

CREDITING HANDBOOK FOR THE Child and Adult Care Food Program



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INTRODUCTION

The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) is a Federal program that provides reimbursements for nutritious meals and snacks served to eligible children and adults who are enrolled for care at participating child care centers, day care homes, and adult day care centers. The CACFP also provides reimbursements for meals served to children and youth participating in at-risk afterschool care programs, children residing in emergency shelters, and adults over the age of 60 or living with a disability and enrolled in day care facilities. CACFP contributes to the wellness, healthy growth, and development of young children and adults in the United States.

This revision to the “Crediting Handbook for the Child and Adult Care Food Program,” referred to as the Crediting Handbook, reflects updates to nutrition standards which became effective July 1, 2024¹. The meal patterns reflect recommendations from the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*², the National Academy of Medicine and the American Academy of Pediatrics. The meal patterns focus on providing a variety of nutrient-dense foods such as whole grains, vegetables, fruits, protein, and fluid milk, while reducing the amount of added sugars, sodium, and highly processed foods. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) reimburses CACFP operators for the meals served to children or adult participants, not for individual foods. A meal is reimbursable if it contains creditable foods (foods which credit toward the meal components) in the required

amounts outlined in the CACFP meal patterns. The CACFP meal patterns are shown on pages 9-11 of this handbook.

The “Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs,” commonly referred to as the Food Buying Guide (FBG), is the primary resource used to determine the contribution that foods make toward the meal pattern requirements. The Crediting Handbook is a supplementary resource to the FBG and contains additional information on creditable foods served in CACFP settings. The Crediting Handbook provides information on a wide variety of foods but does not include all foods that can be served in the CACFP. Contact your sponsoring organization or State agency if you need assistance with determining if a food is creditable in the CACFP. Understanding how to credit foods served in the CACFP is a critical component of program integrity. To ensure institutions understand Program requirements and potential consequences of noncompliance, State agencies should prioritize sponsor training in how to credit foods and other technical assistance topics.

The Crediting Handbook does not cover the infant meal pattern requirements. For information on infant feeding, please see the Team Nutrition resource, “Feeding Infants in the Child and Adult Care Food Program.” Please note minimum creditable amounts do not apply to the infant meal pattern. Contact your State agency or sponsoring organization with questions regarding infant meal pattern requirements.

¹ While this rulemaking is effective July 1, 2024, USDA is gradually phasing in required changes over time. See <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/fr-042524>

² *Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025*

GETTING STARTED: WORDS TO KNOW



Words to Know

Child Nutrition Programs (CNP)

Federal nutrition assistance programs administered by the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) that provide healthy food to participants. These include the **Child and Adult Care Food Program** (CACFP), **National School Lunch Program** (NSLP), **School Breakfast Program** (SBP), **Summer Food Service Program** (SFSP), **Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer** (Summer EBT), **Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program** (FFVP), and **Special Milk Program** (SMP). Administered by State agencies, each of these programs helps promote nutrition security by reimbursing organizations such

as CACFP centers, day care homes, schools, and at-risk afterschool programs for providing healthy meals and snacks to participants.

Combination Food

A single serving of a food item that contains two or more meal components. Common examples of combination foods are pizza, chef salads, and a hamburger on a bun with lettuce and tomatoes.

Example: Hamburger on a bun with lettuce and tomatoes

Meats/Meat Alternates	Hamburger patty
Grains	Hamburger bun
Vegetables	Lettuce and tomatoes

Creditable Foods

Foods that credit toward a meal component (fluid milk, grains, meats/meat alternates, fruits, or vegetables) in CNP. A food is “creditable” when it meets the requirements/standards established to count toward a reimbursable meal or snack.

Enriched Grains

Enriched grains are refined grains that have been processed to remove all or a portion of the bran and germ and then have certain nutrients added back after or during processing.

Family Style Meal Service

In family style meal service, children can help set the table; serve themselves from bowls, plates, and/or pitchers on the table; and talk with others at mealtime. Family style meal service is optional in the CACFP.

Meal Component

One of the five food categories that make up a reimbursable meal or snack according to meal pattern requirements. The five meal components are: fluid milk, fruits, vegetables, grains, and meats/meat alternates (M/MA).

Meal Patterns

The required amounts of food specified by meal components and by age/grade group that must be offered/served to qualify for Federal reimbursement under CNP. The CACFP meal pattern requirements are shown on pages 9-11 of this handbook.

Minimum Creditable Amount

The smallest portion of a food that credits toward a meal component.

Noncreditable Foods

Noncreditable foods are foods that do not credit toward one of the five meal components in the CACFP. Some examples include:

- cereals that do not meet the added sugars limits
- juice drinks that are not 100% juice
- condiments (e.g., ketchup or jelly)
- grain-based desserts

CACFP operators may serve noncreditable foods, however, these foods do not credit toward a reimbursable meal/snack.

Ounce Equivalents (oz eq)

Ounce equivalents designates the contribution a given serving size makes toward the meats/meat alternates (M/MA) component or the grains component. One ounce equivalent (1 oz eq) of M/MA is a serving of meat or meat alternate that provides the equivalent contribution of one ounce cooked lean meat without the bone. One ounce equivalent of grains is a serving of grains that provides 16 grams of creditable grains.

GETTING STARTED: WORDS TO KNOW

Program Operator/CACFP Operator

Program operator is an individual who is operating one or more CNP, such as the CACFP. An example of a program operator is a person who runs a home day care site and serves meals to children through CACFP. Typically, a program operator is the person who is preparing and serving the meals to children or adults and receiving reimbursement through one of the CNP. CACFP operators may also be referred to as “providers.”

Serving Size

A single portion of a food identified by the measure, typically as a weight and/or volume. Each meal pattern lists the minimum serving size for each meal component that must be served or offered to meet the meal pattern requirements. The CACFP operator may choose to serve more than the minimum serving size; however, additional reimbursement will not be given for the extra food served.

Whole Grains

Whole grains or the foods made from whole grains contain all the essential parts of a grain: the bran, germ, and the endosperm.

Whole Grain-Rich

Whole grain-rich is the term used by FNS to indicate that the grain content of a product is between 50 and 100 percent whole grain with any remaining grains being enriched. See the Grains section of this handbook beginning on page 72, for information on identifying whole grain-rich products.

Other Terms to Be Familiar With

Modifications for Disability Reasons

CACFP centers and day care homes must provide reasonable modifications to meals and snacks or to the meal service to accommodate participants with disabilities. These modifications related to an individual’s disability are done on a case-by-case basis. If the meal modification does not meet the meal pattern requirements, a signed medical statement to request modifications on behalf of participants with disabilities is required. State licensed healthcare professionals or Registered Dietitians/Registered Dietitian Nutritionists may write medical statements. A State licensed healthcare professional is an individual authorized to write medical prescriptions under State law. Meals that do not meet the CACFP meal pattern requirements are not eligible for reimbursement unless they are supported by a signed medical statement.

The medical statement should include a description of the participant’s disability so that providers understand how it restricts the participant’s diet. The statement should also describe what must be done to accommodate the disability. This may include what foods should not be served and recommendations for what should be served. A signed medical statement is required to justify reimbursement for the modified meal. This statement should be kept on file at the center or day care home.

Modifications for Nondisability Reasons

CACFP operators are encouraged to consider participants’ dietary preferences when planning and preparing meals and snacks.

Nondisability dietary preferences may include cultural, ethical, Tribal, and religious, to include kosher and halal, preferences. CACFP operators may choose to accommodate a nondisability dietary preference that is not supported by a medical statement if the modifications requested can be made within the meal pattern requirements. Modified meals that meet the meal pattern requirements are reimbursable without a written medical statement. USDA acknowledges that, due to operational and budgetary constraints, program operators may not be able to meet all participant preferences at each meal service; however, USDA encourages program operators to strive for an inclusive meal service. See the **Culturally and Religiously Preferred Foods** website for additional resources.

Reimbursement

Money received from the USDA for serving reimbursable meals and snacks to eligible participants.

Traditional Indigenous Foods

As per the Agricultural Act of 2014, the term “traditional food” means food that has traditionally been prepared and consumed by an Indian Tribe. In general, traditional Indigenous foods are local, seasonal, nutritious, and environmentally friendly, and include herbs and medicinal plants. Traditional Indigenous food includes wild game meat, fish, seafood, marine mammals, plants, and berries.

CACFP operators are encouraged to serve foods that are culturally relevant to their participants, including serving traditional Indigenous foods. Crediting information for some traditional Indigenous foods may be found in the FBG.

However, for those foods which are not listed, program operators may use yield information for a similar product that is in the FBG.

See the policy memo: **Crediting Traditional Indigenous Foods in Child Nutrition Programs** and website: **Serving Traditional Indigenous Foods in Child Nutrition Programs** for additional information.

Manufacturer Documentation: Child Nutrition Labels and Product Formulation Statements

The Child Nutrition (CN) label and a manufacturer’s Product Formulation Statement (PFS) are documents that provide a way for a manufacturer to demonstrate how a processed food product may credit toward the meal pattern requirements in CNP. Both a CN label and PFS are voluntarily provided by manufacturers at the request of program operators.

- A CN label is approved by USDA and provides a warranty of a product’s meal pattern contribution when the product is used according to the manufacturer’s instructions.
- A PFS is typically provided for processed products that do not have a CN label. A verified PFS is one that the program operator has reviewed and verified the ingredients are creditable and calculations are correct.

Additional Information about CN labels and PFS may be found:

- **<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/manufacturing-documentation>**
- **<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/labeling/food-manufacturersindustry>**

GETTING STARTED: WORDS TO KNOW

Child Nutrition Labeling Program

A voluntary program that allows manufacturers the opportunity to include a standardized crediting statement on their product label. Only main dish products that credit toward the meats/meat alternates component are eligible for a CN label. CN labels are typically provided for foodservice products (those provided directly through vendors) versus products found in the retail market (grocery stores).

The CN Labeling Program is managed by USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS).

- A CN-labeled product must contain a minimum of 0.50 ounce equivalent M/MA per serving.
- All CN labels must be authorized by AMS prior to being used.
- Manufacturers must have an approved quality control (QC) program and Federal oversight to participate in the CN Labeling Program.
- CN labels provide a warranty against audit claims when the product is used according to manufacturer's instructions.

Sample CN Label

Beef Crumbles With Soy Protein

Ingredient Statement: Ground beef (no more than 20% fat), textured soy protein product, water, salt, pepper.

CN XXXXXX*

Each 2.20 oz. serving of Cooked Beef Patty Crumbles (By Weight) provides 2.00 oz. equivalent meat/meat alternate for Child Nutrition Meal Pattern Requirements. (Use of this logo and statement authorized by the Food and Nutrition Service, USDA mm/yy**).

CN

Net Wt.: 19.0 pounds

CN



DFG Food Company
1234 Yellow Road Oaktown, PA 12345

* The 6-digit CN identification number is assigned by CN Labeling office.

** Date is written using numbers to represent the month/year of final label approval.

GETTING STARTED: WORDS TO KNOW

For additional information about the CN Labeling Program, see <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/labeling>.

Product Formulation Statement (PFS)

A Product Formulation Statement (PFS) is a signed document from the manufacturer that demonstrates how a food product may credit toward the meal pattern requirements. A PFS may be requested by the program operator for

processed food products that are not listed in the FBG and do not have CN label. USDA does not approve a manufacturer's PFS. Program operators are responsible for ensuring menu items meet meal pattern requirements.

PFS templates for industry use are found here: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/labeling/food-manufacturersindustry>.



CHILD AND ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM (CACFP) MEAL PATTERNS



BREAKFAST Meal Pattern for Children and Adults

Offer the appropriate components for a reimbursable meal

Meal Components ¹	Minimum Quantities				
	Ages 1–2	Ages 3–5	Ages 6–12	Ages 13–18 ²	Adult participants
Fluid Milk	4 fluid ounces ³	6 fluid ounces ⁴	8 fluid ounces ⁵	8 fluid ounces ⁵	8 fluid ounces ⁶
Vegetables, fruits, or portions of both ⁷	¼ cup	½ cup	½ cup	½ cup	½ cup
Grains ⁸	½ ounce equivalent	½ ounce equivalent	1 ounce equivalent	1 ounce equivalent	2 ounce equivalents

¹ Must serve all three components for a reimbursable meal. Offer versus serve is an option for at-risk afterschool care and adult day care centers.

² At-risk afterschool programs and emergency shelters may need to serve larger portions to children ages 13 through 18 to meet their nutritional needs.

³ Must serve unflavored whole milk to children age 1.

⁴ Must serve unflavored milk to children 2 through 5 years old. The milk must be fat-free, skim, low-fat, or 1 percent or less.

⁵ May serve unflavored or flavored milk to children ages 6 and older. The milk must be fat-free, skim, low-fat, or 1 percent or less.

⁶ May serve unflavored or flavored milk to adults. The milk must be fat-free, skim, low-fat, or 1 percent or less. Yogurt may be offered in the place of milk once per day for adults. Yogurt may count as either a fluid milk substitute or as a meat alternate, but not both, in the same meal. Six ounces (by weight) or ¾ cup (by volume) of yogurt is the equivalent of 8 ounces of fluid milk. Yogurt must contain no more than 12 grams of added sugars per 6 ounces (2 grams of added sugars per ounce).

⁷ Juice must be pasteurized. Full-strength juice may only be offered to meet the vegetable or fruit requirement at one meal or snack, per day.

⁸ At least one serving per day, across all eating occasions of bread, cereals, and grains, must be whole grain-rich. Whole grain-rich is the term designated by FNS to indicate that the grain content of a product is between 50 and 100 percent whole grain with any remaining grains being enriched. This requirement only applies for days on which at least one serving from the grains component is served. Grain-based desserts may not be used to meet the grains requirement. Meats/meat alternates may be offered in place of the entire grains requirement, up to three times per week at breakfast. One ounce equivalent of meats/meat alternates credits equal to one ounce equivalent of grains. Breakfast cereals must contain no more than 6 grams of added sugars per dry ounce. Information on crediting grain items and meats/meat alternates may be found in FNS guidance.



CHILD AND ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM (CACFP) MEAL PATTERNS

LUNCH AND SUPPER Meal Pattern for Children and Adults

Offer the appropriate components for a reimbursable meal.

Meal Components ¹	Minimum Quantities				
	Ages 1–2	Ages 3–5	Ages 6–12	Ages 13–18 ²	Adult participants
Fluid Milk	4 fluid ounces ³	6 fluid ounces ⁴	8 fluid ounces ⁵	8 fluid ounces ⁵	8 fluid ounces ⁶
Meats/meat alternates ⁷	1 ounce equivalent	1½ ounce equivalents	2 ounce equivalents	2 ounce equivalents	2 ounce equivalents
Vegetables ⁸	⅓ cup	¼ cup	½ cup	½ cup	½ cup
Fruits ⁸	⅓ cup	¼ cup	¼ cup	¼ cup	½ cup
Grains ⁹	½ ounce equivalent	½ ounce equivalent	1 ounce equivalent	1 ounce equivalent	2 ounce equivalents

¹ Must serve all five components for a reimbursable meal. Offer versus serve is an option for at-risk afterschool care and adult day care centers.

² At-risk afterschool programs and emergency shelters may need to serve larger portions to children ages 13 through 18 to meet their nutritional needs.

³ Must serve unflavored whole milk to children age 1.

⁴ Must serve unflavored milk to children 2 through 5 years old. The milk must be fat-free, skim, low-fat, or 1 percent or less.

⁵ May serve unflavored or flavored milk to children ages 6 and older. The milk must be fat-free, skim, low-fat, or 1 percent or less.

⁶ May serve unflavored or flavored milk to adults. The milk must be fat-free, skim, low-fat, or 1 percent or less. Yogurt may be offered in place of milk once per day for adults. Yogurt may count as either a fluid milk substitute or as a meat alternate, but not both, in the same meal. Six ounces (by weight) or ¾ cup (by volume) of yogurt is the equivalent of 8 ounces of fluid milk. A serving of fluid milk is optional for suppers served to adult participants.

⁷ Alternate protein products must meet the requirements in Appendix A to 7 CFR Part 226. Yogurt must contain no more than 12 grams of added sugars per 6 ounces (2 grams of added sugars per ounce). Information on crediting meats/meat alternates may be found in FNS guidance.

⁸ Juice must be pasteurized. Full-strength juice may only be offered to meet the vegetable or fruit requirement at one meal or snack, per day. A vegetable may be offered to meet the entire fruit requirement. When two vegetables are served at lunch or supper, two different kinds of vegetables must be served.

⁹ At least one serving per day, across all eating occasions of bread, cereals, and grains, must be whole grain-rich. Whole grain-rich is the term designated by FNS to indicate that the grain content of a product is between 50 and 100 percent whole grain with any remaining grains being enriched. This requirement only applies for days on which at least one serving from the grains component is served. Grain-based desserts may not be used to meet the grains requirement. Breakfast cereal must contain no more than 6 grams of added sugars per dry ounce. Information on crediting grain items may be found in FNS guidance.



CHILD AND ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM (CACFP) MEAL PATTERNS

SNACK Meal Pattern for Children and Adults

Offer two of the five components for a reimbursable snack.

Meal Components ¹	Minimum Quantities				
	Ages 1–2	Ages 3–5	Ages 6–12	Ages 13–18 ²	Adult participants
Fluid Milk	4 fluid ounces ³	4 fluid ounces ⁴	8 fluid ounces ⁵	8 fluid ounces ⁵	8 fluid ounces ⁶
Meats/meat alternates ⁷	½ ounce equivalent	½ ounce equivalent	1 ounce equivalent	1 ounce equivalent	1 ounce equivalent
Vegetables ⁸	½ cup	½ cup	¾ cup	¾ cup	½ cup
Fruits ⁸	½ cup	½ cup	¾ cup	¾ cup	½ cup
Grains ⁹	½ ounce equivalent	½ ounce equivalent	1 ounce equivalent	1 ounce equivalent	1 ounce equivalent

¹ Must serve two of the five components for a reimbursable snack. Milk and juice may not be served as the only two items in a reimbursable snack.

² At-risk afterschool programs and emergency shelters may need to serve larger portions to children ages 13 through 18 to meet their nutritional needs.

³ Must serve unflavored whole milk to children age 1.

⁴ Must serve unflavored milk to children 2 through 5 years old. The milk must be fat-free, skim, low-fat, or 1 percent or less.

⁵ May serve unflavored or flavored milk to children ages 6 and older. The milk must be fat-free, skim, low-fat, or 1 percent or less.

⁶ May serve unflavored or flavored milk to adults. The milk must be fat-free, skim, low-fat, or 1 percent or less. Yogurt may be offered in place of milk, once per day for adults. Yogurt may count as either a fluid milk substitute or as a meat alternate, but not both, in the same meal. Six ounces (by weight) or ¾ cup (by volume) of yogurt is the equivalent of 8 ounces of fluid milk.

⁷ Alternate protein products must meet the requirements in Appendix A to 7 CFR Part 226. Yogurt must contain no more than 12 grams of added sugars per 6 ounces (2 grams of added sugars per ounce). Information on crediting meats/meat alternates may be found in FNS guidance.

⁸ Juice must be pasteurized. Full-strength juice may only be offered to meet the vegetable or fruit requirement at one meal or snack, per day.

⁹ At least one serving per day, across all eating occasions of bread, cereals, and grains, must be whole grain-rich. Whole grain-rich is the term designated by FNS to indicate that the grain content of a product is between 50 and 100 percent whole grain with any remaining grains being enriched. This requirement only applies for days on which at least one serving from the grains component is served. Grain-based desserts may not be used to meet the grains requirement. Breakfast cereal must contain no more than 6 grams of added sugars per dry ounce. Information on crediting grain items may be found in FNS guidance.

Fluid milk is a required meal component for a reimbursable breakfast and lunch/supper in the CACFP. Milk is not required at snack but may be served as one of the two meal components. Fluid milk must be pasteurized and meet State and local standards. Fluid milk refers to the following varieties of pasteurized or Ultra High Temperature (UHT) milk:

- fat-free (skim) milk;
- low-fat (1%) milk;
- reduced-fat (2%) milk;
- whole milk;
- lactose-free milk;
- lactose-reduced milk;
- cultured milk, such as cultured buttermilk, cultured kefir milk, and cultured acidophilus milk; and
- acidified milk, such as acidified kefir milk and acidified acidophilus milk.

The type (fat content) of fluid milk (whole, 2%, 1%, or skim) that may be served is indicated by age group (see *Serving Milk* in the CACFP chart on page 13). All milk must contain vitamins A and D at levels specified by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and must meet State and local standards for milk. Lactose-free and lactose-reduced milks may be offered as options for program participants who are lactose intolerant.

Please refer to the infant meal patterns and the **“Feeding Infants in the Child and Adult Care Food Program”** guide for guidance on infant feeding. Breastmilk is considered an allowable fluid milk substitute for children of any age in the CACFP.

The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) grants a one-month transition period for children 12 months through 13 months old to ease the transition from infant formula or breastmilk to unflavored, whole milk. Iron-fortified formula may be served to children between the ages of 12 months and 13 months to help with the transition to whole milk. Breastmilk may be served to a child of any age. A medical statement is not needed during this transition period. After this transition period, between the child’s first and second birthday, unflavored, whole milk must be served. FNS recognizes that switching immediately from whole milk to low-fat (1%) or fat-free (skim) milk when a child turns 2 years old may be challenging. Therefore, unflavored whole milk and reduced-fat (2%) milk may be served to children between the ages of 24 months to 25 months to help with the transition to fat-free (skim) milk or low-fat (1%) milk. Meals served to children 24 months to 25 months old may be reimbursable when they contain breastmilk, whole milk, reduced-fat (2%) milk, low-fat (1%) milk, fat-free (skim) milk, or a combination of these milk types. For more information about transitioning between milk types, please see page 6 of the **“Mealtimes with Toddlers in the CACFP”** guide. Children 2 through 5 years old must be served unflavored, fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%) milk. Children 6 years old and older and adult participants must be served unflavored or flavored fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%) milk.

Serving Milk in the CACFP

Breastmilk may be served to a child of any age in the CACFP.

12 months through 23 months
(1 year through 1 year and 11 months)

Unflavored whole milk

Iron-fortified formula may be served to children between the ages of 12 months and 13 months to help with the transition to whole milk.

2 years through 5 years
(up to 6th birthday)

Unflavored fat-free (skim) milk

Unflavored low-fat (1%) milk

Unflavored whole milk and unflavored reduced-fat (2%) milk may be served to children between the ages of 24 and 25 months to help with the transition to fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%) milk.

6 years through 18 years, and adults

Unflavored or flavored fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%) milk

Refer to the CACFP meal pattern on pages 9-11 for the serving size requirements by age. Program operators have the option to serve fluid milk as one of the two components of a snack; however, the other required meal component must not also be a beverage when fluid milk is served at snack. Fluid milk must be served as a beverage or on cereal, or a combination of both.

For adult participants only, 6 ounces (weight) or $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (volume) of yogurt may be used to meet the equivalent of 8 fluid ounces of milk once per day.

Fluid milk used in smoothies may credit toward the fluid milk component requirement

if the smoothie contains at least $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (2 fluid ounces) of fluid milk per serving. Please note, with the exception of the infant meal pattern, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup is the minimum creditable amount of milk. When a smoothie contains less than the amount of milk required in the meal pattern, additional fluid milk must be offered.

Smoothies are the only example of when milk used as an ingredient in a recipe may credit toward the fluid milk component. Milk is not creditable when used as an ingredient in cooking; for example, when used to make oatmeal, bread, or muffins.

Fluid Milk Substitutes

For children or adults who cannot consume fluid milk, or who do not wish to consume milk for religious or cultural reasons, nondairy beverages may be served in place of fluid milk. Nondairy beverages must be nutritionally equivalent to cow's milk and meet the nutritional standards identified in the table to the right. Nondairy beverages served to children 1 through 5 years old must be unflavored due to the higher sugar content of flavored varieties.

A parent, guardian, adult participant, or a person on behalf of the adult participant must provide a written request for the nondairy beverage substitute. For example, if a parent has a child who follows a vegan diet, the parent must submit a written request to the child's center or day care home asking that a soy beverage (commonly known as soy milk) be served in place of cow's milk. A medical statement is not required.

Nutrient Requirements for Fluid Milk Substitutes/Nondairy Beverages

Nutrient	Per Cup (8 fl oz)
Calcium	276 milligrams
Protein	8 grams
Vitamin A	150 micrograms RAE*
Vitamin D	2.5 micrograms
Magnesium	24 milligrams
Phosphorus	222 milligrams
Potassium	349 milligrams
Riboflavin	0.44 milligrams
Vitamin B-12	1.1 micrograms

*Retinol Activity Equivalents

A medical statement is required when, due to a disability, a program participant requests a nondairy substitution that does not meet the nutrient requirements for fluid milk substitutes as described in the above chart.



Crediting Tips for Serving Milk in the CACFP

- Fluid milk must be served at breakfast and lunch/supper meals and may be served at snack.
- The minimum creditable amount for fluid milk is ¼ cup (2 fluid ounces) per serving.
- Breastmilk may be served to a child of any age.
- After transitioning from breastmilk or iron-fortified formula, only **unflavored** milk may be served to participants under the age of 6 years.
- Lactose-free and lactose-reduced milks may be offered as options for participants who are lactose intolerant.
- Fluid milk used in smoothies may credit toward the fluid milk component requirement if a portion contains at least ¼ cup (2 fluid ounces) of fluid milk.

FLUID MILK

Use this section as a guide to identify creditable milk and products that contain creditable milk. This is NOT an all-inclusive list. Age-specific requirements for percent fat content and flavored vs. unflavored still apply.

Details in the “Additional Information” column help you to determine if the product is creditable and where to find more information.

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
A2 Milk	X			A2 milk only contains the A2 protein. A2 milk meets the standard of identity for milk and is creditable.
Breastmilk	X			Breastmilk may be served to a child of any age.
Buttermilk		X		Only commercially prepared buttermilk is creditable.
Certified Raw Milk			X	Regulations require the use of pasteurized milk.
Cultured Milk (Kefir Milk, Acidified Milk, Acidophilus Milk)		X		Cultured milk is a fluid milk produced by adding selected microorganisms to fluid milk under controlled conditions to produce a product with a specific flavor and/or consistency. Examples are cultured buttermilk, cultured kefir milk, and cultured acidophilus milk. Only commercially prepared cultured milk that meets fat standards is creditable.
Flavored Milks (chocolate, strawberry, etc.)		X		Flavored fat-free (skim) and low-fat (1%) milks are creditable for children 6 years and older and adults. Different flavors may contain different levels of sweetener. However, as a best practice, serve flavored milks that contain no more than 10 g of added sugars per 8 fl oz.
Goat’s Milk		X		Goat’s milk must be pasteurized and meet State and local health standards for fluid milk. Only commercially prepared goat’s milk is creditable. Age-specific requirements for percent fat content and flavored vs. unflavored still apply.

FLUID MILK

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Lactose-Free Milk, Lactose-Reduced Milk	X			Lactose-free and lactose-reduced milks are fluid milks that have been modified by the addition of lactase enzymes. The lactose (milk sugar) in this milk has been broken down into simple sugars. Children or adults who cannot digest lactose may benefit from the use of lactose-free or lactose-reduced milk.
Reduced-fat (2%) Milk		X		Unflavored reduced-fat (2%) milk may be served to children during the 1-month transition period between 24 months through 25 months of age.
Low-fat (1%) Milk	X			Low-fat (1%) unflavored milk is creditable when served to children 2 years through 5 years of age. Low-fat (1%) unflavored and flavored milks are creditable when served to children 6 years and older and adults.
Skim Milk, Nonfat Milk, Fat-free Milk	X			Fat-free (skim) unflavored milk is creditable when served to children 2 years and older and adults. Fat-free (skim) unflavored and flavored milks are creditable for children 6 years and older and adults.
UHT (Ultra High Temperature) Milk or Shelf-Stable Milk	X			UHT is a Grade A, pasteurized milk that has been heated to 280°F for a few seconds then cooled and packaged. UHT milk is creditable.
Whole Milk		X		Unflavored whole milk is creditable when served to children ages 12 through 23 months and during the 1-month transition period between 24 months through 25 months of age.

FLUID MILK

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Dairy Products or Milk Substitutes				
Cheese			X	Cheese is not creditable as fluid milk. Cheese may credit toward the meats/meat alternates component.
Cream			X	Cream is not creditable as fluid milk.
Cream Sauces			X	Cream sauces are not creditable as fluid milk.
Cream Soups			X	Cream soups are not creditable as fluid milk.
Custard			X	Custard is not creditable as fluid milk.
Eggnog			X	Eggnog is not creditable as fluid milk. If serving eggnog as an extra item (nonreimbursable), please note, eggnog made with uncooked eggs increases the risk for foodborne illness.
Evaporated Milk		X		Evaporated milk typically does not credit as fluid milk, however, canned evaporated milk may be creditable under certain conditions of limited fluid milk availability. Contact your State agency or your sponsoring agency for additional guidance.

FLUID MILK

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Dairy Products or Milk Substitutes				
Frozen Yogurt			X	Frozen yogurt is not creditable as fluid milk.
Half and Half			X	Half and half is not creditable as fluid milk.
Hot Chocolate (Cocoa)		X		Hot chocolate must be made with fluid milk, and only the fluid milk portion is creditable. Hot chocolate is considered a flavored milk and is not creditable in CACFP for children under 6 years of age. For children 6 years and older and adults, the milk in hot chocolate may be creditable if it meets the fat requirements.
Ice Cream			X	Ice cream is not creditable as fluid milk.
Ice Milk			X	Ice milk is not creditable as fluid milk.
Plant-based Beverages / Milks Common examples: Almond Milk Coconut Milk Hemp Milk Oat Milk Pea Milk Rice Milk Soy Milk		X		Plant-based beverages, such as almond or soy milk, are nondairy beverages and must be nutritionally equivalent to fluid milk to be creditable (see Nutrient Requirements for Fluid Milk Substitutes/Nondairy Beverages Chart on page 14). Most commercial plant-based beverages are not nutritionally equivalent to fluid milk (with the exception of most soy milks) and therefore are not reimbursable. Use of nondairy beverages that do not meet nutrient standards for fluid milk substitutes must be supported by a medical statement from a State licensed healthcare professional or registered dietitian to be reimbursable.
Pudding			X	Pudding is not creditable as fluid milk.
Pudding Pops			X	Pudding pops are not creditable as fluid milk.

FLUID MILK

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Dairy Products or Milk Substitutes				
Reconstituted Dry Milk		X		Reconstituted dry milk typically does not credit as fluid milk, however, it may be creditable under certain conditions of limited fluid milk availability. Contact your State agency or your sponsoring agency for additional guidance.
Sherbet/Sorbet			X	Sherbet and sorbet are not creditable as fluid milk.
Smoothies		X		The volume of fluid milk in each portion of smoothie is creditable if it contains at least ¼ cup (2 fl oz) of milk; this is the minimum creditable amount of milk in a smoothie. In addition, the milk must meet the fat standards for the age(s) being served and be unflavored for children younger than 6 years old. When a smoothie contains less than the amount of milk required in the meal pattern, additional fluid milk must be offered. For more information, see policy memo: <u>Smoothies Offered in Child Nutrition Programs</u> .
Sweetened Condensed Milk			X	Sweetened condensed milk is not creditable as fluid milk.
Sour Cream			X	Sour cream is not creditable as fluid milk.
Yogurt		X		Yogurt is not creditable as fluid milk. However, for adults, yogurt may be substituted for fluid milk once per day. Yogurt may credit toward the meats/meat alternates component in other instances.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT FLUID MILK

1. **Can flavored milk be served? If so, is there a sugar limit for flavored milk?**

Flavored fat-free (skim) and low-fat (1%) milks are creditable when served to children 6 years and older and adults. Flavored milk is not reimbursable when served to children under the age of 6 years old. As a best practice, serve primarily unflavored milk to all participants. If flavored milk is served to children 6 years old and older, or adults, use the Nutrition Facts label to select flavored milk with the lowest amount of added sugars; ideally one that contains no more than 10 grams of added sugars per 8 fluid ounces.

