Nutrition Policies and Guidance for the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)

Meal Pattern Requirements FOR CACFP CHILD CARE PROGRAMS

Child Care Centers · Family Day Care Homes
Emergency Shelters · At-risk Afterschool Care Centers

October 1, 2017, Through September 30, 2019

Revised December 2017

Connecticut State Department of Education
Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education
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Hartford, CT 06103
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ABOUT THIS GUIDE

The Connecticut State Department of Education’s (CSDE) Meal Pattern Requirements for CACFP Child Care Programs applies to CACFP child care centers, at-risk afterschool care centers, emergency shelters, and family day care homes. This guide provides information on the CACFP meal patterns for children, which are based on the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) final rule, Child and Adult Care Food Program: Meal Pattern Revisions Related to the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (81 FR 24348), the Final Rule Corrections, and USDA policies for the CACFP.

This guide is effective October 1, 2017, through September 30, 2019. Effective October 1, 2019, the serving sizes for the grains component change to ounce equivalents. Prior to this change, the CSDE will revise this guide to include the new requirements for ounce equivalents.

The mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations does not imply approval or endorsement by the CSDE or the USDA.

The contents of this guide are subject to change. The CSDE will update this guide as the USDA issues additional policies and guidance for the CACFP. Please check the CSDE’s Meal Patterns for CACFP Child Care Programs webpage for the most current version.

For more information, contact Susan S. Fiore, M.S., R.D., Nutrition Education Coordinator, at susan.fiore@ct.gov or 860-807-2075.
CSDE CONTACT INFORMATION

For questions regarding the CACFP meal patterns for children, please contact the CACFP staff in the CSDE’s Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>CACFP Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

APP alternate protein products
CACFP Child and Adult Care Food Program
CCCNS Connecticut Child Care Nutrition Standards
CFR Code of Federal Regulations
CN Child Nutrition
CNP Child Nutrition Programs
CSDE Connecticut State Department of Education
FBG Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs (USDA)
FDA Food and Drug Administration
FNS Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture
HHFKA Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act
ICN Institute of Child Nutrition (formerly National Food Service Management Institute)
NSLP National School Lunch Program
OVS offer versus serve
PFS product formulation statement
POS point of service
SBP School Breakfast Program
SFA school food authority
USDA United States Department of Agriculture
WGR whole grain-rich
WIC Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children
1 — CACFP Meal Patterns for Children

The new CACFP meal patterns for children took effect on October 1, 2017. They are based on the USDA’s final rule, *Child and Adult Care Food Program: Meal Pattern Revisions Related to the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010* (81 FR 24348), released on April 25, 2016, and the *Final Rule Corrections*, released on November 1, 2016. The CACFP meal patterns for children apply to:

- children ages 1-12;
- children ages 15 and younger of migrant workers;
- children of any age with disabilities; and
- children through age 18 in at-risk afterschool care centers and emergency shelters.

Meals for infants (birth through 11 months) must follow the CACFP infant meal patterns. For more information, see the CSDE’s *Feeding Infants in CACFP Child Care Programs* webpage.

The USDA’s final rule updates the CACFP meal patterns for children to better align with the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, as required by the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010. The new CACFP meal patterns for children require CACFP facilities to serve more whole grains and a greater variety of vegetables and fruits, and reduce the amount of added sugars and solid fats in meals. They also better align the CACFP with the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), and other Child Nutrition Programs.

The CACFP’s goal is to improve and maintain children’s health and nutrition while promoting the development of good eating habits. The CACFP meal patterns for children are designed to meet children’s needs for calories and key nutrients. To receive reimbursement for meals and snacks served to children, CACFP facilities (child care centers, at-risk afterschool care centers, emergency shelters, and family day care homes) must provide all required food components in the appropriate serving size for each age group.

**OVERVIEW OF CHANGES**

The new CACFP meal patterns for children include the changes below.

- Flavored milk cannot be served to children ages 1-5.
- Flavored fat-free milk can be served to children ages 6 and older, but the USDA recommends serving only unflavored milk.
- Grain-based desserts do not credit as the grains component.
- Breakfast cereals cannot contain more than 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce.
- Grain servings are based on ounce equivalents effective October 1, 2019.
- Yogurt and soy yogurt cannot contain more than 23 grams of sugar per 6 ounces (no more than 3.83 grams per ounce).
- Vegetables and fruits are two separate components.
Vegetables may substitute for the entire fruits component at any lunch.
Juice credits as the vegetables component or fruits component at only one meal or snack per day.
Foods cannot be deep-fat fried on site, i.e., cooking by submerging food in hot oil or other fat.
Parents and guardians may provide one meal component for children without a disability who have medical or special dietary needs. Note: As of the date of this publication, the USDA has not released policy guidance on the implementation requirements for this provision. Until the USDA guidance is released, CACFP facilities cannot claim reimbursement for meals that contain a family-provided meal component for children without a disability that restricts their diet.
Offer versus serve can be implemented in at-risk afterschool child care centers.

This guide provides detailed information on these changes and the requirements of the CACFP meal patterns for children.

**TRANSITION PERIOD**
CACFP facilities must implement all provisions of the new meal patterns effective October 1, 2017. During fiscal year 2018 (October 1, 2017, through September 30, 2018), the USDA is providing a transition period that allows state agencies to provide technical assistance in lieu of fiscal action when they observe violations related to the new CACFP meal patterns for children.

The CSDE will work with CACFP facilities that are not meeting the new CACFP meal patterns for children to identify the necessary actions for compliance. As long as CACFP facilities are making a good faith effort to comply with the updated requirements, the CSDE cannot disallow meals and cannot find CACFP facilities seriously deficient when meals fall short of the new CACFP meal patterns for children during this transition period.

However, as currently required, the CSDE must continue to take immediate fiscal action if a meal is completely missing one or more of the required food components. For more information, see USDA Memo SP 30-2017 CACFP 13-2017: Transition Period for the Updated Child and Adult Care Food Program Meal Patterns and the Updated National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program Infant and Preschool Meal Patterns.
AGE GROUPS
The CACFP meal patterns for children consist of minimum servings of food components for four age groups:

- ages 1-2;
- ages 3-5;
- ages 6-12; and
- ages 3-18 (only for at-risk afterschool programs and emergency shelters).

The minimum serving sizes in the CACFP meal patterns may not be sufficient for older children. Menu planners may choose to provide additional foods or larger serving sizes. For example, a breakfast menu of \(\frac{1}{4}\) cup of oatmeal, \(\frac{1}{2}\) cup of orange slices, and \(\frac{3}{4}\) cup of milk may be adequate for a 3-year-old, but a 5-year-old may need a larger serving size (such as \(\frac{1}{2}\) cup of oatmeal) or additional food items (such as another fruit serving).

The meal patterns for ages 13-18 in at-risk afterschool care programs and emergency shelters are the same as the meal patterns for ages 6-12. Larger portion sizes may be needed to meet these older children’s nutritional needs.

REIMBURSABLE MEALS
The USDA reimburses CACFP facilities for meals and snacks served to children, not for individual foods. A meal or snack is reimbursable if it complies with the CACFP meal patterns for children and contains the required food components in the minimum serving for each age group. Meals that contain foods in addition to the required food components are also reimbursable. However, the CSDE encourages CACFP facilities to choose nutrient-dense foods for additional servings, e.g., vegetables, fruits, whole grains, low-fat and nonfat milk products, lean meats, fish, poultry, and legumes.

FOOD COMPONENTS
A food component is one of the five food groups that comprise the reimbursable meal, including milk, meat/meat alternates, vegetables, fruits, and grains. Menu items contribute to the food components. A menu item is any planned main dish, vegetable, fruit, bread, grain, or milk. For example, a menu item of a hamburger (meat/meat alternates component) on a whole-grain bun (grains component) contributes to two food components. Table 1-1 indicates the required servings of each food component for breakfast, lunch, supper, and snack.
Table 1-1. Required Servings for CACFP Meals for Children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Breakfast</th>
<th>Lunch and Supper</th>
<th>Snack (Supplement)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Three Food Servings ¹</td>
<td>Five Food Servings ¹</td>
<td>Two Food Servings ¹,²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● One serving of milk</td>
<td>● One serving of meat/meat alternates</td>
<td>● One serving of meat/meat alternates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● One serving of vegetables, fruits, or both</td>
<td>● One serving of milk</td>
<td>● One serving of milk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● One serving of grains ³</td>
<td>● One serving of vegetables ⁴</td>
<td>● One serving of vegetables ⁴</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● One serving of fruits</td>
<td>● One serving of fruits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>● One serving of grains</td>
<td>● One serving of grains</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ A serving is the amount specified for each age group in the CACFP meal patterns for children.
² Snack must consist of two of the five components.
³ Meat/meat alternates may substitute for the entire grains component at breakfast up to three times per week.
⁴ Vegetables may substitute for the entire fruits component at lunch and supper. If the meal includes two servings of vegetables, they must be two different kinds.
The following pages include the CACFP meal patterns for children for breakfast (table 1-2), lunch and supper (table 1-3), and snack (table 1-4). A handout of the CACFP meal patterns for children is available on the CSDE’s Meal Patterns for CACFP Child Care Programs webpage.

### Table 1-2. CACFP Breakfast Meal Pattern for Children

**OCTOBER 1, 2017, THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30, 2019**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food Components ¹</th>
<th>Ages 1-2</th>
<th>Ages 3-5</th>
<th>Ages 6-12</th>
<th>Ages 13-18 ² (at-risk afterschool programs and emergency shelters)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Milk, fluid ³</td>
<td>4 fluid ounces (fl oz) (½ cup)</td>
<td>6 fl oz (¾ cup)</td>
<td>8 fl oz (1 cup)</td>
<td>8 fl oz (1 cup)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetables, fruits, or portions of both ⁴, ⁵, ⁶</td>
<td>¼ cup</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grains ⁷, ⁸, ⁹</td>
<td>½ slice</td>
<td>½ slice</td>
<td>1 slice</td>
<td>1 slice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole grain-rich (WGR) or enriched bread</td>
<td>½ slice</td>
<td>½ slice</td>
<td>1 slice</td>
<td>1 slice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WGR or enriched bread product, e.g., biscuit, roll, or muffin</td>
<td>½ serving</td>
<td>½ serving</td>
<td>1 serving</td>
<td>1 serving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WGR, enriched or fortified cooked breakfast cereal ¹⁰, cereal grain ¹¹, or pasta</td>
<td>¼ cup</td>
<td>¼ cup</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WGR, enriched or fortified ready-to-eat (RTE) breakfast cereal (dry, cold) ¹⁰, ¹²</td>
<td>¼ cup</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
<td>¾ cup</td>
<td>¾ cup</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See next page for important menu planning notes
### Table 1.2. CACFP Breakfast Meal Pattern for Children, continued

#### Menu Planning Notes for Breakfast

1. Breakfast must include all three components.

2. This age group applies only to at-risk afterschool programs and emergency shelters. Larger portion sizes may be needed to meet the nutritional needs of children ages 13-18.

3. Serve unflavored whole milk to age 1 and unflavored low-fat (1%) or unflavored fat-free milk to ages 2 and older. Flavored fat-free milk can be served to ages 6 and older, but the USDA’s *CACFP Best Practices* recommends serving only unflavored milk.

4. Pasteurized full-strength juice can meet the vegetables or fruits component at only one meal or snack per day. Juice includes all fruit and vegetable juice, frozen pops made from 100 percent juice, pureed fruits and vegetables in smoothies, and juice from canned fruit in 100 percent juice. For more information, see the CSDE’s handouts, *Crediting Juice in the CACFP* and *Crediting Smoothies in the CACFP*.

5. The USDA’s *CACFP Best Practices* recommends at least one serving per week of dark green vegetables, red and orange vegetables, beans and peas (legumes), starchy vegetables, and other vegetables. For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, *Vegetable Subgroups in the CACFP*. Raw leafy greens credit as half the volume served, e.g., ½ cup of spinach credits as ¼ cup of vegetable.

6. The USDA’s *CACFP Best Practices* recommends serving whole fruits (fresh, canned, dried, or frozen) more often than juice. Dried fruit credits as twice the volume served, e.g., ¼ cup of raisins credits as ½ cup of fruit.

The USDA’s *CACFP Best Practices* recommends at least two servings of WGR grains per day. WGR foods contain at least 50 percent whole grains and any remaining grains are enriched. For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, *Whole Grain-rich Criteria for the CACFP*. Except for sweet crackers such as graham crackers and animal crackers, grain-based desserts cannot credit, e.g., cookies, sweet pie crusts, doughnuts, cereal bars, granola bars, sweet rolls, pastries, toaster pastries, cake, and brownies. The CSDE recommends that sweet crackers are not served more than twice per week between all meals and snacks.

8. Beginning October 1, 2019, ounce equivalents are used to determine the quantity of creditable grains. For more information, see CSDE’s handout, *WGR Ounce Equivalents for the CACFP*.

9. Meat/meat alternates may substitute for the entire grains component at breakfast up to three times per week. One ounce of meat/meat alternates substitutes for one ounce of grains.

