CACFP Crediting Handbook
Information for Schools ONLY

School Lunch and Breakfast Meal Patterns are attached

Meat/Meat Alternates

Page 45: Question 11 regarding sugar limits for yogurt does not apply to NSLP or SBP. Sugar limitations are only for CACFP programs and Pre-K who are not co-mingled.

Page 46-48: Question 12 & Method 1-3 regarding sugar limits for yogurt does not apply to NSLP or SBP. Sugar limitations are only for CACFP programs and Pre-K who are not co-mingled.

Vegetables

Vegetable subgroups are not apart of the CACFP meal patterns. For vegetable subgroup information, refer to the Food Buying Guide or the Cafeteria Managers section of the Training Manual.

Page 69: Question 5: Serving 2 vegetables at lunch. It is not allowed for the NSLP to serve a vegetable in place of a fruit at lunch. Schools are required to offer at least 1 vegetable and 1 fruit at lunch.

Grains

Page 80: Method 3 is only allowed in CACFP.

Page 90-93: Question 2 & Method 1-3: Breakfast Cereals. These sugar limitations do not apply to NSLP or SBP. There are sugar limits for cereal served in CACFP and for Pre-K who are not co-mingled.

Page 95-96: Grains Chart. The items highlighted in red are considered grain-based desserts. These items are allowed in NSLP and SBP. They can only be used up to 2 times per week with ASSP. These items are not allowed in CACFP or for Pre-K who are not co-mingled.

Page 97-106: Some items are marked **NO as not being creditable** as they are considered a grain-based dessert. Grain-based desserts are allowed in NSLP and SBP. They can only be used up to 2 times per week with ASSP. These items are not allowed in CACFP or for Pre-K who are not co-mingled.

Page 108: Question 2 Health Claim is only allowed to be used for CACFP.

Page 109: Question 5 & 6: Whole Grain-rich served in CACFP. It is required for all items served in NSLP and SBP must be whole-grain rich. In CACFP and Pre-K that is co-mingled, whole grain item only has to be served during one meal per day.

Page 111: Question 14: Sugar limitations with cereal. There are no sugar limitations for cereal for NSLP or SBP. Sugar is only limited for CACFP and Pre-K who are not co-mingled.

LUNCH MEAL PATTERN

	Grades K-5		Grades 6-8		Grades 9-12	
Meal Pattern Requirements	**Daily**	**Weeky**	**Daily**	**Weekly**	**Daily**	**Weekly**
Fruits (cups)[b]	**½**	2 ½	**½**	2 ½	**1**	5
Vegetables (cups)[b,c,e]	**¾**	3 ¾	**¾**	3 ¾	**1**	5
Dark Green[c]		½		½		½
Red/Orange[c]		¾		¾		1 ¼
Beans/Peas (Legumes)[c]		½		½		½
Starchy[c]		½		½		½
Other[c,d]		½		½		¾
Additional Veg to Reach Total		1		1		1 ½
Grains (oz eq)[f]	**1**	8	**1**	8	**2**	10
Meat/ Meat Alternates (oz eq)	**1**	8	**1**	9	**2**	10
Fluid Milk (cups)[g]	**1**	5	**1**	5	**1**	5
Min-Max Calories[h]	550-650		600-700		750-850	
Saturated Fat (% Of total calories)[h]	<10		<10		<10	
Sodium (mg)[h,i]	≤1230		≤1360		≤1420	
Trans fat[h]	Nutrition label or manufacturer specifications must indicate zero grams of ***trans*** fat per serving.					

[a] Food items included in each group and subgroup and amount equivalents. Minimum creditable serving is 1/8 cup.

[b] 1/4 cup of dried fruit counts as 1/2 cup of fruit; 1 cup of leafy greens counts as 1/2 cup of vegetables. No more than half of the fruit or vegetable offerings may be in the form of juice. All juice must be 100 percent full-strength.

[c] Larger amounts of these vegetables may be served.

[d] This category consists of *Other Vegetables* as defined in §210.10(c)(2)(iii)(E). For the purposes of the NSLP, the *Other Vegetables* requirement may be met with any additional amounts from the dark green, red/orange, and beans/peas (legumes) vegetable subgroups as defined in 210.10(c)(2)(iii).

[e] Any vegetable subgroup may be offered to meet the total weekly vegetable requirement.

[f] All weekly grains items (or products) must be whole grain-rich.

[g] All fluid milk must be lowfat (1 percent or less, unflavored) or fat-free (unflavored or flavored) for ages 6 and older. Children 5 and under are only allowed unflavored milk, unless comingled (SP37-2017). Operators are ***required*** to offer unflavored fluid milk at each meal service.

[h] Discretionary sources of calories (solid fats and added sugars) may be added to the meal pattern if within the specifications for calories, saturated fat, ***trans*** fat, or sodium. Foods of minimal nutritional value (FMNV) and fluid milk with fat content greater than 1 percent are not allowed.

[i] Target 1 Sodium will be met through SY2023-2024. Target 2 Sodium must be met no later than SY2024-2025. See required intermediate specifications in §210.10(f)(3).

BREAKFAST MEAL PATTERN

	Grades K-5		Grades 6-8		Grades 9-12	
Meal Pattern Requirements	**Daily**	**Weekly**	**Daily**	**Weekly**	**Daily**	**Weekly**
Fruits (cups)[b]	**1**	5	**1**	5	**1**	5
Vegetables (cups)[b,c]		0		0		0
Dark Green[c]		0		0		0
Red/Orange[c]		0		0		0
Beans/Peas (Legumes)[c]		0		0		0
Starchy[c]		0		0		0
Other[c,d]		0		0		0
Additional Veg to Reach Total		0		0		0
Grains (oz eq)[f]	**1**	7	**1**	8	**1**	9
Meat/ Meat Alternates (oz eq)		0[j]		0[j]		0[j]
Fluid Milk (cups)[g]	**1**	5	**1**	5	**1**	5
Min-Max Calories[h]	350-500		400-550		450-600	
Saturated Fat (% Of total calories)[h]	<10		<10		<10	
Sodium (mg)[h,i]	≤540		≤600		≤640	
Trans fat[h]	Nutrition label or manufacturer specifications must indicate zero grams of ***trans*** fat per serving.					

[a] Food items included in each group and subgroup and amount equivalents. Minimum creditable serving is 1/8 cup.

[b] 1/4 cup of dried fruit counts as 1/2 cup of fruit; 1 cup of leafy greens counts as 1/2 cup of vegetables. No more than half of the fruit or vegetable offerings may be in the form of juice. All juice must be 100 percent full-strength.

[c] Larger amounts of these vegetables may be served.

[d] This category consists of *Other Vegetables* as defined in §210.10(c)(2)(iii)(E). For the purposes of the NSLP, the *Other Vegetables* requirement may be met with any additional amounts from the dark green, red/orange, and beans/peas (legumes) vegetable subgroups as defined in 210.10(c)(2)(iii).

[e] Any vegetable subgroup may be offered to meet the total weekly vegetable requirement.

[f] All weekly grains items (or products) must be whole grain-rich.

[g] All fluid milk must be lowfat (1 percent or less, unflavored) or fat-free (unflavored or flavored) for ages 6 and older. Children 5 and under are only allowed unflavored milk, unless comingled (SP37-2017). Operators are ***required*** to offer unflavored fluid milk at each meal service.

[h] Discretionary sources of calories (solid fats and added sugars) may be added to the meal pattern if within the specifications for calories, saturated fat, ***trans*** fat, or sodium. Foods of minimal nutritional value (FMNV) and fluid milk with fat content greater than 1 percent are not allowed.

[i] Target 1 Sodium will be met through SY2023-2024. Target 2 Sodium must be met no later than SY2024-2025. See required intermediate specifications in §210.10(f)(3.

[J] There is no separate meat/meat alternate component in the SBP. Schools may substitute 1 oz eq of meat/meat alternate for 1 oz eq of grains after the minimum daily grains requirement is met.

United States Department of Agriculture

The contents of this guidance document do not have the force and effect of law and are not meant to bind the public in any way. This document is intended only to provide clarity to the public regarding existing requirements under the law or agency policies.

Food and Nutrition Service

CREDITING HANDBOOK FOR THE

Child and Adult Care Food Program

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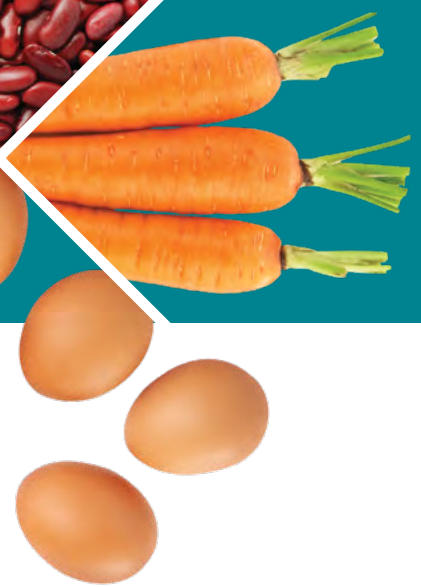


Table of Contents

The goal of USDA's Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) is to improve the health and nutrition of children and adults in the program while promoting the development of good eating habits through nutrition education. Implementing the CACFP meal patterns helps to ensure children and adults receive wholesome and nutritious meals. The *Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs*, commonly referred to as the *Food Buying Guide* (FBG), is the principal resource to determine the contribution that foods make toward the meal pattern requirements in the Child Nutrition Programs, which include the CACFP, for foods produced onsite or purchased commercially. This handbook is a supplementary resource to the *Food Buying Guide* and contains additional information on creditable foods served in child and adult care centers, which may be located in a variety of settings, such as schools, Head Start programs, nonprofit centers, outside-school-hours care centers, homeless shelters, at-risk afterschool programs, day care homes, or for-profit centers that serve low-income children.

This update to the *Crediting Handbook for the Child and Adult Care Food Program* (Crediting Handbook) reflects the updated CACFP meal pattern requirements, which became effective October 2017. The meal patterns were revised to reflect updates to the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* (see the Resource Section on page 133) and recommendations from the National Academy of Medicine and the American Academy of Pediatrics. The meal patterns focus on providing a variety of nutrient-dense foods such as whole grains, vegetables, fruits, and fat-free and low-fat milk, while reducing the amount of added sugars and solid fats. The Crediting Handbook provides information on a wide variety of foods but does not include all foods that can be served in the CACFP.

Please note: The Crediting Handbook is a companion to the *Food Buying Guide* but does not replace it. The *Food Buying Guide* is available as a downloadable PDF. Additional resources include the *Food Buying Guide* for Child Nutrition Programs Interactive Web-Based Tool, the *Food Buying Guide* Mobile App, and the online FBG Calculator, (see the Resource Section on page 133). The *Food Buying Guide* Interactive Web-Based Tool and the Mobile App include additional features such as easy searching and navigation and the ability to compare food yields.

The *Food Buying Guide* is your primary resource to determine if a food is creditable. It contains a wide variety of foods (such as fruits, vegetables, grains, and meats/meat alternates). The Crediting Handbook may include foods that are not listed in the *Food Buying Guide*, however the Crediting Handbook is not an all-inclusive publication. Contact your sponsoring organization or State agency if you need assistance to determine if a food is creditable in the CACFP.

Schools serving meals to children in preschool (ages 1 through 5) under the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) must serve the food components and quantities required in the lunch or breakfast meal pattern. If preschool and elementary school students are in the same cafeteria at the same time, the CACFP final rule, *Meal Pattern Revisions Related to the*

Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, allows program operators the flexibility to serve a single menu. See Resource Section on page 133 for more information on the CACFP final rule.

For information on infant feeding, please see the Team Nutrition *Feeding Infants in the Child and Adult Care Food Program* (see Resource Section on page 133). Contact your State agency (SA) or sponsoring organization with questions regarding the infant meal pattern. See Resource Section on page 134 for State agency contact information.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) reimburses CACFP operators for the meals served to children or adult enrollees, not for individual foods. A meal is reimbursable if it contains creditable foods in the required amounts outlined in the CACFP and preschool meal patterns.

Alternate Protein Products (APP)–Food ingredients (such as soy flour or textured vegetable protein) that may be used to fulfill part or all of the meat/meat alternate requirement. These products must meet the requirements for Alternate Foods for Meals, Appendix A of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Title 7, Part 226. Before using products containing APP and claiming the meals for reimbursement, contact your State Agency or sponsoring organization. See Resource Section on page 134 for State agency contact information.

Buy American Provision–The Buy American Provision is a very important provision in the National School Lunch Program/School Breakfast Program (NSLP/SBP) that applies to a CACFP institution that is a school food authority operating the NSLP/SBP. It does not apply to CACFP institutions that are not school food authorities operating the NSLP/SBP.

This provision requires that a school food authority purchase, to the maximum extent practicable, domestic commodities or products. The term "domestic commodity or product" means an agricultural commodity that is produced in the United States, and a food product that is processed in the United States substantially using agricultural commodities that are produced in the United States.

The definition of "substantially" means that over 51 percent of the final processed product consists of agricultural commodities that were grown domestically. There are very limited exceptions to the purchase of domestic foods. These are only permitted after first considering domestic alternatives and when domestic foods are unavailable or prohibitively expensive. Thus, for foods that are unprocessed, agricultural commodities must be domestic, and for foods that are processed, they must be processed domestically using domestic agricultural food components that are comprised of over 51 percent domestically grown items, by weight or volume.

For products procured by a school food authority using nonprofit food service account funds, the product's food component is considered the agricultural commodity. FNS defines food component as one of the food groups which comprises reimbursable meals. The food components are meats/meat alternates, grains, vegetables, fruits, and fluid milk. Please refer to 7 CFR 210.2 and 226.20 for full definitions.

Please note: While CACFP institutions not operated by a school food authority are not required to abide by the Buy American Provision, they must follow Federal procurement standards in 7 CFR 226.22 and 2 CFR 200.318-326 concerning proper procurement of goods and services to ensure proper use of Federal dollars. This means that all goods and services must be procured using full and open competition. See the Resource Section on page 133 for information on CACFP policy memos that provide guidance on conducting compliant procurement procedures.

Child Nutrition (CN) Labeling Program–A voluntary program that allows manufacturers the opportunity to include a standardized crediting statement on their product label. The CN Labeling Program is managed by USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS).

- All CN Labels must be authorized by AMS prior to being used.
- Manufacturers must have an approved quality control (QC) program and Federal oversight in order to participate in the CN Labeling Program and to produce CN-Labeled products.
- CN Labels provide a warranty against audit claims when the product is used according to manufacturer's instructions.

What products are eligible for CN Labels?

- Main dish products which contribute to the meats/meat alternates component of the meal pattern requirements are eligible for a CN label. Examples of these products include beef patties, cheese or meat pizzas, meat or cheese and bean burritos, egg rolls, and breaded fish portions.

How to identify a CN Label

The four integral parts of a valid CN Label include:

- Product Name
- Ingredient Statement
- CN Logo (the box with CN on each side that surrounds the meal pattern contribution statement)
- Inspection Legend

See the following sample CN Label on page 6. Please note, the CN number on the sample label is not an actual CN number. A valid CN Label will never have XXXXXX as a CN number.

Sample CN Logo

CN Label

1 **Chicken Stir-Fry Bowl**

Ingredient Statement:

2 Chicken, brown rice, broccoli, red peppers, carrots, onions, water, olive oil, soy sauce, spices.

3 CN

CN

XXXXXX

Each 4.5 oz Chicken Stir-Fry Bowl provides 1.5 oz eq meat, 1.0 oz eq grains, ¼ cup dark green vegetable, ¼ cup red/orange vegetable, and 1/8 cup other vegetable for Child Nutrition Meal Pattern Requirements. (Use of this logo and statement authorized by the Food and Nutrition Service, USDA 09/16).

CN

CN

Net Wt.: 18 pounds

4 INSPECTED FOR WHOLESOMENESS BY U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE P-XX

Chicken Wok Company
1234 Kluck Street • Poultry, PA 1235

1 Product Name

2 Ingredient Statement

3 CN Logo

4 Inspection Legend

CN Label Requirements

It is important to know, the CN Logo (the box with CN on each side that surrounds the meal pattern contribution statement) is one of the four integral parts of a label, which includes the product name, ingredient statement, and inspection legend. All four parts must be on the product carton in order for the CN label to be valid.

For a detailed explanation of Child Nutrition (CN) Labeling Program, see the *Food Buying Guide* Appendix C.

Child Nutrition Programs–Federal food assistance programs administered by USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) that provide healthy food to participants. These include the Child and Adult Care Food Program, National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, Summer Food Service Program, Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, and Special Milk Program. Administered by State agencies, each of these programs helps fight hunger and obesity by reimbursing organizations such as CACFP centers, day care homes, schools, and at-risk afterschool programs for providing healthy meals and snacks to children.

Combination Food–A single serving of a food item that contains 2 or more of the required food components. Common examples of combination foods are pizza, chef salads, and a hamburger on a bun with lettuce and tomatoes.

Example: Hamburger on a bun with lettuce and tomatoes

Meat/Meat Alternate	Hamburger patty
Grains	Hamburger bun
Vegetable	Lettuce and tomatoes

Component–A food grouped in a certain food category according to the CACFP meal pattern. These categories include fluid milk, meats/meat alternates, vegetables, fruits, and the grains components.

Creditable Foods–Foods that may be counted toward meeting the meal pattern requirements for a reimbursable meal or snack. These include:

- Foods that are listed as creditable in the *Food Buying Guide* or contain a creditable food as an ingredient
- Foods in compliance with regulations governing the Child Nutrition Programs

Fish–Fish that meets State and local standards is creditable towards the meats/meat alternates component in the CACFP. See the Resource Section on page 133 for information on CACFP policy memos that provide guidance on Service of Traditional Foods in Public Facilities, CACFP 19-2015, and Procuring Local Meat, Poultry, Game, and Eggs for Child Nutrition Programs, CACFP 01-2016.

Food Banks–The CACFP does not have a policy regarding the use of food banks. If food banks are used, please check expiration dates since the foods are sometimes donated close to their expiration date. Foods that have passed the expiration date may not credit toward meal pattern requirements.

Game (Venison, Squirrel, Rabbit, etc.)–For safety reasons, game is not creditable under the CACFP unless it is inspected and approved by the appropriate State or Federal agency, with the exception of traditional foods served in certain public facilities. During hunting season, game may be inspected by the appropriate State or Federal agency so that it may be donated to food banks or soup kitchens. In these circumstances, groups such as Hunters Against Hunger donate their game and USDA inspectors donate inspection services. Check with your State or Federal agency before serving game. See the Resource Section on page 133 for information on CACFP policy memos that provide guidance on Service of Traditional Foods in Public Facilities, CACFP 19-2015, and Procuring Local Meat, Poultry, Game, and Eggs for Child Nutrition Programs, CACFP 01-2016.

Home-Canned Foods–For safety reasons, home-canned foods may not be served in meals reimbursed under the CACFP because they may contain harmful bacteria even when there is no evidence of spoilage.

Medical Exceptions–CACFP centers and day care homes must provide reasonable modifications to meals and snacks or to the meal service to accommodate children and adults with disabilities. These modifications are done on a case-by-case basis. If the meal modification does not meet the meal pattern requirements, a medical statement from a licensed physician or licensed health care professional who is authorized to write medical prescriptions under State law (health care professional) must be provided. Meals that do not meet the CACFP meal pattern requirements are not eligible for reimbursement unless they are supported by a medical statement.

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

You may always choose to accommodate a nondisability-related special dietary need that is not supported by a medical statement if the modifications requested can be made within the meal pattern requirements. Modified meals that meet the meal pattern requirements are reimbursable without a written medical statement.

Non-Creditable Foods–Foods that are either portions of components too small to credit toward meal pattern requirements or foods that do not fit into 1 of the 5 meal components. However, non-creditable foods may help to round out the meal, improve acceptability, and satisfy a child's appetite. For example, condiments such as ketchup and jam are non-creditable foods. These non-creditable foods are listed in the "Other Foods" section of the Food Buying Guide for purchasing information.

Product Formulation Statement (PFS)–A PFS is a signed document from the manufacturer that demonstrates how a product may contribute to the meal pattern requirements. A PFS is typically provided for foods not listed in the *Food Buying Guide* or products without a CN Label.

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

Serving Size–A single portion of a food identified by the measure, size, weight and/or volume, or number of pieces or slices. Each meal pattern lists the minimum serving size for each food component that must be served or offered to meet the meal pattern requirements. For example, a ½ cup serving of cooked whole-grain pasta fulfills the meal pattern requirement for grains in children ages 6 through 12 at breakfast, lunch, or supper. The center or day care home may choose

to serve more than the minimum serving size; however, it will not receive additional reimbursement for the extra food served.

Standards of Identity–Government standards for the content, preparation, and labeling of food before it is manufactured and sold in commerce. Standards of Identity set specific and optional ingredients that a food must contain when a product is to be labeled or identified by that product name. Standards for meat, poultry, and shell egg products are developed by the USDA, while Standards of Identity for other food products are developed by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). For more details and the latest information on the status of any of these standards, contact your sponsoring organization or your State agency. See Resource Section on page 134 for State agency contact information.

Traditional Food–Foods that have traditionally been prepared and consumed by Native American Tribes. These foods specifically include wild game meat, fish, seafood, marine mammals, plants, and berries.

CACFP institutions must follow Federal, State, local, county, Tribal, and other non-Federal laws regarding the safe preparation and service of food in public or nonprofit facilities and follow other such criteria as established by the USDA and the FDA.

Crediting information for some traditional foods may be found in the *Food Buying Guide*. However, for those foods which are not listed in the *Food Buying Guide*, program operators may use yield information for a similar product that is in the *Food Buying Guide*. For example, native white corn may credit as regular corn and ground bison may credit as ground buffalo. Please contact your State agency for information on specific State guidelines and how they relate to specific traditional foods. See the Resource Section on page 133 for information on CACFP policy memos that provide guidance on Service of Traditional Foods in Public Facilities, CACFP 19-2015 and see page 134 for State agency contact information.

Whole Grains–Whole grains or the foods made from whole grains contain all the essential parts of a grain: the bran, germ, endosperm, and naturally occurring nutrients of the entire grain seed. Enriched ("white") flour only contains the endosperm of the grain.

Whole Grain-Rich–Whole grain-rich foods are foods that contain 100 percent whole grains, or that contain at least 50 percent whole grains with the remaining grains in the food being enriched.

See Grains section beginning on page 74 for additional information on identifying whole grain-rich products.

BREAKFAST
Meal Pattern for Children and Adults

	Ages 1-2	Ages 3-5	Ages 6-12	Ages 13-18[1] (at-risk afterschool programs and emergency shelters)	Adult
Food Components and Food Items[2]	**Minimum Quantities**				
Fluid milk[3]	4 fl oz	6 fl oz	8 fl oz	8 fl oz	8 fl oz
Vegetables, fruits, or portions of both[4]	¼ cup	½ cup	½ cup	½ cup	½ cup
Grains (oz eq)[5,6,7]					
Whole grain-rich or enriched bread	½ slice	½ slice	1 slice	1 slice	2 slices
Whole grain-rich or enriched bread product, such as biscuit, roll, muffin	½ serving	½ serving	1 serving	1 serving	2 servings
Whole grain-rich, enriched, or fortified cooked breakfast cereal[8], cereal grain, and/or pasta	¼ cup	¼ cup	½ cup	½ cup	1 cup
Whole grain-rich, enriched, or fortified ready-to-eat breakfast cereal (dry, cold)[8,9]					
Flakes or rounds	½ cup	½ cup	1 cup	1 cup	2 cups
Puffed cereal	¾ cup	¾ cup	1¼ cups	1¼ cups	2½ cups
Granola	⅛ cup	⅛ cup	¼ cup	¼ cup	½ cup

1 Larger portion sizes than specified may need to be served to children 13 through 18 years old to meet their nutritional needs.

2 Must serve all 3 components for a reimbursable meal. Offer versus serve is an option for only adult and at-risk afterschool participants.

3 Must be unflavored whole milk for children age 1. Must be unflavored low-fat (1%) or unflavored fat-free (skim) milk for children 2 through 5 years old. Must be unflavored low-fat (1%), flavored low-fat (1%), unflavored fat-free (skim), or flavored fat-free (skim) milk for children 6 years old and older and adults. For adult participants, 6 ounces (oz) (weight) or ¾ cup (volume) of yogurt may be used to meet the equivalent of 8 oz of fluid milk once per day when yogurt is not served as a meat alternate in the same meal.

4 Pasteurized full-strength juice may only be used to meet the vegetable or fruit requirement at 1 meal, including snack, per day.

5 At least 1 serving per day, across all eating occasions, must be whole grain-rich. Grain-based desserts do not count towards meeting the grains requirement.

6 Meat and meat alternates may be used to meet the entire grains requirement a maximum of 3 times a week. One ounce of meat and meat alternates is equal to 1 ounce equivalent (oz eq) of grains.

7 Beginning October 1, 2021, ounce equivalents are used to determine the quantity of creditable grains.

8 Breakfast cereals must contain no more than 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce (no more than 21 grams sucrose and other sugars per 100 grams of dry cereal).

9 Beginning October 1, 2021, the minimum serving size specified in this section for ready-to-eat breakfast cereals must be served. Until October 1, 2021, the minimum serving size for any type of ready-to-eat breakfast cereal is ¼ cup for children ages 1 and 2, ⅓ cup for children ages 3 through 5, ¾ cup for children ages 6 through 12, and 1½ cups for adults.

