



CHILD AND ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM

Child Meal Pattern Requirements

Participant Workbook

Child and Adult Care Food Program Child Meal Pattern Requirements

Participant Workbook

PROJECT COORDINATOR

Molle Polzin, RDN

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Aleshia Hall-Campbell, PhD, MPH



USDA Professional Standards

Key Areas: Nutrition 1000, Operations 2000

Training Topics: Menu Planning 1100, Food Production 2100, Serving Food 2200

Learning Objectives: 1110, 1160, 2150, 2210

Institute of Child Nutrition The University of Mississippi

The Institute of Child Nutrition was authorized by Congress in 1989 and established in 1990 at the University of Mississippi in Oxford and is operated in collaboration with The University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg. The Institute operates under a grant agreement with the United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Administration.

PURPOSE

Improve the operation of child nutrition programs through research, education and training, and information dissemination.

VISION

Lead the nation in providing research, education, and resources to promote excellence in child nutrition programs.

MISSION

Provide relevant research-based information and services that advance the continuous improvement of child nutrition programs.

Institute of Child Nutrition The University of Mississippi

This project has been funded at least in part with Federal funds from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Administration through an agreement with the Institute of Child Nutrition at the University of Mississippi. The content of this publication does not necessarily reflect the view or policies of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.

In accordance with federal civil rights law and USDA civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its agencies, offices, employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the state or local agency that administers the program or contact USDA through the Telecommunications Relay Service at 711 (voice and TTY). Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, [AD-3027](#), found online at How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992.

Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

1. Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Mail Stop 9410, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
2. Fax: (202) 690-7442; or
3. Email: program.intake@usda.gov.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

The University of Mississippi is an EEO/AA/Title VI/Title IX/Section 504/ADA/ADEA Employer.

Except as provided below, the text and information in this document may be used freely for non-profit or educational purposes with no cost to the participant for the training, provided the following citation is included. Incorporating these materials into other websites, textbooks, or selling them is not permitted.

Suggested Reference Citation:

Institute of Child Nutrition. (2026). *CACFP child meal pattern requirements training*. University, MS: Author.

The photographs and images in this document may be owned by third parties and used by the University of Mississippi under a licensing agreement. The university cannot, therefore, grant permission to use these images. Please contact helpdesk@theicn.org for more information.



TABLE OF **CONTENTS**

Welcome	6
Ground Rules	6
Lessons and Objectives	7
Training Foundation	8
Supporting Child Nutrition Professionals	10
CACFP Meal Pattern Requirements	11
Grains Component	24
Fluid Milk Component	54
Meats and Meat Alternates Component	60
Vegetables and Fruits Components	68
Meal Service Requirements	74
Appendix	84

WELCOME

This training covers the key fundamentals of the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) meal pattern requirements for children aged 1–18 years. You will learn how to identify creditable and non-creditable foods for each meal component and review meal service requirements.

Throughout the training, you will participate in activities, knowledge checks, and practical applications to build understanding and support successful implementation of reimbursable CACFP meals.

How to Use This Workbook

- Follow along during each lesson
- Complete activities and take notes
- Use as a reference after the training

GROUND RULES

To help this training run smoothly and allow all participants to benefit from the course, please refer to the ground rules below.

- **Show up on time and come prepared.** Be prompt in arriving and returning from breaks.
- **Stay mentally and physically present.** Listen attentively to others and avoid side conversations.
- **Let everyone participate.** Be patient when listening and treat others with respect.
- **Listen with an open mind.** Be open to new approaches and listen to understand. You can respect another person's point of view without agreeing with them.
- **Think before speaking.** Focus on understanding others before expressing your perspective. Use clear, straightforward language to avoid potential misunderstandings.
- **Address the issue, not the individual.** Honest and constructive discussions are necessary to achieve the best outcomes.

LESSONS AND OBJECTIVES

CACFP Meal Pattern Requirements

- Identify and utilize the child meal pattern handouts for breakfast, lunch/supper, and snack.
- Explain the requirements to accommodate children with special dietary needs.
- Review Child Nutrition labels and Product Formulation Statements to ensure foods meet meal pattern requirements.

Grains Component

- Recall and interpret the grains component requirements in the CACFP.
- Demonstrate how to identify breakfast cereals that meet the CACFP added sugars limit.
- Identify grain-based desserts and explore creditable grain alternatives.
- Demonstrate how to use ounce equivalents to calculate the required amounts of creditable grains.
- Identify and describe the six methods for determining if a grain is whole grain-rich.
- Explain the CACFP whole grain-rich requirements.

Fluid Milk Component

- Recall and interpret the fluid milk component requirements for each age group.
- Explain the guidelines for accommodating children who do not drink fluid milk and identify creditable fluid milk substitutes.

Meats and Meat Alternates Component

- Identify and explain the meats/meat alternates component requirements in the CACFP.
- Demonstrate how to use the table method to identify yogurt products that meet the CACFP added sugars limit.
- Summarize the key requirements for substituting meats/meat alternates for grains at breakfast in the CACFP.

Vegetables and Fruits Components

- Identify and explain the CACFP requirements for the vegetables and fruits components.
- Interpret and apply the requirements for serving juice in the CACFP.

Meal Service Requirements

- Recall at least one way to increase water intake that aligns with the CACFP requirements.
 - Identify the requirements for preparing and serving nutritious meals and snacks in the CACFP.
-

TRAINING FOUNDATION

Training Overview

The **Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Child Meal Pattern Requirements Training** is designed to prepare child nutrition professionals—including food service staff, menu planners, and individuals operating the CACFP—with the knowledge and skills needed to serve creditable meals and snacks for children ages 1–18 years. The training features practical applications, knowledge checks, and activities to introduce key concepts for preparing reimbursable meals. Participants will explore the child meal pattern and gain strategies for effective implementation.

This training includes six core lessons: 1) CACFP meal pattern requirements, 2) grains, 3) fluid milk, 4) meats/meat alternates, 5) vegetables and fruits, and 6) meal service.

Background Information

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) is committed to supporting healthy choices and healthy outcomes and established nutrition standards for meals provided through various child nutrition programs, including the CACFP, to align with the latest nutritional science and Federal regulations.

In April 2016, USDA announced updated CACFP meal pattern requirements. These updates, the first in over three decades, aimed to improve the quality of meals served to CACFP participants. Key changes included a greater variety of vegetables, the inclusion of whole grains, and limits on total sugars. The implementation of these updated meal patterns on October 1, 2017, represented a significant step in enhancing the nutritional quality of meals offered in child and adult care settings.

On April 25, 2024, USDA published the Final Rule, “Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent With the 2020–2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans.” This final rule focused on changing sugar limits for breakfast cereals and yogurt from total sugars to added sugars. The rule also addressed meal modifications, menu planning, operational flexibilities, and technical changes.

State-Specific Requirements

State agencies may require additional documentation or enforce stricter guidelines than those provided in this training. For details specific to your state, contact your State agency or sponsoring organization. To locate your State agency, you can find the website address listed under “FNA Contacts” in the **Training Resources** section at the end of the Participant Workbook to access it on an electronic device.

Functional Area and Competencies

The Institute of Child Nutrition's Competencies, Knowledge, and Skills for Child Care Providers in CACFP Operations establishes the foundation for providing nutritious meals to all CACFP participants as well as creating an environment supportive of learning healthy eating behaviors. This training focuses on the following competencies for Functional Area #5: Nutrition and Meal Management.

- Competency 5.1: Assures appropriate implementation of meal planning, food purchasing, and meal management that meets CACFP meal pattern requirements.
- Competency 5.2: Establishes a positive dining environment to foster appropriate social interaction and promote healthy eating behaviors.
- Competency 5.4: Assures the proper interpretation and implementation of appropriate food intake for all children regardless of dietary needs.

Source: Institute of Child Nutrition. (2017). *Competencies, knowledge, and skills for child care providers in CACFP operations*. <https://theicn.org/icn-resources-a-z/competencies-knowledge-and-skills-for-child-care-providers-in-cacfp-operations/>



SUPPORTING CHILD NUTRITION PROFESSIONALS

WHO WE ARE

The Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN), headquartered at the University of Mississippi, was established by Congress in 1989. ICN is the only federally funded national center dedicated to providing resources, training, research, and technical assistance for child nutrition programs. The ICN supports professional development and contributes to the success of professionals participating in child nutrition programs.

RESOURCES

ICN offers a vast library of educational resources covering a variety of topics. Available on ICN's website (<http://www.theicn.org/>) for download, our training resources can be used by even the most novice trainer. The library includes materials related to school meal programs and the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Whether you need a 10-minute lesson or a 12-hour course, ICN is your go-to source for educational child nutrition resources.

In addition to ICN's home site, the resource collection includes other helpful websites.

- Child Nutrition Archives (CNA): <https://theicn.org/archives/>
- Culinary Institute of Child Nutrition (CICN): <https://theicn.org/cicn/>
- Child Nutrition Sharing Site (CNSS): <https://theicn.org/cnss/>
- Child Nutrition Recipe Box (CNRB): <https://theicn.org/cnrbr/>

TRAINING

Using a network of expert trainer consultants, ICN delivers face-to-face training seminars and virtual instructor-led trainings (VILTs) to child nutrition professionals across the country. In addition, ICN conducts pre-conference sessions and other presentations at national, regional, and state conferences. On-site training may be requested at little or no cost.

ICN's self-paced online course system, iLearn, supports the professional development of child nutrition program personnel at all levels. ICN's recorded webinars are also available on iLearn.

RESEARCH

The ICN's Applied Research Division (ARD), based at The University of Southern Mississippi, conducts research and develops resources to support child nutrition programs. The ARD is an industry leader in research and addresses key areas such as operational accountability, wellness, human resources, equipment and design, customer service, environmental sustainability, and best practices.

HELP DESK

The ICN Help Desk provides a direct link to experts who can answer a wide variety of questions on all aspects of child nutrition program management. Contact us by phone or email.

Phone: 800-321-3054 | **Fax:** 800-321-3061 | **Web:** theicn.org | **Email:** helpdesk@theicn.org

CACFP MEAL PATTERN REQUIREMENTS



Notes Page

Objective: Identify and utilize the child meal pattern handouts for breakfast, lunch/supper, and snack.

Objective: Explain the requirements to accommodate children with special dietary needs.

Objective: Review Child Nutrition labels and Production Formulation Statements to ensure foods meet meal pattern requirements.

Child Meal Pattern: Breakfast

(Select three components for a reimbursable meal)

Meal Components and Food Items ¹	Ages 1-2	Ages 3-5	Ages 6-12	Ages 13-18 ²
Fluid Milk	4 fluid ounces ³	6 fluid ounces ⁴	8 fluid ounces ⁵	8 fluid ounces ⁵
Vegetables, fruits, or portions of both⁶	¼ cup	½ cup	½ cup	½ cup
Grains⁷ (ounce equivalent = oz eq)				
Whole grain-rich or enriched bread	½ oz eq	½ oz eq	1 oz eq	1 oz eq
Whole grain-rich or enriched grain items, such as biscuits, rolls, or muffins	½ oz eq	½ oz eq	1 oz eq	1 oz eq
Whole grain-rich, enriched or fortified cooked breakfast cereal ⁸ , cereal grains, or pasta	¼ cup	¼ cup	½ cup	½ cup
Whole grain-rich, enriched or fortified ready-to-eat breakfast cereal (dry, cold) ⁸				
Flakes or rounds	½ cup	½ cup	1 cup	1 cup
Puffed cereal	¾ cup	¾ cup	1 ¼ cup	1 ¼ cup
Granola	⅛ cup	⅛ cup	¼ cup	¼ cup

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 be unflavored whole milk for children age 1.

⁴ Must serve unflavored milk to children 2 through 5 years old. The milk may be fat-free (skim), low-fat (1%), reduced-fat (2%), or whole milk.

⁵ May serve unflavored or flavored fat-free (skim), low-fat (1%), reduced-fat (2%), or whole milk to children ages 6 and older.

⁶ 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.

⁷ Must serve at least one whole grain-rich serving, across all eating occasions, per day. 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.

⁸ 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 USDA guidance.

Child Meal Pattern: Lunch/Supper

(Select five components for a reimbursable meal)

Meal Components and Food Items ¹	Ages 1-2	Ages 3-5	Ages 6-12	Ages 13-18 ²
Fluid Milk	4 fluid ounces ³	6 fluid ounces ⁴	8 fluid ounces ⁵	8 fluid ounces ⁵
Meats/Meat Alternates				
Lean meat, poultry, or fish	1 oz eq	1 ½ oz eq	2 oz eq	2 oz eq
Beans, peas, and lentils	¼ cup	⅜ cup	½ cup	½ cup
Cheese	1 oz eq	1 ½ oz eq	2 oz eq	2 oz eq
Large egg	½	¾	1	1
Peanuts, soy nuts, tree nuts, or seeds	1 oz eq	1 ½ oz eq	2 oz eq	2 oz eq
Peanut butter, soy nut butter, or other nut or seed butters	2 tbsp	3 tbsp	4 tbsp	4 tbsp
Tofu, soy products, or alternate protein products ⁶	1 oz eq	1 ½ oz eq	2 oz eq	2 oz eq
Yogurt ⁷	4 ounces or ½ cup	6 ounces or ¾ cup	8 ounces or 1 cup	8 ounces or 1 cup
Vegetables⁸	⅛ cup	¼ cup	½ cup	½ cup
Fruits⁸	⅛ cup	¼ cup	¼ cup	¼ cup
Grains⁹ (ounce equivalent = oz eq)				
Whole grain-rich or enriched bread	½ oz eq	½ oz eq	1 oz eq	1 oz eq
Whole grain-rich or enriched grain items, such as biscuits, rolls, or muffins	½ oz eq	½ oz eq	1 oz eq	1 oz eq
Whole grain-rich, enriched or fortified cooked breakfast cereal, cereal grains, or pasta	¼ cup	¼ cup	½ cup	½ cup

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 may be fat-free (skim), low-fat (1%), reduced-fat (2%), or whole milk.

⁵ May serve unflavored or flavored fat-free (skim), low-fat (1%), reduced-fat (2%), or whole milk to children ages 6 and older.

⁶ Alternate protein products must meet the requirements in Appendix A to 7 CFR Part 226.

⁷ Yogurt may be regular or soy, plain or flavored, unsweetened or sweetened. Yogurt must contain no more than 12 grams of added sugars per 6 ounces (2 grams of added sugars per ounce).

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 Must serve at least one whole grain-rich serving, across all eating occasions, per day. 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 USDA guidance.

Child Meal Pattern: Snack

(Select two of the five components for a reimbursable snack)

Meal Components and Food Items ¹	Ages 1-2	Ages 3-5	Ages 6-12	Ages 13-18 ²
Fluid Milk	4 fluid ounces ³	4 fluid ounces ⁴	8 fluid ounces ⁵	8 fluid ounces ⁵
Meats/Meat Alternates				
Lean meat, poultry, or fish	½ oz eq	½ oz eq	1 oz eq	1 oz eq
Beans, peas, and lentils	⅛ cup	⅛ cup	¼ cup	¼ cup
Cheese	½ oz eq	½ oz eq	1 oz eq	1 oz eq
Large egg	½	½	½	½
Peanuts, soy nuts, tree nuts, or seeds	1 oz eq	1 oz eq	2 oz eq	2 oz eq
Peanut butter, soy nut butter, or other nut or seed butters	1 tbsp	1 tbsp	2 tbsp	2 tbsp
Tofu, soy products, or alternate protein products ⁶	½ oz eq	½ oz eq	1 oz eq	1 oz eq
Yogurt ⁷	2 ounces or ¼ cup	2 ounces or ¼ cup	4 ounces or ½ cup	4 ounces or ½ cup
Vegetables⁸	½ cup	½ cup	¾ cup	¾ cup
Fruits⁸	½ cup	½ cup	¾ cup	¾ cup
Grains⁹ (ounce equivalent = oz eq)				
Whole grain-rich or enriched bread	½ oz eq	½ oz eq	1 oz eq	1 oz eq
Whole grain-rich or enriched grain items, such as biscuits, rolls, or muffins	½ oz eq	½ oz eq	1 oz eq	1 oz eq
Whole grain-rich, enriched or fortified cooked breakfast cereal, cereal grains, or pasta	¼ cup	¼ cup	½ cup	½ cup
Whole grain-rich, enriched or fortified ready-to-eat breakfast cereal (dry, cold) ⁹				
Flakes or rounds	½ cup	½ cup	1 cup	1 cup
Puffed cereal	¾ cup	¾ cup	1 ¼ cup	1 ¼ cup
Granola	⅛ cup	⅛ cup	¼ cup	¼ cup

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 may be fat-free (skim), low-fat (1%), reduced-fat (2%), or whole milk.

⁵ May serve unflavored or flavored fat-free (skim), low-fat (1%), reduced-fat (2%), or whole milk to children ages 6 and older.