10. Breakfast cereals cannot contain more than 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce (no more than 21.2 grams of sucrose and other sugars per 100 grams of dry cereal). For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, *Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP*.

11. Examples of cereal grains include amaranth, barley, buckwheat, cornmeal, corn grits, kasha, millet, oats, quinoa, wheat berries, and rolled wheat.

12. Beginning October 1, 2019, the minimum serving size for cold breakfast cereals is based on ounce equivalents. For flakes or rounds, a serving is ½ cup for ages 1-2 and 3-5, and 1 cup for ages 6-12 and 13-18. For puffed cereal, a serving is ¼ cup for ages 1-2 and 3-5, and 1 ¼ cups for ages 6-12 and 13-18. For granola, a serving is ¼ cup for ages 1-2 and 3-5, and ¼ cup for ages 6-12 and 13-18.
**Table 1-3. CACFP Lunch and Supper Meal Pattern for Children**

**OCTOBER 1, 2017, THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30, 2019**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food Components ¹</th>
<th>Ages 1-2</th>
<th>Ages 3-5</th>
<th>Ages 6-12</th>
<th>Ages 13-18 ² (at-risk afterschool programs and emergency shelters)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Milk, fluid ³</strong></td>
<td>4 fl oz (½ cup)</td>
<td>6 fl oz (¾ cup)</td>
<td>8 fl oz (1 cup)</td>
<td>8 fl oz (1 cup)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Meat/Meat Alternates ⁴</strong></td>
<td>1 ounce</td>
<td>1 ½ ounces</td>
<td>2 ounces</td>
<td>2 ounces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lean meat, poultry, or fish</td>
<td>1 ounce</td>
<td>1 ½ ounces</td>
<td>2 ounces</td>
<td>2 ounces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tofu, soy product, or alternate protein products (APP) ⁵</td>
<td>1 ounce</td>
<td>1 ½ ounces</td>
<td>2 ounces</td>
<td>2 ounces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheese</td>
<td>1 ounce</td>
<td>1 ½ ounces</td>
<td>2 ounces</td>
<td>2 ounces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cottage cheese</td>
<td>¼ cup</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egg, large</td>
<td>½</td>
<td>¾</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooked dry beans or peas or lentils</td>
<td>¾ cup</td>
<td>¾</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peanut butter, soy nut butter, or other nut or seed butters</td>
<td>2 tablespoons</td>
<td>3 tablespoons</td>
<td>4 tablespoons</td>
<td>4 tablespoons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peanuts, soy nuts, tree nuts, or seeds ⁶</td>
<td>½ ounce = 50%</td>
<td>¾ ounce = 50%</td>
<td>1 ounce = 50%</td>
<td>1 ounce = 50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yogurt or soy yogurt, plain or flavored, unsweetened or sweetened ⁷</td>
<td>4 ounces or ½ cup</td>
<td>6 ounces or ¾ cup</td>
<td>8 ounces or 1 cup</td>
<td>8 ounces or 1 cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vegetables ⁸, ⁹</strong></td>
<td>½ cup</td>
<td>¼ cup</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fruits ⁸, ¹⁰, ¹¹</strong></td>
<td>½ cup</td>
<td>¼ cup</td>
<td>¼ cup</td>
<td>¼ cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grains ¹², ¹³</strong></td>
<td>½ slice</td>
<td>½ slice</td>
<td>1 slice</td>
<td>1 slice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WGR or enriched bread</td>
<td>½ slice</td>
<td>½ slice</td>
<td>1 slice</td>
<td>1 slice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WGR or enriched bread product, e.g., biscuit, roll, or muffin</td>
<td>½ serving</td>
<td>½ serving</td>
<td>1 serving</td>
<td>1 serving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WGR, enriched or fortified cooked breakfast cereal ¹⁴, cereal grain ¹⁵, or pasta</td>
<td>¼ cup</td>
<td>¼ cup</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WGR, enriched or fortified RTE breakfast cereal (dry, cold) ¹⁴, ¹⁶</td>
<td>¼ cup</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
<td>¾ cup</td>
<td>¾ cup</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*See next page for important menu planning notes*
**Table 1-3. CACFP Lunch and Supper Meal Pattern for Children, continued**

**Menu Planning Notes for Lunch and Supper**

1. Lunch and supper must include all five components.
2. This age group applies only to at-risk afterschool programs and emergency shelters. Larger portion sizes may be needed to meet the nutritional needs of children ages 13-18.
3. Serve unflavored whole milk to age 1 and unflavored low-fat (1%) or unflavored fat-free milk to ages 2 and older. Flavored fat-free milk can be served to ages 6 and older, but the USDA’s *CACFP Best Practices* recommends serving only unflavored milk.
4. A serving is the edible portion of cooked lean meat, poultry, or fish, e.g., cooked lean meat without bone, breading, binders, fillers, or other ingredients. The USDA’s *CACFP Best Practices* recommends serving only lean meats, nuts, and legumes; limiting processed meats to one serving per week; and serving only low-fat or reduced-fat natural cheese.
5. APP must meet the requirements in appendix A of the CACFP regulations (7 CFR 226). Tofu must contain at least 5 grams of protein in 2.2 ounces (weight) or ¼ cup (volume). For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, *Requirements for Alternate Protein Products in the CACFP and Crediting Tofu in the CACFP*.
6. Creditable nuts and seeds include almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, filberts, macadamia nuts, peanuts, pecans, walnuts, pine nuts, pistachios, and soy nuts. Children younger than 4 are at the highest risk of choking. The USDA recommends that any nuts or seeds served to young children are in a prepared food and are ground or finely chopped. For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, *Crediting Nuts and Seeds in the CACFP*.
7. Yogurt and soy yogurt cannot contain more than 23 grams of total sugars per 6 ounces (no more than 3.83 grams per ounce). For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, *Crediting Yogurt in the CACFP*.
8. Pasteurized full-strength juice can meet the vegetables or fruits component at one meal or snack per day. Juice includes all fruit and vegetable juice, frozen pops made from 100 percent juice, pureed fruits and vegetables in smoothies, and juice from canned fruit in 100 percent juice. For more information, see the CSDE’s handouts, *Crediting Juice in the CACFP* and *Crediting Smoothies in the CACFP*.
9. Raw leafy greens such as lettuce or spinach credit as half the volume served, e.g., ½ cup of raw leafy greens credits as ¼ cup of vegetable. The USDA’s *CACFP Best Practices* recommends at least one serving per week of dark green vegetables, red and orange vegetables, beans and peas (legumes), starchy vegetables, and other vegetables. For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, *Vegetable Subgroups in the CACFP*.
10. Vegetables can substitute for the entire fruits component at lunch or supper. If serving two vegetables, they must be two different kinds.
11. The USDA’s *CACFP Best Practices* recommends serving whole fruits (fresh, canned, dried, or frozen) more often than juice. Dried fruit credits as twice the volume served, e.g., ¼ cup of raisins credits as ½ cup of fruit.
12. Through September 30, 2019, all grains must meet the minimum weights in *Serving Sizes for Grains in the CACFP*. Beginning October 1, 2019, all grains must meet the minimum weights in *WGR Ounce Equivalents for the CACFP*. At least one serving per day must be WGR. The USDA’s *CACFP Best Practices* recommends at least two servings of WGR grains per day. WGR foods contain at least 50 percent whole grains and any remaining grains are enriched. For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, *Whole Grain-rich Criteria for the CACFP*. Except for sweet crackers such as graham crackers and animal crackers, grain-based desserts cannot contain credit, e.g., cookies, sweet pie crusts, doughnuts, cereal bars, granola bars, sweet rolls, pastries, toaster pastries, cake, and brownies. The CSDE recommends that sweet crackers are not served more than twice per week between all meals and snacks.
13. Beginning October 1, 2019, ounce equivalents are used to determine the quantity of creditable grains. For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, *WGR Ounce Equivalents for the CACFP*.
14. Breakfast cereals cannot contain more than 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce (no more than 21.2 grams of sucrose and other sugars per 100 grams of dry cereal). For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, *Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP*.
15. Examples of cereal grains include amaranth, barley, buckwheat, cornmeal, corn grits, kasha, millet, oats, quinoa, wheat berries, and rolled wheat.
16. Beginning October 1, 2019, the minimum serving size for cold breakfast cereals is based on ounce equivalents. For flakes or rounds, a serving is ½ cup for ages 1-2 and 3-5, and 1 cup for ages 6-12 and 13-18. For puffed cereal, a serving is ¼ cup for ages 1-2 and 3-5, and 1 ¼ cups for ages 6-12 and 13-18. For granola, a serving is ½ cup for ages 1-2 and 3-5, and ¼ cup for ages 6-12 and 13-18.
Table 1-4. CACFP Snack Meal Pattern for Children

OCTOBER 1, 2017, THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30, 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food Components ¹</th>
<th>Ages 1-2</th>
<th>Ages 3-5</th>
<th>Ages 6-12</th>
<th>Ages 13-18 ² (at-risk afterschool programs and emergency shelters)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Serve any two of the five components</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milk, fluid ³</td>
<td>4 fl oz (¼ cup)</td>
<td>4 fl oz (¼ cup)</td>
<td>8 fl oz (1 cup)</td>
<td>8 fl oz (1 cup)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meat/Meat Alternates ⁴</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lean meat, poultry, or fish</td>
<td>¼ ounce</td>
<td>¼ ounce</td>
<td>1 ounce</td>
<td>1 ounce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tofu, soy product, or APP ⁵</td>
<td>¼ ounce</td>
<td>¼ ounce</td>
<td>1 ounce</td>
<td>1 ounce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cheese</td>
<td>¼ ounce</td>
<td>¼ ounce</td>
<td>1 ounce</td>
<td>1 ounce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cottage cheese</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
<td>¼ cup</td>
<td>¼ cup</td>
<td>¼ cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egg, large</td>
<td>½</td>
<td>½</td>
<td>½</td>
<td>½</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooked dry beans or peas or</td>
<td>¼ cup</td>
<td>¼ cup</td>
<td>¼ cup</td>
<td>¼ cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peanut butter, soy nut butter, or other nut or seed butters</td>
<td>1 tablespoon</td>
<td>1 tablespoon</td>
<td>2 tablespoons</td>
<td>2 tablespoons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peanuts, soy nuts, tree nuts, or seeds ⁶</td>
<td>¼ ounce</td>
<td>¼ ounce</td>
<td>1 ounce</td>
<td>1 ounce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yogurt or soy yogurt, plain or flavored, unsweetened or sweetened ⁷</td>
<td>2 ounces or ¼ cup</td>
<td>2 ounces or ¼ cup</td>
<td>4 ounces or ¼ cup</td>
<td>4 ounces or ¼ cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetables ⁸, ⁹</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
<td>¾ cup</td>
<td>¾ cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fruits ⁸, ¹⁰</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
<td>¾ cup</td>
<td>¾ cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grains ¹¹, ¹²</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WGR or enriched bread</td>
<td>½ slice</td>
<td>½ slice</td>
<td>1 slice</td>
<td>1 slice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WGR or enriched bread product, e.g., biscuit, roll, or muffin</td>
<td>½ serving</td>
<td>½ serving</td>
<td>1 serving</td>
<td>1 serving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WGR, enriched or fortified cooked breakfast cereal ¹³, cereal grain ¹⁴, or pasta</td>
<td>¼ cup</td>
<td>¼ cup</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WGR, enriched or fortified RTE breakfast cereal (dry, cold) ¹³, ¹⁵</td>
<td>¼ cup</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
<td>¾ cup</td>
<td>¾ cup</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See next page for important menu planning notes
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Menu Planning Notes for Snack</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
MENU PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS

The new CACFP meal patterns for children better align the CACFP with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, which provide recommendations that help Americans ages 2 and older make healthy food and beverage choices. The Dietary Guidelines encourages a variety of nutrient-dense foods (vegetables, fruits, whole grains, low-fat and nonfat milk products, lean meats, fish, poultry, and dry beans), while limiting added sugars, saturated fats, and sodium.

CACFP facilities can ensure that meals and snacks meet the Dietary Guidelines by following the CSDE’s Connecticut Child Care Nutrition Standards (CCNS). The CCCNS reflects current nutrition science and national health recommendations, and provides the healthiest choices for infants and children in child care by promoting whole or minimally processed nutrient-rich foods that are low in fat, added sugars, and sodium. For more information, see the CSDE’s Action Guide for Child Care Nutrition and Physical Activity Policies, and Planning Healthy Meals in CACFP Child Care Programs webpage.

CHECKLIST FOR CACFP MENUS

The checklist below helps CACFP facilities evaluate menus for compliance with the CACFP meal patterns for children. For detailed guidance on each food component, see section 3. For information on the required menu records for documenting meal pattern compliance, see section 2.

Breakfast

- Breakfasts include one serving of grains; one serving of vegetables, fruits, or both; and one serving of milk. The required serving for each component is at least the minimum amount for each age group in the CACFP breakfast meal pattern (see table 1-2 in this section).