LUNCH AND SUPPER
Meal Pattern for Children and Adults

	Ages 1-2	Ages 3-5	Ages 6-12	Ages 13-18[1] (at-risk afterschool programs and emergency shelters)	Adult
Food Components and Food Items[2]	**Minimum Quantities**				
Fluid milk[3]	4 fl oz	6 fl oz	8 fl oz	8 fl oz	8 fl oz[4]
Meats/meat alternates Edible portion as served:					
Lean meat, poultry, or fish	1 oz	1½ oz	2 oz	2 oz	2 oz
Tofu, soy products, or alternate protein products[5]	1 oz	1½ oz	2 oz	2 oz	2 oz
Cheese	1 oz	1½ oz	2 oz	2 oz	2 oz
Large egg	½	¾	1	1	1
Cooked dry beans or peas	¼ cup	⅜ cup	½ cup	½ cup	½ cup
Peanut butter or soy nut butter or other nut or seed butters	2 Tbsp	3 Tbsp	4 Tbsp	4 Tbsp	4 Tbsp
Yogurt, plain or flavored, unsweetened or sweetened[6]	4 oz or ½ cup	6 oz or ¾ cup	8 oz or 1 cup	8 oz or 1 cup	8 oz or 1 cup
The following may be used to meet no more than 50 percent of the requirement: Peanuts, soy nuts, tree nuts, or seeds, as listed in program guidance, or an equivalent quantity of any combination of the above meat/meat alternates (1 oz of nuts/seeds = 1 oz of cooked lean meat, poultry, or fish)	½ oz = 50%	¾ oz = 50%	1 oz = 50%	1 oz = 50%	1 oz = 50%
Vegetables[7]	⅛ cup	¼ cup	½ cup	½ cup	½ cup
Fruits[7,8]	⅛ cup	¼ cup	¼ cup	¼ cup	½ cup

LUNCH AND SUPPER
Meal Pattern for Children and Adults (continued)

	Ages 1-2	Ages 3-5	Ages 6-12	Ages 13-18[1] (at-risk afterschool programs and emergency shelters)	Adult
Food Components and Food Items[2]	**Minimum Quantities**				
Grains (oz eq)[9,10]					
Whole grain-rich or enriched bread	½ slice	½ slice	1 slice	1 slice	2 slices
Whole grain-rich or enriched bread product, such as a biscuit, roll, or muffin	½ serving	½ serving	1 serving	1 serving	2 servings
Whole grain-rich, enriched or fortified cooked breakfast cereal,[11] cereal grain, and/or pasta	¼ cup	¼ cup	½ cup	½ cup	1 cup

[1] Larger portion sizes than specified may need to be served to children 13 through 18 years old to meet their nutritional needs.

[2] Must serve all five components for a reimbursable meal. Offer versus serve is an option for only adult and at-risk participants.

[3] Must be unflavored whole milk for children age 1. Must be unflavored low-fat (1%) or unflavored fat-free (skim) milk for children 2 through 5 years old. Must be unflavored low-fat (1%), flavored low-fat (1%), unflavored fat-free (skim), or flavored fat-free (skim) milk for children 6 years old and older and adults. For adult participants, 6 ounces (weight) or ¾ cup (volume) of yogurt may be used to meet the equivalent of 8 ounces of fluid milk once per day when yogurt is not served as a meat alternate in the same meal.

[4] A serving of fluid milk is optional for suppers served to adult participants.

[5] Alternate protein products must meet the requirements in Appendix A to Part 226.

[6] Yogurt must contain no more than 23 grams of total sugars per 6 ounces.

[7] Pasteurized full-strength juice may only be used to meet the vegetable or fruit requirement at one meal, including snack, per day.

[8] A vegetable may be used to meet the entire fruit requirement. When two vegetables are served at lunch or supper, two different kinds of vegetables must be served.

[9] At least one serving per day, across all eating occasions, must be whole grain-rich. Grain-based desserts do not count towards the grains requirement.

[10] Beginning October 1, 2021, ounce equivalents are used to determine the quantity of the creditable grains.

[11] Breakfast cereals must contain no more than 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce (no more than 21 grams sucrose and other sugars per 100 grams of dry cereal).

SNACK
Meal Pattern for Children and Adults

(Select 2 of the 5 components for a reimbursable snack)

	Ages 1-2[2]	Ages 3-5	Ages 6-12	Ages 13-18[1] (at-risk afterschool programs and emergency shelters)	Adult
Food Components and Food Items[2]	**Minimum Quantities**				
Fluid Milk[3]	4 fl oz	4 fl oz	8 fl oz	8 fl oz	8 fl oz
Meats/meat alternates					
Lean meat, poultry, or fish	½ oz	½ oz	1 oz	1 oz	1 oz
Tofu, soy product, or alternate protein products[4]	½ oz	½ oz	1 oz	1 oz	1 oz
Cheese	½ oz	½ oz	1 oz	1 oz	1 oz
Large egg	½	½	½	½	½
Cooked dry beans or peas	⅛ cup	⅛ cup	¼ cup	¼ cup	¼ cup
Peanut butter or soy nut butter or other nut or seed butters	1 Tbsp	1 Tbsp	2 Tbsp	2 Tbsp	2 Tbsp
Yogurt, plain or flavored unsweetened or sweetened[5]	2 oz or ¼ cup	2 oz or ¼ cup	4 oz or ½ cup	4 oz or ½ cup	4 oz or ½ cup
Peanuts, soy nuts, tree nuts, or seeds	½ oz	½ oz	1 oz	1 oz	1 oz
Vegetables[6]	½ cup	½ cup	¾ cup	¾ cup	½ cup
Fruits[6]	½ cup	½ cup	¾ cup	¾ cup	½ cup
Grains (oz eq)[7,8]					
Whole grain-rich or enriched bread	½ slice	½ slice	1 slice	1 slice	1 slice
Whole grain-rich or enriched bread product, such as biscuit, roll, or muffin	½ serving	½ serving	1 serving	1 serving	1 serving
Whole grain-rich, enriched or fortified cooked breakfast cereal,[9] cereal grain, and/or pasta	¼ cup	¼ cup	½ cup	½ cup	½ cup

SNACK
Meal Pattern for Children and Adults (continued)

	Ages 1-2[2]	Ages 3-5	Ages 6-12	Ages 13-18[1] (at-risk afterschool programs and emergency shelters)	Adult
Food Components and Food Items[2]	**Minimum Quantities**				
Whole grain-rich, enriched or fortified ready-to-eat breakfast cereal (dry, cold)[9,10]					
Flakes or rounds	½ cup	½ cup	1 cup	1 cup	1 cup
Puffed cereal	¾ cup	¾ cup	1¼ cups	1¼ cups	1¼ cups
Granola	⅛ cup	⅛ cup	¼ cup	¼ cup	¼ cup

[1] Larger portion sizes than specified may need to be served to children 13 through 18 years old to meet their nutritional needs.

[2] Select two of the five components for a reimbursable snack. Only one of the two components may be a beverage.

[3] Must be unflavored whole milk for children age 1. Must be unflavored low-fat (1%) or unflavored fat-free (skim) milk for children 2 through 5 years old. Must be unflavored low-fat (1%), flavored low-fat (1%), unflavored fat-free (skim), or flavored fat-free (skim) milk for children 6 years old and older.

[4] Alternate protein products must meet the requirements in Appendix A to Part 226.

[5] Yogurt must contain no more than 23 grams of total sugars per 6 ounces.

[6] Pasteurized full-strength juice may only be used to meet the vegetable or fruit requirement at one meal, including snack, per day.

[7] At least one serving per day, across all eating occasions, must be whole grain-rich. Grain-based desserts do not count towards meeting the grains requirement.

[8] Beginning October 1, 2021, ounce equivalents are used to determine the quantity of creditable grains.

[9] Breakfast cereals must contain no more than 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce (no more than 21.2 grams sucrose and other sugars per 100 grams of dry cereal).

[10] Beginning October 1, 2021, the minimum serving sizes specified in this section for ready-to-eat breakfast cereals must be served. Until October 1, 2021, the minimum serving size for any type of ready-to-eat breakfast cereal is ¼ cup for children ages 1 and 2, ⅓ cup for children ages 3 through 5, and ¾ cup for children ages 6 through 12.

The CACFP regulations require that each participant's breakfast, lunch, or supper include fluid milk (milk) to be eligible for reimbursement. FNS grants a 1-month transition period for children 12 months through 13 months old to ease the transition from infant formula or breastmilk to whole milk. A medical statement is not needed during this transition period. Breastmilk is allowed at any age in the CACFP. After this transition period, between the child's first and second birthday, whole milk must be served. Children 2 through 5 years old must be served unflavored fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%) milk. Children 6 years old and older and adults must be served unflavored or flavored fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%) milk.

In recognizing that switching immediately from whole milk to low-fat (1%) or fat-free (skim) milk when a child turns 2 years old may be challenging, FNS grants a 1-month transition period. This means that meals served to children 24 months to 25 months old that contain whole milk or reduced-fat milk (2%) may be claimed for reimbursement during this time without a medical statement.

Serving Milk in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

12 months through 23 months

(1 year through 1 year and 11 months)

Unflavored whole milk

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

Breastmilk is allowed at any age in the Child and Adult Care Food Program.

2 years through 5 years

(*up to 6th birthday*)

Unflavored fat-free (skim) milk

Unflavored low-fat (1%) milk

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

6 through 12 years, 13 through 18 years, and adults

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

FLUID MILK

Fluid milk includes pasteurized whole milk, reduced-fat (2%) milk, low-fat (1%) milk, or fat-free (skim) milk, lactose-reduced milk, lactose-free milk, acidified milk, cultured milk, cultured buttermilk, and goat's milk. Fluid milk must meet State or local standards for milk. In addition, fluid milk must meet fat requirements (see serving milk in the CACFP chart on page 15). All milk must contain vitamins A and D at levels specified by the FDA and must be consistent with State and local standards for such milk. Lactose-free and lactose-reduced milks may be offered as options for program participants who are lactose intolerant.

The breakfast meal pattern requires that a serving of fluid milk be served as a beverage or used on cereal, or used in part for each purpose. Both lunch and supper must contain a serving of fluid milk as a beverage. Refer to the CACFP meal pattern for the serving size requirements by age. Similar to breakfast, if milk is one of the two components served for a snack, it must be fluid milk served as a beverage, used on cereal, or used in part for each purpose. Milk may not be served at snack time when juice is served as the other component.

Fluid milk used in smoothies can credit toward the fluid milk component requirement if a portion contains at least ¼ cup (2 ounces) of fluid milk. Please note that ¼ cup is the minimum creditable amount of milk. When a smoothie contains less than the amount of milk required in the meal pattern, additional fluid milk must be offered. Smoothies are the only example of a recipe made by program operators that can credit the fluid milk in the recipe. Milk is not creditable when used in cooking for such foods as cooked cereals, bread, custards, puddings, etc.

Please note, for adult participants, only 6 ounces (weight) or ¾ cup (volume) of yogurt may be used to meet the equivalent of 8 ounces of fluid milk once per day.

Fluid Milk Substitutes

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

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

Nutrient Requirements for Fluid Milk Substitutes/Non-Dairy Beverages

Nutrient	Per Cup (8 fl oz)
Calcium	276 milligrams
Protein	8 grams
Vitamin A	500 International Unit
Vitamin D	100 International Unit
Magnesium	24 milligrams
Phosphorus	222 milligrams
Potassium	349 milligrams
Riboflavin	0.44 milligrams
Vitamin B-12	1.1 micrograms

[81 Federal Register 24375, April 25, 2016]

A medical statement is required when, due to a disability, a program participant requests a non-dairy substitution that does not meet the nutritional standards of cow's milk as described in the above chart.

Use this section as a guide to identify creditable milk and products that contain creditable milk. This is NOT an all-inclusive list. For information on creditable milk commonly served in Child Nutrition Programs, see the *Food Buying Guide*.

Details in the "Additional Information" column help you to determine if the product is creditable and where to go to get more information, for example the *Food Buying Guide*.

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
A2 Milk	X			A2 milk only contains the A2 protein. It still meets the standard of identity for milk.
Breastmilk	X			Breastmilk is creditable at any age.
Buttermilk		X		Buttermilk must be fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%) for participants 2 years of age and older. Only commercially prepared buttermilk may be offered to program participants.
Certified Raw Milk			X	Regulations require the use of pasteurized milk.
Cultured Milk (Kefir Milk, Acidified Milk, Acidophilus Milk)		X		Cultured milk is a fluid milk produced by adding selected microorganisms to fluid fat-free (skim), low-fat (1%), reduced-fat (2%), or whole milk under controlled conditions to produce a product with a specific flavor and/or consistency. Examples are cultured buttermilk, cultured kefir milk, and cultured acidophilus milk. Only commercially prepared cultured milk that meets fat standards is creditable.
Flavored Milks (chocolate, strawberry, etc.)		X		Flavored fat-free (skim) and low-fat (1%) milks are creditable for children 6 years old and older and adults. Different flavors may contain differing levels of sweetener. However, as a best practice, serve flavored milks that contain no more than 22 g of sugar per 8 fl oz.
Goat's Milk		X		Must meet State standards for fluid milk. If goat's milk meets State standards, then it may be served in place of cow's milk with no additional documentation. All milk must be fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%) when served to children 2 years of age or older. Unflavored and flavored fat-free (skim) and low-fat (1%) flavored milks are creditable for children 6 years and older and adults.

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

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Dairy Products or Milk Substitutes				
Almond Beverage (commonly known as almond milk)		X		Almond beverages are non-dairy beverages and must be nutritionally equivalent to fluid milk (see Nutrient Requirements for Fluid Milk Substitutes/Non-Dairy Beverages Chart on page 17). Use of fluid milk substitutes that do not meet nutrient standards for cow's milk must be supported by a medical statement from a State-recognized medical authority. Most commercial almond beverages are not nutritionally equivalent to fluid milk and are not reimbursable.
Cheese			X	Cheese cannot be credited toward the fluid milk requirement as it does not meet the definition of fluid milk. Cheese may be credited toward the meats/meat alternates component.
Coconut Beverage (commonly known as coconut milk)		X		Coconut beverages are non-dairy beverages and must be nutritionally equivalent to fluid milk (see Nutrient Requirements for Fluid Milk Substitutes/Non-Dairy Beverages Chart on page 17). Use of fluid milk substitutes that do not meet nutrient standards for cow's milk must be supported by a medical statement from a State-recognized medical authority. Most commercial coconut beverages are not nutritionally equivalent to fluid milk and are not reimbursable.
Cream			X	Cream does not meet the definition of fluid milk. It is not creditable. See the Other Foods section in the *Food Buying Guide* for purchasing information.
Cream Sauces			X	Cream sauces do not meet the definition of fluid milk.
Cream Soups			X	Cream soups do not meet the definition of fluid milk.
Custard			X	Custard does not meet the definition of fluid milk.
Eggnog, Commercial and Homemade			X	Eggnog does not meet the definition of fluid milk and does not credit. If serving eggnog as an extra item, please note, eggnog made with uncooked eggs increases the risk for foodborne illness.

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Dairy Products or Milk Substitutes				
Evaporated Milk			X	Evaporated milk does not meet the definition of fluid milk. See the Other Foods section in the *Food Buying Guide* for purchasing information.
Frozen Yogurt			X	Frozen yogurt does not meet the definition of fluid milk.
Half and Half			X	Half and half does not meet the definition of fluid milk.
Hot Chocolate (Cocoa)		X		Hot chocolate must be made with fluid milk, and only the fluid milk portion is creditable. Hot chocolate is considered a flavored milk (served at a higher temperature) and is not creditable in CACFP for children under 6 years of age. For older children, the milk in hot chocolate may be creditable if it meets the fat requirements.
Ice Cream			X	Ice cream does not meet the definition of fluid milk. See the Other Foods section in the *Food Buying Guide* for purchasing information.
Ice Milk			X	Ice milk does not meet the definition of fluid milk. See the Other Foods section in the *Food Buying Guide* for purchasing information.
Imitation Milk			X	Imitation milk does not meet the definition of fluid milk.
Pudding			X	Pudding does not meet the definition of fluid milk.
Pudding Pops			X	Pudding pops do not meet the definition of fluid milk.
Reconstituted Dry Milk		X		Creditable under certain conditions of limited fluid milk availability. Contact your State agency or your sponsoring agency for additional guidance.

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Dairy Products or Milk Substitutes				
Rice Beverage (commonly known as rice milk)		X		Rice beverages are non-dairy beverages and must be nutritionally equivalent to fluid milk (see Nutrient Requirements for Fluid Milk Substitutes/Non-Dairy Beverages Chart on page 17). Use of fluid milk substitutes that do not meet nutrient standards for cow's milk must be supported by a medical statement from a State-recognized medical authority. Most commercial rice beverages are not nutritionally equivalent to fluid milk and are not reimbursable.
Sherbet/Sorbet			X	Sherbet and sorbet do not meet the definition of fluid milk. See the Other Foods section in the *Food Buying Guide*. See the Other Foods section in the *Food Buying Guide* for purchasing information.
Smoothies		X		The volume of fluid milk in each portion of smoothie is creditable if it contains at least ¼ cup (2 oz) of milk; this is the minimum creditable amount of milk in a smoothie. In addition, the milk must meet the fat standards. When a smoothie contains less than the amount of milk required in the meal pattern, additional fluid milk must be offered. For more information, see the Resource Section on page 133 for the CACFP policy memo on *Smoothies Offered in Child Nutrition Programs–Revised*.
Soy or Soybean Beverage, Fortified (commonly known as soy milk)		X		Fortified soy or soybean beverages are non-dairy beverages and must be nutritionally equivalent to fluid milk (see Nutrient Requirements for Fluid Milk Substitutes/Non-Dairy Beverages Chart on page 17). Use of fluid milk substitutes that do not meet nutrient standards for cow's milk must be supported by a medical statement from a State-recognized medical authority.
Sweetened Condensed Milk			X	Sweetened condensed milk does not meet the definition of fluid milk.
Sour Cream			X	Sour cream does not meet the definition of fluid milk.
Yogurt		X		Yogurt does not meet the definition of fluid milk. However, for adults, yogurt may be substituted for fluid milk once per day. Yogurt may credit toward the meats/meat alternates component in other instances.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT FLUID MILK

Fluid Milk

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

   Flavored fat-free (skim) and low-fat (1%) milks are creditable for children 6 years and older and adults. Flavored milk is not reimbursable when served to children 1 through 5 years of age. Children 2 years through 5 years of age must be served only unflavored fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%) milk.

   As a best practice, serve only unflavored milk to all participants. If flavored milk is served to children 6 years old and older, or adults, use the Nutrition Facts Label to select and serve flavored milk that contains no more than 22 grams of sugar per 8 fluid ounces, or the flavored milk with the lowest amount of sugar if flavored milk within this range is not available.

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

   For children 1 through 5 years old, flavored milk powder may not be added to milk. Similar to syrup, flavored milk powder turns unflavored milk into flavored milk. Flavored milk cannot be part of a reimbursable meal for children ages 1 through 5 years old.

   Flavored fat-free (skim) and low-fat (1%) milks are creditable for children 6 years old and older and adults. Thus, for children 6 years old and older and adults, flavored milk powder may be added to fat-free (skim) and low-fat (1%) milks and served as part of a reimbursable meal.

3. **Why is reconstituted dry milk only creditable under certain situations?**

   Reconstituted dry milk is only creditable in situations where there is limited availability of fluid milk. For example, in certain States and U.S. territories such as Alaska, Hawaii, American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands, and the Virgin Islands, if a sufficient supply of fluid milk as described cannot be obtained due to unforeseen circumstances including hurricanes or other natural disasters, "milk" shall include reconstituted or recombined milk.

   Contact your State agency or your sponsoring agency for additional guidance. See Resource Section on page 134 for State agency contact information.

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

   No. Milk must be served as a beverage, poured over cereal, or a combination of both in order to credit toward the milk requirement.

5. **Can milk be purchased directly from a farm?**

   Yes, as long as it is pasteurized fluid milk that meets State and local health standards. It must also include vitamins A and D and other nutrients at levels consistent with State and local standards.

6. **Can smoothies be served to meet the milk requirements?**

   Yes, the volume of fluid milk in each portion of smoothie is creditable if the smoothie contains at least ¼ cup (2 ounces) of fluid milk, the minimum serving size for milk, and the milk meets the fat standards. When a smoothie contains less than the amount of milk required in the meal pattern, additional fluid milk must be offered. Smoothies are the only example of a recipe made by program operators that can credit the fluid milk in the recipe. For more information on smoothies, see the Resource Section on page 133 for the CACFP policy memo on *Smoothies Offered in Child Nutrition Programs–Revised*.

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

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

   Pediatric nutrition authorities, including the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), agree that reduced-fat (2%), low-fat (1%), and fat-free (skim) milk should not be fed to children younger than age 2. These milks contain insufficient amounts of fat (including linoleic acid) for children under the age of 2 years old. See CACFP memo 17-2016, *Nutrition Requirements for Fluid Milk and Fluid Milk Substitutions in the CACFP, Q&As* (see the Resource Section on page 133). Therefore, it is recommended that children 12 through 23 months of age be served only whole milk.

Milk Substitutes

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

   Yes, lactose-free milk, lactose-reduced milk, cultured buttermilk, acidified milk, or acidophilus milk are creditable fluid milk options and can be served without a medical statement.

2. **Do you need a medical statement to receive and serve soy beverage (commonly known as soy milk) or any other nutritionally equivalent non-dairy beverages as part of a reimbursable meal?**

   A signed medical statement is not required for a non-dairy beverage that is nutritionally equivalent to milk. For example, it meets the nutritional standards for calcium, protein, vitamin A, vitamin D, and other nutrients levels found in cow's milk (see Nutrient Requirements for Fluid Milk Substitutes/Non-Dairy Beverages Chart on page 17). However, a parent/guardian must request the nutritionally equivalent non-dairy beverage in writing. If the parent/guardian requests a non-dairy beverage that is not nutritionally equivalent to milk, a medical statement is then required for reimbursement.

3. **If parents provide a non-dairy beverage such as coconut milk, rice milk, or soy milk for their child, can we count that child's meal in our meal count?**

   If a parent provides a non-dairy beverage that meets the nutritional standards outlined in 7 CFR 226.20(g)(3), the center or day care home may serve the non-dairy beverage and claim reimbursement for the meal. The provider is then responsible for supplying the remaining required meal components for the meal to be reimbursable.

   Centers and day care homes should inform parents, guardians, and adult participants about the types of creditable non-dairy beverages. In general, only certain soy beverages meet the nutritional standards. If a non-dairy beverage is served that does not meet the nutrient requirements for fluid milk substitutes/non-dairy beverages (see Nutrient Requirements for Fluid Milk Substitutes/Non-Dairy Beverages Chart on page 17) and a medical statement that supports the substitution is not on file, then the meal is not reimbursable.

   As a best practice, it is recommended the provider offer a reimbursable non-dairy beverage that meets the needs of the participant.

4. **If a participant cannot have milk, can I be reimbursed for breakfast, lunch, or supper?**

   Yes, you may be reimbursed if a child or adult is unable to have milk for special dietary needs when a parent, guardian, adult participant, or a person on behalf of the adult participant provides a written request for a non-dairy beverage substitute. Non-dairy beverages offered as fluid milk substitutes must be nutritionally equivalent to milk and provide specific levels of calcium, protein, vitamin A, vitamin D, magnesium, phosphorus, potassium, riboflavin, and vitamin B-12. See Nutrient Requirements for Fluid Milk Substitutes/ Non-Dairy Beverages Chart on page 17 for nutrient requirements. However, in the case of a special dietary restriction related to a disability, an exemption to the milk requirement is allowed, provided a medical statement is available from a physician or a State-recognized medical authority and kept on file at the center or day care home.

5. **If a participant cannot drink milk for religious or ethical reasons, can I be reimbursed for breakfast, lunch, or supper?**

   Children or adults who do not consume milk for religious or ethical reasons may be served a non-dairy beverage that is nutritionally equivalent to cow's milk (see Nutrient Requirements for Fluid Milk Substitutes/Non-Dairy Beverages Chart on page 17). A parent, guardian, adult participant, or a person on behalf of the adult participant must provide a written request for the non-dairy beverage substitute. For example, if a parent has a child who follows a vegan diet, the parent must submit a written request to the child's center or day care home asking that a soy beverage be served in place of cow's milk.

The CACFP regulations require that lunch and supper meals contain a serving of meat/meat alternate as specified in the meal patterns. In order to meet the minimum serving, the meat/meat alternate for lunch and supper may be served in the main dish or in the main dish together with another menu item. For example, offering a ⅛ cup serving of cooked pinto beans with 1 ounce of grilled chicken breast provides 1½ ounce equivalents of meat/meat alternate and meets the minimum serving size required in the meal pattern for children ages 3 through 5.

A meat/meat alternate is not required to be served at breakfast. However, meats and meat alternates may be used to meet the entire grains requirement a maximum of 3 times per week at breakfast. One ounce of meat or meat alternate is equal to 1 ounce equivalent of grains. A menu item must provide at least a ¼ ounce equivalent of meat or meat alternate to count towards the meat or meat alternate requirement.

Meats and meat alternates include lean meat, poultry, fish, shellfish, cheese, eggs, tofu, yogurt, cooked dry beans or peas, nuts and seeds, nut or seed butters (except for acorn), or an equivalent quantity of any combination of these foods. All meat, poultry, fish, and shellfish must meet State or local regulations for food safety.

Please note, a serving of cooked, dry beans or peas cannot be credited as both a meat alternate and a vegetable in the same meal. If two different cooked, dry beans or peas are offered at a meal, the program operator may choose to credit one as a meat alternate and the other as a vegetable. Creditable portion sizes for beans as vegetables and as meat alternates are found both in the CACFP meal patterns and the *Food Buying Guide*. Additionally, when yogurt is served in place of milk to adults, the yogurt cannot credit toward both the milk and the meats/meat alternates component in the same meal.

Alternate Protein Products (APPs)

Alternate Protein Products (APPs) such as soy protein isolate or whey protein concentrate are generally included as an added ingredient in processed meat/meat alternate products such as a formed meat patty or vegetarian patty that resembles a meat product. Meats/meat alternates with APPs should be accompanied by a CN label or a Product Formulation Statement. Prior to being added to other products, APPs must meet the specific standards. Before using products containing APP and claiming the meals for reimbursement, contact your State agency or your sponsoring organization. See the Resource Section on page 134 for State agency contact information.