2. **Can flavored powder be added to unflavored (plain) milk?**

For children under the age of 6, flavored powder may not be added to milk. Similar to adding syrup to milk, flavored powder, whether sweetened or unsweetened, turns unflavored milk into flavored milk. Flavored milk is not reimbursable when served to children under the age of 6 years old. Flavored fat-free (skim) and low-fat (1%) milks are creditable when served to children 6 years old and older and adults. Thus, for children 6 years old and older and adults, flavored powder may be added to fat-free (skim) and low-fat (1%) milks and served as part of a reimbursable meal. Flavored powder often contains added sugars. As a best practice, check how much added sugars are included in a serving of

the flavored powder and try to limit it to no more than 10 grams of added sugars per 8 fluid ounces of milk.

3. **What should I do if I cannot find/ provide fluid milk due to milk supply shortages or other emergencies?**

Program operators are expected to meet the fluid milk requirements to the greatest extent possible as milk is a critical component of the CACFP meal patterns because it provides nutrients that are vital for health and maintenance of the body. However, State agencies may allow program operators experiencing milk supply shortages to serve meals during an emergency period with an alternate form of fluid milk or without fluid milk. With State agency approval, program operators may serve an alternate form of fluid milk in both temporary and continuing conditions in which fluid milk is unavailable.

Unavailability of fluid milk:

(1) Temporary. When emergency conditions prevent an institution or facility normally having a supply of milk from temporarily obtaining milk deliveries, the State agency may approve the service of breakfast, lunches, or suppers without milk during the emergency period.

(2) Continuing. When an institution or facility is unable to obtain a supply of milk on a continuing basis, the State agency may approve service of meals without

milk, provided an equivalent amount of canned, reconstituted whole dry or fat-free dry milk is used in the preparation of the components of the meal.

4. When are canned evaporated milk and reconstituted dry milk creditable for use?

Canned evaporated milk and reconstituted dry milk may be creditable under certain conditions of limited fluid milk availability. If a sufficient supply of fluid milk cannot be obtained due to unforeseen circumstances, such as in the event of a natural disaster, canned evaporated milk and reconstituted dry milk may credit as fluid milk. Check with your State agency for additional guidance.

5. Can the milk used in the preparation of products such as puddings, cream sauces, and ice cream count toward the milk requirement?

No. Milk must be served as a beverage, poured over cereal, or a combination of both to credit toward the milk requirement. Milk used as an ingredient in the preparation of recipes does not credit toward the fluid milk requirement, except for smoothies (see question #8).

6. Can lactose-free milk, lactose-reduced milk, cultured buttermilk, acidified milk, or acidophilus milk be offered without a medical statement?

Yes, lactose-free milk, lactose-reduced milk, cultured buttermilk, acidified milk, or acidophilus milk are creditable fluid

milk options and can be served without a medical statement.

7. Can milk be purchased directly from a farm?

Yes, milk purchased from a farm may be served if it is pasteurized fluid milk that meets State and local health standards. It must also include vitamins A and D and other nutrients at levels specified by the FDA.

8. Can smoothies be served to meet the milk requirements?

Yes, the volume of fluid milk in each portion of smoothie is creditable if the smoothie contains at least $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (2 fluid ounces) of fluid milk. In addition, the milk must meet the fat standards for the age(s) being served and be unflavored for children younger than 6 years old. When a smoothie contains less than the amount of milk required in the meal pattern, additional fluid milk must be offered. Smoothies are the only example of when milk used as an ingredient in a recipe may credit toward the fluid milk component. For more information, see the policy memo, **Smoothies Offered in Child Nutrition Programs**.

9. Why is cow's milk not permitted for infants and reduced-fat (2%), low-fat (1%), and fat-free (skim) milk not allowed for children 1 year of age?

Breastmilk is the optimal source of nutrition for infants. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends

delaying the introduction of cow's milk to children until 1 year of age. Based on this recommendation, infants are required to be served breastmilk or iron-fortified infant formula during the first year of life. Cow's milk may only be served to infants and be reimbursed if it is supported by a medical statement signed by a registered dietitian or State licensed healthcare professional who is authorized to write medical prescriptions under State law. The statement should explain how the infant's disability restricts their diet. It should also include how the disability must be accommodated, what foods or beverages should not be served, and provide recommended alternatives to serve in place of the prohibited foods.

The *Dietary Guidelines for Americans (Dietary Guidelines)* and pediatric nutrition authorities, including the American Academy of Pediatrics, recommend that reduced-fat (2%), low-fat (1%), and fat-free (skim) milk should not be fed to children younger than age 2. These milks contain insufficient amounts of fat (including linoleic acid) for children under the age of 2 years old. Based on this recommendation, children 12 through 23 months of age must be served only whole milk, unless supported by a signed medical statement. See the policy memo: **Nutrition Requirements for Fluid Milk and Fluid Milk Substitutions in the CACFP, Q&As.**

Milk Substitutes

1. Is a medical statement needed to serve soy beverages (commonly known as soy milk) or any other nondairy beverages as part of a reimbursable meal?

A signed medical statement is not required for a nondairy beverage (e.g., soy milk) that is nutritionally equivalent to cow's milk. If the nondairy beverage meets the nutritional standards for calcium, protein, vitamin A, vitamin D, and other nutrients levels found in cow's milk (see Nutrient Requirements for Fluid Milk Substitutes/Nondairy Beverages Chart on page 14), then it is creditable toward the fluid milk requirement. However, a parent, guardian, adult participant, or a person on behalf of the adult participant must request the nutritionally equivalent nondairy beverage in writing. If the nondairy beverage requested is not nutritionally equivalent to milk, a medical statement is then required for the beverage to credit toward the reimbursable meal.

2. If parents provide a nondairy beverage such as coconut milk, rice milk, or soy milk for their child, can we count that child's meal in our reimbursable meal count?

If a parent provides a nondairy beverage that meets the nutritional standards for fluid milk substitutes/nondairy beverages (see Nutrient Requirements for Fluid Milk Substitutes/Nondairy Beverages Chart on page 14), the CACFP provider may serve the nondairy beverage and

claim reimbursement for the meal. The provider is then responsible for supplying the remaining required meal components for the meal to be reimbursable. CACFP providers should inform parents, guardians, and adult participants about the nutrient requirements for nondairy beverages. In general, only certain soy and pea beverages meet the nutritional standards.

If a parent provides a nondairy beverage that does not meet the nutrient requirements for fluid milk substitutes/nondairy beverages, then a signed medical statement that supports the substitution is required for the meal to be reimbursable.

3. If a participant does not drink fluid milk (for example for religious or cultural reasons), can I be reimbursed for their meals?

Yes, you may be reimbursed if a participant is unable to drink milk when a written request for a nondairy beverage substitute is provided by a parent, guardian, adult participant, or a person on behalf of the adult participant. Nondairy beverages offered as fluid milk substitutes must

be nutritionally equivalent to cow's milk and provide specific levels of calcium, protein, vitamin A, vitamin D, magnesium, phosphorus, potassium, riboflavin, and vitamin B-12. See Nutrient Requirements for Fluid Milk Substitutes/Nondairy Beverages Chart on page 14 for nutrient requirements.

In the case of a dietary restriction related to a disability, an exemption to the nutrient requirements is allowed, if a signed written medical statement is provided from a State licensed healthcare professional or registered dietitian. The medical statement must be kept on file at the CACFP site.

4. Are milk substitutes required to meet the same fat requirements as fluid milk?

If a CACFP operator chooses to offer one or more nondairy beverages for nondisability reasons, fat is **not** one of the nutrients listed in regulation at **7 CFR 226.20(g)(3)** and therefore does not need to be considered when choosing a nondairy beverage for a nondisabled participant. Children under 6 years of age must be served unflavored milk substitutes.



MEATS/MEAT ALTERNATES

Meats and meat alternates (M/MA) are a required meal component for a reimbursable lunch/supper in the CACFP. A M/MA is not required to be served at breakfast. However, M/MA may be used to meet the entire grains requirement a maximum of three times per week at breakfast. M/MA is not required at snack but may be served as one of two required meal components. M/MA include meat; poultry; fish; cheese; yogurt (including soy yogurt); beans, peas, and lentils; eggs; tofu; tempeh; nut and seed butters, such as peanut butter; and nuts and seeds. All meat, poultry, fish, and shellfish must meet State or local regulations for food safety. M/MAs are measured in ounce equivalents (oz eq); 1 ounce equivalent is equal to 1 ounce of cooked lean meat (e.g., cooked chicken breast).

A food item must provide at least a 0.25 oz eq of M/MA to credit toward the M/MA requirement. This means that M/MA in amounts smaller than 0.25 oz eq do not credit toward the meal pattern requirements. For example, if you make a casserole containing pasta, cheese, peas and carrots. The cheese may credit toward the M/MA component if there is at least 0.25 oz eq in one serving of the casserole. You would use your standardized recipe to determine creditable amounts per serving. If there is less than 0.25 oz eq cheese per serving, then you could not credit the casserole toward the M/MA component.

To meet the minimum serving, the M/MA for lunch and supper may be served as the main dish or in the main dish together with another menu item. For example, offering a $\frac{1}{8}$ cup serving of cooked pinto beans with 1 ounce

of grilled chicken breast provides $1\frac{1}{2}$ ounce equivalents of M/MA and meets the minimum serving size required in the meal pattern for children ages 3 through 5.

Beans, Peas, and Lentils

Beans, peas, and lentils may credit toward the meal pattern requirements as a meat alternate or as a vegetable. A serving of beans, peas, or lentils cannot credit as both a meat alternate and a vegetable in the same meal. If two different beans, peas, or lentils are offered at a meal, the program operator may choose to credit one as a meat alternate and the other as a vegetable. For example, if a lunch menu includes chili made with pinto beans, a whole-wheat roll, sliced apples, and cooked black-eyed peas, the program operator may credit the pinto beans (in the chili) as a meat alternate and the black-eyed peas as a vegetable.

Yogurt

Yogurt, including soy yogurt, credits toward to the meal pattern requirements as a meat alternate. Yogurt served in the CACFP must contain no more than 12 grams of added sugars per 6 ounces of yogurt (2 grams of added sugars per ounce). See pages 43-44 for guidance on how to determine if a yogurt product meets the added sugars limit. Commercially-purchased frozen yogurt is not creditable. Additionally, when yogurt is served in place of milk to adults, the yogurt cannot credit toward both the milk and the M/MA component in the same meal.

Added Sugars vs. Total Sugars

What Are Added Sugars and How Are They Different from Total Sugars?



Total Sugars include sugars naturally present in many nutritious foods and beverages, such as sugar in milk and fruits as well as any added sugars that may be present in the product. **Added sugars** include sugars that are added during the processing of foods (such as sucrose or dextrose), foods packaged as sweeteners (such as table sugar), sugars from syrups and honey, and sugars from concentrated fruit or vegetable juices. They do not include naturally occurring sugars that are found in milk, fruits, and vegetables. Labels for foods and beverages with added sugars list the number of grams and the percent Daily Value (%DV) for added sugars within the Nutrition Facts label.

Having the word “includes” before added sugars on the label indicates that added sugars are included in the number of grams of total sugars in the product.

For example, a container of yogurt with added sugars, might list:

Total Sugars 15g
Includes 7g Added Sugars 14%

This means one serving of the yogurt has 7 grams of added sugars and 8 grams of naturally occurring sugars—for a total of 15 grams of sugar. The 7 grams of added sugars represents 14% of the Daily Value for added sugars.



For more information, visit:

<https://www.fda.gov/food/nutrition-facts-label/added-sugars-nutrition-facts-label>



MEATS/MEAT ALTERNATES

Cheese

Cheese that meets the U.S. Food and Drug Administration’s (FDA) Standard of Identity for cheese is creditable as a meat alternate. Homemade cheeses are not creditable in CNP. The FBG includes many types of cheeses; however, if the cheese type you are searching for is not listed, use a cheese type that is similar in form and texture. For example, if you are searching for queso fresco or queso blanco cheese, which are fresh Mexican cheeses with crumbly textures, you can use the yield information for feta cheese from the FBG.

“Cheese substitute,” “cheese food substitute,” and “cheese spread substitute” must meet the

FDA’s Standard of Identity for substitute foods and be labeled as “cheese substitute,” “cheese food substitute,” or “cheese spread substitute.” The standard requires that a “cheese substitute” is not nutritionally inferior to the standardized cheese for which it is substituting. Cheese substitutes are creditable because they are produced under Federal standards and are nutritionally equivalent to cheese. Cheese alternates/alternatives are not the same as cheese substitutes. Cheese alternates, including imitation cheeses or “cheese products,” are produced without a Federal Standard of Identity, are typically nutritionally inferior to cheese, and are not creditable in CNP.

Quick-Reference Crediting Chart for Meats/Meat Alternates

The FBG provides serving sizes of foods typically in 1 oz eq and 1.5 oz eq M/MA crediting amounts. See the M/MA section of the FBG.

Food Item and serving size	Credits as:	
Meat, poultry, and fish (boneless)	1 oz cooked boneless meat, poultry, fish 1.5 oz cooked boneless meat, poultry, fish	1 oz eq M/MA 1.5 oz eq M/MA
Whole eggs	½ egg 1 egg	1 oz eq M/MA 2 oz eq M/MA
Cheese	1 oz cheese 1.5 oz cheese	1 oz eq M/MA 1.5 oz eq M/MA
Yogurt*, including soy yogurt	4 oz (½ cup) yogurt 6 oz (¾ cup) yogurt	1 oz eq M/MA 1.5 oz eq M/MA
Peanut butter and other nut butters	2 Tbsp nut butter 3 Tbsp nut butter	1 oz eq M/MA 1.5 oz eq M/MA
Beans, peas, and lentils	¼ cup cooked beans, peas, and lentils ⅜ cup cooked beans, peas, and lentils	1 oz eq M/MA 1.5 oz eq M/MA
Commercially prepared tofu	2.2 oz (¼ cup) tofu containing at least 5 grams of protein 4.4 oz (½ cup) tofu containing at least 10 grams of protein	1 oz eq M/MA 1.5 oz eq M/MA
Commercially prepared surimi seafood	3 oz surimi 4.4 oz surimi	1 oz eq M/MA 1.5 oz eq M/MA

* Yogurt must not contain more than 12 grams of added sugars per 6 ounces of yogurt.



Crediting Tips for Serving M/MA in the CACFP

- M/MAs are measured in ounce equivalents (oz eq).
- The minimum creditable amount for M/MA is 0.25 oz eq per serving.
- M/MA is a required component at lunch and supper; M/MA is not required at snack but may be served as one of two required meal components.
- M/MA is not required at breakfast but may be served in place of grains up to three times per week to meet the entire grains requirement. 1 oz eq of M/MA is equal to 1 oz eq of grains.
- Some food items containing M/MA may not be listed in the FBG; however, they still may be creditable with proper documentation, such as a Child Nutrition (CN) label or Product Formulation Statement (PFS).

Nuts and Seeds and Nut and Seed Butters

Nuts and seeds and their butters credit toward the meal pattern requirements as a meat alternate and may be used to meet the entire M/MA component at a meal or snack. Please be aware that some participants may have nut or seed allergies or intolerances. Nuts and seeds should be served with caution to children under 4 years of age and some elderly participants, to reduce the risk of choking. Always supervise participants during meals and snacks.

Nut and seed meals or flours may credit as meat alternates only if they meet the requirements for alternate protein products established in appendix A of 7 CFR 226.20. Acorns, chestnuts, and coconuts do not credit as meat alternates because of their low protein and iron content.

Alternate Protein Products (APPs)

Alternate Protein Products (APPs) such as soy protein isolate or whey protein concentrate are generally included as an added ingredient in processed M/MA products such as a formed meat patty or vegetarian patty. M/MA with APPs must be accompanied by a CN label or a PFS and APP documentation. Prior to being added to other products, APPs must meet specific standards. Before using products containing APPs and claiming the meals for reimbursement, contact your State agency or your sponsoring organization. For more information about APPs, see <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/labeling/food-manufacturersindustry>.



MEATS/MEAT ALTERNATES

Use this section as a guide to identify creditable M/MA and products that contain creditable M/MA. This is NOT an all-inclusive list. For information on creditable M/MA commonly served in CNP, see the FBG. Details in the “Additional Information” column help you to determine if the product is creditable and where to find more information.

Note: CN label = Child Nutrition label; PFS = Product Formulation Statement

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Acorns			X	Acorns are not creditable due to their low protein content.
Bacon and Imitation Bacon Products			X	Bacon is not creditable. These products contain little meat. See the Other Foods section in the FBG for purchasing information.
Bacon/Pork Rinds			X	Bacon/Pork rinds are not creditable.
Bacon, Turkey		X		Turkey bacon is creditable only if the product is (1) CN labeled or (2) has a verified PFS.
Bean/Pea/Lentil Flour		X		Bean/pea/lentil flour used in pastas, other processed foods, or recipes is creditable toward the M/MA component when served with at least 0.25 oz eq of visible M/MA. Document meal pattern contribution with a CN label, PFS or standardized recipe. Note: Bean/pea/lentil flour used in pastas may also credit as a vegetable, but not as both M/MA and vegetable in the same meal.
Beans, Peas, and Lentils, Canned or Dry	X			Cooked dry or canned beans, peas, and lentils (kidney, garbanzo, black, pinto, etc.) may be credited as either a meat alternate or a vegetable, but not as both in the same meal. See the M/MA section in the FBG.
Beans, Refried	X			See the M/MA section in the FBG.
Beef Jerky		X		Beef jerky is creditable toward the M/MA component if it is (1) CN labeled or (2) has a verified PFS. The PFS should identify the type of beef or pork used to make the product as listed in the FBG. For example, “ground beef (not more than 30 percent fat).” Please note beef jerky may be a choking hazard for some populations.

MEATS/MEAT ALTERNATES

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Bologna		X		Bologna is creditable toward the M/MA component. See the M/MA section in the FBG for creditable luncheon meats such as bologna. Bologna containing byproducts, cereals, or binders/ extenders is only creditable if the product is (1) CN labeled or (2) has a verified PFS. Examples of binders/extenders are starch, cellulose, and nonfat dry milk. Examples of byproducts are glands, hearts, and other organ meats. As a best practice, it is recommended to serve low-fat versions of luncheon meats.
Canadian Bacon or Mild Cured Pork	X			See the M/MA section in the FBG for creditable pork products.
Canned or Frozen Combination Foods such as: Stews, Beefaroni, Chili, Macaroni & Cheese, Pizzas, Pot Pies, Raviolis		X		These products are creditable toward the M/MA component if the product is (1) CN labeled or (2) has a verified PFS and contains at least 0.25 oz eq M/MA per serving.
Canned, Pressed Luncheon Meat (Potted/Deviled)			X	Canned, pressed luncheon meat is not creditable.
Ceviche (Raw Fish Marinated in Citrus Juice)			X	Raw ceviche is not creditable. Raw fish is a potential health hazard for vulnerable populations.
Cheese, Cottage or Ricotta	X			See the M/MA section in the FBG. A 2 oz serving of cottage cheese credits as 1 oz eq meat alternate.
Cheese, Homemade			X	Homemade cheese is not creditable.
Cheese, Natural or Processed	X			See the M/MA section in the FBG. A 1 oz serving of hard cheese provides 1 oz eq meat alternate.



MEATS/MEAT ALTERNATES

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Cheese Foods, Cheese Food Substitutes, Cheese Spreads, and Cheese Spread Substitutes	X			See the M/MA section in the FBG. A 2 oz serving provides 1 oz eq meat alternate. These products are not creditable in the infant meal pattern.
Cheese, Imitation or Cheese alternative/alternate			X	Cheese labeled as “imitation” or as “cheese alternative” is not creditable because the nutrient content is inferior to the food it substitutes and therefore is not creditable.
Cheese Products			X	Cheese labeled as a “cheese product” is not creditable. Cheese products do not have a standard of identity.
Chicken Nuggets		X		The edible chicken portion is creditable toward the M/MA component. See the M/MA section in the FBG. Commercial chicken nuggets are creditable only if they have (1) a CN label or (2) a verified PFS. Document the meal pattern contribution of homemade nuggets with a standardized recipe. For breading/batter crediting, see the Grains section in the FBG. Deep-fat frying is not allowed as a way of preparing foods onsite. Chicken nuggets credit if reheated using a method other than deep-fat frying. This product has a high fat content and as a best practice it is recommended to be served on a limited frequency.
Chickpeas, Roasted (Roasted Garbanzo Beans)	X			Roasted chickpeas may be credited as either a meat alternate or a vegetable but not as both in the same meal. A ¼ cup roasted chickpeas credit as a 1 oz eq meat alternate or a ¼ cup vegetable, but not as both at the same meal. Please note they may be a choking hazard for some populations.
Chitterlings (Chitlins, Tripes, Mondongo, Chinchulines)	X			Chitterlings are small intestines and credit toward the M/MA component. A ½ cup chitterlings is equal to 2 oz eq meat.

MEATS/MEAT ALTERNATES

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Corn Dogs, Corn Dog Nuggets		X		Only the weight of the hot dog (frankfurter) credits toward the M/MA component. See the M/MA section in the FBG. If the hot dog contains byproducts, cereals, or binders/extenders they are only creditable if the product is (1) CN labeled or (2) has a verified PFS. Examples of binders/extendors are starch, cellulose, and nonfat dry milk. For breading/batter crediting see the Grains section in the FBG. Deep-fat frying is not allowed as a way of preparing foods onsite. Corn dogs credit if reheated using a method other than deep-fat frying. Document the meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe, a CN label, or a PFS. This product has a high fat and salt content and as a best practice it is recommended to be served on a limited frequency. Remember to serve corn dogs in small pieces for those participants where choking is a potential hazard.
Cream Cheese			X	Cream cheese is not creditable. See the Other Foods section in the FBG for purchasing information.
Deviled Eggs	X			Whole eggs are creditable. See the M/MA section in the FBG. The weights of the added ingredients (for example, relish, mayonnaise, etc.) cannot credit toward the meal pattern requirements.
Dried and Semi-Dried Meat, Poultry, and Seafood Snacks, Shelf-Stable		X		These products credit based on the percent of meat, poultry, and/or seafood the product contains. These products are creditable if the product is (1) CN labeled or (2) has a verified PFS. The creditable amount cannot exceed the weight of the volume served. The creditable ingredients must match or have a similar description as listed on the product label and must match or have a similar description as listed in the FBG. Please note these products may be a choking hazard for some populations.
Eggs, Liquid Substitutes			X	Liquid egg substitutes are not whole eggs and are not creditable. Only whole liquid eggs are creditable.



MEATS/MEAT ALTERNATES

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Eggs, Whites Only			X	Egg whites are not creditable if served without the yolks. Only whole eggs are creditable. See the Other Foods section in the FBG for purchasing information.
Eggs, Whole, Fresh, Frozen, Dried, or Liquid	X			All forms of whole eggs are creditable toward the M/MA component. One large egg credits as 2 oz eq meat alternate. See the M/MA section in the FBG.
Eggs, Yolks Only			X	Only whole eggs are creditable. See the Other Foods section in the FBG for purchasing information.
Falafel		X		The volume of meat alternate, such as chickpeas, in each serving is creditable. See the M/MA section in the FBG. Document the meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe, CN Label, or a PFS.
Fish, Commercial	X			<p>Must comply with State and local regulations. See M/MA section in the FBG. See “Fish sticks” item below for crediting breaded fish products.</p> <p>The FDA and the <i>Dietary Guidelines for Americans</i> recommend that pregnant women and young children avoid eating fish that typically have higher mercury levels. Please note that bones in fish should also be considered a choking hazard.</p>
Fish, Home Pickled			X	For safety reasons, home pickled fish is not creditable.
Fish, Noncommercial, Home-Caught		X		<p>Home-caught fish is only creditable if it meets State or local public health policies regarding food safety or if the center is serving primarily a Native American population with donated traditional foods.</p> <p>The FDA and the <i>Dietary Guidelines for Americans</i> recommend that pregnant women and young children avoid eating fish that typically have higher mercury levels. Please note that bones in fish should also be considered a choking hazard.</p>

MEATS/MEAT ALTERNATES

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Fish Sticks or Portions/Nuggets (breaded)		X		<p>The edible fish portion credits toward the M/MA component. See the M/MA section in the FBG. For breading/batter crediting, see the Grains section in the FBG.</p> <p>Document the meal pattern contributions with a CN label, PFS, or a standardized recipe. Deep-fat frying is not allowed as a way of preparing foods onsite. Fish sticks credit if reheated using a method other than deep-fat frying. This product has a high fat content and as a best practice it is recommended to be served on a limited frequency. The FDA and the <i>Dietary Guidelines for Americans</i> recommend that pregnant women and young children avoid eating fish that typically have higher mercury levels.</p>
Game [e.g., Deer Meat (Venison), Bison, Elk, etc.]		X		<p>Meat from both farm raised and wild game animals (e.g., bison, venison, and reindeer) may be served in CNP. Producers selling domesticated and wild game animals to CACFP sites must meet applicable Federal, State, local, and Tribal food safety regulations and inspection requirements. CACFP sponsoring organizations should work with their local food safety authority to determine applicable State and local food safety regulations. See the policy memo: <u>Crediting Traditional Indigenous Foods in Child Nutrition Programs</u>.</p>
Home-Slaughtered Meat			X	<p>For safety reasons, home-slaughtered meat is not creditable.</p>
Hot Dogs (Frankfurters)		X		<p>Hot dogs (frankfurters) are creditable toward the M/MA component. See the M/MA section in the FBG. If they contain byproducts, cereals, or binders/extenders they are only creditable if the product is (1) CN labeled or (2) has a verified PFS. Examples of binders/extenders are starch, cellulose, and nonfat dry milk. Examples of byproducts are glands, hearts, and other organ meats. The selection of low-fat versions of these types of products is encouraged as a best practice. Cut into age-appropriate sizes and shapes for those participants where choking is a potential hazard.</p>



MEATS/MEAT ALTERNATES

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Hummus		X		Hummus is a dip made from beans and nut/seed butter and does not have a standard of identity. Therefore, hummus would require a PFS or CN label to determine the volume of meat alternate in each serving of commercially prepared hummus. A standardized recipe can be used for crediting hummus if it is prepared onsite. Note: Nut/seed butter will credit as an M/MA, while the beans, peas, and/or lentils (e.g., chickpeas) could credit as either a vegetable or M/MA, potentially crediting as two food components.
Kidney, Liver, Heart, Gizzards	X			See the M/MA section in the FBG.
Liverwurst		X		Liverwurst is creditable if the product is (1) CN labeled or (2) has a verified PFS.
Luncheon Meats		X		Only luncheon meats that are listed in the FBG or have a (1) CN label or (2) verified PFS are creditable.
Meat Sauce (Spaghetti Sauce)		X		Only the amount of cooked meat in the sauce may be credited toward the M/MA component. The creditable ingredients must match or have a similar description as listed in the FBG (e.g., Ground Beef, not more than 30% fat). The minimum creditable amount is 0.25 oz eq. Commercial meat sauce is creditable if the product is (1) CN labeled or (2) has a verified PFS.
Meat and Poultry Sticks (Not Dried or Semi-Dried and Not Jerky)		X		Meat sticks in a jar are similar to Vienna sausage. Meat sticks are creditable if the product is (1) CN labeled or (2) has a verified PFS. The creditable amount cannot exceed the weight of the volume served. The creditable ingredients must match those listed on the product label and must match or have a similar description as listed in the FBG.
Neufchatel Cheese			X	Neufchatel cheese is not creditable.
Nuts	X			A 1 oz serving of nuts provides 1 oz eq meat alternate. See the M/MA section in the FBG. Please note that nuts may be a choking hazard for some populations.

MEATS/MEAT ALTERNATES

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Nut or Seed Butters	X			2 tablespoons of nut or seed butter provides 1 oz eq meat alternate. See the M/MA section in the FBG. Examples of nut or seed butters include: Almond butter, Cashew nut butter, Peanut butter, Sesame seed butter, Soy nut butter, Sunflower seed butter.
Nut or Seed Flour		X		Nut and seed meal flours (such as almond flour) may credit only if they meet the requirements for Alternate Protein Products (APPs) and are served in a product with at least 0.25 oz eq visible M/MA. Nut and seed flours do not credit toward the grains component.
Nut or Seed Spreads		X		Nut spreads (such as peanut spreads) are not the same as a nut butter. Nut or seed spreads must be credited using a PFS or CN label that lists the creditable ingredient(s) (i.e., peanuts) and uses the yields found in the FBG for the ingredient(s) that contribute to the meal requirements.
Pasta/Noodles or Flour made from Beans/Peas/Lentils		X		Noodles made from bean/pea/lentil flours may credit toward the M/MA component when paired with at least 0.25 oz eq of visible M/MA, such as meat or cheese. Document meal pattern contribution with a CN label or a PFS.
Peas or Lentils, Dry	X			A ¼ cup cooked dry peas or lentils credits as 1 oz eq meat alternate.
Pepperoni, Traditional, Dried		X		These products credit based on the percent of meat (beef and pork) the product contains. Pepperoni is creditable if the product is (1) CN labeled or (2) has a verified PFS.
Pepperoni, Turkey		X		These products credit based on the percent of poultry the product contains. Turkey Pepperoni is creditable if the product is (1) CN labeled or (2) has a verified PFS.
Pig's Feet, Neck Bones, or Tails (Parts)			X	These products contain small amounts of meat and are not creditable.
Pimento Cheese, Commercial	X			Pimento cheese is classified as a cheese spread. A 2 oz serving provides 1 oz eq meat alternate.
Pizza, Commercial		X		Meats, cheeses, or other meat alternates on a pizza are creditable toward the M/MA component. The weights of the sauce, vegetables, and crust may credit toward the vegetable and grains components. Document the meal pattern contribution with a CN label or a PFS.



MEATS/MEAT ALTERNATES

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Pizza, Homemade	X			Meats, cheeses, or other meat alternates on a pizza are creditable toward the M/MA component. The weights of the sauce, vegetables, and crust may credit toward the vegetable and grains components. Document the meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe.
Polish Sausage		X		Polish sausage is creditable if the product is (1) CN labeled or (2) has a verified PFS.
Pot Pies, Commercial		X		The M/MA ingredients are creditable if there is at least a 0.25 oz eq M/MA per serving. See the FBG for information on crediting the remaining ingredients toward other meal components. Document the meal pattern contribution with a CN label or PFS.
Pot Pies, Homemade		X		The M/MA ingredients are creditable if there is at least a 0.25 oz eq M/MA per serving. See the FBG for information on crediting the remaining ingredients toward other meal components. Document the meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe.
Potted or Deviled Meats			X	Potted or deviled meats are not creditable.
Powdered Cheese (e.g., in Boxed Macaroni and Cheese)			X	Powdered cheese mix is not creditable. The macaroni, if made from enriched or whole grains, may be credited toward the grains component.
Queso Blanco, Commercial, Pasteurized	X			Queso blanco is a fresh, crumbly white cheese. Commercial, pasteurized queso blanco is creditable. Queso blanco credits similarly to feta cheese; 1 oz cheese = 1 oz eq
Queso Fresco, Commercial, Pasteurized	X			Queso fresco is a fresh, white cheese. Commercial, pasteurized queso fresco is creditable. Queso fresco credits similarly to feta cheese; 1 oz cheese = 1 oz eq
Quiche		X		The eggs, cheese, and other M/MA may be credited toward the M/MA component if there is at least a 0.25 oz eq per serving. See the FBG for information on crediting the remaining ingredients toward other meal components. Document the meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe if made from scratch, or a CN label or PFS if commercially purchased.