- Breakfast menus that include meat/meat alternates substituted for grains comply with the weekly limit for meat/meat alternate substitutions. Meat/meat alternates may substitute for the entire grains component at breakfast up to three times per week. One ounce of meat/meat alternates substitutes for one ounce of grains.

- If the menu indicates “juice” or “fruit,” the CACFP facility indicates the specific varieties of juice and fruit served. This information can be listed on the CACFP menu, daily production record, or other menu documentation such as a list of all types of juice and fruit served in CACFP meals and snacks.
If the menu indicates “cereal,” the CACFP facility indicates the specific varieties (type and brand) of hot and cold cereals, and whether they are WGR or enriched. Menu planners can write “WGR” next to the product name to indicate that a product is WGR. For example, “General Mills Cheerios (WGR)” or “Quaker Oatmeal (WGR).” This information can be listed on the CACFP menu, daily production record, or other menu documentation such as a list of all cereals served in CACFP meals and snacks.

Cold and hot breakfast cereals are whole grain, WGR, enriched, or fortified; contain no more than 6 grams of sugars per dry ounce; and provide the minimum serving for each age group indicated in Serving Sizes for Grains in the CACFP (through September 30, 2019). Menu planners can use the CSDE’s Child Care Worksheet 2: Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP to determine crediting information for breakfast cereals.

If the CACFP facility serves cereal with milk, the menu lists the specific type of cereal as one component (e.g., “whole-grain granola”) and the specific type of fluid milk as another (e.g., “unflavored low-fat milk”). “Cereal with milk” does not indicate that the CACFP facility is serving each age group an appropriate amount of breakfast cereal or an appropriate amount or type of milk.

Lunch and Supper

Lunches and suppers include one serving of milk, one serving of meat/meat alternates, one serving of vegetables, one serving of fruits (or vegetable substitutions), and one serving of grains. The required serving for each component is at least the minimum amount in the CACFP lunch and supper meal pattern (see table 1-3 in this section).

If the CACFP facility substitutes vegetables for fruits at lunch or supper, the menu must include two different servings of vegetables. Vegetables can substitute for the entire fruits component at any lunch or supper. Lunch and supper menus must include one serving of the vegetables component and one serving of the fruits component, or two different servings of the vegetables component.

If the menu lists “salad,” the CACFP facility provides a specific description of the type of salad on the CACFP menu, daily production record, or other menu documentation such as a list of all types of salads served in CACFP meals and snacks. Examples include carrot-raisin salad; garden salad with lettuce, cucumbers, carrots, and tomatoes; and fresh fruit salad with apples, oranges, bananas, and strawberries.

If nuts and seeds are served at lunch or supper, they credit for only half of the meat/meat alternates component and another meat/meat alternate provides the other half. For example, a lunch for ages 3-5 can include ¾ ounce of nuts or seeds and ¾ ounce of cheese. Note: Children younger than 4 are at the highest risk of choking. The USDA
Meal Pattern Requirements for CACFP Child Care Programs

Connecticut State Department of Education
December 2017

CACFP MEAL PATTERNS

recommends that any nuts or seeds served to young children are in a prepared food and are ground or finely chopped.

Snack

☐ Snacks include two of the five components. The required serving for each component is at least the minimum amount in the CACFP snack meal pattern (see table 1-3 in this section). A snack with two servings from the same component is not reimbursable. For example, a snack of orange juice (fruits component) and applesauce (fruits component) contains two food items but only one food component and is not reimbursable. However, a snack of orange juice (fruits component) and carrot sticks (vegetables component) contains two different components and is reimbursable.

☐ If a snack menu includes a creditable beverage (milk or juice), the other snack component is not a beverage. Juice cannot be served when milk is the only other snack component.

☐ If a snack menu includes milk, the other snack component is not yogurt. The CSDE recommends this practice to increase nutrient variety.

☐ If a snack menu includes three or more different food items, at least two food items meet the food components and serving sizes. The menu clearly indicates which items contribute to the CACFP snack meal pattern and the serving size provided.

☐ If a snack menu includes a noncreditable food, it also includes the minimum required serving of at least two components. For example, a snack consisting of strawberry gelatin (noncreditable food), whole-grain crackers (grains component), and milk (milk component) contains three food items but only two components. To be reimbursable, this snack menu must provide the minimum serving of both milk and crackers.

☐ The menu planner offers water with snacks when no other beverage is being served. Water does not credit as a snack component. For more information, see “Water Availability” in section 4.

☐ The menu planner includes a vegetable or fruit as often as possible at snack. The USDA’s CACFP Best Practices recommends making at least one of the two required snack components a vegetable or a fruit.
CACFP MEAL PATTERNS

Crediting Foods

- Milk consists of unflavored whole milk for age 1 and unflavored low-fat (1%) or unflavored fat-free milk for ages 2-5. Flavored fat-free milk can be served to ages 6 and older, but the USDA’s CACFP Best Practices recommends serving only unflavored milk.

- Any nondairy beverages (such as soy milk) served as milk substitutes comply with the USDA’s nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes. For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, Allowable Milk Substitutes for Children without Disabilities in the CACFP, and the CSDE’s guide, Accommodating Special Diets in CACFP Child Care Programs.

- Yogurt and soy yogurt comply with the limit for sugars (no more than 23 grams of total sugars per 6 ounces, i.e., no more than 3.83 grams per ounce). For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, Crediting Yogurt in the CACFP.

- Tofu complies with the minimum amount of protein (at least 5 grams in a 2.2-ounce serving) and the CACFP facility has appropriate documentation on file. For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, Crediting Tofu and Tofu Products in the CACFP.

- Alternate protein products (APPs) comply with the USDA’s requirements in appendix A of the CACFP regulations (7 CFR 226). and the CACFP facility has appropriate documentation on file. For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, Requirements for Alternate Protein Products in the CACFP.

- Juice is not used to meet the vegetables component or fruits component at more than one meal or snack per day. For example, if juice credits at breakfast, the CACFP facility cannot serve juice as the vegetables component or fruits component at any other meal or snack that day. The menu planner counts all sources of juice toward this limit, including all fruit and vegetable juice, frozen juice pops made from 100 percent juice, pureed fruits and vegetables in smoothies, and juice from canned fruit in 100 percent juice. For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, Crediting Juice in the CACFP.

- The menu planner credits raw leafy greens (such as spinach, lettuce, and spring mix) as half the volume served, e.g., ½ cup of lettuce or spinach credits as ¼ cup of the vegetables component.

- The menu planner uses the USDA’s “rule of three” to determine if grains meet the crediting criteria for the CACFP. A grain food credits as the grains component if the first ingredient (or second after water) is whole or enriched, and the next two grain ingredients (if any) are whole grains, enriched grains, bran, or germ. A combination food credits as the grains component if the first grain ingredient (or second after water) is whole or enriched, and the next two grain ingredients (if any) are whole grains, enriched grains, bran, or germ. For more information, see the CSDE’s handouts, Whole Grain-rich Criteria for the CACFP and Whole Grain-rich Criteria for the CACFP.
The menu planner does not credit grain-based desserts as the grains component. Examples include brownies, cookies, sweet pie crusts, doughnuts, cereal bars, granola bars, breakfast bars, sweet rolls, pastries, toaster pastries, sweet scones (e.g., blueberry, raisin, and orange cranberry) cake, brownies, rice pudding, and sweet bread pudding. Grain-based desserts do not include muffins, quick breads (such as banana bread and zucchini bread), cornbread, pancakes, waffles, French toast, and savory scones (such as cheese and herb). Note: The CACFP meal patterns for children allow sweet crackers, such as graham crackers and animal crackers, to credit as the grains component. The CSDE recommends that sweet crackers are not served more than twice per week between all meals and snacks.

CACFP menus include at least one WGR food per day, between all meals and snacks served to children. A grain food meets the WGR criteria if a whole grain is the first ingredient (or second after water), and the next two grain ingredients (if any) are whole grains, enriched grains, bran, or germ. A combination food meets the WGR criteria if the first grain ingredient (or second after water) is a whole grain, and the next two grain ingredients (if any) are whole grains, enriched grains, bran, or germ. For more information, see the CSDE's handouts, Whole Grain-rich Criteria for the CACFP and Whole Grain-rich Criteria for the CACFP.

Through September 30, 2019, grain servings meet the minimum weights in Serving Sizes for Grains in the CACFP. Note: Effective October 1, 2019, grain servings must meet the minimum serving sizes in Whole Grain-rich Ounce Equivalents for the CACFP.

The menu planner does not count noncreditable foods (such as bacon, cream cheese, condiments, pudding, ice cream, popcorn, and potato chips) toward the CACFP meal patterns for children. For more information, see “Noncreditable Foods” in section 3.

Water is made available during the meal service but cannot be not offered in place of the required food components. For more information, see “Water Availability” in section 4.

Meal Pattern Documentation

The CACFP facility has a written menu documenting that all meals and snacks provide the required components and appropriate portion sizes for each age group in the CACFP meal patterns for children. For more information, see “CACFP Menus” in section 2.

The CACFP facility has a Child Nutrition (CN) label or production formulation statement (PFS) on file to document the meal pattern contribution of all commercial foods used in CACFP menus, such as entrees, grains, and vegetables and fruits with added ingredients, e.g., coleslaw, potato salad, and carrot-raisin salad. Note: CN labels are only available for main dish entrees that contribute to the meat/meat alternates component. For more information, see “Documentation for Commercial Products” in section 2.

The CACFP facility has a standardized recipe on file to document the meal pattern contribution of all foods made on site, such as entrees, grains, and vegetables and fruits.
with added ingredients, e.g., coleslaw, potato salad, and carrot-raisin salad. For more information, see “Standardized Recipes” in section 2.

☐ If a CACFP child care center operates under the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), the center has a daily production record on file for all CACFP meals. The production record includes all meal components and menu items including all meal choices, food components, types of milk, leftovers, substitutions, and all other food items such as condiments and other noncreditable foods. For more information, see “Production Records” in section 2.

MEAL PATTERN RESOURCES

The resources below provide information and guidance on planning meals to meet the CACFP meal patterns for children. For detailed information on how to credit foods in the CACFP meal patterns for children, see the CSDE’s guide, Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs, which is available on the Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs webpage.

- CACFP Meal Pattern Training Tools (USDA):

- CACFP Nutrition and Nutrition Education (USDA):

- CACFP Nutrition Standards for CACFP Meals and Snacks (USDA):
  www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/meals-and-snacks

- Child Meal Pattern (USDA):

- Child and Adult Care Food Program Meal Pattern Revision: Best Practices (USDA):

- Choose Breakfast Cereals That Are Lower in Added Sugars (USDA):

- Choose Yogurts That Are Lower in Added Sugars (USDA):

- Final Rule: Child and Adult Care Food Program: Meal Pattern Revisions Related to the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (USDA):


- Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs (USDA):

- Food Buying Guide Online Calculator (USDA)
  http://fbg.nfsmi.org/

- Healthy Meals Resource System (USDA):
  http://healthymeals.nal.usda.gov/
•  *Measuring Success with Standardized Recipes* (ICN):  

•  Menu Planning Tools for Child Care Providers (USDA):  

•  Nutrition and Wellness Tips for Young Children (USDA):  

•  Nutrition Resource Library (USDA):  
  www.fns.usda.gov/tn/resource-library

•  *Updated Child and Adult Care Food Program Meal Patterns: Child and Adult Meals* (USDA):  

•  *Using the Updated Meal Pattern to Lower Costs* (USDA):  

For additional resources, see section 6.
2 — Menu Records

CACFP facilities must be able to document that meals and snacks provide the food components and serving sizes required by the CACFP meal patterns for children. Without appropriate documentation, foods and beverages cannot credit toward the CACFP meal patterns for children. The CSDE will disallow reimbursement for noncompliant meals.

Family day care home sponsors must provide training, early monitoring, and technical assistance to ensure that new providers are able to serve reimbursable meals and snacks. CACFP regulations do not allow grace periods for new day care homes that are not meeting the CACFP meal patterns in the early months of participation. While serving meals with missing components or insufficient portion sizes may not rise to the level of serious deficiency for new homes, family day care sponsors must always disallow ineligible meals.

CACFP facilities should ensure that all appropriate staff are aware of the documents needed to demonstrate the CACFP menu’s compliance. Table 2-1 summarizes the required documentation for meal pattern compliance. CACFP facilities must maintain these records on file for the CACFP Administrative Review.

Table 2-1. Documentation for Meal Pattern Compliance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foods Made on Site</th>
<th>Commercially Prepared Foods</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CACFP menus</td>
<td>CACFP menus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production records ¹</td>
<td>Production records ¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standardized recipes</td>
<td>CN labels</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PFS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Production records are not required in the CACFP unless a CACFP child care center follows the NSLP meal pattern. However, the CSDE encourages CACFP facilities to use production records because they provide appropriate documentation of compliance with the CACFP meal patterns.
CACFP MENUS

CACFP facilities must develop menus that represent the actual food components served for each meal and snack claimed for reimbursement. The menu must identify the date of the meal service and all food items served, including the type of milk and which grain products are WGR. Cycle menus or menus developed in advance of the meal service must specify the month and day, and indicate any menu substitutions that occur. For more information on cycle menus, see “Using Cycle Menus” in this section.