Nuts, Seeds, and Nut and Seed Butters

Nuts and seeds may fulfill no more than one-half of the meat/meat alternate requirement for reimbursable meals. They must be combined with another meat or meat alternate to meet the full requirement for a reimbursable meal. However, nut and seed butters may credit toward the entire meats/meat alternates component. Please be aware that some participants may have nut or seed intolerances or allergies. You are encouraged to make reasonable accommodations for children with allergies to ensure they are receiving safe and nutritious meals. Nuts and seeds should be served with caution to children under 4 years of age and some elderly participants, as they may cause choking. Always supervise participants during meals and snacks.

Use this section as a guide to identify creditable meats/meat alternates and products that contain creditable meats/meat alternates. This is NOT an all-inclusive list. For information on creditable meats/meat alternates commonly served in Child Nutrition Programs, see the *Food Buying Guide*.

Details in the "Additional Information" column help you to determine if the product is creditable and where to go to get more information, for example the *Food Buying Guide*.

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Acorns			X	Acorns are not creditable due to their low protein content.
Bacon and Imitation Bacon Products			X	Bacon is not creditable. These products contain little meat. See the Other Foods section in the *Food Buying Guide* for purchasing information.
Bacon Rinds			X	Bacon Rinds are not creditable.
Bacon, Turkey		X		Turkey bacon is creditable only if the product is (1) CN labeled or (2) has a Product Formulation Statement.
Bean Flour		X		Bean flour is creditable toward the meats/meat alternates component when served with at least 0.25 oz eq of visible meat/meat alternate. Document meal pattern contribution with a Product Formulation Statement.
Beans or Peas (Legumes), Canned or Dry	X			Cooked dry or canned beans or peas (kidney, garbanzo, black, lentils, etc.) may be credited as either a meat alternate or a vegetable, but not as both in the same meal. See the Vegetables section in the *Food Buying Guide*.
Beans, Refried	X			See the Meats/Meat Alternates section in the *Food Buying Guide*.
Beef Jerky		X		Beef jerky is creditable toward the meats/meat alternates component if it is (1) CN labeled or (2) has a Product Formulation Statement (PFS). The PFS should identify the type of beef or pork used to make the product as listed in the *Food Buying Guide*. For example, "ground beef (not more than 30 percent fat)." Please note beef jerky may be a choking hazard for some populations.
Bologna		X		Bologna is creditable toward the meats/meat alternates component. See the Meats/Meat Alternates section in the *Food Buying Guide* for creditable luncheon meats such as bologna. Bologna containing byproducts, cereals, or binders/extenders is only creditable if the product is (1) CN labeled or (2) has a Product Formulation Statement. Examples of binders/extenders are starch, cellulose, and nonfat dry milk. Examples of byproducts are glands, hearts, and other organ meats. As a best practice, it is recommended to serve low-fat versions of luncheon meats.

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Canadian Bacon or Mild Cured Pork	X			See the Meats/Meat Alternates section in the *Food Buying Guide* for creditable pork products.
Canned or Frozen Combination Foods such as: Stews, Beef-a-Roni, Chili, Macaroni, Pizzas, Pot Pies, Raviolis		X		These products are creditable toward the meats/meat alternates component if the product is (1) CN labeled or (2) has a Product Formulation Statement and contains at least 0.25 oz eq meat/meat alternate per serving.
Canned, Pressed Luncheon Meat (Potted/Deviled)			X	Canned, pressed luncheon meat is not creditable.
Ceviche (Raw Fish Marinated in Citrus Juice)			X	Raw ceviche is not creditable. Raw fish is a potential health hazard for vulnerable populations.
Cheese, Cottage or Ricotta	X			See the Meats/Meat Alternates section in the *Food Buying Guide*. A 2 oz serving of cottage cheese credits as 1 oz eq meat alternate.
Cheese, Natural or Processed	X			See the Meats/Meat Alternates section in the *Food Buying Guide*. A 1 oz serving of hard cheese provides 1 oz eq meat alternate.
Cheese Foods, Cheese Food Substitutes, Cheese Spreads, and Cheese Spread Substitutes	X			See the Meats/Meat Alternates section in the *Food Buying Guide*. A 2 oz serving provides 1 oz eq meat alternate. These products are not creditable in the infant meal pattern.
Cheese, Imitation			X	Cheese labeled as "imitation" is not creditable because the nutrient content is inferior to the food it substitutes and therefore is not creditable.
Cheese Products			X	Cheese labeled as a cheese "product" is not creditable. Cheese products do not have a standard of identity.
Chestnuts	X			Chestnuts credit as 1 oz eq meat alternate per 1 oz of nuts. Note that chestnuts are not in the *Food Buying Guide*.

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Chicken Nuggets		X		The edible chicken portion is creditable toward the meats/meat alternates component. See the Meats/Meat Alternates section in the *Food Buying Guide*. Commercial chicken nuggets are creditable only if they have (1) a CN label or (2) a Product Formulation Statement. Document the meal pattern contribution of homemade nuggets with a standardized recipe. For breading/batter crediting, see the Grains section in the *Food Buying Guide*. Deep-fat frying is not allowed as a way of preparing foods onsite. Chicken nuggets credit if reheated using a method other than deep-fat frying. This product has a high fat content and should be served on a limited frequency.
Chickpeas, Roasted (Roasted Garbanzo Beans)	X			Roasted chickpeas may be credited as either a meat alternate or a vegetable but not as both in the same meal. A ¼ cup roasted chickpeas credit as a 1 oz eq meat alternate or a ¼ cup vegetable, but not both at the same meal. Please note they may be a choking hazard for some populations.
Chitterlings	X			Chitterlings are small intestines and credit as a meat alternate. A ½ cup chitterlings is equal to 2 oz eq meat alternate.
Corn Dogs, Corn Dog Nuggets		X		Only the weight of the hot dog (frankfurter) credits toward the meats/meat alternates component. See the Meats/Meat Alternates section in the *Food Buying Guide*. If the hot dog contains byproducts, cereals, or binders/extenders they are only creditable if the product is (1) CN labeled or (2) has a Product Formulation Statement. Examples of binders/extenders are starch, cellulose, and nonfat dry milk. For breading/batter crediting see the Grains section in the *Food Buying Guide*. Deep-fat frying is not allowed as a way of preparing foods onsite. Corn dogs credit if reheated using a method other than deep-fat frying. Document the meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe, a CN label, or a Product Formulation Statement. This product has a high fat and salt content and should be served on a limited frequency. Remember to serve corn dogs in small pieces for those participants where choking is a potential hazard.

MEATS/MEAT ALTERNATES

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Cream Cheese			X	Cream cheese is not creditable. See the Other Foods section in the *Food Buying Guide* for purchasing information.
Deviled Eggs	X			Whole eggs are creditable. See the Meats/Meat Alternates section in the *Food Buying Guide*. The weights of the added ingredients (for example, relish, mayonnaise, etc.) cannot contribute to the meal pattern requirements.
Dried and Semi-Dried Meat, Poultry, and Seafood Snacks, Shelf-Stable		X		These products credit based on the percent of meat, poultry, and/or seafood the product contains. These products are creditable if the product is (1) CN labeled or (2) has a Product Formulation Statement. The creditable amount cannot exceed the weight of the volume served. The creditable ingredients must match or have a similar description as listed on the product label and must match or have a similar description as listed in the *Food Buying Guide*. Please note these products may be a choking hazard for some populations.
Eggs, Liquid Substitutes			X	Liquid egg substitutes are not whole eggs and are not creditable. Only whole liquid eggs are creditable.
Eggs, Whites Only			X	Egg whites are not creditable if served without the yolks. Only whole eggs are creditable. See the Other Foods section in the *Food Buying Guide* for purchasing information.
Eggs, Whole, Fresh, Frozen, Dried, or Liquid	X			All forms of whole eggs are creditable toward the meats/meat alternates component. One large egg credits as 2 oz eq meat alternate. See the Meats/Meat Alternates section in the *Food Buying Guide*.
Eggs, Yolks Only			X	Only whole eggs are creditable. See the Other Foods section in the *Food Buying Guide* for purchasing information.
Falafel		X		The volume of meat alternate, such as beans, in each serving is creditable. See the Meats/Meat Alternates section in the *Food Buying Guide*. Document the meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a Product Formulation Statement.

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Fish, Commercial	X			Must comply with State and local regulations. See Meats/Meat Alternates section in the *Food Buying Guide*. The FDA and the Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend that pregnant women and young children avoid eating fish that typically have higher mercury levels. When including fish in menus, you should consider the fish allergies or intolerances of participants. Please note that bones in fish should also be considered a choking hazard.
Fish, Home Pickled			X	For safety reasons home pickled fish is not creditable.
Fish, Noncommercial, Home-Caught		X		Home-caught fish is only creditable if it meets State or local public health policies regarding food safety or if the center is serving primarily an Native American population with donated traditional foods. The FDA and the Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend that pregnant women and young children avoid eating fish that typically have higher mercury levels. When including fish in menus, you should consider the fish allergies or intolerances of participants. Please note that bones in fish should also be considered a choking hazard.
Fish Sticks or Portions		X		The edible fish portion credits toward the meats/meat alternates component. See the Meats/Meat Alternates section in the *Food Buying Guide*. For breading/batter crediting, see the Grains section in the *Food Buying Guide*. Document the meal pattern contributions with a CN label, Product Formulation Statement, or a standardized recipe. Deep-fat frying is not allowed as a way of preparing foods onsite. Fish sticks credit if reheated using a method other than deep-fat frying. This product has a high fat content and should be served on a limited frequency. The FDA and the Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend that pregnant women and young children avoid eating fish that typically have higher mercury levels. When including fish in menus, you should consider the fish allergies or intolerances of participants.
Game [e.g., Deer Meat (Venison), Bison, Squirrel, Elk, etc.]		X		Game, for safety reasons, is only creditable if it is inspected and approved by the appropriate State, local, or Federal agency or when it is served as a traditional food on Indian Reservations or schools or institutions operated by Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations.

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Home-Slaughtered Meat			X	For safety reasons, home-slaughtered meat is not creditable.
Hot Dogs (Frankfurters)	X			Hot dogs (frankfurters) are creditable toward the meats/meat alternates component. See the Meats/Meat Alternates section in the *Food Buying Guide*. If they contain byproducts, cereals, or binders/extenders they are only creditable if the product is (1) CN labeled or (2) has a Product Formulation Statement. Examples of binders/extenders are starch, cellulose, and nonfat dry milk. Examples of byproducts are glands, hearts, and other organ meats. The selection of low-fat versions of these types of products is encouraged. Remember to serve hot dogs in small pieces for those participants where choking is a potential hazard.
Hummus	X			The volume of meat alternate, such as beans, in each serving may credit toward the meats/meat alternates component. See the Meats/Meat Alternates section in the *Food Buying Guide*. Document the meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a Product Formulation Statement.
Kidney, Liver, Heart, Gizzards	X			See the Meats/Meat Alternates section in the *Food Buying Guide*.
Liverwurst		X		Liverwurst is creditable if the product is (1) CN labeled or (2) has a Product Formulation Statement.
Luncheon Meats (Chicken, Turkey, Beef, Pork, all Deli Meats)		X		Only luncheon meats that are listed in the *Food Buying Guide* or have a (1) CN label or (2) Product Formulation Statement are creditable.
Meat Sauce (Spaghetti or Brown)		X		Only the amount of cooked meat in the sauce may be credited toward the meats/meat alternates component. The minimum creditable amount is 0.25 oz of meat. Commercial meat sauce is creditable if the product is (1) CN labeled or (2) has a Product Formulation Statement; and the meat ingredient matches or has a similar description to a meat item in the *Food Buying Guide* (e.g., Ground Beef, not more than 30% fat).
Meat and Poultry Sticks (Not Dried or Semi-Dried and Not Jerky)		X		Meat sticks in a jar are similar to Vienna sausage. Meat sticks are creditable if the product is (1) CN labeled or (2) has a Product Formulation Statement. The creditable amount cannot exceed the weight of the volume served. The creditable ingredients must match or have a similar description as listed on the product label and must match or have a similar description as listed in the *Food Buying Guide*.

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Neufchatel Cheese			X	Neufchatel cheese is not creditable.
Nut Flour			X	Nut flour is not creditable.
Nuts	X			A 1 oz serving of nuts provides 1 oz eq meat alternate. See the Meats/Meat Alternates section in the *Food Buying Guide*. Please note that nuts may be a choking hazard for some populations. When including nuts and nut products in menus, you should consider the nut allergies or intolerances of participants.
Nut or Seed Butters	X			A 2 tablespoon serving of nut or seed butters provides 1 oz eq meat alternate. See the Meats/Meat Alternates section in the *Food Buying Guide*. It is suggested that nut butters be served in combination with another meat/meat alternate since the required portion sizes may be too large for preschool children. When including nuts and nut products in menus, you should consider the nut allergies or intolerances of participants.
Oxtail, Beef	X			See the Meats/Meat Alternates section in the *Food Buying Guide*.
Pasta/Noodles (made from Beans/Peas)		X		To credit as a meat alternate, pasta/noodles made from beans/peas are creditable if a serving provides at least a 0.25 oz eq of meat/meat alternate. It must be offered with additional meat/meat alternate, such as tofu, cheese, or meat. Document meal pattern contribution with a CN label or a Product Formulation Statement.
Peanut Butter Spreads			X	Peanut butter spreads are not the same as peanut butter. Peanut butter spreads do not have a standard of identity and are not creditable.
Peas or Lentils, Dry	X			See the Meats/Meat Alternates section in the *Food Buying Guide*. A ¼ cup cooked dry peas or lentils credits as 1 oz eq meat alternate.
Pepperoni, Traditional, Dried		X		These products credit based on the percent of meat (beef and pork) the product contains. Pepperoni is creditable if the product is (1) CN labeled or (2) has a Product Formulation Statement.

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Pepperoni, Turkey		X		These products credit based on the percent of poultry the product contains. Turkey Pepperoni is creditable if the product is (1) CN labeled or (2) has a Product Formulation Statement.
Pig's Feet, Neck Bones, or Tails (Parts)			X	These products contain small amounts of meat and are not creditable. See the Other Foods section in the *Food Buying Guide* for purchasing information.
Pimento Cheese, Commercial	X			A 2 oz serving provides 1 oz eq meat alternate. See the Meats/Meat Alternates section in the *Food Buying Guide*.
Pizza, Commercial		X		Commercial pizza is creditable if the product is (1) CN labeled or (2) has a Product Formulation Statement. Only the meat/meat alternate ingredients are creditable toward the meats/meat alternates component. See the *Food Buying Guide* for information on crediting remaining ingredients toward meal pattern requirements.
Pizza, Homemade	X			Only the meat/meat alternate ingredients are creditable toward the meats/meat alternates component. See the *Food Buying Guide* for information on crediting remaining ingredients toward meal pattern requirements. Document the meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe.
Polish Sausage		X		Polish sausage is creditable if the product is (1) CN labeled or (2) has a Product Formulation Statement.
Pot Pies, Commercial		X		Commercial pot pies are creditable if the product is (1) CN labeled or (2) has a Product Formulation Statement.
Pot Pies, Homemade		X		The meat and meat alternate ingredients are creditable if there is at least a 0.25 oz eq meat/meat alternate per serving. See the *Food Buying Guide* for information on crediting the remaining ingredients toward meal pattern requirements. Document the meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe.
Potted or Deviled Meats			X	Potted or deviled meats are not creditable.

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Powdered Cheese (in Boxed Macaroni and Cheese)			X	Powdered cheese mix is not creditable. The macaroni, if made from enriched or whole grains, may be credited toward the grains component.
Queso Blanco, Commercial, Pasteurized	X			Queso blanco is a creamy, soft cheese. Commercial, pasteurized queso blanco is creditable. See the Meats/ Meat Alternates section in the *Food Buying Guide*.
Queso Blanco, Homemade			X	Homemade queso blanco is not creditable. There are potential safety concerns with this product.
Queso Fresco, Commercial, Pasteurized	X			Queso fresco is a fresh, white cheese. Commercial, pasteurized queso fresco is creditable. See the Meats/ Meat Alternates section in the *Food Buying Guide*.
Queso Fresco, Homemade			X	Homemade queso fresco is not creditable. There are potential safety concerns with this product.
Quiche		X		The eggs, cheese, and/or meat may be credited toward the meats/meat alternates component if there is at least a 0.25 oz eq per serving. See the *Food Buying Guide* for information on crediting the remaining ingredients toward meal pattern requirements. Document the meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe.
Salami		X		Creditable only if it is (1) CN labeled or (2) has a Product Formulation Statement. This product is high in sodium and fat.
Salt Pork			X	Salt pork is not creditable. Salt pork contains little meat.
Sausage		X		Products labeled “fresh pork sausage” or “fresh Italian sausage” may be credited. See the Meats/Meat Alternates section in the *Food Buying Guide*. Other sausage products must have (1) CN label or a (2) Product Formulation Statement.
Scrapple			X	Scrapple has an insufficient meat content and is not creditable.

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Seeds	X			A 1 oz serving of seeds provides 1 oz eq meat alternate. See the Meats/Meat Alternates section in the *Food Buying Guide*. Seeds may be a choking hazard for some populations.
Shellfish	X			Shellfish must be fully cooked; only the edible fish portion is creditable. See the Meats/Meat Alternates section in the *Food Buying Guide*. When including shellfish in menus, you should consider the shellfish allergies or intolerances of participants.
Shellfish, Imitation (Commercial Surimi and Imitation Crab)	X			See the Meats/Meat Alternates section in the *Food Buying Guide*. A 3 oz serving of thawed, commercially prepared imitation shellfish provides 1 oz eq meat. A 4.4 oz serving of thawed, commercially prepared imitation shellfish provides 1.5 oz eq meat. Document imitation shellfish products containing higher quantities of fish product, or other creditable ingredients with a Product Formulation Statement or a CN Label.
Soups, Commercial, Bean or Pea	X			A ½ cup bean or pea soup equals ¼ cup or 1 oz eq meat alternate. Beans and peas may be credited either as a vegetable or meat alternate, but not both in the same meal. See the Meats/Meat Alternates section in the *Food Buying Guide*.
Soups, Commercial with Meat or Meat Alternate		X		Creditable if the product is (1) CN labeled or (2) has a Product Formulation Statement.
Soups, Homemade with Meat or Meat Alternate		X		The meat and meat alternate ingredients are creditable if there is at least a 0.25 oz eq meat/meat alternate per serving. See the *Food Buying Guide* for information on crediting the remaining ingredients toward meal pattern requirements. Document the meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe.
Soy Nut Butter, Almond Butter, Cashew Butter	X			A 2 tablespoon serving provides 1 oz eq meat alternate. See the Meats/Meat Alternates section in the *Food Buying Guide*. Nut butters such as almond, cashew, or soy are a good alternative for those participants who are allergic to peanut butter. It is suggested that nut butter be served in combination with another meat/meat alternate since the required portion sizes may be too large for preschool children.

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Soy Beans, Fresh (Edamame)	X			May be credited either as a meat alternate or a vegetable, but not both in the same meal. See the Meats/Meat Alternates section in the *Food Buying Guide*.
Soy Beans, Roasted (Soy Nuts)	X			Roasted soy beans may be credited as either a meat alternate or a vegetable, but not as both in the same meal. A ¼ cup roasted soy beans credit as a 1 oz eq meat alternate or a ¼ cup vegetable, but not as both at the same meal. Please note they may be a choking hazard for some populations. When including soy and soy products in menus, you should consider the potential food allergies or intolerances.
Spare Ribs	X			See the Meats/Meat Alternates section in the *Food Buying Guide*. These products contain small amounts of meat and are high in fat.
Surimi, Commercial (Imitation Crab, and Imitation Shellfish))	X			See the Meats/Meat Alternates section in the *Food Buying Guide*. A 3 oz serving of thawed, commercially prepared surimi seafood provides 1 oz eq meat. A 4.4 oz serving of thawed, commercially prepared surimi seafood provides 1.5 oz eq meat. Document surimi products containing higher quantities of fish product, or other creditable ingredients with a Product Formulation Statement or a CN Label.
Sushi (Raw Seafood and Sashimi)			X	Raw sushi is not creditable. Raw fish is a potential health hazard for vulnerable populations.
Tahini (Sesame Seed Butter)	X			Credited as a seed or nut butter. A 2 tablespoon serving provides 1 oz eq meat alternate. See the Meats/Meat Alternates section in the *Food Buying Guide*. It is suggested that seed and nut butters be served in combination with another meat/meat alternate since the required portion sizes may be too large for preschool children.
Tempeh, Commercial	X			See the Meats/Meat Alternates section in the Food Buying Guide. A 1 oz serving of commercially prepared tempeh provides 1 oz eq meat alternate. Document meal pattern contribution of tempeh that contains other creditable ingredients (grains, seeds, etc.) with a Product Formulation Statement or a CN Label.

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Tofu, Commercial		X		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.
Tripe, Beef	X			See the Meats/Meat Alternates section in the *Food Buying Guide*.
Vienna Sausage		X		Vienna sausage is creditable toward the meats/meat alternates component. See the Meats/Meat Alternates section in the *Food Buying Guide*. If Vienna sausage contains byproducts, cereals, or binders/extenders it is only creditable if the product is (1) CN labeled or (2) has a Product Formulation Statement. Examples of binders/extenders are starch, cellulose, and nonfat dry milk. Examples of byproducts are glands, hearts, and other organ meats. The selection of low-fat versions of these types of products is encouraged. Remember to serve Vienna sausage in small pieces for those participants where choking is a potential hazard.
Yogurt, Commercial Plain, Un-Flavored, Flavored, Sweetened		X		A ½ cup or 4 oz provides 1 oz eq meat alternate. Must contain no more than 23 g of total sugars per 6 oz See the Meats/Meat Alternates section in the *Food Buying Guide* for additional crediting information. Homemade yogurt is not creditable. There are potential safety concerns with homemade yogurt.
Yogurt, Soy		X		A ½ cup or 4 oz provides 1 oz eq meat alternate. Must contain no more than 23 g of total sugars per 6 oz
Yogurt in a Tube		X		A 2.2 oz tube of yogurt provides ½ oz eq meat alternate. Must contain no more than 23 g of total sugars per 6 oz

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Yogurt, Frozen		X		Program operators may credit yogurt that they have frozen. Please note that crediting of meat/meat alternate in this form is discouraged, as it is perceived as a dessert. Commercial frozen yogurt is similar to ice cream and is not creditable. See the Other Foods section in the *Food Buying Guide* for purchasing information of commercial frozen yogurt.
"Yogurt," Liquid			X	Liquid "yogurt" is not creditable. This product does not meet the definition of yogurt. However, cultured milk (kefir) would contribute toward the fluid milk requirement.
Yogurt Products (commercial); Frozen Yogurt, Yogurt Bars, Yogurt Flavored Products, Yogurt-Covered Fruits or Nuts, or similar products			X	These products are not creditable. See the Other Foods section in the *Food Buying Guide* for purchasing information.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT MEATS/MEAT ALTERNATES

Meats

1. **Can pizza be credited as a meat/meat alternate?**

   Yes. Meats, cheeses, or other meat alternates on a pizza are creditable toward the meats/meat alternates component. The weights of the sauce, vegetables, and crust may contribute toward the vegetable and grains components. Document the meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe, CN label, or a Product Formulation Statement.

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

   Commercial nuggets and sticks are creditable only if they have (1) a CN label or (2) a Product Formulation Statement. These products vary in size and in the amount of meat and breading or batter in the product. Only the edible meat or meat alternate portion is creditable as a meat/meat alternate. Document the meal pattern contribution of homemade nuggets with a standardized recipe. For breading/batter crediting, see the Grains section in the *Food Buying Guide*.

   Some States or sponsoring organizations may require you to use only CN labeled products. Check with your State agency or sponsoring organization for requirements (see the Resource Section on page 134 for State agency contact information).

Meat Alternates

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

   Nuts, seeds, and nut/seed butters are good sources of protein and other nutrients.

   One ounce of nuts or seeds provides 1 ounce equivalent meat alternate. Nuts and seeds may count toward half (½) of the meat/meat alternate requirement at meals and for the entire meat/meat alternate requirement at snack. For a reimbursable meal, they must be combined with other meats/meat alternates.

   Two tablespoons of nut or seed butter, such as peanut butter and almond butter, provides 1 ounce equivalent meat alternate. They may be used to meet all or a portion of the meats/meat alternates component. For preschool-age children, it is recommended that nut and seed butters be served in combination with another meat/meat alternate since the required portion sizes may be too large.

   Please note that nuts and seeds may be a choking hazard for some populations. Nuts are not recommended for children under 4 years of age and adults at risk for choking. Always supervise participants during meals and snacks. Additionally, some participants may have food intolerances or allergies to nuts, seeds, and nut/seed butters.

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

   Natural, low-fat, or reduced-fat cheeses, such as Cheddar, Swiss, Colby, and Monterey Jack, as well as cheese foods, cheese spreads, cottage cheese, and ricotta cheese, are examples of creditable cheeses. Products labeled as imitation cheese or cheese products are not creditable. Other examples of non-creditable cheese are cheese whips and cream cheese.

3. **Are grated Romano and Parmesan cheeses creditable?**

   Yes, both Romano and Parmesan cheeses are creditable as a meat alternate.

   Small amounts of cheese, when used as a garnish, a seasoning, or in a breading, may credit toward the meats/meat alternates component if the total amount of meat/meat alternate ingredients in the product provides at least a ¼ ounce equivalent meat/meat alternate per serving. Document the meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe, CN label, or a Product Formulation Statement.

4. **Can vegetarian meals be served in the CACFP?**

   Yes. There are a variety of creditable foods within the meats/meat alternates component to allow centers and day care homes to plan vegetarian meals. Examples of creditable vegetarian meat alternates for the CACFP include natural and processed cheese, cheese foods, cheese spreads, cottage cheese, eggs, yogurt (including soy yogurt), tofu, cooked dry beans and peas, nuts and seeds, nut and seed butters, or any combination of these foods.

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

   Yes. Substitutions may be made to accommodate religious dietary restrictions within existing meal pattern requirements.