⁶ Alternate protein products must meet the requirements in Appendix A to 7 CFR Part 226.

⁷ Yogurt must contain no more than 12 grams of added sugars per 6 ounces (2 grams of added sugars per ounce).

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 Must serve at least one whole grain-rich serving, across all eating occasions, per day. 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 USDA guidance.

ACTIVITY: EXPLORING THE MEAL PATTERN

A **reimbursable** meal or snack includes creditable foods in the minimum serving sizes specified in the CACFP meal patterns.

Activity Instructions: Answer each question using the CACFP Child Meal Pattern Handouts. Create sample menus using the provided meal component combinations, making sure no food item is repeated—except for milk, which may appear multiple times.

Breakfast:

1. How many fluid ounces of milk are required for a 2-year-old at breakfast?
2. What are the components that must be offered for a reimbursable breakfast?
3. Create a sample breakfast menu including the following components.
 - 1) Milk, Fruits, Grains:
 - 2) Milk, Vegetables, Grains:

Lunch/Supper:

1. What is the required amount of vegetables to serve to a 5-year-old at lunch or supper?
2. What are the components that must be offered for a reimbursable lunch?
3. Create a sample lunch menu including the following components.
 - 1) Milk, Meats, Vegetables, Fruits, Grains:
 - 2) Milk, Meat Alternates, Two Vegetables, Grains:

Snack:

1. If serving cheese at snack, what is the amount of cheese required for a 6-year-old?
2. What are the components that must be offered for a reimbursable snack?
3. Create a sample snack menu including the following components.
 - 1) Meats/Meat Alternates, Vegetables:
 - 2) Vegetables, Grains:
 - 3) Fruits, Vegetables:

SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS

Disabilities

A disability is a physical or mental impairment that limits major life activities (e.g., eating, breathing, or body functions). Food allergies or intolerances are considered disabilities.

Accommodating Children With Disabilities

- Programs must provide reasonable meal modifications at no extra charge.
- If modifications meet meal pattern requirements, a medical statement is not required (e.g., substitute oranges for a child with a strawberry allergy).
- Written parent requests are recommended but not required.
- Child care programs are strongly encouraged to meet these requested special dietary needs.

Meal Modifications With a Medical Statement

- If a meal modification does not meet meal pattern requirements, a medical statement is required for reimbursement.
- It must be signed by a State licensed healthcare professional or registered dietitian.

Meal Modifications for Disabilities

- Programs must provide substitutions when a valid medical statement is on file.
- Exact substitutions (i.e., specific name brand) are not required, but programs must offer a reasonable alternative.
- Work with families and keep documentation on file.

Medical Statement Requirements

Must include:

1. Child's physical or mental impairment and how it restricts their diet
2. Required meal modifications (foods to avoid/substitute)
3. Signature from a State licensed healthcare professional or a registered dietitian

Review for completeness and follow up if unclear.

Non-Disability Dietary Preferences

- Programs are encouraged, but not required, to accommodate preferences not related to a disability (e.g., cultural or religious).
- Substitutions must meet meal pattern requirements to be reimbursable.
- Written requests are recommended.

For more information, refer to the USDA policy memo, CACFP 14-2017: Modifications to Accommodate Disabilities in the CACFP. The website address is in the **Training Resources** section.

SAMPLE MEDICAL STATEMENT

PART 1: May be completed by the child care center or home provider		
Child Care Name		Child Care Address
First and Last Name of Participant		Date of Birth
Name of Parent or Guardian		Telephone Number
PART 2: Must be completed by a State licensed healthcare professional* or registered dietitian		
☐ The participant has a physical or mental impairment that limits one or more major life activities**		
List the physical or mental impairment:		
Describe how the physical or mental impairment restricts the diet:		
Meal Accommodation(s) List foods or types of foods that must be omitted: List foods or types of foods to be substituted:		
Signature of State licensed healthcare professional or registered dietitian		
Printed Name	Telephone Number	Date
Medical Office Name and Address		

* A State licensed healthcare professional is an individual authorized to write medical prescriptions under state law. This may include a licensed physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant, depending on State law. Program operators should contact their State agency about which professions are included in this definition in their State.

** Major life activities include, but are not limited to, caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, and working. A major life activity also includes the operation of a major bodily function, including but not limited to, functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine, and reproductive functions.

Contact your State agency or sponsoring organization for their sample medical statement, as each State's form may vary. You can find the website address for the FNA State Agency Contacts in the **Training Resources** section at the end of the Participant Workbook.

ACTIVITY: UNDERSTANDING MEDICAL STATEMENTS

Instructions: Review the medical statement and answer the questions.

PART 1: May be completed by the child care center or home provider

Child Care Name ABC Day Care	Child Care Address 123 South Street, City
First and Last Name of Participant <i>Sally Smith</i>	Date of Birth <i>12/14/20XX</i>
Name of Parent or Guardian <i>Nancy Smith</i>	Telephone Number <i>502-123-4567</i>

PART 2: Must be completed by a State licensed healthcare professional or registered dietitian

☒ Participant has a physical or mental impairment that limits one or more major life activities.

List the physical or mental impairment: *No milk*

Describe how the physical or mental impairment restricts the diet: _____

Meal Accommodation(s)

List foods or types of foods that must be omitted: *Cow's Milk*

List foods or types of foods to be substituted: *Soy Milk*

Signature of State licensed healthcare professional or registered dietitian

Printed Name	Telephone Number	Date
--------------	------------------	------

Medical Office Name and Address

1. List the missing or incorrect information from the medical statement.
2. What should you do after you review this medical statement?

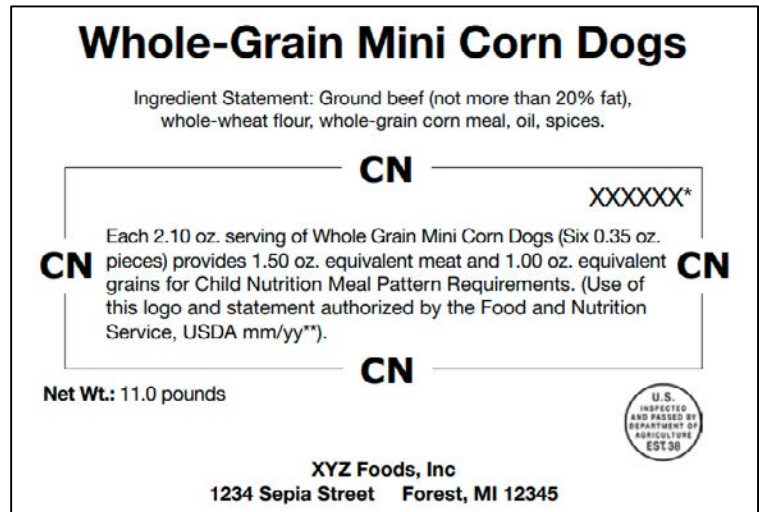
For additional information on how to provide meal modifications to participants, refer to the USDA policy memo CACFP 14-2017: Modifications to Accommodate Disabilities in the CACFP and CACFP 07-2025: Requirement to Accept Medical Statements from Registered Dietitians. You can find the website addresses for these memos in the **Training Resources** section at the end of the Participant Workbook.

CHILD NUTRITION LABELS

Child Nutrition (CN) labels provide information on how a product contributes to the meal pattern. A CN label must contain the following:

1. Federally required label with product name, inspection legend, ingredient statement, name and address of manufacturer or distributor, and net weight
2. CN logo with distinct border
3. Meal pattern contribution statement
4. USDA authorization statement
5. Unique 6-digit CN identification number (assigned by the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service)
6. Month and year of approval

Sample CN Label



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

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

Products Eligible for a CN Label

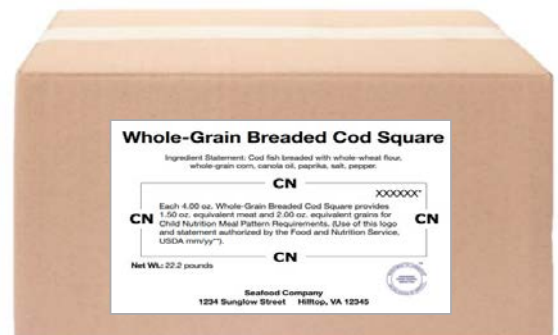
- Commercially prepared main dish products that contribute to the meats/meat alternates component are eligible for a CN label. These items may also credit toward the grains, vegetables, and fruits components.
- Many CN-labeled foods are combination items (e.g., pizza, chicken nuggets, corn dogs, fish sticks, lasagna).
- A CN label does not mean a product is healthier or higher quality.

Advantages of CN Labels

- A CN label tells you how the food credits toward the meal pattern.
- CN labels confirm the product was made in a facility that meets Federal food safety rules and keeps quality consistent.
- When prepared as directed, the CN label protects against audit claims.
- The CN Label Verification System verifies the status of a CN label and crediting information. This is not a method to obtain a CN label.

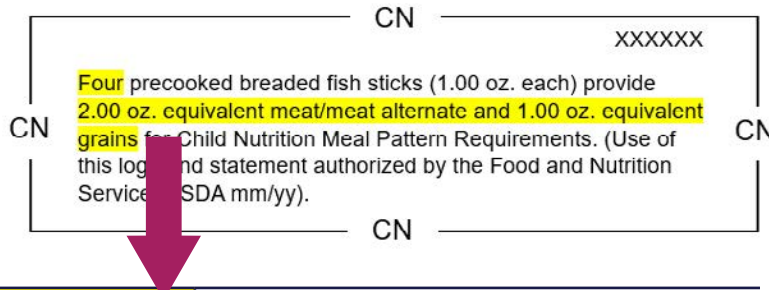
Where to Find CN Labels

- CN labels are typically found on product packaging or boxes from large food distributors and are rarely on items from grocery or retail stores. Because CN labels are voluntary, not all products will have one.
- Programs are not required to purchase CN-labeled items; however, all purchased products must have documentation showing they meet meal pattern requirements.



How to Use a CN Label

Compare the CN label to the CACFP meal pattern minimum serving sizes to determine how much to serve each age group.



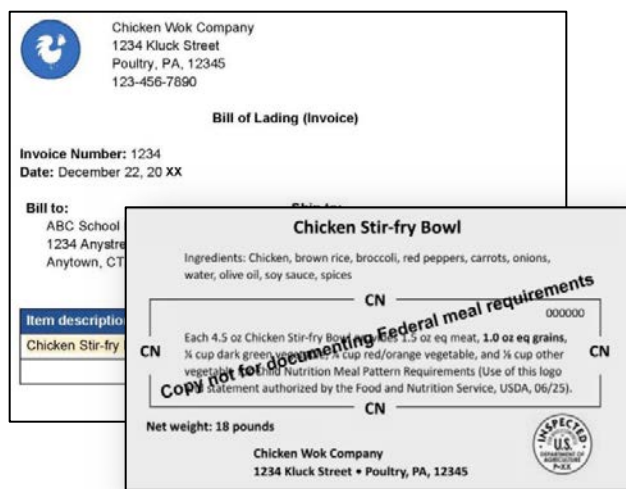
Ages	Meal Pattern Requirements	Crediting Info From CN Label	Number of Fish Sticks to Serve to Each Child
1–2	1 oz M/MA ½ oz eq Grains	4 fish sticks = 2 oz eq M/MA 1 oz eq Grains	2 fish sticks
3–5	1.5 oz M/MA ½ oz eq Grains		3 fish sticks
6+	2 oz M/MA 1 oz eq Grains		4 fish sticks

CN Label Retention Guidelines

A CN label must be kept on file. Options include:

1. Original CN label from the product package
2. A photo or photocopy of the CN label shown attached to the original product packaging
3. CN label copied with a watermark displaying the product name and CN number provided by the vendor and the Bill of Lading (invoice)

CN labels must be clear and readable, apply only to the specific product, and match exactly when reordering.



When CN Labels Are Unavailable

1. Make the product from scratch using a standardized recipe.
2. Request a Product Formulation Statement (PFS).
 - a. PFS must be signed, on the manufacturer's letterhead, and indicate how the product contributes to the meal pattern.
 - b. Refer to the USDA's "Tips for Evaluating a Manufacturer's Product Formulation Statement" and "Checklist for Evaluating a Manufacturer's PFS."

Additional Information

- USDA resources under **Child Nutrition Labels and PFS** in the **Training Resources** section
- State agency or sponsoring organization for state-specific requirements or training

Good Way Foods, Inc.

III. Alternate Protein Products (APP)
 Fill out the chart below to determine the creditable amount of APP. Documentation must be provided as described in Attachments A and B for each APP used.

DESCRIPTION OF APP, MANUFACTURER'S NAME, AND CODE NUMBER	OUNCES DRY PER APP PORTION	MULTIPLY	% OF PROTEIN AS %*	DIVIDE†	CREDITABLE AMOUNT APP (x 1.1) ‡
Soy Protein Concentrate powder, ABC Protein Company, Product Code 45678	0.09	x	68	= 18	0.340
		x		= 18	
		x		= 18	
J. Total Creditable APP Amount (sum of lines above)					0.340

* Attached documentation provides % of Protein as is.
 † It is the percent of protein when fully hydrated.

IV. Total Creditable Amount of MMA

Total Creditable Meats Amount (from line C)	1.698
Total Creditable Meat Alternates Amount (from line G)	
Total Creditable APP Amount (from line J)	0.340
K. Total Creditable Amount (sum of lines above)	2.038
L. Total Creditable Amount rounded to nearest 0.25 or 0.50	2.00

† Total Creditable Amount must be rounded down to the nearest 0.25 (or examples: 1.88 rounds down to 1.25; 1.91 rounds down to 1.25; 1.94 rounds down to 1.25; 1.97 rounds down to 1.25; 1.99 rounds down to 1.25; 2.01 rounds up to 2.00; 2.04 rounds up to 2.00; 2.07 rounds up to 2.00; 2.10 rounds up to 2.00; 2.13 rounds up to 2.00; 2.16 rounds up to 2.00; 2.19 rounds up to 2.00; 2.22 rounds up to 2.00; 2.25 rounds up to 2.00; 2.28 rounds up to 2.00; 2.31 rounds up to 2.00; 2.34 rounds up to 2.00; 2.37 rounds up to 2.00; 2.40 rounds up to 2.00; 2.43 rounds up to 2.00; 2.46 rounds up to 2.00; 2.49 rounds up to 2.00; 2.52 rounds up to 2.00; 2.55 rounds up to 2.00; 2.58 rounds up to 2.00; 2.61 rounds up to 2.00; 2.64 rounds up to 2.00; 2.67 rounds up to 2.00; 2.70 rounds up to 2.00; 2.73 rounds up to 2.00; 2.76 rounds up to 2.00; 2.79 rounds up to 2.00; 2.82 rounds up to 2.00; 2.85 rounds up to 2.00; 2.88 rounds up to 2.00; 2.91 rounds up to 2.00; 2.94 rounds up to 2.00; 2.97 rounds up to 2.00; 3.00 rounds up to 2.00).

Total weight (per portion) of product as purchased: 2.5 oz (5 meatballs)
 Total creditable amount of product (per portion): 2.00 Note: Total creditable amount (per portion) cannot exceed the total weight (per portion).

I certify that the above information is true and correct and that a 2.5 ounce serving of the above product (ready for serving) contains 2.00 ounce equivalents meat/meat alternate when prepared according to directions.

I further certify that any APP used in the product conforms to the Food and Nutrition Service Regulations (Appendix A of 7 CFR Parts 200, 220, 225, and 226) as demonstrated by the attached supplier documentation.

Signature: Jeff Stephens Title: K-12 Program Manager
 Printed Name: Jeff Stephens Date: 09/05/2025 Phone Number: 789-456-1230

ACTIVITY: USING A CN LABEL

Instructions: Complete the steps for lunch using the sample CN label and meal pattern handout.

CN	_____ CN _____ XXXXXX Five fully cooked breaded chicken nuggets (0.66 oz each) provide 2.00 oz. equivalent meat/meat alternate and 1.00 oz. equivalent grains for Child Nutrition Meal Pattern Requirements. (Use of this logo and statement authorized by the Food and Nutrition Service, USDA mm/yy).	CN
	_____ CN _____	

1. Write the crediting information from the CN label in the box below.

Number of Chicken Nuggets in a Serving	Oz eq M/MA	Oz eq Grains

2. Refer to the meal pattern handout for lunch and write the minimum required serving sizes for the M/MA and Grains components for each age group in Column #1.

3. Using the minimum required serving sizes from Column #1 and the meal contribution amounts from the CN label information in the box above, calculate the number of chicken nuggets to serve to each child in each age group. Write the answers in Column #2.

•	Column #1	Column #2
Ages	Meal Pattern Requirements (From Meal Pattern Handouts)	Number of Chicken Nuggets to Serve to Each Child Per Age Group
1–2	M/MA: _____ Grains: _____	_____
3–5	M/MA: _____ Grains: _____	_____
6+	M/MA: _____ Grains: _____	_____

ACTIVITY: APPLY IN THREE

Instructions: Write at least three things you learned about the meal pattern requirements, how you will apply this information, and the estimated date you would like to have completed each item.