Each CACFP facility must have a written “menu of record” on file to document the specific meal pattern components served to all enrolled children each day. The CACFP facility must maintain all menus on file with other required CACFP records in accordance with the CACFP regulations (7 CFR 226.10(d)).

Menu Forms

The menu form is an important tool to help CACFP facilities comply with the CACFP meal patterns for children. Using an appropriate menu form makes it easier to ensure that all meals and snacks include the required food components in the proper portion sizes. When reviewing CACFP menus for meal pattern compliance, CSDE staff cannot determine if meal components are offered unless they are indicated on the menu.

The CSDE strongly discourages CACFP facilities from using a blank calendar as a menu form because food components may be omitted and serving sizes may be insufficient. This may result in menus that do not comply with CACFP requirements. Meals with missing food components or insufficient portion sizes are not reimbursable in the CACFP.

The CSDE’s sample CACFP weekly menu forms help menu planners include the required food components in the appropriate portion sizes. These forms are available on the CSDE’s Meal Patterns for CACFP Child Care Programs webpage, and include:

- AM and PM Snack for Ages 1-2;
- AM and PM Snack for Ages 3-5;
- AM or PM Snack for Ages 3-5;
- AM, PM, and Evening Snack for Ages 6-18 in Emergency Shelters;
- AM Snack, Lunch, and PM Snack for Ages 3-5;
- At-risk Snack and Supper for Ages 6-18;
- At-risk Snack for Ages 6-18;
- At-risk Supper for Ages 6-18;
- Breakfast, AM Snack, and PM Snack for Ages 3-5;
- Breakfast and PM Snack for Ages 3-5;
- Breakfast and PM Snack for Ages 6-12;
- Breakfast, Lunch, and Snack for Ages 1-2;
- Breakfast, Lunch, and Snack for Ages 3-5;
- Breakfast, Lunch, and Snack for Ages 6-12; and
- Breakfast, Lunch, and Supper for Ages 6-18 in Emergency Shelters.
The PDF and Word links for each document are listed in section 6. CACFP facilities may adapt these forms to fit individual program needs. If a CACFP facility chooses to use a different menu format, it should contain appropriate guidance regarding the required food components and portion sizes for each meal served to each age group.

**USING CYCLE MENUS**

The CSDE strongly encourages CACFP facilities to use cycle menus for meals and snacks. A cycle menu is a series of menus planned for a specific period of time, with a different menu for each day. Cycle menus can help CACFP facilities to increase variety, control food cost, and save time.

The CSDE recommends a period of at least four weeks for cycle menus. This time period increases the variety of meals offered and ensures that children are not served the same combination of foods too often. The resources below provide additional information on cycle menus.

- *Using Cycle Menus to Control Food Costs* (ICN): [www childnutritioninstitute org/documentlibraryfiles/PDF/20131105115523.pdf](www childnutritioninstitute org/documentlibraryfiles/PDF/20131105115523.pdf)
- *What’s Cookin’ II* (Nebraska Department of Education): [www education nc gov NS/CACFP/cookin html](www education nc gov NS/CACFP/cookin html)

For more resources, see the CSDE’s *Menu Planning and Food Production* resources list.

**Note:** These resources were developed prior to the USDA’s final rule and do not include the requirements of the new CACFP meal patterns for children. CACFP facilities must ensure that local menus comply with the new CACFP meal patterns for children. Menu planners should check resources for compliance with the new CACFP meal patterns, and adapt recipes, as needed.
SAMPLE CACFP MENUS
The CSDE’s sample CACFP menus provide ideas for meals and snacks for children in child care programs. These menus are available on the CSDE’s Meal Patterns for CACFP Child Care Programs webpage, and include:

- Cold Breakfast Menus for CACFP Child Care Centers and Homes;
- Hot Breakfast Menus for CACFP Child Care Centers and Homes;
- Cold Lunch/Supper Menus for CACFP Child Care Centers and Homes;
- Hot Lunch/Supper Menus for CACFP Child Care Centers and Homes; and
- Snack Menus for CACFP Child Care Centers and Homes.

The serving sizes in these menus are for ages 3-5 and can be adjusted for other ages. Each menu contains at least the minimum required food components and serving sizes. Some menus include additional components or exceed the minimum serving requirements.

The type of foods purchased and the recipes and preparation techniques used by the CACFP facility will determine whether local menus meet the CACFP meal patterns for children and the CCCNS. The CSDE encourages CACFP facilities to evaluate their menus for compliance with the CCCNS. For more information, see section 4 and the CSDE’s Action Guide for Child Care Nutrition and Physical Activity Policies.

For resources on menu planning, see “Menu Planning Resources” in this section and the CSDE’s Menu Planning and Food Production resources list.
PRODUCTION RECORDS

The USDA regulations require that CACFP facilities must document compliance with the CACFP meal patterns for children and maintain records of food purchases. Production records are only required for CACFP child care centers that follow the NSLP meal pattern. However, the CSDE encourages CACFP facilities to use production records because they provide appropriate documentation of compliance with the CACFP meal patterns.

A production record is a working tool that outlines the type and quantity of foods that need to be purchased and available for the meal service. A production record should include:

- name of site;
- meal date;
- meal type (breakfast, lunch, supper, or snack);
- all planned menu items including food components, type of milk, leftovers, substitutions, and noncreditable foods such as condiments;
- recipe name and number or product name and code;
- planned serving size and number of servings for reimbursable meals for each age/grade group and, if applicable, nonreimbursable meals (e.g., second meals for children and adult meals), and a la carte sales;
- total amount/quantity of food prepared, e.g., number of servings, pounds, cans, and pieces;
- amount of leftover food for each food item or menu item;
- total amount of food served;
- number of reimbursable meals served for each age group; and
- number of nonreimbursable meals served, e.g., meals for CACFP staff and incomplete meals served to children.

The CSDE’s sample CACFP production records help menu planners document compliance with the CACFP meal patterns for children. They are available on the CSDE’s Meal Patterns for CACFP Child Care Programs webpage, and include:

- AM and PM Snack;
- AM, PM, and Evening Snack for Emergency Shelters;
- AM Snack, Lunch, and PM Snack;
- Any Meal;
- At-Risk Snack and Supper;
- Breakfast and PM Snack;
- Breakfast, AM Snack, and PM Snack;
- Breakfast, Lunch, and Supper for Emergency Shelters; and
- Breakfast, Lunch, and Snack.

The PDF and Word links for each document are available in section 6. CACFP facilities may adapt these forms to fit individual program needs.

If a CACFP facility does not use production records, the CSDE recommends developing an alternate system to document the actual serving sizes provided for each meal and snack, such
as maintaining a list of serving sizes. For more information on production records, see the ICN’s Production Records: A Tool to Use and the USDA’s Sample Menu Production Record.

STANDARDIZED RECIPES
When a CACFP facility prepares foods on site, recipes must document that a serving provides the appropriate portion size of each meal component being credited toward the CACFP meal patterns for children. For example, if the menu planner includes macaroni and cheese as one serving of the meat/meat alternates component and one serving of the grains component for ages 3-5 at lunch, the CACFP facility’s recipe must indicate that each serving contains 1 ½ ounces of cheese and ¼ cup of pasta.

The CSDE strongly encourages the use of standardized recipes to ensure that menus provide the correct CACFP food components and portion sizes. The USDA defines a standardized recipe as one that has been tried, adapted, and retried several times for use by a given foodservice operation and has been found to produce the same good results and yield every time when the exact procedures are used with the same type of equipment and the same quantity and quality of ingredients.

Standardized recipes have many benefits. They help to ensure:

- consistent food quality;
- predictable yield;
- consistent nutrient content;
- customer satisfaction;
- food cost control;
- efficient purchasing procedures;
- inventory control;
- labor cost control;
- increased employee confidence;
- reduced record keeping; and
- successful completion of the CACFP Administrative Review, conducted by the CSDE.

CACFP facilities can standardize their own local recipes or use existing standardized recipes such as the USDA recipes. The CSDE’s CACFP Standardized Recipe Form provides a template that CACFP facilities can use when developing standardized recipes. The ICN’s Measuring Success with Standardized Recipes provides detailed guidance on developing standardized recipes. For more information on using standardized recipes, see “Recipe Resources” and “Determining In-house Product Yields” in this section.
Recipe Resources

The resources below assist CACFP facilities with developing and using standardized recipes.

- **Beans** (USDA): http://healthymeals.nal.usda.gov/menu-planning/beans
- **CACFP Standardized Recipe Form** (CSDE): www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/word_docs/deps/nutrition/cacfp/stdrecipecacfp.doc
- **Food Buying Guide Calculator for Child Nutrition Programs** (ICN): http://fbg.nfsmi.org/
- **USDA Recipes for Child Care**: www.fns.usda.gov/usda-recipes-child-care
- **USDA Recipes for Child Care Booklet**: https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/ccrecipes_bk.pdf
- **USDA Standardized Recipes**: www.fns.usda.gov/usda-standardized-recipe

For more information, see the CSDE’s Menu Planning webpage.
DOCUMENTATION FOR COMMERCIAL PRODUCTS

Commercially prepared foods used in CACFP meals and snacks must provide the amount of the food components being credited toward the CACFP meal patterns for children. For example, to credit a commercially prepared meat and cheese burrito as 1 ½ ounces of meat/meat alternates, the manufacturer’s documentation must indicate that one serving of the product contains a combined total of 1 ½ ounces of cooked lean meat and cheese.

To credit commercial products, CACFP facilities must obtain:

- the original CN label from the product carton or a photocopy or photograph of the CN label shown attached to the original product carton; or
- a PFS signed by an official of the manufacturer stating the amount of each meal pattern component contained in one serving of the product.

These are the only acceptable records to document a commercial product’s contribution to the CACFP meal patterns for children.

Table 2-2 compares the criteria for a CN label and PFS. Only CN labels provide a guarantee of the product’s contribution to the meal patterns for the USDA Child Nutrition Programs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>CN Label</th>
<th>PFS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard information required</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reviewed and monitored by the USDA</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Includes USDA guarantee of meal component contribution for Child Nutrition Programs</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distinct six-digit product identification number</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CACFP facilities must check crediting information for accuracy</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Without a CN label or PFS, CACFP facilities cannot use commercial products to credit toward the CACFP meal patterns for children. For additional guidance on accepting product documentation, see the CSDE’s handout, *Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the CACFP*, and CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 7A-16, 9C-16 and 9H-16: *Requirements for Documenting CACFP Meal Pattern Contribution of Processed Foods.*
CN Label
The USDA’s CN Labeling Program is a voluntary federal labeling program for Child Nutrition Programs. It provides food manufacturers the option to include a standardized food crediting statement on their product labels. The USDA approves labels prior to use and manufacturers must have quality control procedures and inspection oversight that meet USDA requirements. All manufacturers participating in the CN Labeling Program must have a quality control program approved by the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) or National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS).

The USDA does not require that manufacturers make CN-labeled products or that CACFP facilities purchase foods with CN labels. Purchasing decisions are at the discretion of the local CACFP facility. If the CACFP facility requires a CN-labeled product, this must be clearly stated in the CACFP facility’s purchasing specifications.

A CN label is a statement that clearly identifies the contribution of a food product toward the meal pattern requirements, based on the USDA’s evaluation of the product’s formulation. CN labels are available only for main dish entrees that contribute to the meat/meat alternates component of the USDA meal patterns. Examples include beef patties, cheese or meat pizzas, meat or cheese and bean burritos, egg rolls, and breaded fish portions.

A CN label will usually indicate the contribution of other meal components that are part of these products. For example, CN-labeled cheese pizza may list contributions to the meat/meat alternates, grains, and vegetables components. CN-labeled breaded chicken nuggets may list contributions to the meat/meat alternates and grains components. For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, Using Child Nutrition (CN) Labels in the CACFP.

Product Formulation Statement
A PFS is an information statement obtained from the manufacturer that provides specific information about how a product credits toward the USDA meal patterns, and documents how this information is obtained citing Child Nutrition Program resources or regulations. A PFS must:

- indicate how the product credits toward the USDA meal pattern requirements;
- document how the manufacturer obtained the crediting information by citing specific Child Nutrition Program resources or regulations such as the USDA’s FBG and USDA policy on crediting foods; and
- be prepared on company letterhead with the signature of a company official and the date of issue. The signature can be handwritten, stamped, or electronic.

All creditable ingredients in the PFS must match a description in the USDA’s Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs (FBG). Sample USDA PFS templates for the meat/meat alternates, vegetables, fruits, and grains components are available on the USDA’s CN Labeling website.
Unlike a CN label, a PFS does not provide any warranty against audit claims and is not monitored by the USDA. CACFP facilities must check the manufacturer’s crediting information for accuracy prior to including the item in reimbursable meals. For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, *Using Product Formulation Statements in the CACFP*, and the USDA’s handout, *Tips for Evaluating a Manufacturer’s PFS*.

