5.0

**GOOD:** The foodimals were so cute and I can't stop saying "enwoo"!

**BAD:** I wanted to see less fight scenes and more about the personalities of the foodimals.

The star of the foodimals? Barry the strawberry, who turns out to be the star of the film. Like his fellow foodimals, Barry is an ambulatory chunk of food spawned from an invention that goes by the mumbled name “FLDSMDFR”. In the sequel, the FLDSMDFR has been popping out food on the island of Swallow Falls since the first film.

Phil Lord and Chris Miller, who wrote and directed the first film, still wrote the story in the sequel. But in “Cloudy 2,” first-time directors Cody Cameron and Kris Pearn took the helm with a screenplay by John Francis Daley (“Horrible Bosses”) and Jonathan M. Goldstein (“Horrible Bosses”).

While we’re led to believe the foodimals need to be exterminated, they’re just living out their lives and trying to survive against a mad scientist who wants to exploit them and achieve global domination (as all mad scientists do).



This team had the right idea with Barry, who is initially obsessed with the word “enwoo!” for no apparent understanding. Funny, adorable and always stealing the screen’s spotlight, Barry is voiced by none other than the film’s co-director Cody Cameron (who even doubles as Dill Pickle).



Sam (Anna Faris) holds Barry for Flint (Bill Hader) in “Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs 2”.

*Image credit: Sony Pictures Animation*

We got to know the human characters. Flint Lockwood (Bill Hader) is a wide-eyed, budding scientist with a good heart and a bad role model. Sam Sparks (Anna Faris) is his friend and love interest. Chester V (Will Forte) is the bad, mad scientist Flint aspires to impress. Terry Crews is the funny Earl Devereaux: the town’s athletic cop who’s obsessed with his kid trying to grow chest hair.

James Caan, Andy Samberg, Benjamin Bratt, Neil Patrick Harris and Kristen Schaal round out a talented comedic cast of human-animated characters. But while the film invests heavily in its humans, it should have focused more on its foodimals. Aside from Barry, we don’t get to know the other foodimals and they’re primarily used for quick puns or flyovers.

The film would have been more funny and memorable had it further developed the unique personalities behind its foodimals.



Anna Faris in “Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs 2”.

*Image credit: Sony Pictures Animation*

Who is Tacosaurus Rex, does he prefer iceberg lettuce or romaine and is he a mild or spicy taco sauce kind of guy? The “leek in a boat” is a funny onion indeed as a fast one-liner, but he’s got feelings too and I can’t help but wonder what makes *him* cry. And we could have gotten to know more about the bananostriches, cucumbirds, flamangoes, fruit cockatiels, tacodiles, watermelophants and wildabeets.

The funniest and most memorable part of the movie is when Barry translates to the other foodimals – who for the most part don’t say anything but “enwoo!” too – and he sounds like South Park’s Cartman when explaining the human’s words. And you can’t help but love a strawberry who poops instant jelly when he’s afraid.

For the kids, “Cloudy 2” quite obviously matches dialogue puns with corresponding visuals. So, the line “This is bananas!” is accompanied visually by giant potassium-filled fruits and “We’re toast!” goes deliciously with golden-browned bread. These scenes – and the film as a whole – are enjoyably fast-paced so you’re kept relatively alert and engaged through its 95 minutes.





The cast of “Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs 2”.

Image credit: Sony Pictures Animation

But the movie is relatively simple, too straightforward and forgets that kids are smart, too. Animated family films strive to appeal to the kids who beg their paying parents to take them while *a/so* having plenty of themes for the adults that go over their kids’ heads.

“Cloudy 2” spends most of its energy appealing to the kids and doesn’t balance itself as well for adults. The film could have looked for inspiration from more intelligent animated films in this genre like 2008’s “WALL•E” from Andrew Stanton and 2009’s “Up” from Pete Docter and Bob Peterson.

For those who are allowed to legally drink alcohol, we *can* transport ourselves back to films like “Jurassic Park”. When “Cloudy 2” introduces us to its island of foodimals, it’s just like seeing Steven Spielberg’s dinosaurs for the first time. While there’s still plenty for adults to enjoy in “Cloudy 2,” you end up feeling like you’re primarily there to keep your kids quiet for a couple hours.

*“Cloudy with a Chance of Meatballs 2” stars Bill Hader, Anna Faris, Benjamin Bratt, Terry Crews, Neil Patrick Harris, Andy Samberg, Kristen Schaal, Will Forte and James Caan from co-directors Cody Cameron and Kris Pearn. The film is written by Judi Barrett (characters), Ron Barrett (characters), John Francis Daley (screenplay), Jonathan M. Goldstein (screenplay), Erica Rivinoja (story and screenplay), Phil Lord (story) and Chris Miller (story). The film is rated “PG” for mild rude humor, has a running time of 95 minutes and opened on Sept. 27, 2013.*



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