What did you learn?	How will you apply it?	When will you apply it?
1.		
2.		
3.		

GRAINS COMPONENT

Notes Page

Objective: Recall and interpret the grains component requirements in the CACFP.

Objective: Demonstrate how to identify breakfast cereals that meet the CACFP added sugars limit.

Objective: Identify grain-based desserts and explore creditable grain alternatives.

Objective: Demonstrate how to use ounce equivalents to calculate the required amounts of creditable grains.

Objective: Identify and describe the six methods for determining if a grain is whole grain-rich.

Objective: Explain the CACFP whole grain-rich requirements.

GRAINS BASICS

Grains Component Requirements at Meals/Snacks

- **Breakfast, lunch, and supper:** Grains are a required component for a reimbursable meal.
- **Breakfast:** A meat/meat alternate may be served in place of the entire grains component a maximum of three times per week.
- **Snack:** Grains may be offered as one of the two required meal components.

Creditable Grains

All grains served in a reimbursable meal or snack must be creditable to count toward the grains component. Creditable grains include whole grains, enriched grains, fortified breakfast cereals, bran, and germ. To determine if a grain item is creditable, use the following criteria:

- The first ingredient (or second after water) is an enriched grain, whole grain, bran, or germ.
- The ingredient list includes nutrients used to enrich or fortify the grain flour or meal.
 - Example: yellow corn flour (thiamin, riboflavin, niacin, and folic acid)
- The grain item is labeled as “enriched” (e.g., enriched long grain rice), “fortified” (e.g., fortified breakfast cereal), or “whole grain” (e.g., whole wheat bread).

Breakfast Cereals

- Include ready-to-eat, instant, and regular hot cereals.
- Must contain no more than 6 grams of added sugars per dry ounce.

Grain-Based Desserts

Grain-based desserts (GBDs) are not creditable and do not count toward the grains component. GBDs are identified with a superscript 3 or 4 in Exhibit A of the Food Buying Guide. Some common examples include:

- Brownies
- Cakes
- Cereal bars
- Cookies
- Granola bars
- Sweet pie crusts
- Sweet rolls
- Toaster pastries

Graham Crackers and Animal Crackers

Sweet crackers, such as graham and animal crackers, are creditable and can be included in a reimbursable meal or snack. On Exhibit A, they are marked in blue with a superscript 5.

Whole Grain-Rich

- When grains are served, at least one serving of grains per day must be whole grain-rich.
- Whole grain-rich is the term used by the USDA FNA to indicate that the grain content of a product is between 50 and 100 percent whole grain, with any remaining grains being enriched.
- Common whole grain names include:
 - “Whole” before the grain (e.g., whole wheat, whole corn)
 - Berries or groats
 - Rolled oats or oatmeal

ACTIVITY: CREDITABLE GAINS

Instructions: Read each ingredients list. Determine if the grain item is creditable and explain why or why not.

1. Whole Wheat Pancake Mix

Ingredients: Whole Wheat flour, sugar, dextrose, leavening (baking soda, calcium phosphate, sodium aluminum phosphate), buttermilk.

Is it creditable?

Explain why or why not:

2. Corn Tortilla

Ingredients: Yellow corn flour, vegetable oil, salt.

Is it creditable?

Explain why or why not:

3. Honey Wheat Bread

Ingredients: Water, wheat flour (thiamin, riboflavin, niacin, and folic acid), whole grain oats, honey, leavening (baking soda, calcium phosphate, sodium aluminum phosphate).

Is it creditable?

Explain why or why not:

BREAKFAST CEREAL AND ADDED SUGARS GUIDE

Breakfast cereals in the CACFP must contain no more than 6 grams of added sugars per dry ounce. Three ways to identify creditable breakfast cereals: 1) WIC-Approved Breakfast Cereals List, 2) Table Method, and 3) Calculation Method. The first two methods are demonstrated below. Learn about the calculation method in the USDA's "Calculating the Added Sugars Limit for Breakfast Cereals." The website address is in the **Training Resources** section of the Participant Workbook.

WIC-Approved Breakfast Cereals List

Use any State agency's WIC-approved breakfast cereal list to identify creditable cereals:

<https://www.fna.usda.gov/fns-contacts/wic>

Table Method

- **Step 1:** Use the Nutrition Facts label to find the **Serving Size**, in grams (g), of the cereal. Write it here: _____
- **Step 2:** Find the **Added Sugars** line. Look at the number of grams (g) next to Added Sugars. Write it here: _____
- **Step 3:** Use the serving size identified in Step 1 to find the serving size of your cereal in the **Added Sugars Limits 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 breakfast cereal has that amount of added sugars or less, it meets the added sugars limit.
Is it creditable? _____

Nutrition Facts	
5 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%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 140mg	6%
Total Carbohydrate 20g	7%
Dietary Fiber 3g	11%
Total Sugars 10g	
Includes 5g Added Sugars	10%
Protein 5g	10%
Not a significant source of vitamin D, calcium, iron, and potassium	
*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.	

Added Sugars Limits Table

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

ACTIVITY: BREAKFAST CEREAL: IS IT CREDITABLE?

Instructions: Review each label and use the table method to determine if the breakfast cereal is within the added sugars limit.

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

Multi-Color Rounds

- **Step 1:** Use the Nutrition Facts label to find the **Serving Size** on the cereal. Write it here: _____
- **Step 2:** Find the amount of **Added Sugars**. Write it here: _____
- **Step 3:** Use the serving size identified in Step 1 to find the serving size of your cereal in the **Added Sugars Limits 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, it meets the added sugars requirement.

Is it creditable? _____

Nutrition Facts	
8 servings per container	
Serving size	1 cup (32g)
Amount Per Serving	
Calories	130
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 180mg	8%
Total Carbohydrate 27g	10%
Dietary Fiber 3g	11%
Total Sugars 23g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	20%
Protein 1g	2%
Not a significant source of vitamin D, calcium, iron, and potassium	
* 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.	

Honey Frosty O's

- **Step 1:** Use the Nutrition Facts label to find the **Serving Size** on the cereal. Write it here: _____
- **Step 2:** Find the amount of **Added Sugars**. Write it here: _____
- **Step 3:** Use the serving size identified in Step 1 to find the serving size of your cereal in the **Added Sugars Limits 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, it meets the added sugars requirement.

Is it creditable? _____

Nutrition Facts	
12 servings per container	
Serving size	3/4 cup (30g)
Amount Per Serving	
Calories	120
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 110mg	5%
Total Carbohydrate 27g	10%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Total Sugars 17g	
Includes 12g Added Sugars	24%
Protein 1g	2%
Not a significant source of vitamin D, calcium, iron, and potassium	
*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.	

Champion Flakes

- **Step 1:** Use the Nutrition Facts label to find the **Serving Size** on the cereal. Write it here: _____
- **Step 2:** Find the amount of **Added Sugars**. Write it here: _____
- **Step 3:** Use the serving size identified in Step 1 to find the serving size of your cereal in the **Added Sugars Limits 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, it meets the added sugars requirement.

Is it creditable? _____

Nutrition Facts	
1 servings per container	
Serving size	1 bowl (33g)
Amount Per Serving	
Calories	120
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 1g	1%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 270mg	12%
Total Carbohydrate 27g	10%
Dietary Fiber 1g	4%
Total Sugars 5g	
Includes 3g Added Sugars	6%
Protein 2g	4%
Not a significant source of vitamin D, calcium, iron, and potassium	
*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.	

GRAIN-BASED DESSERTS IN THE CACFP

1. What is a grain-based dessert (GBD)?

Grain-based desserts are marked with a red superscript 3 or 4 in the FBG Exhibit A and are not creditable in the CACFP. Examples include cookies, granola bars, and toaster pastries.

2. How can I tell if a food is a grain-based dessert?

Some foods may be marketed under different names (e.g., a cookie labeled as a “breakfast round” or a granola bar labeled as a “breakfast square”). Ask yourself: Is this a dessert? If yes, it is likely a grain-based dessert. If unsure, check with your State agency or sponsoring organization.

3. Can grain-based desserts be served?

Yes, as an extra item only. They do not count toward the meal components and must be purchased with non-CACFP funds.

4. Does the Exhibit A list all grain-based desserts?

No, the Exhibit A chart is not a complete list. The table below highlights some additional items and clarification for each. Refer to your State agency or sponsoring organization with questions.

Grain Item	GBD		Explanations and Examples
	Yes	No	
Black Bean Brownies	✓		GBDs made with healthy ingredients, like black beans, are still considered GBDs. Also, the beans in the GBD cannot count toward the M/MA or the vegetables component.
Homemade Granola Bars	✓		Store-bought and scratch-made items—even those made with less sugar or fat are still considered GBDs and not creditable.
Pancakes or Waffles with Syrup, Jam, or Honey		✓	Pancakes and waffles are creditable grains, even with sweet toppings. Consider offering healthier toppings, such as yogurt, fresh fruit, or fruit purees like strawberries or bananas.
Quick Breads		✓	Examples: banana, pumpkin, and zucchini bread Credit like muffins in Exhibit A, Group D
Savory Grain Items		✓	Examples: • Scones with cheese or herbs (Exhibit A, Group B) • Bread puddings with vegetables (Exhibit A, Group B) • Crusts on M/MA (savory) pies like chicken pot pie (Exhibit A, Group C)
Sweet Grain Items	✓		Examples: • Scones with fruit and icing • Bread puddings with chocolate chips or sweet toppings • Grain portion of sweet pie crusts, cobblers, and crisps

Adapted Source: United States Department of Agriculture. Food and Nutrition Administration. (2024, December 19). *CACFP 05-2025: Grain requirements in the child and adult care food program: questions and answers*. <https://www.fna.usda.gov/cacfp/grain-requirements-qas>

EXHIBIT A: GRAIN REQUIREMENTS^{1,2}

Color Key: Footnote 3 or 4 = Red, Footnote 5 = Blue | Ounce Equivalent (Oz Eq)

Group A		Oz Eq for Group A
- Bread-type coating - Breadsticks (hard) - Chow Mein noodles - Savory Crackers (saltines & snack crackers)	- Croutons - Pretzels (hard) - Stuffing (dry) Note: weights apply to bread in stuffing	1 oz eq = 22 gm or 0.8 oz $\frac{3}{4}$ oz eq = 17 gm or 0.6 oz $\frac{1}{2}$ oz eq = 11 gm or 0.4 oz $\frac{1}{4}$ oz eq = 6 gm or 0.2 oz
Group B		Oz Eq for Group B
- Bagels - Batter-type coating - Biscuits - Breads—all (e.g., sliced, French, Italian) - Buns (hamburger, 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 $\frac{3}{4}$ oz eq = 21 gm or 0.75 oz $\frac{1}{2}$ oz eq = 14 gm or 0.5 oz $\frac{1}{4}$ oz eq = 7 gm or 0.25 oz
Group C		Oz Eq for Group C
- Cookies³ (plain – includes vanilla wafers) - Cornbread - Corn muffins - Croissants - Pancakes	- Pie crust (dessert pies³, cobbler³, fruit turnovers⁴, and meat/meat alternate pies) - Waffles	1 oz eq = 34 gm or 1.2 oz $\frac{3}{4}$ oz eq = 26 gm or 0.9 oz $\frac{1}{2}$ oz eq = 17 gm or 0.6 oz $\frac{1}{4}$ oz eq = 9 gm or 0.3 oz
Group D		Oz Eq for Group D
- 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 $\frac{3}{4}$ oz eq = 42 gm or 1.5 oz $\frac{1}{2}$ oz eq = 28 gm or 1.0 oz $\frac{1}{4}$ oz eq = 14 gm or 0.5 oz
Group E		Oz Eq for Group E
- 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 roll⁴ (frosted) - Toaster pastry⁴ (frosted)	1 oz eq = 69 gm or 2.4 oz $\frac{3}{4}$ oz eq = 52 gm or 1.8 oz $\frac{1}{2}$ oz eq = 35 gm or 1.2 oz $\frac{1}{4}$ oz eq = 18 gm or 0.6 oz
Group F		Oz Eq for Group F
- Cake³ (plain, unfrosted) - Coffee cake⁴		1 oz eq = 82 gm or 2.9 oz $\frac{3}{4}$ oz eq = 62 gm or 2.2 oz $\frac{1}{2}$ oz eq = 41 gm or 1.5 oz $\frac{1}{4}$ oz eq = 21 gm or 0.7 oz

Group G		Oz Eq for Group G
- 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
Group H		Oz Eq for Group H
- Cereal grains (barley, quinoa, etc.) - Breakfast cereals (cooked)^{6,7} - 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
Group I		Oz Eq for Group I
Ready-to-eat breakfast cereal (cold, dry)^{6,7,8}		1 oz eq = 1 cup or 1 oz for flakes and rounds 1 oz eq = 1.25 cups or 1 oz for puffed cereal 1 oz eq = ¼ cup or 1 oz for granola

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 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.

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 (effective July 1, 2025), 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.

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.

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 served in CACFP and NSLP/SBP infant and preschool meals must contain no more than 6 grams of added sugars per dry ounce.

Adapted Source: USDA. Food and Nutrition Administration. (2025, August 04). *Food buying guide for child nutrition programs: Grains*. https://foodbuyingguide.fns.usda.gov/Content/TablesFBG/USDA_FBG_Section4_Grains.pdf

ACTIVITY: GRAIN-BASED DESSERTS

Instructions: For each food item, decide if it is a grain-based dessert (GBD) or not. If it is a GBD, stand up. If it is not a GBD, stay seated. For each GBD, suggest a creditable grain alternative.

Food Item	GBD		Alternatives
	Yes	No	
1. Homemade Granola Bars			
2. Graham Crackers			
3. Chicken Pot Pie Crust			
4. Coffee Cake			
5. Vanilla Wafers			
6. Blueberry Muffins			
7. Buttermilk Biscuits			
8. Cinnamon Buns			
9. Breakfast Bar			
10. Pancakes with Syrup			



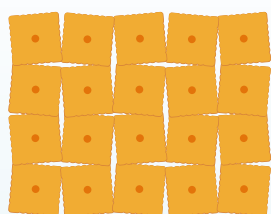
United States Department of Agriculture

Food and Nutrition Service

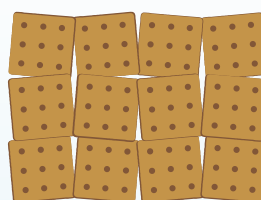
Using Ounce Equivalents for Grains in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

Grains are an important part of meals in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). To make sure children and adults get enough grains at CACFP meals and snacks, required amounts for the grains component are listed in the meal pattern as ounce equivalents (oz. eq.). Ounce equivalents tell you the amount of grain in a portion of food.

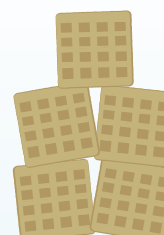
How Much Is 1 Ounce Equivalent?



20 cheese crackers
(1" by 1") = 1 oz. eq.



12 thin wheat crackers
(1 ¼" by 1 ¼") = 1 oz. eq.



5 woven whole-wheat crackers
(1 ½" by 1 ½") = 1 oz. eq.

Using the Grains Measuring Chart

The Grains Measuring Chart on pages 2-4 tells you how much of a grain item you need to serve to meet CACFP meal pattern requirements. To use this chart:

- Find the grain you want to serve under the "Grain Item and Size" column.
- Check if the chart lists a size or weight by the name of the grain. If the chart:

Lists a weight for the grain, such as *at least 56 grams*, then use the Nutrition Facts label for the item you want to serve to make sure it weighs the same, or more than, the grain on the chart. See page 5.

Does not list a weight or size for the grain, then you do not need to check the size or weight of the product before using the chart.

Lists a size for the grain, such as *about 1 ¼" by 1 ½"*, then check if the item is the same size, or larger than, this amount. See page 6.

- Find the column for the age of your participants and the meal or snack you are serving. This column lists the amount of a grain you will need to serve to meet the meal pattern requirement for grains.

 Grain Item and Size	
Pita Bread/Round (whole grain-rich or enriched) at least 56 grams*	1- through 5-year-olds at Breakfast, Lunch, Supper, Snack Serve at Least ½ oz. eq., which equals about...
Popcorn	¼ pita or 14 grams
Pretzel, Hard, Mini-Twist (about 1 ¼" by 1 ½")**	1 ½ cups or 14 grams
	7 twists or 11 grams

More training, menu planning, and nutrition education materials for the CACFP can be found at <https://teamnutrition.usda.gov>.