**DETERMINING FOOD YIELDS**

CACFP facilities should use the FBG to determine the correct amount of food to meet the required serving size in the CACFP meal patterns for children. The USDA’s FBG and web-based interactive FBG provide yield information for common types and customary sizes of meat/meat alternates, vegetables, fruits, and grains, including commercially available foods and USDA Foods. The FBG helps CACFP facilities determine:

- how many servings a specific quantity of food will provide;
- what quantity of raw product will provide the amount of ready-to-cook food in a recipe; and
- how much food to buy.

CACFP facilities should use the FBG to determine how much food to purchase to meet the minimum portion sizes in the USDA meal patterns and calculate how recipes contribute to the CACFP meal patterns for children. For example, menu planners can use the FBG to determine how much raw broccoli provides 50 servings of ½ cup of cooked vegetable or how much uncooked brown rice provides 100 servings of 1 cup of cooked rice. This process is critical for documenting compliance with the meal pattern requirements.

The USDA also has an online FBG Calculator for Child Nutrition Programs at [http://fbg.nfsmi.org/](http://fbg.nfsmi.org/). For information on how to use the online calculator, see the ICN’s Food Purchasing/Procurement Grab and Go Lesson, *The Food Buying Guide Calculator*. For information on using the FBG, see the CSDE’s guide, *Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs*, which is available on the Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs webpage.

**Determining In-house Product Yields**

The yield information provided in the FBG represents average yields based on research conducted by the USDA. Many factors affect yield, including:

- the quality and condition of the food purchased;
- storage conditions and handling;
- the equipment used in preparation;
- cooking method and time;
- the form in which the food is served, e.g., whether potatoes are mashed, fried, or baked; and
- the serving utensils and portion control methods used.

If a food service operation consistently obtains a higher or lower yield for a product than the yield listed in the FBG, the CACFP facility should conduct an in-house yield study to determine the actual number of portions of a specified size that the product provides. In-house yields are also required for products not listed in the FBG. The CSDE allows CACFP
facilities to use in-house yields if they are properly documented and follow the CSDE’s yield study procedures.

**CSDE Yield Study Procedures**

CACFP facilities can use the procedures below to determine and document in-house yields for food products.

1. Select a day when the product is served on the menu. Use at least four separate samples of the product to determine yields. A “sample” is the product pack unit, such as number 10 cans or 5-pound bags. If the CACFP facility uses more samples, the yield data will be more accurate.

2. For the best yield estimate, at least two people should independently portion and count the samples. Each person completes half of the samples. For example, with a sample of four cans, each person works alone to measure and count the servings from two cans.

3. Select the appropriate measuring utensil for the portion size being served, such as a number 16 scoop/disher or ½-cup measuring spoon.

4. Fill the measuring utensil level to the top of the measure.

5. Carefully count and document the number of portions in each sample.

6. Add the total number of servings from each of the samples.

7. Divide the total number of servings by the number of samples to get the average number of servings per sample.

8. Complete the CSDE’s **Yield Study Data Form** and maintain on file for review by the CSDE staff during the CACFP Administrative Review.

For additional technical assistance with yield studies, contact the CSDE’s CACFP staff (see “Contact Information” at the beginning of this guide).
3 — Meal Components

The menu planning guidance in this section assists CACFP facilities with meeting the requirements of the CACFP meal patterns for children. For additional guidance on crediting foods, see the CSDE’s Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs webpage.

MILK COMPONENT

- The CACFP meal patterns for children require a serving of fluid milk at breakfast, lunch, and supper. Milk may be served as one of the two required snack components.

- Milk must be pasteurized, meet all state and local requirements, and contain vitamins A and D at levels specified by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

- The CACFP meal patterns for children require unflavored whole milk for age 1 and unflavored low-fat milk or unflavored fat-free milk for ages 2-5. Flavored fat-free milk can be served to ages 6 and older, but the USDA’s CACFP Best Practices recommends serving only unflavored milk.

Table 3-1 summarizes the types of milk that can be served in the CACFP meal patterns for children.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Milk</th>
<th>Ages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unflavored whole</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flavored whole</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unflavored reduced-fat (2%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flavored reduced-fat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unflavored low-fat (1%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flavored low-fat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unflavored fat-free (skim)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flavored fat-free</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 This age group applies only to at-risk afterschool programs and emergency shelters.

2 Unflavored whole milk and unflavored reduced-fat milk can only be served during a one-month transition period when switching a 24-month-old child from whole milk to low-fat or fat-free milk. For example, a CACFP facility can help ease the transition by adding a small amount of reduced-fat milk to whole-milk, then gradually changing to low-fat or fat-free milk mixed with whole milk, and increasing the amount over time.

3 The USDA’s CACFP Best Practices recommends serving only unflavored milk.
3 | MEAL COMPONENTS

- Lactose-free and lactose-reduced milk credit the same as regular milk and must meet the same requirements for fat content and flavor (see table 3-1). Lactose-reduced milk has part of the lactose removed, while lactose-free milk has all of the lactose removed. Like regular milk, lactose-free and lactose-reduced milk come in a variety of flavors and fat contents, such as fat-free, low-fat, and whole.

- CACFP menus must document the type of milk served, including fat content (e.g., whole, low-fat, and fat-free), and whether the milk is unflavored or flavored. For example, the menu must state “unflavored low-fat milk” instead of “low-fat milk” and “unflavored fat-free milk” instead of “fat-free milk.” Flavored fat-free milk is allowed only for ages 6 and older.

- CACFP facilities cannot serve milk that does not comply with the specific fat content of the CACFP meal patterns for children. For example, low-fat milk, fat-free milk, and reduced-fat milk cannot be served to 1-year-olds; and whole milk and reduced-fat milk cannot be served to children ages 2 and older. However, if a child has a disability that requires milk with a fat content that is different from the meal pattern requirements, the CACFP facility can make the substitution prescribed in the medical statement signed by a recognized medical authority. For more information, see the CSDE’s guide, Accommodating Special Diets in CACFP Child Care Programs.

- Any nondairy milk substitutes (such as soy milk) served in the CACFP must meet the USDA’s nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes. For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, Allowable Milk Substitutes for Children without Disabilities in the CACFP, and the CSDE’s guide, Accommodating Special Diets in CACFP Child Care Programs.

- CACFP facilities cannot offer water or juice as a choice instead of milk. Only fluid milk credits as the milk component in the CACFP meal patterns for children. For more information, see “Water Availability” in section 4.

- Only one snack component can be a creditable beverage. Milk cannot be served when juice is the only other snack component.
MEAT/MEAT ALTERNATES COMPONENT

- The CACFP meal patterns for children require a serving of meat/meat alternates at lunch and supper. Meat/meat alternates are not required at breakfast, but can be substituted for the entire grains component up to three times per week. Meat/meat alternates may be served as one of the two required snack components.

- At lunch and supper, meat/meat alternates must be served in a main dish or in a main dish and only one other food item. The main dish is generally considered the main food item in the menu, which is complemented by the other food items. Foods that are not a main dish do not credit toward the meat/meat alternates component even if they contain a meat/meat alternate. Examples include soup made with blended soft tofu, pasta made with legumes, and muffins made with peanut butter or yogurt. The intent of this requirement is to ensure that CACFP facilities are offering meat/meat alternates in a form that is recognizable to children. The USDA emphasizes the importance of the nutrition education aspect of the CACFP, which includes the goal of helping children easily recognize the key food groups that contribute to a healthy meal.

- Meat/meat alternates include cooked lean meat, poultry, or fish; cheese; cottage cheese; beans and peas (legumes); eggs; nut and seed butters; nuts and seeds; yogurt and soy yogurt; tofu and other soy products; and alternate protein products (APPs) that meet the USDA’s criteria for APP.

- The USDA’s CACFP Best Practices recommends serving only lean meats, nuts, and legumes; limiting processed meats to one serving per week; and serving only low-fat or reduced-fat natural cheese.

- Menu planners should consult the USDA’s FBG to determine the crediting information for specific meat/meat alternates. A 1-ounce serving of the meat/meat alternates component equals:
  - 1 ounce of lean meat, poultry, or fish;
  - 1 ounce of natural cheese, e.g., Colby, Monterey Jack, and Swiss or process cheese, e.g., American (reduced-fat or low-fat recommended for ages 2 and older);
  - ¼ cup of cottage cheese (reduced-fat or low-fat recommended for ages 2 and older);
  - 2 ounces of cheese food/spread or cheese substitute;
  - ¼ cup of cooked beans and peas (legumes), e.g., kidney beans, chick peas (garbanzo beans), lentils, and split peas;
  - ½ large egg;
  - 2 tablespoons of nut or seed butters, e.g., peanut butter, almond butter, cashew butter and sunflower seed butter;
  - 1 ounce of nuts or seeds, e.g., almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, filberts, macadamia nuts, peanuts, pecans, pine nuts, pistachios, soy nuts, and walnuts;
  - ½ cup of yogurt or soy yogurt (plain or flavored) containing no more than 23 grams of sugar per 6 ounces (3.83 grams per ounce);
  - 2.2 ounces (weight) or ¼ cup (volume) of tofu and other soy products containing at least 5 grams of protein; and
• 1 ounce of APP that meets the USDA requirements for APP. For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, *Requirements for Alternate Protein Products in the CACFP*.

- Amounts in the meat/meat alternates component refer to the edible portion, i.e., cooked, lean meat without bone, breading, or other ingredients. All serving sizes must contain the appropriate size edible portion of meat/meat alternates before any other ingredients are added. For example, tuna salad for ages 3-5 at lunch must contain 1 ½ ounces of tuna fish before added ingredients such as mayonnaise, celery, and seasonings.

- Meat products without binders and extenders credit based on the actual serving weight, e.g., 1 ounce of meat provides 1 ounce of the meat/meat alternates component. Table 3-2 shows some examples of binders and extenders. For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, *Crediting Deli Meats in the CACFP*.

- Meat products with binders and extenders cannot credit based on the amount of meat served. For example, 1 ounce of deli turkey that contains modified food starch cannot credit as 1 ounce of the meat/meat alternates component. This product credits based on the actual percentage of turkey in the product formula, which must be documented by a PFS (or CN label, if available). For more information, see “Product Formulation Statement” and “CN Label” in section 2.

### Table 3-2. Examples of Binders and Extenders ¹

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agar-agar</th>
<th>Dried milk</th>
<th>Reduced minerals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Algin (a mixture of sodium alginate, calcium carbonate and calcium gluconate/lactic acid)</td>
<td>Dry or dried whey</td>
<td>Sodium caseinate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bread</td>
<td>Enzyme (rennet) treated calcium-reduced dried skim milk and calcium lactate</td>
<td>Soy flour (APP) ²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calcium-reduced dried skim milk</td>
<td>Gums, vegetable</td>
<td>Soy protein concentrate (APP) ²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrageenan</td>
<td>Isolated soy protein (APP) ²</td>
<td>Starchy vegetable flour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carboxymethyl cellulose (cellulose gum)</td>
<td>Locust bean gum</td>
<td>Tapioca dextrin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cereal</td>
<td>Methyl cellulose</td>
<td>Vegetable starch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Modified food starch</td>
<td>Wheat gluten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reduced lactose whey</td>
<td>Whey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Whey protein concentrate (APP) ²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Xanthan gum</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Binders and extenders are defined by the USDA Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) Regulations, 9 CFR 318.7.

² Products can contain these ingredients if they meet the USDA requirements for APPs. For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, *Requirements for Alternate Protein Products in the CACFP*. 
When CACFP menus include commercially prepared foods such as pizza and chicken nuggets, menu planners must ensure that these products provide the actual amount of the meal components being credited in CACFP menus. For example, to credit a commercially prepared cheese pizza as 2 ounces of the meat/meat alternates component, the PFS (or CN label, if available) must indicate that the product contains 2 ounce of cheese in one serving. For more information, see “Documentation for Commercial Products” in section 2.

Cheese substitute, cheese food substitute, and cheese spread substitute must meet the FDA’s standard of identity for substitute foods and must be labeled as “cheese substitute,” “cheese food substitute,” or “cheese spread substitute.” The standard of identity requires that a cheese substitute is not nutritionally inferior to the standardized cheese for which it is substituting. Imitation cheese and cheese products do not credit as meat/meat alternates in the CACFP.

Legumes (cooked dry beans and peas) credit as either the meat/meat alternates component or the vegetables component, but not both in the same meal. Menu planners must decide in advance how they will credit on the menu. The serving size of cooked legumes cannot include any liquid added to the product, such as the sauce in baked beans. For example, if the menu planner credits ¼ cup of baked beans as 1 ounce of meat/meat alternates, the serving must contain ¼ cup of beans, not including any sauce. For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, Crediting Legumes in the CACFP.

Creditable nuts and seeds include almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, filberts, macadamia nuts, peanuts, pecans, walnuts, pine nuts, pistachios, and soy nuts.