6. **Is tofu creditable as a meat/meat alternate in the CACFP?**

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

7. **How would you calculate the creditable amount of meat alternate contributed by tofu in a stir-fry using the yield information from the *Food Buying Guide*?**

   For example:

   If you prepare a ½ cup serving of vegetable stir-fry with creditable tofu that contains 1.5 ounces of tofu in the serving, calculate the meal pattern contribution as follows:

   The *Food Buying Guide* yield information for tofu is 2.2 ounces or ¼ cup credits as 1 ounce equivalent meat alternate. Therefore 1.50 ounces tofu divided by 2.2 ounces equals 0.68 ounce equals 0.50 ounce equivalent (rounded down to the nearest 0.25 ounce) meat alternate.

   In this example, a ½ cup serving of vegetable stir-fry with tofu provides 0.50 ounce equivalent meat alternate.

8. **How are fresh soybeans (edamame) credited?**

   Fresh soybeans (edamame) may credit as a vegetable or a meat alternate, the same as dry mature beans/peas. These fresh soybeans are the only immature beans/peas that credit the same as mature beans/peas. To credit fresh soybeans, follow the same guidance used for crediting dry beans or peas.

9. Is soy yogurt creditable as a meat/ meat alternate?

Yes. A ½ cup of soy yogurt credits as 1 ounce equivalent meat alternate.

10. Must yogurt be offered in 4 ounce portions in order to be credited?

No. Although ½ cup (4 ounces) of yogurt, including soy yogurt, provides 1 ounce equivalent meat alternate, this does not mean that programs are limited to offering yogurt in ½ cup (4 ounce) servings. Meal planners may use their discretion to vary the portion sizes offered. In order to credit towards the meat alternates component, a minimum serving size of ⅛ cup (1 ounce) of yogurt is required to provide the minimum 0.25 ounce equivalent meat alternate.

11. Why is there a sugar limit for yogurt of no more than 23 grams of total sugars per 6 ounces? Does this also apply to soy yogurt?

Yogurt, including soy yogurt, is a great source of calcium, protein, vitamin A, vitamin D, magnesium, phosphorus, potassium, riboflavin, and vitamin B-12. However, some yogurt products have significantly more sugar than others. To promote healthy habits from the start, the updated meal patterns limit the amount of total sugars allowed in creditable yogurt and soy yogurts.

Yogurt or soy yogurt may contain up to 23 grams of sugar per 6 ounces. As a reminder, soy yogurt is not creditable in the infant meal pattern.

12. What method should be used to determine if a yogurt meets the sugar limit?

There are 3 methods you may use to determine if the yogurt meets the sugar limits. Using the Nutrition Facts labels below, follow the example for each method to determine if the yogurt is creditable.

Method 1

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

6 ounces.

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

19 grams.

Step 3: Use the chart below to determine if the yogurt meets the sugar limit.

This yogurt is creditable because it has a 6 ounce serving size and 19 grams of sugar.

Nutrition Facts

1 serving per container

Serving size **6 oz**

Amount per serving

Calories **125**

	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 0g	**0%**
Saturated Fat 0g	**0%**
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 10mg	**3%**
Sodium 90mg	**4%**
Total Carbohydrate 23g	**8%**
Dietary Fiber 0g	**0%**
Total Sugars 19g	
Includes 4g Added Sugars	**8%**
Protein 3g	

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

Table of Yogurt Serving Sizes in Grams and Sugar Limits

Serving Size* (oz)	Serving Size in Grams (g) (Use when the serving size is not listed in ounces)	Sugars (g)
If the serving size is		Sugars cannot be more than
2.25 oz	64 g	9 g
3.5 oz	99 g	13 g
4 oz	113 g	15 g
5.3 oz	150 g	20 g
6 oz	170 g	23 g
8 oz	227 g	31 g

**Serving sizes here refer to those commonly found for store-bought yogurts. Homemade yogurt is not creditable in the Child and Adult Care Food Program. Sugar limits are pre-calculated and set forth by the USDA.*

Method 2

Step 1: What is the serving size in ounces?

4.5 ounces.

Step 2: What is the amount of total sugar (in grams)?

16 grams.

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

$$\frac{\text{Sugars}}{\text{Serving Size}} = \frac{16}{4.5} = 3.55$$

Step 4: If the number is **3.83 or less**, the yogurt is within the sugar limit. 3.83 is the maximum grams of sugar per 1 ounce of yogurt allowed.

This yogurt is creditable.

Nutrition Facts

1 serving per container

Serving size **4.5 oz**

Amount per serving

Calories **140**

	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 2g	**3%**
Saturated Fat 0g	**0%**
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 10mg	**3%**
Sodium 90mg	**4%**
Total Carbohydrate 23g	**8%**
Dietary Fiber 0g	**0%**
Total Sugars 16g	
Includes 4g Added Sugars	**8%**
Protein 8g	

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

Method 3

Step 1: The serving size is: 170 grams.

Step 2: The amount of total sugar is: 19 grams.

Step 3: Use the chart on page 46 to determine if the yogurt meets the sugar limit. The yogurt has less sugar than the amount listed in the chart. Therefore this yogurt meets the sugar requirement.

Nutrition Facts

1 serving per container

Serving size **6 oz (170g)**

Amount per serving

Calories **140**

	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 2g	**3%**
Saturated Fat 1g	**5%**
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 10mg	**3%**
Sodium 90mg	**4%**
Total Carbohydrate 23g	**8%**
Dietary Fiber 0g	**0%**
Total Sugars 19g	
Includes 7g Added Sugars	**14%**
Protein 8g	

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

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

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

14. Will yogurt credit if I serve it frozen?

Program operators may credit yogurt that they have frozen. Please note that crediting meat/meat alternate in this form is discouraged as it is perceived as a dessert. Commercial frozen yogurt is similar to ice cream and is not creditable. See the Other Foods section in the *Food Buying Guide* for purchasing information.

15. If I buy regular yogurt and use it in a smoothie, can the yogurt be credited?

Yes. Yogurt may be served in a drinkable form and credit it toward the meat alternates component if you use creditable yogurt in your own standardized smoothie recipe. For more information on smoothies, see the Resource Section on page 133 for the CACFP policy memo on *Smoothies Offered in Child Nutrition Programs–Revised*.

An Explanation of the Separation of the Vegetable and Fruit Components

The updated CACFP meal patterns include a separate vegetables component and fruits component at lunch, supper, and snack. Serving separate vegetable and fruit components will help increase the variety of vegetables and fruits served and consumed by children and adults.

To allow program operators flexibility to offer a variety of vegetables, the meal pattern(s) allow a second vegetable to be served in place of the fruits component.

A **reimbursable meal at breakfast** must contain:

- minimum required serving of fruit(s)

OR

- minimum required serving of vegetable(s)

OR

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

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

- the minimum required serving of fruit(s) and the minimum required serving of vegetable(s)

OR

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

A **reimbursable snack** may include a fruit and a vegetable as 2 of the 5 required components. This means the program operator may offer:

- the minimum serving of fruits and vegetables

OR

- two different vegetables to credit towards the vegetables and fruits component.

Fruits and vegetables are credited based on their volume as served. The smallest creditable portion size of fruit and vegetable is an ⅛ cup or 2 tablespoons. There are a few exceptions:

- Dried fruit credits as twice the volume served (for example, a ¼ cup of raisins credits as a ½ cup of fruit).
- Raw leafy greens credit half of the volume served. For example, a ½ cup raw leafy greens credits as a ¼ cup vegetable.
- Tomato paste and puree credit based on their whole food equivalency. One tablespoon of tomato paste provides a ¼ cup vegetable, while 2 tablespoons of tomato puree equals a ¼ cup vegetable.

Servings of fruits and vegetables that are less than an ⅛ cup are not creditable towards the fruit and vegetable components. Condiments and seasonings may be served as extras to enhance the acceptability of the meal.

Fruit and Vegetable Juices

Full-strength 100% fruit and vegetable juice may count toward the entire fruits or vegetables component at 1 meal per day, including snack. However, when fluid milk is served as 1 of the components at snack, juice cannot credit toward the vegetables or fruits component. Full-strength 100% juice may be fresh, canned, frozen, or reconstituted with water from concentrate and served in either a liquid or frozen state. The name of the full-strength juice as it appears on the label must include the word(s) "juice" or "full-strength juice" or "single-strength juice" or "100% juice" or "reconstituted juice" or "juice from concentrate."

If juice blends are served, they must be 100% juice or a full-strength juice blend. A juice blend that contains 100% tomatoes, carrots and spinach juice counts as vegetable juice and credits towards the vegetables component. As a best practice, you are encouraged to specify the type of juice served on your menu.

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

All juice must be pasteurized. Unpasteurized juice may contain harmful bacteria. Children and some older adults are at risk of becoming ill from consuming these types of bacteria.

Food Mixtures With Fruits and Vegetables

Foods that contain a mixture of vegetables and fruits with known quantities must be credited separately for the vegetables and fruits component in reimbursable lunches/suppers and snacks. The mixture must contain at least an ⅛ cup of vegetable to count toward the vegetables component and at least an ⅛ cup of fruit to count toward the fruits component. For example, a carrot-pineapple mixture served to 6-year-olds contains a ½ cup carrots and a ¼ cup pineapples (credits as a ½ cup vegetable and a ¼ cup fruit). This carrot-pineapple mixture meets the full vegetables component and full fruits component requirements for a reimbursable lunch/supper for children 6 through 12 years old.

A serving of vegetables that contribute to the meal pattern includes:

- fresh vegetables
- frozen vegetables
- dried vegetables
- canned vegetables
- cooked dry beans and peas (legumes)
- full-strength vegetable juice

As previously stated, a second, different vegetable may be served in place of the fruit requirement. Two servings of the same vegetable provided at the same meal do not count as two different vegetables and cannot be served in place of the fruit requirement. For example, two servings of broccoli count as one serving of vegetables and not two different vegetables. Similarly, the same vegetable served in different forms, such as raw carrots and cooked carrots, count as only one serving of vegetable.

Vegetable Mixtures

Mixtures of different types of vegetables, whose quantities are not known, such as frozen carrots and peas, credit as one serving of vegetables. However, if the program operator has documentation from the manufacturer that provides information about the quantity of each vegetable in the mixture, then the food may be credited as two servings of vegetables, provided the minimum serving amount of each vegetable offered is an ⅛ cup.

Cooked dry beans or peas (legumes) may be used to meet all or part of the vegetables component. Beans and peas include, but are not limited to, black beans, fresh edamame, garbanzo beans, lentils, kidney beans, mature lima beans, navy beans, pinto beans, and split peas. Beans and peas may also count as a meat alternate, but not as both a vegetable and a meat alternate in the same meal. Roasted soy beans (soy nuts) may also be credited as either a vegetable or as a meat alternate but not as both in the same meal. When crediting roasted soy beans as a vegetable, volume must be used for crediting purposes (for example, a ¼ cup of roasted soy beans is equivalent to a ¼ cup vegetable, regardless of the weight).

Snack chips, such as potato chips, are not creditable. These products do not meet the vegetables component requirements. These processed food items are typically high in sodium, fat, and/or sugar and low in nutrients.

Home-canned vegetable products are not allowed for service in the CACFP due to health and safety reasons. See the Resource Section on page 134 for additional information on produce safety. Home frozen vegetable products are allowed. For example, when sweet corn is in season (when it is the most economical to buy and tastes the best), you may freeze cobs on a sheet pan for use in the winter months when fresh corn is not available or is very expensive.

Serving Size and Yield for Selected Vegetables

This chart is a snapshot of commonly used vegetables that can be found in the *Food Buying Guide* for Child Nutrition Programs, commonly referred to as the *Food Buying Guide* (FBG). Please note that the serving sizes and yields are approximate. Double check to ensure that your serving sizes meet meal pattern requirements. The information in the *Food Buying Guide* can assist you in menu planning and purchasing. See the Resource Section on page 134 for information on the *Food Buying Guide* Interactive Web-Based Tool.

Vegetable	Serving Size and Yield
Carrot Stick	1 stick is 4 inches long and ½ inch wide. 3 sticks = ¼ cup
Cauliflower	1 medium head = about 6 cups florets
Celery Sticks	1 stick is 4 inches long and ½ inch wide. 3 sticks = ¼ cup
Cucumber Sticks	1 stick is 3 inches long and ¾ inch wide. 3 sticks (pared or unpared) = ¼ cup
Lettuce Head (Iceberg)	¼ cup raw, shredded vegetable OR ¼ cup raw vegetable pieces
Lettuce, Leaf	¼ cup raw vegetable pieces
Olives, Ripe	8 (large) olives = ¼ cup
Pickles	⅓ (large) pickle = ¼ cup
Radishes	7 small radishes = ¼ cup
Tomatoes, Large/Extra Large	4 slices, ⅛ inch thick = ¼ cup
Tomatoes, Small/Medium	5 slices, ⅛ inch thick = ¼ cup
Tomatoes, Cherry	3 tomatoes = about ¼ cup

*For simplicity, this table of serving sizes for vegetables is based on a ¼ cup serving.

VEGETABLES

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

Details in the "Additional Information" column help you to determine if the product is creditable and where to go to get more information, for example the *Food Buying Guide*.

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Barbecue Sauce			X	Barbecue sauce is a condiment and is not creditable.
Bean Flour		X		Pasta products made of flour(s) from one vegetable subgroup may credit toward the appropriate vegetable subgroup.
Beans or Peas (Legumes), Canned or Dry	X			Cooked dry or canned beans or peas (kidney, garbanzo, black, lentils, etc.) may be credited as either a vegetable or as a meat alternate, but not as both in the same meal. See the Vegetables section in the *Food Buying Guide*.
Bean Sprouts (canned or cooked)	X			See the Vegetables section in the *Food Buying Guide* for canned or cooked sprouts. Please be aware, for food safety reasons, raw sprouts are not creditable.
Carrot Bread		X		Carrot bread must contain at least an ⅛ cup (2 tablespoons) of visible vegetable per serving. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a Product Formulation Statement. Generally, these products contain an insufficient amount of vegetable per serving.
Catsup or Chili Sauce			X	Catsup and chili sauce are condiments and are not creditable. See the Other Foods section in the *Food Buying Guide* for purchasing information.

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Chickpeas, Roasted (Roasted Garbanzo Beans)	X			Roasted chickpeas may be credited as either a vegetable or a meat alternate, but not as both in the same meal. A ¼ cup of roasted chickpeas credit as a ¼ cup of vegetable or a 1 oz eq of meat alternate, but not as both at the same meal. Please note they may be a choking hazard for some populations.
Coleslaw		X		The vegetable portion of coleslaw, without condiments or other ingredients, is creditable. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a Product Formulation Statement. See the Vegetables section in the *Food Buying Guide*.
Corn, Fresh (Kernel or On-the-Cob)	X			See the Vegetables section in the *Food Buying Guide*.
Corn Chips			X	Corn chips are classified as a grain (not a vegetable) when made from creditable ingredients. See the Grains section in the *Food Buying Guide*.
Corn Syrup			X	Corn syrup is a sugar, not a vegetable. See the Other Foods section in the *Food Buying Guide* for purchasing information. Please note that corn syrup is not recommended for children under 1 year of age.
Dehydrated Vegetables	X			Dehydrated vegetables are creditable based on the volume served. See the Vegetables section in the *Food Buying Guide*.
Dry Spice Mixes			X	Spices do not contribute toward meal pattern requirements.
French-Fried Potatoes		X		French-fried potatoes that are air-fried, pre-fried, flash-fried, or par-fried by a commercial manufacturer may be served, when reheated by a method other than frying. Foods deep-fat fried onsite are not creditable. See the Vegetables section in the *Food Buying Guide*.

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Gelatin Containing Vegetables (Aspic)		X		Gelatin containing vegetables must contain at least an ⅛ cup (2 tablespoons) of visible vegetable per serving. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a Product Formulation Statement.
Gravy Base			X	Gravy base is not a vegetable and is not creditable.
Greens, All Varieties (such as Mustard, Collard, and Chard)	X			See the Vegetables section in the *Food Buying Guide*.
Hominy, Canned	X			See the Vegetables section in the *Food Buying Guide*. A ¼ cup of canned, drained hominy credits as ¼ cup vegetable. See Grains Section for information on crediting dried hominy.
Juice Blends -100% Vegetable and/or Fruit	X			Vegetable and fruit juice blends that are combinations of full-strength 100% fruit juices are creditable. May be credited toward the vegetables component when vegetable is the most prominent ingredient.
Ketchup (Catsup)			X	Ketchup is a condiment and is not creditable. See the Other Foods section in the *Food Buying Guide* for purchasing information.
Macaroni Salad (also Pasta Salads)		X		Macaroni Salad containing vegetables must contain at least an ⅛ cup (2 tablespoons) of visible vegetable per serving. Document with a standardized recipe or a Product Formulation Statement. See Grains section for documenting meal components of pasta ingredients.
Mayonnaise, Salad Dressing, Margarine, Salad Oil, and Butter			X	These products are condiments and are not creditable. See the Other Foods section in the *Food Buying Guide* for purchasing information.
Mustard			X	Mustard is a condiment and is not creditable. See the Other Foods section in the *Food Buying Guide* for purchasing information.

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Olives	X			Olives may be credited if a minimum of an ⅛ cup (2 tablespoons) is provided. Please note that most olives are high in sodium.
Onion Rings		X		Onion rings that are air-fried, pre-fried, flash-fried, or par-fried by a commercial manufacturer may be served but must be reheated by a method other than frying. Foods deep-fat fried onsite are not creditable. To credit as a vegetable, this product must contain at least an ⅛ cup (2 tablespoons) of cooked onion per serving. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a Product Formulation Statement. Please note that most onion rings are high in fat.
Pasta/Noodles (made from Beans/ Peas)		X		Pasta/noodles (made from 100% bean/pea flour) is creditable toward the vegetables component based on volume served. For pasta/noodles made with less than 100% bean/pea flour, document meal pattern contribution with a CN label or a Product Formulation Statement.
Pickle Relish			X	Pickle relish is a condiment and is not creditable. See the Other Foods section in the *Food Buying Guide* for purchasing information.
Pickles	X			Pickles may be credited if a minimum of an ⅛ cup (2 tablespoons) is provided. Please note that most pickles are high in sodium.
Pie Filling: Sweet Potato, Pumpkin		X		Pie fillings containing vegetables must contain at least an ⅛ cup (2 tablespoons) of visible vegetable per serving. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a Product Formulation Statement.

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Pizza Sauce		X		Pizza sauce may be credited if a minimum of an ⅛ cup (2 tablespoons) is provided. An ⅛ cup of pizza sauce equals an ⅛ cup of vegetable. See the Vegetables section in the *Food Buying Guide*. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a Product Formulation Statement.
Potato Chips (and Other Vegetable Chips), Fried			X	Potato chips and other vegetable chips contain many different variations in ingredients and are not creditable. These products are high in fat and sodium and should be served on a limited frequency. See the Other Foods section in the *Food Buying Guide* for purchasing information.
Potatoes and Potato Skins	X			See the Vegetables section in the *Food Buying Guide*.
Potatoes, Dehydrated	X			See the Vegetables section in the *Food Buying Guide*.
Pumpkin Bread			X	Pumpkin bread typically does not contain at least an ⅛ cup (2 tablespoons) of visible vegetable per serving.
Salsa	X			Salsa is creditable toward the vegetables component. See the Vegetables section in the *Food Buying Guide*.
Soups: Canned, Condensed, or Ready-To-Serve (Minestrone, Tomato, Tomato with other basic components such as Rice and Vegetable, and Vegetable with basic components such as Meat and Poultry)	X			1 cup of reconstituted or ready-to-serve soup provides a ¼ cup of vegetable. See the Vegetables section in the *Food Buying Guide*. Please note that 1 cup of soup may be an excessive volume for young children.

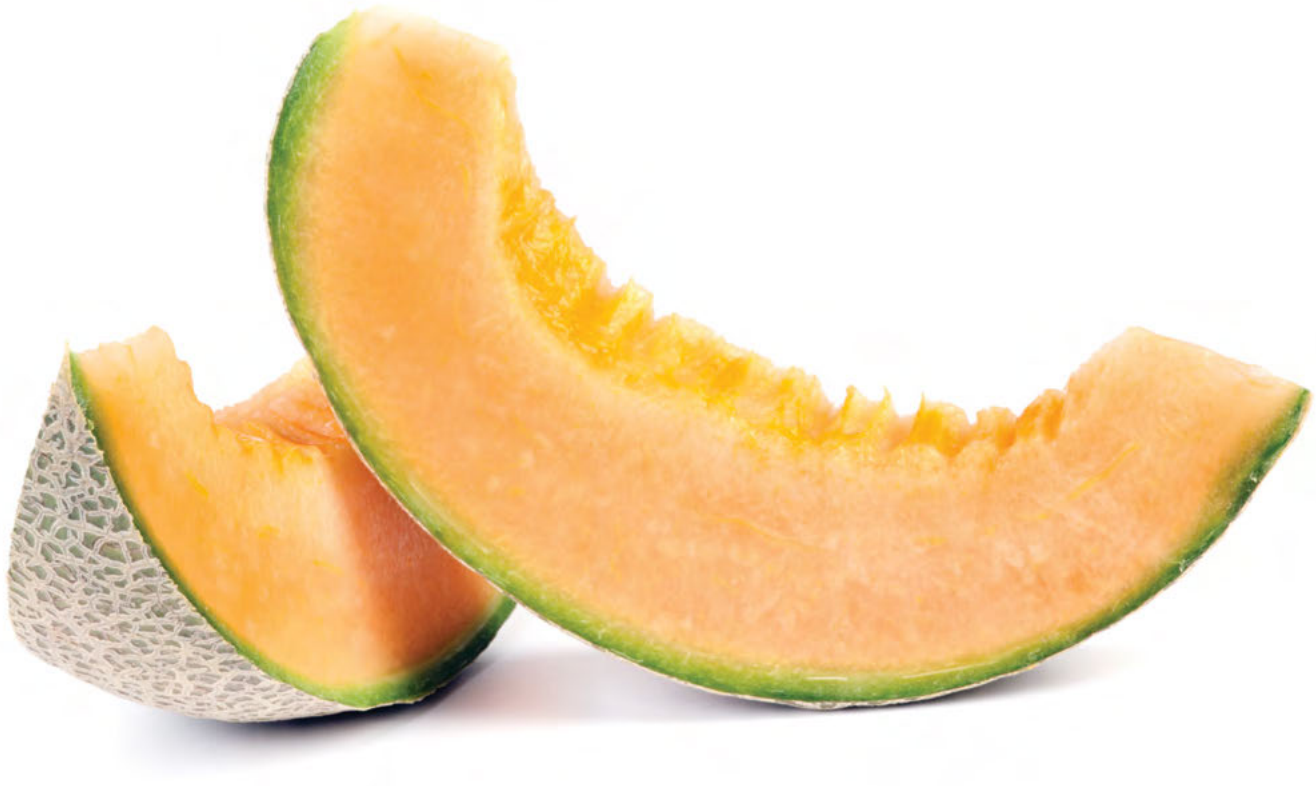
Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Soups, Homemade		X		Homemade soups must contain at least an ⅛ cup (2 tablespoons) of visible vegetable per serving. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe.
Soy Beans, Roasted (Soy Nuts)	X			Roasted soy beans may be credited as either a vegetable or a meat alternate, but not as both in the same meal. A ¼ cup of roasted soy beans credit as a ¼ cup of vegetable or a 1 oz eq meat alternate, but not both at the same meal. Please note they may be a choking hazard for some populations. When including soy and soy products in menus, you should consider the potential food allergies or intolerances.
Spaghetti Sauce (Meatless)	X			Spaghetti sauce is creditable toward the vegetables component. See the Vegetables section in the *Food Buying Guide*.
Vegetable Juice Blends		X		Vegetable juice blends that are full-strength 100% juice are creditable.
Vegetable Spirals (from Fresh Vegetables such as Carrot or Squash)	X			Creditable toward vegetables component based on the volume served.
Vegetable Sticks/ Straws			X	Generally, these products contain an insufficient amount of vegetable per serving.
Vegetables, Fresh, Frozen, Canned, or Dried (All Varieties)	X			See the Vegetables section in the *Food Buying Guide*.
Zucchini Bread (Squash in Bread)		X		Zucchini bread must contain at least an ⅛ cup (2 tablespoons) of visible vegetable per serving. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a Product Formulation Statement. Generally, vegetable breads contain an insufficient amount of vegetable per serving.

A serving of fruits that contribute to the meal pattern includes:

- fresh fruits
- frozen fruits
- dried fruits
- canned fruits
- full-strength fruit juice

Commercial fried fruit chips, such as banana and other fruit chips, are not creditable. These products do not meet the fruits component requirements. These highly processed food items are typically high in salt and/or sugar and low in nutrients. Please keep in mind that young children—especially age 4 and younger—and some elderly participants are at risk of choking on these foods. Always supervise participants during meals and snacks.

Home-canned fruit products are not allowed for service in the CACFP due to health and safety reasons. See the Resource Section on page 134 for additional information on produce safety. Home-frozen fruit products are allowed. For example, when blueberries are in season (when they are the most economical to buy and taste the best) you may freeze them for later use in the winter months when berries are not available or are very expensive.



Serving Sizes and Yields for Fruits

This chart is a snapshot of commonly used fruits that can be found in the *Food Buying Guide*. Please note that the serving sizes and yields are approximate. Double check to ensure that your serving sizes meet meal pattern requirements. The information in the *Food Buying Guide* can assist you in menu planning and purchasing. See the Resource Section on page 134 for information on the *Food Buying Guide* Interactive Web-Based Tool.

Fruit	Serving Size and Yield
Apples	¼ raw, unpeeled medium apple = about ¼ cup
Bananas	1 medium banana = ½ cup
Blueberries	¼ cup measure
Strawberries	¼ cup measure
Cantaloupe	⅒ medium melon = about ¼ cup
Grapes	
With Seeds	6 grape halves = about ¼ cup
Seedless	7 grapes = about ¼ cup
Nectarines	1 small nectarine = about ½ cup; 1 medium nectarine = about ¾ cup
Oranges	1 medium orange = about ½ cup
Peaches	1 small peach = about ⅜ cup; 1 medium peach = about ⅔ cup
Pears	1 medium pear = about ¾ cup
Plums	1 small plum = ⅜ cup; 1 medium plum = ½ cup; 1 large plum = ⅝ cup
Raisins	1.3 to 1.5 oz package = ¼ cup; 1 lb = 12.6 servings (¼ cup each)
Tangerine	1 medium tangerine = about ⅜ cup; 1 large tangerine = about ½ cup
Watermelon	¼ cup fruit or ¼ cup diced fruit without rind

*For simplicity, this table of serving sizes for fruits is based on a variety of cup servings.