Grains Measuring Chart for the Child and Adult Care Food Program

 Grain Item and Size	Age Group and Meal		
	1- through 5-year-olds at Breakfast, Lunch, Supper, Snack	6- through 18-year-olds at Breakfast, Lunch, Supper, Snack Adults at Snack only	Adults at Breakfast, Lunch, Supper
	Serve at Least ½ oz. eq., which equals about...	Serve at Least 1 oz. eq., which equals about...	Serve at Least 2 oz. eq., which equals about...
Bagel (entire bagel) at least 56 grams*	¼ bagel or 14 grams	½ bagel or 28 grams	1 bagel or 56 grams
Bagel, Mini (entire bagel) at least 28 grams*	½ bagel or 14 grams	1 bagel or 28 grams	2 bagels or 56 grams
Biscuit at least 28 grams*	½ biscuit or 14 grams	1 biscuit or 28 grams	2 biscuits or 56 grams
Bread (whole grain-rich or enriched) at least 28 grams*	½ slice or 14 grams	1 slice or 28 grams	2 slices or 56 grams
Bun or Roll (entire bun or roll) at least 28 grams*	½ bun/roll or 14 grams	1 bun/roll or 28 grams	2 buns/rolls or 56 grams
Cereal Grains (barley, bulgur, quinoa, etc.)	¼ cup cooked or 14 grams dry	½ cup cooked or 28 grams dry	1 cup cooked or 56 grams dry
Cereal, Ready-to-Eat: Flakes or Rounds	½ cup or 14 grams	1 cup or 28 grams	2 cups or 56 grams
Cereal, Ready-to-Eat: Granola	⅔ cup or 14 grams	¼ cup or 28 grams	½ cup or 56 grams
Cereal, Ready-to-Eat: Puffed	¾ cup or 14 grams	1 ¼ cup or 28 grams	2 ½ cups or 56 grams
Corn Muffin at least 34 grams*	½ muffin or 17 grams	1 muffin or 34 grams	2 muffins or 68 grams
Cracker, Animal (about 1 ½" by 1")**	8 crackers or 14 grams	15 crackers or 28 grams	30 crackers (~1 cup) or 56 grams
Cracker, Bear-Shaped, Sweet (about 1" by ½")**	12 crackers (~¼ cup) or 14 grams	24 crackers (~½ cup) or 28 grams	48 crackers (~1 cup) or 56 grams
Cracker, Cheese, Square, Savory (about 1" by 1")**	10 crackers or 11 grams	20 crackers (~⅓ cup) or 22 grams	40 crackers (~⅔ cup) or 44 grams
Cracker, Fish-Shaped or Similar, Savory (about ¾" by ½")**	21 crackers (~¼ cup) or 11 grams	41 crackers (~½ cup) or 22 grams	81 crackers (~1 cup) or 44 grams



*Check that the item you want to serve weighs this amount, or more. See "Using the Nutrition Facts Label" on page 5 for more information.

**Check that the item you want to serve is about this size or larger. See "Grains Measuring Tools" on page 6 for more information.

Grains Measuring Chart for the Child and Adult Care Food Program

 Grain Item and Size	Age Group and Meal		
	1- through 5-year-olds at Breakfast, Lunch, Supper, Snack	6- through 18-year-olds at Breakfast, Lunch, Supper, Snack Adults at Snack only	Adults at Breakfast, Lunch, Supper
	Serve at Least ½ oz. eq., which equals about...	Serve at Least 1 oz. eq., which equals about...	Serve at Least 2 oz. eq., which equals about...
Cracker, Graham (about 5" by 2 ½")**	1 cracker or 14 grams	2 crackers or 28 grams	4 crackers or 56 grams
Cracker, Round, Savory (about 1 ¾" across)**	4 crackers or 11 grams	7 crackers or 22 grams	14 crackers or 44 grams
Cracker, Saltine (about 2" by 2")**	4 crackers or 11 grams	8 crackers or 22 grams	16 crackers or 44 grams
Cracker, Thin Wheat, Square, Savory (about 1 ¼" by 1 ¼")**	6 crackers or 11 grams	12 crackers or 22 grams	23 crackers or 44 grams
Cracker, Woven Whole- Wheat, Square, Savory (about 1 ½" by 1 ½")**	3 crackers or 11 grams	5 crackers or 22 grams	10 crackers or 44 grams
Croissant at least 34 grams*	½ croissant or 17 grams	1 croissant or 34 grams	2 croissants or 68 grams
English Muffin (top and bottom) at least 56 grams*	¼ muffin or 14 grams	½ muffin or 28 grams	1 muffin or 56 grams
French Toast Stick at least 18 grams*	2 sticks or 35 grams	4 sticks or 69 grams	8 sticks or 138 grams
Grits	¼ cup cooked or 14 grams dry	½ cup cooked or 28 grams dry	1 cup cooked or 56 grams dry
Melba Toast (about 3 ½" by 1 ½")**	2 pieces or 11 grams	5 pieces or 22 grams	8 pieces or 44 grams
Muffin and Quick Bread (banana, etc.) at least 55 grams*	½ muffin/slice or 28 grams	1 muffin/slice or 55 grams	2 muffins/slices or 110 grams
Oatmeal	¼ cup cooked or 14 grams dry	½ cup cooked or 28 grams dry	1 cup cooked or 56 grams dry
Pancake at least 34 grams*	½ pancake or 17 grams	1 pancake or 34 grams	2 pancakes or 68 grams



*Check that the item you want to serve weighs this amount, or more. See "Using the Nutrition Facts Label" on page 5 for more information.

**Check that the item you want to serve is about this size or larger. See "Grains Measuring Tools" on page 6 for more information.

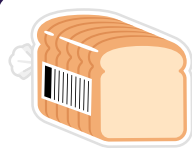
Grains Measuring Chart for the Child and Adult Care Food Program

 Grain Item and Size	Age Group and Meal		
	1- through 5-year-olds at Breakfast, Lunch, Supper, Snack	6- through 18-year-olds at Breakfast, Lunch, Supper, Snack Adults at Snack only	Adults at Breakfast, Lunch, Supper
	Serve at Least ½ oz. eq., which equals about...	Serve at Least 1 oz. eq., which equals about...	Serve at Least 2 oz. eq., which equals about...
Pasta (whole grain-rich or enriched, all shapes)	¼ cup cooked or 14 grams dry	½ cup cooked or 28 grams dry	1 cup cooked or 56 grams dry
Pita Bread/Round (whole grain-rich or enriched) at least 56 grams*	¼ pita or 14 grams	½ pita or 28 grams	1 pita or 56 grams
Popcorn	1 ½ cups or 14 grams	3 cups or 28 grams	6 cups or 56 grams
Pretzel, Hard, Mini-Twist (about 1 ¼" by 1 ½")**	7 twists (~⅓ cup) or 11 grams	14 twists (~⅔ cup) or 22 grams	27 twists (~1 cup) or 44 grams
Pretzel, Hard, Thin Stick (about 2 ½" long)**	16 sticks or 11 grams	31 sticks or 22 grams	62 sticks or 44 grams
Pretzel, Soft at least 56 grams*	¼ pretzel or 14 grams	½ pretzel or 28 grams	1 pretzel or 56 grams
Rice (all types)	¼ cup cooked or 14 grams dry	½ cup cooked or 28 grams dry	1 cup cooked or 56 grams dry
Rice Cake at least 8 grams*	1 ½ cakes or 11 grams	3 cakes or 22 grams	5 ½ cakes or 44 grams
Rice Cake, Mini (about 1 ¾" across)**	7 cakes or 11 grams	13 cakes or 22 grams	25 cakes or 44 grams
Taco or Tostada Shell, Hard at least 14 grams*	1 shell or 14 grams	2 shells or 28 grams	4 shells or 56 grams
Tortilla, Soft, Corn (about 5 ½")**	¾ tortilla or 14 grams	1 ¼ tortillas or 28 grams	2 ½ tortillas or 56 grams
Tortilla, Soft, Flour (about 6")**	½ tortilla or 14 grams	1 tortilla or 28 grams	2 tortillas or 56 grams
Tortilla, Soft, Flour (about 8")**	¼ tortilla or 14 grams	½ tortilla or 28 grams	1 tortilla or 56 grams
Waffle at least 34 grams*	½ waffle or 17 grams	1 waffle or 34 grams	2 waffles or 68 grams



*Check that the item you want to serve weighs this amount, or more. See "Using the Nutrition Facts Label" on page 5 for more information.

**Check that the item you want to serve is about this size or larger. See "Grains Measuring Tools" on page 6 for more information.



Using the Nutrition Facts Label

Some items on the Grains Measuring Chart may have weights listed by the name of the item. Follow the steps below to see if your grain meets the minimum weight listed in the chart:

- Find the grain item and its minimum weight in the Grains Measuring Chart.

For example, the minimum weight for a pancake is at least 34 grams.

Grain Item and Size	Age Group and Meal		
	1- through 5-year-olds at Breakfast, Lunch, Supper, Snack	6- through 18-year-olds at Breakfast, Lunch, Supper, Snack Adults at Snack only	Adults at Breakfast, Lunch, Supper
Pancake at least 34 grams*	Serve at Least ½ oz. eq., which equals about... ½ pancake or 17 grams	Serve at Least 1 oz. eq., which equals about... 1 pancake or 34 grams	Serve at Least 2 oz. eq., which equals about... 2 pancakes or 68 grams

- Look at the Nutrition Facts label of the grain you wish to serve. Find the weight of the serving size (usually provided as grams (g)). One serving of Brand P pancakes weighs 117 grams.

- Using the Nutrition Facts label, find how many items are in one serving. There are three pancakes in one serving of Brand P pancakes.

- If there is more than one of an item in a serving, you will need to divide to find the weight of each item. For example, the serving size of Brand P pancakes is three pancakes.

Divide the serving weight by the number of items in one serving to find the weight of each item.

Brand P Pancakes

Nutrition Facts	
4 servings per container	
Serving size	3 Pancakes 117g
Amount per serving	
Calories	280
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 9g	12%
Saturated Fat 1.5g	8%
Trans Fat 0g	

$$\begin{array}{ccccc}
 \text{117 grams} & \div & \text{3 pancakes} & = & \text{39 grams per pancake} \\
 \text{Serving Weight} & & \text{Serving Size} & & \text{Weight of Each Item}
 \end{array}$$

Compare the weight of one item to the minimum weight listed in the Grains Measuring Chart (from Step 1). Is your item the same weight as, or heavier than, the minimum weight?



Yes: Use the Grains Measuring Chart to see how much of your grain to serve to meet CACFP meal pattern requirements. In the example above, pancakes must weigh at least 34 grams in order to use the Grains Measuring Chart. Because each Brand P pancake weighs 39 grams, you may use the chart as a guide to the minimum serving amount.



No: Use another method to determine how much of a grain item to serve. See “What If My Grain Is Different?” on page 6 for more information.



Are There Other Menu Planning Considerations?

If you serve an item that is larger, or weighs more, than what's listed on the Grains Measuring Chart, then you might serve more grains than required by the CACFP meal pattern. The Grains Measuring Chart can help make serving enough grains easier. However, the tools described under "What If My Grain Is Different?" can also help you determine how much of an item to serve to meet the meal pattern without serving more than what is needed.

What If My Grain Is Different?

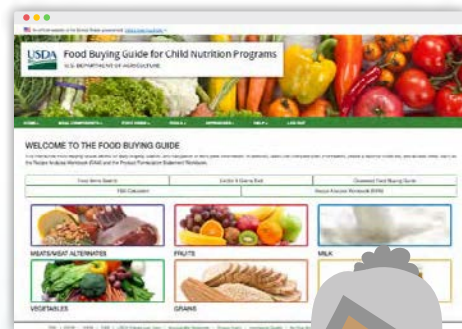
Is the grain item you want to serve:

- Smaller than the item listed on the Grains Measuring Chart?
- Lighter in weight than the item listed on the Grains Measuring Chart?
- Not listed on the Grains Measuring Chart?

If so, you will need to use another way to tell how much to serve in order to meet CACFP meal pattern requirements. You could:

- Enter information from the Nutrition Facts label into the *Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Program's (FBG) Exhibit A Grains Tool*.^{*} This tool will let you know how many ounce equivalents of grains are in one serving of the item.
- Use the *FBG Recipe Analysis Workbook (RAW)*^{*} to determine the ounce equivalents per serving for standardized recipes.

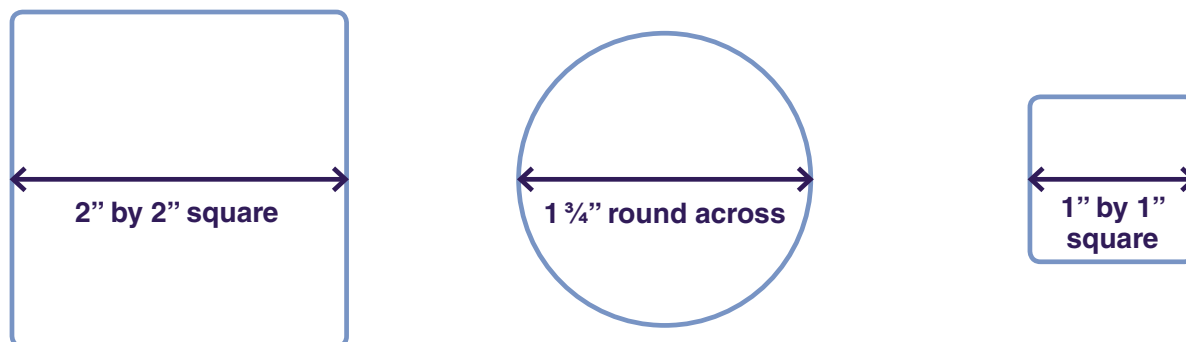
^{*}Available at <https://foodbuyingguide.fns.usda.gov>.



Grains Measuring Tools

Compare your food to the guides below to see if it is the same size or larger than the item listed on the Grains Measuring Chart.

Guides appear as actual size when this worksheet is printed at 100% on standard 8 ½" by 11" paper.



FNS-862 October 2019

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

ACTIVITY: GRAINS MEASURING CHART

Instructions: Utilize the **Using Ounce Equivalents for Grains in the CACFP** handout to determine the amount to meet the CACFP meal pattern requirements for 1–to 5-year-olds.

Crackers, Saltine (Size: 2" by 2")

1. Is there a minimum weight or size for this grain in the Grains Measuring Chart? _____
2. Does this product meet the minimum weight or size? _____
3. How much must you serve to meet the meal pattern requirements for 1–5-year-olds? _____

Nutrition Facts	
30 servings per container	
Serving size	5 crackers (15g)
Amount Per Serving	
Calories	60

Bagel

1. Is there a minimum weight or size for this grain in the Grains Measuring Chart? _____
2. Does this product meet the minimum weight or size? _____
3. How much do you need to serve to meet the meal pattern requirements for 1–5-year-olds? _____

Nutrition Facts	
4 servings per container	
Serving size	1 bagel (60g)
Amount Per Serving	
Calories	340

Rice

1. Is there a minimum weight or size for this grain in the Grains Measuring Chart? _____
2. Does this product meet the minimum weight or size? _____
3. How much do you need to serve to meet the meal pattern requirements for 1–5-year-olds? _____

Nutrition Facts	
16 servings per container	
Serving size	1/4 cup (36g)
Amount Per Serving	
Calories	60

GRAINS KEY TERMS

Whole grain-rich: Term designated by the USDA FNA to indicate that the grain content of a product is between 50 and 100 percent whole grain, with any remaining grains being enriched. The term is not found on product labels and should not be confused with the term “whole grain.”

Whole grain: Consists of the entire cereal grain seed or kernel.

Kernel: Includes the bran, endosperm, and germ.

Bran: Outer layer of the kernel, containing fiber, B vitamins, trace minerals, and other health-promoting substances called phytochemicals.

Endosperm: Found in the inner layer of the kernel that contains complex carbohydrates, protein, and smaller amounts of B vitamins.

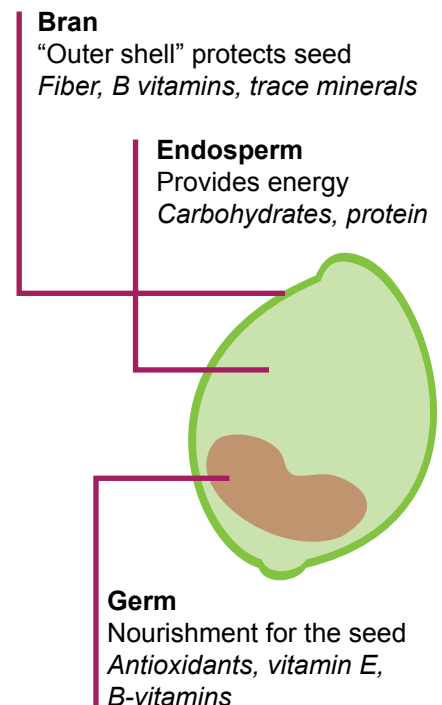
Germ: Small area found in the inner area of the kernel that provides nourishment for the seed and contains B vitamins, vitamin E, trace minerals, healthy fats, antioxidants, and phytochemicals.