- At lunch and supper, nuts and seeds cannot credit for more than half of the meat/meat alternates component. They must be combined with another meat/meat alternate to meet the full requirement for each age group.
- Roasted or dried soy beans (edamame) credit the same as soy nuts, e.g., 1 ounce credits as 1 ounce of the meat/meat alternates component.

Creditable nut and seed butters include almond butter, cashew nut butter, peanut butter, reduced-fat peanut butter, sesame seed butter, soy nut butter, and sunflower seed butter. The serving size is based on volume, e.g., 2 tablespoons equals 1 ounce of the meat/meat alternates component. CACFP facilities should consider the appropriateness of the serving size for each age group. It may be unreasonable to provide the full serving of nut/seed butters in one menu item, such as a peanut butter sandwich.

- For example, the CACFP lunch meal pattern for ages 3-5 requires 1 ½ ounces of meat/meat alternates (3 tablespoons of peanut butter). CACFP facilities may need to consider serving a smaller portion of peanut butter and supplementing with another food from the meat/meat alternates component, e.g., 1 tablespoon of peanut butter (½ ounce of meat/meat alternates) served with soup that contains ¼ cup of split peas (1 ounce of meat/meat alternates).
Yogurt can be plain or flavored, or contain added fruit (blended or on the bottom). Yogurt (including soy yogurt) cannot contain more than 23 grams of total sugars per 6 ounces (no more than 3.83 grams per ounce). For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, Crediting Yogurt in the CACFP.

- The required serving size is based on volume (cups) or weight (ounces) and is the same for all types, flavors, and fat content of yogurt. A ½-cup serving (volume) or 4 ounces (weight) equals 1 ounce of the meat/meat alternates component.

- Yogurt that meets the sugar limit credits as the meat/meat alternates component when used in smoothies made on site. For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, Crediting Smoothies in the CACFP.

- Frozen yogurt and drinkable or squeezable yogurt do not credit in the CACFP meal patterns.

Commercial tofu and tofu products must meet two criteria to credit as the meat/meat alternates component. They must be easily recognizable as meat substitutes (such as a tofu burger or tofu sausage) and the tofu ingredient must contain at least 5 grams of protein in a 2.2-ounce serving by weight (¼ cup volume equivalent). For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, Crediting Tofu and Tofu Products in the CACFP.

APPs must meet the USDA requirements specified in appendix A of the CACFP regulations (7 CFR 226). APPs are generally single ingredient powders that are added to foods, such as soy flours, soy concentrates, soy isolates, whey protein concentrate, whey protein isolates, and casein. APPs may be used alone or in combination with meat or other meat alternates. Examples of foods with added APPs include beef patties, beef crumbles, pizza topping, meat loaf, meat sauce, taco filling, burritos, and tuna salad. For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, Requirements for Alternate Protein Products in the CACFP. Guidance on documenting the APP requirements is available in the USDA’s Questions and Answers on Alternate Protein Products (APP).

- Bacon and cream cheese do not credit as meat/meat alternates. They are low in protein and high in fat. For more information, see “Noncreditable Foods” in this section and the CSDE’s handout, Noncreditable Foods in the CACFP.

For more information on crediting meat and meat alternate products, see the CSDE’s Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs webpage and the CSDE’s handout, Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the CACFP.
VEGETABLES COMPONENT

- The CACFP meal patterns for children require a serving of vegetables at lunch and supper. At breakfast, vegetables and fruits are one component and can include vegetables, fruits, or both. Vegetables may be served as one of the two required snack components.

- Vegetables can replace the fruits component at any lunch or supper. Lunches and suppers can contain one serving of vegetables and one serving of fruits, or two different servings of vegetables. They cannot contain only two servings of fruits.

- The vegetables component includes fresh, frozen, and canned vegetables. Menu planners should consult the USDA’s FBG to determine the crediting information for specific vegetables.

- The serving size for vegetables is based on volume (cups) except for leafy greens such as lettuce and spinach, which credit as half the volume served, e.g., 1 cup of leafy greens credits as ½ cup of the vegetables component. A serving of cooked vegetables must be drained. For example, a serving of canned corn cannot include the water in which it is packed.

- Legumes (cooked dry beans and peas) credit as either the vegetables or meat/meat alternates component, but not both in the same meal. Menu planners must decide in advance how they will credit legumes on the menu. The serving size of cooked legumes does not include any liquid added to the product, such as the sauce in baked beans. For example, if the menu planner credits ¼ cup of baked beans as 1 ounce of the meat/meat alternates component, the serving must contain ¼ cup of beans, not including any sauce. For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, Crediting Legumes in the CACFP.

- Vegetable mixtures can credit toward both the vegetables component and fruits component if they contain at least ¼ cup of two different kinds of vegetables. For example, a lunch menu for ages 3-5 includes ¼ cup of broccoli and ¼ cup of cauliflower mixed together. The menu planner can credit the broccoli as the full vegetables component (¼ cup) and use the cauliflower to replace the full fruits component (¼ cup) because it provides the minimum required serving size for the fruits component. If the quantities of the different vegetables are not known, such as frozen mixed carrots and peas, the vegetable mixture credits as one serving of vegetables and cannot credit as the fruit component. In this case, the CACFP menu would require either a serving of the fruits component or another serving of vegetables substituted for the fruits component.
**MEAL COMPONENTS**

- Vegetable juice must be pasteurized 100 percent full-strength juice or a combination of vegetable and fruit juices. It can be fresh, frozen, or made from concentrate. The name of the full-strength juice on the label must include one of the following terms: “juice,” “full-strength juice,” “100 percent juice,” “reconstituted juice,” or “juice from concentrate.” For more information on juice, see “Fruits” on the next page and the CSDE’s handout, *Crediting Juice in the CACFP*.

- Only certain types of commercial vegetable soups credit toward the vegetables component. Allowable commercial soups include tomato, vegetable, clam chowder with potatoes, corn chowder, minestrone, and lentil, pea or bean (legumes). For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, *Crediting Soup in the CACFP*.

  - A 1-cup serving of lentil, pea, or bean soup credits as ½ cup of vegetables.
  - A 1-cup serving of all other allowable commercial vegetable soups credits as ¼ cup of vegetables. At lunch and supper for ages 6 and older, the menu must include additional vegetables to meet the minimum required ½-cup serving of vegetables.
  - Commercial beef barley, chicken/turkey noodle, and chicken/turkey rice soup are noncreditable foods, and do not credit in the CACFP meal patterns.
  - Soups made on site in the CACFP facility credit based on the amount of vegetables they contain per serving, as documented by the standardized recipe.
  - When planning portion sizes of soup to meet the CACFP meal patterns, keep in mind that a 1-cup container (8 fluid ounces) does not contain 1 cup of soup unless it is completely filled to the top. To avoid spilling and ensure CACFP serving size compliance, the container should be larger than the serving size of soup. For example, use a 10-fluid ounce bowl for an 8-fluid ounce (1 cup) serving of soup or a 6-fluid ounce bowl for a 4-fluid ounce (½ cup) serving of soup.

- Pureed vegetables must be recognizable to credit in the CACFP meal patterns for children. Pureed foods made from one vegetable (such as tomato sauce, split pea soup, mashed potatoes, mashed sweet potatoes, and pureed butternut squash) are recognizable creditable vegetables. Combination foods with pureed (unrecognizable) vegetables may contribute to the vegetables component if the dish that contains them also provides an adequate amount of recognizable creditable vegetables. For example, a serving of macaroni and cheese that contains ⅛ cup of diced butternut squash (recognizable) and ⅛ cup of pureed carrots (unrecognizable) credits as ¼ cup of the vegetables component. Pureed vegetables credit based on the volume served, not the volume before pureeing.

- Dehydrated vegetables used for seasonings, such as dried onion and dried parsley, do not credit in the CACFP meal patterns for children. Dehydrated vegetables credit when rehydrated only if the product’s PFS provides specific documentation on the amount of vegetables per serving. CACFP facilities should check the accuracy of the PFS prior to including foods with dehydrated vegetables in reimbursable meals.
The USDA’s *CACFP Best Practices* recommends providing at least one serving per week of dark green vegetables, red and orange vegetables, beans and peas (legumes), starchy vegetables, and other vegetables. For more information, see table 3-3 and the CSDE’s handout, *Vegetable Subgroups in the CACFP*.

For more information on crediting vegetables, see the CSDE’s guide, *Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs*, which is available on the *Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs* webpage.
### Table 3-3. Vegetable Subgroups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>DARK GREEN</strong></th>
<th><strong>RED/ORANGE</strong></th>
<th><strong>BEANS AND PEAS</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Fresh, frozen, and canned</em></td>
<td><em>Fresh, frozen, and canned</em></td>
<td><em>(LEGUMES)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Arugula</td>
<td>- Fiddle heads</td>
<td>- Black beans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Beet greens</td>
<td>- Grape leaves</td>
<td>- Black-eyed peas (mature, dry)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Bok choy</td>
<td>- Kale</td>
<td>- Cowpeas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Broccoli</td>
<td>- Mesclun</td>
<td>- Edamame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Broccoli rabe (rapini)</td>
<td>- Mustard greens</td>
<td>- Fava beans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Broccolini</td>
<td>- Parsley</td>
<td>- Refried beans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Butterhead lettuce (boston, bibb)</td>
<td>- Spinach</td>
<td>- Soy beans (mature, dry)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Chicory</td>
<td>- Swiss chard</td>
<td>- Split peas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Cilantro</td>
<td>- Red leaf lettuce</td>
<td>- White beans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Collard greens</td>
<td>- Romaine lettuce</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Endive</td>
<td>- Turnip greens</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Escarole</td>
<td>- Watercress</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* does not include green peas, green lima beans, and green (string) beans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>STARCHY</strong></th>
<th><strong>OTHER</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Fresh, frozen, and canned</em></td>
<td><em>Fresh, frozen, and canned</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Black-eyed peas, fresh (not dry)</td>
<td>- Eggplant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Corn</td>
<td>- Fennel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Cassava</td>
<td>- Garlic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Cowpeas, fresh (not dry)</td>
<td>- Green chili peppers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Field peas, fresh (not dry)</td>
<td>- Green onions (scallions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Green bananas</td>
<td>- Green peppers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Green peas</td>
<td>- Horseradish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Jicama</td>
<td>- Iceberg lettuce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Lima beans, green (not dry)</td>
<td>- Kohlrabi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Parsnips</td>
<td>- Leeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Pigeon peas, fresh (not dry)</td>
<td>- Mushrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Plantains</td>
<td>- Okra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Potatoes</td>
<td>- Olives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Poi</td>
<td>- Onions (white, yellow, red)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Taro</td>
<td>- Peas in pod, e.g., snap peas, snow peas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Water chestnuts</td>
<td>- Pepperoncini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Yautia (tannier)</td>
<td>- Pickles (cucumber)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Artichokes
- Asparagus
- Avocado
- Bamboo shoots
- Bean sprouts, cooked only (for food safety), e.g., alfalfa, mung
- Beans, green and yellow
- Beets
- Breadfruit
- Brussels sprouts
- Cabbage (green, red, celery, napa)
- Cactus (nopales)
- Cauliflower
- Celeriac
- Celery
- Chayote (mirliton)
- Chives
- Cucumbers
- Daikon (oriental radish)
- Eggplant
- Fennel
- Garlic
- Green chili peppers
- Green onions (scallions)
- Green peppers
- Horseradish
- Iceberg lettuce
- Kohlrabi
- Leeks
- Mushrooms
- Okra
- Olives
- Onions (white, yellow, red)
- Peas in pod, e.g., snap peas, snow peas
- Pepperoncini
- Pickles (cucumber)
- Purple peppers
- Radishes
- Rhubarb
- Rutabagas
- Shallots
- Sauerkraut
- Seaweed
- Snap peas
- Snow peas
- Spaghetti squash
- Tomatillo
- Turnips
- Wax beans
- Yellow peppers
- Yellow summer squash
- Zucchini squash
**FRUITS COMPONENT**

- The CACFP meal patterns for children require a serving of fruits at lunch and supper, but allow vegetables to substitute for the full fruits component at any lunch or supper. At breakfast, vegetables and fruits are one component and can include vegetables, fruits, or both. Fruits may be served as one of the two required snack components.

- The fruits component includes fresh, frozen, dried, and canned fruits, and pasteurized full-strength fruit juice. Menu planners should consult the USDA’s FBG to determine the crediting information for specific fruits.

- The serving size for fruits is based on volume (cups) except for dried fruit, which credits as twice the volume served, e.g., ¼ cup of dried fruit credits as ½ cup of the fruits component.

- Choose canned fruits in water, 100 percent fruit juice, or light syrup. A serving of canned fruit may include the 100 percent juice in which the fruit is packed, but cannot include water or syrup. The juice from canned fruit counts toward the juice limit.