MEATS/MEAT ALTERNATES

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Salami		X		Creditable only if it is (1) CN labeled or (2) has a verified PFS. This product is high in sodium and fat and as a best practice should be served less frequently.
Salt Pork			X	Salt pork contains little meat and it is not creditable.
Sausage		X		Sausage products that are listed in the FBG are creditable. See the M/MA section in the FBG. Other sausage products must have (1) CN label or a (2) verified PFS.
Scrapple			X	Scrapple contains little meat and is not creditable.
Seeds	X			A 1 oz serving of seeds provides 1 oz eq meat alternate. See the M/MA section in the FBG.
Shellfish	X			Shellfish must be fully cooked; only the edible fish portion is creditable. See the M/MA section in the FBG.
Soups, Bean or Pea, Commercial	X			1 cup serving of commercially prepared bean or pea soup provides ½ cup heated beans which credits as 2 oz eq meat alternate. Beans, peas, and lentils may be credited either as a vegetable or meat alternate, but not both in the same meal. See the M/MA section in the FBG.
Soups, Commercial with M/MA		X		The M/MA ingredients are creditable if there is at least a 0.25 oz eq M/MA per serving. See the FBG for information on crediting the remaining ingredients toward other meal components. Document the meal pattern contribution with a CN label or PFS.
Soups, Homemade with M/MA		X		The M/MA ingredients are creditable if there is at least a 0.25 oz eq M/MA per serving. See the FBG for information on crediting the remaining ingredients toward meal pattern requirements. Document the meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe.
Soybeans, Fresh (Edamame) or Dry/Roasted (Soy Nuts)	X			A ¼ cup soybeans credits as 1 oz eq meat alternate. Soybeans may credit toward either the M/MA or vegetables component, but not both in the same meal. See the M/MA section in the FBG.



MEATS/MEAT ALTERNATES

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Surimi Seafood, Commercial (Imitation Crab, Imitation Shellfish)	X			3 oz of commercially prepared surimi seafood credits as 1 oz eq meat. See the M/MA section of the FBG. Document surimi seafood products containing higher quantities of fish product, or other creditable ingredients with a PFS or a CN label.
Sushi (Raw Seafood and Sashimi)			X	Raw sushi is not creditable. Raw fish is a potential health hazard for vulnerable populations.
Tahini (Sesame Seed Butter)	X			Tahini is classified as a seed butter. A 2-tablespoon serving provides 1 oz eq meat alternate.
Tempeh, Commercial	X			1 oz of commercially prepared tempeh provides 1 oz eq meat alternate. Document meal pattern contribution of tempeh that contains other creditable ingredients (grains, seeds, etc.) with a PFS or a CN label.
Tofu, Commercial	X			Commercially prepared tofu is creditable. A 2.2 oz (1/4 cup) serving of commercially prepared tofu, containing at least 5 g of protein, provides 1 oz eq meat alternate. Homemade or noncommercial tofu is not creditable.
Vienna Sausage		X		Vienna sausage is creditable toward the M/MA component. See the M/MA section in the FBG. If Vienna sausage contains byproducts, cereals, or binders/extenders it is only creditable if the product is (1) CN labeled or (2) has a verified PFS. Examples of binders/extenders are starch, cellulose, and nonfat dry milk. Examples of byproducts are glands, hearts, and other organ meats. The selection of low-fat versions of these types of products is encouraged. Remember to serve Vienna sausage in age-appropriate sizes and shapes for those participants where choking is a potential hazard.

MEATS/MEAT ALTERNATES

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Yogurt, Commercial Plain, Unflavored, Flavored, Sweetened	X			Product must be labeled as “yogurt”. A ½ cup or 4 oz serving provides 1 oz eq meat alternate. Must contain no more than 12 g of added sugars per 6 oz. See the M/MA section in the FBG for additional crediting information. Homemade yogurt is not creditable.
Yogurt, Soy	X			A ½ cup or 4 oz serving provides 1 oz eq meat alternate. Must contain no more than 12 g of added sugars per 6 oz.
Yogurt in a Tube	X			Product must be labeled as “yogurt”. A 2.2 oz tube of yogurt provides ½ oz eq meat alternate. Must contain no more than 12 g of added sugars per 6 oz (or no more than 4 g of added sugars per 2 oz of yogurt).
Yogurt, Frozen		X		Only yogurt that is frozen by program operators may credit. Please note that crediting of yogurt in this form is discouraged, as it is perceived as a dessert. Commercial frozen yogurt is similar to ice cream and is not creditable.
Yogurt Drinks		X		Yogurt drinks that meet the Food and Drug Administrations’ Standard of Identify for yogurt may credit. Must contain no more than 12 g of added sugars per 6 oz (or no more than 4 g of added sugars per 2 oz of yogurt). Note: cultured milk (kefir) credits toward the fluid milk component.
Yogurt Products (commercial); Frozen Yogurt, Yogurt Bars, Yogurt Flavored Products, Yogurt-Covered Fruits or Nuts, or similar products			X	These products are not creditable.



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT MEATS/MEAT ALTERNATES

Meats

1. Can pizza be credited toward the M/MA component?

Yes. Meats, cheeses, or other meat alternates on a pizza are creditable toward the M/MA component. The sauce, vegetables, and crust may credit toward the vegetables and grains components. Document the meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe, CN label, or a PFS.

2. Chicken nuggets, corn dog nuggets, and fish sticks are very popular in our center. How many nuggets or sticks should we serve to meet requirements?

Commercial nuggets and sticks are creditable only if they have (1) a CN label or (2) a verified PFS. These products vary in size and in the amount of meat and breading or batter in the product. Only the edible meat or meat alternate portion is creditable as a M/MA. For homemade nuggets and sticks, document the meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe. For breading/batter crediting, see the Calculating Grains Contribution section of the **“Child Nutrition Labeling Manual.”**

The CACFP meal pattern requirements prohibit deep-fat frying as way of preparing food onsite but allow CACFP sites to serve pre-fried purchased foods.

Meat Alternates

1. Why are nuts, seeds, and nut/seed butters allowed as meat alternates and how do they credit?

Nuts, seeds, and nut/seed butters are good sources of protein and other nutrients. One ounce of nuts or seeds provides 1 ounce equivalent meat alternate. Nuts and seeds may count toward the entire M/MA requirement at meals and snacks.

Two tablespoons of nut or seed butter, such as peanut butter or sunflower seed butter, provides 1 ounce equivalent meat alternate. They may be used to meet all or a portion of the M/MA component.

Please note that nuts and seeds may be a choking hazard for some populations. Nuts are not recommended for children under 4 years of age and adults at risk for choking. A spoonful of peanut butter or other nut butters can also be a choking hazard. Spread nut butters thinly on other foods (e.g., toast, crackers, etc.). Serve only creamy, not chunky, nut butters. Always supervise participants during meals and snacks. Additionally, some participants may have food intolerances or allergies to nuts, seeds, and nut/seed butters.

MEATS/MEAT ALTERNATES

2. What types of cheeses are creditable under the CACFP meal pattern requirements?

Creditable cheeses include natural and processed, low-fat, or reduced-fat cheeses, such as:

- Cheddar, American, Swiss, Colby, and Monterey Jack
- Fresh cheeses such as feta, mozzarella, and queso fresco
- Cottage cheese and ricotta cheese
- Romano and Parmesan cheese
- Cheese foods**
- Cheese spreads**

**Note that cheese foods and cheese spreads are not creditable in the infant meal pattern.

Noncreditable cheeses include products labeled as:

- Imitation cheese
- Cheese products
- Cheese alternates/alternatives
- Cheese whips
- Cream cheese and Neufchatel cheese

Homemade cheese is not creditable in the CNP.

3. Can vegetarian meals be served in the CACFP?

Yes. There are a variety of creditable foods within the M/MA component to allow program operators to plan vegetarian meals. Examples of creditable vegetarian meat alternates for the CACFP include cheeses, eggs, yogurt (including soy yogurt), tofu, tempeh, beans, peas and lentils, nuts and seeds, and nut and seed butters.

4. We have several participants that attend our CACFP site who cannot eat certain foods because of religious reasons. Can we claim these participants on the food program?

Yes. Substitutions may be made to accommodate religious dietary restrictions within existing meal pattern requirements. See page 5 for more information about accommodating nondisability dietary preferences.

5. Is tofu creditable as a meat alternate in the CACFP?

Yes. A 2.2 ounce serving (¼ cup) of commercially-prepared tofu, containing at least 5 grams of protein, is creditable as 1 ounce equivalent meat alternate.



MEATS/MEAT ALTERNATES

6. How would you calculate the creditable amount of meat alternate contributed by tofu in a stir fry using the yield information from the FBG?

The FBG yield information for tofu is 2.20 ounces (oz) (or ¼ cup) credits as 1 ounce equivalent (oz eq) meat alternate (MA).

For example, if you prepare a vegetable stir fry that contains 1.50 oz of creditable tofu per ½ cup serving of stir fry, calculate the meal pattern contribution as follows:

- a. Amount of tofu divided by 2.20 oz per 1 oz eq MA:

$$1.50 \text{ oz tofu} \div 2.20 \text{ oz}/1 \text{ oz eq} = \mathbf{0.68 \text{ oz eq}}$$

- b. Round down to the nearest 0.25 oz eq:

$$0.68 \text{ oz eq rounds down to} \\ \mathbf{0.50 \text{ oz eq MA}}$$

In this example, a ½ cup serving of vegetable stir fry with tofu provides 0.50 oz eq MA.

7. How are fresh soybeans (edamame) credited?

Fresh soybeans (edamame) are classified as “beans, peas, and lentils” and may credit as a vegetable or a meat alternate. These fresh soybeans are the only immature beans/peas that credit the same as mature beans/peas. A ¼ cup of soybeans (fresh or dry/roasted) credits as 1 ounce equivalent meat alternate or as ¼ cup vegetables.

8. Is soy yogurt creditable as a meats/meat alternate?

Yes. A ½ cup of soy yogurt credits as 1 ounce equivalent meat alternate. To be creditable in the CACFP, yogurt must contain no more than 12 grams of added sugars per 6 ounces (2 grams of added sugars per ounce).

9. Must yogurt be offered in 4-ounce portions to be credited?

No. Although ½ cup (4 ounces) of yogurt provides 1 ounce equivalent meat alternate, this does not mean that programs are limited to offering yogurt in ½ cup (4 ounce) servings. Meal planners may use their discretion to vary the portion sizes offered. To credit toward the meat alternates component, a minimum serving size of ⅓ cup (1 ounce) of yogurt is required to provide the minimum 0.25 ounce equivalent meat alternate. To be creditable in the CACFP, yogurt must contain no more than 12 grams of added sugars per 6 ounces (2 grams of added sugars per ounce). Please note minimum creditable amounts do not apply to the infant meal pattern.

10. Why is there an added sugar limit for yogurt of no more than 12 grams of added sugars per 6 ounces? Does this also apply to soy yogurt?

Yogurt, including soy yogurt, is a great source of calcium, protein, vitamin A, vitamin D, magnesium, phosphorus, potassium, riboflavin, and vitamin B-12. However, some yogurt products have significantly more sugar than others. To promote healthy habits early in life, the meal patterns limit the amount of added sugars allowed in creditable yogurts. Yogurt must contain no more than 12 grams of added sugars per 6 ounces.

11. What method should be used to determine if a yogurt meets the added sugars limit?

There are two methods you may use to determine if the yogurt meets the added sugars limits.

Method 1:

Use the Table of Yogurt Serving Sizes and Added Sugars Limits to determine if the yogurt is within the added sugars limits.

Method 2:

Divide the added sugars amount by the serving size in ounces. Compare the answer to 2.0 which is the maximum grams of added sugars per 1 ounce of yogurt allowed.

Table of Yogurt Serving Sizes and Added Sugars Limits

Serving Size (ounces)	Serving Size (grams)	Added Sugars cannot be more than (grams):
If the serving size is:		
2.25 oz	64 g	4 g
3.5 oz	99 g	7 g
4 oz	113 g	8 g
5.3 oz	150 g	10 g
6 oz	170 g	12 g
8 oz	227 g	16 g

*Serving sizes here refer to those commonly found for store-bought yogurts. Homemade yogurt is not creditable in the CACFP. Added sugars limits are pre-calculated and set forth by the USDA.





MEATS/MEAT ALTERNATES

Method 1 – if serving size is in ounces

Step 1: What is the serving size in ounces?

6 ounces

Step 2: What is the amount of added sugars in grams?

11 grams

Step 3: Use the table on page 43 to determine if the yogurt meets the added sugars limit.

This yogurt is creditable because it has 11 grams of added sugars which is less than the limit of 12 grams of added sugars for a 6 ounce serving size.

Nutrition Facts

1 serving per container

Serving size 6 oz

Amount per serving

Calories 125

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 0g 0%

Saturated Fat 0g 0%

Trans Fat 0g

Cholesterol 10mg 3%

Sodium 90mg 4%

Total Carbohydrate 23g 8%

Dietary Fiber 0g 0%

Total Sugars 19g

Includes 11g Added Sugars 8%

Protein 6g

* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

Method 1 – if serving size is in grams

Step 1: What is the serving size in grams?

113 grams

Step 2: What is the amount of added sugars in grams?

10 grams

Step 3: Use the table on page 43 to determine if the yogurt meets the added sugars limit.

This yogurt is not creditable because it has 10 grams of added sugars which is more than the limit of 8 grams of added sugars for a 113 gram serving size.

Nutrition Facts

1 serving per container

Serving size 113 g

Amount per serving

Calories 120

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 2g 0%

Saturated Fat 1g 0%

Trans Fat 0g

Cholesterol 10mg 3%

Sodium 80mg 4%

Total Carbohydrate 23g 8%

Dietary Fiber 0g 0%

Total Sugars 18g

Includes 10g Added Sugars 8%

Protein 5g

* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

MEATS/MEAT ALTERNATES

Method 2 – compare to 2.0 grams of added sugars per 1 ounce of yogurt

Step 1: What is the serving size in ounces?
4.5 ounces

Step 2: What is the amount of added sugars in grams?
8 grams

Step 3: Divide the added sugars by the serving size. In this example, it would be:

$$\frac{\text{Added Sugars (g)}}{\text{Serving Size (oz)}} = \frac{8}{4.5} = 1.78$$

Step 4: If the number is **2.0 or less**, the yogurt is within the added sugars limit. 2.0 is the maximum grams of added sugars per 1 ounce of yogurt allowed.

This yogurt is creditable because 1.78 is less than 2.0.

Nutrition Facts

1 serving per container

Serving size 4.5 oz

Amount per serving

Calories 140

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 2g 3%

Saturated Fat 0g 0%

Trans Fat 0g

Cholesterol 10mg 3%

Sodium 90mg 4%

Total Carbohydrate 23g 8%

Dietary Fiber 0g 0%

Total Sugars 16g

Includes 8g Added Sugars 8%

Protein 8g

* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

12. How are cups of commercially prepared yogurt containing fruit credited? Does the volume of fruit have to be subtracted from the total weight of the containers?

Commercially prepared yogurt containing fruit receives the full credit toward the M/MA component. For example, ½ cup (4 ounces) of yogurt containing fruit provides 1 ounce equivalent meat alternate. It should be noted that the fruit in commercial yogurts cannot be credited toward the fruits component. Fruit may be credited only when the program operator adds sufficient quantities of fresh, frozen, or canned fruit to commercial yogurt.

13. Will yogurt credit if I serve it frozen?

Program operators may credit yogurt that they have frozen. Please note that crediting M/MAs in this form is discouraged as it is perceived as a dessert. Commercial frozen yogurt is similar to ice cream and is not creditable.

14. Can I use commercially-bought yogurt in a smoothie, and credit the yogurt?

Yes. Yogurt used as an ingredient in a smoothie may credit toward the M/MA component. The yogurt must be creditable and meet the added sugars limit. For more information on smoothies, see the policy memo, **Smoothies Offered in Child Nutrition Programs**.



VEGETABLES

Vegetables are a required meal component for a reimbursable lunch/supper in the CACFP. Vegetables, fruits, or portions of both are a required meal component for a reimbursable breakfast. Vegetables are not required at snack but may be served as one of two required meal components. Fresh, frozen, or canned vegetables and full-strength vegetable juice may credit toward the vegetables requirement. The importance of adequate and recognizable amounts of vegetables must be considered in menu planning to ensure a well-balanced meal and to meet meal pattern requirements.

To allow program operators flexibility to offer a variety of vegetables, the meal patterns allow a second vegetable to be served in place of the fruits component at lunch and supper. Equal volume measures of vegetables can be substituted for equal volume measures of fruits. If substituting for fruits, the second vegetable must be different/distinct from the first vegetable. For example, the same vegetable served in different forms, such as raw carrots and cooked carrots, do not count as two different vegetables.

A **reimbursable breakfast** must contain:

- minimum required serving of fruits

OR

- minimum required serving of vegetables

OR

- adequate portions of both a fruit and a vegetable to provide the minimum required serving.

A **reimbursable lunch/supper** must contain:

- the minimum required serving of fruits and the minimum required serving of vegetables

OR

- two different minimum servings of vegetables; with this option, the second different vegetable is served in place of the fruit requirement.

A **reimbursable snack** may include a fruit and a vegetable which would meet the requirements to serve two of the five meal components. This means the program operator may offer:

- the minimum serving of fruits
- the minimum serving of vegetables



Substituting Vegetables for Grains in American Samoa, Guam, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Tribal Communities

All sponsors, institutions, and facilities in American Samoa, Guam, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and Tribal Communities can offer any vegetable such as breadfruit, prairie turnips, yams, plantains, or sweet potatoes to meet the grains requirements in the CACFP to address cultural food preferences, product availability, and cost concerns. The vegetables served must meet the daily minimum grain quantity required and can be used to meet the whole grain-rich requirement. One-half cup vegetables substitutes for 1 ounce equivalent grains. There is no limit on the amount of times vegetables may be substituted for the grains requirement. The vegetables substituting for the grains component cannot also credit as the vegetables component in the same meal.

Crediting Vegetables

Vegetables are credited based on their volume as served. The smallest creditable portion size of a vegetable is an $\frac{1}{8}$ cup or 2 tablespoons.*

There are a few exceptions:

- Raw leafy greens credit as half of the volume served. For example, a $\frac{1}{2}$ cup raw leafy greens credits as a $\frac{1}{4}$ cup vegetable.
- Tomato paste and puree credit based on their whole food equivalency. One tablespoon of tomato paste credits as $\frac{1}{4}$ cup vegetable, while 2 tablespoons of tomato puree credits as $\frac{1}{4}$ cup vegetable.

Servings of vegetables that are less than an $\frac{1}{8}$ cup are not creditable toward the vegetables component.

*Please note minimum creditable amounts do not apply to the infant meal pattern.



Crediting Tips for Serving Vegetables in the CACFP

- The minimum creditable amount for vegetables is $\frac{1}{8}$ cup per serving.
- Vegetables credit based on volume served (with a few exceptions: raw leafy greens and tomato paste and puree).
- Full-strength 100% vegetable juice may credit toward the vegetables component at one meal, including snack, per day.
- Menu items that are mixtures of fruits and vegetables (for example: fruit salsa made with peaches and red pepper), must be credited separately for the fruits and the vegetables components.
- Snack-type foods made from vegetables (for example: potato chips, vegetable straws, etc.) and condiments (for example tomato ketchup), do **not** credit toward the meal pattern requirements.



VEGETABLES

Beans, Peas, and Lentils

Foods in this vegetable subgroup include beans (kidney beans, pinto beans, white beans, black beans, lima beans, fava beans, soybeans), dried peas (chickpeas, black-eyed peas, pigeon peas, split peas), and lentils. Edamame, which is the soybean in the pod, is also counted in this subgroup (even though it is eaten fresh and not dried).

Beans, peas, and lentils can credit toward either the vegetables or meats/meat alternates (M/MA) component, but not as both a vegetable and a meat alternate in the same meal. If two different servings of beans, peas, or lentils are offered at a meal, the program operator may choose to credit one as a meat alternate and the other as a vegetable.

Vegetable Mixtures

Vegetable mixtures, like frozen carrots and peas, credit as one serving of vegetables when you don't know how much of each vegetable is in the mix. If the program operator has documentation—standardized recipe, Child Nutrition (CN) label, or Product Formulation Statement (PFS)—showing the amounts, the mix can credit as two different servings of vegetables when each vegetable meets the minimum amount.



Noncreditable Vegetables

Snack-type foods, such as potato chips and vegetable straws, are not creditable toward the CACFP meal pattern requirements. These processed food items are typically high in sodium, fat, and/or sugar and low in nutrients.

Condiments such as pickle relish, mustard, tomato ketchup, or chili sauce are not creditable toward the CACFP meal pattern requirements. Additionally, dehydrated vegetables that are used for seasoning, such as spices made from pepper flakes, are not creditable.

Home-canned vegetable products are not allowed in the CACFP due to health and safety reasons. See the **Resource Section** for additional information on produce safety. However, home-frozen vegetable products are allowed. For example, when sweet corn is in season (when it is the most economical to buy and tastes the best), you may freeze corn for use in the winter months when fresh corn is not available or is more expensive.

Vegetable Juices

Pasteurized, 100% vegetable juice (in either liquid, gelled, or frozen form) may count toward the vegetables component at only one meal per day, including snack. Juice may be used as one component of a snack when the other component is not fluid milk. Juice must be pasteurized and full strength (100%). Vegetable juice may be fresh, canned, frozen, or reconstituted with water from concentrate. The product label must include the word(s): “juice” or “full-strength juice” or “single-strength juice” or “100% juice” or “reconstituted juice” or “juice from concentrate.” Juice may not be served as part of a reimbursable meal for infants.

If juice blends are served, they must be 100% juice or a full-strength juice blend. A juice blend that contains only vegetables such as tomatoes, carrots and spinach juice, credits toward the vegetables component.

Juice blends or purees that are mixtures of vegetables and fruits credit toward the vegetables or fruits component based on the highest quantity ingredient. For example, if the first ingredient listed on the product label is a fruit juice/puree (e.g., strawberry), then the juice blend credits toward the fruit requirement. If the first ingredient is a vegetable juice/puree (e.g., carrot), then the juice blend credits toward the vegetable requirement. As a best practice, you are encouraged to specify the type of juice served on your menu.

Please see page 57 for information on crediting smoothies containing juice.

Food Mixtures With Fruits and Vegetables

Foods that contain a mixture of vegetables and fruits with known quantities must be credited separately for the vegetables and fruits component in reimbursable lunches, suppers and snacks. The mixture must contain at least an 1/8 cup of vegetable to count toward the vegetables component and at least an 1/8 cup of fruit to count toward the fruits component. For example, a carrot-pineapple mixture served to 6-year-olds contains a 1/2 cup carrots and a 1/4 cup pineapple. This mixture would credit as a 1/2 cup vegetable and a 1/4 cup fruit. This carrot-pineapple mixture meets the full vegetables component and full fruits component requirements for a reimbursable lunch/supper for children 6 through 12 years old.



VEGETABLES

Serving Size and Yield for Selected Vegetables

This is a quick-reference table of commonly served raw vegetables and the amounts needed to provide ¼ cup servings. Double check to ensure that your serving sizes meet meal pattern requirements and refer to the FBG for purchasing and yield information.

Vegetable	Serving Size and Yield
Avocado	1 slice is ¾ inch by 3½ inch. About 3 slices = ¼ cup vegetable
Bell Peppers	¼ cup pepper strips or chopped/diced pepper pieces = ¼ cup vegetable
Broccoli	¼ cup raw spears/pieces = ¼ cup vegetable
Carrot Sticks	1 stick is 4 inches long and ½ inch wide. 3 sticks = ¼ cup vegetable
Celery Sticks	1 stick is 4 inches long and ½ inch wide. 3 sticks = ¼ cup vegetable
Cucumber Sticks	1 stick is 3 inches long and ¾ inch wide. 3 sticks = ¼ cup vegetable
Jicama (Yam Bean)	¼ cup raw peeled, julienned vegetable strips = ¼ cup vegetable
Lettuce Head (Iceberg)*	½ cup raw, shredded lettuce or ½ cup raw lettuce pieces credits as ¼ cup vegetable
Lettuce, Leaf*	½ cup raw lettuce pieces credits as ¼ cup vegetable
Olives, Ripe	8 (large) olives = ¼ cup vegetable
Pickles	⅓ (large) pickle = ¼ cup vegetable
Radishes	7 small radishes = ¼ cup vegetable
Tomatoes, Small/Medium	5 slices, ⅛ inch thick = ¼ cup vegetable
Tomatoes, Cherry	3 tomatoes = about ¼ cup vegetable

*Raw leafy greens credit half of the volume served.



VEGETABLES

Use this section as a guide to identify creditable vegetables and products that contain creditable vegetables. This is NOT an all-inclusive list. For information on creditable vegetables commonly served in Child Nutrition Programs (CNP), see the FBG.

Details in the “Additional Information” column help you to determine if the product is creditable and where to find more information.

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Barbecue Sauce			X	Barbecue sauce is a condiment and is not creditable.
Beans, Peas, or Lentils, Canned or Dry	X			Beans, peas, or lentils (kidney, garbanzo, black, lentils, etc.) may be credited as either a vegetable or as a meat alternate, but not as both in the same meal. See the Vegetables section in the FBG.
Bean Sprouts (canned or cooked)	X			See the Vegetables section in the FBG for canned or cooked sprouts. Please be aware, for food safety reasons, raw sprouts are not creditable.
Carrot Bread		X		Carrot bread must contain at least an ⅛ cup (2 tablespoons) of visible vegetable per serving. Document the meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a PFS. Generally, these products contain an insufficient amount of vegetable per serving.
Chickpeas, Roasted (Roasted Garbanzo Beans)	X			Roasted chickpeas may be credited as either a vegetable or a meat alternate, but not as both in the same meal. A ¼ cup of roasted chickpeas credits as a ¼ cup of vegetable or a 1 oz eq of meat alternate. Please note they may be a choking hazard for some populations.
Chili Sauce			X	Chili sauce is a condiment and is not creditable.
Coleslaw		X		The vegetable portion of coleslaw, without condiments or other ingredients, is creditable. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a PFS. See the Vegetables section in the FBG.
Corn, Fresh (Kernel or On-the-Cob)	X			See the Vegetables section in the FBG.



VEGETABLES

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Corn Chips			X	Corn chips are classified as a grain (not a vegetable) when made from creditable ingredients. See the Grains section in the FBG.
Corn Syrup			X	Corn syrup is a sugar, not a vegetable, and considered a noncreditable food in CNP.
Dehydrated/Dried Vegetables	X			Dehydrated and dried (including freeze-dried) vegetables are creditable based on the rehydrated volume served. See the Vegetables section in the FBG.
Dry Spice Mixes			X	Spices do not credit toward meal pattern requirements.
French-Fried Potatoes (French Fries)		X		French-fried potatoes that are air-fried, pre-fried, flash-fried, or par-fried by a commercial manufacturer may be served, when reheated by a method other than deep-fat frying. Foods deep-fat fried onsite are not creditable. See the Vegetables section in the FBG.
Gelatin Containing Vegetables (Aspic)		X		Gelatin containing vegetables must contain at least an 1/8 cup (2 tablespoons) of visible vegetable per serving. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a PFS.
Gravy Base			X	Gravy base is not a vegetable and is not creditable.
Greens, All Varieties (such as Mustard, Collard, and Chard)	X			See the Vegetables section in the FBG.
Hominy, Canned	X			See the Vegetables section in the FBG. 1/4 cup of canned, drained hominy credits as 1/4 cup vegetable. Note: hominy grits credit toward the grains component.
Hummus		X		Hummus is a dip made typically from chickpeas and nut/seed butter and does not have a standard of identity. Therefore, hummus would require a PFS or CN label to determine the volume of vegetables (chickpeas) in each serving of commercially prepared hummus. A standardized recipe can be used for crediting hummus if it is prepared onsite. Note: Nut/seed butter will credit as an M/MA, while the beans, peas, and/or lentils (e.g., chickpeas) could credit as either a vegetable or M/MA, potentially crediting as two food components.



VEGETABLES

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Juice, 100% Vegetable	X			Pasteurized, 100% full-strength vegetable juice is creditable.
Juice Blends (Vegetable only or Fruit and Vegetable)		X		Vegetable and fruit juice blends that are combinations of pasteurized, 100% full-strength juices are creditable. If vegetable is the first ingredient listed, the juice blend may credit toward the vegetables component.
Ketchup (Catsup)			X	Ketchup is a condiment and is not creditable.
Macaroni Salad (also Pasta Salads)		X		Macaroni Salad containing vegetables must contain at least an 1/8 cup (2 tablespoons) of visible vegetable per serving. Document with a standardized recipe or a PFS.
Mayonnaise, Salad Dressing, Margarine, Salad Oil, and Butter			X	These products are condiments and are not creditable.
Mustard			X	Mustard is a condiment and is not creditable.
Olives	X			Olives may be credited if a minimum of an 1/8 cup (2 tablespoons) is provided. Please note that most olives are high in sodium and may pose a choking hazard to young children.
Onion Rings		X		Onion rings that are air-fried, pre-fried, flash-fried, or par-fried by a commercial manufacturer may be served but must be reheated by a method other than deep-fat frying. Foods deep-fat fried onsite are not creditable. To credit as a vegetable, this product must contain at least an 1/8 cup (2 tablespoons) of cooked onion per serving. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a PFS.
Pasta/Noodles from Bean/Pea/Lentil Flours		X		Noodles made from bean/pea/lentil flours may credit toward the vegetable or meat/meat alternate component. Program operators may serve noodles made from bean/pea/lentil flours without serving additional recognizable vegetables and credit toward the vegetables component.
Pickle Relish			X	Pickle relish is a condiment and is not creditable.
Pickles	X			Pickles may be credited if a minimum of an 1/8 cup (2 tablespoons) is provided. Please note that most pickles are high in sodium.



VEGETABLES

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Pie Filling: Sweet Potato, Pumpkin		X		Pie fillings containing vegetables must contain at least an 1/8 cup (2 tablespoons) of visible vegetable per serving. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a PFS.
Pizza Sauce (Tomato Sauce)		X		Pizza/Tomato sauce may be credited if a minimum of an 1/8 cup (2 tablespoons) of sauce is provided. An 1/8 cup of sauce equals an 1/8 cup of vegetable. See the Vegetables section in the FBG. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a PFS.
Potato Chips (and Other Vegetable Chips)			X	Snack-type vegetable products, such as potato chips, do not credit toward meal pattern requirements.
Potatoes	X			See the Vegetables section in the FBG.
Potatoes, Dehydrated	X			Reconstituted, heated potatoes made from dehydrated potatoes are creditable. See the Vegetables section in the FBG.
Pumpkin Bread		X		Pumpkin bread must contain at least an 1/8 cup (2 tablespoons) of visible vegetable per serving. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a PFS. Generally, these products contain an insufficient amount of vegetable per serving.
Salsa	X			Salsa is creditable toward the vegetables component. See the Vegetables section in the FBG.
Soups: Canned, Condensed, or Ready-To-Serve (Minestrone, Tomato, Tomato with other basic ingredients such as Rice, Vegetable, and Vegetable with basic ingredients such as Meat and Poultry)	X			1 cup of reconstituted or ready-to-serve soup provides 1/4 cup of vegetable. See the Vegetables section in the FBG. Please note that 1 cup of soup may be an excessive volume for young children.