Refined Grains: Processed to remove the bran and germ, which removes dietary fiber, iron, and other nutrients.

Enriched: A process that restores nutrients to refined grains, typically adding iron and four B vitamins: thiamin, riboflavin, niacin, and folic acid.

Fortified: A process that adds vitamins and minerals to a food that were not originally in the food.

Whole Grain Kernel



METHODS TO IDENTIFY WHOLE GRAIN-RICH FOODS

Foods that meet the WGR criteria contain between 50 and 100 percent whole grain, with any remaining grains being enriched. If the grain meets any one of the following six methods, it is WGR.

1. WIC Whole Grain Food List

The product can be found in **any** State agency's WIC Authorized Foods List (WIC list). Any whole grain item found on any State's approved list meets the CACFP WGR criteria. Visit <https://www.fns.usda.gov/contacts> for a list of WIC State agency contacts.

2. Bread and Pastas Labeled Whole Wheat

The product is labeled as "whole wheat" and has a Standard of Identity issued by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). This method only applies to **bread, buns, rolls, and pasta**.

3. FDA-Approved Health Claim

The product features one of the following FDA health claims on the package, exactly as written:

- "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."
- "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."

4. Rule of Three

The Rule of Three examines the first three grain ingredients to determine whether a product is WGR.

- The first ingredient (or second after water) is whole grain
- The second or third **grain** ingredients (if any) are whole grains, enriched grains, bran, or germ

5. Meets the NSLP Whole Grain-Rich Criteria

Foods that are considered WGR in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) are WGR in the CACFP. Not all grains served in the NSLP are WGR, so look specifically for WGR foods.

6. Standardized Recipe or Manufacturer Documentation

Foods with a standardized recipe or documentation, such as a Child Nutrition (CN) label or a Product Formulation Statement (PFS), identifying that the food is whole grain-rich in the CACFP.

BREAD AND PASTAS LABELED WHOLE WHEAT

Bread, buns, rolls, and pasta labeled with the following **exact** names have a Standard of Identity issued by the FDA and meet the whole grain-rich criteria:

Breads, Buns, Rolls, and Pasta

Bread

- Whole wheat bread
- Entire wheat bread
- Graham bread

Buns

- Whole wheat buns
- Entire wheat buns
- Graham buns

Rolls

- Whole wheat rolls
- Entire wheat rolls
- Graham rolls

Pasta

- Whole wheat macaroni product
- Whole wheat macaroni
- Whole wheat spaghetti
- Whole wheat vermicelli



Products Without a Standard of Identity

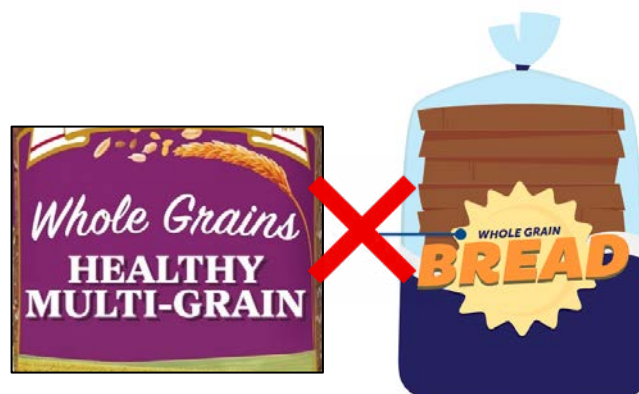
Grain items without a Standard of Identity, such as bagels, biscuits, crackers, English muffins, tortillas, waffles, and other pasta shapes not listed above, must use another method to determine if they are WGR, even if they are labeled “whole wheat.”



Tricky Wording

The following terms do not meet the FDA Standard of Identity requirements:

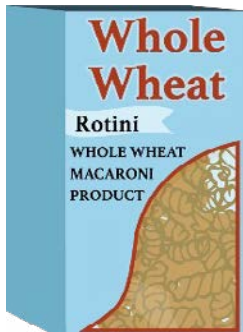
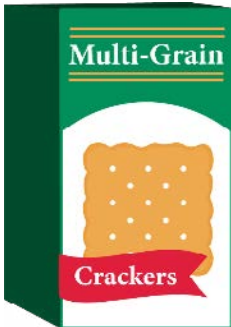
- “Whole grain”
- “Made with whole grains”
- “Made with whole wheat”
- “Contains whole grains”
- “Multigrain”
- “Wheat”
- “Organic”



Any grain item with these claims requires a different method to determine if it meets the WGR criteria.

ACTIVITY: IS THE PRODUCT WHOLE GRAIN-RICH?

Instructions: Use the product label to identify WGR items. Check the box next to “WGR” if the item is whole grain-rich.

1 ☐ WGR 	2 ☐ WGR 	3 ☐ WGR 
4 ☐ WGR 	5 ☐ WGR 	6 ☐ WGR 
7 ☐ WGR 	8 ☐ WGR 	9 ☐ WGR 

CHOOSING CREDITABLE GRAINS

Creditable Grains

Whole Grain Ingredients

In addition to the items below, if an ingredient has “whole” in front of it, it is a whole grain.

• Amaranth	• Graham flour	• Teff	• Whole grain oat flour
• Amaranth flour	• Hominy	• Teff flour	• Whole grain sorghum
• Brown rice	• Hominy grits	• Triticale	• Whole grain sorghum flour
• Brown rice flour	• Masa harina	• Triticale flour	• Whole grain spelt flour
• Bromated whole wheat flour	• Millet	• Wheat berries	• Whole grain wheat
• Buckwheat	• Millet flour	• Wheat groats	• Whole grain wheat flakes
• Buckwheat flour	• Nixtamalized corn flour or meal	• White whole wheat flour	• Whole grain wheat flour
• Buckwheat groats	• Oat groats	• Whole barley	• Whole grain wheat flour
• Bulgur	• Oats, oatmeal (all types)	• Whole barley flour	• Whole kamut
• Corn masa	• Popcorn	• Whole corn, dried	• Whole rye
• Corn treated with lime	• Quinoa	• Whole cornmeal	• Whole rye flour
• Cracked wheat	• Rye berries	• Whole grain corn	• Whole spelt
• Crushed wheat	• Rye groats	• Whole grain corn flour	• Whole grain spelt flour
• Dehulled barley	• Spelt berries	• Whole grain grits	• Whole wheat flour
• Dehulled barley flour	• Sprouted brown rice	• Whole durum flour	• Wild rice
• Entire wheat flour	• Sprouted buckwheat	• Whole einkorn berries	• Wild rice flour
• Einkorn berries	• Sprouted einkorn	• Whole grain einkorn	
• Flaked rye	• Sprouted spelt	• Whole grain einkorn flour	
• Flaked wheat	• Sprouted whole rye		
	• Sprouted wheat		

Enriched Grain Ingredients

In addition to the items below, if the ingredient list includes nutrients used to enrich the flour, it is enriched. Example: Durum flour (niacin, iron, riboflavin, folic acid, thiamin)

The nutrients listed in the parenthesis indicate that the durum flour is enriched.

• Enriched all-purpose flour	• Enriched yellow corn flour	• Enriched farina	• Enriched semolina
• Enriched bromated flour	• Enriched durum flour	• Enriched grits	• Enriched wheat flour
• Enriched corn flour	• Enriched durum wheat flour	• Enriched rice	• Enriched white flour
		• Enriched rice flour	• Other grains with the word “enriched” in front
		• Enriched rye flour	

Bran or Germ Ingredients

• Corn bran	• Rice bran	• Wheat bran
• Oat bran	• Rye bran	• Wheat germ

Ingredients To Disregard

Disregard any ingredients after the words “**contains 2% or less**” or “**contains less than 2%**” as indicated below.

Ingredients: Whole wheat flour, flaxseed, honey, rye, soybean oil, **contains 2% or less of: gluten, calcium sulfate, salt, butter, soy lecithin, and enzymes.**
contains: wheat.

Disregard any **grain derivative** ingredient, which is generally presented in small amounts, such as:

- Cellulose fiber
- Corn dextrin
- Corn starch
- Modified food starch
- Rice starch
- Tapioca starch
- Water
- Wheat dextrin
- Wheat gluten
- Wheat starch

Noncreditable Grains Or Flours

The following ingredients are not whole or enriched and cannot be counted as one of the first three grain ingredients when determining WGR items:

- Non-enriched flours
 - All-purpose
 - Bromated flour
 - Durum flour
 - Wheat flour
 - White flour
- Bean or legume flour (e.g., soy, chickpea, lentil)
- Barley malt
- Bromated flour
- Corn
- Corn fiber
- Corn flour
- Degerminated corn
- Degerminated corn meal
- Durum flour
- Farina
- Grits
- Malted barley flour
- Nut or seed flour (any kind)
- Oat fiber
- Potato flour
- Rice flour
- Semolina
- Stone ground corn
- Tapioca flour
- Vegetable flour (any kind)
- Wheat flour
- White flour
- Yellow corn flour
- Yellow corn meal

APPLYING THE RULE OF THREE

The Rule of Three is a three-step process to identify whole grain-rich items. A product is whole grain-rich if the first ingredient (or second after water) is a whole grain, and the next two grain ingredients (if any) are whole grains, enriched grains, brans, or germs.



1. English Muffin

Whole Grain

Enriched Grain

Grain Derivative

INGREDIENTS: **Whole wheat flour**, water, **enriched wheat flour**, yeast, **wheat starch**, salt.

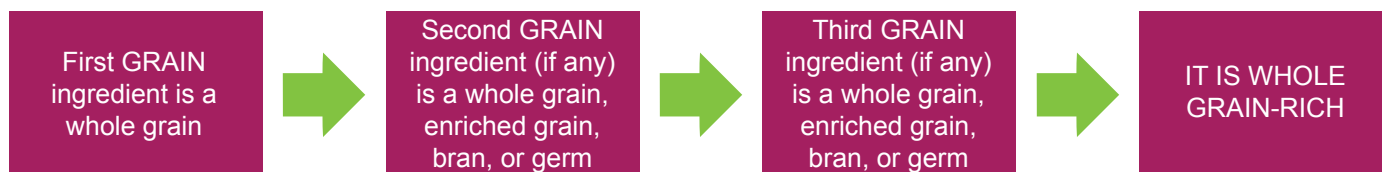
Is it whole grain-rich based on the Rule of Three Criteria? _____

2. Tortilla Chips

INGREDIENTS: Whole corn, vegetable oil, salt, maltodextrin, wheat flour, whey protein concentrate.

Is it whole grain-rich based on the Rule of Three Criteria? _____

Mixed Dishes (e.g., pizza crust, tortillas for burritos): Check the “**grain portion**” of the ingredients list. The first **grain** must be a whole grain, and the next two **grain** ingredients (if any) must be whole grains, enriched grains, bran, or germ. If these criteria are met, the item is WGR.

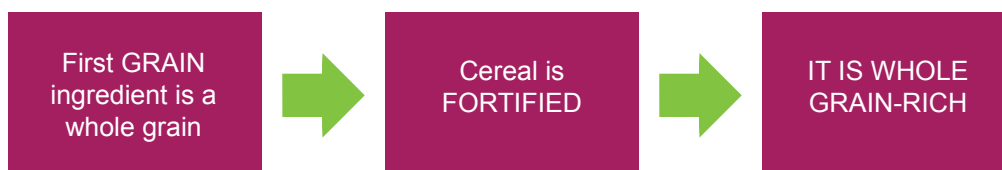


3. Cheese Pizza Crust

INGREDIENTS: Mozzarella cheese, whole wheat flour, brown rice flour, enriched flour, non-fat milk, water, tomato paste, yeast.

Is it whole grain-rich based on the Rule of Three Criteria? _____

Breakfast Cereal: If the first grain ingredient is a whole grain and the cereal is **fortified**, the product is WGR. If “Vitamins and Minerals” appear in the ingredients list, the cereal is fortified.



4. Breakfast Cereal

INGREDIENTS: Whole grain oat flour, wheat starch, sugar, salt, trisodium phosphate, caramel color.

VITAMINS AND MINERALS: Calcium carbonate, iron, zinc, folic acid, niacinamide (vitamin B3), riboflavin (vitamin B2), pyridoxine hydrochloride (vitamin B6), vitamin B12.

Is it whole grain-rich based on the Rule of Three Criteria? _____

ACTIVITY: RULE OF THREE – IS IT WHOLE GRAIN-RICH?

Instructions: Read each ingredient list to determine if the food is whole grain-rich based on the Rule of Three criteria.

1. French Bread Sticks

Ingredients: Enriched unbleached flour (wheat flour, malted barley flour, niacin, ferrous sulfate, thiamin mononitrate, riboflavin, folic acid, potassium bromate), water, salt, yeast, dextrose, sugar, soy oil, corn starch, mono-diglycerides, soy flour, potassium bromate, ascorbic acid.

Is this product whole grain-rich based on the Rule of Three criteria? _____

2. Crackers

Ingredients: All-purpose flour, water, enriched semolina (wheat flour, niacin, ferrous sulfate, thiamine mononitrate, riboflavin, folic acid), **contains 2% or less of:** yeast, salt, natural flavor (wheat), soybean oil, minced garlic, wheat gluten, calcium sulfate, enzymes (wheat), ascorbic acid.

Is this product whole grain-rich based on the Rule of Three criteria? _____

3. Whole Wheat Bagels

Ingredients: Whole wheat flour, water, enriched unbleached wheat flour (wheat flour, malted barley flour, niacin, iron as ferrous sulfate, thiamine mononitrate, enzyme, riboflavin, folic acid), wheat starch, yeast, sugar, **contains 2% or less of:** soybean oil, salt, oat fiber, honey, sodium stearoyl lactylate, acesulfame potassium, ascorbic acid, enzyme.

Is this product whole grain-rich based on the Rule of Three criteria? _____

4. Cheese Pizza Crust

Ingredients: Topping: Low-moisture part-skim mozzarella cheese (pasteurized part-skim milk, cheese cultures, sea salt). **Crust:** Whole wheat flour, enriched wheat flour (bleached wheat flour, malted barley flour, niacin, reduced iron, thiamine mononitrate, riboflavin, folic acid), water, soybean oil, dextrose, baking powder, yeast, salt, dough conditioners (wheat flour, salt, soy oil, ascorbic acid), wheat gluten. **Sauce:** Water, tomato paste, corn starch, cane sugar, sea salt, seasoning (onion powder, garlic powder, basil, black pepper, oregano).

Is this product whole grain-rich based on the Rule of Three criteria? _____

5. Ready-to-Eat Cereal

Ingredients: Wheat flour, sugar, brown rice flour, oats, honey, canola oil, maltodextrin, salt, corn syrup, cinnamon, barley malt syrup, barley malt extract, color added, soy lecithin, artificial flavor, baking soda, trisodium phosphate, vitamin E (mixed tocopherols).

Is this product whole grain-rich based on the Rule of Three criteria? _____

STANDARDIZED RECIPE OR MANUFACTURER'S DOCUMENTATION

Standardized Recipe: Keep recipes on file to document scratch-prepared WGR items. To qualify as WGR, at least 50% of the grain ingredients must be whole grain.

Manufacturer's Documentation

Child Nutrition (CN) Label

Products that meet the WGR criteria will have the following language on the CN label:

- x.xx oz equivalent grains

Products primarily made with enriched grains (e.g., enriched wheat flour) and NOT WGR will include the following language on the CN label:

- x.xx oz equivalent grains (enriched)

Whole Grain-Rich

CN XXXXXX

Three breaded chicken nuggets provide 2.00 oz. equivalent meat/meat alternate and 1.00 oz. equivalent grains for Child Nutrition Meal Pattern Requirements. (Use of this logo and statement authorized by the FNS, USDA mm/yy).

CN

Not Whole Grain-Rich

CN XXXXXX

Three breaded chicken nuggets provide 2.00 oz. equivalent meat/meat alternate and 1.00 oz. equivalent grains (enriched) for Child Nutrition Meal Pattern Requirements. (Use of this logo and statement authorized by the FNS, USDA mm/yy).

CN

Sample Product Formulation Statement (PFS)

Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Grains In Child Nutrition Programs (Crediting Standards Based on Grams of Creditable Grains (ounce equivalents))

Program operators should include a copy of the label from the purchased product package in addition to the following information on letterhead signed by an official company representative. Program operators can choose the crediting method that fits their specific menu planning needs.

Product Name: _____ Code No.: _____
Manufacturer: _____ Serving Size: _____

(raw dough weight may be used to calculate creditable grains)

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

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.)

Adapted Source: USDA FNA (2024, August). *Crediting grains in the child nutrition programs tip sheet part 2: identifying grain products that are whole grain-rich.* <https://www.fna.usda.gov/tn/cn/crediting-tipsheets/grains>

ACTIVITY: WGR FOODS AND DISALLOWED MEALS

Requirement: When a grain is served, at least one serving of grains per day must be whole grain-rich (WGR). Programs may choose the meal (breakfast, lunch, supper) or snack to serve the WGR item. This requirement does not apply to infant meals.