- Juice must be pasteurized 100 percent full-strength juice or a combination of fruit and vegetable juices. The name of the full-strength juice on the label must include one of the following terms: “juice,” “full-strength juice,” “100 percent juice,” “reconstituted juice,” or “juice from concentrate.” Juice can be fresh, frozen, or made from concentrate. Juice may be served liquid or frozen, e.g., full-strength frozen juice pops.

  - Pasteurized full-strength juice can meet the vegetables or fruits component at only one meal or snack per day. Juice includes all fruit and vegetable juice, frozen pops made from 100 percent juice, pureed fruits and vegetables in smoothies, and juice from canned fruit in 100 percent juice. For more information, see the CSDE’s handouts, *Crediting Juice in the CACFP* and *Crediting Smoothies in the CACFP*.

  - If juice is served at snack to ages 6-12 (and ages 13-18 in at-risk afterschool centers and emergency shelters), the minimum serving size is ¾ cup. If the snack menu includes 4-fluid ounce juice cartons (½ cup), the menu planner must include an additional ¼ cup of fruits to provide the minimum serving size for the fruits component. To be reimbursable, this snack must also include the minimum serving size of either the grains or meat/meat alternates components.

  - Only one snack component can be a beverage. Juice cannot be served when milk is the only other snack component.
Consult the FBG to determine the proper crediting information for an individual piece of whole or cut-up fresh fruit. The meal pattern contribution of whole fresh fruit varies depending on the type and size (count pack) of the fruit. For example, the FBG indicates that one 60-count plum, one 2 ¼-inch diameter peach, and one 150-count petite banana each credit as ⅜ cup of fruit; one 100-120-count banana, one 150-count pear, one 80-count peach, one 138-count orange, and one 45-count (2-inch diameter) plum each credit as ⅛ cup of fruit; and one 113-count and 125-count orange each credit as ⅝ cup of fruit. Table 3-4 lists the FBG’s meal pattern contribution of whole fresh fruits and the additional amount needed to meet a ½-cup serving and a ¾-cup serving.

- One piece of fresh fruit (whole or cut-up) might not credit as a full serving of the fruits component, depending on the meal and age group being served. For example, snack for ages 6-12 (and ages 13-18 in at-risk afterschool centers and emergency shelters) requires ¼ cup of fruit to credit as the full fruits component. Most whole fresh fruits do not provide ¼ cup of fruit in one piece. If an individual piece of fruit does not provide the full serving, the snack menu must include additional fruits to meet the minimum serving, or provide two other snack components and count the fruit as an extra snack item.

- Pureed fruits and vegetables in smoothies made on site credit only as juice toward the CACFP meal patterns for children. Crediting is based on the actual volume of pureed fruits and vegetables per serving, as documented by the standardized recipe. For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, Crediting Smoothies in the CACFP.

- Pureed fruits must be recognizable to credit in the CACFP meal patterns for children. Pureed foods made from one fruit (such as applesauce) are recognizable creditable fruits. Combination foods with pureed (unrecognizable) fruits may contribute to the fruits component if the dish that contains them also provides an adequate amount of recognizable creditable fruit. Pureed fruit credits based on the volume served, not the volume before pureeing.

- The fruit portion of grain-based desserts such as pies, cobblers, or crisps, credits towards the fruits component based on the amount of fruit per serving. However, the grain portion of a grain-based dessert made with fruit cannot credit towards the grains component. CACFP facilities should serve sweetened fruit in moderation to help reduce children’s consumption of added sugars and help children develop a taste preference for unsweetened fruit.

- The USDA’s CACFP Best Practices encourages CACFP facilities to serve a variety of fruits and choose whole fruits (fresh, canned, dried, or frozen) more often than juice. It also recommends making at least one of the two required snack components a vegetable or a fruit.

For more information on crediting fruits, see the CSDE’s guide, Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs, which is available on the Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs webpage.
### Table 3-4. FBG’s Meal Pattern Contribution of Whole Fresh Fruits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fruit (One Piece)</th>
<th>Meal Pattern Contribution from FBG</th>
<th>Additional Amount for ½ Cup ¹, ²</th>
<th>Additional Amount for ¾ Cup ², ³</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Apple, 125-138 count</td>
<td>1 cup</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apricot, medium (1 ¾-inch diameter)</td>
<td>¼ cup</td>
<td>¼ cup</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banana, 150 count, petite</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banana, 100-120 count, regular</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clementine, whole, peeled</td>
<td>¾ cup</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
<td>¼ cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grapefruit, 27-32 count, large</td>
<td>1 cup</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiwi, 33-39 count</td>
<td>¼ cup</td>
<td>¼ cup</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nectarine, size 88-96 (2 ¼-inch diameter)</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>¼ cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nectarine, size 56-64 (2 ¾-inch diameter)</td>
<td>¾ cup</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange, Arizona or California, 113 count</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange, Florida or Texas, 125 count</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange, Arizona or California, 138 count</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peach, size 88 and 84 (2 ¼-inch diameter)</td>
<td>¾ cup</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
<td>¾ cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peach, size 64 and 60 (2 ½-inch diameter)</td>
<td>¾ cup</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peach, size 80</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>¼ cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peach, size 56</td>
<td>¾ cup</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peach, size 56</td>
<td>¾ cup</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pear, 150 count</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>¼ cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pear, 120 count</td>
<td>¾ cup</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pear, D’Anjou, Bosc or Bartlett, 100 count</td>
<td>1 ¼ cups</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plum, purple, red, or black, size 45 and 50 (2-inch diameter)</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>¼ cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plum, purple, red, or black, 2 ½-inch diameter</td>
<td>¾ cup</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plum, Japanese or hybrid, size 60 and 65</td>
<td>¾ cup</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
<td>¾ cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tangerine, 120 count</td>
<td>¾ cup</td>
<td>½ cup</td>
<td>¾ cup</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ A ½-cup serving of the fruits component is required at breakfast for ages 3-5, ages 6-12 (and ages 13-18 in at-risk afterschool centers and emergency shelters); and at snack for ages 1-2 and 3-5, if fruit is served as one of the two required snack components.

² The additional required amount can be from the same fruit or a different fruit.

³ A ¾-cup serving of the fruits component is required at snack for ages 6-12 (and ages 13-18 in at-risk afterschool centers and emergency shelters), if fruit is served as one of the two required snack components.
MEAL COMPONENTS

GRAINS COMPONENT

- The CACFP meal patterns for children require a serving of grains at breakfast, lunch, and supper. Grains may be served as one of the two required snack components.

- Through September 30, 2019, grains must meet the minimum serving sizes in *Serving Sizes for Grains in the CACFP*. Effective October 1, 2019, all grains must meet the ounce equivalents in *Whole Grain-rich Ounce Equivalents for the CACFP*. Menu planners can determine the appropriate serving size for purchased grains using the CSDE’s *Child Care Worksheet 1: Crediting Purchased Grains in the CACFP*.

- Creditable grains include whole grains, enriched grains, bran, and germ. Cereal grains (such as oats, barley, cornmeal, and bulgur) must be whole grain, enriched, or fortified. A food credits as the grains component if the first ingredient (or second after water) is whole or enriched, and the next two grain ingredients (if any) are whole grains, enriched grains, bran, or germ. For best nutrition, serve whole grains most often (see table 3-5).

- CACFP menus must include at least one serving of WGR grains per day. The USDA’s *CACFP Best Practices* recommends at least two servings of WGR grains per day. WGR products contain 100 percent whole grain or contain at least 50 percent whole grains and any other grain ingredients are enriched. A grain food meets the WGR criteria if a whole grain is the first ingredient (or second after water), and the next two grain ingredients (if any) are whole grains, enriched grains, bran, or germ. A RTE breakfast cereal meets the WGR criteria if it has a whole grain as the first ingredient (or second after water) and it is fortified. A combination food meets the WGR criteria if a whole grain is the first grain ingredient (or second after water), and the next two grain ingredients (if any) are whole grains, enriched grains, bran, or germ. For information on determining if foods meet the WGR criteria, see the CSDE’s handout, *Whole Grain-rich Criteria for the CACFP*.

- Note for school food authorities (SFAs) that work with CACFP centers: The WGR definition for the CACFP is different from the WGR definition for grades K-12 in the NSLP and School Breakfast Program (SBP). Foods that meet the WGR criteria for the CACFP may or may not meet the WGR criteria for grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP. Foods that meet the WGR criteria for grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP may or may not meet the WGR criteria for the CACFP. If the same grain foods are served to children in the CACFP and grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP, the SFA must ensure that each food meets the specific crediting and WGR criteria for each age group.

- Menus must document the type of grain served (whole grain, WGR, or enriched). For example, the menu must state “whole-wheat bread” or “enriched bread” instead of “bread,” and “brown rice” or “enriched rice” instead of “rice.” Menu planners should indicate “WGR” after any grain items that meet the WGR requirement, e.g., “seven-grain bread (WGR).” This information can also be listed on the daily production record or other menu documentation, such as a list of all types of grain products served in CACFP meals and snacks. The CSDE and CACFP sponsors must be able to verify that grains are creditable and menus comply with the WGR requirement.

- Except for sweet crackers such as graham crackers and animal crackers, grain-based desserts cannot credit in the CACFP meal patterns for children. Examples include
brownies, cookies, sweet pie crusts, doughnuts, cereal bars, granola bars, breakfast bars, sweet rolls, pastries, toaster pastries, sweet scones (e.g., blueberry, raisin, and orange cranberry) cake, brownies, rice pudding, and sweet bread pudding. Grain-based desserts do not include muffins, quick breads (such as banana bread and zucchini bread), cornbread, pancakes, waffles, French toast, savory scones (such as cheese and herb), and savory bread pudding. The CSDE recommends that sweet crackers are not served more than twice per week between all meals and snacks.

- CACFP facilities may choose to serve grain-based desserts as an additional food item that does not credit toward the CACFP meal patterns, for example, cake or cookies at special celebrations. However, CACFP facilities cannot use CACFP funds to purchase grain-based desserts or any other noncreditable foods, except for condiments, herbs, and spices. For more information, see “Noncreditable Foods” in this section.

- Recipes for grains made on site in the CACFP facility must be evaluated for CACFP crediting information. A recipe credits as the grains component if a whole or enriched grain is the greatest ingredient by weight (excluding water), and the next two grain ingredients by weight (if any) are whole grains, enriched grains, bran, or germ. For family-size recipes, use the CSDE’s Child Care Worksheet 3: Crediting Family-size Recipes for Grains in the CACFP. For quantity recipes, use the CSDE’s Child Care Worksheet 4: Crediting Quantity Recipes for Grains in the CACFP.

- Cold ready-to-eat breakfast (RTE) and hot breakfast cereals must be whole grain, WGR, enriched, or fortified; and cannot contain more than 6 grams of sugars per dry ounce. CACFP facilities can determine the appropriate serving size and compliance with the sugar limit using the CSDE’s Child Care Worksheet 2: Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP. For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP.

- Through September 30, 2019, breakfast cereals must meet the serving size requirements for either measure (cups) or weight (ounces), whichever is less. The required volume for one serving of RTE breakfast is ¼ cup for ages 1-2, ⅓ cup for ages 3-5, ¼ cup for ages 6-12, and ¼ cup for ages 13-18 in at-risk afterschool centers and emergency shelters. The required volume for one serving of cooked breakfast cereal is ¼ cup for ages 1-2 and 3-5, and ½ cup for ages 6-12 and 13-18.

- Effective October 1, 2019, breakfast cereals must comply with ounce equivalents for creditable grains. For ages 1-2 and 3-5, ½ ounce equivalent of RTE breakfast equals ½ cup of cereal flakes and rounds, ¼ cup of puffed cereal and ¼ cup of granola. For ages 6-12 and ages 13-18 in at-risk afterschool centers and emergency shelters, 1 ounce equivalent of RTE breakfast equals 1 cup of cereal flakes and rounds, 1 ¼ cups of puffed cereal and ¼ cup of granola. The required volume for 1 ounce equivalent of cooked breakfast cereal is ¼ cup for ages 1-2 and 3-5, and ½ cup for ages 6-12 and 13-18.

For more information on crediting grains, see the CSDE’s guide, Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs, which is available on the Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs webpage.
### Table 3-5. Whole-grain Products and Ingredients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barley</th>
<th>Rye</th>
<th>Wheat (White)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dehulled barley</td>
<td>Whole rye</td>
<td>Whole white wheat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dehulled-barley flour</td>
<td>Rye berries 2</td>
<td>Whole white wheat flour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole barley</td>
<td>Whole-rye flour</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole-barry flakes</td>
<td>Whole-rye flakes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole-barry flour</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole-grain barley</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole-grain barley flour</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brown Rice</th>
<th>Rye</th>
<th>Wheat (White)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brown rice</td>
<td>Whole rye</td>
<td>Whole white wheat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brown rice flour</td>
<td>Whole-rye flour</td>
<td>Whole white wheat flour</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corn</th>
<th>Rye</th>
<th>Wheat (White)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Masa (whole corn treated with lime)</td>
<td>Whole rye</td>
<td>Whole white wheat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole corn</td>
<td>Rye berries 2</td>
<td>Whole white wheat flour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole-corn flour</td>
<td>Whole-rye flour</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole cornmeal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole-grain corn flour</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole-grain grits</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole-ground corn</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Oats</th>
<th>Rye</th>
<th>Wheat (White)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oat groats 2</td>
<td>Whole rye</td>
<td>Whole white wheat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oatmeal, including old-fashioned, quick-cooking and instant</td>
<td>Whole-rye flour</td>
<td>Whole white wheat flour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rolled oats</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole oats</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole-oat flour</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Notes:

1. Masa (often used in tortilla products) is a whole grain only if the manufacturer provides documentation that the manufacturing process used to prepare the corn with lime retains the pericarp (bran layer).