Use this section as a guide to identify creditable fruits and products that contain creditable fruits. This is NOT an all-inclusive list. For information on creditable fruits commonly served in Child Nutrition Programs, see the *Food Buying Guide*.

Details in the "Additional Information" column help you to determine if the product is creditable and where to go to get more information, for example the *Food Buying Guide*.

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Ade Drinks			X	Ade drinks contain an insufficient amount of juice and are not creditable.
Apple Butter			X	Apple butter is a condiment and is not creditable.
Apple Cider		X		Cider must follow the same crediting rules as fruit juice (100% juice and pasteurized).
Apple Fritters		X		Fritters must contain at least an ⅛ cup (2 tablespoons) of visible fruit per serving. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a Product Formulation Statement. Generally, fritters contain an insufficient amount of fruit per serving. Fritters are a grain-based dessert and cannot count toward the grains component. Deep-fat frying is not allowed as a way of preparing foods onsite. Apple fritters credit if reheated using a method other than deep-fat frying and if they contain a creditable amount of visible fruit per serving. This product has a high fat and sugar content and should be served on a limited frequency.
Banana Bread			X	Banana bread typically does not contain at least an ⅛ cup (2 tablespoons) of visible fruit per serving.
Berries, All Varieties	X			See the Fruits section in the *Food Buying Guide*.

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Cake Containing Fruit		X		Although cake containing fruit is a grain-based dessert and cannot count toward the grains component, if it contains at least an ⅛ cup (2 tablespoons) of visible fruit per serving the fruit portion may credit toward the fruits component. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a Product Formulation Statement. Generally, cakes with fruit contain an insufficient amount of fruit per serving.
Coconut, Dried	X			Dried coconut credits as twice the volume served. For example, a ¼ cup dried coconut credits as a ½ cup fruit. See the Fruits section in the *Food Buying Guide*.
Coconut, Flour			X	Coconut flour is not creditable.
Coconut, Fresh or Frozen	X			See the Fruits section in the *Food Buying Guide*.
Cranberry Juice Cocktail			X	Juice cocktails contain an insufficient amount of juice and are not creditable.
Cranberry Sauce or Relish		X		Sauces must contain an ⅛ cup (2 tablespoons) of fruit per serving. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or Product Formulation Statement. See the Fruits section in the *Food Buying Guide*.
Dried Fruit, Whole (such as Raisins, Apricots, Prunes, Cranberries)	X			Dried fruit credits as twice the volume served. For example, a ¼ cup raisins credits as a ½ cup fruit. See the Fruits section in the *Food Buying Guide*. Please note they may be a choking hazard for some populations.
Fig Bars			X	Fig bars contain an insufficient amount of fruit per serving and do not credit toward the fruits component. Fig bars are a grain-based dessert and cannot count toward the grains component. This product is high in sugar.
Frozen Fruit-Flavored Bars, Freezer Pops			X	Frozen fruit-flavored bars contain an insufficient amount of juice and are not creditable.

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Frozen Fruit Juice Bars		X		Frozen fruit juice bars must contain at least an ⅛ cup (2 tablespoons) of fruit and/or full-strength 100% fruit juice per serving. Only the fruit or full-strength 100% fruit juice portion may be counted toward the fruit requirement. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a Product Formulation Statement.
Fruit, Fresh, Frozen, Canned, or Dried (All Varieties)	X			See the Fruits section in the *Food Buying Guide*.
Fruit Cobblers/ Crisps		X		Fruit cobblers and crisps must contain at least an ⅛ cup (2 tablespoons) of visible fruit per serving. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a Product Formulation Statement. Cobblers and crisps are grain-based desserts and cannot count toward the grains component.
Fruit Juice Bases			X	Juice bases contain an insufficient amount of fruit juice per serving and are not creditable.
Fruit Juice Concentrates		X		Juice concentrates may only be credited when reconstituted to full-strength juice.
Fruit Drinks			X	Fruit drinks contain an insufficient amount of juice and are not creditable.
Fruit-Flavored Powders and Syrups			X	Fruit-flavored powders and syrups do not meet the definition of fruit or juice and are not creditable.
Fruit-Flavored Punch			X	Fruit-flavored punch contains an insufficient amount of juice and is not creditable.
Fruit-Flavored Waters			X	Fruit-flavored waters contain an insufficient amount of juice and are not creditable.

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Fruit Sauces		X		Fruit sauces must contain at least an ⅛ cup (2 tablespoons) of visible fruit per serving. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a Product Formulation Statement. Generally, commercial sauces contain an insufficient amount of fruit per serving. These products are high in sugar.
Fruit Snacks (100% Fruit Strips, Leather, Fruit Drops, or other Fruit Snack type products)			X	Fruit snacks are not creditable.
Gelatin Containing Fruit and/or Fruit Juice (Aspic)		X		Gelatin containing fruit must contain at least an ⅛ cup (2 tablespoons) of visible fruit per serving. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a Product Formulation Statement. Please note that juice is only creditable when served as a beverage.
Honey			X	Honey is a sweetener and is not creditable. See the Other Foods section in the *Food Buying Guide* for purchasing information. For food safety reasons, honey should not be served to children less than 1 year of age.
Ice Cream, Fruit Flavors			X	Fruit-flavored ice cream contains an insufficient amount of fruit to credit toward the fruits component. See the Other Foods section in the *Food Buying Guide* for purchasing information.
Jam			X	Jam is a condiment and is not creditable. See the Other Foods section in the *Food Buying Guide* for purchasing information.
Jelly			X	Jelly is a condiment and is not creditable. See the Other Foods section in the *Food Buying Guide* for purchasing information.
Juice Blends - All Fruit		X		Juice blends containing full-strength 100% fruit juice are creditable.

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Juice Blends - Fruit and Vegetable		X		Juice blends containing combinations of full-strength 100% fruit and vegetable juice are creditable. May be credited toward the fruits component when fruit is the most prominent ingredient.
Lemonade			X	For lemonade to be palatable, the lemon juice must be diluted to the point that there is insufficient full-strength juice per serving.
Lemon Pie Filling			X	Lemon pie filling contains an insufficient amount of fruit per serving and is not creditable.
Maple Syrup			X	Maple syrup is a condiment or sweetener and is not creditable. See the Other Foods section in the *Food Buying Guide* for purchasing information.
Muffins Containing Fruit		X		Muffins must contain at least an ⅛ cup (2 tablespoons) of visible fruit per serving. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a Product Formulation Statement. Generally, muffins contain an insufficient amount of fruit per serving.
Nectars - Fruit		X		Full-strength 100% fruit nectars are creditable. Please note that there are no industry standards for nectars, and juice content may range anywhere from 0 to 100%.
Pie Filling - Fruit		X		Pie filling must contain at least an ⅛ cup (2 tablespoons) of visible fruit per serving. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a Product Formulation Statement. Grain-based desserts cannot count toward the grains component.
Pineapple Upside - Down Cake		X		Cake must contain at least an ⅛ cup (2 tablespoons) of visible fruit per serving. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a Product Formulation Statement. Cake is a grain-based dessert and cannot count toward the grains component.
Preserves			X	Preserves are considered a condiment and are not creditable.
Puddings Containing Fruit, Commercial			X	Commercial puddings contain insufficient fruit per serving and are not creditable toward the fruits component.

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Puddings Containing Fruit, Homemade		X		Homemade pudding containing fruit must contain at least an ⅛ cup (2 tablespoons) of visible fruit per serving to credit toward the fruits component. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe. In most cases, puddings are an "Other Food" and do not contribute to the meal pattern requirements. See the Other Foods section in the *Food Buying Guide* for purchasing information.
Sherbet, Commercial or Homemade			X	Sherbet is not creditable. See the Other Foods section in the *Food Buying Guide* for purchasing information.
Sorbets, Commercial or Homemade		X		Sorbets must contain at least an ⅛ cup (2 tablespoons) of fruit per serving. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a Product Formulation Statement.
Syrup (Fruit Flavored)			X	Syrup is a condiment and is not creditable. See the Other Foods section in the *Food Buying Guide* for purchasing information.
Toaster Pastries with Fruit			X	Toaster pastries contain an insufficient amount of fruit per serving and do not credit toward the fruits component. Toaster pastries are a grain-based dessert and cannot count toward the grains component. This product is high in sugar.
Yogurt, Commercial (Fruit added by Provider)		X		Yogurt containing fruit added by the provider must contain at least an ⅛ cup (2 tablespoons) of visible fruit per serving. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe. Yogurt must contain no more than 23 g of total sugars per 6 oz
Yogurt with Fruit, Commercial			X	The entire volume of commercial yogurt with fruit may contribute to the meat alternate component but cannot count toward the fruits component. See the Meats/Meat Alternates section in the *Food Buying Guide* for additional crediting information. Must contain no more than 23 g of total sugars per 6 oz

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT VEGETABLES AND FRUITS

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

   To meet the fruit and the vegetable components, the minimum creditable serving size is an ⅛ cup (2 tablespoons). For raw, leafy greens the minimum serving is a ¼ cup and for dried fruit the minimum serving is an ⅛ cup (2 tablespoons). This amount may not meet the required serving for the meal pattern.

2. **How do fruits and vegetables credit toward meal pattern requirements when found in combination dishes such as beef stew or pineapple chicken stir fry?**

   Combination food items may credit toward both the vegetables component and/or the fruits component if they contain at least an ⅛ cup of visible vegetable and/or fruit per serving.

3. **Can combination mixed vegetables (such as peas and carrots) be used to meet the requirement of serving 2 vegetables at lunch and supper?**

   Yes. Program operators may use a recipe or information provided by the manufacturer that documents the ratio of vegetables in the mixture. For example, if a mixture contains 50 percent carrots and 50 percent peas, and a 1 cup serving of this blend provides a ½ cup of carrots and a ½ cup of peas, then the requirement of serving 2 vegetables is met. If the ratio or serving size for each vegetable cannot be determined, then the mixture will credit as 1 vegetable component.

4. **How are combination salads such as carrot-raisin salad or Waldorf salad credited?**

   Mixtures of vegetables and fruits must be credited separately for the vegetable and fruit components. The mixture must contain at least an ⅛ cup of vegetable to count toward the vegetables component and an ⅛ cup fruit to count toward the fruits component. For example, a portion of carrot-raisin salad served to 6-year-olds contains a ½ cup of carrots and an ⅛ cup of raisins (credits as a ¼ cup of fruit because dried fruits credit for twice the volume served). This carrot-raisin salad meets the full vegetables component and full fruits component for children 6 through 12 years old. Document meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a Product Formulation Statement.

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

   Yes. You may serve the second vegetable as either an extra food or count it toward the fruits component for lunch. This is because a second vegetable may count toward the fruits component at lunch and supper meals if at least an ⅛ cup of two different kinds of vegetables are served. For example, a center serves 6-year-old children a ½ cup of roasted broccoli and a ¼ cup of roasted cauliflower. The cauliflower is replacing the fruits component and meets the minimum serving size required for the fruits component for children 6 through 12 years old.

6. **Can the vegetable, fruit, or juice in pudding or gelatin be credited toward the fruits component?**

   This question must be answered in two parts:

   - Fruit juice ONLY credits when served as a beverage. Therefore, fruit juice used in preparation of puddings or gelatins does not credit.
   - To credit fruit in puddings or gelatin, each serving must contain at least an ⅛ cup (2 tablespoons) of fruit per serving and the fruit must be visible in the product. Document the meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe or a Product Formulation Statement.

7. **Could a provider serve a sweet potato and a white potato and count them as two different creditable vegetables in the same meal?**

   No. Although the nutrient content of sweet potatoes and white potatoes is not identical, from an operational standpoint they are both potatoes and would not be considered different vegetables if served in the same meal.

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

   Full-strength juice will be labeled with "Contains 100% Juice." Juices that have the words cocktail, beverage, or drink are not considered 100% juice. The statements "natural" or "organic" do not indicate that the juice is 100% juice.

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

No. 100% fruit and vegetable juice blends cannot count toward both the vegetable and fruit components. A 100% fruit and vegetable juice blend may contribute to the fruits component or vegetables component. The 100% fruit and vegetable juice blend counts toward the fruits component when fruit juice or puree is the most prominent ingredient. Conversely, the 100% fruit and vegetable juice blend may contribute to the vegetables component when vegetable juice or puree is the most prominent ingredient. Keep in mind, that fruit or vegetable juice may only be served as a reimbursable component of a meal once per day to children ages 1 through 18 and to adults. Please note, juice is not allowed under the infant meal pattern.

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

Yes. Juice (or other foods) may be served as an extra food item outside of the meal pattern requirements. For example, if juice is served at breakfast, juice may also be served as an extra item at snack (for example, crackers, cheese, and juice [extra]). FNS encourages centers and day care homes to use their discretion when choosing to serve extra food items. While juice can be part of a healthful diet, it lacks the dietary fiber found in other forms of fruit and vegetables, and when consumed in excess, it can contribute extra calories. Additionally, the Dietary Guidelines for Americans align with the Academy of Pediatrics' recommendation that young children consume no more than 4 to 6 fluid ounces of 100% fruit juice per day. Meals containing extra foods, in addition to the minimum required meal components, receive the same reimbursement rate as regular CACFP meals.

As a reminder, juice may not be served more than once a day as a reimbursable component of a meal. Additionally, juice is not allowed under the infant meal pattern.

11. Can the list of approved juices from WIC also be used in helping providers determine a creditable juice?

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

12. When serving a smoothie with fruit as 1 of the ingredients/components, does that count as your juice for the day?

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

13. Can we purchase homemade juices such as apple cider from local farm stands?

Yes. However, due to the safety hazards of unpasteurized ciders and juices, only pasteurized juice and juice products may be served.

14. How can juice concentrate credit?

There are four ways juice can credit toward the fruit requirements:

- 100% liquid juice not from concentrate;
- 100% frozen juice not from concentrate;
- 100% liquid juice reconstituted from concentrate; or
- 100% frozen juice reconstituted from concentrate.

Juice concentrates can be used only when reconstituted with water to full-strength 100% juice and can be credited in the forms of liquid (including 100% carbonated juice) or frozen juice only. Therefore, juice cannot be credited when used as an ingredient in another food or beverage with the exception of smoothies. See the *Food Buying Guide* for additional crediting information. For example, a ¼ cup of gelatin made with 1 tablespoon of juice concentrate and water does not credit as a ¼ cup of juice since the fruit juice is no longer in the form of liquid or frozen juice. Please note that the amount of juice concentrate used cannot credit for more than one serving of vegetable or fruit per day.

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

Pureed vegetables or fruits may contribute to the CACFP meal pattern requirements if the dish also provides an adequate amount (an ⅛ cup or more) of visible, creditable fruits or vegetables. Therefore, in the carrots and macaroni and cheese scenario, the pureed or mashed carrots can count toward the vegetables component if there is at least an ⅛ cup of another visible vegetable per portion. Meals served in the Child Nutrition Programs are a nutrition education opportunity to help children learn how to build a healthy plate. It is important for young children to be able to identify the components in a healthy meal.

16. How should vegetables, fruits, or other foods not listed in the *Food Buying Guide* be credited?

There are some foods not listed in the *Food Buying Guide* that may be served in CACFP. If a food can contribute to a reimbursable meal, but is not listed in the *Food Buying Guide*, the yield information of a similar food or in-house yield may be used to determine the contribution toward meal pattern requirements, with State agency approval. Instructions for developing yields are available in the introduction section of the *Food Buying Guide*.

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

Vegetable and fruit pizza toppings credit if there is at least an ⅛ cup vegetable or fruit per portion. If pizza toppings only meet a portion of the vegetable or fruit requirement, an additional serving of vegetable and/or fruit must be provided. Document the meal pattern contribution with a standardized recipe.

18. How much tomato paste, tomato puree, or tomato sauce would be needed to equal a ¼ cup of vegetable for each child at lunch or supper?

Tomato paste: 1 tablespoon = ¼ cup vegetable
Tomato puree: 2 tablespoons = ¼ cup vegetable
Tomato sauce: 4 tablespoons = ¼ cup vegetable

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

Both tomatoes and avocados are considered vegetables. Refer to the *Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs* for a list of creditable fruits and vegetables. While the *Food Buying Guide* provides a relatively comprehensive list of foods commonly served in Child Nutrition Programs, it does not include information on every possible vegetable or fruit that can be part of a reimbursable meal.

CACFP centers and homes should work with their sponsor or State agency, as appropriate, when they have questions about the crediting of foods.

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

These items are considered to be vegetables; however, caution should be used. Wild plants that are not purchased commercially may have been sprayed with toxic pesticides. Safeguards in the use of wild plants should be developed. It is suggested that operators restrict their use of these food items to those that are commercially available.

21. Are dehydrated vegetables creditable?

Yes. Dehydrated vegetables are creditable. Crediting is based on the rehydrated volume, not the fresh volume that may be stated on the container. Keep in mind that rehydration data on the container often vary from brand to brand. This variation means that the following procedure must be used for each brand of dehydrated product. A minimum of an ⅛ cup of rehydrated vegetable must be served in order to contribute to the vegetables component.

Determine the rehydrated volume as follows:

- Rehydrate (add water or liquid to) a purchase unit of the dehydrated vegetable according to manufacturers' directions. If the directions are not on the container, request rehydration instructions from the manufacturer.
- Measure the rehydrated volume.

- Measure the number of ¼ cup servings of rehydrated product that 1 purchase unit provides.
- Document and keep records obtained as required by the State agency, regional office, or sponsoring agency as verification. Records should include information on the size of the purchase unit, the number of ¼ cup servings of rehydrated product per purchase unit, the name of the manufacturer, and the manufacturers' directions for how to rehydrate the product.

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

Yes. However, at least an ⅛ cup (2 tablespoons) must be present in each serving. In most recipes, not enough raisins are used to meet this requirement. Maintain a standardized recipe on file to document that there is at least an ⅛ cup (2 tablespoons) of raisins per serving (which credits as a ¼ cup fruit).

As a reminder, sweet rice and bread puddings are considered grain-based desserts and are (1) not creditable grains and (2) generally discouraged in the CACFP.

GRAINS

Grains are a required component for a reimbursable breakfast, lunch, and supper meal. Grains are an optional component at snack.

All grain products served in the CACFP must be made with whole grains or enriched meal and/or enriched flour, or bran or germ, to be creditable in the CACFP. This section provides guidance on how to determine if a product is creditable based on the combination of grains, meals, and flours in the product.

Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs (Exhibit A) provides the minimum portion sizes of grain products that are required to meet meal pattern requirements for each age group. This chart provides serving size information in both grains/breads servings and ounce equivalents (oz eq). As a reminder, starting October 1, 2021, all grain products served in the CACFP and to preschool age children in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) must be credited based on ounce equivalents. See Exhibit A on page 94.

To emphasize the importance of whole grains, the CACFP meal patterns require that grains served at least once per day be whole grain-rich. Whole grain-rich means that at least half (50 percent) of the grain ingredients in the food are whole grains and any other grains are enriched. Please note that food items that are 100 percent whole grain meet the whole grain-rich requirement. This requirement was developed based on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommendation that half of the grains we consume should be whole grains.

This requirement will help children and adults increase their intake of whole grains and benefit from the important nutrients that whole grains provide. This whole grain-rich requirement only applies to meals and snacks served to children (ages 1 year or older) and adults.

Any additional grains served that do not meet the whole grain-rich criteria may still count toward program requirements if they are made of creditable grains.

Whole grain-rich foods are foods that contain 100 percent whole grains, or that contain at least 50 percent whole grains with the remaining grains in the food being enriched. See page 78 for more information on how to identify whole grain-rich products.

As a reminder, an ounce equivalent of grains is slightly heavier (16 grams of grains) than a grains serving (14.75 grams of grains). For example, if the minimum required amount of grains for a meal is 1 serving, you can serve a grain product that provides 1 ounce equivalent grains. This 1 ounce equivalent grains provides slightly more than the minimum quantity needed to provide 1 serving of grains. For more information on crediting ounce equivalent grains, see the Crediting in Action section on page 112 and *Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition* Programs on page 94.

CREDITABLE GRAINS

Grains that contribute to the meal pattern include:

- whole grains
- enriched grains
- bran and germ

1. Whole Grains

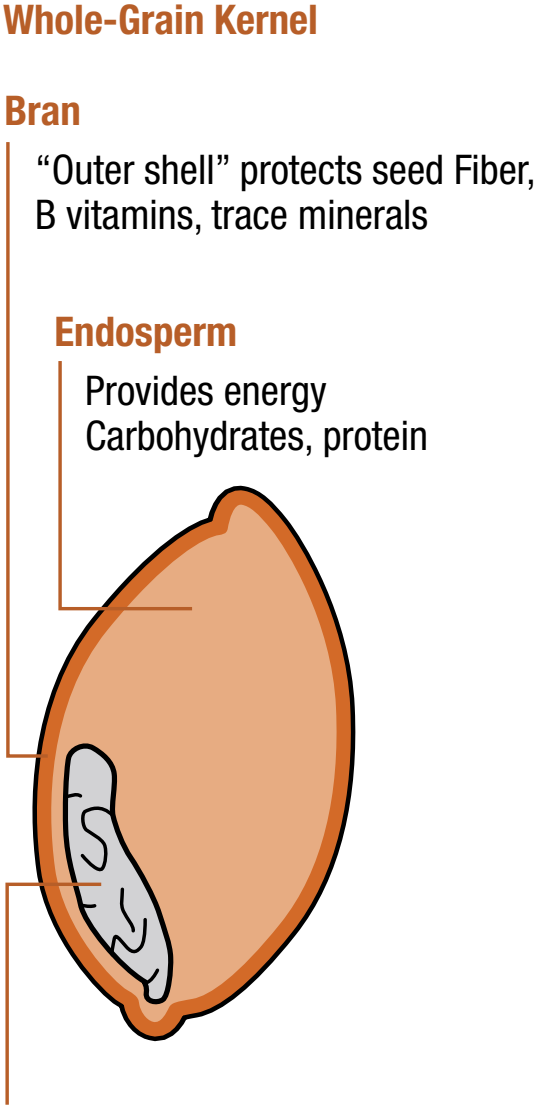
What Is a Whole Grain?

Whole grains consist of the entire grain, seed, or kernel. A whole grain has 3 parts—the bran, the germ, and the endosperm. Usually the kernel is cracked, crushed, or flaked during processing. If the finished product has about the same amount of bran, germ, and endosperm as the original grain did before processing, it is considered a whole grain.

Examples of whole-grain ingredients include whole-grain or whole-wheat flour, brown rice, wild rice, oatmeal, bulgur, whole-grain corn, and quinoa.

Whole grains offer a variety of vitamins and minerals, including magnesium, selenium, iron, zinc, B vitamins, and dietary fiber.

For a list of whole grains, see *List of Common Whole Grains* chart on page 82.



2. Enriched and Fortified Grains

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

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

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

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

*Added nutrients are in bold.

For more information on how to tell if a grain is enriched or fortified, see "Criteria To Determine Enriched or Fortified Grain Products" on page 87.

For a list of enriched grains, see *List of Enriched Grains* chart on page 84.

3. Bran and Germ

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

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

For a list of brans and germs, see *List of Brans and Germs* chart on page 84.

NON-CREDITABLE GRAINS OR FLOURS

Many commercial grain products include ingredients that are not creditable toward the grains component. These include grain ingredients that are not whole, enriched, bran, or germ such as bromated flour, durum flour, white flour, and wheat flour. Also, legume and vegetable flours (tapioca, potato, legume, bean, and other vegetable flours) are flours that do not contain any grains, but are considered a non-creditable grain or flour.

For a list of non-creditable grains or flours, see *List of Non-Creditable Grains or Flours* chart on page 85.

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

Grain Derivatives

Grain derivatives do not count as grains in the Child Nutrition Programs and can be ignored when looking at an ingredients label to determine if a grain product is creditable. Grain derivatives, which are generally presented in only small amounts, include:

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

CREDITABLE GRAIN PRODUCTS

A creditable grain product must be:

- whole grain-rich

OR

- enriched

OR

- bran or germ.

Use the following 2 criteria to determine if your grain product is creditable as either whole grain-rich or enriched. Creditable grain products must meet at least **1** of the criteria described in this section.

1. Criteria To Determine Whole Grain-Rich Products

Any **1** of the following six methods may be used to determine if a grain product meets the whole grain-rich criteria. The food only needs to meet **1** of the following to be considered whole grain-rich.

Remember, if grains are part of a reimbursable meal or snack, at least 1 serving per day must be whole grain-rich.

Method 1

The product is found on **any** State agency's Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)-approved whole-grain food list.

Any grain product found on **any** State agency's WIC-approved whole-grain food list meets CACFP whole grain-rich criteria. You may obtain a copy of a State agency's WIC-approved whole-grain food list by contacting the WIC State agency. For a list of WIC State agency contacts, see the Resource Section on page 135.

Method 2

The product is labeled as "whole wheat" and has a Standard of Identity (as defined below) issued by the FDA.

An FDA Standard of Identity is a set of rules for what a certain product (like whole-wheat bread) must contain or may contain to be labeled with that product name legally. FDA provides Standards of Identity for certain whole-wheat bread products and certain whole-wheat pasta products.

Only **breads** with these exact product names conform to an FDA Standard of Identity and can be considered whole grain-rich using this method:

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

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

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

Other grain products labeled as "whole wheat" such as crackers, tortillas, bagels, biscuits, and other pastas shapes not listed in the "pastas" section must be evaluated using **1** of the other methods (methods 3-6) listed here to determine if the product meets the whole grain-rich criteria.

Please be aware that manufacturers may label their products with terms that are similar to, but slightly different from, FDA's Standard of Identity terms previously defined. Some of these terms include "whole grain," "made with whole grains," "made with whole wheat," or "contains whole grains." Foods labeled with these terms may not be whole grain-rich and need to be evaluated for FNS' whole grain-rich creditability for CACFP using **1** of the other methods listed here.