When a WGR item is not served on a day when a grain is served, the meal or snack with the lowest reimbursement that contains a grain will be disallowed. In order, snacks have the lowest reimbursement rate, followed by breakfast, and then lunch and supper.

Activity Instructions: For each day's menu, identify the meal or snack—containing a grain—with the lowest reimbursement that would not be allowed if no whole grain-rich item was served that day.

Monday Menu		
Breakfast	Lunch	Snack
Diced peaches Blueberry pancake Milk	Macaroni and cheese Cornbread Okra Tropical fruit Milk	Cheddar cheese slices Crackers Water
Tuesday Menu		
Breakfast	Lunch	Snack
Banana slices Waffle Milk	Chicken stir-fry Broccoli Carrots White rice Milk	Yogurt Apple slices Water
Wednesday Menu		
PM Snack	Supper	
Mini bagels Oranges	Meatloaf Brussels sprouts Strawberries Dinner roll Milk	
Thursday Menu		
Breakfast	Lunch	Snack
Eggs Kiwi Milk	Baked fish Green beans Watermelon Biscuit Milk	Cherry tomatoes Cottage cheese

FLUID MILK COMPONENT



Notes Page

Objective: Recall and interpret the fluid milk component requirements for each age group.

Objective: Explain the guidelines for accommodating children who do not drink fluid milk and identify creditable fluid milk substitutes.

FLUID MILK COMPONENT BASICS

Fluid Milk:

- Must be pasteurized and meet State and local standards for milk. All milk must contain vitamins A and D at levels specified by the FDA.
- Must be offered as a beverage, over ready-to-eat cereal, or a combination of both.
- Is not creditable when used as an ingredient in the preparation of recipes such as in cooked cereals (i.e., oatmeal), bread, custard, puddings, soups, cream sauces, or in other foods.
 - Smoothies are the only example of when milk used as an ingredient in a recipe may credit toward the fluid milk component.

Meal	Fluid Milk Requirements
Breakfast, Lunch, Supper	Required component
Snacks	May be offered as one of the two meal components; however, the other meal component cannot be a beverage.

Allowable Milk Types

Breast milk may be served to a child of any age in the CACFP. Programs may claim meals when a mother breastfeeds in the child care center or home, or if expressed breast milk is fed to the child.

Age	Required Milk Types
12–23 months (1 year through 1 year and 11 months)	Unflavored • Whole
2–5 years (up to 6th birthday)	Unflavored • Fat-free (skim) • Low-fat (1%) • Reduced-fat (2%) • Whole
6 years and older	Unflavored or flavored* • Fat-free (skim) • Low-fat (1%) • Reduced-fat (2%) • Whole *Flavored milk may be commercially prepared or prepared using flavored syrup or flavored milk powders (including flavored straws).

ACTIVITY: FLUID MILK COMPONENT REQUIREMENTS

Instructions: For each multiple-choice question, select the correct answer.

1. Milk is a required component at which meals/snacks?
 - a. Breakfast
 - b. Lunch/Supper
 - c. Snack
 - d. Both a and b
2. Which of the following is NOT a creditable milk?
 - a. Sweetened condensed milk
 - b. Breast milk
 - c. Lactose-free milk
 - d. Whole milk
3. Which of the following milks are allowed to be served to children 2 through 5 years old?
 - a. Unflavored, Fat-free (skim)
 - b. Flavored, Fat-free (skim)
 - c. Unflavored, Low-fat (1%)
 - d. Flavored, Reduced-fat (2%)
 - e. Both A and C
4. Which of the following milks are allowed to be served to a 1-year-old child?
 - a. Unflavored, Low-fat (1%)
 - b. Unflavored, Whole
 - c. Flavored, Fat-free (skim)
 - d. Flavored, Whole
 - e. Both B and D
5. Which of the following milks are allowed to be served to children ages 6 years and older?
 - a. Unflavored, Whole
 - b. Flavored, Fat-free (skim)
 - c. Unflavored, Reduced-fat (2%)
 - d. Flavored, Low-fat (1%)
 - e. All of the above

SMOOTHIES IN THE CACFP

Meal Components

Smoothies may count toward the following CACFP meal components: fluid milk, meats/meat alternates (M/MA), fruits, or vegetables.

- **Fluid Milk** in smoothies may credit toward the fluid milk component if each portion has at least $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (2 fl oz) and meets age group meal requirements (flavored/unflavored, fat content).
- **Fruits and vegetables**, pureed or blended, credit as juice when served in a smoothie.
 - Juice credits at only one meal or snack per day; therefore, smoothies may only meet the vegetables or fruits component at one meal or snack per day.
 - Amounts of fruits and vegetables credit based on the volume **after** pureeing.
 - Beans, peas, and lentils credit as a vegetable, not a meat alternate.
- **Yogurt**, regular or soy, is the only M/MA that may credit in a smoothie.
 - Yogurt must contain no more than 12 grams of added sugars per 6 ounces (2 grams of added sugars per ounce).
- Grains (e.g., oats) and other M/MA (e.g., peanut butter, tofu) do not credit when served in a smoothie but may be included to improve flavor and consistency.

Smoothies at Meals and Snacks

Smoothies may be served at any meal or snack.

- **Breakfast:** Fruits or vegetables may credit as the entire fruit or vegetable component.
- **Lunch, Supper, Snack:** A smoothie with both fruit and vegetable puree or juice counts toward the component with the largest amount. It can only meet either the fruits or vegetables component, not both.
- **Snack:** A smoothie containing fruits, vegetables, and milk can be credited as either juice or fluid milk, but not both, because only one component in a snack can be a beverage.

If the amounts of fruits, vegetables, yogurt, and milk in the smoothie do not meet the minimum meal pattern requirements, additional components must be served with the smoothie to meet the meal pattern requirements.

Smoothies Prepared In-House or Commercially

To credit smoothies made in-house, programs need a standardized recipe showing the meal pattern contribution per serving. Commercially prepared smoothies require a CN label or Product Formulation Statement from the manufacturer specifying each component's meal contribution.

For additional information, refer to the USDA policy memo CACFP 17-2019: Smoothies Offered in Child Nutrition Programs. You can find the website address for these memos in the **Training Resource** section at the end of the Participant Workbook to access them on an electronic device.

FLUID MILK SUBSTITUTES

Fluid Milk Substitute Requirements

- Fluid milk substitutes may be served to children with special dietary needs.
- To be creditable, fluid milk substitutes must be nutritionally equivalent to cow's milk and provide required amounts of specific nutrients (see table below).
- Fluid milk substitutes for children ages 1–5 years must be unflavored.
- Typically, only certain soy and pea milks are nutritionally equivalent to cow's milk.
- Families must provide a written request for the fluid milk substitute that is nutritionally equivalent to cow's milk.
- State agencies may specify fluid milk substitutes that meet these requirements. Contact your State agency or sponsoring organization for a list of options.

Products That Typically Do Not Meet Nutritional Requirements

- Nut (e.g., almond, cashew), rice, oat, and coconut-based fluid milk substitutes usually do not contain enough protein to be nutritionally equivalent to cow's milk. They most likely will not be a creditable replacement for milk.
- A medical statement signed by a State licensed healthcare professional or registered dietitian is required for children with disabilities to receive fluid milk substitutes that do not meet the nutritional standards of cow's milk.

Nutrient Requirements for Fluid Milk Substitutes

Nutrient	Per Cup (8 fl oz)
Calcium	276 mg
Protein	8 g
Vitamin A	150 mcg retinol activity equivalents (RAE)
Vitamin D	2.5 mcg
Magnesium	24 mg
Phosphorous	222 mg
Potassium	349 mg
Riboflavin	0.44 mg
Vitamin B-12	1.1 mcg

For additional information on how to provide meal modifications, refer to the USDA policy memos:

- CACFP 14-2017: Modifications to Accommodate Disabilities in the CACFP.
- CACFP 01-2025: Nutrition Requirements for Fluid Milk and Substitutions in the CACFP, Questions and Answers

You can find the website addresses in the **Training Resources** section.

ACTIVITY: TEAM QUIZ

Instructions: The instructor will read each statement. Decide if it is true or false. If you think it's true, stand up. If you think it's false, stay seated. Use the space provided below to write the correct answers.

1. Fluid milk substitutes served to 2-year-olds must be unflavored. True or False?

2. Almond milk is typically nutritionally equivalent to cow's milk. True or False?

3. A medical statement is required to serve a fluid milk substitute that is nutritionally equivalent to cow's milk. True or False?



MEATS AND MEAT ALTERNATES COMPONENT

Notes Page

Objective: Identify and explain the meats/meat alternates component requirements in the CACFP.

Objective: Demonstrate how to use the table method to identify yogurt products that meet the CACFP added sugars limit.

Objective: Summarize the key requirements for substituting meats/meat alternates for grains at breakfast in the CACFP.

MEATS AND MEAT ALTERNATES BASICS

Meal	Meats/Meat Alternates (M/MA) Requirements
Breakfast	Not required; may be served in place of grains up to three times per week
Lunch, Supper	Required component
Snacks	May be offered as one of the two meal components

Meats	Meat Alternates
- Meat options: lean meat, poultry, fish - Only the edible portion of meat is creditable	Meat alternate options: cheese, beans, peas, lentils, eggs, tofu, yogurt, nuts, seeds, nut or seed butters
Yogurt and Soy Yogurt	Beans, Peas, and Lentils
- Yogurt may be regular or soy, plain or flavored, unsweetened or sweetened. - Four ounces of yogurt credits as 1 oz eq M/MA. - Yogurt must contain no more than 12 g of added sugars per 6 oz (2 g added sugars per ounce). - Noncreditable yogurt products include homemade yogurt and the following commercial yogurt products (frozen yogurt, yogurt bars, yogurt-flavored products, yogurt-covered fruits and nuts).	- Examples: black beans, garbanzo beans, lentils, lima beans, pinto beans, split peas. - Beans, peas, and lentils may credit as the M/MA component and/or the vegetables component. - Pasta or noodles made from bean, pea, or lentil flour may credit toward the M/MA or vegetables components, but not both in the same meal. To credit as M/MA, it must be paired with at least 0.25 oz eq of visible M/MA per serving.

Nuts, Seeds, Nut and Seed Butters

- Nuts and seeds, and their butters, may be used to meet the entire M/MA requirement.
 - Peanut butter spreads are not creditable because they do not have an FDA standard of identity.
 - Acorns and coconuts* do not credit as meat alternates because of their low protein content.
- *Coconuts are creditable as a fruit, not a M/MA.

Tofu

- Commercially prepared tofu is creditable. A 2.2 oz (¼ 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.
- Commercial tofu must be easily recognized as a meat alternate.
 - Creditable examples: medium, firm, or extra firm tofu in stir-fry or omelet
 - Noncreditable examples: tofu noodles; soft or silken tofu in smoothies, sauces, and baked desserts

YOGURT AND ADDED SUGARS GUIDE

Yogurt, including soy yogurt, must contain no more than 12 grams of added sugars per 6 ounces (2 grams of added sugars per ounce). Use the Nutrition Facts label and follow the steps below to identify creditable yogurts.

Table Method

Example #1: Serving Size in Ounces

- **Step 1:** Use the Nutrition Facts label to find the **Serving Size**, in ounces (oz), on the yogurt. Write it here: _____
- **Step 2:** Find the **Added Sugars** line. Look at the number of grams (g) next to Added Sugars. Write it here: _____
- **Step 3:** Find the serving size identified in Step 1 in the table below.
- **Step 4:** In the table, look at the number to the right of the serving size amount under the “Added Sugars” column. If your yogurt has that amount of added sugars or less, the yogurt meets the added sugars limit.

Nutrition Facts	
7 servings per container	
Serving size	6 oz (170g)
Amount Per Serving	
Calories	130
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 10mg	3%
Sodium 65mg	3%
Total Carbohydrate 17g	6%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Total Sugars 14g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	20%
Protein 13g	26%
Not a significant source of vitamin D, calcium, iron, and potassium	
*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.	

Is it creditable? _____

Added Sugar Limits Table

Serving Size Ounces (oz)	Serving Size Grams (g)	Added Sugars Grams (g)	Serving Size Ounces (oz)	Serving Size Grams (g)	Added Sugars Grams (g)
If the serving size is:		Added sugars must not be more than:	If the serving size is:		Added sugars must not be more than:
1 oz	28 g	2 g	4.75 oz	135 g	9 g
1.25 oz	35 g	2 g	5 oz	142 g	10 g
1.5 oz	43 g	3 g	5.25 oz	149 g	10 g
1.75 oz	50 g	3 g	5.3 oz	150 g	10 g
2 oz	57 g	4 g	5.5 oz	156 g	11 g
2.25 oz	64 g	4 g	5.75 oz	163 g	11 g
2.5 oz	71 g	5 g	6 oz	170 g	12 g
2.75 oz	78 g	5 g	6.25 oz	177 g	12 g
3 oz	85 g	6 g	6.5 oz	184 g	13 g
3.25 oz	92 g	6 g	6.75 oz	191 g	13 g
3.5 oz	99 g	7 g	7 oz	198 g	14 g
3.75 oz	106 g	7 g	7.25 oz	206 g	14 g
4 oz	113 g	8 g	7.5 oz	213 g	15 g
4.25 oz	120 g	8 g	7.75 oz	220 g	15 g
4.5 oz	128 g	9 g	8 oz	227 g	16 g

Example #2: Serving Size in Grams

- **Step 1:** Use the Nutrition Facts label to find the **Serving Size**, in grams (g), on the yogurt. If the serving size lists “one container,” check the front of the package to see how many ounces or grams are in the container. Write it here: _____
- **Step 2:** Find the **Added Sugars** line. Look at the number of grams (g) next to Added Sugars. Write it here: _____
- **Step 3:** Find the serving size identified in Step 1 in the table below.
- **Step 4:** In the table, look at the number to the right of the serving size amount, under the “Added Sugars” column. If your yogurt has that amount of added sugars or less, the yogurt meets the added sugars requirement.

Is it creditable? _____

Nutrition Facts	
4 servings per container	
Serving size	1/2 cup (85g)
Amount Per Serving	
Calories	100
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 5mg	2%
Sodium 65mg	3%
Total Carbohydrate 15g	5%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Total Sugars 14g	
Includes 9g Added Sugars	18%
Protein 5g	10%
Not a significant source of vitamin D, calcium, iron, and potassium	
* 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.	

Added Sugar Limits Table					
Serving Size Ounces (oz)	Serving Size Grams (g)	Added Sugars Grams (g)	Serving Size Ounces (oz)	Serving Size Grams (g)	Added Sugars Grams (g)
If the serving size is:		Added sugars must not be more than:	If the serving size is:		Added sugars must not be more than:
1 oz	28 g	2 g	4.75 oz	135 g	9 g
1.25 oz	35 g	2 g	5 oz	142 g	10 g
1.5 oz	43 g	3 g	5.25 oz	149 g	10 g
1.75 oz	50 g	3 g	5.3 oz	150 g	10 g
2 oz	57 g	4 g	5.5 oz	156 g	11 g
2.25 oz	64 g	4 g	5.75 oz	163 g	11 g
2.5 oz	71 g	5 g	6 oz	170 g	12 g
2.75 oz	78 g	5 g	6.25 oz	177 g	12 g
3 oz	85 g	6 g	6.5 oz	184 g	13 g
3.25 oz	92 g	6 g	6.75 oz	191 g	13 g
3.5 oz	99 g	7 g	7 oz	198 g	14 g
3.75 oz	106 g	7 g	7.25 oz	206 g	14 g
4 oz	113 g	8 g	7.5 oz	213 g	15 g
4.25 oz	120 g	8 g	7.75 oz	220 g	15 g
4.5 oz	128 g	9 g	8 oz	227 g	16 g

ACTIVITY: YOGURT, IS IT CREDITABLE?

Instructions: Review each label and follow the steps to determine if the yogurt is creditable.

Added Sugar Limits Table					
Serving Size Ounces (oz)	Serving Size Grams (g)	Added Sugars Grams (g)	Serving Size Ounces (oz)	Serving Size Grams (g)	Added Sugars Grams (g)
If the serving size is:		Added sugars must not be more than:	If the serving size is:		Added sugars must not be more than:
1 oz	28 g	2 g	4.75 oz	135 g	9 g
1.25 oz	35 g	2 g	5 oz	142 g	10 g
1.5 oz	43 g	3 g	5.25 oz	149 g	10 g
1.75 oz	50 g	3 g	5.3 oz	150 g	10 g
2 oz	57 g	4 g	5.5 oz	156 g	11 g
2.25 oz	64 g	4 g	5.75 oz	163 g	11 g
2.5 oz	71 g	5 g	6 oz	170 g	12 g
2.75 oz	78 g	5 g	6.25 oz	177 g	12 g
3 oz	85 g	6 g	6.5 oz	184 g	13 g
3.25 oz	92 g	6 g	6.75 oz	191 g	13 g
3.5 oz	99 g	7 g	7 oz	198 g	14 g
3.75 oz	106 g	7 g	7.25 oz	206 g	14 g
4 oz	113 g	8 g	7.5 oz	213 g	15 g
4.25 oz	120 g	8 g	7.75 oz	220 g	15 g
4.5 oz	128 g	9 g	8 oz	227 g	16 g

Greek Yogurt With Banana

- **Step 1:** Use the Nutrition Facts label to find the **Serving Size**, in ounces (oz) or grams (g), on the yogurt.