VEGETABLES

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Soups, Homemade		X		Homemade soups must contain at least an ⅛ cup (2 tablespoons) of visible vegetable per serving. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe.
Soybeans, Roasted	X			Roasted soybeans may be credited as either a vegetable or a meat alternate, but not as both in the same meal. A ¼ cup of roasted soybeans credits as a ¼ cup of vegetable or a 1 oz eq meat alternate. Please note these may be a choking hazard for some populations.
Spaghetti Sauce (Meatless)	X			Spaghetti sauce is creditable toward the vegetables component. See the Vegetables section in the FBG.
Vegetable Spirals (from Fresh or Frozen Vegetables such as Carrot or Squash)	X			Fresh or frozen vegetable spirals are creditable toward the vegetables component based on the volume served.
Vegetable Sticks/ Vegetable Straws (Dehydrated/ Puffed)			X	Snack-type vegetable products, such as dehydrated/ puffed vegetable sticks/straws, do not credit toward meal pattern requirements.
Vegetables, Fresh, Frozen, or Canned (All Varieties)	X			See the Vegetables section in the FBG.
Zucchini Bread (Squash in Bread)		X		Zucchini bread must contain at least an ⅛ cup (2 tablespoons) of visible vegetable per serving. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a PFS. Generally, vegetable breads contain an insufficient amount of vegetable per serving.



FRUITS

Fruits are a required meal component for a reimbursable lunch/supper in the CACFP. Vegetables, fruits, or portions of both are a required meal component for a reimbursable breakfast. Fruits are not required at snack but may be served as one of two required meal components. Fresh, frozen, dried, or canned fruits and full-strength fruit juice may credit toward the fruits component. The importance of adequate and recognizable amounts of fruits must be considered in menu planning to ensure a well-balanced meal and to meet meal pattern requirements.

To allow program operators flexibility to offer a variety of vegetables, the meal patterns allow a second vegetable to be served in place of the fruits component at lunch and supper. When two vegetables are served at lunch or supper, two different kinds of vegetables must be served.

A **reimbursable breakfast** must contain:

- minimum required serving of fruits

OR

- minimum required serving of vegetables

OR

- portions of both a fruit and a vegetable to provide the minimum required serving.

A **reimbursable lunch/supper** must contain:

- the minimum required serving of fruits and the minimum required serving of vegetables

OR

- two minimum servings of different vegetables; with this option, the second different vegetable is served in place of the fruit requirement.

A **reimbursable snack** may contain a minimum serving of fruit as one of the two meal components required.



Crediting Tips for Serving Fruits in the CACFP

- The minimum creditable amount for fruit is $\frac{1}{8}$ cup per serving.
- Fruits credit based on volume served (except for dried fruit).
- Dried fruits credit as twice the volume served (for example: $\frac{1}{8}$ cup of raisins credits as a $\frac{1}{4}$ cup fruit).
- Full-strength 100% fruit juice may credit toward the fruits component at one meal, including snack, per day.
- Menu items that are mixtures of fruits and vegetables (for example: fruit salsa made with peaches and red pepper), must be credited separately for the fruits and the vegetables components, except at breakfast when fruits and vegetables are a combined component.
- Snack-type foods made from fruits (for example: fried banana chips, fruit drops, fruit strips) do **not** credit toward the meal pattern requirements.

Fruit Juices

Pasteurized, 100% fruit juice (in either liquid, gelled, or frozen form) may be used to meet the fruits requirement of reimbursable meals or snacks. The name of the full-strength juice as it appears on the label must include the word(s): “juice” or “full-strength juice” or “single-strength juice” or “100% juice” or “reconstituted juice” or “juice from concentrate.” Juice concentrates can be used only when reconstituted to 100% juice. Fruit juice may count toward the fruits component at only one meal per day, including snack. Juice may be used as one component of a snack when the other component is not fluid milk. Juice may not be served as part of a reimbursable meal for infants.

If juice blends are served, they must be 100% juice or a full-strength juice blend. For example, a juice blend that contains 100% apple, blueberry and strawberry juice counts as fruit juice and credits toward the fruits component. As a best practice, you are encouraged to specify the type of juice served on your menu.

Juice blends or purees that are mixtures of vegetables and fruits credit toward the vegetables or fruits component based on the highest quantity ingredient. For example, if the first ingredient listed on the product label is a fruit juice/puree (e.g., strawberry), then the juice blend credits toward the fruit requirement. If the first ingredient is a vegetable juice/puree (e.g., carrot), then the juice blend credits toward the vegetables requirement.

Smoothies

Smoothies may be offered as part of reimbursable meals and snacks. Milk, yogurt, fruits, and vegetables used in smoothies may credit toward CACFP meal pattern requirements for all meals, including snacks. If the smoothie contains at least ¼ cup fruits or vegetables per serving, then it may credit toward those meal components. Smoothies may be made from scratch, commercially-prepared mixes, or be commercially pre-packaged (ready to consume) smoothies.

Fruits and vegetables used in smoothies credit as juice. CACFP operators must limit the amount of juice offered to one serving per day. Fruits or vegetables included in a smoothie may be counted as the entire combined fruit/vegetables component at breakfast, or as the fruits or vegetables component at lunch/supper or snack. However, at snack, juice may not be served when milk is served as the only other component; therefore, a smoothie containing juice and milk can credit as either juice or milk, but not both. For additional guidance on smoothies, see the policy memo: **Smoothies Offered in the Child Nutrition Programs.**





FRUITS

Food Mixtures With Fruits and Vegetables

Foods that contain a mixture of vegetables and fruits with known quantities must be credited separately for the vegetables and fruits component in reimbursable lunches/suppers and snacks. The mixture must contain at least an $\frac{1}{8}$ cup of vegetable to count toward the vegetables component and at least an $\frac{1}{8}$ cup of fruit to count toward the fruits component. For example, a carrot-pineapple mixture served to 6-year-olds contains a $\frac{1}{2}$ cup carrots and a $\frac{1}{4}$ cup pineapple. This mixture credits as a $\frac{1}{2}$ cup vegetable and a $\frac{1}{4}$ cup fruit. This carrot-pineapple mixture meets the full vegetables component and full fruits component requirements for a reimbursable lunch/supper for children 6 through 12 years old.



Noncreditable Fruits

Snack-type fruit products such as commercial fried fruit chips (e.g., banana chips) and fruit gummies or drops are not creditable toward CACFP meal pattern requirements. These highly processed food items are typically high in added sugars and low in nutrients. Please keep in mind that young children—especially age 4 and younger—and some elderly participants are at risk of choking on these foods. Always supervise participants during meals and snacks.

Condiments such as jams and jellies are not creditable toward CACFP meal pattern requirements.

Home-canned fruit products may not be served in the CACFP due to health and safety reasons. See the **Resource Section** for additional information on produce safety. However, home-frozen fruit may be served. For example, program operators may choose to freeze blueberries when they are in season (when they are the most economical to buy and taste the best) for use during the winter months when berries are not available or are more expensive.



Serving Sizes and Yields for Fruits

This is a quick-reference table of commonly served fruits and the amounts needed to provide various serving sizes. Double check to ensure that your serving sizes meet meal pattern requirements and refer to the FBG for purchasing and yield information.

Fruit	Serving Size and Yield
Apples	¼ raw, unpeeled medium apple = about ¼ cup fruit
Bananas	1 medium banana = ½ cup fruit
Blueberries	¼ cup measure = ¼ cup fruit
Strawberries	¼ cup measure = ¼ cup fruit
Cantaloupe	¼ cup diced fruit without rind = ¼ cup fruit
Grapes, Seedless	7 grapes = about ¼ cup fruit
Nectarines	1 small nectarine = about ½ cup fruit; 1 medium nectarine = about ¾ cup fruit
Oranges	1 medium orange = about ½ cup fruit
Peaches	1 small peach = about ⅔ cup fruit; 1 medium peach = about ¾ cup fruit
Pears	1 medium pear = about ¾ cup fruit
Plums	1 medium plum = ½ cup; 1 large plum = ⅔ cup fruit
Raisins*	1 package (1.3 – 1.5 oz) = ¼ cup credits as ½ cup fruit
Tangerine	1 medium tangerine = about ⅔ cup fruit; 1 large tangerine = about ½ cup fruit
Watermelon	¼ cup diced fruit without rind = ¼ cup fruit

*Dried fruit credits as twice the volume served. For example, a ¼ cup of raisins credits as a ½ cup fruit.



FRUITS

Use this section as a guide to identify creditable fruits and products that contain creditable fruits. This is NOT an all-inclusive list. For information on creditable fruits commonly served in Child Nutrition Programs (CNP) see the FBG.

Details in the “Additional Information” column help you to determine if the product is creditable and where to find more information.

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Ade Drinks (Lemonade, Limeade)			X	Ade drinks, such as lemonade and limeade, are not 100% juice and are not creditable.
Apple Butter			X	Apple butter is a condiment and is not creditable.
Apple Cider		X		Cider must follow the same crediting rules as fruit juice (must be 100% juice and pasteurized).
Apple Fritters		X		Fritters must contain at least an 1/8 cup (2 tablespoons) of visible fruit per serving. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a PFS. Generally, fritters contain an insufficient amount of fruit per serving. Fritters are a grain-based dessert and do not credit toward the grains component. Deep-fat frying is not allowed as a way of preparing foods onsite. Apple fritters may credit if reheated using a method other than deep-fat frying and if they contain a creditable amount of visible fruit per serving. This product has a high fat and added sugars content and should be served on a limited frequency.
Applesauce	X			Applesauce credits toward the fruit component. See the Fruits section in the FBG. Note: Purees do not credit toward the meal pattern requirements when used to improve the nutrient profile such as applesauce used to replace oil in muffins. Purees will credit as juice if included in a beverage.
Banana Bread		X		Banana bread must contain at least an 1/8 cup (2 tablespoons) of visible fruit per serving. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a PFS. Typically, banana bread contains an insufficient amount of fruit per serving.
Berries, All Varieties	X			See the Fruits section in the FBG.



FRUITS

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Cake Containing Fruit		X		Although cake containing fruit is a grain-based dessert and cannot credit toward the grains component, if it contains at least an 1/8 cup (2 tablespoons) of visible fruit per serving, the fruit portion may credit toward the fruits component. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a PFS. Generally, cakes with fruit contain an insufficient amount of fruit per serving.
Coconut, Dried	X			Dried coconut credits as twice the volume served. For example, a 1/4 cup dried coconut credits as a 1/2 cup fruit. See the Fruits section in the FBG.
Coconut Flour			X	Coconut flour is not creditable.
Coconut, Fresh or Frozen	X			See the Fruits section in the FBG.
Cranberry Juice Cocktail			X	Juice cocktails are not 100% juice and are not creditable.
Cranberry Sauce or Relish		X		Canned cranberry sauce/relish credits toward the fruit component. See the Fruits section in the FBG. Note: canned cranberry sauce/relish often contains a large amount of added sugars, therefore, as a best practice, program operators should limit how often these foods are served. Cranberry sauces made from scratch may be creditable if they contain an 1/8 cup of fruit per serving. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe.
Dried Fruit, Whole (such as Raisins, Apricots, Prunes, Cranberries)	X			Dried fruit credits as twice the volume served. For example, a 1/4 cup of raisins credits as a 1/2 cup fruit. See the Fruits section in the FBG. Dried fruit may be a choking hazard for some populations.
Fig Bars		X		Although fig bars are a grain-based dessert and cannot credit toward the grains component, if it contains at least an 1/8 cup (2 tablespoons) of visible fruit per serving, the fruit portion may credit toward the fruits component. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a PFS. Generally, fig bars contain an insufficient amount of fruit per serving.



FRUITS

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Frozen Fruit-Flavored Bars/Popsicles (Freezer Pops)			X	Frozen fruit-flavored bars/popsicles are not made of 100% juice and are not creditable.
Frozen Fruit Juice Bars or Cups		X		Frozen fruit juice bars or cups must contain at least an $\frac{1}{8}$ cup (2 tablespoons) of fruit and/or full-strength 100% fruit juice per serving. Only the fruit or fruit juice portion may credit toward the fruit requirement. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a PFS.
Fruit Cups		X		Commercially prepared fruit cups (packed in water, 100% juice, or light syrup) must contain at least an $\frac{1}{8}$ cup (2 tablespoons) of visible fruit. Document meal pattern contribution with a PFS. Fruit cups prepared by using a #8 scoop serving from a #10 can of fruit may credit $\frac{1}{2}$ cup measure of fruit and juice as $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruit as described in the FBG.
Fruit Cobblers/Crisps		X		Although fruit cobblers/crisps are a grain-based dessert and cannot credit toward the grains component, if it contains at least an $\frac{1}{8}$ cup (2 tablespoons) of visible fruit per serving, the fruit portion may credit toward the fruits component. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a PFS.
Fruit Juice Bases			X	Juice bases are not 100% fruit juice and are not creditable.
Fruit Juice Concentrates		X		Juice concentrates may only be credited when reconstituted to full-strength 100% juice. Juice concentrate cannot be credited when used as an ingredient in another food or beverage unless it is reconstituted to 100% full-strength and provides a minimum of $\frac{1}{8}$ of a cup of full-strength 100% juice.
Fruit Drinks			X	Fruit drinks are not 100% juice and are not creditable.
Fruit-Flavored Powders and Syrups			X	Fruit-flavored powders and syrups do not meet the definition of fruit or juice and are not creditable.
Fruit-Flavored Punch			X	Fruit-flavored punch is not 100% juice and is not creditable.

FRUITS

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Fruit-Flavored Waters			X	Fruit-flavored waters are not 100% juice and are not creditable.
Fruit Purees	X			Fruit purees credit on volume served. See the Fruits section in the FBG. Please note: Purees do not credit toward the meal pattern requirements when used to improve the nutrient profile such as applesauce used to replace oil in muffins. Purees will credit as juice if included in a beverage, including smoothies.
Fruit Sauces (Other than applesauce or cranberry sauce)		X		Fruit sauces must contain at least an 1/8 cup (2 tablespoons) of visible fruit per serving. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a PFS. Generally, commercial sauces contain an insufficient amount of fruit per serving.
Fruit Snacks (Fruit Strips, Leather, Fruit Drops, or other Fruit Snack-Type Products)			X	Fruit snacks are not creditable.
Gelatinized Fruit/ Gelatin Containing Fruit		X		Thickened or gelatinized fruit (such as gelatin with fruit) must contain at least an 1/8 cup (2 tablespoons) of visible fruit per serving. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a PFS.
Honey			X	Honey is a sweetener and is not creditable. See the Other Foods section in the FBG for purchasing information. For food safety reasons, honey should not be served to children less than 1 year of age.
Ice Cream, Fruit Flavors			X	Fruit-flavored ice cream contains an insufficient amount of fruit to credit toward the fruits component. See the Other Foods section in the FBG for purchasing information.
Jam			X	Jam is a condiment and is not creditable. See the Other Foods section in the FBG for purchasing information.
Jelly			X	Jelly is a condiment and is not creditable. See the Other Foods section in the FBG for purchasing information.



FRUITS

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Juice, 100% Fruit	X			Pasteurized, 100% full-strength fruit juice is creditable.
Juice Blends (All Fruit)		X		Juice blends made from pasteurized, 100% full-strength fruit juice are creditable.
Juice Blends (Fruit and Vegetable)		X		Juice blends containing combinations of full-strength 100% fruit and vegetable juice are creditable. May be credited toward the fruits component when fruit is the first ingredient listed.
Maple Syrup			X	Maple syrup is a condiment or sweetener and is not creditable. See the Other Foods section in the FBG for purchasing information.
Muffins Containing Fruit		X		Muffins must contain at least an 1/8 cup (2 tablespoons) of visible fruit per serving. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a PFS. Generally, muffins contain an insufficient amount of fruit per serving.
Nectars (Fruit)		X		Full-strength 100% fruit nectars are creditable. Please note that there are no industry standards for nectars, and juice content may range anywhere from 0 to 100%.
Pie Filling (Fruit)		X		Pie filling must contain at least an 1/8 cup (2 tablespoons) of visible fruit per serving. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a PFS. Pies are a grain-based dessert and do not credit toward the grains component.
Pineapple Upside-Down Cake		X		Cake must contain at least an 1/8 cup (2 tablespoons) of visible fruit per serving. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a PFS. Cake is a grain-based dessert and does not credit toward the grains component.
Preserves			X	Preserves, similar to jams and jellies, are considered a condiment and are not creditable.
Puddings Containing Fruit, Commercial			X	Commercial puddings are not creditable toward the fruits component.

FRUITS

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Puddings Containing Fruit, Homemade		X		Homemade pudding containing fruit must contain at least an ⅛ cup (2 tablespoons) of visible fruit per serving to credit toward the fruits component. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe. In most cases, puddings are an “Other Food” and do not credit toward the meal pattern requirements. See the Other Foods section in the FBG for purchasing information.
Sherbet, Commercial or Homemade			X	Sherbet is not creditable. See the Other Foods section in the FBG for purchasing information.
Sorbets, Commercial or Homemade		X		Sorbets must contain at least an ⅛ cup (2 tablespoons) of fruit per serving. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a PFS. Please note that sorbets are perceived as desserts and often contain a large amount of added sugars, therefore, as a best practice, program operators should limit how often these foods are served.
Syrup (Fruit Flavored)			X	Syrup is a condiment and is not creditable.
Toaster Pastries with Fruit			X	Toaster pastries do not credit toward the fruits component. Toaster pastries are a grain-based dessert and do not credit toward the grains component.
Yogurt, Commercial (Fruit added by Provider)		X		Yogurt containing fruit added by the provider must contain at least an ⅛ cup (2 tablespoons) of visible fruit per serving. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe. Yogurt must contain no more than 12 g of added sugars per 6 oz.
Yogurt with Fruit, Commercial			X	The entire volume of commercial yogurt with fruit may credit toward the meat alternates component but cannot count toward the fruits component. See the Meats/Meat Alternates section in the FBG for additional crediting information. Yogurt must contain no more than 12 g of added sugars per 6 oz.



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT VEGETABLES AND FRUITS

1. **What is the minimum amount of fruits or vegetables that can be credited toward the meal pattern requirements?**

The minimum creditable amount for fruits and vegetables is $\frac{1}{8}$ cup (2 tablespoons).

This means that fruits or vegetables in amounts smaller than $\frac{1}{8}$ cup do not credit toward the meal pattern requirements.

For example, if you make a casserole containing pasta, cheese, peas and carrots. The peas and carrots may credit toward the vegetable component if there is at least $\frac{1}{8}$ cup peas and carrots in one serving of the casserole. You would use your standardized recipe to determine creditable amounts per serving. If there is less than $\frac{1}{8}$ cup peas and carrots per serving, then you could not credit the casserole toward the vegetables component in that meal.

The minimum creditable amount may not meet the required serving amount for the meal pattern. Please note, minimum creditable amounts do not apply to the infant meal pattern.

2. **How do food items that are mixtures of vegetables and fruit, such as a carrot-raisin salad or pineapple chicken stir fry, credit?**

Food items that are mixtures of vegetables and fruits, such as a carrot-raisin salad, may credit toward both the vegetables component and the fruits component if they contain at least $\frac{1}{8}$ cup vegetable and $\frac{1}{8}$ cup fruit per serving. The vegetables and fruits should be visibly recognizable. For example, a carrot-raisin salad served

to 6-year-olds that contains $\frac{1}{2}$ cup carrots and $\frac{1}{8}$ cup raisins (which credits as $\frac{1}{4}$ cup fruit) meets the full vegetables component and the full fruits component. Component contribution should be documented with a standardized recipe, Product Formulation Statement (PFS), or Child Nutrition (CN) label.

3. **Can a program operator serve a vegetable mixture (such as peas and carrots) and credit this as 2 servings of vegetables at lunch and supper (if serving a second vegetable in place of fruits)?**

Yes. Program operators may use a standardized recipe or manufacturer documentation (such as a PFS) that documents the ratio of vegetables in the mixture. For example, if a mixture contains 50 percent carrots and 50 percent peas, and a 1 cup serving of this blend provides a $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of carrots and a $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of peas, then this would credit as serving two, distinct vegetables at the meal. If the ratio or amount of each vegetable cannot be determined, then the vegetable mixture will credit as only one vegetable.

4. **I would like to serve two different vegetables at lunch. Is this allowable?**

Yes. To provide flexibility in menu planning, centers and day care homes may choose to serve two vegetables at lunch and supper, rather than a serving of vegetables and a serving of fruit. This means that the fruit component at lunch and supper may be substituted by an additional vegetable.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT VEGETABLES AND FRUITS

The substituted vegetable must be at least the same serving size as the fruit component it replaced. When two vegetables are served at lunch or supper, they must be two different kinds of vegetables.

For example, a supper menu for children ages 6–12 years old may contain a ½ cup of roasted broccoli and a ¼ cup of roasted cauliflower. The broccoli meets the minimum serving size required for the vegetables components (½ cup) while the cauliflower is replacing the fruits component and meets the minimum serving size required for the fruits component (¼ cup) for children 6 through 12 years old.

5. **Are herbs and spices that I use in my recipes creditable in the CACFP?**

Dried herbs and spices are frequently used as seasonings to round out the meal, improve acceptability, and satisfy children's or adults' appetites. These dried herbs and spices are considered "other foods" and are not creditable in CACFP. Fresh herbs, such as parsley and cilantro, when provided in the minimum creditable amount, may be credited toward the vegetables component. Please note: Raw parsley and cilantro credit as half the volume served (¼ cup raw chopped herb credits as ½ cup vegetable).

6. **Could a provider serve mashed potatoes and French fries and count them as two different creditable vegetables in the same meal?**

No. Although these vegetables are in different forms, they are both made from white/russet potatoes and would not be considered different vegetables if served in the same meal.

7. **Can program operators who serve primarily American Indian or Alaska Native participants or who are located in American Samoa, Guam, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands substitute vegetables for the grains component at snack meal service?**

Yes. These program operators may substitute vegetables for the grains component at any meal service, including snack. If program operators choose to substitute vegetables for grains at snack and want to offer vegetables as the second required component, then another (different) vegetable must be offered. The same serving of vegetables may not be used to meet the requirement to offer two components. Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) encourages program operators to offer different vegetables for each component.

For example, a CACFP operator serving at-risk afterschool snacks to children ages 6–8 in Guam may substitute ½ cup of vegetables for 1 ounce equivalent of grains to meet the first of any two components required for snack. In this example, the CACFP operator may also serve ¾ cup of another vegetable to meet the vegetables component as the second component in a reimbursable snack.



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT VEGETABLES AND FRUITS

8. Can the fruit or fruit juice in pudding or gelatin be credited toward the fruits component?

This question must be answered in two parts:

- Fruit juice may be served in liquid, gelled, or frozen form, therefore 100% juice may credit even if it has been gelatinized or thickened with thickening agents. However, juice cannot be credited when used as an ingredient in another food or beverage except for smoothies. Therefore, fruit juice used in preparation of recipes other than smoothies does not credit.
- To credit fruit in other foods (for example, puddings or gelatin), each serving must contain at least an ⅛ cup (2 tablespoons) of fruit per serving, and the fruit must be visible in the product. Document the meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a PFS.

9. How can I tell if juice is 100% full-strength juice?

Any juice product labeled “juice,” “full-strength juice,” “single-strength juice,” “100% juice,” or “reconstituted juice” is considered full-strength juice. To meet the fruits requirement, the product must be pasteurized, 100% full-strength juice and purchased fresh, canned, frozen, or reconstituted with water from concentrate. Juices that have the words cocktail, beverage, or drink are not considered 100% juice. The statements “natural” or “organic” do not indicate that the juice is 100% juice.

10. Can a pasteurized, 100% full-strength fruit and vegetable juice blend count toward both the vegetables component and the fruits component?

No, 100% fruit and vegetable juice blends may only credit toward one component, not both the vegetables and fruits components. The 100% fruit and vegetable juice blend credits toward the fruits component when fruit juice or puree is the first ingredient listed. Similarly, the 100% fruit and vegetable juice blend may credit toward the vegetables component when vegetable juice or puree is the first ingredient listed. Keep in mind, that fruit or vegetable juice may only be served as a reimbursable component of a meal once per day to children ages 1 through 18 and to adults. Please note, juice is not allowed under the infant meal pattern.

11. Can juice be served as an extra food item?

Yes. Juice (or other foods) may be served as an extra food item outside of the meal pattern requirements. For example, if juice is served at breakfast, juice may also be served as an extra item at snack (for example, crackers, cheese, and juice as the extra item). FNS encourages program operators to use their discretion when choosing to serve extra food items. While juice can be part of a healthful diet, it lacks the dietary fiber found in other forms of fruit and vegetables, and when consumed in excess, it can contribute extra calories. Meals containing extra foods, in addition to the minimum required meal components, receive the same reimbursement rate as regular CACFP meals.



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT VEGETABLES AND FRUITS

12. Can the list of approved juices from the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) also be used in helping providers determine a creditable juice?

Yes. Like the CACFP, all WIC-approved juices must be 100% full strength. WIC's juice requirements include additional nutrition standards, such as a minimum amount of vitamin C. This means there may be some 100% juices that are creditable in the CACFP but may not be eligible in WIC.

13. When serving a smoothie with fruit as one of the ingredients/components, does that count as your juice for the day?

Yes. Pureed vegetables and fruits (fresh, frozen, or canned) served in a smoothie credit as juice and are subject to the daily juice limit.

14. Can we serve homemade juices such as apple cider from local farm stands?

Yes, if the juice is pasteurized. Due to the safety hazards, unpasteurized ciders and juices cannot be served. As a best practice, check your local and State requirements before serving.

15. How can juice concentrate credit?

Fruit juice concentrates are allowed to be credited when fully reconstituted. Per the FBG, reconstituted juice is one part juice concentrate to three parts water. One tablespoon (1 Tbsp) concentrate credits as $\frac{1}{4}$ cup fruit when fully

reconstituted: 1 Tbsp concentrate + 3 Tbsp water = 4 Tbsp full-strength reconstituted juice which equals $\frac{1}{4}$ cup.

16. May food ingredients that are unrecognizable (not visible) credit toward meal pattern requirements (for example, carrots pureed in a sauce for Macaroni and Cheese)?

Pureed vegetables or fruits may credit toward the CACFP meal pattern requirements if the menu item also provides an adequate amount ($\frac{1}{8}$ cup or more) of visible, creditable vegetables or fruits. For example, if the macaroni and cheese made with carrot puree also contains visible butternut squash cubes in the minimum creditable amount (e.g., $\frac{1}{8}$ cup of diced squash), then the volume of the pureed vegetables (e.g., $\frac{1}{8}$ cup of pureed carrots) may also credit. In this example, the menu item would provide a total of $\frac{1}{4}$ cup vegetables. Meals served in CNP are a nutrition education opportunity to help children learn how to build a healthy plate. It is important for young children to be able to identify the meal components in a healthy meal.

17. How should vegetables, fruits, or other foods not listed in the FBG be credited?

Not all foods that you may want to serve at your site are listed in the FBG. If a food item is not listed in the FBG, the program operator may use the yield information of a similar food that is found in the FBG. For example, if you have a



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT VEGETABLES AND FRUITS

recipe that includes queso fresco (a soft, fresh Mexican cheese), you could use the FBG yield information for feta cheese, which is similar in texture and yield, to determine the crediting. Additionally, if your State agency approves, you may conduct an in-house yield study to determine the contribution toward meal pattern requirements. Instructions for developing in-house yields are available in the introduction section of the FBG.

18. How do I credit the vegetables and fruits on a homemade pizza?

Vegetable and fruit pizza toppings credit if there is at least an 1/8 cup vegetable or fruit per serving. If pizza toppings only meet a portion of the vegetable or fruit requirement, an additional serving of vegetable and/or fruit must be provided. Document the meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe.

19. How much tomato paste, tomato puree, or tomato sauce would be needed to equal a 1/4 cup of vegetable for each child?

- Tomato paste: 1 tablespoon = 1/4 cup vegetable
- Tomato puree: 2 tablespoons = 1/4 cup vegetable
- Tomato sauce: 4 tablespoons = 1/4 cup vegetable

20. Is tomato a fruit or vegetable? What about avocado?

Both tomatoes and avocados credit as vegetables in CNP. Refer to the FBG for a list of creditable fruits and vegetables. While the FBG provides a relatively

comprehensive list of foods commonly served in CNP, it does not include information on every possible vegetable or fruit that can be part of a reimbursable meal. CACFP centers and homes should work with their sponsor or State agency, as appropriate, when they have questions about the crediting of foods.

21. Are edible wild plants such as dandelion greens, burdock, lambs quarters (pig weed), and seaweed creditable?

Yes, these items credit as vegetables. Some items, such as seaweed, have been added to the FBG; others are listed as under a food item they are similar to (for example, dandelion greens are found under “chicory, fresh”). Caution should be used when serving wild plants that are not purchased commercially for food safety reasons.

22. Are dehydrated vegetables creditable?

Yes. Dehydrated vegetables are creditable. Crediting is based on the rehydrated volume, not the fresh volume that may be stated on the container. Keep in mind that rehydration data on the container often varies from brand to brand. This variation means that the following procedure must be used for each brand of dehydrated product. A minimum of an 1/8 cup of rehydrated vegetable must be served in order to credit toward the vegetables component.

Determine the rehydrated volume as follows:

- Rehydrate (add water or liquid to) a purchase unit of the dehydrated vegetable according to the manufacturer’s



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT VEGETABLES AND FRUITS

directions. If the directions are not on the container, request rehydration instructions from the manufacturer.

- Measure the rehydrated volume.
- Measure the number of $\frac{1}{4}$ cup servings of rehydrated product that one purchase unit provides.

Document and keep records obtained as required by the State agency, or sponsoring agency as verification. Records should include information on the size of the purchase unit, the number of $\frac{1}{4}$ cup servings of rehydrated product per purchase unit, the name of the manufacturer, and the manufacturer's directions for how to rehydrate the product.

23. Are the raisins in homemade rice or bread pudding creditable?

Yes. However, at least an $\frac{1}{8}$ cup (2 tablespoons) must be present in each serving. In most recipes, not enough raisins are used to meet this requirement. Maintain a standardized recipe on file to document that there is at least an $\frac{1}{8}$ cup (2 tablespoons) of raisins per serving (which credits as a $\frac{1}{4}$ cup fruit).

As a reminder, sweet rice and bread puddings are considered grain-based desserts and are not creditable toward the grains component in CACFP.





GRAINS

Grains are a required meal component for a reimbursable breakfast and lunch/supper in the CACFP. Grains are not required at snack but may be served as one of the two meal components. At breakfast, program operators may serve meats/meat alternates in place of the entire grains component, up to three times per week.

To credit toward the grains component, grain items must be made from ingredients that are whole grain, enriched, bran, or germ. Grains are measured in ounce equivalents (oz eq).

Some examples of foods that contribute toward the grains requirement when made from creditable grain ingredients include:

- Breads, biscuits, bagels, rolls, tortillas, crackers, muffins
- Cereal grains (cooked) such as rice, bulgur, oatmeal, quinoa
- Macaroni, pasta, noodle products (cooked)
- Ready-to-eat (RTE) breakfast cereals

The Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs (Exhibit A) chart provides a general guideline for crediting prepared grains items. Exhibit A is discussed starting on **page 94**.