Please note, use of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) whole grain-rich criteria may ease menu planning and purchasing for schools that operate CACFP at-risk afterschool programs or CACFP child care programs because they can use the same whole grain-rich criteria for both programs. The NSLP whole grain-rich criteria apply for all grain products with the exception of grain-based desserts, which are not creditable under the CACFP.

Method 3

The product includes **1** of the following FDA-approved whole-grain health claims on its packaging, exactly as written below:

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

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

Method 4

The food meets the whole grain-rich criteria under the National School Lunch Program (NSLP).

Use of the NSLP whole grain-rich criteria may ease menu planning and purchasing for schools that operate CACFP at-risk afterschool programs or CACFP preschool and CACFP at-risk afterschool programs, because the NSLP whole grain-rich criteria can be used for both programs.

Please note, the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) whole grain-rich criteria applies for all grain products with the exception of grain-based desserts, which are not creditable under the CACFP. Also remember, cereals served in the CACFP must contain no more than 6 grams of sugar per ounce.

Method 5

The food meets FNS' *Rule of Three* criteria for identifying whole grain-rich products in CACFP.

FNS developed the *Rule of Three* recognizing that CACFP operators purchase food differently than School Meal Program operators, as CACFP operators often shop in retail environments and may not have access to manufacturers' Product Formulation Statements or products specially formulated for School Meal Programs.

To meet the *Rule of Three* criteria:

The first ingredient (or the second ingredient after water) must be whole grain, and the next 2 grain ingredients (if any) must be whole grains, enriched grains, bran, or germ.

Grain derivatives (byproducts of grains) do not count as grain ingredients and can be ignored when evaluating with the *Rule of Three* criteria. For more information on grain derivatives, see page 78.

- Any non-creditable grain ingredients that are labeled as "less than 2 percent" in the ingredients list are considered insignificant and may be ignored. See page 85 for list of non-creditable grains or flours.

When using the *Rule of Three*, you may refer to the lists of common grain ingredients found on grain product labels. Please note that these lists are not meant to be exhaustive, and there may be other items that qualify that are not included in these grain lists. See lists beginning on page 82:

- List of Common Whole Grains
- List of Enriched Grains
- List of Brans and Germs
- List of Non-Creditable Grains or Flours

Mixed Dishes

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

Ready-To-Eat Breakfast Cereals

When applying the *Rule of Three* criteria for ready-to-eat breakfast cereals, if the first grain ingredient is a whole grain and the cereal is fortified, the product meets the whole grain-rich criteria. In this situation, there is no need to look at any other grain ingredients in the cereal. See page 111 for more information on crediting ready-to-eat breakfast cereals.

List of Common Whole Grains

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

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

List of Common Whole Grains	
Corn	
popcorn	whole-grain corn flour
whole corn	whole-grain cornmeal
whole cornmeal	whole-grain grits
whole-grain corn	whole-corn flour
Brown Rice	
brown rice	sprouted brown rice
brown rice flour	
Wild Rice	
wild rice	wild rice flour
Rye	
flaked rye	whole-rye
rye berries	whole-rye flakes
rye groats	whole-rye flour
sprouted whole rye	
Other Grains	
amaranth	sprouted spelt
amaranth flour	teff
buckwheat	teff flour
buckwheat flour	triticale
buckwheat groats	triticale flour
millet	whole-grain einkorn
millet flour	whole-einkorn berries
quinoa	whole-grain emmer (farro)
sorghum (milo)	whole-grain einkorn flour
sorghum flour	whole kamut (Khorasan wheat)
spelt berries	whole-grain spelt flour
sprouted buckwheat	whole spelt
sprouted einkorn	

List of Common Whole Grain-Rich Ingredients

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

Did you know, the following may be counted as whole grain-rich ingredients using the *Rule of Three*.

- corn masa
- masa harina
- hominy grits

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

Enriched Grains may be the:

- Second or third grain ingredient.

List of Common Enriched Grains

Please note:

1. That this is not an exhaustive list and therefore may not contain all possible enriched grain ingredient names present on food labels.
2. Look for the word "enriched" in the grain ingredient description.

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

Bran and Germ may be the:

- Second or third grain ingredient.

List of Common Brans and Germs

Please note:

1. That this is not an exhaustive list and therefore may not contain all possible bran and germ ingredient names present on food labels
2. Look for the words "bran" and "germ" in the ingredient description.

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

Disregarded ingredients (may be ignored, as these ingredients are not included in the *Rule of Three*):

- Any ingredients that are less than 2 percent of product weight (i.e., any ingredients listed on the ingredient list after the words "contains less than 2 percent").
- Grain derivatives. For more information on grain derivatives, see page 78.

Non-Creditable Grains or Flours

These ingredients are not whole, enriched, bran, or germ. They cannot be 1 of the first 3 grain ingredients. See the List of Non-Creditable Grains or Flours in the next column.

List of Common Non-Creditable Grains or Flours

Please note that:

1. This is not an exhaustive list and therefore may not contain all possible grains that do not credit in the CACFP.
2. Typically, these are grains that DO NOT include the word "whole" or "enriched" in the ingredient description.
3. Please note, although legume, potato, tapioca, and nut flours are not grains, they are to be counted along with the non-creditable grains in the CACFP.

List of Common Non-Creditable Grains or Flours
all-purpose flour (not enriched)
any bean flour
any legume flour
any nut flour
any vegetable flour
barley malt
bromated flour
corn
corn fiber
degerminated corn meal
durum flour
farina
malted barley flour
oat fiber
potato flour
rice flour
semolina
tapioca flour
wheat flour
white flour

As a reminder, the *Rule of Three* is ONLY used to determine if a product is whole grain-rich. If the product does not meet the *Rule of Three* criteria for a whole grain-rich product, then check to see if the product is creditable as enriched. See page 87 for Criteria To Determine Enriched or Fortified Grain Products.

Examples of *Rule of Three*

Example 1: An English muffin ingredient list includes: "whole-wheat flour, water, enriched wheat flour, wheat starch, yeast, sugar, and salt."

This product is creditable as a whole grain-rich product in the CACFP using the *Rule of Three* criteria because:

1. The first ingredient (whole-wheat flour) is a whole grain,

AND

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

This product meets the *Rule of Three* based on the 2 creditable grain ingredients; whole-wheat flour and enriched wheat flour.

Example 2: A cheese pizza ingredient list reads: "mozzarella cheese, parmesan cheese, white whole-wheat flour, brown rice flour, enriched flour, nonfat milk, water, tomato paste, yeast."

This product is creditable as a whole grain-rich product using the *Rule of Three* criteria because:

1. The first grain ingredient is white whole-wheat flour, which is a whole-grain ingredient,

AND

2. The second grain ingredient is brown rice flour, which is a whole-grain ingredient,

AND

3. The third grain ingredient is enriched flour, which is an enriched ingredient.

Method 6

Proper documentation from a manufacturer or a standardized recipe demonstrating that whole grains are the primary grain ingredient by weight.

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

2. Criteria for Enriched or Fortified Grain Products

To determine if a grain product is enriched, it must meet at least **1** of the following methods:

Method 1

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

Method 2

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

Method 3

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

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

*Added nutrients are in bold.

NOTE: The ingredient list of a non-fortified cereal does not include any added vitamins and minerals.

For example, the ingredient list of a non-fortified breakfast cereal may read, "Ingredients: rice flour, wheat flour, evaporated cane juice, pomegranate juice concentrate, sea salt." This particular cereal is not considered a creditable grain because it is not made from whole or enriched grains and is not fortified.

See questions on the following page to practice how to determine if a grain product is creditable using an ingredient list. There are additional questions on crediting grains toward meal pattern requirements beginning on page 123.

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

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

Multigrain Bread

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

Is this a creditable grain product?

Yes, this multigrain bread is creditable as an enriched grain product because the first grain ingredient listed after water is an enriched grain.

Please note: There is no *Rule of Three* for enriched grain items. The rule only applies to determining a whole grain-rich item.

Garlic Bread

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

Is this a creditable grain product?

No, it does not meet the criteria for a whole grain-rich or an enriched grain product because:

- The first ingredient on the ingredient list is all-purpose flour, and it is not enriched.

This garlic bread is not creditable because it does not meet the grains requirement as a whole grain-rich or an enriched grain product.

Bagels

INGREDIENTS: Enriched Bleached Flour, Water, Brown Sugar, Yeast, Wheat Germ, Yellow Corn Flour (Folic Acid, Riboflavin, Niacin, and Thiamine), Cornmeal, Gluten, Cornstarch, Salt, Calcium Propionate, Cellulose Gum, Citric Acid, Soy Lecithin

Is this a creditable grain product?

Yes, this is creditable as an enriched grain product because the first ingredient is an enriched flour (enriched bleached flour).

The bagels are creditable as an enriched grain.

Wheat Breadsticks

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

Is this a creditable grain product?

Yes, this is a creditable grain product and meets the whole grain-rich criteria because it meets the following *Rule of Three* criteria:

1. The first ingredient on the ingredient list is a whole grain (whole-wheat flour).

AND

2. The remaining grain in the product (enriched unbleached wheat flour) is enriched.

These wheat breadsticks are creditable as a whole grain-rich product.

Please note: Ingredients are listed by weight with the ingredient weighing the most listed first on the ingredient list.

ADDITIONAL GRAIN REQUIREMENTS

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

1. Grain-Based Desserts

To better align the CACFP meal patterns with the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, grain-based desserts cannot count toward the grains requirement at any meal or snack.

Grain-based desserts are those food items that have a superscript 3 and 4 in Exhibit A (See page 94). Under Exhibit A, the following foods are grain-based desserts: cookies, sweet pie crusts, doughnuts, cereal bars, breakfast bars, granola bars, sweet rolls, toaster pastries, cakes, and brownies.

Certain grain-based items may be considered a dessert or a savory snack, depending on how they are served. For example, scones can be savory or sweet. Savory scones, such as ones made with cheese and herbs, are not grain-based desserts. However, sweet scones, such as those made with fruit and/or icing, are grain-based desserts.

Cookies do not have an FDA Standard of Identity, so a food manufacturer may come up with fanciful names that could be misleading.

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

FNS recognizes that centers and day care homes may want to occasionally serve grain-based desserts, such as for celebrations or other special occasions. As a reminder, centers and day care homes continue to have the flexibility to serve grain-based desserts as an additional food item that does not contribute to the meal components required for reimbursement. However, food items that do not contribute to the CACFP meal pattern are not allowable costs and must be purchased using non-program funds. See the Resource Section on page 133 for information on accessing CACFP Meal Pattern Training Worksheet *Grain-Based Desserts in the CACFP*.

2. Breakfast Cereals

Breakfast cereals must meet the sugar limit and be made from whole grains, enriched meal and/or enriched flour, bran or germ, or be fortified, to be creditable in the CACFP. Breakfast cereals served to infants, children, and adults may contain up to 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce (no more than 21.2 grams of sugar per 100 grams of dry cereal). Breakfast cereals include ready-to-eat cereals, instant cereals, and hot cereals.

To determine if a breakfast cereal is within the sugar limit, it must meet only **1** (not all) of the following methods:

Method 1

The cereal is listed on **any** State agency's Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) approved breakfast cereal list.

Similar to the CACFP, all WIC-approved breakfast cereals contain no more than 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce (21.2 grams of sugar per 100 grams).

Method 2

The Table of Cereal Serving Sizes in Grams and Sugar Limits.

This method uses the Nutrition Facts Label and a Sugar Limits table to help you determine if a breakfast cereal meets the sugar limit.

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

Step 1: Find the Serving Size in grams (g) on the Nutrition Facts label of the cereal.

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

Step 3: Use the serving size identified in Step 1 to find the serving size of your cereal in the "Table of Cereal Serving Sizes in Grams and Sugar Limits."

Step 4: In the table, look at the number to the right of the serving size amount, under the "Sugars" column. If your cereal has that amount of total sugar, or less, your cereal meets the sugar requirement.

Table of Cereal Serving Sizes in Grams and Sugar Limits

Use this chart to determine if your cereal meets the sugar requirements.

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

*Serving sizes here refer to those found for breakfast cereals on the Nutrition Facts label. See the meal patterns for serving size requirements in the CACFP.

For additional information on breakfast cereals, see the Resource Section on page 133 for information on accessing CACFP Meal Pattern Training Worksheet *Choose Breakfast Cereals That Are Lower in Added Sugars*.

Method 3

Use **1** of the following 2 methods to calculate the sugar content per dry ounce:

1. Standard Method: Use the Nutrition Facts label (in the next column) of the breakfast cereal to calculate the sugar content per dry ounce.

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

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

   Step 3: Divide the number of grams of total sugars by the serving size in grams.

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

Nutrition Facts

About 15 servings per container

Serving size **3/4 cup (30g)**

Amount per serving

Calories **100**

	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 0.5g	**1%**
Saturated Fat 0g	**0%**
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	**0%**
Sodium 140mg	**6%**
Total Carbohydrate 22g	**7%**
Dietary Fiber 3g	**11%**
Total Sugars 5g	
Includes 3g Added Sugars	**6%**
Protein 3g	

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

2. Rounding Method: Use an FNS-provided alternate calculation that uses rounding and aligns with the CACFP Meal Pattern Training Worksheet: *Choose Breakfast Cereals That Are Lower in Added Sugars*. To access the training worksheet, see the Resource Section on page 133.

   Step 1: First, find the serving size in grams at the top of the Nutrition Facts label.

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

   Step 3: If the answer in step 2 ends in 0.5 or more, round the number up to the next whole number. If the answer in step 2 ends in 0.49 or less, round the number down to the next whole number. For example, if the answer in step 2 is 4.24, it is rounded down to 4.

   Step 4: Next, find the Total Sugars line. Look at the number of grams (g) next to Total Sugars.

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

Nutrition Facts

About 15 servings per container

Serving size **3/4 cup (30g)**

Amount per serving

Calories **100**

	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 0.5g	**1%**
Saturated Fat 0g	**0%**
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	**0%**
Sodium 140mg	**6%**
Total Carbohydrate 22g	**7%**
Dietary Fiber 3g	**11%**
Total Sugars 5g	
Includes 4g Added Sugars	**8%**
Protein 2g	

* 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.

EXHIBIT A
GRAINS REQUIREMENTS FOR CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS[1,2]
Color Key: Footnote 5 = Blue, Footnote 3 or 4 = Red

Group A	Ounce Equivalent (oz eq) for Group A	Minimum Serving Size for Group A
• Bread coating • Bread sticks (hard) • Chow mein noodles • Savory crackers (saltines and snack crackers) • Croutons • Pretzels (hard) • Stuffing (dry) (note: weights apply to bread in stuffing)	1 oz eq = 22 g or 0.8 oz ¾ oz eq = 17 g or 0.6 oz ½ oz eq = 11 g or 0.4 oz ¼ oz eq = 6 g or 0.2 oz	1 serving = 20 g or 0.7 oz ¾ serving = 15 g or 0.5 oz ½ serving = 10 g or 0.4 oz ¼ serving = 5 g or 0.2 oz
Group B	**Ounce Equivalent (oz eq) for Group B**	**Minimum Serving Size for Group B**
• Bagels • Batter type coating • Biscuits • Breads–all (for example sliced, French, Italian) • Buns (hamburger and hot dog) • Sweet crackers[5] (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 g or 1.0 oz ¾ oz eq = 21 g or 0.75 oz ½ oz eq = 14 g or 0.5 oz ¼ oz eq = 7 g or 0.25 oz	1 serving = 25 g or 0.9 oz ¾ serving = 19 g or 0.7 oz ½ serving = 13 g or 0.5 oz ¼ serving = 6 g or 0.2 oz

[1] In National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) (grades K-12), at least half of the grains served must meet whole grain-rich criteria and the remaining grain items offered must be enriched or made with enriched or whole-grain meal and/or flour, bran, and/or germ. For information on flexibilities, please contact your State agency. For all other Child Nutrition Programs, grains are whole grain or enriched or made with enriched or whole-grain meal, and/or flour, bran, and/or germ. Under the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) child and adult meal patterns, and in NSLP/SBP preschool meals, at least 1 grain serving per day must meet whole grain-rich criteria.

[2] For NSLP and SBP (grades K-12), grain quantities are determined using ounce equivalents (oz eq). All other Child Nutrition Programs determine grain quantities using grains/bread servings. Beginning Oct. 1, 2021, grain quantities in CACFP and NSLP/SBP infant and preschool meals will be determined using oz eq. Some of the following grains may contain more sugar, salt, and/or fat than others. This should be a consideration when deciding how often to serve them.

[5] Allowed in NSLP (up to 2.0 oz eq grain-based dessert per week in grades K-12) as specified in §210.10. May count toward the grain component in SBP (grades K-12), CACFP, NSLP/SBP infant and preschool meals, and Summer Food Service Program (SFSP).

Group C	Ounce Equivalent (oz eq) for Group C	Minimum Serving Size for Group C
• Cookies[3] (plain–includes vanilla wafers) • Cornbread • Corn muffins • Croissants • Pancakes • Pie crust (dessert pies[3], cobbler[3], fruit turnovers[4], and meat/meat alternate pies) • Waffles	1 oz eq = 34 g or 1.2 oz ¾ oz eq = 26 g or 0.9 oz ½ oz eq = 17 g or 0.6 oz ¼ oz eq = 9 g or 0.3 oz	1 serving = 31 g or 1.1 oz ¾ serving = 23 g or 0.8 oz ½ serving = 16 g or 0.6 oz ¼ serving = 8 g or 0.3 oz
Group D	**Ounce Equivalent (oz eq) for Group D**	**Minimum Serving Size for Group D**
• Doughnuts[4] (cake and yeast raised, unfrosted) • Cereal bars, breakfast bars, granola bars[4] (plain) • Muffins (all, except corn) • Sweet roll[4] (unfrosted) • Toaster pastry[4] (unfrosted)	1 oz eq = 55 g or 2.0 oz ¾ oz eq = 42 g or 1.5 oz ½ oz eq = 28 g or 1.0 oz ¼ oz eq = 14 g or 0.5 oz	1 serving = 50 g or 1.8 oz ¾ serving = 38 g or 1.3 oz ½ serving = 25 g or 0.9 oz ¼ serving = 13 g or 0.5 oz
Group E	**Ounce Equivalent (oz eq) for Group E**	**Minimum Serving Size for Group E**
• Cereal bars, breakfast bars, granola bars[4] (with nuts, dried fruit, and/or chocolate pieces) • Cookies[3] (with nuts, raisins, chocolate pieces and/or fruit purees) • Doughnuts[4] (cake and yeast raised, frosted or glazed) • French toast • Sweet rolls[4] (frosted) • Toaster pastry[4] (frosted)	1 oz eq = 69 g or 2.4 oz ¾ oz eq = 52 g or 1.8 oz ½ oz eq = 35 g or 1.2 oz ¼ oz eq = 18 g or 0.6 oz	1 serving = 63 g or 2.2 oz ¾ serving = 47 g or 1.7 oz ½ serving = 31 g or 1.1 oz ¼ serving = 16 g or 0.6 oz
Group F	**Ounce Equivalent (oz eq) for Group F**	**Minimum Serving Size for Group F**
• Cake[3] (plain, unfrosted) • Coffee cake[4]	1 oz eq = 82 g or 2.9 oz ¾ oz eq = 62 g or 2.2 oz ½ oz eq = 41 g or 1.5 oz ¼ oz eq = 21 g or 0.7 oz	1 serving = 75 g or 2.7 oz ¾ serving = 56 g or 2 oz ½ serving = 38 g or 1.3 oz ¼ serving = 19 g or 0.7 oz

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

[4] Allowable 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 grain component in SBP (grades K-12) and at snack and breakfast meals in SFSP. Considered a grain-based dessert and cannot count toward the grain component in the CACFP and NSLP/SBP infant and preschool meals, as specified in §§226.20(a)(4) and 210.10.

GRAINS

Group G	Ounce Equivalent (oz eq) for Group G	Minimum Serving Size for Group G
• Brownies[3] (plain) • Cake[3] (all varieties, frosted)	1 oz eq = 125 g or 4.4 oz ¾ oz eq = 94 g or 3.3 oz ½ oz eq = 63 g or 2.2 oz ¼ oz eq = 32 g or 1.1 oz	1 serving = 115 g or 4 oz ¾ serving = 86 g or 3 oz ½ serving = 58 g or 2 oz ¼ serving = 29 g or 1 oz
Group H	**Ounce Equivalent (oz eq) for Group H**	**Minimum Serving Size 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 oz (28 g) dry	1 serving = ½ cup cooked or 25 g dry
Group I	**Ounce Equivalent (oz eq) for Group I**	**Minimum Serving Size for Group I**
• Ready-to-eat breakfast cereal (cold, dry)[6,7]	1 oz eq = 1 cup or 1 oz for flakes and rounds 1 oz eq = 1¼ cups or 1 oz for puffed cereal 1 oz eq = ¼ cup or 1 oz for granola	1 serving = ¾ cup or 1 oz, whichever is less

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

[6] Refer to program regulations for the appropriate serving size for supplements served to children ages 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] Cereals must be whole-grain, enriched, fortified, or made with bran, and/or germ; cereals served in CACFP and NSLP/SBP infant and preschool meals must contain no more than 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce.

Use this section as a guide to identify creditable grains and products that contain creditable grains. This is NOT an all-inclusive list. For information on creditable grains commonly served in Child Nutrition Programs, see the *Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs*, commonly referred to as the *Food Buying Guide* (FBG) and *Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs*.

To verify the product contains creditable grains, you also must check the product ingredient list and the product food label.

Remember, grain products must be made with whole grains, enriched meal and/or flour, or bran or germ to credit toward the grains component.

Details in the Additional Information column help you to determine if the product is creditable and where to go to get more information, for example the *Food Buying Guide* or the *Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs*.

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Amaranth	X			Amaranth is creditable as a whole grain. See Group H of Exhibit A. When amaranth is used as an ingredient in another product, crediting is based on the food item being served. See Groups A through I of Exhibit A.
Animal Crackers	X			Animal crackers are credited in the same group as sweet crackers. See Group B of Exhibit A.
Bagels	X			See Group B of Exhibit A.
Bagel Chips	X			See Group B of Exhibit A. These products should be served with caution due to potential choking hazards.
Banana Bread	X			Quick breads are credited in the same group as muffins (other than corn muffins). See Group D of Exhibit A.
Barley		X		Barley is creditable as a grain. See Group H of Exhibit A. When barley is used as an ingredient in another product, crediting is based on the food item being served. See Groups A through I of Exhibit A. Please note that "pot" or "Scotch" barley and "pearl" or "pearled" barley are not creditable because they are not whole grain or enriched.
Bean Pasta/ Noodles			X	Beans are not creditable toward the grains component. See the Meats/Meat Alternates or Vegetables section.

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Biscuits	X			See Group B of Exhibit A.
Boston Brown Bread	X			See Group B of Exhibit A.
Bread Pudding		X		Sweet bread puddings are considered grain-based desserts and cannot count toward the grains component. Savory bread puddings, such as those made with spinach and mushrooms, are not considered grain-based desserts and can count toward the grains component. Please note that bread puddings may contain an insufficient amount of grains per serving. See Group B of Exhibit A for weights of creditable bread (without other ingredients) required per serving. Document with a standardized recipe or a Product Formulation Statement.
Breading/Batter	X			See Groups A and B of Exhibit A for weights of the prepared breading or batter coatings. Many commercial products contain varying amounts of batter/breading. To help ensure the crediting of the product is accurate, purchasing Child Nutrition-labeled items is recommended for products such as commercial fish sticks or chicken or fish nuggets.
Brownies			X	Brownies are considered a grain-based dessert and cannot count toward the grains component.
Buckwheat	X			Buckwheat is a grain. See Group H of Exhibit A. When buckwheat is used as an ingredient in another product, crediting is based on the food item being served. See Groups A through I of Exhibit A.
Bulgur	X			Bulgur is a grain. See Group H of Exhibit A. When bulgur is used as an ingredient in another product, crediting is based on the food item being served. See Groups A through I of Exhibit A.
Buns, Hamburger and Hot Dog	X			See Group B of Exhibit A.

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Cakes			X	Cake is considered a grain-based dessert and cannot count toward the grains component.
Carrot Bread	X			Quick breads are credited in the same group as muffins (other than corn). See Group D of Exhibit A.
Cereal Bars			X	Cereal bars are considered a grain-based dessert and cannot count toward the grains component.
Chips, Corn/Tortilla (Wheat or Corn)	X			See Group B of Exhibit A.
Chips, Potato			X	Potato chips are not creditable. See the Other Foods section in the *Food Buying Guide* for purchasing information.
Chow Mein Noodles	X			See Group A of Exhibit A.
Coffee Cake, Cinnamon/ Danish Rolls			X	Coffee cakes, cinnamon rolls, and Danish rolls are considered grain-based desserts and cannot count toward the grains component.
Cookies			X	Cookies are considered grain-based desserts and cannot count toward the grains component.
Cornbread	X			See Group C of Exhibit A.
Corn Muffins	X			See Group C of Exhibit A.
Cornmeal		X		Cornmeal must be whole grain or enriched when used as an ingredient in another product. Crediting is based on the food item being served, see Groups A through I of Exhibit A.
Corn Pone	X			Corn pone is a cornbread often made without milk or eggs and baked or fried. See Group C of Exhibit A.
Couscous		X		Couscous is a pasta. See Group H of Exhibit A. Please note, not all couscous is whole grain or enriched.

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Crackers–Savory (Saltines and Snack Crackers)	X			See Group A of Exhibit A.
Crackers–Sweet (All Shapes, Animal, Graham)	X			See Group B of Exhibit A.
Cream Puff Shells (Dessert)			X	Cream puff shells are considered grain-based desserts and cannot count toward the grains component.
Crepes	X			Crepes are credited in the same group as pancakes. See Group C of Exhibit A.
Croissants	X			See Group C of Exhibit A.
Croutons	X			See Group A of Exhibit A.
Cupcakes			X	Cupcakes are considered grain-based desserts and cannot count toward the grains component.
Danish Pastries (Danishes)			X	Sweet pastries are considered grain-based desserts and cannot count toward the grains component.
Doughnuts			X	Doughnuts are considered grain-based desserts and cannot count toward the grains component.
Dumplings	X			Dumplings are credited in the same group as biscuits. See Group B of Exhibit A.
Egg Roll Skins/ Wonton Wrappers	X			See Group B of Exhibit A.
Emmer (Wheat)	X			Emmer is a type of wheat. When emmer is used as an ingredient in another product, crediting is based on the food item being served. See Groups A through I of Exhibit A.
English Muffins	X			See Group B of Exhibit A.