Write it here: _____

- **Step 2:** Find the amount of **Added Sugars**.

Write it here: _____

- **Step 3:** Use the serving size identified in Step 1 to find the serving size of your yogurt in the **Added Sugars Limit Table**.

- **Step 4:** In the table, look at the number to the right of the serving size amount, under the “Added Sugars” column.

Is it creditable? _____

Nutrition Facts	
1 servings per container	
Serving size	5.3 oz (150g)
Amount Per Serving	
Calories	130
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 2.5g	3%
Saturated Fat 1.5g	8%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 15mg	5%
Sodium 50mg	2%
Total Carbohydrate 17g	6%
Dietary Fiber 1g	4%
Total Sugars 14g	
Includes 8g Added Sugars	16%
Protein 11g	22%
Not a significant source of vitamin D, calcium, iron, and potassium	
*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.	

Yogurt With Mixed Berry

- **Step 1:** Use the Nutrition Facts label to find the **Serving Size**, in ounces (oz) or grams (g), on the yogurt.

Write it here: _____

- **Step 2:** Find the amount of **Added Sugars**.

Write it here: _____

- **Step 3:** Use the serving size identified in Step 1 to find the serving size of your yogurt in the **Added Sugars Limit Table**.
- **Step 4:** In the table, look at the number to the right of the serving size amount, under the “Added Sugars” column.

Is it creditable? _____

Nutrition Facts	
4 servings per container	
Serving size	2.5 oz (71g)
Amount Per Serving	
Calories	120
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 1g	1%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 20mg	7%
Sodium 85mg	4%
Total Carbohydrate 15g	5%
Dietary Fiber 1g	4%
Total Sugars 14g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	20%
Protein 2g	4%
Not a significant source of vitamin D, calcium, iron, and potassium	
*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.	

Raspberry Soy Yogurt

- **Step 1:** Use the Nutrition Facts label to find the **Serving Size**, in ounces (oz) or grams (g), on the yogurt.

Write it here: _____

- **Step 2:** Find the amount of **Added Sugars**.

Write it here: _____

- **Step 3:** Use the serving size identified in Step 1 to find the serving size of your yogurt in the **Added Sugars Limit Table**.
- **Step 4:** In the table, look at the number to the right of the serving size amount, under the “Added Sugars” column.

Is it creditable? _____

LOW FAT YOGURT VITAMINS A & D, CALCIUM ADDED	Nutrition Facts	
	Serving size	1 container
6 OZ (170g)	Amount per serving	Calories 150
	% Daily Value*	
	Total Fat 2g	3%
	Saturated Fat 1.5g	6%
	Trans Fat 0g	
	Cholesterol 10mg	3%
	Sodium 90mg	4%
	Total Carbohydrate 27g	10%
	Total Sugars 19g	
	Includes 13g Added Sugars	26%
	Protein 6g	
	Vit. D 3mcg 15% • Calcium 260mg 20%	
	Potas. 280mg 6% • Vit. A 180mcg 23%	
	Not a significant source of dietary fiber and iron	
	*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 AT BREAKFAST

Programs have the option to serve meats/meat alternates (M/MA) in place of the entire grains component at breakfast up to three times per week. If you serve M/MA more than three days a week, you must offer them as additional items that do not count toward the reimbursable meal

1 oz eq of M/MA = 1 oz eq of grains

The table below shows the minimum amount of M/MA to serve in place of grains at breakfast.

	Ages 1–5 years	Ages 6–18 years
Meats/Meat Alternates	½ oz eq is equal to:	1 oz is equal to:
Beans, peas, and lentils	⅛ cup	¼ cup
Natural or processed cheese	½ oz eq	1 oz eq
Cottage or ricotta cheese	⅛ cup (1 oz)	¼ cup (2 oz)
Eggs	¼ large egg	½ large egg
Lean meat, poultry, or fish	½ oz eq	1 oz eq
Peanut butter, soy nut butter, or other nut or seed butter	1 tablespoon	2 tablespoons
Tofu	⅛ cup (1.1 oz)	¼ cup (2.2 oz)
Yogurt (including soy yogurt)	¼ cup (2 oz)	½ cup (4 oz)

M/MA Crediting Considerations

- **M/MA requiring CN label or PFS:** Turkey bacon and some types of sausage
- **Noncreditable M/MA:** Pork bacon, imitation bacon products, scrapple, salt pork

For more details on crediting foods, refer to the “Crediting Handbook for the CACFP” and the “Food Buying Guide.” You can find the website addresses in the **Training Resources** section at the end of the Participant Workbook to access it on an electronic device.

Try It Out!

1. Your child care center is open 7 days per week. How many times per week can you serve meats/meat alternates in place of the grains at breakfast? _____
2. You serve yogurt for breakfast to 3–5-year-olds once per week. What is the minimum amount you must serve to meet the meal pattern requirement? _____

ACTIVITY: BREAKFAST IDEAS WITH MEATS/MEAT ALTERNATES

Instructions: List creditable meats/meat alternates in the “Meats/Meat Alternates” box. Then, under “Breakfast Menu Ideas,” create six breakfast menu options featuring different M/MA, such as an egg and sausage burrito or cottage cheese with cherry tomatoes.

Meats/Meat Alternates

Breakfast Menu Ideas		
1.	2.	3.
4.	5.	6.



VEGETABLES AND FRUITS COMPONENTS

Notes Page

Objective: Identify and explain the CACFP requirements for the vegetables and fruits components.

Objective: Interpret and apply the requirements for serving juice in the CACFP.

VEGETABLES AND FRUITS BASICS

Vegetables and Fruits Components at Meals and Snacks

Breakfast

- Vegetables and fruits are a **combined** meal component.
- A vegetable, fruit, or combination must be served.
- Refer to the table for reimbursable combinations.

Breakfast		
Reimbursable (Veg)	Reimbursable (Fruit)	Reimbursable (Combination)
Toast Avocado 1% Milk	Cereal Strawberries 1% Milk	Pitas Mango Corn Salsa 1% Milk

Lunch and Supper

- Vegetables and fruits are **separate** components.
- A fruit and a vegetable OR two **different** vegetables must be served.
- Two fruits are not reimbursable as the two components in a meal.
- The serving size of the second vegetable must be equal to or greater than the fruit it replaces.
- Refer to the table for combinations that are reimbursable and not reimbursable.

Lunch			
Reimbursable (Veg + Fruit)	Reimbursable (2 Different Veggies)	Not Reimbursable (2 Same Veggies)	Not Reimbursable (2 Fruits)
Chicken Carrots Apples WG Bun 1% Milk	Chicken Carrots Broccoli WG Buns 1% Milk	Chicken Raw Carrots Cooked Carrots WG Buns 1% Milk	Chicken Kiwi Apples WG Buns 1% Milk

Snack

- Vegetables and fruits are **separate** components.
- A fruit and a vegetable can be served as the two required meal components.
- Two fruits or two vegetables are not reimbursable.
- Refer to the table for combinations that are reimbursable and not reimbursable.

Snack		
Reimbursable (Veg + Fruit)	Not Reimbursable (2 Veggies)	Not Reimbursable (2 Fruits)
Kiwi Carrots	Carrots Celery	Kiwi Apples

VEGETABLES AND FRUITS BASICS

Vegetables Component

- May be fresh, frozen, canned, or full-strength vegetable juice (100% juice).
- Combinations such as **mixed vegetables** (e.g., peas and carrots), stew vegetables, and casserole vegetables credit as one vegetable when the amount of each vegetable is not known.
- **Beans, peas, and lentils** may count toward the vegetables component and/or the M/MA component.
 - If **two different servings** of beans, peas, or lentils are offered at a meal, you may choose to credit one as a M/MA and the other as a vegetable.
 - If **only one serving** of beans, peas, or lentils is offered at a meal, it can only credit toward the M/MA component or the vegetables component, but not both in the same meal.
- **Pasta or noodles made from bean, pea, or lentil flour** may credit toward the vegetables or M/MA components, but not as both in the same meal. These products may credit toward the vegetables component without serving additional recognizable vegetables.
 - For example, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of pasta made from bean, pea, or lentil flour credits as $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of vegetables.
- The minimum creditable amount for vegetables is $\frac{1}{8}$ cup. Most vegetables credit as **volume served**. Exceptions:
 - Raw leafy greens: credit at half the volume served ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup romaine lettuce = $\frac{1}{4}$ cup veg)
 - Tomato paste: 1 Tablespoon = $\frac{1}{4}$ cup vegetables

Fruits Component

- May be fresh, frozen, canned, dried, or pasteurized full-strength fruit juice (100% juice).
- Credited based on volume, except $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of dried fruit counts as $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruit.

Fruit and Vegetable Mixtures

Mixtures of fruits and vegetables (e.g., baked sweet potato with apples or salsa with peaches and red peppers) may credit toward both the vegetables component **and** the fruits component if they contain the minimum creditable amounts per serving.

- For example, a $\frac{1}{2}$ cup serving of salsa with peaches and peppers served to 4-year-olds at lunch must contain $\frac{1}{4}$ cup peppers and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup peaches to meet the full vegetables and fruits components.

Juice

- Must be pasteurized, full-strength, and 100% fruit or vegetable juice and can be served in liquid, gelled, or frozen form.
- Concentrates only credit when reconstituted to 100% juice.
- May be served at snack if the other served component is not a beverage (e.g., fluid milk).
- Does not credit when used as an ingredient in another food or beverage product, except for smoothies.
- Pureed fruits and vegetables credit as juice when served in a smoothie.
- **May only credit toward the fruits or vegetables component at one meal or snack per day.**

ACTIVITY: RECALL THAT PHRASE

Instructions: Complete each statement using the answers in the Phrases box.

Vegetables and Fruits Component Statements

1. The vegetables and fruits components are separate components at _____.
2. Vegetables and fruits are a combined component at _____.
3. A fruit may replace the vegetables component at _____.
4. A snack with a _____, in the appropriate minimum serving sizes, is reimbursable.
5. When serving two vegetables at lunch or supper, they must be _____.

Phrases

- A. vegetable and fruit
 - B. two different types of vegetables
 - C. lunch, supper, and snack
 - D. no meal or snack
 - E. breakfast only
-

GROUP ACTIVITY: JUICE, DOES IT COMPLY?

Instructions: Read each scenario and determine if it complies with the juice limit.

Sam serves milk at breakfast and lunch, and juice at snack. Does this comply with the juice requirement?	Tyrone serves juice at breakfast and snack. Does this comply with the juice requirement?
LeeAnn serves the same meals to different groups of children (a morning and an afternoon group). The morning group gets juice at the a.m. snack, and the afternoon group gets juice at the p.m. snack. Does this comply with the juice requirement?	Shayla serves meals in shifts because of limited space. Today, she served juice to two different groups during lunch. Does this comply with the juice requirement?

PLANNED MENUS

Programs must demonstrate compliance with meal pattern requirements by maintaining planned, dated menus for each meal and snack claimed for reimbursement, detailing all components and specific food items.



Meal Component	Week of January 12-16, [year]				
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Meats/Meat Alternates	Baked Fish	Chicken Alfredo	Bean Quesadilla	Pork Stir-Fry	Spinach Egg Bake
Grains	WGR Rolls	WGR Noodles	WGR Tortilla	Brown Rice	WGR English Muffin
Vegetables	Asparagus	Steamed Green Beans	Broccoli	Yellow Pepper Strips	Jicama Sticks
Fruits	Raspberries	Nectarine Wedges	Honeydew Melon	Blueberries	Strawberries
Milk	Milk	Milk	Milk	Milk	Milk

*Whole milk is served to 1-year-olds, and 1% milk is served to children 2 years and older.

State agencies may require additional documentation or set stricter guidelines to verify compliance with the meal pattern. For State-specific requirements, contact your State agency or sponsoring organization. To locate your State agency, you can find the website address listed under “FNA Contacts” in the **Training Resources** section at the end of the Participant Workbook to access it on an electronic device.

MEAL SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

Notes Page

Objective: Recall at least one way to increase water intake that aligns with CACFP requirements.

Objective: Identify the requirements for preparing and serving nutritious meals and snacks in the CACFP.

ACTIVITY: LARGE GROUP DISCUSSION: OFFERING WATER

Requirement: Child care programs participating in the CACFP are required to make safe, drinkable water **available** to children upon request throughout the day, including mealtimes. They must also **offer** water to children throughout the day. Water is not part of the reimbursable meal and may not be served instead of fluid milk.

Activity Instructions: List strategies you currently use and plan to try to encourage children to drink more water while in your care.

Strategies Currently Using

Strategies You Would Like to Try

COOKING METHODS

The CACFP requirements **do not allow deep-fat frying when preparing foods on-site**. Deep-fat frying means cooking food by submerging it in hot oil or other fat. Here are some other methods CACFP programs may use:

Roasting or Baking

- Roasting or baking means cooking meat, poultry, fish, or vegetables in the oven without liquid and uncovered. To roast or bake:
 - Remove all visible fat from poultry or beef.
 - Add appropriate seasonings and flavorings to replace the flavor lost when fat is removed. Since salt penetrates meat only about an inch and delays browning, most recipes suggest adding salt at the end of cooking. Do not add salt unless the recipe calls for it.
 - Place in the cooking dish or pan. Do not cover or add any liquid to meat or poultry. Place meat on a rack when appropriate so fat will drain, and hot air can circulate on all sides.
 - Follow the recipe for the oven temperature until the food reaches the appropriate internal temperature as specified in the recipe.
 - When using a meat thermometer, place it in the thickest part of the meat, away from bone or fat.
- Remove from the oven and serve. For large pieces of meat, such as a turkey or a large roast, allow them to sit in a warm place for about 15 minutes before carving or slicing. This makes the meat firmer, juicier, and easier to slice. Slice meat across the grain.
- If meat or poultry is not served immediately, cover it and store in a warmer at the correct temperature or chill it in the refrigerator. Never hold a meat product at room temperature.

Sautéing

- Sautéing uses high heat and a small amount of fat to cook vegetables, meat, poultry, and fish rapidly. Searing and stir-frying are sautéing techniques. To sauté:
 - Prepare the item by making sure it is dry. If using a marinade, drain it thoroughly and pat the food dry. Food with a lot of moisture will steam rather than sauté.
 - Measure the oil carefully and add it to the pan.
 - Heat the oil; add the item to the pan in a single layer. If the pieces are touching, the product will steam rather than sauté.
 - Cook the item by turning until browned on all sides and cooked evenly. If cooking meat, some recipes suggest that the cooked meat be removed from the pan and the remaining juices be used to make a sauce. Follow the recipe.
- Cook sautéed items in batches just in time for service. Covering sautéed food during holding causes it to steam, and the advantages of the sauté technique are lost. Serve immediately. Never hold a sautéed item at room temperature.

Braising and Stewing

- Braising and stewing are a combination of dry-heat and moist-heat cooking used for less tender cuts of meat. Braising is used for large cuts of meat. The same technique is called stewing when used for bite-sized pieces of meat, poultry, or fish. To braise or stew:
 - Trim fat and prepare meat according to the recipe.
 - Sear the meat on all sides. Searing meat before braising or stewing adds color and flavor. Follow the recipe for using a small amount of oil or, preferably, none. Use a pan in the oven or a steam-jacketed kettle for large pieces of meat. For smaller pieces, use a grill or brown them in a hot oven.
 - Remove the meat from the pan and add any vegetables or seasonings called for in the recipe.
 - Add the seared meat back to the cooking pan along with the liquid for cooking.
 - Cover tightly and simmer until tender. Follow the recipe for the temperature and time for the equipment being used. Do not allow the liquid to boil. The kind of meat and size of the cut will influence the cooking time. Braised or stewed meat is done when it is tender.
 - Remove the meat from the cooking liquid. Some recipes suggest that the liquid be cooked for an additional time to reduce the volume and concentrate the flavor. The cooking liquid may also be thickened with a roux.
- If the item is not served immediately, it should be covered and kept in a warmer at the correct temperature or chilled in the refrigerator.