Crediting Tips for Serving Grains in the CACFP

- Ounce equivalents (oz eq) are used to determine the amount of creditable grains.
- The minimum creditable amount for grains is 0.25 oz eq per serving.
- Grain items must be made from grain ingredients that are whole-grain flour, whole-grain meal, corn masa, masa harina, hominy, enriched flour, enriched meal, bran, germ, or be an enriched product such as enriched bread or a fortified cereal.
- At least one serving of grains per day must be whole grain-rich when one or more grain items are served that day.
- Grain-based desserts do not credit toward the grains component (i.e., are noncreditable foods) in the CACFP.
- Breakfast cereals must contain no more than 6 grams of added sugars per dry ounce.





CACFP operators must credit grains based on ounce equivalent (oz eq) standards. For more information on crediting ounce equivalent grains, see the Crediting in Action section on page 111.

Substituting Vegetables for Grains in American Samoa, Guam, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and Tribal Communities

All sponsors, institutions, and facilities in American Samoa, Guam, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and Tribal Communities can offer any vegetable such as breadfruit, prairie turnips, yams, plantains, or sweet potatoes to meet the grains requirements in the CACFP to address cultural food

preferences, product availability, and cost concerns. The vegetables served must meet the daily minimum grain quantity required and can be used to meet the whole grain-rich requirement. One-half cup vegetables substitutes for 1 ounce equivalent grains. There is no limit on the amount of times vegetables may be substituted for the grains requirement. The vegetables substituting for the grains component cannot also credit as the vegetables component in the same meal.



CREDITABLE GRAINS

The following types of ingredients are considered creditable grains in the CACFP:

1. Whole grains (including nixtamalized corn, such as corn masa, masa harina, or hominy grits)
2. Enriched grains and fortified breakfast cereals
3. Bran and germ

1. Whole Grains

Whole grains consist of the entire grain seed, usually called the kernel. The kernel is made of three components: the bran, germ, and endosperm. When processed, grain kernels are cracked, crushed, or flaked. For food products to be labeled “whole grain,” they must contain the same proportions of bran, germ, and endosperm as the original whole grain.

Examples of whole-grain ingredients include whole-grain flour, whole-wheat flour, oatmeal, bulgur, popcorn, and whole-grain barley. Gluten-free whole grains include amaranth, brown rice, buckwheat, whole corn, millet, quinoa, teff, and wild rice. Whole grains offer a variety of vitamins and minerals, including magnesium, selenium, iron, zinc, B vitamins, and dietary fiber. For a list of whole grains, see List of Common Whole Grains chart on the next page.

Grain products made from corn must be labeled as whole corn (or other “whole-corn” designations such as whole-grain corn, whole ground corn, or whole-corn flour) or enriched corn (or other “enriched corn” designations such as enriched yellow cornmeal, enriched corn flour, or enriched corn grits) to be creditable, with the exception of corn masa,

masa harina, or hominy grits, which are considered whole grain.

Nixtamalized corn, (i.e., corn treated with lime), such as hominy, corn masa (dough from masa harina), and masa harina (corn flour) are considered whole grain when evaluating products for meal requirements. Nixtamalization is a process in which dried corn is soaked and cooked in an alkaline (slaked lime) solution. This process increases the bioavailability of certain nutrients. If the ingredient statement indicates the corn is treated with lime (for example, “ground corn with trace of lime” or “ground corn treated with lime”), then the corn is nixtamalized and considered a whole grain.

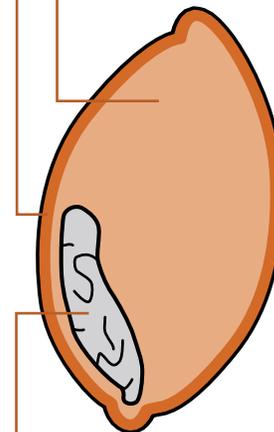
Whole-Grain Kernel

Bran

“Outer shell” protects the seed. It contains fiber, B vitamins, and trace minerals.

Endosperm

Provides energy. It contains carbohydrates and protein.



Germ

Nourishment for the seed. It contains antioxidants, vitamin E, and B vitamins.

List of Common Whole Grains

Please note that this is not an exhaustive list and therefore may not contain all possible whole-grain ingredient names present on food labels.

List of Common Whole Grains	
Wheat	
bromated whole-wheat flour	white whole-wheat flour
bulgur (cracked wheat)	whole bulgur
cracked wheat or crushed wheat	whole-durum flour
entire wheat flour	whole-durum wheat flour
flaked wheat	whole-grain bulgur
graham flour	whole-grain wheat
sprouted wheat	whole-grain wheat flakes
sprouted wheat berries	whole-grain wheat flour
sprouted whole wheat	whole-wheat flakes
stone ground whole-wheat flour	whole-wheat flour
toasted crushed whole wheat	whole-wheat pastry flour
wheat berries	whole-white wheat
wheat groats	
Oats	
instant oatmeal	steel cut oats
oat groats	whole-grain oat flour
oatmeal or rolled oats	whole oats
old fashioned oats	whole-oat flour
quick-cooking oats	
Barley	
dehulled barley	whole-barley flour
dehulled-barley flour	whole-grain barley
whole barley	whole-grain barley flour
whole-barley flakes	



List of Common Whole Grains

Corn

nixtamalized corn, such as corn masa, masa harina, or hominy grits	whole-grain corn
popcorn	whole-grain corn flour
whole corn	whole-grain cornmeal
whole-corn flour	whole-grain grits
whole cornmeal	

Brown Rice

brown rice	sprouted brown rice
brown rice flour	

Wild Rice

wild rice	wild rice flour
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Rye

flaked rye	whole rye
rye berries	whole-rye flakes
rye groats	whole-rye flour
sprouted whole rye	

Other Grains

amaranth	teff
amaranth flour	teff flour
buckwheat	triticale
buckwheat flour	triticale flour
buckwheat groats	whole einkorn
freekeh (farik)	whole einkorn berries
millet	whole emmer (farro)
millet flour	whole-grain einkorn flour
quinoa	whole-grain sorghum flour
spelt berries	whole-grain spelt flour
sprouted buckwheat	whole kamut (Khorasan wheat)
sprouted einkorn	whole sorghum (milo)
sprouted spelt	whole spelt

2. Enriched Grains and Fortified Breakfast Cereals

Enriched and fortified grains are grains that have been processed to remove all or part of the bran and the germ to give a grain product a smoother texture. Certain nutrients are then added back during or after processing. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) sets the standards for food enrichment and fortification.

If a grain product is labeled “enriched,” it must contain certain amounts of niacin, iron, thiamine, riboflavin, and folic acid. If it is labeled “fortified,” it can have any nutrients added to increase the nutritional quality of the product. Sometimes just the grain portion of a product is enriched or fortified, and sometimes the entire product has been enriched or fortified. When nutrients are added to the entire grain product, the added nutrients appear at the end of the ingredient list.

For example, an ingredient list for an enriched pasta may say:

INGREDIENTS: Semolina (Wheat), Durum Wheat Flour, **Niacin, Iron (Ferrous Sulfate), Thiamine Mononitrate, Riboflavin, Folic Acid**

*Added nutrients are in bold.

List of Common Enriched Grains

Please note that this is not an exhaustive list and therefore may not contain all possible enriched grain ingredient names present on food labels. Look for the word “enriched” in the grain ingredient description.

List of Common Enriched Grains	
enriched bromated flour	enriched rice flour
enriched corn flour	enriched rye flour
enriched durum flour	enriched semolina
enriched durum wheat flour	enriched wheat flour
enriched farina	enriched white flour
enriched rice	enriched yellow corn flour

Criteria for Enriched Grain Products or Fortified Breakfast Cereals

To determine if a grain product is enriched or if a breakfast cereal is fortified, it must meet at least **one** of the following criteria:

Criteria 1

The food is labeled as “enriched.” For example, long grain rice that is enriched will have in the product name “enriched long grain rice.”

Criteria 2

An enriched grain is listed as the first ingredient on the ingredient list (or second after water). The ingredient list will usually say “enriched flour” or “enriched wheat flour,” or there is a sub-listing of nutrients used to enrich the ingredient, for example, “white flour (iron, folic acid, riboflavin, niacin, and thiamine).”



GRAINS

Criteria 3

For breakfast cereals, the product is labeled as “fortified” or the ingredient list names the vitamins and minerals that have been added to the product. If a breakfast cereal is fortified, it does not need to be enriched.

For example, the ingredient list of a fortified breakfast cereal may read, “Ingredients: Wheat flour, sugar. Contains less than 2 percent or less of salt, baking soda, caramel color, BHT for freshness. **Vitamins and Minerals: vitamin C (sodium ascorbate, ascorbic acid), niacin, vitamin B6 (pyridoxine hydrochloride), reduced iron, zinc oxide, folic acid, vitamin B2 (riboflavin), vitamin B1 (thiamin hydrochloride), vitamin A palmitate, vitamin D, vitamin B12.**”

3. Bran and Germ

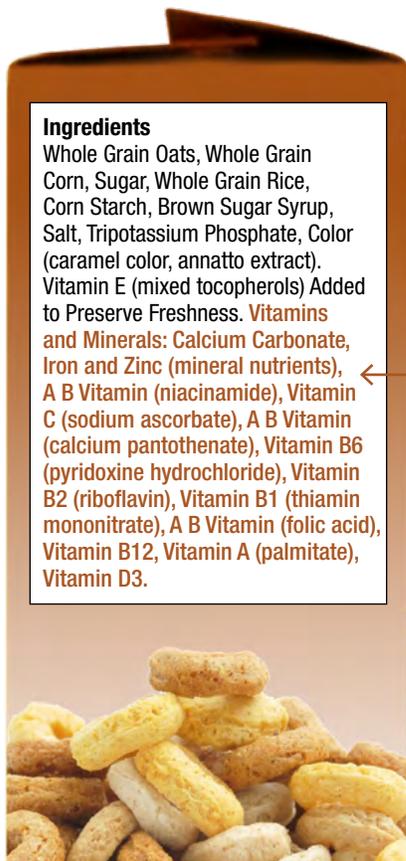
The bran is the seed husk or outer coating of grains such as wheat, rye, and oats. The bran can be a good source of many nutrients, including B vitamins, iron, potassium, and fiber.

The germ is the vitamin-rich portion of the grain kernel, which can provide a good source of B vitamins, phosphorus, and zinc. The germ can be separated before processing for use as a cereal or food supplement.

List of Common Brans and Germs

Please note that this is not an exhaustive list and therefore may not contain all possible bran and germ ingredient names present on food labels. Look for the words “bran” and “germ” in the ingredient description.

List of Common Brans and Germs	
corn bran	rye bran
oat bran	wheat bran
rice bran	wheat germ



Added nutrients are in bold and indicate this is a fortified breakfast cereal. **NOTE: If a cereal is not fortified, the ingredient list will not include any added vitamins and minerals.**



NONCREDITABLE GRAINS OR FLOURS

Many commercial grain products include ingredients that are not creditable toward the grains component. These include grain ingredients that are not whole, enriched, bran, or germ such as bromated flour, durum flour, white flour, and wheat flour. Additionally, bean/pea/lentil and vegetable flours do not credit toward the grains component; they may credit toward the vegetables and/or meat alternates components when used as an ingredient.

List of Common Noncreditable Grains or Flours

Please note that this is not an exhaustive list and therefore may not contain all possible grains that do not credit in the CACFP.

Typically, these are grains that DO NOT include the word “whole” or “enriched” in the ingredient description.

Although bean/pea/lentil and vegetable flours are not grains, they are included with the noncreditable grains. Note: bean/pea/lentil and vegetable flours may credit toward the vegetables and/or meat alternates components when used as an ingredient for pasta or other recipes.

List of Common Noncreditable Grains or Flours

all-purpose flour (not enriched)	farina (not enriched)
any bean/pea/lentil flour	malted barley flour
any nut/seed flour	oat fiber
any vegetable flour	potato flour
barley malt	rice flour
bromated flour	semolina
corn fiber	tapioca flour
corn flour	wheat flour
degerminated corn meal	white flour
durum flour	yellow corn meal

Noncreditable grains or flours in insignificant amounts (displayed in the ingredient list as less than 2 percent of the total product) may be disregarded when determining if a grain product credits toward the meal pattern. To the extent possible, choose grain foods with an insignificant amount of noncreditable grains or flours.

Grain Derivatives

Grain derivatives are not considered grains in the CACFP and can be ignored when looking at an ingredient list to determine if a grain product is creditable. Grain derivatives are generally present in small amounts in grain products.

List of Common Grain Derivatives

corn starch	tapioca starch
corn dextrin	wheat dextrin
modified food starch	wheat gluten
rice starch	wheat starch



GRAINS

Use this flowchart to determine if a grain product is creditable in the CACFP.

Flowchart for Determining Creditable Grains for CACFP

1. Is the grain product considered a grain-based dessert? (See [Grain-Based Desserts](#) in the CACFP for a chart of some common grain-based desserts.)

If the answer is “yes”, then this product is **not** creditable toward the grains component in CACFP. 

If the answer is “no”, look at the grain **product label**.

No 

2. Is the grain product labeled as: “enriched” (e.g., enriched long grain rice), “fortified” (e.g., fortified breakfast cereal), or “whole grain” (e.g., whole-wheat bread)*?

Note: If the label states “made with whole grains” or “contains whole grains” this is not the same. Please go to step 3.

✓ If the answer is “yes” to any of these, the grain product is **creditable** toward the grains component.

✗ If the answer is “no”, then look at the **ingredient list** on the package.

No 

3. Is the first grain ingredient (or second after water): an enriched grain, a whole grain, bran, or germ?

✓ If the answer is “yes” to any of these, the grain product is **creditable** toward the grains component.

✗ If the answer is “no”, continue reading the **ingredient list**.

No 

4. Does the ingredient list include a listing of vitamins and minerals used to enrich or fortify the product (e.g., wheat flour (niacin, iron, riboflavin, folic acid, thiamin))?

✓ If the answer is “yes”, the grain product is **creditable** toward the grains component.

✗ If the answer is “no”, there may still be other creditable grains in the product.

In these cases, obtain documentation from the manufacturer stating the grams of creditable grains per serving. If there are enough creditable grains per serving (at least 0.25 oz eq), the grain product may be creditable toward the grains component.

***Note:** Although products whose first ingredient is whole grain, or are labeled as whole grain, are creditable, they are not necessarily whole grain-rich. See [page 82](#) to determine whether a product is whole grain-rich.

The questions on the following page will provide practice on how to determine if a grains product is creditable using an ingredient list. There are additional examples of crediting grains toward the meal pattern requirements beginning on page 93.



PRACTICE QUESTIONS ON HOW TO DETERMINE A CREDITABLE GRAIN PRODUCT USING AN INGREDIENT LIST

Use the following sample product ingredient lists to determine whether the product is creditable as a grain in the CACFP:

Multigrain Bread

INGREDIENTS: Water, Enriched Wheat Flour [Flour, Malted Barley Flour, Reduced Iron, Niacin, Thiamin Mononitrate (Vitamin B1), Riboflavin (Vitamin B2), Folic Acid], Rolled Oats, Sugar, Wheat Gluten, Yeast, Soybean Oil, Salt, Calcium Propionate, (Preservative), Monoglycerides, Datem and/or Sodium Stearoyl Lactylate, Calcium Sulfate, Citric Acid, Calcium Carbonate, Soy Lecithin, Whey, Nonfat Milk



Is this a creditable grain product?

Yes, this multigrain bread is creditable as an enriched grain product because the first grain ingredient listed is an enriched grain: enriched wheat flour.

Garlic Bread

INGREDIENTS: All-Purpose Flour, Water, Enriched Semolina (Wheat Flour, Niacin, Ferrous Sulfate, Thiamine Mononitrate, Riboflavin, Folic Acid). Contains less than 2% of each of the following: Yeast, Salt, Natural Flavor (Wheat), Soybean Oil, Minced Garlic, Wheat Gluten, Calcium Sulfate, Enzymes (Wheat), and Ascorbic Acid



Is this a creditable grain product?

No, the first ingredient on the ingredient list is all-purpose flour, which is not a whole grain or enriched grain. This garlic bread is not creditable as a grain product.

Ready-to-Eat Breakfast Cereal

INGREDIENTS: Whole-Grain Oats, Corn Starch, Sugar, Salt, Tripotassium Phosphate, Vitamin E (mixed tocopherols) Added to preserve freshness. Vitamins and Minerals: Calcium Carbonate, Iron and Zinc (mineral nutrients), Vitamin C (sodium ascorbate), A B Vitamin (niacinamide), Vitamin B6 (pyridoxine hydrochloride), Vitamin A (palmitate), Vitamin B1 (thiamin mononitrate), A B Vitamin (folic acid), Vitamin B12, Vitamin D3



Is this a credible grain product?

Yes, this ready-to-eat breakfast cereal is creditable as a grain product because it is a fortified breakfast cereal. The ingredient list includes vitamins and minerals that have been added to enhance the nutritional value.

Bagels

INGREDIENTS: Whole-Wheat Flour, Water, Brown Sugar, Yeast, Wheat Bran, Germ, Cornmeal, Gluten, Cornstarch, Salt, Calcium Propionate, Cellulose Gum, Citric Acid, Soy Lecithin



Is this a creditable grain product?

Yes, this bagel is creditable as a whole-grain product because the first ingredient is a whole grain: whole-wheat flour.



GRAINS

Whole Grain-Rich

To emphasize the importance of whole grains, the CACFP meal patterns require that at least one grains serving per day is whole grain-rich when one or more grain items are served that day. Whole grain-rich is the term used by the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) to indicate that the grain content of a product is between 50 and 100 percent whole grain with any remaining grains being enriched. Please note that food items that are 100 percent whole grain meet the whole grain-rich requirement. This requirement was developed based on the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* recommendation to prioritize fiber-rich whole grains.

This requirement helps children and adults increase their intake of whole grains and benefit from the important nutrients that whole grains provide. This whole grain-rich requirement

applies to meals and snacks served to children ages 1 year or older and adults. It does not apply to the infant meal patterns. Any additional grains served that do not meet the whole grain-rich criteria may still credit toward the grains component if they are made of creditable grains. If a provider does not serve grains that day, the provider is not expected to meet the whole grain-rich requirement.

How to Determine if a Product is Whole Grain-Rich

Any **one** of the following six methods may be used to determine if a grain product meets the whole grain-rich criteria. The grain product only needs to meet **one** of the following to be considered whole grain-rich. Remember, at least one serving of grains per day must be whole grain-rich when one or more grain items are served that day.



Method 1:

WIC Whole-Grain Food List



Method 2:

Bread and Pastas Labeled Whole Wheat



Method 3:

FDA-Approved Health Claim



Method 4:

Meets Whole Grain-Rich Criteria for National School Lunch Program (NSLP)



Method 5:

Rule of Three



Method 6:

Manufacturer Documentation or Standardized Recipe





Whole Grain-Rich Method 1

The product is found on **any** State agency's Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)-approved whole-grain food list. **Any** grain product found on **any** State agency's WIC-approved **whole-grain** food list meets CACFP whole grain-rich criteria. Note: for cereals, be sure to check that it is identified as "whole grain" or similarly designated. You may obtain a copy of a State agency's WIC-approved whole grain food list by contacting the State's WIC office. For a list of WIC State agency contacts, see the [Resource Section](#).



Whole Grain-Rich Method 2

For bread and pasta products, the product is labeled as "whole wheat" and has a Standard of Identity issued by the FDA. An FDA Standard of Identity is a set of requirements related to the composition, nature, and essential characteristics of a food that must be met to be labeled/ marketed under a specific name. FDA provides Standards of Identity for certain whole-wheat bread products and whole-wheat pasta products.

Only **bread**s with these exact product names conform to the FDA Standard of Identity for whole-wheat bread and can be considered whole grain-rich using this method:

- whole-wheat bread
- entire wheat bread
- graham bread
- whole-wheat rolls
- entire wheat rolls
- graham rolls
- whole-wheat buns
- entire wheat buns
- graham buns

Only **pastas** with these exact product names conform to the FDA Standard of Identity for whole-wheat pasta and can be considered whole grain-rich using this method:

- whole-wheat macaroni product
- whole-wheat macaroni
- whole-wheat spaghetti
- whole-wheat vermicelli

Other grain products labeled as "whole wheat" such as crackers, tortillas, bagels, biscuits, and other pasta shapes not listed in the "pastas" section above must be evaluated using **one** of the other methods to determine if the product meets the whole grain-rich criteria. Please be aware that manufacturers may label their products with terms that are similar to, but slightly different from, the FDA's Standard of Identity terms listed above. Some of these terms include "whole grain," "made with whole grains," "made with whole wheat," or "contains whole grains." Food products labeled with these terms must be evaluated using **one** of the other methods to determine if it meets the whole grain-rich criteria.



GRAINS



Whole Grain-Rich Method 3

The grain product includes **one** of the following FDA-approved whole grain health claims on its packaging, exactly as written below:

“Diets rich in whole grain foods and other plant foods and low in total fat, saturated fat and cholesterol may reduce the risk of heart disease and some cancers.”

OR

“Diets rich in whole grain foods and other plant foods, and low in saturated fat and cholesterol, may help reduce the risk of heart disease.”

The FDA whole grain health claims are sufficient documentation to demonstrate compliance with the whole grain-rich criteria.



Whole Grain-Rich Method 4

The product meets the whole grain-rich criteria under the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). Use of the NSLP whole grain-rich criteria may ease menu planning and purchasing for schools that operate the CACFP because the NSLP whole grain-rich criteria can be used for both programs. The **“Whole Grain Resource for the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs”** provides guidance and explanations on determining if a grain product is whole grain-rich under these programs.



Use of the NSLP whole grain-rich criteria may ease menu planning and purchasing for schools that operate CACFP programs. The NSLP whole grain-rich criteria apply for all grain products except for grain-based desserts, which are not creditable under the CACFP.



Whole Grain-Rich Method 5

The product meets FNS’s “Rule of Three” criteria for identifying whole grain-rich products in CACFP. FNS developed the “Rule of Three” recognizing that CACFP operators often purchase food in retail environments (grocery stores) and may not have access to manufacturers’ Product Formulation Statement (PFS) or products specially formulated for school meal programs.

To meet the “Rule of Three” criteria:

The first grain ingredient (which may be the second ingredient after water) must be whole grain, and the next two grain ingredients (if any) must be whole grains, enriched grains, bran, or germ. Grain derivatives (byproducts of grains) do not count as grain ingredients and may be disregarded when evaluating with the “Rule of Three” criteria. For more information on grain derivatives, see page 79. Any noncreditable grain ingredients that are labeled as “less than 2 percent” in the ingredients list are considered insignificant and may also be disregarded. See page 79 for list of noncreditable grains/flours.



GRAINS

When using the “Rule of Three”, you may refer to the lists of common grain ingredients while reviewing product labels. Please note that these lists are not all-inclusive, and there may be other items that qualify that are not included. See lists beginning on page 75:

- List of Common Whole Grains
- List of Common Enriched Grains
- List of Common Brans and Germs
- List of Common Noncreditable Grains or Flours
- List of Grain Derivatives

Example: Flatbread Ingredient Statement

Looking at this ingredient statement, you see that this grain product meets the whole grain-rich criteria using the Rule of Three. The first ingredient is a whole grain (stoneground whole-wheat flour), and the second grain ingredient is an enriched grain (enriched flour). The remaining ingredients are not grains or are present in insignificant amounts (less than 2%).

INGREDIENTS: Stoneground whole-wheat flour, water, enriched flour (wheat flour, malted barley flour, niacin, iron, thiamin mononitrate, riboflavin, folic acid), soybean oil, yeast, salt, contains 2% or less of: sugar, dough conditioner (cultured wheat, mono- and diglycerides, sodium stearoyl lactylate, guar gum, enzymes, l-cysteine), leavening (sodium bicarbonate, monocalcium phosphate, sodium acid pyrophosphate), wheat starch, wheat protein, lactic acid, natural flavors, canola oil, calcium propionate (preservative)

Mixed Dishes

When applying the “Rule of Three” criteria to the grain portion of mixed dishes, such as pizza crusts and tortillas for burritos, the first grain ingredient must be a whole grain and the next two grain ingredients (if any) must be whole grains, enriched grains, bran, or germ.

Ready-To-Eat Breakfast Cereals

When applying the “Rule of Three” criteria for breakfast cereals, if the first grain ingredient is a whole grain and the cereal is fortified, the product meets the whole grain-rich criteria. In this situation, there is no need to look at any other grain ingredients in the cereal. See page 77 for more information on fortified breakfast cereals.



GRAINS

As a reminder, the “Rule of Three” is **ONLY** used to determine if a product is whole grain-rich. If the product does not meet the “Rule of Three” criteria for a whole grain-rich product, then check to see if the product meets one of the other methods for whole grain-rich or is creditable as an enriched grain.

Examples using the “Rule of Three”

Example 1: An English muffin ingredient list reads:

“whole-wheat flour, water, enriched wheat flour, wheat starch, yeast, sugar, and salt.”

Let’s evaluate if the English muffin is considered a whole grain-rich product using the “Rule of Three” method:

1. The **first ingredient** (whole-wheat flour) is a **whole grain**,
- AND
2. The **second grain ingredient** (enriched wheat flour) is an **enriched grain**,
 3. The wheat starch is a grain derivative and can be disregarded when determining if a product is whole grain-rich in the CACFP.

 The English muffin is considered whole grain-rich because it meets the “Rule of Three” based on the two creditable grain ingredients: whole-wheat flour and enriched wheat flour.

Example 2: A cheese pizza ingredient list reads:

“mozzarella cheese, parmesan cheese, white whole-wheat flour, brown rice flour, enriched flour, nonfat milk, water, tomato paste, yeast.”

Let’s evaluate if the cheese pizza is considered a whole grain-rich product using the “Rule of Three” method:

1. The **first grain ingredient** (white whole-wheat flour) is a **whole grain**,
- AND
2. The **second grain ingredient** (brown rice flour) is also a **whole grain**,
- AND
3. The **third grain ingredient** (enriched flour) is an **enriched grain**.

 The cheese pizza is considered whole grain-rich because it meets the “Rule of Three” based on the three creditable grain ingredients: white whole-wheat flour, brown rice flour, and enriched flour.

Example 3: Wheat Breadstick

INGREDIENTS: Bread Flour, Water, Enriched Unbleached Wheat Flour (Wheat Flour, Malted Barley Flour, Niacin, Iron as Ferrous Sulfate, Thiamine Mononitrite, Enzyme, Riboflavin, Folic Acid), Yeast, Sugar, Wheat Gluten. Contains less than 2 percent of the following: Soybean Oil, Salt, Oat Fiber, Honey, Sodium Stearoyl Lactylate, Datem, Acesulfame Potassium, Ascorbic Acid, Enzyme. May contain Milk, Soy, Egg, and Sesame

Let's evaluate if the wheat breadstick is considered a whole grain-rich product using the "Rule of Three" method:

1.  The **first ingredient** (bread flour) is **not** a whole grain, therefore this product is **not** considered whole grain-rich using the Rule of Three.



Whole Grain-Rich Method 6

Documentation from a manufacturer or a standardized recipe demonstrating that whole grains are the primary grain ingredient by weight may be used to determine if a grain product is whole grain-rich. Acceptable documentation from a manufacturer is either a Child Nutrition (CN) label or a Product Formulation Statement (PFS). For more information about CN labels see page 7.

- A CN label crediting statement that indicates the product credits toward the grains component, as in the first example below, ensures that the product is whole grain-rich. If the crediting statement includes "grains (enriched)," as shown in the second example below, then the product credits toward the grains component in CNP as an enriched grain, but does not meet the whole grain-rich criteria.

Is it Whole Grain-Rich? Example CN labels

 <h3>Whole-Grain Bean and Cheese Burrito</h3> <p>Ingredient Statement: Whole-wheat flour tortilla, pinto beans, American cheese, green chili, onion, chili powder, salt.</p> <p>CN XXXXXX</p> <p>Each 4.50 oz. Whole-Grain Bean and Cheese Burrito provides 2.00 oz. equivalent meat alternate and <u>2.00 oz. equivalent grains</u> OR 1.00 oz. equivalent meat alternate, 2.00 oz. equivalent grains, and 1/4 cup legume vegetable for Child Nutrition Meal Pattern Requirements. (Use of this logo and statement authorized by the Food and Nutrition Service, USDA mm/yy).</p> <p>CN</p> <p>Net Wt.: 27.0 pounds</p> <p>HJK Foods, Inc 1234 Green Street Leafville, PA 12345</p>	 <h3>Egg and Cheese Breakfast Wrap</h3> <p>Ingredient Statement: Enriched flour tortilla, eggs, Monterey jack cheese, American cheese, chipotle chili pepper, spices.</p> <p>CN XXXXXX</p> <p>Each 3.50 oz. Egg and Cheese Breakfast Wrap provides 1.00 oz. equivalent meat alternate and <u>1.00 oz. equivalent grains (enriched)</u> for Child Nutrition Meal Pattern Requirements. (Use of this logo and statement authorized by the Food and Nutrition Service, USDA mm/yy).</p> <p>CN</p> <p>Net Wt.: 19.0 pounds</p> <p>WXW Company 1234 Maroon Street Cypress, PA 12345</p>
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GRAINS

- A PFS for documenting grains, supplied by the manufacturer, indicates if the product meets the whole grain-rich criteria and may be used by program operators to identify whole grain-rich foods.

Example PFS

Is the product whole grain-rich?



Food and Nutrition Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Grains Ounce Equivalents in Child Nutrition Programs

Crediting Standards Based on **Grams of Creditable Grains**

Program operators have the option to choose the crediting method that fits their specific menu planning needs.

Food manufacturers/vendors must: 1. Provide the following information on company letterhead signed by an official company representative. 2. Use Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs (Exhibit A) in the "Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs" (FBG) to complete this form. 3. Provide a copy of the ingredient list from the product package.

Product Name: _____ Code No.: _____

Manufacturer: _____ Serving Size: _____

I. Does the product meet the whole grain-rich* criteria? Yes _____ No _____

* Whole grain-rich is the term designated by Food and Nutrition Service to indicate that the grain content of a product is between 50 and 100 percent whole grain with any remaining grains being enriched.

II. Does the product contain noncreditable grains? Yes _____ No _____ **How many grams?** _____

(Products with more than 0.24 ounce equivalent (oz eq) or 3.99 grams (g) for Groups A–G or 6.99g for Groups H and I of noncreditable grains do not credit toward the grains requirement for school meals.)

- A standardized recipe may also be used as documentation. For recipes that credit toward the grains component, check the grain ingredient amounts to make sure they are at least 50 percent whole grain to ensure the recipe meets the whole grain-rich criteria.

Documentation from a manufacturer or a standardized recipe is helpful when grain products do not have a whole grain as the first ingredient and for mixed products. When a grain product (such as bread) has a first ingredient that is not whole grain, the primary ingredient by weight may still be whole grain if there are multiple whole-grain ingredients and the combined weight of those whole grains is more than the weight of the other grain ingredients. When the grain portion of a mixed product (like a beef enchilada) is not entirely whole grain, it may be whole grain-rich depending upon the proportion of whole grains to other grain ingredients. More information regarding acceptable documentation for grain products is located in Questions and Answers About Grains on page 107.



ADDITIONAL GRAINS REQUIREMENTS

There are additional grains requirements in the CACFP. Let's review those in detail.