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Farina		X		Farina is served as a cooked breakfast cereal. See Group H of Exhibit A. Farina must be whole grain-rich or enriched. Check packaging carefully before purchasing.
Fig Bars			X	Fig bars are considered grain-based desserts and cannot count toward the grains component.
Flour Alternatives (Made from Non-Grain Ingredients)			X	Flour substitutes such as almond flour, bean flour, coconut flour, chickpea flour, hazelnut flour, Jerusalem artichoke flour, legume flour, potato flour, soy flour, and other vegetable flours are not grains and cannot count toward the grains component.
Freekeh	X			Freekeh is a grain and is creditable as a whole grain. See Group H of Exhibit A. When freekeh is used as an ingredient in another product, crediting is based on the food item being served. See Groups A through I of Exhibit A.
French Bread		X		Please note some French breads may not be made with enriched or whole-grain flour. Document with a standardized recipe or a Product Formulation Statement. See Group B of Exhibit A.
French Toast	X			See Group E of Exhibit A. Document crediting information with a CN label, standardized recipe, or a Product Formulation Statement.
Fruit Fritters (such as Apple Fritter)			X	Fruit fritters are considered grain-based desserts and cannot count toward the grains component.
Graham Crackers	X			Graham crackers are credited in the same group as sweet crackers. See Group B of Exhibit A.
Granola Bars			X	Granola bars are considered grain-based desserts and cannot count toward the grains component.
Grits		X		Grits must be whole grain or enriched. See Group H of Exhibit A.
Hominy Grits, Regular, Dry	X			See Group H of Exhibit A.

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Hush Puppies		X		See Group C of Exhibit A. Must be made with an enriched and/or whole-grain flour. Document with a standardized recipe or a Product Formulation Statement. Deep-fat frying is not allowed as a way of preparing foods onsite. Pre-fried bread may count toward the grains component if it is reheated using a method other than deep-fat frying. Please note that this product is high in fat.
Ice Cream Cones			X	Ice cream cones are considered grain-based desserts and cannot count toward the grains component.
Ice Cream Sandwich Wafers			X	Ice cream sandwich wafers are considered grain-based desserts and cannot count toward the grains component.
Italian Bread		X		Please note some Italian breads may not be made with enriched or whole-grain flour. Document with a standardized recipe or a Product Formulation Statement. See Group B of Exhibit A.
Johnny Cake			X	Johnny cake is considered a grain-based dessert and cannot count toward the grains component.
Kasha	X			Kasha is creditable as a whole grain. See Group H of Exhibit A. When kasha is used as an ingredient in another product, crediting is based on the food item being served. See Groups A through I of Exhibit A.
Millet	X			Millet is creditable as a whole grain. See Group H of Exhibit A. When millet is used as an ingredient in another product, crediting is based on the food item being served. See Groups A through I of Exhibit A.
Muffins	X			See Group C of Exhibit A for corn muffins. For all other muffins, see Group D.
Nachos	X			See Group B of Exhibit A for the weights of creditable corn chips (without other ingredients) required per serving. To determine the meal pattern contribution of the other ingredients in the nachos, see the *Food Buying Guide*.
Noodles (Wheat)	X			See Group H of Exhibit A.

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Noodles in Canned Soup	X			Crediting is based on the weight of the noodles alone without other ingredients. See Group H of Exhibit A.
Oatmeal, Instant and Regular	X			Oatmeal must meet the sugar limit for breakfast cereals in the CACFP. When oatmeal is used as an ingredient in another product, crediting is based on the food item being served. See Groups A through I of Exhibit A.
Pancakes	X			See Group B of Exhibit A.
Pie Crust (Savory Pies with Meat/ Meat Alternate and/or Vegetable)		X		The crust portion of savory pies, such as beef or chicken pot pies, may contribute to the grains component. For the weight of the crust alone, see Group C of Exhibit A.
Pie Crust (Dessert Crust)			X	Dessert pie crust is considered a grain-based dessert and cannot count toward the grains component.
Pineapple Upside Down Cake			X	Cake is considered a grain-based dessert and cannot count toward the grains component.
Pita Bread	X			See Group B of Exhibit A.
Pizza Crust	X			See Group B of Exhibit A.
Polenta	X			See Group H of Exhibit A.
Popcorn, Popped	X			See the Grains section in the *Food Buying Guide*. A ¾ cup serving of popcorn credits as 0.25 oz eq grains. A 1 ½ cup serving credits as 0.5 oz eq of grains. A 3 cup serving credits as 1 oz eq of grains. Please note that popcorn may be a choking hazard for some participants.
Potatoes			X	Potatoes are not grains and are not creditable toward the grains component. See the Vegetable section in the *Food Buying Guide* for crediting information.
Potato Pancakes		X		Potatoes are not a grain. Only the enriched or whole-grain flour in the potato pancakes may count toward the grains component. Document with a standardized recipe or a Product Formulation Statement. Typically, potato pancakes contain too little creditable grain flour to contribute to the grains component.

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Pound Cake			X	Pound cake is considered a grain-based dessert and cannot count toward the grains component.
Pretzels, Soft	X			See Group B of Exhibit A.
Pretzels, Hard	X			See Group A of Exhibit A.
Puff Pastry		X		Sweet puff pastries are considered grain-based desserts and cannot count toward the grains component. Savory puff pastries, such as ones made with spinach and mushrooms, are not considered grain-based desserts and can count toward the grains component. Please note that pastries may contain an insufficient amount of grains per serving. See Group B of Exhibit A for weights of creditable bread (without other ingredients) required per serving. Document with a standardized recipe or a Product Formulation Statement.
Pumpernickel Bread	X			See Group B of Exhibit A.
Pumpkin Bread	X			Quick breads are credited in the same group as muffins (other than corn). See Group D of Exhibit A.
Quinoa	X			Quinoa is a cereal-like product and is creditable as a whole grain. See Group H of Exhibit A. When quinoa is used as an ingredient in another product, crediting is based on the food item being served. See Groups A through I of Exhibit A. Quinoa is typically served like rice, but products made from whole-grain or enriched quinoa flour are also creditable.
Raisin Bread	X			Raisin bread is credited the same as breads without raisins. See Group B of Exhibit A.
Rice (Either Enriched White or Brown)	X			See Group H of Exhibit A.

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Rice Flour		X		Rice flour must be whole grain or enriched. Check packaging carefully before purchasing. When rice flour is used as an ingredient in another product, crediting is based on the food item being served. See Groups A through I of Exhibit A.
Rice Pudding			X	Sweet rice pudding is considered a grain-based dessert and cannot count toward the grains component.
Rye	X			Rye is a grain. See Group H of Exhibit A. When rye is used as an ingredient in another product, crediting is based on the food item being served. See Groups A through I of Exhibit A.
Sopapillas			X	Sopapillas are considered grain-based desserts and cannot count toward the grains component.
Sorghum	X			Sorghum is a whole grain. See Group H of Exhibit A. When sorghum is used as an ingredient in another product, crediting is based on the food item being served. See Groups A through I of Exhibit A.
Spelt	X			Spelt is a type of wheat. When spelt is used as an ingredient in another product, crediting is based on the food item being served. See Groups A through I of Exhibit A.
Spoon Bread	X			Spoon bread is credited in the same group as cornbread. See Group C of Exhibit A.
Squash or Zucchini Bread (Quick Bread)	X			Quick breads are credited in the same group as muffins (other than corn). See Group D of Exhibit A.
Stuffing, Bread, Dry	X			See Group A of Exhibit A. Weights apply only to the dry bread in the stuffing.
Sweet Rolls/Buns			X	Sweet rolls are considered grain-based desserts and cannot count toward the grains component.
Tapioca			X	Tapioca is not a grain and is not creditable.

Food	Creditable			Additional Information
	Yes	Maybe	No	
Taco or Tortilla Shells	X			See Group B of Exhibit A.
Taco Chips	X			See Group B of Exhibit A.
Toaster Pastries (for example, Pop Tarts®)			X	Sweet pastries are considered grain-based desserts and cannot count toward the grains component.
Tortilla, Soft (Flour, Whole Wheat, and Corn)	X			See Group B of Exhibit A.
Triticale	X			Triticale is a whole grain. When triticale is used as an ingredient in another product, crediting is based on the food item being served. See Groups A through I of Exhibit A.
Turnover Crust		X		Sweet turnovers are considered to be grain-based desserts and cannot count toward the grains component. Savory turnovers, such as ones made with spinach and mushrooms, are not considered grain-based desserts and can count toward the grains component. For the weight of the crust alone, see Group C of Exhibit A.
Wafers, Vanilla			X	Vanilla wafers are considered grain-based desserts and cannot count toward the grains component.
Waffles	X			See Group C of Exhibit A.
Wheat Berries	X			Wheat berries are whole-wheat kernels. See Group H of Exhibit A. When wheat berries are used as an ingredient in another product, crediting is based on the food item being served. See Groups A through I of Exhibit A.
Wheat Germ/Bran	X			When wheat germ or bran is used as an ingredient in another product, crediting is based on the food item being served. See Groups A through I of Exhibit A.
Wild Rice	X			Wild rice is a whole grain. See Group H of Exhibit A.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT GRAINS

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

   There are several types of acceptable documentation that demonstrate a product is whole grain-rich and meets with program requirements. Some acceptable forms of documentation include:

   Example 1: A product package showing the product is labeled as whole wheat. For example, an empty whole-wheat bread bag or an empty whole-wheat spaghetti box. This only applies to products that have an FDA Standard of Identity. See page 79 for more information on products with an FDA Standard of Identity.

   OR

   Example 2: A product package showing the ingredient list with:

   - A whole grain as the first ingredient (or second after water) and
   - The next two grain ingredients (if any) must be whole grains, enriched grains, bran, or germ.
   - If any, only a small quantity of non-creditable grains (generally less than 2 percent of total product weight).

   This is an example of a product that meets the FNS *Rule of Three* criteria for identifying whole grain-rich products in CACFP. See page 81 for more information.

   Please note: Ingredients are listed by weight with the ingredient weighing the most listed first on the ingredient list.

   OR

Example 3: Documentation from a manufacturer such as product information sheets, information provided on the manufacturer's letterhead, or a Product Formulation Statement (PFS) demonstrating that the whole grains in the product are at least 50 percent of all grains and the remaining grains are enriched grains. For example, the manufacturer's documentation may state:

> Enriched flour (40 percent of grain weight), whole-wheat flour (30 percent of grain weight), and whole oats (30 percent of grain weight).

The combined weight of the 2 whole-grain ingredients (whole-wheat flour and whole oats equals 60 percent) is greater than the enriched wheat flour (at 40 percent), even though the enriched wheat flour is listed first on the ingredient list.

OR

Example 4: A standardized recipe demonstrating that the whole grains in the product make up at least 50 percent of all grains and the other grains are enriched grains. For example, a bread recipe calls for:

> 2 cups of whole-wheat flour and
> 2 cups of enriched flour.

This recipe meets the whole grain-rich requirement because it contains 50 percent whole grains and the remaining grains in the product are enriched.

Please note: The 50 percent whole grains can be in either volume (such as cups) or weight (such as grams or ounces).

OR

Example 5: Product package (for example, an empty box of multi-grain crackers) that includes **1** of the 2 approved FDA whole-grain health claims (see page 80).

OR

Example 6: A valid Child Nutrition (CN) Label for a CN-Labeled entrée item that includes grains.

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

Yes. If a food has **1** of the 2 FDA whole-grain health claims on its packaging, then the food meets the whole grain-rich criteria for CACFP.

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

No. While the Whole Grain Stamps provide useful information on the amount of whole grains in a product, they are not sufficient documentation to determine if a food is whole grain-rich. Products that display a Whole Grain Stamp may also contain high amounts of non-creditable grains, such as non-enriched refined flour. Therefore, the Whole Grain Stamps alone are not sufficient documentation to demonstrate a product is whole grain-rich.

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

   Yes. Grain products that are specifically labeled as "whole-wheat bread," "entire wheat bread," "whole-wheat rolls," "entire wheat rolls," "whole-wheat buns," and "entire wheat buns" are 100 percent whole wheat and are easily identifiable as meeting the whole grain-rich criteria. These products generally will not have any refined grains listed in the ingredient list. If they do, it is considered to be an insignificant amount. Please note that foods with the label "whole grain," "made with whole grains," "made with whole wheat," or "contains whole grains" do not necessarily meet the whole grain-rich criteria. See page 78 for more information.

5. **Is there discretion to choose which meals will include a whole grain-rich food item?**

   Yes. You may choose to serve a whole grain-rich item at any meal or snack as long as you serve at least 1 whole grain-rich food per day over the course of all the meals and snacks served. For example, you may serve a whole grain-rich cereal at breakfast 1 day and whole grain-rich pasta at lunch the next day. This will help expose participants to a variety of whole grains and the wide range of vitamins and minerals that whole grains provide.

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

   No. The whole grain-rich requirement applies to the center or day care home, not to each child or adult participant. If you serve breakfast and lunch and 2 different groups of children or adults are at each meal, only 1 meal must contain a whole grain-rich food.

   It is strongly encouraged that centers and day care homes serving different groups of participants at each meal (such as 1 group of children at breakfast and a second group at lunch) vary the meal in which a whole grain-rich item is served. For example, whole grain-rich toast could be served at breakfast on Monday and brown rice could be served at lunch on Tuesday. This will help ensure that all participants are served a variety of whole grains and benefit from the important nutrients provided.

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

   Yes. If the snack includes a grain, such as crackers, the grain must be whole grain-rich. However, programs that only serve a snack, such as an at-risk afterschool program, are not required to serve a grain at snack because it is not a required component at snack.

8. **What are the criteria for identifying grain-based desserts?**

   In Exhibit A, foods are designated as grain-based desserts with a superscript 3 or 4. These foods cannot be part of a reimbursable meal in the CACFP. There is not a specific amount of sugar, fat, or any other nutrient that qualifies a grain as a dessert. The following items are designated as grain-based desserts: cookies, sweet pie crusts, doughnuts, cereal bars, breakfast bars, granola bars, sweet rolls, toaster pastries, cake, and brownies.

   It is important to note that, in some instances, a food manufacturer may come up with creative marketing names that could mislead the menu planner into serving a product that may not be allowed. When determining whether a food is a grain-based dessert, consider whether the food is commonly thought of as a dessert or treat. See the Resource Section on page 133 for information on accessing CACFP Meal Pattern Training Worksheet *Grain-Based Desserts in the CACFP*.

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

   There are simple ways to switch out foods in place of grain-based desserts, or you can get creative. Some examples include fresh fruit, fruit cups, dried fruit, yogurt parfaits, cheese and whole-grain crackers, or peanut butter and crackers.

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

    Yes. The fruit in the grain-based dessert can credit towards the fruits component if it contains at least an ⅛ cup or 2 tablespoons of recognizable fruit per serving. The grains portion of a grain-based dessert with fruit, such as pies, cobblers, or crisps, cannot count toward the grain component. Serve sweetened fruit in moderation to help reduce children's and adults' consumption of added sugars and help children develop a taste preference for unsweetened fruit.

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

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

12. Is granola cereal a creditable grains item?

Commercial or homemade granola cereal is credited like other breakfast cereals; it must both be made with whole grains, enriched meal and/or enriched flour, bran, or germ, and meet the sugar limit. For information on whole-grain and enriched grain criteria, see page 78. For information on breakfast cereal sugar limits, see page 90. Credit granola cereal using Group I of Exhibit A.

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

Cereal products that have been fortified list added vitamins and minerals in the ingredient list. For example, an ingredient list might read:

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

*Added vitamins and minerals are in bold.

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

No. You may not mix a non-creditable food item with a creditable food item to make the new food item creditable. For example, a provider cannot mix a cereal with 8 g of sugar per dry ounce with a cereal with 4 g of sugar per dry ounce to create a cereal that has 6 g of sugar per dry ounce (the sugar limit for breakfast cereals). It would be challenging for providers and monitors to determine that the mixed cereal meets its respective sugar limit during preparation or review.

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

No. Nuts and seeds are not grains and cannot count toward the grains component, because they do not contain any grains.

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

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

CREDITING IN ACTION: DETERMINING MEAL PATTERN CONTRIBUTIONS

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

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

1. **Meats/Meat Alternates**
2. **Grains**
3. **Vegetables**
4. **Fruits**
5. **Milk**

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

- *Food Buying Guide* Interactive Web-Based Tool
- Downloadable *Food Buying Guide*
- *Food Buying Guide* Mobile App (Includes search and navigation, comparison features for yield information, the Exhibit A Grains Tool, and the ability for users to create and save favorite foods lists.)

See the Resource Section on page 134 for additional information on the *Food Buying Guide*.

You can use the *Food Buying Guide* Interactive Web-Based Tool to determine yields, and the Recipe Analysis Workbook (RAW) to determine the meal pattern contribution (credit) of foods or recipes, and the Exhibit A Grains Tool to determine the ounce equivalent (oz eq) grains or grains/breads serving(s) for grain products. For more information on the FBG, see the Resource Section on page 134.

You can use the FBG to determine crediting for combination foods such as pizza or lasagna that contribute to more than 1 meal component. For example, pizza typically includes grains in the crust, a meat or meat alternate (such as cheese), vegetables (such as tomato paste and mushrooms), and sometimes a fruit topping (such as pineapple). Remember, in order for a meal component to contribute toward a reimbursable meal, food must contain at least the following minimum amounts:

1. **Meats/Meat Alternates: at least 0.25 (¼) ounce equivalent per serving**
2. **Grains: at least 0.25 (¼) ounce equivalent per serving**
3. **Vegetables: at least ⅛ cup (2 tablespoons) per serving**
4. **Fruits: at least ⅛ cup (2 tablespoons) per serving**
5. **Milk: at least ¼ cup (2 fluid ounces) per serving**
   - Milk is only creditable when served in a beverage or over cereal. It only credits with other meal components when contained in a smoothie.

DOCUMENTING MEAL PATTERN CONTRIBUTION

During a program review, the State agencies are responsible for checking your documentation to ensure meal pattern requirements are met. Check with your State Agency (SA) if you are unsure if a food is creditable or if you have questions on what type of documentation is needed. Documentation may include **1** or more of the following:

- *Food Buying Guide*
- Actual food product label with ingredient statement
- Standardized recipe
- Valid Child Nutrition (CN) labels
- Product Formulation Statement (PFS) or other manufacturer documentation

For example, if you use a standardized recipe to prepare a burrito from scratch, no other documentation is needed. To properly document the meal pattern contribution of a commercial burrito, you would need a PFS or a CN label.

CREDITING COMMERCIALLY PROCESSED FOODS

The *Food Buying Guide* lists a number of standard commercially processed foods; for example, baked beans, canned tuna, and ground chicken. If the name on the product label exactly matches the FBG description in the "Food as Purchased, AP" column, you may use the yield information in the FBG to determine the meal pattern contribution (credit) of that food. For example, Vegetarian Baked Beans in Sauce:

Section 1 - Meats/Meat Alternates

1. Food As Purchased, AP	2. Purchase Unit	3. Servings per Purchase Unit, EP	4. Serving Size per Meal Contribution	5. Purchase Units for 100 Servings	6. Additional Information
BEAN PRODUCTS *(continued)*					
Bean Products, dry beans, canned, Beans Baked in Sauce, Vegetarian *Includes USDA Foods*	No. 300 Can (16 oz)	6.94	1/4 cup heated beans with sauce	14.50	1 No. 300 can = about 1 3/4 cups heated beans with sauce
	No. 300 Can (16 oz)	4.62	3/8 cup heated beans with sauce	21.70	1 No. 300 can = about 1 3/4 cups heated beans with sauce

(Example of a commercially processed canned food from the *Food Buying Guide*.)

When crediting combination food products (food items that contribute to more than 1 meal component), only the amount of the food that contributes to each component is counted. For example, pizzas, chicken nuggets, and ravioli count toward the meats/meat alternates component. The amount of meat/meat alternate per serving is used for crediting purposes, not the total portion size which includes other ingredients. Combination foods may contain varied amounts from a meal component. Due to the uncertainty of the actual amount of the meal components contained in the commercial combination food product, for example meat/meat alternate, they cannot be served as part of a reimbursable meal if they are not in the FBG unless:

- They are CN labeled;

OR

- You obtain a Product Formulation Statement (PFS) from the manufacturer that shows how the creditable amount was determined.

Remember that only CN-labeled commercially prepared products provide a warranty on the crediting information on the label. See page 5 for additional information on the Child Nutrition (CN) Labeling Program.

There are varying amounts of food components, such as meat/meat alternate, contained in commercially prepared entrée products. In some cases, you may need to serve a very large portion in order to meet meal pattern requirements. For example, a 15-ounce serving of canned ravioli is needed to provide the required 1½ ounce equivalent meat/meat alternate for children ages 3 through 5, but this quantity of ravioli greatly exceeds the ¼ cup meal pattern requirement for grains. This may be too large of a portion size for preschool children ages 3 through 5 years old. In this instance, it may be best to serve a smaller portion of canned ravioli with a second meat/meat alternate choice to complete the required meat/meat alternate serving size for that meal.

Crediting Recipes

Now let's practice determining how a recipe credits toward the CACFP meal pattern requirements. Determining meal pattern contributions for recipes is an important step in ensuring that meals served are nutritious and meet the CACFP meal pattern requirements.

The *Food Buying Guide* Recipe Analysis Workbook (RAW) is available to help simplify the way you calculate meal pattern contributions for standardized recipes. The RAW is available on the *Food Buying Guide* Interactive Web-Based Tool. We'll use this tool to credit the first recipe. The FBG (Appendix A) contains additional examples for crediting recipes using the RAW. See the Resource Section on page 134 for information to access the FBG.

You can use the *Food Buying Guide* Recipe Analysis Workbook (RAW) on the *Food Buying Guide* Interactive Web-Based Tool to help simplify the way you calculate meal pattern contributions for recipes. The online tool contains a user guide and training videos to help you use the RAW to credit recipes toward meal pattern requirements.

Hands-On Practice: Crediting a Recipe Toward Meal Pattern Requirements

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

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

*The creditable ingredient is in bold.

Using the FBG Interactive Web-Based Tool Recipe Analysis Workbook (RAW), follow these steps to calculate the vegetable contribution per serving:

Step 1: Use the search feature in the RAW to find the food item most similar to the carrots, fresh, sliced from the recipe. Enter carrots in the search and click "search."

Search Results

Meal Component	Category / Subcategory	Food As Purchased, AP	Purchase Unit	Servings per Purchase Unit, EP	Serving Size per Meal Contribution	Additonal Information	Add to RAW
Vegetables	Red/Orange Vegetables CARROTS	**Carrots, fresh** *Without tops*	Pound	10.30	1/4 cup raw vegetable strips (about 3 strips, 4 inch by 1/2 inch)	1 lb AP = 0.70 lb ready-to-cook, or serve raw carrot sticks	Add
Vegetables	Red/Orange Vegetables CARROTS	**Carrots, fresh** *Without tops*	Pound	10.60	1/4 cup raw, chopped vegetable	1 lb AP = 0.83 lb trimmed, peeled carrots	Add
Vegetables	Red/Orange Vegetables CARROTS	**Carrots, fresh** *Without tops*	Pound	15.40	1/4 cup raw, shredded vegetable	1 lb AP = 0.83 lb (about 3-3/4 cups) trimmed, peeled, shredded carrot	Add
Vegetables	Red/Orange Vegetables CARROTS	**Carrots, fresh** *Without tops*	Pound	8.10	1/4 cup raw, shredded vegetable with dressing	1 lb AP = 0.83 lb (about 3-3/4 cups) trimmed, peeled, shredded carrot	Add
Vegetables	Red/Orange Vegetables CARROTS	**Carrots, fresh** *Without tops*	Pound	8.63	1/4 cup cooked, drained, shredded vegetable	1 lb AP = 0.79 lb (about 2-1/8 cups) trimmed, peeled, shredded, cooked carrot; 1 lb AP = 0.83 lb (about 3-3/4 cups) trimmed, peeled, shredded carrot	Add
Vegetables	Red/Orange Vegetables CARROTS	**Carrots, fresh** *Without tops*	Pound	10.90	1/4 cup raw, sliced vegetable	1 lb AP = 0.83 lb (about 2-2/3 cups)	Add
Vegetables	Red/Orange Vegetables CARROTS	**Carrots, fresh** *Without tops*	Pound	8.16	1/4 cup cooked, drained, sliced vegetable (5/16 inch slices)	1 lb AP = 0.76 lb (about 2 cups) cooked, sliced carrots; 1 lb AP = 0.83 lb (about 2-2/3 cups) trimmed, peeled, sliced carrots	Add
Vegetables	Red/Orange Vegetables CARROTS	**Carrots, fresh** *Shredded, Ready-to-use*	Pound	19.90	1/4 cup raw vegetable	1 lb AP = 1 lb shredded carrots ready-to-use (about 4-7/8 cups)	Add

Carrots, fresh
Without tops

Step 2: Choose the food item that most closely matches both the form of the food as it is purchased and as served in the prepared recipe. The carrots in this recipe are purchased raw, but will then be cooked. Choose the option for "carrots, fresh, *without tops*" which will provide 8.16 servings (¼ cups) of cooked, drained, sliced vegetable per pound.

