



Tip Sheet for Accepting Processed Product Documentation

CN Labels, factsheets, and product labels provide a way for food manufacturers to communicate with school program operators about how their products may contribute to the meal pattern requirements for meals served under the Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Child Nutrition (CN) programs. Below are tips for acceptable documentation:

CN Labeled Products

- The CN label provides a warranty against audit claims when the product is used according to the manufacturer's direction.
- School program operators may submit an original CN label, a photocopy or a photograph of the valid CN label during an administrative review as acceptable documentation.
 - CN labels that are laser printed on the product carton or cannot be easily removed may be photocopied while attached to the original product carton; or
 - A photograph of the CN label while it is attached to the original product carton. (CN Labels that are photocopied or photographed must be visible and legible.)
- When a valid CN logo and crediting statement is provided, state reviewers **must not** request a product formulation statement.

Watermarked CN Labels

- If the actual CN label, photograph or photocopy of the valid CN label is not available, school program operators may provide the bill of lading (invoice) containing the product name and:
 - A CN Label copied with a watermark displaying the product name and CN number; or

- An electronic copy of the CN label with a watermark displaying the product name and CN number provided by the vendor.

Product Formulation Statements/Other Documentation

- PFS must be on signed letterhead that demonstrates how the processed product contributes to the meal pattern requirements.
- [Templates for documenting](#) the meat/meat alternates (M/MA), grains, fruits, and vegetables components are available.
- PFS may be modified for various products contributing to more than one meal component. For example, a cheese pizza may credit towards the M/MA, grains and the red/orange vegetable subgroup. The crediting information for each meal component may be documented on the same PFS.
- Creditable ingredients listed in the PFS must match a description in the [Food Buying Guide for School Meal Programs](#).
- PFS should verify that the product's contribution to the meal pattern requirements is not greater than the serving size of the product (i.e., a 2.15 ounce beef patty may not credit more than 2.00 ounce M/MA).
- PFS should assure that the creditable components are in the finished product.

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