1. Grain-Based Desserts

To better align the CACFP meal patterns with the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, grain-based desserts may not credit toward the grains requirement at any meal or snack. Grain-based desserts are those food items that have a superscript 3 and 4 in **Exhibit A** (see page 94). Grain-based desserts in the CACFP include the following foods: cookies, sweet pie crusts, cobblers, fruit turnovers, doughnuts, cereal bars, breakfast bars, granola bars, sweet rolls, toaster pastries, cakes, coffee cake, and brownies.

Certain grain-based items may be considered a dessert or a savory snack, depending on how they are served. For example, scones can be savory or sweet. Savory scones, such as ones made with cheese and herbs, are not grain-based desserts. However, sweet scones, such as those made with fruit and/or icing, are grain-based desserts. It is important to note that cookies do not have an FDA Standard of Identity, so be aware of clever names that could mislead the menu planner into serving a product that may not be allowed.

When determining whether a food is a grain-based dessert, consider whether the food is commonly thought of as a dessert or treat. Using this approach is particularly important when a food item may not be labeled as a dessert. If you are unsure of whether a food item is considered a grain-based dessert, you should work with your sponsoring organization or State agency to make the determination.

FNS recognizes that centers and day care homes may want to occasionally serve grain-based desserts for celebrations or other special occasions. As a reminder, program operators have the flexibility to serve grain-based desserts as an additional food item that does not credit toward the reimbursable meal or snack. However, food items that do not credit toward the CACFP meal pattern are not allowable costs and must be purchased using nonprogram funds.

2. Breakfast Cereals

Breakfast cereals must meet the added sugars limit and be made from creditable grains. Breakfast cereals served to infants, children, and adults must contain no more than 6 grams of added sugars per dry ounce (no more than 21.2 grams of added sugars per 100 grams of dry cereal). Breakfast cereals include ready-to-eat cereals, instant cereals, and hot/cooked cereals (e.g., oatmeal).



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To determine if a breakfast cereal is within the added sugars limit, use any of the following 3 methods:

Method 1

Find the cereal on **any** State agency’s WIC-approved breakfast cereal list. Similar to the CACFP, all WIC-approved breakfast cereals contain no more than 6 grams of added sugars per dry ounce (21.2 grams of added sugars per 100 grams).

Method 2

Compare the added sugars amount in the cereal to the Added Sugars Limits for Breakfast Cereals Table. This method uses the Nutrition Facts label from the cereal packaging and the table in the next column to help you determine if a breakfast cereal meets the added sugars limit.

Use the table in the next column and follow these steps:

Step 1: Use the Nutrition Facts label to find the Serving Size, in grams (g), of the cereal.

Step 2: Find the Added Sugars line on the Nutrition Facts label. Look at the number of grams (g) next to Added Sugars.

Step 3: Use the serving size identified in Step 1 to find the serving size of your cereal in the Added Sugars Limits for Breakfast Cereals Table.

Step 4: In the table, look at the number to the right of the serving size amount, under the “Added Sugars” column. If your cereal has that amount of added sugars, or less, your cereal meets the added sugars limit.

Added Sugars Limits for Breakfast Cereals Table

Use this table to determine if your breakfast cereal meets the added sugars limits.

Serving Size*	Added Sugars
If the serving size is:	Added sugars must not be more than:
0–2 grams	0 grams
3–7 grams	1 gram
8–11 grams	2 grams
12–16 grams	3 grams
17–21 grams	4 grams
22–25 grams	5 grams
26–30 grams	6 grams
31–35 grams	7 grams
36–40 grams	8 grams
41–44 grams	9 grams
45–49 grams	10 grams
50–54 grams	11 grams
55–58 grams	12 grams
59–63 grams	13 grams
64–68 grams	14 grams
69–73 grams	15 grams
74–77 grams	16 grams
78–82 grams	17 grams
83–87 grams	18 grams
88–91 grams	19 grams
92–96 grams	20 grams
97–100 grams	21 grams

*Serving sizes here refer to those listed on the Nutrition Facts label of the cereal packaging. See the meal patterns for serving size requirements in the CACFP.

GRAINS

For additional information on breakfast cereals, see the **Resource Section** for information on accessing the CACFP Meal Pattern Training Worksheet “Choose Breakfast Cereals That Are Lower in Added Sugars.” Due to rounding, you may get a slightly different result when using the chart in Method 2 and doing the calculations in Method 3. If either of these methods indicates that the cereal is within the added sugars limit, then the cereal may credit toward a reimbursable meal.

Method 3

Use **1** of the following 2 approaches to calculate if the Added Sugars content of the cereal is within the limit:

1. **Standard Approach:** Use the Nutrition Facts label (in the next column) of the breakfast cereal to calculate the Added Sugars content per dry ounce.

Step 1: Find the Serving Size in grams (g) at the top of the label.

30 grams

Step 2: Find the Added Sugars line. Look at the number of grams (g) next to Added Sugars.

3 grams

Step 3: Divide the number of grams of Added Sugars by the serving size in grams.

$$\frac{\text{Added Sugars } 3}{\text{Serving Size } 30} = \frac{3}{30} = 0.100$$

Step 4: If the answer is equal to or less than 0.212, then the cereal is within the added sugars limit and may be creditable in the CACFP.

0.100 < 0.212

This cereal is within the added sugars limit.

* 0.212 is the ratio of the upper limit of Added Sugars per cereal amount. The limit is 21.2 g of Added Sugars per 100 g of cereal (21.2 / 100 = 0.212)

Nutrition Facts	
About 15 servings per container	
Serving size	3/4 cup (30g)
Amount per serving	
Calories	100
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 0.5g	1%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
<i>Trans Fat</i> 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 140mg	6%
Total Carbohydrate 22g	7%
Dietary Fiber 3g	11%
Total Sugars 5g	
Includes 3g Added Sugars	6%
Protein 3g	

* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.



GRAINS

2. **Rounding Approach:** Use an FNS-provided alternate calculation that uses rounding.

Step 1: Find the serving size in grams at the top of the Nutrition Facts label.

30 grams

Step 2: Multiply the serving size in grams by 0.212.

30 x 0.212 = 6.36

Step 3: If the answer in Step 2 ends in 0.5 or more, round the number up to the next whole number. If the answer in Step 2 ends in 0.49 or less, round the number down to the next whole number. For this example, the answer in Step 2 is **6.36**, so it is rounded down to **6**.

Step 4: Find the Added Sugars line on the Nutrition Facts label. Look at the number of grams (g) next to Added Sugars.

3 grams

Step 5: Compare the number from Step 4 with the number in Step 3. If the number from Step 4 is equal to or less than the number in Step 3, the cereal meets the added sugars limit and may be creditable in the CACFP.

3 < 6

This cereal is within the added sugars limit.

Nutrition Facts	
About 15 servings per container	
Serving size	3/4 cup (30g)
Amount per serving	
Calories	100
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 0.5g	1%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
<i>Trans Fat</i> 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 140mg	6%
Total Carbohydrate 22g	7%
Dietary Fiber 3g	11%
Total Sugars 5g	
Includes 3g Added Sugars	8%
Protein 3g	

* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.



CREDITING GRAINS: EXHIBIT A

The Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs (Exhibit A) chart provides a general guideline for crediting prepared grains items. Exhibit A (see next page) can be found in the FBG under Meal Components, “Grains”: <https://foodbuyingguide.fns.usda.gov/Content/TablesFBG/ExhibitA.pdf>.

Exhibit A provides the minimum portion size of grain products that are required to meet various meal pattern requirements. Grain products are grouped together by typical grain amount per product. There are nine groups (A through I) in Exhibit A. Once you have determined that a food product is creditable, find the group on the

chart containing the generic name of the food product. The serving size to provide a specific grains contribution is listed under the Ounce Equivalent (oz eq) column.

When using Exhibit A to determine ounce equivalents, please note that for grain products listed in Groups A through G, the weight of the food product is used to determine the ounce equivalent. However, for food products in Groups H and I, the weight or volume of the food product may be used. For example, when determining crediting for pasta (found in Group H), you may use the volume of the cooked pasta (for example ½ cup cooked) or the weight of the dry pasta (for example 28 grams dry).

Using Exhibit A to find serving sizes

Let’s say you wanted to serve hard pretzels for snack. You can use Exhibit A to figure out how much to serve to meet the meal pattern requirements.

- ▶ Find “Pretzels (hard)” in Exhibit A. These are listed under Group A.
- ▶ Look under the column “Ounce Equivalent (oz eq) for Group A”.

According to Exhibit A, to serve 1 oz eq grains, you would need to serve 22 grams (or 0.8 ounces) of hard pretzels.

Exhibit A also shows smaller serving amounts. For example, if you only need to serve ½ oz eq grains, you would serve 11 grams of hard pretzels.

Food Products per Group	Ounce Equivalent (oz eq)
Group A	Ounce Equivalent (oz eq) for Group A
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bread type coating • Bread sticks (hard) • Chow Mein noodles • Savory crackers (saltines and snack crackers) • Croutons • Pretzels (hard) • Stuffing (dry) Note: weights apply to bread in stuffing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 oz eq = 22 gm or 0.8 oz ¾ oz eq = 17 gm or 0.6 oz ½ oz eq = 11 gm or 0.4 oz ¼ oz eq = 6 gm or 0.2 oz



GRAINS

Exhibit A Grain Requirements For Child Nutrition Programs^{1,2}

Color Key: Footnote 3 or 4 = Red, Footnote 5 = Blue

Food Products per Group	Ounce Equivalent (oz eq)	Minimum Serving Size
Group A	Ounce Equivalent (oz eq) for Group A	Minimum Serving Size for Group A
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bread type coating • Bread sticks (hard) • Chow Mein noodles • Savory crackers (saltines and snack crackers) • Croutons • Pretzels (hard) • Stuffing (dry) Note: weights apply to bread in stuffing 	1 oz eq = 22 gm or 0.8 oz ¾ oz eq = 17 gm or 0.6 oz ½ oz eq = 11 gm or 0.4 oz ¼ oz eq = 6 gm or 0.2 oz	1 serving = 20 gm or 0.7 oz ¾ serving = 15 gm or 0.5 oz ½ serving = 10 gm or 0.4 oz ¼ serving = 5 gm or 0.2 oz
Group B	Ounce Equivalent (oz eq) for Group B	Minimum Serving Size for Group B
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bagels • Batter type coating • Biscuits • Breads—all (for example sliced, French, Italian) • Buns (hamburger and hot dog) • Sweet Crackers⁵ (graham crackers—all shapes, animal crackers) • Egg roll skins • English muffins • Pita bread • Pizza crust • Pretzels (soft) • Rolls • Tortillas • Tortilla chips • Taco shells 	1 oz eq = 28 gm or 1.0 oz ¾ oz eq = 21 gm or 0.75 oz ½ oz eq = 14 gm or 0.5 oz ¼ oz eq = 7 gm or 0.25 oz	1 serving = 25 gm or 0.9 oz ¾ serving = 19 gm or 0.7 oz ½ serving = 13 gm or 0.5 oz ¼ serving = 6 gm or 0.2 oz

¹ In the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP) (grades K–12), and NSLP afterschool snacks, at least 80 percent of the weekly grains offered must meet the whole grain-rich criteria and the remaining grain items offered must be made from whole-grain flour, whole-grain meal, corn masa, masa harina, hominy, enriched flour, enriched meal, bran, germ, or be an enriched product, such as enriched bread, or a fortified cereal. Please note: State agencies have the discretion to set stricter requirements than the minimum nutrition standards for school meals. For additional guidance, please contact your State agency. For all other Child Nutrition Programs, grains must be made from whole-grain flour, whole-grain meal, corn masa, masa harina, hominy, enriched flour, enriched meal, bran, germ, or be an enriched product, such as enriched bread, or a fortified cereal. Under the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) child and adult meal patterns and in the NSLP/SBP preschool meals, at least one grain serving per day must meet the whole grain-rich criteria.

² For the NSLP, SBP (grades K–12), NSLP afterschool snacks, and CACFP, and NSLP/SBP infant and preschool meals grain quantities are determined using ounce equivalents (oz eq). Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) may determine grain quantities using grains/breads servings. Some of the following grain items may contain more sugar, salt, and/or fat than others. This should be a consideration when deciding how often to serve them.

⁵ Allowed in NSLP (up to 2.0 oz eq grain-based dessert per week in grades K–12) as specified in §210.10. May count toward the grains component in the SBP (grades K–12), NSLP afterschool snacks, CACFP, NSLP/SBP infant and preschool meals, and SFSP.

GRAINS

Food Products per Group	Ounce Equivalent (oz eq)	Minimum Serving Size
Group C	Ounce Equivalent (oz eq) for Group C	Minimum Serving Size for Group C
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cookies³ (plain—includes vanilla wafers) • Cornbread • Corn muffins • Croissants • Pancakes • Pie crust (dessert pies³, cobbler³, fruit turnovers⁴, and meats/meat alternate pies) • Waffles 	1 oz eq = 34 gm or 1.2 oz ¾ oz eq = 26 gm or 0.9 oz ½ oz eq = 17 gm or 0.6 oz ¼ oz eq = 9 gm or 0.3 oz	1 serving = 31 gm or 1.1 oz ¾ serving = 23 gm or 0.8 oz ½ serving = 16 gm or 0.6 oz ¼ serving = 8 gm or 0.3 oz
Group D	Ounce Equivalent (oz eq) for Group D	Minimum Serving Size for Group D
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doughnuts⁴ (cake and yeast raised, unfrosted) • Cereal bars, breakfast bars, granola bars⁴ (plain) • Muffins (all, except corn) • Sweet roll⁴ (unfrosted) • Toaster pastry⁴ (unfrosted) 	1 oz eq = 55 gm or 2.0 oz ¾ oz eq = 42 gm or 1.5 oz ½ oz eq = 28 gm or 1.0 oz ¼ oz eq = 14 gm or 0.5 oz	1 serving = 50 gm or 1.8 oz ¾ serving = 38 gm or 1.3 oz ½ serving = 25 gm or 0.9 oz ¼ serving = 13 gm or 0.5 oz
Group E	Ounce Equivalent (oz eq) for Group E	Minimum Serving Size for Group E
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cereal bars, breakfast bars, granola bars⁴ (with nuts, dried fruit, and/or chocolate pieces) • Cookies³ (with nuts, raisins, chocolate pieces and/or fruit purees) • Doughnuts⁴ (cake and yeast raised, frosted or glazed) • French toast • Sweet rolls⁴ (frosted) • Toaster pastry⁴ (frosted) 	1 oz eq = 69 gm or 2.4 oz ¾ oz eq = 52 gm or 1.8 oz ½ oz eq = 35 gm or 1.2 oz ¼ oz eq = 18 gm or 0.6 oz	1 serving = 63 gm or 2.2 oz ¾ serving = 47 gm or 1.7 oz ½ serving = 31 gm or 1.1 oz ¼ serving = 16 gm or 0.6 oz
Group F	Ounce Equivalent (oz eq) for Group F	Minimum Serving Size for Group F
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cake³ (plain, unfrosted) • Coffee cake⁴ 	1 oz eq = 82 gm or 2.9 oz ¾ oz eq = 62 gm or 2.2 oz ½ oz eq = 41 gm or 1.5 oz ¼ oz eq = 21 gm or 0.7 oz	1 serving = 75 gm or 2.7 oz ¾ serving = 56 gm or 2 oz ½ serving = 38 gm or 1.3 oz ¼ serving = 19 gm or 0.7 oz

³ Allowed in NSLP (up to 2.0 oz eq grain-based dessert per week in grades K–12) as specified in §210.10 and at snack service in SFSP. Considered a grain-based dessert and cannot count toward the grains component in CACFP or NSLP afterschool snacks, or NSLP/SBP infant and preschool meals as specified in §§226.20(a)(4) and 210.10.

⁴ Allowed in NSLP (up to 2.0 oz eq grain-based dessert per week for grades K–12) as specified in §210.10. May count toward the grains component in SBP (grades K–12) and at snack and breakfast meals in SFSP. Considered a grain-based dessert and cannot count toward the grains component in the CACFP, NSLP afterschool snacks, or NSLP/SBP infant and preschool meals as specified in §§226.20(a)(4) and 210.10.



GRAINS

Food Products per Group	Ounce Equivalent (oz eq)	Minimum Serving Size
Group G	Ounce Equivalent (oz eq) for Group G	Minimum Serving Size for Group G
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brownies³ (plain) • Cake³ (all varieties, frosted) 	1 oz eq = 125 gm or 4.4 oz ¾ oz eq = 94 gm or 3.3 oz ½ oz eq = 63 gm or 2.2 oz ¼ oz eq = 32 gm or 1.1 oz	1 serving = 115 gm or 4 oz ¾ serving = 86 gm or 3 oz ½ serving = 58 gm or 2 oz ¼ serving = 29 gm or 1 oz
Group H	Ounce Equivalent (oz eq) for Group H	Minimum Serving Size for Group H
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cereal grains (barley, quinoa, etc.) • Breakfast cereals (cooked)^{6,7,8} • Bulgur or cracked wheat • Macaroni (all shapes) • Noodles (all varieties) • Pasta (all shapes) • Ravioli (noodle only) • Rice 	1 oz eq = ½ cup cooked or 1 ounce (28 gm) dry	1 serving = ½ cup cooked or 25 gm dry
Group I	Ounce Equivalent (oz eq) for Group I	Minimum Serving Size for Group I
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ready to eat breakfast cereal (cold, dry)^{6,7,8} 	1 oz eq = 1 cup or 1 ounce for flakes and rounds 1 oz eq = 1¼ cups or 1 ounce for puffed cereal 1 oz eq = ¼ cup or 1 ounce for granola	1 serving = ¾ cup or 1 oz, whichever is less

³ Allowed in NSLP (up to 2.0 oz eq grain-based dessert per week in grades K–12) as specified in §210.10 and at snack service in SFSP. Considered a grain-based dessert and cannot count toward the grain component in CACFP, NSLP afterschool snacks, or NSLP/SBP infant and preschool meals as specified in §§226.20(a)(4) and 210.10.

⁶ Refer to program regulations for the appropriate serving size for supplements served to children aged 1 through 5 in the NSLP; breakfast served in the SBP, and meals served to children ages 1 through 5 and adult participants in the CACFP. Breakfast cereals are traditionally served as a breakfast menu item but may be served in meals other than breakfast.

⁷ In the NSLP and SBP, cereals that list a whole grain as the first ingredient must be fortified. If the cereal is 100 percent whole grain, fortification is not required. For all Child Nutrition Programs, cereals must be whole-grain, enriched, or fortified.

⁸ Cereals must contain no more than 6 grams of added sugars per dry ounce.

GRAINS

Use this **Grains** chart as a guide to identify creditable grains. Use the product ingredient list and/or the product food label along with the details in the Additional Information column to determine if the grain is creditable and where to find more information. This is NOT an all-inclusive list.

Grain	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Amaranth	X			Amaranth is creditable as a whole grain. See Group H of Exhibit A. When amaranth is used as an ingredient in another product, crediting is based on the food item being served.
Barley		X		Barley must be whole grain or enriched to be creditable. See Group H of Exhibit A. When barley is used as an ingredient in another product, crediting is based on the food item being served. Please note that “pot” or “Scotch” barley and “pearl” or “pearled” barley are not creditable because they are not whole grain or enriched.
Buckwheat	X			Buckwheat is creditable as a whole grain. See Group H of Exhibit A. When buckwheat is used as an ingredient in another product, crediting is based on the food item being served.
Bulgur	X			Bulgur is creditable as a whole grain. See Group H of Exhibit A. When bulgur is used as an ingredient in another product, crediting is based on the food item being served.
Cornmeal		X		Cornmeal must be whole grain or enriched to be creditable. When cornmeal is used as an ingredient in another product, crediting is based on the food item being served.
Emmer (Wheat)		X		Emmer is a type of wheat (see Group H of Exhibit A). Emmer must be whole grain or included as in ingredient of an enriched product. When emmer is used as an ingredient in another product, crediting is based on the food item being served.



GRAINS

Grain	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Freekeh	X			Freekeh is creditable as a whole grain. See Group H of Exhibit A. When freekeh is used as an ingredient in another product, crediting is based on the food item being served.
Kasha	X			Kasha made from buckwheat is creditable as a whole grain. See Group H of Exhibit A. When kasha is used as an ingredient in another product, crediting is based on the food item being served.
Millet	X			Millet is creditable as a whole grain. See Group H of Exhibit A. When millet is used as an ingredient in another product, crediting is based on the food item being served.
Quinoa	X			Quinoa is creditable as a whole grain. See Group H of Exhibit A. When quinoa is used as an ingredient in another product, crediting is based on the food item being served. Products made from whole-grain or enriched quinoa flour are also creditable.
Rice (Either Enriched White or Brown)	X			See Group H of Exhibit A.
Rice Flour		X		Rice flour must be whole grain or enriched. Check packaging carefully before purchasing. When rice flour is used as an ingredient in another product, crediting is based on the food item being served.
Rye		X		Rye must be whole grain or included as an ingredient in a final product that has been enriched. See Group H of Exhibit A. When rye is used as an ingredient in another product, crediting is based on the food item being served.



GRAINS

Grain	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Sorghum		X		Sorghum must be whole grain or included as an ingredient in a final product that has been enriched. See Group H of Exhibit A. Pearled sorghum is not a whole grain since the bran is removed during processing; a pearled sorghum grain product must be enriched in order to credit toward the grains component. Popped sorghum is similar to popcorn so it may be credited using information for popcorn found in the FBG. When sorghum is used as an ingredient in another product, crediting is based on the food item being served.
Spelt		X		Spelt is a type of wheat (see Group H of Exhibit A). Spelt must be whole grain or included as an ingredient in a final product that has been enriched. When spelt is used as an ingredient in another product, crediting is based on the food item being served.
Triticale	X			Triticale is a whole grain. When triticale is used as an ingredient in another product, crediting is based on the food item being served.
Wheat Berries	X			Wheat berries are whole-wheat kernels and creditable as whole grains. See Group H of Exhibit A. When wheat berries are used as an ingredient in another product, crediting is based on the food item being served.
Wheat Germ/Bran	X			When wheat germ or bran is used as an ingredient in another product, crediting is based on the food item being served.
Wild Rice	X			Wild rice is creditable as a whole grain. See Group H of Exhibit A.



GRAINS

Use this **Grain Products** chart as a guide to determine if a grain product may be creditable in CACFP. Remember: first check if the product is made from creditable grain ingredients (whole grains, enriched grains, bran and/or germ). To verify the product contains creditable grains, you must check the product ingredient list and/or the product food label. Details in the Additional Information column help you to determine if the product is creditable and where to find more information. This is NOT an all-inclusive list.

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Animal Crackers	X			Animal crackers are credited in the same group as sweet crackers. See Group B of Exhibit A.
Bagels	X			See Group B of Exhibit A.
Bagel Chips	X			See Group B of Exhibit A. These products should be served with caution due to potential choking hazards.
Banana Bread	X			Quick breads are credited in the same group as muffins (other than corn muffins). See Group D of Exhibit A.
Bean/Pea/Lentil Pasta/Noodles			X	Bean/pea/lentil pastas are not creditable toward the grains component. Pasta made from bean/pea/lentil flours may credit toward the M/MA or vegetables components.
Biscuits	X			See Group B of Exhibit A.
Boston Brown Bread	X			See Group B of Exhibit A.
Bread—All (For Example: French, Italian, Sandwich)	X			See Group B of Exhibit A.
Bread Pudding		X		Sweet bread puddings are considered grain-based desserts and do not credit toward the grains component. Savory bread puddings, such as those made with spinach and mushrooms, are not considered grain-based desserts and may credit toward the grains component. Please note that bread puddings may contain an insufficient amount of grains per serving. See Group B of Exhibit A for weights of creditable bread (without other ingredients) required per serving. Document with a standardized recipe or a PFS.



GRAINS

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Breading/Batter	X			See Groups A and B of Exhibit A for weights of the prepared breading or batter coatings. Many commercial products such as commercial fish sticks or chicken nuggets, contain varying amounts of batter/breading. Document crediting information with manufacturers documentation.
Brownies			X	Brownies are considered a grain-based dessert and are not creditable toward the grains component.
Buns, Hamburger and Hot Dog	X			See Group B of Exhibit A.
Cakes			X	Cake is considered a grain-based dessert and is not creditable toward the grains component.
Carrot Bread	X			Quick breads are credited in the same group as muffins (other than corn muffins). See Group D of Exhibit A.
Cereal Bars			X	Cereal bars are considered a grain-based dessert and are not creditable toward the grains component.
Chips, Corn/Tortilla (Wheat or Corn)	X			See Group B of Exhibit A.
Chips, Potato			X	Potato chips are not creditable.
Chow Mein Noodles	X			See Group A of Exhibit A.
Coffee Cake, Cinnamon/ Danish Rolls			X	Coffee cakes, cinnamon rolls, and Danish rolls are considered grain-based desserts and are not creditable toward the grains component.
Cookies			X	Cookies are considered grain-based desserts and are not creditable toward the grains component.
Cornbread	X			See Group C of Exhibit A.
Corn Muffins	X			See Group C of Exhibit A.
Corn Pone	X			Corn pone is a cornbread often made without milk or eggs and baked or fried. See Group C of Exhibit A.
Couscous		X		Couscous is a pasta. Couscous must be whole grain or enriched to be creditable. See Group H of Exhibit A.



GRAINS

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Crackers—Savory (Saltines and Snack Crackers)	X			See Group A of Exhibit A.
Crackers—Sweet (Graham crackers—All Shapes, Animal Crackers)	X			See Group B of Exhibit A.
Cream Puff Shells (Dessert)			X	Cream puff shells are considered grain-based desserts and are not creditable toward the grains component.
Crepes	X			Crepes are credited in the same group as pancakes. See Group C of Exhibit A.
Croissants	X			See Group C of Exhibit A.
Croutons	X			See Group A of Exhibit A.
Cupcakes			X	Cupcakes are considered grain-based desserts and are not creditable toward the grains component.
Danish Pastries (Danishes)			X	Sweet pastries are considered grain-based desserts and are not creditable toward the grains component.
Doughnuts (Donuts)			X	Doughnuts are considered grain-based desserts and are not creditable toward the grains component.
Dumplings	X			Dumplings are credited in the same group as biscuits. See Group B of Exhibit A.
Egg Roll Skins/ Wonton Wrappers	X			See Group B of Exhibit A.
English Muffins	X			See Group B of Exhibit A.
Farina		X		Farina is a cooked cereal, similar to porridge. See Group H of Exhibit A. Farina must be whole grain-rich or enriched.
Fig Bars			X	Fig bars are considered grain-based desserts and are not creditable toward the grains component.
Flour Alternatives (Made from Nongrain Ingredients)			X	Flour alternatives are not grains and are not creditable toward the grains component. These include almond flour, bean flour, coconut flour, chickpea flour, hazelnut flour, Jerusalem artichoke flour, legume flour, potato flour, soy flour, and other nut/seed and vegetable flours.



GRAINS

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
French Toast	X			See Group E of Exhibit A. Document crediting information with standardized recipe or manufacturer's documentation.
Fruit Fritters (such as Apple Fritter)			X	Fruit fritters are considered grain-based desserts and are not creditable toward the grains component.
Graham Crackers	X			Graham crackers are credited in the same group as sweet crackers. See Group B of Exhibit A.
Granola Bars			X	Granola bars are considered grain-based desserts and are not creditable toward the grains component.
Grits		X		Grits are a cooked cereal, similar to porridge, made from coarsely dried maize or hominy. Grits must be whole grain or enriched to be creditable. See Group H of Exhibit A.
Hominy Grits, Regular, Dry	X			Hominy grits are creditable as a whole grain. See Group H of Exhibit A.
Hush Puppies		X		Hush puppies are credited in the same group as corn muffins. See Group C of Exhibit A. Must be made with an enriched and/or whole-grain flour. Document with a standardized recipe or manufacturer's documentation. Deep-fat frying is not allowed as a way of preparing foods onsite. Pre-fried bread may count toward the grains component if it is reheated using a method other than deep-fat frying. Please note that this product is high in fat.
Ice Cream Cones			X	Ice cream cones are considered grain-based desserts and are not creditable toward the grains component.
Ice Cream Sandwich Wafers			X	Ice cream sandwich wafers are considered grain-based desserts and are not creditable toward the grains component.
Johnny Cake			X	Johnny cake is considered a grain-based dessert and is not creditable toward the grains component.
Muffins	X			Muffins are found in Groups C and D of Exhibit A. See Group C for corn muffins. See Group D for all other muffins.



GRAINS

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Noodles (All Varieties)	X			See Group H of Exhibit A.
Noodles in Canned Soup	X			Crediting is based on the weight/volume of the noodles alone without other ingredients. See Group H of Exhibit A.
Oatmeal, Instant and Regular	X			See Group H of Exhibit A. Oatmeal must meet the added sugars limit for breakfast cereals. When oatmeal is used as an ingredient in another product, crediting is based on the food item being served.
Pancakes	X			See Group C of Exhibit A.
Pie Crust (Savory Pies with M/MA and/or Vegetable)		X		See Group C of Exhibit A. The crust portion of savory pies, such as beef or chicken pot pies, may be creditable toward the grains component. Document crediting with a standardized recipe or manufacturer's documentation.
Pie Crust (Dessert Crust)			X	Dessert pie is considered a grain-based dessert and is not creditable toward the grains component.
Pineapple Upside - Down Cake			X	Cake is considered a grain-based dessert and is not creditable toward the grains component.
Pita Bread	X			See Group B of Exhibit A.
Pizza Crust	X			See Group B of Exhibit A.
Polenta	X			See Group H of Exhibit A.
Popcorn, Popped	X			Popcorn is creditable as a whole grain. See the Grains section in the FBG. A ¾ cup serving of popcorn credits as 0.25 oz eq grains. A 1½ cup serving credits as 0.5 oz eq of grains. A 3 cup serving credits as 1 oz eq of grains. Please note that popcorn may be a choking hazard for some participants.
Potato Pancakes		X		Potatoes are not a grain. Only the enriched or whole-grain flour in the potato pancakes may be creditable toward the grains component. Document crediting with a standardized recipe or manufacturer's documentation. Typically, potato pancakes do not contain enough grain flour to credit toward the grains component.

GRAINS

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Pound Cake			X	Pound cake is considered a grain-based dessert and is not creditable toward the grains component.
Pretzels, Soft	X			See Group B of Exhibit A.
Pretzels, Hard	X			See Group A of Exhibit A.
Puff Pastry		X		<p>Puff pastry is credited in the same group as pie crusts. See Group C of Exhibit A for weights of creditable grains (without other ingredients) required per serving.</p> <p>Sweet puff pastries are considered grain-based desserts and are not creditable toward the grains component. Savory puff pastries, such as ones made with vegetables and/or M/MA, are not considered grain-based desserts and may credit toward the grains component. Please note that pastries may contain an insufficient amount of grains per serving.</p> <p>Document crediting with a standardized recipe or manufacturers documentation.</p>
Pumpernickel Bread	X			See Group B of Exhibit A.
Pumpkin Bread	X			Quick breads are credited in the same group as muffins (other than corn muffins). See Group D of Exhibit A.
Raisin Bread	X			Raisin bread is credited in the same group as breads without raisins. See Group B of Exhibit A.
Rice Pudding			X	Sweet rice pudding is considered a grain-based dessert and is not creditable toward the grains component.
Scones, Savory	X			Savory scones are credited in the same group as biscuits. See Group B of Exhibit A.
Scones, Sweet			X	Sweet scones are considered a grain-based dessert and are not creditable toward the grains component.
Sopapillas			X	Sopapillas are considered grain-based desserts and are not creditable toward the grains component.