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

Step 3: Identify the **Purchase Unit:**

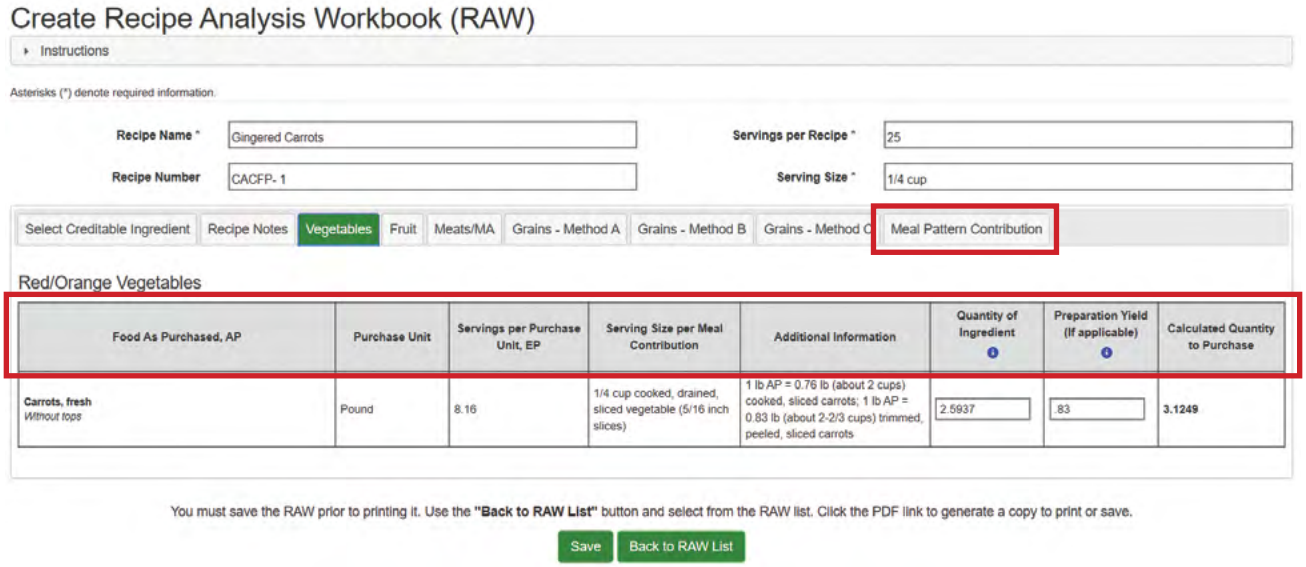
Pound

Step 4: Now, we'll go to the vegetables tab to finish crediting the amount of carrots in our recipe.

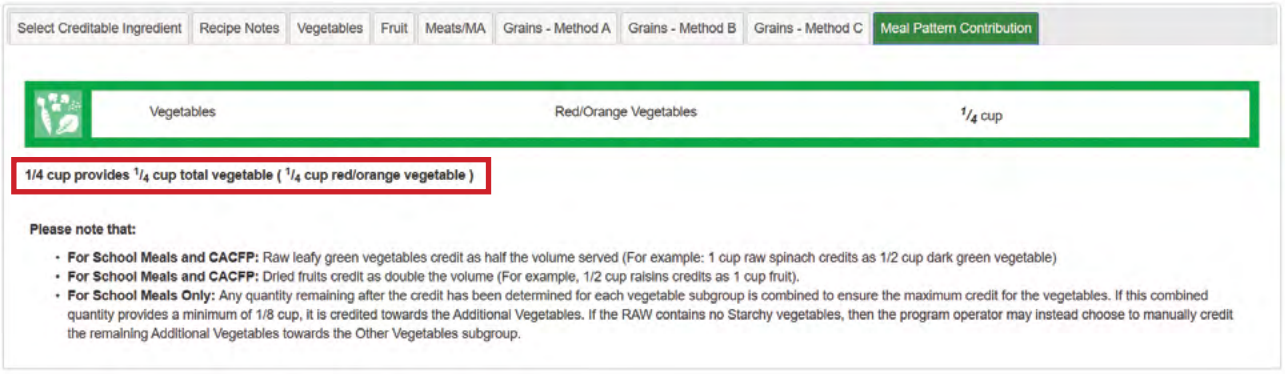
Step 5: Enter the quantity of carrots in the recipe (2 lbs 9½ oz) into the **Quantity of Ingredient** field. Please note you must convert the quantity to pounds in decimals (2.5937). Then locate the preparation yield of 0.83 (from the **Additional Information** column) and enter into the Preparation Yield (if applicable) field.

*The number from the **Additional Information** column is used to determine how many **pounds of** carrots to purchase.

Note: The preparation yield factor should only be used when a recipe ingredient needs to be converted to match the form of the item as listed under *Food As Purchased*, column 1 of the *Food Buying Guide*. If several options are available in *Additional Information*, column 6, choose the yield data that most closely matches the form of the recipe ingredient.



Step 6: Now you can go to the **Meal Pattern Contribution** tab to view how the carrots credit (in volume served) toward the meal pattern:



This recipe provides 25 servings (¼ cup each) of carrots. You can save or print a copy for your files.

You can see how simple it is to use the *Food Buying Guide's* RAW as you determine meal pattern contributions of recipes. We'll credit the remaining recipes using hand calculations to show you an alternative method for determining meal pattern contribution of recipes. The FBG (Appendix A) contains Recipe Analysis Workbook (RAW) templates you may use to do the hand calculations. See the Resource Section on page 134 for information to access the FBG.

Mango Smoothie Bowl–Makes 25 servings

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

*The creditable ingredients are in bold.

Using the FBG, follow these steps to calculate the ounce equivalent meat alternate contribution for low-fat Greek yogurt per serving and to determine how much of the low-fat Greek yogurt to purchase for the recipe:

Step 1: Find the food item most similar to **low-fat Greek yogurt**. Choose the food item that most closely matches both the form of the food as it is purchased and as served in the prepared recipe.

Section 1 - Meats/Meat Alternates

1. Food As Purchased, AP	2. Purchase Unit	3. Servings per Purchase Unit, EP	4. Serving Size per Meal Contribution	5. Purchase Units for 100 Servings	6. Additional Information
YOGURT					
Yogurt, fresh[45] *Plain or Flavored, Sweetened or Unsweetened, Commercially Prepared, (includes Greek yogurt)*	32 oz Container	8.00	1/2 cup or 4 oz yogurt provides 1 oz meat alternate	12.50	
	32 oz Container	5.33	3/4 cup or 6 oz yogurt provides 1-1/2 oz meat alternate	18.80	

Yogurt, fresh
Plain or Flavored, Sweetened or Unsweetened, Commercially Prepared, (includes Greek yogurt)

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

32 ounce container

Step 3: Convert the 6 lbs 4 oz of low-fat Greek yogurt to ounces to match the ounces in the **Purchase Unit**:

6 lb x 16 oz per lb = 96 oz

Add 4 oz to 96 oz = 100 oz

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

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

100 oz ÷ 32 oz in a container of yogurt = 3.125 containers of yogurt. This calculates the quantity of 32-ounce containers of yogurt to purchase (the number of containers required) to yield 100 oz

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

8.00

Step 6: Calculate the number of ounces of meat alternate in the recipe:

3.125 containers of yogurt (32 oz each) x 8 **Servings per Purchase Unit, EP** = 25 total oz eq meat alternate

Step 7: Divide the total oz eq of meat alternate by the number of servings per recipe to determine the oz eq of meat alternate per serving:

25 oz ÷ 25 servings per recipe = 1.0 oz eq meat alternate per serving.

There is a total of 1 oz eq meat/meat alternate per serving.

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

Section 3 - Fruits

1. Food As Purchased, AP	2. Purchase Unit	3. Servings per Purchase Unit, EP	4. Serving Size per Meal Contribution	5. Purchase Units for 100 Servings	6. Additional Information
MANGOES					
Mangoes, fresh *Whole*	Pound	7.60	1/4 cup cubed or sliced fruit	13.20	1 lb AP = 0.69 lb ready-to-serve raw mangoes

Step 1: Find the food item most similar to the frozen mangoes, diced in the recipe. The FBG does not contain information on frozen mangoes. The most similar item is mangoes, fresh, *whole*. Choose the food item that most closely matches both the form of the food as it is purchased and as served in the prepared recipe.

Key Tip: The *Food Buying Guide* contains more than 2,100 food items that are typically served in Child Nutrition Program settings, but it does not contain every food item available. If your food item is not in the FBG, you can use the item most similar to that food. Document which similar food item was used to determine the meal pattern contribution.

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

Pound

Step 3: Because the fresh mangoes are purchased whole and your recipe calls for frozen, diced mangoes, you must convert the quantity of frozen mangoes to match the form of the mangoes as listed under the **Food As Purchased, AP** column.

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

Preparation Yield Factor

The preparation yield factor is the percent of food lost during preparation of the ingredient. It is the quantity of ready-to-cook or cooked food you will get from a pound of food as purchased.

Step 4: Determine the quantity of fresh mangoes required (the calculated quantity to purchase) to provide the quantity of frozen mangoes in the recipe. Divide the weight of the frozen mangoes by the preparation yield:

5 lbs frozen mangoes ÷ 0.69 lb preparation yield = 7.24638 lbs calculated quantity to purchase of the mangoes, fresh, *whole*.

Step 5: Find the **Servings per Purchase Unit, EP** (edible portion) for the mangoes, fresh, *whole* that provide ¼ cup cubed fruit (found under **Serving Size** column):

7.60

Step 6: Calculate the number of ¼ cups of cubed fruit in the recipe using the calculated quantity to purchase:

7.24638 lbs mangoes, fresh, *whole* x 7.6 **Servings per Purchase Unit, EP** = 55.07246 total ¼ cups fruit.

Step 7: Convert the ¼ cups to cups:

55.07246 total ¼ cups ÷ 4 = 13.76812 cups.

Step 8: Divide the total cups by the number of servings per recipe to determine the total cups of fruit per serving:

13.76812 cups ÷ 25 servings per recipe = 0.55072 cup fruit per serving.

Step 9: Round down to the nearest ⅛ cup (see the table below below for converting decimal equivalents to the nearest portion of a cup):

0.55072 cup rounds down to 0.5 cup = ½ cup.

Always rounding down to the nearest ⅛ cup helps ensure the fruit items offered will never contain less credit than what is claimed.

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

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

Use the ranges in the table to identify the servings of fruit in the recipe. You can use this table to identify the amount of fruits or vegetables in any recipe.

A Mango Smoothie Bowl contains a total of ½ **cup fruit per serving**.

Step 10: Write your meal pattern contribution crediting statement to state how the recipe credits toward the CACFP meal pattern requirements:

1 smoothie bowl with ⅔ cup (about 6½ oz) mango smoothie provides 1 oz eq meat/meat alternate and a ½ cup of fruit.

CREDITING GRAIN ITEMS

This handbook focuses on using ounce equivalent to credit grains and specifically how to use Exhibit A (found on page 94) to credit grain products in ounce equivalents. See page 124 for information on calculating ounce equivalent. You may also find information on how to credit foods using grains/breads servings in Exhibit A or the *Food Buying Guide*.

Ounce Equivalents versus Grains/Breads Servings

EXHIBIT A: GRAINS REQUIREMENTS FOR CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS[1,2]

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

Group A	Ounce Equivalent (oz eq) for Group A	Minimum Serving Size for Group A
• Bread coating	1 oz eq = 22 g or 0.8 oz	1 serving = 20 g or 0.7 oz
• Bread sticks (hard)	¾ oz eq = 17 g or 0.6 oz	¾ serving = 15 g or 0.5 oz
• Chow mein noodles	½ oz eq = 11 g or 0.4 oz	½ serving = 10 g or 0.4 oz
• Savory crackers (saltines and snack crackers)	¼ oz eq = 6 g or 0.2 oz	¼ serving = 5 g or 0.2 oz
Group B	**Ounce Equivalent (oz eq) for Group B**	**Minimum Serving Size for Group B**
• Bagels	1 oz eq = 28 g or 1.0 oz	1 serving = 25 g or 0.9 oz
• Batter type coating	¾ oz eq = 21 g or 0.75 oz	¾ serving = 19 g or 0.7 oz
• Biscuits	½ oz eq = 14 g or 0.5 oz	½ serving = 13 g or 0.5 oz
• Breads–all (for example sliced, French, Italian)	¼ oz eq = 7 g or 0.25 oz	¼ serving = 6 g or 0.2 oz

Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs with ounce equivalent and serving highlighted.

As a reminder, an ounce equivalent of grains is slightly heavier (16 grams of grains) than a grains serving (14.75 grams of grains).

Examples of using *Exhibit A*:

If you want to meet half of the grains component with crackers and each cracker weighs 5 grams, you need to serve:

- 2 crackers (10 grams total weight) to meet the minimum serving requirement for a ½ serving of grains
- 3 crackers (15 grams total weight) to ensure you serve at least the 11 grams required for a ½ ounce equivalent of grains.

If you want to meet both the 1 serving and the ounce equivalent grains with a slice of bread that weighs 28 grams per slice, you need to serve:

- 1 slice of bread (28 grams total weight) to meet the minimum serving requirement for 1 grains serving (25 grams).
- 1 slice of bread (28 grams total weight) to meet the 1 ounce equivalent grains requirement (28 grams).

In this example, you need to serve the same amount of bread (1 slice that weighs 28 grams per slice) to meet both the minimum serving for 1 grains serving and for 1 ounce equivalent grains.

CREDITING IN ACTION: DETERMINING MEAL PATTERN CONTRIBUTIONS

Beginning October 1, 2021, grains must be credited using ounce equivalents in the CACFP. Until that time, you may credit based on either grains servings or ounce equivalents.

The final rule requires that grains be credited using ounce equivalents instead of grains/breads servings as credited under the previous meal pattern requirements. This change is consistent with the 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans (Dietary Guidelines), which provide grain recommendations in ounce equivalents.

To determine the ounce equivalent of grains or the grains/breads servings in a recipe containing grain ingredients, use **1** of the following methods:

- Use the weights provided in Exhibit A.

Or

- Information in the FBG

Or

- Calculate the **ounce equivalent grains** or the **grains servings** based on the grams of creditable grain in a food product.
    - Please note, it takes 16 g of creditable grain to provide 1 oz eq grains:
        - Divide the total grams of whole-grain or enriched meal and/or flour, bran, or germ in the recipe by the number of servings the recipe yields and then divide by 16 g to determine the oz eq grains.

For example, 600 g of creditable grains in the recipe divided by 25 servings = 24 g of creditable grains per serving divided by 16 g per oz eq = 1.5 oz eq grains per serving.

600 ÷ 25 ÷ 16 g per oz eq = 1.5 oz eq per serving.

    - Please note, it takes 14.75 g of creditable grains to provide 1 grains/breads serving:
        - Divide the total grams of whole-grain or enriched meal and/or flour, bran, or germ in the recipe by the number of servings that the recipe yields and then divide by 14.75 g to determine the grains/breads servings.

For example, 600 g of creditable grains in the recipe divided by 25 servings = 24 g of creditable grains per serving divided by 14.75 g per oz eq = 1.62711 grains/breads servings.

600 ÷ 25 ÷ 14.75 g per grains serving = 1.62711 grains servings. Round down to the 0.25 amount = 1.5 grains/breads servings.

For the types of food items listed in Exhibit A, Groups H and I, in order for the food item to count as a 1 ounce equivalent or a grains/breads serving, you must use the weights and volumes listed in the appropriate group.

Always round down to the nearest 0.25 amount. For example 1.0, 1.25, 1.5, 1.75. Rounding down helps to ensure the grain items offered will never contain less credit than what is claimed.

Grains Servings Versus Ounce Equivalents—Make the Conversion

EXHIBIT A: GRAINS REQUIREMENTS FOR CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAMS[1,2]

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

Group H	Ounce Equivalent (oz eq) for Group H	Minimum Serving Size 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 oz (28 g) dry	1 serving = ½ cup cooked or 25 g dry
Group I	**Ounce Equivalent (oz eq) for Group I**	**Minimum Serving Size for Group I**
• Ready-to-eat breakfast cereal (cold, dry)[6,7]	1 oz eq = 1 cup or 1 oz for flakes and rounds 1 oz eq = 1¼ cups or 1 oz for puffed cereal 1 oz eq = ¼ cup or 1 oz for granola	1 serving = ¾ cup or 1 oz, whichever is less

Hands-On Practice: Crediting Grain Products Toward Meal Pattern Requirements

For grain products listed in Groups A-G of Exhibit A, each portion must contain at least 16 grams of whole-grain and/or enriched meal and/or flour, bran, or germ to provide a 1 ounce equivalent.

Let's look at a few examples.

Examples for Calculating the Grains Credit for Whole Grain-Rich or Enriched Bread

Enriched Wheat Sandwich Bread

You may purchase bread products from your local grocery store. For these types of commercial products, you may compare the weight per serving information on the Nutrition Facts label of the package against the applicable group in Exhibit A. For example:

Nutrition Facts

23 servings per container

Serving size **1 slice (31g)**

Amount per serving

Calories **70**

	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 1g	**2%**
Saturated Fat 0g	**0%**
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	**0%**
Sodium 140mg	**6%**
Total Carbohydrate 15g	**5%**
Dietary Fiber 2g	**8%**
Total Sugars 1g	
Includes 1g Added Sugars	**2%**
Protein 3g	

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

Step 1: Find the Serving Size on the Nutrition Facts label on the package of Enriched Wheat Sandwich Bread:

1 serving bread = 1 slice = 31 g

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

Breads – all (for example sliced, French, Italian) 1 oz eq = 28 g or 1.0 oz

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

31 ÷ 28 = 1.107 oz eq per serving

Step 4: Round 1.107 oz eq down to nearest 0.25 oz eq. There is 1.0 oz eq grains per slice of bread.

Step 5: Record the quantity served and the grains contribution. For example: 1 slice enriched bread (1 oz eq grains).

Tortilla
(made with enriched grains)

Nutrition Facts

10 servings per package
Serving size 1 tortilla (49g)

Amount per serving
Calories 140

	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 3.5g	**5%**
Saturated Fat 1.5g	**8%**
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	**0%**
Sodium 420mg	**18%**
Total Carbohydrate 24g	**8%**
Dietary Fiber 1g	**4%**
Total Sugars 1g	
Includes 1g Added Sugars	**2%**
Protein 4g	

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

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

1 tortilla = 49 g

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

Tortillas 1 oz eq = 28 g or 1.0 oz

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

49 ÷ 28 = 1.75 oz eq per tortilla

Step 4: Record the quantity served and the oz eq. For example: 1 enriched flour tortilla (1.75 oz eq grains).

Crackers
(made with enriched grains)

Nutrition Facts

About 4 servings per container
Serving size 30g (8 crackers)

Amount per serving
Calories 140

	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 4.5g	**7%**
Saturated Fat 2g	**10%**
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	**0%**
Sodium 280mg	**12%**
Total Carbohydrate 23g	**8%**
Dietary Fiber 1g	**4%**
Total Sugars 1g	
Includes 1g Added Sugars	**2%**
Protein 2g	

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

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

1 serving = 30 g (8 crackers)

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

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

Step 3: Divide 30 g per 8 crackers by 22 g per oz eq:

30 ÷ 22 = 1.36 oz eq per serving.

Step 4: Round 1.36 oz eq down to nearest 0.25 oz eq = 1.25 oz eq per serving of 8 crackers.

Step 5: Record the quantity served and the oz eq. For example: 8 enriched grain crackers (1.25 oz eq grains).

To determine how many crackers you need to serve to provide 1 oz eq of grains, you can do a simple calculation:

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

22 ÷ 30 = 0.73 (73%)

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

0.73 x 8 = 5.86 crackers

Step 3: Round 5.86 crackers up to the next whole cracker:

Round up to 6 crackers

Examples for Calculating the Grains Credit for Whole Grain-Rich or Enriched Pasta

There are 3 methods to calculate an ounce equivalent of pasta:

1. **Cooked volume based on Exhibit A: Pasta is in Group H of Exhibit A.**
   - As a reminder, for any items listed in Group H of Exhibit A, a ½ cup of cooked pasta provides 1 oz eq grains.
2. **Dry weight of the pasta: The standard weight for dry grain is 28 g per oz eq.**
3. **Grams of creditable grains per serving.**

Dry Pasta

Nutrition Facts

8 servings per container

Serving size **32g**

Amount per serving

Calories **100**

	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 0.5g	**1%**
Saturated Fat 0g	**0%**
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	**0%**
Sodium 0mg	**0%**
Total Carbohydrate 20g	**7%**
Dietary Fiber 4g	**14%**
Total Sugars 0.5g	
Includes 0g Added Sugars	**0%**
Protein 3g	

* 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.

For this example, the pasta:

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

Let's try the 3 calculation methods to determine creditable ounce equivalent (oz eq) grains:

1. **To determine oz eq by the cooked volume:**

   ½ cup cooked pasta ÷ ½ cup standard = 1 oz eq

2. **To determine oz eq by dry weight of pasta:**

   32 g dry weight ÷ 28 g standard = 1.14.

   1.14 rounds down to 1 oz eq

3. **To determine oz eq by g of creditable grain:**

   29 g of creditable grains per portion ÷ 28 g standard = 1.03

   1.03 rounds down to 1 oz eq

In this example, the 3 calculation methods result in the same credit amounts. Please note that each of the methods could result in a different answer and, as long as the method was used correctly, the calculated ounce equivalent for any method may be used. Choose and document the method that works best for your program.

Next we will take a look at the steps to calculate the ounce equivalent grains contribution in a recipe.

Example: Calculating the Ounce Equivalent Grains Credit From a Recipe

Use the steps in the Italian Bread recipe example to calculate the ounce equivalent grains in a recipe. Please note that this recipe contains both whole-grain and enriched flours and meals.

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

Italian Bread–Makes 25 slices

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

The creditable grain ingredients are in bold.

Step 1: Convert grain ingredients to ounces in decimals:

Whole-Wheat Flour 1 lb = 16 oz

Enriched Bread Flour 14 oz

White whole-grain cornmeal (because 1 tablespoon of cornmeal weighs less than 1 ounce, the weight is not added to the weight of the other flours).

Note: To convert the weight in pounds to ounces, change weight to pounds in decimals and then multiply by 16 ounces per pound. For example, 1 lb 4 oz = 1.25 lb x 16 oz per pound = 20 oz

Step 2: Convert ounces to grams in decimals:

Whole-Wheat Flour 16 oz x 28.35 g per ounce = 453.6 g

Enriched Bread Flour 14 oz x 28.35 g per ounce = 396.9 g

Step 3: Add the total grams of all grains:

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

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

850.5 total g ÷ 25 = 34.02 g grains per serving

Step 5: Divide the total grams of grains per serving by 16 g per oz eq:

34.02 g of grains per serving ÷ 16 g per oz eq = 2.1262 oz eq grains.

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

2.1262 rounds down to 2 oz eq grains per serving.

1 slice of this Italian bread provides 2 oz eq grains. To provide a 1 oz eq of grains, you could serve a ½ slice of this Italian Bread.

Key Tip: Document both the serving size and the ounce equivalents grains per serving.

WEIGHTS OF COMMONLY USED GRAINS

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

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

Source: USDA National Nutrient Database for Standard Reference

Note: you may also use the Recipe Analysis Workbook (RAW) available on the *Food Buying Guide* Interactive Web-Based Tool to calculate the meal pattern contribution of your recipes. The online tool contains a user guide and training videos to assist you in using the RAW (see the Resource Section on page 133).

SPECIAL CREDITING SITUATIONS FOR GRAINS

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

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

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

Corn grain products must be labeled as whole corn (or other "whole-corn" designations such as whole-grain corn, whole ground corn, or whole-corn flour) or enriched corn (or other "enriched corn" designations such as enriched yellow cornmeal, enriched corn flour, or enriched corn grits) to be creditable with the exception of corn masa, masa harina, or hominy grits, which are considered whole grain.

1. **Alternate Protein Products**
   https://www.fns.usda.gov/cnlabeling/food-manufacturersindustry
   http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/APPindustryfaqs.pdf

2. **Be Food Safe: Food Safety Education**
   http://www.befoodsafe.gov

3. **CACFP meal pattern training tools**
   https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp-training-tools

4. **CACFP Meal Pattern Training Worksheet: Choose Breakfast Cereals That Are Lower in Added Sugars**
   https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/meal-pattern-training-worksheets-cacfp

5. **CACFP Meal Pattern Training Worksheet: Grain-Based Desserts in the Child and Adult Care Food Program**
   https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/meal-pattern-training-worksheets-cacfp

6. **CACFP Nutrition Standards for CACFP Meals and Snacks**
   https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/meals-and-snacks

7. **CACFP Policy Memos**
   https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/policy

8. **Child Care Recipes**
   https://theicn.org/cnrb/recipes-for-child-care/

9. **Child Nutrition Labeling Program**
   https://www.fns.usda.gov/cnlabeling/child-nutrition-cn-labeling-program

10. **Dietary Guidelines for Americans**
    www.dietaryguidelines.gov

11. **Feeding Infants in the Child and Adult Care Food Program**
    https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/feeding-infants-child-and-adult-care-food-program

12. **Final Rule: Child and Adult Care Food Program**
    https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/fr-042516

13. **Food and Nutrition Information**
    www.nutrition.gov

14. **Food and Nutrition Service (FNS)**
    https://www.fns.usda.gov

15. **Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs**
    https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/food-buying-guide-for-child-nutrition-programs

16. **Food Safety**
    https://www.fns.usda.gov/ofs/food-safety

17. **My Plate (ChooseMyPlate)**
    https://www.choosemyplate.gov/

18. **My Plate in Spanish (Mi Plato en Español)**
    https://www.choosemyplate.gov/multilanguage-spanish

19. **Produce Safety**
    https://www.fns.usda.gov/ofs/produce-safety

20. **Product Formulation Statement**
    http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/cn/manufacturerPFStipsheet.pdf

21. **State Agency Contact Information**
    https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/cacfp-contacts

22. **Team Nutrition Materials**
    https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/

23. **Team Nutrition Materials (in Spanish)**
    https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/spanish-materials-available-team-nutrition

24. The Institute of Child Nutrition
https://theicn.org/

25. USDA Foods
http://www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/food-distribution-programs
https://whatscooking.fns.usda.gov/fdd/household-material-fact-sheets

26. USDA Standardized Recipes
https://theicn.org/cnrb/

27. WIC State Agency Contacts
https://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/wic-contacts

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