

GRAB AND GO LESSON

Food Buying Guide Calculator

Procurement | Food Purchasing

Purpose: This handout provides the benefits and steps for using the Food Buying Guide Calculator.

The Institute of Child Nutrition and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Team Nutrition developed an online calculator to be used with the Food Buying Guide (FBG) for Child Nutrition Programs. This interactive and easy to use calculator allows users to determine how much of each item to purchase to provide enough servings.

There are over 1,200 food items from the FBG featured in the calculator. Each item lists the yield data, which is the amount of a specific food available to serve after the food is cooked or prepared. The calculator allows you to determine the total amount of food needed for 1 to 5,000 servings. This vast range in servings makes the calculator an excellent resource for all child care facilities, regardless of size. The calculator also populates the top 10 most searched foods in each food group. As you begin using the calculator more frequently, each food group will populate those top 10 items with the foods that you select the most.

How to calculate how much food to purchase:

Before using the calculator, you will need to have the information for the following questions.

- How many servings will I need?
- Will different serving sizes be used for various age groups?
- What is my planned serving size for this food?
- In what form will I purchase this food?
- What serving size is listed in column 4 of the FBG?
- Is the listed serving size the same as my planned serving size?
- How many purchase units will I need to buy?

Once those questions are answered, manually calculate how much food to purchase. Then, use the FBG Calculator as a tool to check your calculations and confirm the quantities to purchase and prepare.

How to use the FBG Calculator:

1. Type this address into the address bar: <https://foodbuyingguide.fns.usda.gov/>
2. Choose the food group by clicking on the image link or enter the keyword or food item in the search field to the right, then click "Go." Do not use punctuation.
3. Use the item description to select the desired food item for your planned menu.
4. Select the planned serving size from the drop-down list.
5. Enter the planned number of servings.
6. Click on "Add to List."
7. The amount to purchase and prepare will appear in the table.

Whether serving food to a small or large number of children, think carefully about each meal. The FBG Calculator will help determine the correct amount to purchase, prepare, and serve to meet the CACFP meal pattern requirements.

References

U.S. Department of Agriculture. (2018). *USDA food buying guide for child nutrition programs*. <http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/food-buying-guide-for-child-nutrition-programs>

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