GRAINS

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Spoon Bread (Spoonbread)	X			Spoon bread is credited in the same group as cornbread. See Group C of Exhibit A.
Squash or Zucchini Bread (Quick Bread)	X			Quick breads are credited in the same group as muffins (other than corn). See Group D of Exhibit A.
Stuffing, Bread, Dry	X			See Group A of Exhibit A. Weights apply only to the dry bread in the stuffing.
Sweet Rolls/Buns			X	Sweet rolls are considered grain-based desserts and are not creditable toward the grains component.
Tapioca			X	Tapioca is not a grain and is not creditable toward the grains component.
Taco Shells (Hard Tortillas)	X			See Group B of Exhibit A.
Toaster Pastries			X	Toaster pastries are considered grain-based desserts and are not creditable toward the grains component.
Tortilla Chips	X			See Group B of Exhibit A.
Tortillas, Soft (Flour and Corn)	X			See Group B of Exhibit A.
Turnover Crust		X		See Group C of Exhibit A for weights of creditable pie crusts (without other ingredients). Sweet turnovers are considered grain-based desserts and are not creditable toward the grains component. Savory turnovers, such as ones made with vegetables and/or M/MA, are creditable toward the grains component.
Wafers, Vanilla			X	Vanilla wafers are considered grain-based desserts and are not creditable toward the grains component.
Waffles	X			See Group C of Exhibit A.



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT GRAINS

1. What are acceptable forms of documentation for whole grain-rich products?

Several types of acceptable documentation may demonstrate that a product is whole grain-rich and meets CACFP requirements. These acceptable forms of documentation include:

1. WIC whole-grain food list
 - a. If the product is found on any State's WIC whole-grain food list (Whole Grain-Rich Method 1)
2. Product Packaging/Ingredient List
 - a. If labeled as whole wheat for bread or pasta products (Whole Grain-Rich Method 2)
 - b. If it contains one of the two FDA whole grain health claims (Whole Grain-Rich Method 3)
 - c. If the product meets the whole grain-rich criteria under the NSLP (Whole Grain-Rich Method 4)
 - d. If it meets the "Rule of Three" based on the ingredient list (Whole Grain-Rich Method 5)
3. Standardized Recipe
 - a. Demonstrating that the whole grains in the recipe make up at least 50 percent of all grains (by weight) and the other grains are enriched grains (Whole Grain-Rich Method 6)

4. Manufacturer Documentation

- a. If the manufacturer provides a PFS that indicates the product meets the whole grain-rich criteria (Whole Grain-Rich Method 6)
- b. If the product has a CN label that provides a contribution toward the grains components (Note: if the label states "grains (enriched)" then the product is not considered whole grain-rich) (Whole Grain-Rich Method 6)

2. Are the FDA whole-grain health claims sufficient documentation to demonstrate that a food is whole grain-rich?

Yes. If a food has **one** of the two **FDA whole-grain health claims** on its packaging, then the food meets the whole grain-rich criteria for CACFP.

3. Can the Whole Grain Stamps from the Whole Grain Council be used to determine if a product meets the whole grain-rich criteria?

No. While the Whole Grain Stamp provides useful information on the amount of whole grains in a product, it is not sufficient documentation to determine if a food is whole grain-rich. Products that display a Whole Grain Stamp may also contain high amounts of noncreditable grains, such as nonenriched refined flour.

4. Can wheat bread, rolls, and buns labeled as “100% whole wheat” be used to meet the whole grain-rich requirement?

Yes. Bread products that are specifically labeled as “whole-wheat bread,” “entire wheat bread,” “whole-wheat rolls,” “entire wheat rolls,” “whole-wheat buns,” and “entire wheat buns” have met the FDA Standard of Identity for a whole-wheat bread and meet the whole grain-rich criteria. Please note that foods with the label “whole grain,” “made with whole grains,” “made with whole wheat,” or “contains whole grains” do not necessarily meet the whole grain-rich criteria.

5. Can a program operator choose which meal will include a whole grain-rich food item?

Yes. You may choose which meal or snack will include a whole grain-rich food item (if grains are served that day). For example, you may serve a whole grain-rich cereal at breakfast one day and whole grain-rich pasta at lunch the next day. This will help expose participants to a variety of whole grains and the wide range of vitamins and minerals that whole grains provide.

6. If I serve a different group of children at lunch than at breakfast, do both meals have to contain a whole grain-rich food item?

No. The whole grain-rich requirement applies to the center or day care home, not to each child or adult participant. If you serve breakfast and lunch and two different groups of children or adults are at each meal, only one meal must contain a whole

grain-rich food. It is strongly encouraged that program operators serving different groups of participants at each meal (such as one group of children at breakfast and a second group at lunch) vary the meal in which a whole grain-rich food item is served. For example, serving whole grain-rich toast at breakfast on Monday and serving brown rice at lunch on Tuesday. This will help ensure that all participants are served a variety of whole grains and benefit from the important nutrients they provide.

7. My day care home only serves snacks. Would all the grains served at snack need to be whole grain-rich?

Yes. Since snack is the only meal/snack served during the day, if the snack includes a grain item, such as crackers, it must be whole grain-rich. However, program operators are not required to serve a grain item at snack and may choose to serve any two of the five meal components.

8. How do I identify grain-based desserts?

In **Exhibit A**, foods listed with a superscript 3 or 4 are designated as grain-based desserts in the CACFP. Grain-based desserts do not credit toward the grains component in the CACFP. The following items are designated as grain-based desserts: cookies, sweet pie crusts, doughnuts, cereal bars, breakfast bars, granola bars, sweet rolls, toaster pastries, cake, and brownies. There is not a specific amount of added sugars, fats, or other nutrients that qualifies a grain

product as a dessert. When determining whether a food is a grain-based dessert, consider whether the food is commonly thought of as a dessert or treat.

9. Can you provide some examples of foods that I can serve in place of grain-based desserts?

Some alternatives to grain-based desserts include muffins, cinnamon toast, fresh and dried fruit, yogurt parfaits, cheese and whole-grain crackers, or peanut butter and crackers.

10. If a center or day care home chooses to serve a grain-based dessert containing a fruit or vegetable, can the fruit/vegetable count toward the fruit/vegetable component?

Yes. The fruit or vegetable in the grain-based dessert (for example: pumpkin in a pumpkin pie) can credit toward the fruit or vegetable component if it contains at least an $\frac{1}{8}$ cup or 2 tablespoons of recognizable fruit or vegetable per serving. The grains portion of a grain-based dessert with fruit or vegetables, such as pies, cobblers, or crisps, cannot credit toward the grains component. Serve sweetened fruit or vegetables in moderation to help reduce participants' consumption of added sugars and help children develop a taste preference for unsweetened fruits or vegetables.

11. Pancakes and waffles are not grain-based desserts, according to Exhibit A. If syrup, honey, jam or another sweet topping is served with these items, are they then considered grain-based desserts?

No. Adding a sweet topping, such as syrup, to pancakes or waffles does not make them grain-based desserts. However, healthy alternatives for toppings, such as fruit or yogurt, are strongly encouraged. Minimizing sweet toppings will help reduce children's and adults' consumption of added sugars. When sugars are added to foods and beverages to sweeten them, they add calories without contributing essential nutrients.

12. Is granola cereal a creditable grain item?

Commercial or homemade granola cereal is credited like other breakfast cereals; it must (1) be made from whole grains, enriched grains, bran, or germ, (or be fortified in the case of breakfast cereals) and (2) meet the added sugars limit for cereals. Credit granola cereal using Group I of Exhibit A. Note: granola bars are considered grain-based desserts and do not credit toward the grains component.



GRAINS

13. How would I know if a ready-to-eat breakfast cereal is “fortified”?

Cereal products that have been fortified list added vitamins and minerals in the ingredient list. For example, an ingredient list for a fortified cereal might read (added vitamins and minerals are in bold):

“Ingredients: Whole wheat, sugar, oats. Contains less than 2 percent of salt, baking soda, caramel color, annatto color, BHT for freshness. **Vitamins and Minerals: vitamin C (sodium ascorbate, ascorbic acid), niacinamide, vitamin B6 (pyridoxine hydrochloride), reduced iron, zinc oxide, folic acid, vitamin B2 (riboflavin), vitamin B1 (thiamin hydrochloride), vitamin A palmitate, vitamin D, vitamin B12**”

14. Can I mix a high-sugar cereal with a low-sugar cereal to meet the added sugars limit?

No. You may not mix a noncreditable food item with a creditable food item to make the new food item creditable. For example, a program operator cannot mix a cereal with 8 grams of added sugars per dry ounce with a cereal with 4 grams of added sugars per dry ounce with the intent of creating a cereal that has 6 grams of added sugars per dry ounce (the added sugars limit for breakfast cereals). It would be challenging for program operators and monitors to determine if the mixed cereal meets the added sugars limit during preparation or review.

15. Can nut or seed meal or flour be used to meet the grains requirement?

No. Nuts and seeds are not grains and cannot credit toward the grains component.

16. Are black bean brownies creditable toward the grains component?

No. Brownies of any kind are considered grain-based desserts and cannot credit toward the grains component in any meal or snack in CACFP.

CREDITING IN ACTION: DETERMINING MEAL PATTERN CONTRIBUTIONS



Now that you've learned how to identify foods that are creditable toward the meal pattern components, let's learn how to determine the meal pattern contribution (crediting) for each meal component. This is an important step to ensure meals served are nutritious and meet United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) meal pattern requirements.

A food credits based on how it contributes toward the following meal components:

1. **Meats/Meat Alternates (M/MA)**
2. **Vegetables**
3. **Fruits**
4. **Grains**
5. **Fluid Milk**

The "**Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs**," commonly referred to as the Food Buying Guide (FBG), is the resource developed by USDA to help you determine how much food to purchase and how each food credits toward the meal components. The FBG is available as a(n):

- Interactive Web-based Tool
- Mobile App
- Downloadable PDF

The FBG Interactive Web-Based Tool (FBG Web Tool) and Mobile App include search and navigation functions, the FBG Calculator, the Exhibit A Grains Tool, the Recipe Analysis Workbook (RAW), and the ability for users to create and save a Favorite List.

You can search over 2,100 foods in the FBG to determine which meal component a food item credits toward and how much of that food is needed for the desired meal contribution. You can use the FBG to determine crediting for a standardized recipe



You can use the FBG Web Tool to determine yields, the RAW to determine the meal pattern contribution of standardized recipes, and the Exhibit A Grains Tool to determine the ounce equivalent (oz eq) grains for grain products.



CREDITING IN ACTION: DETERMINING MEAL PATTERN CONTRIBUTIONS

or to verify Product Formulation Statement (PFS) calculations for combination foods such as pizza or lasagna that credit toward more than one meal component. For example, pizza typically includes grains in the crust, M/MA (such as pepperoni and cheese), vegetables (such as tomato paste and mushrooms), and sometimes a fruit topping (such as pineapple). Remember, for a meal component to credit toward a reimbursable meal, the food must contain the following minimum creditable amounts* per serving:

- 1. Meats/Meat Alternates: at least 0.25 (1/4) ounce equivalent**
- 2. Vegetables: at least 1/8 cup (2 tablespoons)**
- 3. Fruits: at least 1/8 cup (2 tablespoons)**
- 4. Grains: at least 0.25 (1/4) ounce equivalent**
- 5. Fluid Milk: at least 1/4 cup (2 fluid ounces)**
 - Milk is only creditable when served as a beverage or on cereal, or a combination of both. Milk only credits as an ingredient when served in a smoothie.

* Please note minimum creditable amounts do not apply to the infant meal pattern.

DOCUMENTING THE MEAL PATTERN CONTRIBUTION

During a program review, the State agency is responsible for checking your documentation to ensure meal pattern requirements are met. Check with your State agency if you are unsure if a food is creditable or if you have questions on what type of documentation is needed. Documentation may include one or more of the following:

- FBG search results for a food item
- Food product label with ingredient statement
- Standardized recipe
- Valid Child Nutrition (CN) label
- Verified PFS

Documentation requirements may vary depending upon whether a food item is made from scratch or is commercially purchased. For example, if you use a standardized recipe to prepare a burrito from scratch, the standardized recipe may serve as documentation for the meal pattern contribution. However, to properly document the meal pattern contribution of a commercial burrito, you would need a PFS or a CN label.

CREDITING IN ACTION: DETERMINING MEAL PATTERN CONTRIBUTIONS

CREDITING COMMONLY PURCHASED FOODS

The FBG lists a number of commonly purchased foods; for example, baked beans, canned tuna, and ground chicken. If the food described on the product label matches the FBG description in the “Food as Purchased, AP” column, you may use the yield information in the FBG to determine the meal pattern contribution of that food. For example, when you search “tuna solid” in the FBG, the results are:

Search Results

Meal Component	Category / Subcategory	Food As Purchased (AP)	Purchase Unit	Servings per Purchase Unit, Edible Portion (EP)	Serving Size per Meal Contribution	Add to Compare	Add to Favorites
Meats/Meat Alternates	Seafood and Fish Seafood, TUNA, pouch pack or canned	Seafood, canned, Tuna Chunk style, Water packed, Includes USDA Foods	66-1/2 oz Can	51.20	1 oz drained tuna	Add	Add
Meats/Meat Alternates	Seafood and Fish Seafood, TUNA, pouch pack or canned	Seafood, canned, Tuna Chunk style, Water packed, Includes USDA Foods	66-1/2 oz Can	34.10	1-1/2 oz drained tuna	Add	Add
Meats/Meat Alternates	Seafood and Fish Seafood, TUNA, pouch pack or canned	Seafood, canned, Tuna Chunk style, Water packed, Includes USDA Foods	12 oz Can	10.50	1 oz drained tuna	Add	Add
Meats/Meat Alternates	Seafood and Fish Seafood, TUNA, pouch pack or canned	Seafood, canned, Tuna Chunk style, Water packed, Includes USDA Foods	12 oz Can	7.00	1-1/2 oz drained tuna	Add	Add
Meats/Meat Alternates	Seafood and Fish Seafood, TUNA, pouch pack or canned	Seafood, canned, Tuna Chunk style, Water packed, Includes USDA Foods	6 oz Can	5.26	1 oz drained tuna	Add	Add
Meats/Meat Alternates	Seafood and Fish Seafood, TUNA, pouch pack or canned	Seafood, canned, Tuna Chunk style, Water packed, Includes USDA Foods	6 oz Can	3.50	1-1/2 oz drained tuna	Add	Add

The search results show the meal component (M/MA in the above example) that the tuna credits toward and how much (1 ounce drained tuna) is needed to provide 1 ounce equivalent M/MA. This search results screen may be used to document meal pattern contributions for your menu items.

Commercial combination food products such as pizza, chicken nuggets and ravioli, vary in ingredients and therefore vary in how much these foods contribute toward a meal component. Due to the uncertainty of the actual amount of the creditable ingredients contained in commercial combination foods, documenting the meal pattern contribution for these types of products requires one of the following:

- CN label
- PFS from the manufacturer

The CN label and a manufacturer’s PFS are documents that provide a way for a manufacturer to demonstrate how a processed food product may credit toward the meal pattern requirements in CNP. A CN label is approved by USDA and provides a warranty of a product’s meal pattern contribution when the product is used according to the manufacturer’s instructions. A PFS may be requested for processed products that do not have a CN label. A manufacturer’s PFS is not approved by USDA.

More information about manufacturer documentation can be found here:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/manufacturer-documentation> and on page 6 of the **Introduction section** of this resource.



CREDITING IN ACTION: DETERMINING MEAL PATTERN CONTRIBUTIONS

Remember that only CN-labeled products provide a warranty regarding the crediting information on the label. See page 7 for additional information on the CN Labeling Program.

Beef Crumbles With Soy Protein

Ingredient Statement: Ground beef (no more than 20% fat), textured soy protein product, water, salt, pepper.

CN XXXXXX*

Each 2.20 oz. serving of Cooked Beef Patty Crumbles (By Weight) provides 2.00 oz. equivalent meat/meat alternate for Child Nutrition Meal Pattern Requirements. (Use of this logo and statement authorized by the Food and Nutrition Service, USDA mm/yy**).

CN

Net Wt.: 19.0 pounds

DFG Food Company
1234 Yellow Road Oaktown, PA 12345



Commercially prepared products contain varying amounts of each meal component. In some cases, you may need to serve a very large portion to meet meal pattern requirements. For example, a CN label reveals that a 15 ounce serving of canned ravioli is needed to provide the required 1½ ounce equivalent M/MA for children ages 3 through 5, but this quantity of ravioli greatly exceeds the ¼ cup meal pattern requirement for grains. This portion size is too large for preschool children ages 3 through 5 years old. In this instance, it may be best to serve a smaller portion of canned ravioli with a second M/MA item to provide the required M/MA amount for that meal.

Crediting Standardized Recipes

Now let's look at how to calculate meal pattern contributions using a standardized recipe. Determining meal pattern contributions for recipes is an important step in ensuring that

meals served are nutritious and meet the CACFP meal pattern requirements.

The FBG's Recipe Analysis Workbook (RAW) is available to help simplify the way you calculate meal pattern contributions for standardized recipes. The RAW is available on the FBG Web Tool to registered users with an account other than a "vendor" account. We'll use this tool to credit the example recipe below. Appendix A of the FBG contains additional instructions and examples for crediting recipes using the RAW.

The **FBG Web Tool** contains a user guide and training videos to help you use the RAW to credit standardized recipes toward the meal pattern requirements.

CREDITING IN ACTION: DETERMINING MEAL PATTERN CONTRIBUTIONS

Example 1: Crediting a Standardized Recipe using the RAW Tool

Gingered Carrots—Makes 25 servings (¼ cup per serving)

Ingredients	Weight	Measure
Carrots, fresh, sliced diagonally	2 lbs 9½ oz	2 qts 1 cup
Water	32 fl oz	1 qt
Margarine		1 Tbsp 1 tsp
Honey		¼ cup
Lemon Juice		1 Tbsp 1 tsp
Grated Ginger, fresh		2 tsp

*The creditable ingredient is in bold.

Using the RAW, follow these steps to calculate the vegetables contribution per serving:

Step 1: Navigate to the RAW via the FBG Web Tool homepage. Click “Create RAW”. Fill in Recipe Name, Servings per Recipe, and Serving Size.

Step 2: Use the search feature in the RAW to find the food item most similar to the “carrots, fresh, sliced” from the recipe. Enter “carrots” in the “Keywords” search field and click “Search.”

Search Results

Meal Component	Category / Subcategory	Food As Purchased, AP	Purchase Unit	Servings per Purchase Unit, EP	Serving Size per Meal Contribution	Additional Information	Add to RAW
Vegetables	Red/Orange Vegetables CARROTS	Carrots, fresh Without tops	Pound	10.30	1/4 cup raw vegetable strips (about 3 strips, 4 inch by 1/2 inch)	1 lb AP = 0.70 lb ready-to-cook, or serve raw carrot sticks	Add
Vegetables	Red/Orange Vegetables CARROTS	Carrots, fresh Without tops	Pound	10.60	1/4 cup raw, chopped vegetable	1 lb AP = 0.83 lb trimmed, peeled carrots	Add
Vegetables	Red/Orange Vegetables CARROTS	Carrots, fresh Without tops	Pound	15.40	1/4 cup raw, shredded vegetable	1 lb AP = 0.83 lb (about 3-3/4 cups) trimmed, peeled, shredded carrot	Add
Vegetables	Red/Orange Vegetables CARROTS	Carrots, fresh Without tops	Pound	8.10	1/4 cup raw, shredded vegetable with dressing	1 lb AP = 0.83 lb (about 3-3/4 cups) trimmed, peeled, shredded carrot	Add
Vegetables	Red/Orange Vegetables CARROTS	Carrots, fresh Without tops	Pound	8.83	1/4 cup cooked, drained, shredded vegetable	1 lb AP = 0.79 lb (about 2-1/8 cups) trimmed, peeled, shredded, cooked carrot; 1 lb AP = 0.83 lb (about 3-3/4 cups) trimmed, peeled, shredded carrot	Add
Vegetables	Red/Orange Vegetables CARROTS	Carrots, fresh Without tops	Pound	10.90	1/4 cup raw, sliced vegetable (5/16 inch slices)	1 lb AP = 0.83 lb (about 2-2/3 cups) trimmed, peeled, sliced carrots	Add
Vegetables	Red/Orange Vegetables CARROTS	Carrots, fresh Without tops	Pound	8.16	1/4 cup cooked, drained, sliced vegetable (5/16 inch slices)	1 lb AP = 0.76 lb (about 2 cups) cooked, sliced carrots; 1 lb AP = 0.83 lb (about 2-2/3 cups) trimmed, peeled, sliced carrots	Add
Vegetables	Red/Orange Vegetables CARROTS	Carrots, fresh Shredded, Ready-to-use	Pound	19.90	1/4 cup raw vegetable	1 lb AP = 1 lb shredded carrots ready-to-use (about 4-7/8 cups)	Add

Step 3: Select the food item that matches the recipe ingredient.



CREDITING IN ACTION: DETERMINING MEAL PATTERN CONTRIBUTIONS

Step 3: Choose the food item that most closely matches both the form of the ingredient and as it is served in the prepared recipe. The carrots in this recipe are listed as fresh but are then cooked. Choose the option for **“carrots, fresh, without tops”** which will provide 8.16 servings (¼ cups) of **cooked, drained, sliced vegetable** per pound.

You can select the item by clicking on the green “Add” button.

Step 4: Identify the **Purchase Unit: Pound**

Step 5: Select the **Vegetables tab** since carrots credit toward the vegetables meal component.

Step 6: Enter the quantity of carrots in the recipe (2 lbs 9½ oz) into the **Quantity of Ingredient** field. Please note you must enter the quantity in the same unit as the “Purchase unit”. In this case, the “Purchase Unit” is in pounds, so the quantity of carrots shown in ounces must be converted to the decimal equivalent of a pound. See Table 5 Decimal Weight Equivalents in the FBG Resource Center (under the “home” navigation tab).

For this example, 9½ oz = 9.5 oz which converts to 0.5937 pounds (9.5 oz / 16 oz/lb). So the quantity of carrots to enter into the RAW is **2 lbs + 0.5937 lbs = 2.5937 lbs.**

Step 7: Determine if you need to enter the “Preparation Yield”. The preparation yield factor should only be used when the form of a recipe ingredient **does**

not match the form of the food item selected under “Food As Purchased, AP” column 1. If more than one option is available in “Additional Information”, choose the preparation yield factor that most closely matches the form of the recipe ingredient.

Preparation Yield Factor

The preparation yield factor is the percent of food remaining after preparation of the ingredient (e.g., peeling, dicing). It helps you determine the quantity of ready-to-cook or ready-to-serve food you will get from the quantity of food as purchased. Use the “When To Use a Preparation Yield” interactive flow chart (found under the “Tools” menu in the FBG WebTool) to help you determine if a preparation yield factor is needed.

In the carrot recipe example, the preparation yield factor is needed because the form of the carrots as the recipe ingredient is “fresh, peeled, sliced”, however, the form of the “Food As Purchased” item from the FBG is “fresh, without tops” indicating that the carrots are not peeled or sliced. Therefore, you will need to use the “Preparation Yield” field. For this example, find the preparation yield factor of **0.83** in the **Additional Information** column and enter into the “Preparation Yield” field in the RAW. The amount to purchase of 3.1249 is automatically calculated. Save the information entered by clicking on the “Save” button at the bottom of the screen.

CREDITING IN ACTION: DETERMINING MEAL PATTERN CONTRIBUTIONS

Create Recipe Analysis Workbook (RAW)

Instructions

Asterisks (*) denote required information.

Recipe Name * Servings per Recipe *
 Recipe Number Serving Size *

Select Creditable Ingredient | Recipe Notes | **Vegetables** | Fruit | Meats/MA | Grains - Method A | Grains - Method B | Grains - Method C | Meal Pattern Contribution

Red/Orange Vegetables

Food As Purchased, AP	Purchase Unit	Servings per Purchase Unit, EP	Serving Size per Meal Contribution	Additional Information	Quantity of Ingredient	Preparation Yield (If applicable)	Calculated Quantity to Purchase
Carrots, fresh Without tops	Pound	8.16	1/4 cup cooked, drained, sliced vegetable (5/16 inch slices)	1 lb AP = 0.76 lb (about 2 cups) cooked, sliced carrots; 1 lb AP = 0.83 lb (about 2-2/3 cups) trimmed, peeled, sliced carrots	<input type="text" value="2.5937"/>	<input type="text" value="83"/>	<input type="text" value="3.1249"/>

You must save the RAW prior to printing it. Use the "Back to RAW List" button and select from the RAW list. Click the PDF link to generate a copy to print or save.

Step 8: Select the **Meal Pattern Contribution** tab to see the results of the meal pattern contribution for this recipe.

Select Creditable Ingredient | Recipe Notes | Vegetables | Fruit | Meats/MA | Grains - Method A | Grains - Method B | Grains - Method C | **Meal Pattern Contribution**

Vegetables Red/Orange Vegetables 1/4 cup

1/4 cup provides 1/4 cup total vegetable (1/4 cup red/orange vegetable)

Please note that:

- For School Meals and CACFP: Raw leafy green vegetables credit as half the volume served (For example: 1 cup raw spinach credits as 1/2 cup dark green vegetable)
- For School Meals and CACFP: Dried fruits credit as double the volume (For example, 1/2 cup raisins credits as 1 cup fruit).
- For School Meals Only: Any quantity remaining after the credit has been determined for each vegetable subgroup is combined to ensure the maximum credit for the vegetables. If this combined quantity provides a minimum of 1/8 cup, it is credited towards the Additional Vegetables. If the RAW contains no Starchy vegetables, then the program operator may instead choose to manually credit the remaining Additional Vegetables towards the Other Vegetables subgroup.

One serving (1/4 cup) of this recipe credits as 1/4 cup Vegetables.

You can save or print a copy for your files and use this as crediting documentation for your standardized recipe.

This example demonstrates how to use the FBG's RAW to calculate the meal pattern contribution of a standardized recipe. The next recipe is credited using hand calculations to show an alternative method for determining the meal pattern contribution for recipes. Appendix A in the FBG contains the RAW worksheets and templates that you can use to do the hand calculations.



CREDITING IN ACTION: DETERMINING MEAL PATTERN CONTRIBUTIONS

Example 2: Crediting a Standardized Recipe using Hand Calculations

Mango Smoothie Bowl—Makes 25 servings (1 serving = ¾ cup)

Ingredients	Weight	Measure
Low-Fat Plain Yogurt	6 lb 4 oz	3 qts 3 cups
Frozen Mangoes, diced	5 lb	3 qts 3 cups
Agave Syrup		¼ cup
Vanilla Extract		2 Tbsp

*The creditable ingredients are in bold.

Using the FBG, follow these steps to calculate the M/MA contribution for low-fat plain yogurt per serving and to determine how much of the low-fat plain yogurt to purchase for the recipe:

Step 1: Navigate to the Food Items “Search” within the FBG Web Tool. Search for “yogurt” in the “Keywords” field and find the food item most similar to **low-fat plain yogurt**. Choose the food item that most closely matches both the form of the food as it is purchased and as served in the prepared recipe. For this example, we selected: Yogurt, fresh, Plain or Flavored, Sweetened or Unsweetened, Commercially Prepared, (includes Greek yogurt)

Meal Component	Category / Subcategory	Food As Purchased (AP)	Purchase Unit	Servings per Purchase Unit, Edible Portion (EP)	Serving Size per Meal Contribution	Add to Compare	Add to Favorites
Meats/Meat Alternates	Cheese, Eggs, Yogurt YOGURT	Yogurt, fresh** Plain or Flavored, Sweetened or Unsweetened, Commercially-prepared, (includes Greek yogurt), Includes USDA Foods Footnote	32 oz Container	6.00	1/2 cup or 4 oz yogurt provides 1 oz meat alternate	Add	Add
Meats/Meat Alternates	Cheese, Eggs, Yogurt YOGURT	Yogurt, fresh** Plain or Flavored, Sweetened or Unsweetened, Commercially-prepared, (includes Greek yogurt), Includes USDA Foods Footnote	32 oz Container	5.33	3/4 cup or 6 oz yogurt provides 1-1/2 oz meat alternate	Add	Add
Meats/Meat Alternates	Cheese, Eggs, Yogurt YOGURT	Yogurt, fresh** Plain or Flavored, Sweetened or Unsweetened, Commercially-prepared, (includes Greek yogurt), Includes USDA Foods Footnote	32 oz Container	4.00	1 cup or 8 oz provides 2 oz meat alternate	Add	Add

CREDITING IN ACTION: DETERMINING MEAL PATTERN CONTRIBUTIONS

Step 2: Identify the **Purchase Unit**:

32-ounce container

Step 3: Convert the ingredient amount in the recipe to match the unit of the **Purchase Unit** from the FBG food item. The recipe calls for 6 lb 4 oz of low-fat plain yogurt. The purchase unit is in ounces (32-oz container).

6 lb x 16 oz per lb = 96 oz

Add 4 oz to 96 oz = 100 oz

There are 100 oz of low-fat plain yogurt in this recipe.

Step 4: Determine how many 32-ounce containers of yogurt you need (the calculated quantity to purchase) by dividing the 100 oz of yogurt in the recipe by 32 oz (the weight of the **Purchase Unit**).

100 oz ÷ 32 oz in a container of yogurt = 3.125 containers of yogurt.

You will need to round this up to the nearest whole number to determine how many 32-oz containers of yogurt to purchase. In this example, round 3.125 up to 4; hence, 4 containers need to be purchased. (Note: You will have extra yogurt once you measure out the 100 oz of yogurt needed for the recipe).

Step 5: Find the **Servings per Purchase Unit, EP** (edible portion) for yogurt, fresh that provides a 1 oz eq M/MA (found under **Serving Size per Meal Contribution** column):

8.00 servings per 32-oz container

Step 6: Calculate the number of ounce equivalent (oz eq) of M/MA in the recipe:

3.125 containers of yogurt (32 oz each) x 8 servings per Purchase Unit, EP = 25 total oz eq M/MA

Step 7: Divide the total oz eq of M/MA by the number of servings per recipe to determine the oz eq of M/MA per serving:

25 oz eq M/MA ÷ 25 servings per recipe =

1.0 oz eq M/MA per serving.

One serving (¾ cup) of the recipe provides 1 oz eq M/MA.

Key Tip: The FBG contains more than 2,100 food items that are typically served in CNP settings, but it does not contain every food item that may be served. If your food item is not in the FBG, you can use the item most similar to that food. Document which food item was used as a substitute to determine the meal pattern contribution. For commercially processed items that vary significantly by manufacturer (e.g., chicken nuggets), manufacturer documentation such as a CN label or PFS is required for crediting determination.



CREDITING IN ACTION: DETERMINING MEAL PATTERN CONTRIBUTIONS

Using the FBG, follow these steps to calculate the fruits contribution per serving for the frozen mangoes, diced:

Search Results

Meal Component	Category / Subcategory	Food As Purchased (AP)	Purchase Unit	Servings per Purchase Unit, Edible Portion (EP)	Serving Size per Meal Contribution	Add to Compare	Add to Favorites
Fruits	Fruit and Fruit Juice MANGOES	Mangoes, fresh Whole	Pound	7.60	1/4 cup cubed or sliced fruit	Add	Add
Fruits	Fruit and Fruit Juice MANGOES	Mangoes, frozen Unsweetened, Cubed, IQF	Pound	6.00	1/4 cup thawed, drained fruit	Add	Add
Fruits	Fruit and Fruit Juice MANGOES	Mangoes, frozen Unsweetened, Diced	Pound	7.50	1/4 cup thawed, drained fruit	Add	Add
Fruits	Fruit and Fruit Juice MANGOES	Mangoes, dried Slices, 100% dried fruit only	Pound	21.00	1/4 cup dried fruit (credits as 1/2 cup fruit in NSLP/ISBP and CACFP)	Add	Add



Step 1: Navigate to the Food Items “Search” within the FBG Web Tool. Search for “mangoes” in the “Keywords” field and find the food item most similar to the frozen mangoes, diced in the recipe. Choose the food item that most closely matches both the form of the food as it is purchased and as served in the prepared recipe. For this example, we selected **mangoes, frozen, unsweetened, diced**.