MEAL SERVICE IN THE CACFP

Meal Service Requirements

- Meals must be served at regularly scheduled times approved by the sponsoring organization or State agency.
- During each meal and snack, all required meal components must be served together at the same time to provide healthy options for children to choose from.
 - A food item or beverage cannot be withheld until the end of the meal or until a participant eats a specific item.
 - Participants should be encouraged to try different foods but cannot be forced to try all foods or finish one before receiving additional servings of other foods.

Meal Service Styles

The three types of meal service styles are:

- Unitized or Preplated
- Family Style
- Offer versus Serve (OVS)

Your facility may choose one of these methods, or a combination, to serve CACFP meals.

Preplated (Unitized) Meal Service

Staff serve meals by plating food and pouring milk before or as children are seated. This may also include cafeteria-style service (e.g., serving lines or self-service from a cart or counter).

- Each child must receive all required meal components at the start of the meal and at least the minimum serving sizes for their age group.
- Meals or snacks missing components or minimum amounts are not reimbursable.

Family Style Meal Service (FSMS)

Children serve themselves from common serving dishes and pitchers with adult assistance as needed.

- Children choose their preferred foods and portions, are encouraged to try each item, and may take additional servings during the meal.
- Children are not required to take all components or the minimum serving sizes for the meal to be reimbursable.
- Family style is optional but highly encouraged because of its many benefits.

Offer Versus Serve (OVS) in the CACFP

Allows participants to decline some of the food offered at breakfast, lunch, or supper. OVS may not be used for snacks. OVS can help reduce food waste and give participants more choices.

- OVS is only allowed in at-risk afterschool programs or adult day care centers.
- Child care centers and homes may not use OVS.

FAMILY STYLE MEAL SERVICE

Family style meal service allows children to serve themselves from common serving bowls and small pitchers with the assistance of supervising adults if needed. It allows children to choose their preferred foods and beverages and determine the quantity of each they wish to consume. They are not required to take all components or the minimum serving sizes for the meal to be reimbursable.

Benefits

- Builds self-esteem and confidence when children serve themselves
- Promotes the development of social, emotional, and motor skills
- Encourages children to try new foods
- Provides children with control over their food choices

FSMS Guidelines

- Provide the full portion of each meal component for every child and supervising adult.
- Place all serving dishes and pitchers on the table.
- Offer each meal component to each child and allow children to serve themselves.
- A meal or snack is reimbursable even if a child does not place the food on their plate or eat it.
- If a child cannot serve themselves, an adult may assist or serve the entire meal component. Any component served by an adult must meet the minimum serving size.

Implementing Family Style Meals

Equipment

- If possible, buy supplies that are child-sized, unbreakable, stain-, odor-, and scratch-resistant, and convenient (dishwasher and microwave-safe).
- It is good practice to measure the volume of each serving spoon ahead of time to know how many spoonfuls provide the appropriate serving size for each age group.

Train Staff

Provide training to teachers and food service staff focusing on the following areas:

- Assisting children in serving themselves and understanding their own hunger and fullness cues
- Determining appropriate portion sizes
- Addressing possible challenges and developing effective strategies to overcome them

Educate and Engage Parents and Caregivers

- Explain the concept and benefits of family style and encourage families to try it at home.
- Share information through meetings, conversations during drop-off or pick-up times, or by sending information home.
- Distribute the “Serving Meals Family Style” newsletter from the “Nibbles for Health” series to provide detailed insights. The link to this resource is in the **Training Resources** section.

Educate Children

- Explain the changes that will happen during mealtimes.
- To practice the needed skills, engage children in activities like pouring water into cups, passing empty dishes, and transferring small items from a large bowl to a smaller one.
- As skills develop, allow children to serve themselves one item during mealtimes, progressively increasing until they can manage all foods and beverages independently.

Accommodating Children With Disabilities

With a medical statement, CACFP programs must provide reasonable modifications for children with disabilities. To reduce cross-contact risks, such as shared serving utensils, pre-plating the child's meal may be a safer option.

More Information and Resources

- USDA's "Family Style Meal Service With Children in the CACFP" helps support children, train staff, and meet CACFP meal pattern requirements to serve family style meals successfully.
- ICN's "Introduction to Happy Mealtimes in Child Care Settings" training includes a lesson on implementing family style meal service.

You can find the website addresses in the **Training Resources** section at the end of the Participant Workbook to access it on an electronic device.

OFFER VERSUS SERVE IN THE CACFP

Only at-risk afterschool or adult day care participants in the CACFP may use Offer Versus Serve (OVS). OVS allows participants to decline some of the food offered at breakfast, lunch, or supper. It may not be used at snacks or in other CACFP child care settings. OVS can help reduce food waste and give participants more choices.

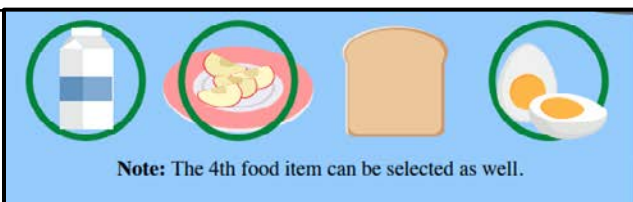
Understanding OVS: Know the Terms

- **Meal component:** a group of foods in a reimbursable meal: milk, vegetables, fruits, grains, and meats/meat alternates. At breakfast only, vegetables and fruits are one combined component. This means you can serve vegetables, fruits, or a combination to meet this requirement.
- **Food item:** foods that are part of a **meal component** (ex., broccoli is a **food item** in the vegetables **component**). All food items offered must be different food items. For example, apple slices and applesauce are two forms of apples, but they are the same **food item**. The participant must take the full minimum serving size of a **food item** for it to count toward a reimbursable meal.
- **Combination Food:** a type of food that contains more than one **food item** from different **meal components** that cannot be separated. These items include sandwiches, burritos, and pizzas.

How to Use OVS at Meals

OVS at Breakfast

1. Offer these 3 **meal components**:
 - Milk
 - Vegetables and/or Fruits
 - Grains
2. Offer at least 4 different **food items** at breakfast, at least 1 from each **meal component** above. The 4th **food item** can come from the vegetables or fruits, grains, or meats/meat alternates component.
3. Participants must choose at least 3 different **food items**.



OVS at Lunch and Supper

1. Offer these 5 **meal components**:
 - Milk*
 - Vegetables
 - Fruits
 - Grains
 - Meats and Meat Alternates
2. Offer at least 1 **food item** from each **meal component**.
3. Participants must choose **food items** from **3 or more meal components**.



*For Adult Participants Only: Milk is optional at supper. If milk is not offered, the adult still needs to select food items from 3 different meal components to have a reimbursable meal.

Adapted Source: United States Department of Agriculture. (2024, October 28). *Offer versus serve in the CACFP*. <https://www.fna.usda.gov/tn/offer-versus-serve-cacfp>

ACTIVITY: UNDERSTANDING CACFP MEAL SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

Instructions: Answer the following questions about CACFP meal service requirements.

1. Which of the following is not allowed at mealtimes?
 - a) Allowing children to serve themselves from common serving bowls
 - b) Using food as a reward for good behavior
 - c) Encouraging children to try new foods
 - d) Assisting children during mealtimes as needed
2. In family style meal service, children are encouraged to:
 - a) Serve themselves from shared dishes and choose the amount of food they want to eat.
 - b) Wait for adults to serve them their portions.
 - c) Take food only after everyone else has been served.
 - d) Eat only the foods preplated by the staff.
3. In the CACFP, which cooking method is not allowed when preparing food onsite?
 - a) Baking
 - b) Steaming
 - c) Deep-fat frying
 - d) Roasting
4. In pre-plated meal service, which of the following statements is true?
 - a) Children can choose which meal components they want to receive.
 - b) Staff must serve each child all required meal components in at least the minimum serving size for their age group.
 - c) Beverages can be served separately after the meal.
 - d) Staff may put less than the minimum serving size on each child's plate if more is available.
5. Which statement aligns with CACFP's approach to mealtime behavior?
 - a) Children must finish all their food before leaving the table.
 - b) Meals can be used as a form of punishment for misbehavior.
 - c) Children should be forced to eat all components before getting a second helping.
 - d) Children should be encouraged, but not forced, to try each food item.

ACTIVITY: APPLY IN THREE

Instructions: Write at least three things you learned today about the CACFP meal pattern and meal service requirements, how you will apply this information, and the estimated date you would like to have completed each action item.

What did you learn?	How will you apply it?	When will you apply it?
1.		
2.		
3.		

APPENDIX



Training Resources 85

Key Terms 89

References 91

TRAINING RESOURCES



USDA REGULATIONS AND POLICY MEMOS*	
7 CFR Parts 210, 215, 220, and 226	Child Nutrition Programs: Flexibilities for Milk, Whole Grains, and Sodium Requirements
7 CFR Parts 210, 215, 220, 225, and 226	Final Rule - Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent With the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans
CACFP 04-2026	Expanding Fluid Milk Options in Child Nutrition Programs
CACFP 07-2025	Requirement to Accept Medical Statements from Registered Dietitians for Schools and Child and Adult Care Institutions and Facilities
CACFP 05-2025	Grain Requirements in the CACFP: Questions and Answers
CACFP 04-2025	Guidance for Accepting Processed Product Documentation for Meal Pattern Requirements
CACFP 03-2025	Substituting Vegetables for Grains in American Samoa, Guam, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Tribal Communities
CACFP 02-2025	Offer Versus Serve and Family Style Meals in CACFP
CACFP 01-2025	Nutrition Requirements for Fluid Milk and Fluid Milk Substitutions in the Child and Adult Care Food Program
CACFP 07-2024	Initial Implementation Memorandum: Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent With the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans
CACFP 02-2024	Revised: Crediting Tofu and Soy Yogurt Products in the School Meal Programs, CACFP, and SFSP
CACFP 17-2019	Smoothies Offered in Child Nutrition Programs
CACFP 17-2017	Documenting Meals in the Child and Adult Care Food Program
CACFP 16-2017	Grain-Based Desserts in the Child and Adult Care Food Program
CACFP 14-2017	Modifications to Accommodate Disabilities in the Child and Adult Care Food Program and Summer Food Service Program
CACFP 09-2017	Vegetable and Fruit Requirements in CACFP: Q&As
CACFP 08-2017	Questions and Answers on the Updated Meal Pattern Requirements for the Child and Adult Care Food Program
CACFP 20-2016	Water Availability in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

CACFP 15-2016	Optional Best Practices to Further Improve Nutrition in the Child and Adult Care Food Program Meal Pattern Requirements
TA 01-2024	Crediting Traditional Indigenous Foods in Child Nutrition Programs

* All policy memos can be found at the FNA website: <https://www.fna.usda.gov/resources>

RESOURCES



ICN Resources	
CACFP Education and Training Resources	https://theicn.org/cacfp
Child Nutrition Sharing Site	https://theicn.org/cnss/
Introduction to Happy Mealtimes	https://theicn.org/icn-resources-a-z/introduction-to-happy-mealtimes-in-child-care-settings/
USDA Resources	
CACFP Child Meal Pattern Tables	https://www.fna.usda.gov/cacfp/nutrition-standards
CACFP Training Tools: Infographics, Posters, Training Worksheets	https://www.fna.usda.gov/tn/cacfp/trainers-tools
Child Nutrition Labels and PFS	
Child Nutrition Labeling Manual	https://www.fna.usda.gov/cn/labeling/manual
CN Labeling Program	https://www.fna.usda.gov/cn/labeling
Child Nutrition Authorized Labels and Manufacturers	https://www.fna.usda.gov/cn/labeling/authorized-labels-manufacturers
Manufacturer Documentation: Child Nutrition Labels and Product Formulation Statements	https://www.fna.usda.gov/cn/manufacturer-documentation
Tips for Evaluating a Manufacturer's Product Formulation Statement	https://www.fna.usda.gov/cn/labeling/tips-evaluating-pfs
Checklist for Evaluating a Manufacturer's PFS	https://www.fna.usda.gov/cn/labeling/tips-evaluating-pfs
Crediting Handbook for the Child and Adult Care Food Program	https://www.fna.usda.gov/tn/crediting-handbook-child-and-adult-care-food-program
Crediting Tip Sheets in Child Nutrition Programs	https://www.fna.usda.gov/tn/cn/crediting-tipsheets
Family Style Meal Service With Children in the CACFP (TN training materials)	https://www.fna.usda.gov/tn/cacfp/family-style-meals
FNA Contacts (State Agency)	https://www.fna.usda.gov/fna-contacts
Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs	https://www.fna.usda.gov/tn/fbg

Nibbles for Health	https://www.fna.usda.gov/tn/nibbles
Procuring Local Foods	https://www.fna.usda.gov/f2s/procuring-local-foods
Team Nutrition Resources for Child Care	https://www.fna.usda.gov/tn/child-care-organization
Using Ounce Equivalents for Grains in CACFP	https://www.fna.usda.gov/tn/using-ounce-equivalents-grains-cacfp
Using the WIC Food Lists to Identify Grains for the CACFP	https://www.fna.usda.gov/tn/cacfp/wic-food-lists-identify-grains

KEY TERMS

Key Terms	Definition
Creditable Foods	Foods that may be counted toward meeting the CACFP meal pattern requirements for a reimbursable meal or snack.
Dietary Guidelines For Americans	The cornerstone document of Federal nutrition policy and nutrition education activities, providing food-based recommendations to promote health, help prevent diet-related disease, and meet nutrient needs. The US Department of Health and Human Services and the USDA jointly publish the Dietary Guidelines every 5 years.
Deep-Fat Frying	To cook a food by submerging it in hot oil or other fat. This cooking method is not allowed when preparing food onsite.
Enriched Grain	An enriched grain has undergone processing to restore nutrients lost during refinement, typically including iron and four B vitamins: thiamin, riboflavin, niacin, and folic acid.
Expressed Milk	Breast milk that is pumped, stored, and fed to the infant.
Family Style Meal Service	A type of meal service that allows children to serve themselves from common platters of food with assistance from supervising adults if needed.
Food Item	A specific food offered for one of the five meal components: fluid milk, fruits, vegetables, grains, and meats/meat alternates. For example, a hamburger patty on a bun is one food item with two of the five meal components (meats/meat alternates and grains).
Fortified Grain	A grain with added vitamins and minerals that were not originally present.
Grain-Based Desserts	Items in the USDA's "Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs" are denoted as desserts with superscripts 3 and 4. Examples include cakes, cookies, doughnuts, granola bars, toaster pastries, sweet rolls, and brownies.
Meal Component	One of the five food categories required for a reimbursable meal or snack under CACFP meal pattern requirements. The five meal components are: fluid milk, vegetables, fruits, grains, and meats/meat alternates.
Meal Pattern Requirements	The required amounts of food specified by meal components and by age group that must be offered to qualify for reimbursement under Child Nutrition Programs.

Key Terms	Definition
Noncreditable Foods	Foods that are either portions of components too small to credit toward meal pattern requirements or foods that do not fit into one of the five meal components.
Offer Versus Serve (OVS)	OVS allows participants in at-risk afterschool programs and adult day care centers to decline some of the food offered in a reimbursable breakfast, lunch, or supper.
Ounce Equivalent (oz eq)	Used to measure the amount of grains or MMA in a food serving. Foods contributing to the grains and MMA components are credited in ounce equivalents (oz eq). One oz eq of MMA is equivalent to one ounce of cooked lean meat. One oz eq of grains equals a serving containing 16 grams of creditable grains.
Portion	The amount of food selected by the participant.
Refined Grain	A refined grain has been processed to remove the bran and germ, which removes dietary fiber, iron, and other nutrients.
Reimbursable Meal or Snack	A meal or snack served to a participant that meets the meal pattern requirements.
Serving	A standardized amount of food served to a participant.
Whole Grain	A whole grain consists of the entire cereal grain seed or kernel: the bran, the germ, and the endosperm.
Whole Grain-Rich	A term designated by the USDA to indicate that the grain content of a product is between 50 and 100 percent whole grain, with any remaining grains being enriched.

REFERENCES



- Institute of Child Nutrition. (2015). *Competencies, knowledge, and skills for child care providers in CACFP operations*. <https://theicn.org/icn-resources-a-z/competencies-knowledge-and-skills-for-child-care-providers-in-cacfp-operations/>
- U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Administration. (2026, March). *Crediting handbook for the child and adult care food program*. <https://www.fna.usda.gov/tn/cacfp/crediting-handbook>
- U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Administration. (2024, June 17). *Family style meal service in the child and adult care food program*. <https://www.fna.usda.gov/cacfp/family-style-meal-service-child-and-adult-care-food-program>
- U.S. Food & Drug Administration. (n.d.). *The nutrition facts label*. <https://www.fda.gov/food/nutrition-education-resources-materials/nutrition-facts-label>
- University of Oklahoma, K20 Center. (2020, September 16). *Instructional strategies*. <https://learn.k20center.ou.edu/strategy/d9908066f654727934df7bf4f505bbe0>



The University of Mississippi
School of Applied Sciences

800-321-3054

www.theicn.org