Step 2: Identify the **Purchase Unit: Pound**

Step 3: Determine if you need to use the preparation yield factor. In this example, because the form of the food from the FBG (mangoes, frozen, unsweetened, diced) matches the form of the food in the ingredient list of the recipe (frozen mangoes, diced), the preparation yield is not needed. Use 5 pounds (quantity

of the recipe ingredient) of frozen diced mangoes when completing the calculations below.

If, however, you purchased fresh, whole mangoes and your recipe calls for frozen, diced mangoes, you must convert the quantity of mangoes, as listed in the recipe, to match the form of the mangoes as listed under the **Food As Purchased, AP** column.

The **Additional Information** column for the mangoes, fresh, **whole** states, “1 lb AP = 0.69 lb ready-to-serve raw mangoes,” meaning that 1 pound as purchased of fresh, whole mangoes yields 0.69 pound of ready-to-serve mangoes after the mango is peeled, seeded, and diced (0.69 lb is the preparation yield factor).

CREDITING IN ACTION: DETERMINING MEAL PATTERN CONTRIBUTIONS

Step 4: Find the **Servings per Purchase Unit, EP** (edible portion) for the mangoes, **frozen, unsweetened, diced** that provide $\frac{1}{4}$ cup thawed, drained fruit (found under **Serving Size** column):

7.50

Step 5: Calculate the number of $\frac{1}{4}$ cups of thawed, drained fruit in the recipe using the calculated quantity to purchase:

5 lbs mangoes, frozen, unsweetened, diced x 7.50 Servings per Purchase Unit, EP = 37.50 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups fruit.

Step 6: Convert the $\frac{1}{4}$ cups to cups:

37.50 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups \div 4 = 9.375 cups.

Step 7: Divide the total cups by the number of servings per recipe to determine the total cups of fruit per serving:

9.375 cups \div 25 servings per recipe = 0.375 cup fruit per serving.

Step 8: Use the table below for converting decimal equivalents to the nearest $\frac{1}{8}$ cup portion. In this example, 0.375–0.499 credits as $\frac{3}{8}$ cup fruit.

One serving of the recipe provides $\frac{3}{8}$ cup fruit.

Converting Decimal Equivalents to the Nearest Portion of a Cup for Fruits and Vegetables

If decimal equivalent is	The recipe contributes
0.125 - 0.249	$\frac{1}{8}$ cup
0.250 - 0.374	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup
0.375 - 0.499	$\frac{3}{8}$ cup
0.500 - 0.624	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup
0.625 - 0.749	$\frac{5}{8}$ cup
0.750 - 0.874	$\frac{3}{4}$ cup
0.875 - 0.999	$\frac{7}{8}$ cup
1.000 - 1.124	1 cup

You can use this table to identify the creditable amount of fruits or vegetables in any recipe.

Step 9: Write your meal pattern contribution statement to show how the standardized recipe credits toward the CACFP meal pattern requirements:

1 serving ($\frac{3}{4}$ cup) of the mango smoothie bowl provides 1 oz eq M/MA and $\frac{3}{8}$ cup fruit.



CREDITING IN ACTION: DETERMINING MEAL PATTERN CONTRIBUTIONS

HANDS-ON PRACTICE: CREDITING GRAIN PRODUCTS TOWARD THE MEAL PATTERN REQUIREMENTS

You likely purchase grain products from your local grocery store or supermarket. To determine how these commercial products credit toward the grains component, you will compare the weight of one serving (found on the Nutrition Facts label) against the ounce equivalent (oz eq) amount in the applicable group in Exhibit A.

Here are the general steps to follow:

1. Find the serving size on the Nutrition Facts label of the product package.
2. Find the Group in Exhibit A chart to which your grain product belongs.
3. Find the amount in grams that equals 1 oz eq for that group.
4. Divide the serving size of your product by the amount from step 3.
5. Round down to the nearest 0.25 oz eq.
6. Record the serving size and grains contribution.

Examples for Calculating the Grains Credit for Groups A–G of Exhibit A.

For grain products listed in Groups A–G (such as crackers, breads, muffins, pancakes, and waffles), each portion must contain at least 16 grams of creditable grains (whole grains, enriched grains, bran or germ) to provide 1 oz eq grains.

Let's look at a few examples using the sample Nutrition Facts labels to calculate oz eq grains.

Example 1: Enriched Wheat Sandwich Bread

Nutrition Facts	
23 servings per container	
Serving size	1 slice (31g)
<hr/>	
Amount per serving	
Calories	70
<hr/>	
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 1g	2%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 140mg	6%
Total Carbohydrate 15g	5%
Dietary Fiber 2g	8%
Total Sugars 1g	
Includes 1g Added Sugars	2%
Protein 3g	
<hr/>	
* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.	

Step 1: Find the Serving Size on the Nutrition Facts label on the package of Enriched Wheat Sandwich Bread:
1 serving = 1 slice = 31 g

Step 2: Find bread in Exhibit A under Group B which reads:
Breads—all (for example sliced, French, Italian)
1 oz eq = 28 g or 1.0 oz

Step 3: Divide 31 g per slice by 28 g per oz eq:
31 ÷ 28 = 1.1071 oz eq per slice

Step 4: Round 1.1071 oz eq down to the nearest 0.25 oz eq.
1.1071 → 1.0 oz eq grains

Step 5: Record the quantity served and the grains contribution.
1 slice enriched bread credits as 1 oz eq grains.

CREDITING IN ACTION: DETERMINING MEAL PATTERN CONTRIBUTIONS

Example 2: Tortilla (made with enriched grains)

Nutrition Facts	
10 servings per package	
Serving size 1 tortilla (49g)	
<hr/>	
Amount per serving	
Calories	140
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 3.5g	5%
Saturated Fat 1.5g	8%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 420mg	18%
Total Carbohydrate 24g	8%
Dietary Fiber 1g	4%
Total Sugars 1g	
Includes 1g Added Sugars	2%
Protein 4g	
<hr/>	
* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.	

Step 1: Find the Serving Size on the Nutrition Facts label on the package of tortillas:

1 serving = 1 tortilla = 49 g

Step 2: Find tortillas in Exhibit A under Group B which reads:

Tortillas 1 oz eq = 28 g or 1.0 oz

Step 3: Divide 49 g per tortilla by 28 g per oz eq:

$49 \div 28 = 1.75$ oz eq grains per tortilla*

Step 4: Record the quantity served and the grains contribution.

1 enriched tortilla credits as 1.75 oz eq grains.

Example 3: Savory Crackers (made with enriched grains)

Nutrition Facts	
About 4 servings per container	
Serving size 30g (8 crackers)	
<hr/>	
Amount per serving	
Calories	140
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 4.5g	7%
Saturated Fat 2g	10%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 280mg	12%
Total Carbohydrate 23g	8%
Dietary Fiber 1g	4%
Total Sugars 1g	
Includes 1g Added Sugars	2%
Protein 2g	
<hr/>	
* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.	

Step 1: Find the Serving Size on the Nutrition Facts label on the package of the crackers:

1 serving = 30 g (8 crackers)

Step 2: Find crackers in Exhibit A under Group A which reads:

Savory Crackers (saltines and snack crackers) 1 oz eq = 22 g or 0.8 oz

Step 3: Divide 30 g by 22 g per oz eq:

$30 \div 22 = 1.3636$ oz eq per serving.

Step 4: Round 1.3636 oz eq down to nearest 0.25 oz eq. **$1.3636 \rightarrow 1.25$ oz eq grains**

Step 5: Record the quantity served and the grains contribution.

8 enriched grain crackers credits as 1.25 oz eq grains.

* This result does not need to be rounded down.



CREDITING IN ACTION: DETERMINING MEAL PATTERN CONTRIBUTIONS

What if you only need to provide 1 oz eq grains? To determine how many crackers you need to serve to provide 1 oz eq of grains, you can do this calculation:

Step 1: 22 g per 1 oz eq from Exhibit A divided by 30 g per serving of 8 crackers from the Nutrition Facts label equals 73 percent:

$$22 \div 30 = 0.73 \text{ (73\%)}$$

Step 2: Multiply 0.73 by 8 crackers to determine how many crackers are needed to provide 1 oz eq grains:

$$0.73 \times 8 = 5.84 \text{ crackers}$$

Step 3: Round 5.84 crackers up to the next whole number (5.84 rounds to 6):

6 crackers are needed to provide 1.0 oz eq grains.

Examples for Calculating the Grains Credit for Group H Items (Cereal Grains, Pasta, Rice)

There are 3 methods to calculate oz eq grains for Group H items:

1. **Cooked volume:** For any item listed in Group H of Exhibit A, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooked grains provides 1 oz eq grains.
2. **Dry weight:** For any item listed in Group H, 28 grams (dry) provides 1 oz eq grains.
3. **Grams of creditable grains per serving.**



CREDITING IN ACTION: DETERMINING MEAL PATTERN CONTRIBUTIONS

Example: Pasta

Nutrition Facts	
8 servings per container	
Serving size	32g
Amount per serving	
Calories	100
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 0.5g	1%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 0mg	0%
Total Carbohydrate 20g	7%
Dietary Fiber 4g	14%
Total Sugars 0.5g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	0%
Protein 3g	
<small>* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.</small>	

Additional information obtained from the pasta package and/or PFS for this example:

- Contains whole-wheat flour, enriched flour, and no noncreditable grains.
- Cooks to a ½ cup volume per 32 g dry weight portion, according to the label.
- Contains 29 g of creditable grains per 32 g portion, according to the manufacturer's PFS.

Let's try the 3 calculation methods to determine oz eq grains:

1. **Using cooked volume:**

$$\frac{1}{2} \text{ cup cooked pasta} \div \frac{1}{2} \text{ cup standard (Group H)} = 1 \text{ oz eq}$$

2. **Using the dry weight of pasta:**

$$\frac{32 \text{ g dry weight}}{28 \text{ g standard (Group H)}} = 1.1428$$

1.1428 rounds down to 1 oz eq

3. **Using grams of creditable grains:**

$$\frac{29 \text{ g of creditable grains per serving (from PFS)}}{28 \text{ g standard (Group H)}} = 1.0357$$

1.0357 rounds down to 1 oz eq

Meal Pattern Contribution Statement:

1 serving of pasta (32 g dry or ½ cup cooked) credits as 1.0 oz eq grains.

In this example, the three calculation methods result in the same crediting (1 serving credits as 1.0 oz eq grains). Please note that each of the methods could result in a slightly different answer. As long as the method was calculated correctly, the result for any method may be used. Choose and document the method that works best for your program.



CREDITING IN ACTION: DETERMINING MEAL PATTERN CONTRIBUTIONS

Example for Calculating the Grains Credit Using the Exhibit A Grains Tool

The Exhibit A Grains Tool, found within the FBG Web Tool, assists program operators with determining the grains contribution for grain products listed in Exhibit A chart. The Exhibit A Grains Tool allows the user to easily

determine the oz eq grains for a grain product. In addition, the tool also allows the user to determine the amount to serve to provide a desired grains contribution in oz eq as well as to determine the amount to serve each age group. This tool is also available on the FBG Mobile App.

Example: RTE Cereal

Use the steps in the example below to calculate the oz eq grains in this cereal using the Exhibit A Grains Tool.

ABC Fortified Toasted Cereal Rounds



Nutrition Facts	
17 servings per container	
Serving size	1 cup (30 g)
<hr/>	
Amount per serving	
Calories	120

Step 1: Navigate to the Exhibit A Grains Tool in the FBG Web Tool or FBG Mobile App. Click the “Enter Exhibit A Product” button.

Step 2: Enter the required information in the Product Name field as listed on the Product Label. For this example, you may enter, “ABC Fortified Toasted Cereal Rounds”. Next, choose the program and meal that you will serve the grain product. The drop-down menu provides many program and meal options. There are four CACFP options: Breakfast, Lunch and Supper, Snack, and Infant. For this example, you may select “CACFP – Breakfast.”



CREDITING IN ACTION: DETERMINING MEAL PATTERN CONTRIBUTIONS

Step 3: Search for the grain product as it is listed in Exhibit A. Exhibit A does not have brand names listed, so you will need to search for the general term, such as, “cereal.” You can see that “Ounce Equivalent (oz eq) Grains” is automatically selected since we chose CACFP in Step 2.

Exhibit A Grains Tool - Edit Product

Instructions

Asterisks (*) denote required information
The numbers listed below correspond to the steps in the instructions accordion above.

① Product Name * ABC Fortified Toasted Cereal Rounds Product Date 08/29/2025 (MM/DD/YYYY)

Program—Meal * CACFP—Breakfast

② Item Keywords: cereal Search Clear Search

③ Choose Method * Ounce Equivalent (oz eq) Grains (All Programs) Grains/Breads Serving(s) (SFSP/NSLP Afterschool Snack Service)

Action	Item Name	Group	Grams per 1 oz eq	Ounces per 1 oz eq	Grams per 1 Bread Serving	Ounces per 1 Bread Serving
④ Add	Breakfast cereals (cooked)	Group H	28 g	1 oz	25 g	0.8928 oz
Add	Cereal Grains (barley, quinoa, etc.)	Group H	28 g	1 oz	25 g	0.8928 oz
Add	Ready to eat breakfast cereal (cold, dry)	Group I	28 g	1 oz	28 g	1 oz

All the Exhibit A items that contain the keywords you entered in the search and are creditable for the program and meal you selected will populate on the table below. Once you find the appropriate grain item that matches the product, you can click on the “Add” button to select it. In this example, the ABC Fortified Toasted Cereal Rounds are a “Ready to eat breakfast cereal.”



CREDITING IN ACTION: DETERMINING MEAL PATTERN CONTRIBUTIONS

Step 4a: Click on the Grains Contribution tab and enter the serving size as listed on product label and/or the Nutrition Facts label. You may enter the serving size either in cups or in grams if the correct measurement unit is indicated. For this example, you will enter that a serving is 30 grams, as shown on the Nutrition Facts label above.

With this information, the grains contribution is calculated for you and displayed in these two places (outlined in the blue boxes below). As you can see, 30 grams of the cereal provides 1.0 oz eq grains. Be sure to click “Save” in order to save this item.

The screenshot shows the Exhibit A Grains Tool interface. At the top, there is a table with columns: Action, Item Name, Group, Grams per 1 oz eq, Ounces per 1 oz eq, Grams per 1 Bread Serving, and Ounces per 1 Bread Serving. Three items are listed: Breakfast cereals (cooked), Cereal Grains (barley, quinoa, etc.), and Ready to eat breakfast cereal (cold, dry). Below the table are three tabs: Grains Contribution (highlighted in red), Amount to Serve, and Amount to Serve by Age Group/Grade Group. The Grains Contribution tab is active, showing a detailed view of the 'Ready to eat breakfast cereal (cold, dry)' item. The 'Amount to Serve' field is set to 30.00 (circled in red), and the 'Measurement Unit' is set to grams (circled in red). The 'Grains Contribution' field shows 1.00 oz eq grains (circled in blue). Below the detailed view, there is a summary line: 'Grains Contribution: 30.00 grams of Ready to eat breakfast cereal (cold, dry) provide 1.00 oz eq grains'. A 'NOTE' section follows with several bullet points. At the bottom, there are 'Save' and 'Back to List' buttons.

Action	Item Name	Group	Grams per 1 oz eq	Ounces per 1 oz eq	Grams per 1 Bread Serving	Ounces per 1 Bread Serving
Add	Breakfast cereals (cooked)	Group H	28 g	1 oz	25 g	0.8928 oz
Add	Cereal Grains (barley, quinoa, etc.)	Group H	28 g	1 oz	25 g	0.8928 oz
Add	Ready to eat breakfast cereal (cold, dry)	Group I	28 g	1 oz	28 g	1 oz

Grains Contribution | Amount to Serve | Amount to Serve by Age Group/Grade Group

Description of Food Item per Exhibit A	Serving Size (as provided on Product Label) Decimal Equivalents of Commonly Used Fractions	Measurement Unit	Weight or Cups of One Ounce Equivalent/Minimum Serving Size as Listed in Exhibit A	Grains Contribution
Ready to eat breakfast cereal (cold, dry)	30.00	grams	28 grams	1.00 oz eq grains

Grains Contribution: 30.00 grams of Ready to eat breakfast cereal (cold, dry) provide 1.00 oz eq grains

NOTE:

- Refer to Exhibit A for specific guidance on creditable grain products in Child Nutrition Programs.
- Creditable grain items are made from whole or enriched grains.
- Grain-based desserts are not creditable in CACFP or NSLP/SBP infant and preschool meals.
- Make sure the food you are entering is creditable for infants. For more information, see "Feeding Infants in the CACFP's Appendix F: Infant Foods List"
- For combination foods that credit toward more than one meal component, enter the weight of the grain portion only (e.g., for pizza, only enter the weight of the crust).

You must save the Exhibit A Product prior to printing it. Use the "Back to List" button and select from the Exhibit A Products list. Click the PDF link to generate a copy to print or save.

Save Back to List

The Exhibit A Grains Tool has three tabs:

- 1 The Grains Contribution tab calculates the Grains Contribution for a grain product based on a serving as stated on the Nutrition Facts label.
- 2 The Amount to Serve tab calculates the amount to serve for a grain product based on your desired grains contribution.
- 3 The Amount to Serve by Age Group/Grade Group tab calculates the amount to serve for a grain product to meet the minimum grains requirement for the program and meal you selected in Step 2.

CREDITING IN ACTION: DETERMINING MEAL PATTERN CONTRIBUTIONS

Step 4b: Click on the Amount to Serve tab. First, we need to distinguish the “food item type” for the ready-to-eat cereal. The options are: flakes and rounds, puffed, or granola cereal. For this ABC Fortified Toasted Cereal Rounds example, select the “flakes and rounds” option from the drop-down menu. Next, enter the desired grains contribution that you want to serve. For this example, you want to provide 0.50 oz eq grains. As soon as this amount is entered, the amount to serve is calculated and displayed in two places (outlined in the blue boxes below). To provide 0.50 oz eq grains, you need to serve 0.50 cups, which is a ½ cup of the cereal.

Grains Contribution		Amount to Serve	Amount to Serve by Age Group/Grade Group	
Description of Food Item per Exhibit A		Food Item Type	Desired Grains Contribution	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ready to eat breakfast cereal (cold, dry)	⑤ flakes and rounds	⑥ 0.5	oz eq grains
Amount to Serve: To provide 0.5 oz eq grains of Ready to eat breakfast cereal (cold, dry), serve 0.50 cup(s)		⑧ Amount to Serve Decimal Equivalents of Commonly Used Fractions 0.50 cup(s)		

NOTE:

- Refer to Exhibit A for specific guidance on creditable grain products in Child Nutrition Programs.
- Creditable grain items are made from whole or enriched grains.
- Grain-based desserts are not creditable in CACFP or NSLP/SBP infant and preschool meals.
- Make sure the food you are entering is creditable for infants. For more information, see ["Feeding Infants in the CACFP's Appendix E: Infant Foods List"](#)
- For combination foods that credit toward more than one meal component, enter the weight of the grain portion only (e.g., for pizza, only enter the weight of the crust).

You must save the Exhibit A Product prior to printing it. Use the "Back to List" button and select from the Exhibit A Products list. Click the PDF link to generate a copy to print or save.

[Save](#) [Back to List](#)



CREDITING IN ACTION: DETERMINING MEAL PATTERN CONTRIBUTIONS

Step 4c: Click on the Amount to Serve by Age Group/Grade Group tab. First, you need to select the type of cereal from the drop-down options. Again, for this example, select “flakes and rounds”. The program and meal type are automatically shown based on your selection in Step 2. For this example it is CACFP Breakfast.

The table is displayed with the amount of the product to serve to meet the minimum grains requirement by age group. This is helpful if you are serving a group of children of different ages.

Grains Contribution
Amount to Serve
Amount to Serve by Age Group/Grade Group

Description of Food Item per Exhibit A	Food Item Type	Program—Meal
X Ready to eat breakfast cereal (cold, dry)	⑤ flakes and rounds	⑦ CACFP—Breakfast ←

⑧ Amount to Serve by Age Group/Grade Group to Meet Minimum Grains Requirement for CACFP—Breakfast
[Decimal Equivalents of Commonly Used Fractions](#)

Age Group/Grade Group	Amount to Serve to Meet Minimum Grains Requirement	Minimum Grains Requirement
Ages 1—2	0.50 cup(s)	0.50 oz eq grains
Ages 3—5	0.50 cup(s)	0.50 oz eq grains
Ages 6—12	1.00 cup(s)	1.00 oz eq grains
Ages 13—18	1.00 cup(s)	1.00 oz eq grains
Adult	2.00 cup(s)	2.00 oz eq grains

NOTE:

- Refer to Exhibit A for specific guidance on creditable grain products in Child Nutrition Programs.
- Creditable grain items are made from whole or enriched grains.
- Grain-based desserts are not creditable in CACFP or NSLP/SBP infant and preschool meals.
- Make sure the food you are entering is creditable for infants. For more information, see ["Feeding Infants in the CACFP's Appendix F: Infant Foods List"](#)
- For combination foods that credit toward more than one meal component, enter the weight of the grain portion only (e.g., for pizza, only enter the weight of the crust).

The Exhibit A Grains Tool does the math calculations for you, making it easier to determine the grains contribution for grain products. Remember, you can use the Exhibit A Grains Tool to:

1. Calculate the grains contribution for a grain product based on a serving as stated on the Nutrition Facts label,
2. Calculate the amount to serve for a grain product based on your desired grains contribution, and
3. Calculate the amount to serve for a grain product to meet the minimum grains requirement by age/grade group for a selected program and meal.



CREDITING IN ACTION: DETERMINING MEAL PATTERN CONTRIBUTIONS

Example for Calculating the Grains Credit for a Standardized Recipe

Italian Bread Recipe

Use the steps in the example below to calculate the oz eq grains in a standardized recipe. Please note that this recipe contains both whole-grain and enriched flours and meals.

Please note that in determining the grains contribution, decimals are always rounded down so there will never be less credit than what is claimed. However, in determining amounts to prepare, decimals are always rounded up to ensure enough food is prepared to provide the correct number of servings.

Italian Bread Recipe—Makes 25 servings (1 serving = 1 slice)

Ingredients	Weight	Measure
Active Dry Yeast		2 Tbsp 1 tsp
Water (110 °F)		½ cup
Whole-Wheat Flour	1 lb	3½ cups
Enriched Bread Flour	14 oz	3 ⅛ cups
Instant Nonfat Dry Milk	1½ oz	3 Tbsp
Sugar		2 Tbsp
Salt		1¾ tsp
Water (70-75 °F)		1½ cups
Shortening, trans fat-free		2 Tbsp
White Whole Grain Cornmeal		1 Tbsp

The creditable grain ingredients are in bold.

Step 1: Convert creditable grain ingredients to ounces:

Whole-Wheat Flour: 1 lb = 16 oz

Enriched Bread Flour: 14 oz

White Whole Grain Cornmeal

is disregarded because 1 tablespoon (approximately 8 grams) of cornmeal weighs less than 1 ounce. This weight is very small and therefore not added to the weight of the other creditable grains.

Note: To convert the weight in pounds to ounces, multiply the pounds by 16 ounces per pound and add any remaining ounces. For example, if the weight is 1 lb 4 oz

Multiple the pounds by 16 oz per pound

$$1 \text{ lb} \times 16 \text{ oz per pound} = 16 \text{ oz}$$

Add the remaining ounces (4 oz)

$$16 \text{ oz} + 4 \text{ oz} = 20 \text{ oz}$$

Step 2: Convert ounces to grams.

Note: 1 oz = 28.35 g

Whole-Wheat Flour:

$$16 \text{ oz} \times 28.35 \text{ g per ounce} = 453.6 \text{ g}$$

Enriched Bread Flour:

$$14 \text{ oz} \times 28.35 \text{ g per ounce} = 396.9 \text{ g}$$

Step 3: Add the total grams of creditable grains ingredients:

Whole-Wheat Flour		453.6 g
	+	
Enriched Bread Flour		396.9 g
Total grains	=	850.5 g

Step 4: Divide the total grains by the number of servings in the recipe:

$$850.5 \text{ g grains} \div 25 \text{ servings} = 34.02 \text{ g grains per serving}$$



CREDITING IN ACTION: DETERMINING MEAL PATTERN CONTRIBUTIONS

Step 5: Divide the grams of grains per serving by 16 g per oz eq. Remember, for grain items in Groups A—G of Exhibit A, each portion must contain at least 16 grams of creditable grains per 1 oz eq:

$$\frac{34.02 \text{ g grains per serving}}{16 \text{ g per oz eq}} = 2.1262 \text{ oz eq grains.}$$

Step 6: Round down to the nearest 0.25 oz eq:

2.1262 rounds down to 2.0 oz eq grains per serving.

Step 7: Record the quantity served and the grains contribution

1 slice of Italian bread provides 2 oz eq grains.

(Note: If you want to provide only 1 oz eq of grains, you could serve a ½ slice of this Italian Bread.)

You may also use the RAW available on the FBG Web Tool to calculate the meal pattern contribution of your standardized recipes. The FBG Web Tool contains a user guide and training videos to assist you in using the RAW.

WEIGHTS OF COMMONLY USED GRAINS

If your recipe only provides the quantity of grains in cup measurements, use the table below to determine the weight of each ingredient in grams. This saves you the additional step of converting recipes from cups to ounces/pounds and then to grams.

Of course, remember to divide or multiply the number of grams to reflect the number of cups in your recipe.

Food Item	Description	Weight of 1 cup in grams
Flour, All-Purpose	Unsifted, spooned	125 grams
Bread Flour	Unsifted, spooned	137 grams
Masa Harina (Corn Flour)	Unsifted, spooned	114 grams
Oats	Uncooked	81 grams
Wheat Germ	Spooned	115 grams
Whole-Wheat Flour	Unsifted, spooned	120 grams

Source: USDA National Nutrient Database for Standard Reference

CREDITING IN ACTION: DETERMINING MEAL PATTERN CONTRIBUTIONS

SPECIAL CREDITING SITUATIONS FOR GRAINS

Please note, when crediting combination foods that contain a grain product listed in Exhibit A, such as a wonton or egg roll skins (Exhibit A, Group B) or the crust portion of savory pies (Exhibit A, Group C), the weights of the finished products vary widely with differences in the amount of fillings so that standard total weights cannot be established. As with all grain items, **ONLY** the weight of the grains in the product, **NOT** the weight of the entire food product, is used to determine the grains contribution. Document the grains contribution of these combination foods with a standardized recipe, a PFS, or a CN label. Maintain a copy of the documentation on file

to demonstrate how the food credits toward the meal pattern requirements.

The weights listed for 1-ounce equivalent grains in Groups A—G of Exhibit A reflect the total weight of the product needed to provide at least 16 grams of creditable grains (whole grain, enriched grain, bran, or germ) along with any other ingredients in the product.

One ounce equivalent for some foods may be less than a measured ounce if the food is concentrated or low in water content (e.g., savory crackers or croutons) or more than an ounce if the food contains a large amount of water (e.g., cooked rice or cooked pasta).





TEAM NUTRITION RESOURCES FOR THE CHILD AND ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM (CACFP)

Team Nutrition Homepage: fns.usda.gov/tn/team-nutrition

Team Nutrition Resources for Child Care: fns.usda.gov/tn/child-care-organization

Crediting Resources:

Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs: fns.usda.gov/tn/fbg

Crediting Tip Sheets in Child Nutrition Programs: fns.usda.gov/tn/cn/crediting-tipsheets

Serving Traditional Indigenous Foods in Child Nutrition Programs: fns.usda.gov/cn/serving-traditional-indigenous-foods

Meal Patterns & Menu Planning:

CACFP Meal Pattern Training Worksheets: fns.usda.gov/tn/cacfp/meal-pattern-training-worksheets

CACFP Meal Pattern Posters: fns.usda.gov/tn/meal-pattern-posters-cacfp

It's Breakfast Time! Menu Planner: fns.usda.gov/tn/its-breakfast-time

Let's Make a Snack! Menu Planner: fns.usda.gov/tn/lets-make-snack

Training Tools:

CACFP Training Tools: fns.usda.gov/tn/cacfp/trainers-tools

CACFP Trainer's Tool: Serving Milk Bingo: fns.usda.gov/tn/serving-milk-bingo

CACFP Trainer's Tools: Feeding Infants: fns.usda.gov/tn/cacfp/trainers-tools/feeding-infants

CACFP Grains Ounce Equivalents Resources: fns.usda.gov/tn/cacfp/grains-ounce-equivalents-resources

Family Style Meal Service With Children in the CACFP: fns.usda.gov/tn/cacfp/family-style-meals

Growing A Healthier Future With the CACFP Infographic: fns.usda.gov/tn/cacfp/growing-healthier-future-infographic

The Institute of Child Nutrition: theicn.org/

Child Nutrition Sharing Site: theicn.org/cnss/

RESOURCE SECTION

Infants and Toddlers:

Mealtimes With Toddlers in the CACFP: fns.usda.gov/tn/mealtimes-toddlers-cacfp

Feeding Infants in the CACFP: fns.usda.gov/tn/cacfp/feeding-infants

Recipes:

Team Nutrition Standardized Recipes: fns.usda.gov/tn/recipes

Child Nutrition Recipe Box: theicn.org/cnrb/recipes-for-child-care

Manufacturer Documentation: Child Nutrition (CN) labels and Product Formulation Statement (PFS):

Manufacturer Documentation (CN labels and PFS): fns.usda.gov/cn/manufacturer-documentation

CN Labeling Program: fns.usda.gov/cn/labeling

CN Labeling and PFS Guidance for Food Manufacturers/Industry: fns.usda.gov/cn/labeling/food-manufacturersindustry

Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Regulations, Policy Memos and Guidance:

Current Meal Pattern Regulations 7 CFR 226.20: <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-7/subtitle-B/chapter-II/subchapter-A/part-226/subpart-E/section-226.20>

Final Rule: Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent With the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans: fns.usda.gov/cn/fr-042524

Final Rule: CACFP Meal Pattern Revisions Related to the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010: fns.usda.gov/cacfp/fr-042516

Nutrition Standards for CACFP Meals and Snacks: fns.usda.gov/cacfp/nutrition-standards
(Note: this site includes nutrition-related CACFP Policy memos, meal pattern tables, and additional guidance and technical assistance resources)



RESOURCE SECTION

Other helpful resources from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS): fns.usda.gov

Food and Nutrition Information: www.nutrition.gov

Dietary Guidelines for Americans: <https://realfood.gov/>

State Agency Contact Information: fns.usda.gov/fns-contacts

Food Safety: fns.usda.gov/fs/food-safety

Food Safety and Inspection Service: fsis.usda.gov/food-safety

Produce Safety: fns.usda.gov/fs/produce-safety

Culturally and Religiously Preferred Foods in FNS Programs: fns.usda.gov/programs/cultural-foods-preferences

INSIDE BACK COVER

**U.S. Department of Agriculture
Food and Nutrition Service**

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