2. Groats and berries are the hulled kernels of cereal grains such as oat, wheat, rye, and barley.

3. Red wheat is the most common kind of wheat in the United States.

4. “Stone ground” describes the process used for making the flour or meal and does not necessarily mean that the product is whole grain. Look for “whole” in combination with “stone ground” in the ingredients statement.

5. White whole-wheat products are lighter in color and lack the slightly bitter taste associated with the bran in red wheat. Read labels carefully to be sure products are “white whole wheat” and not “white wheat,” which is not a whole grain.
NONCREDITABLE FOODS

- Noncreditable foods are foods and beverages that cannot credit toward the CACFP meal patterns for children. Examples include popcorn, potato chips, pudding, ice cream, gelatin, cream cheese, bacon, and condiments, such as syrup, jam, ketchup, mustard, mayonnaise, and butter. Noncreditable foods are generally high in fat, sugars, and sodium, and contain few nutrients. The USDA and CSDE encourage CACFP facilities to use discretion when serving noncreditable foods and beverages, to ensure children’s nutritional needs are met.

- CACFP facilities cannot use CACFP funds to purchase noncreditable foods. The two exceptions include condiments served with creditable foods and herbs and spices used to prepare and enhance the flavor of meals.

- Examples of noncreditable meat/meat alternates include bacon; cream cheese; commercial canned soups, e.g., beef barley, beef noodle, turkey or chicken noodle, and turkey or chicken rice; dried meat and poultry snacks such as smoked meat snack sticks, pepperoni sticks, and beef or turkey jerky; drinkable and squeezable yogurt; frozen yogurt; egg whites; imitation cheese; sour cream; yogurt or soy yogurt that contains more than 23 grams of total sugars per 6 ounces (more than 3.83 grams per ounce); and tofu that contains less than 5 grams of protein in 2.2 ounces (weight) or ¼ cup (volume).

- Examples of noncreditable grains include products that are not whole grain, enriched, bran, or germ; noncreditable ingredients such as oat fiber, corn fiber, wheat starch, corn starch, and modified food starch (including potato, legume, and other vegetable flours); breakfast cereals that contain more than 6 grams of sugars per ounce; and grain-based desserts such as brownies, cookies, sweet pie crusts, doughnuts, cereal bars, granola bars, breakfast bars, sweet rolls, pastries, toaster pastries, sweet scones (e.g., blueberry, raisin, and orange cranberry) cake, brownies, rice pudding, and sweet bread pudding.

- Examples of noncreditable vegetables include pickle relish; tomato catsup; chili sauce; dehydrated vegetables used for seasoning; and snack-type foods made from vegetables such as potato chips and popcorn. Home-canned products are not allowed for food safety reasons.

- Examples of noncreditable fruits include fruit snacks (e.g., roll-ups, wrinkles, leathers, twists, and yogurt-covered fruit snacks); banana chips; jam; jelly; and juice drinks that are not 100 percent juice such as grape juice drink, orange juice drink, pineapple-grapefruit drink, cranberry juice cocktail, and lemonade. Home-canned products are not allowed for food safety reasons.

- Water does not credit in the CACFP meal patterns for children. CACFP menus cannot offer a choice between water and milk or juice. Note: The Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act requires that CACFP facilities must make drinking water available to children at no charge where meals are served during the meal service. For more information, see USDA memo SP 49-2016 CACFP 18-2016: Resources for Making Potable Water Available in Schools and Child Care Facilities.

For more information on noncreditable foods, see the CSDE’s handout, Noncreditable Foods in the CACFP, and the CSDE’s Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs webpage.
USDA BEST PRACTICES
The USDA’s optional best practices help CACFP facilities to provide the healthiest environment for children, and ensure they are getting the optimal benefit from CACFP meals. The CSDE strongly encourages CACFP facilities to follow these recommendations.

Milk

- Serve only unflavored milk to all children. The CACFP meal patterns for children require unflavored whole milk for age 1 and unflavored low-fat or unflavored fat-free (skim) milk for ages 2-5. For ages 6 and older, milk must be unflavored low-fat or unflavored or flavored fat-free (skim) milk. The USDA and CSDE encourage CACFP facilities to serve only unflavored milk.

- If serving flavored milk to children ages 6 years and older, use the Nutrition Facts Label to select flavored milk that contains no more than 22 grams of sugar per 8 fluid ounces. If flavored milk within this sugar limit is not available, choose the flavored milk with the lowest amount of sugar.

Grains

- Provide at least two servings of WGR grains per day. The CACFP meal patterns for children require at least one serving of WGR grains per day. WGR grains contain at least 50 percent whole grains and any other grain ingredients are enriched. For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, Whole Grain-rich Criteria for the CACFP.

  - A **grain food** meets the WGR criteria if the first ingredient (or second after water) is a whole grain, and the next two grain ingredients (if any) are whole grains, enriched grains, bran, or germ.

  - A **combination food** meets the WGR criteria if the first grain ingredient (or second after water) is a whole grain, and the next two grain ingredients (if any) are whole grains, enriched grains, bran, or germ.

Meat and Meat Alternates

- Serve only lean meats, nuts, and legumes.

- Limit processed meats to no more than one serving per week. Processed meats and processed poultry (e.g., sausages, luncheon meats, bacon, and beef jerky) are products preserved by smoking, curing, salting, or the addition of chemical preservatives. Processed meats are sources of sodium and saturated fats.

- Serve only natural cheeses and choose low-fat or reduced-fat cheeses. Natural cheese is cheese that is produced directly from milk, such as cheddar, Colby, Monterey Jack, mozzarella, muenster, provolone, Swiss, feta, and brie.
Vegetables and Fruits

- Make at least one of the two required snack components a vegetable or a fruit. This helps CACFP menus provide healthier snacks that meet the recommendations of the Dietary Guidelines.

- Serve a variety of fruits and choose whole fruits (fresh, canned, frozen, or dried) more often than juice. The CACFP meal patterns for children allow pasteurized full-strength juice to meet the vegetables component or fruits component at only one meal or snack per day.

- Provide at least one serving each of dark green vegetables, red/orange vegetables, beans and peas (legumes), starchy vegetables, and other vegetables each week. These are the five vegetable subgroups recommended by the Dietary Guidelines and the vegetables group of Choose MyPlate. Table 3-3 identifies some commonly eaten vegetables in each of the five subgroups.

Additional Best Practices

- Incorporate seasonal and locally produced foods into meals. For more information, see the USDA’s Farm to Preschool webpage and the CSDE’s Farm to School webpage.

- Limit purchased pre-fried foods to no more than one serving per week. The CACFP meal patterns for children prohibit deep-fat frying foods, i.e., cooking by submerging food in hot oil or other fat, but allows pre-fried foods. Pre-fried foods are commercially prepared foods such as meats, poultry, fish, and vegetables that are fried by the manufacturer during preparation. They are usually cooked by the food service operation in the oven or microwave. Pre-fried foods include refrigerated or frozen items that are breaded or battered, most frozen potato products, and most frozen products described as “crispy” or “crunchy.” Examples include chicken nuggets, chicken patties, fish sticks, french fries, tater tots, hash browns, and onion rings.

- Avoid serving noncreditable foods that are sources of added sugars. Examples include sweet toppings (e.g., honey, jam and syrup), mix-in ingredients sold with yogurt (e.g., honey, candy, or cookie pieces), and sugar-sweetened beverages (e.g., fruit drinks or sodas). Note: CACFP funds cannot be used to purchase these noncreditable foods. For more information, see “Noncreditable Foods” in this section and the CSDE’s handout, Noncreditable Foods in the CACFP, and the CSDE’s Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs webpage.

For more information on best practices and planning healthy menus to meet the Dietary Guidelines, see the CSDE’s Planning Healthy Meals in CACFP Child Care Programs webpage.
MEAL COMPONENTS
4 — Meal Service

This section addresses the meal service requirements for the CACFP, including family-style meal service, children’s intent to participate in the meal service, water availability, meals consumed off site, and offer versus serve.

FAMILY-STYLE MEAL SERVICE

The goal of the CACFP is to provide nutritious meals to young children and help them establish good eating habits at a young age. Family-style meal service enhances this goal by establishing a pleasant eating environment that supports and promotes mealtime as a learning experience. It encourages supervising adults to set a personal example and provide educational activities that are centered on foods. The USDA and the CSDE strongly encourage family-style meal service in all CACFP child care facilities.

Family style is an optional type of meal service that allows children to serve themselves from communal platters or bowls of food with assistance from supervising adults, if needed. This approach allows children to identify and be introduced to new foods, new tastes, and new menus, while developing a positive attitude toward healthy foods, sharing in group eating situations, and developing good eating habits. It also helps young children develop motor skills and the dexterity and hand strength needed to serve foods.

Unlike other types of meal service, such as cafeteria lines, vended meals, pre-plated service, and offer versus serve, family-style meals allow some latitude in initial serving sizes of food because additional servings of each food are readily available at each table and more can be served at any time. When a complete family-style service is not possible or practical, it may be useful to offer some meal components in a family-style manner, particularly when smaller children are being served or when a new food item is being introduced.

To ensure CACFP compliance when implementing family-style meal service, CACFP facilities must follow the practices below.

- A sufficient amount of prepared food and milk must be placed on each table to provide the full-required portions of each food component for all children at the table, and to accommodate the supervising adults, if they eat with the children.

- Children must be allowed to serve the food components themselves, with the exception of beverages such as milk and juice. During the course of the meal, supervising adults are responsible for actively encouraging each child to serve themselves the full-required meal pattern component. If a child initially refuses a food component or does not accept the full-required portion, the supervising adults should offer the food component to the child again.
• Supervising adults who choose to serve beverages (including milk and juice) directly to the children must serve the required minimum quantity to each child. For example, children ages 3-5 must be served ¾ cup of milk at breakfast, lunch, and supper.

• Centers and day care homes that use family style meal service cannot claim second meals for reimbursement.

Meals that follow these guidelines are reimbursable, even if teachers do not eat with the children. However, the CSDE strongly encourages CACFP facilities to assist in the development of healthy eating practices by ensuring that teachers eat with the children and model healthy eating behaviors.

The resources below provide more information on family-style meal service in the CACFP.

• Family Style Dining in Child Care (ICN): www.nfsmi.org/documentLibraryFiles/PDF/20080609045003.pdf


INTENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE MEAL SERVICE

For a CACFP facility to claim a meal or snack for CACFP reimbursement, children must participate in the meal service or have the intent to participate in the meal service. A child who makes no attempt (i.e., has no intent) to join other children at the meal or snack cannot be included in the reimbursable meal count, even if he or she was asked by the teacher to participate.

CACFP regulations allow for reimbursement of meals that are served and eaten by enrolled participants. They do not allow for reimbursement of ordered or plated meals. If a CACFP facility uses pre-plated meals or teachers serve the children, it may be difficult to judge the child’s intent to participate in the meal service. If a child refuses a meal that is pre-plated or served by a teacher, the CACFP facility cannot claim the meal for reimbursement. The child must show intent, for example:

- coming willingly to the table;
- helping himself or herself to food or asking to be served; and
- attempting to eat the meal.

The meal does not have to be eaten to be claimed, but the child must demonstrate the intent to eat.

When a child who clearly has no intent to participate is forced to come to the table or forced to put food on his or her plate, the CACFP facility cannot claim the meal for reimbursement. A child may not have the intent to participate in a meal for many reasons, such as behavior issues or being sick, tired, angry, or upset. The scenarios in table 4-1 help to illustrate the principle of a child’s intent to eat and when CACFP meals can be claimed.
### Table 4-1. Examples of Child's Intent to Eat

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCENARIO</th>
<th>CAN THE MEAL BE CLAIMED?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A child typically chooses not to participate in the meal service. A teacher forces the child to come and sit at the table, and serves the child some food. The child does not eat.</td>
<td><strong>No.</strong> The meal cannot be claimed for reimbursement because the child has not chosen (i.e., has no intent) to participate in the meal. Since the teacher knows this child typically does not eat, it would be clear that the child did not intend to participate in the meal. If the child willingly comes to the table, chooses to take a serving of food, but then does not eat, the meal is reimbursable. In this case, the child has the intent to eat, even if he or she did not follow through.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A child who normally participates in the meal service comes to the table then chooses not to take any food.</td>
<td><strong>No.</strong> The meal cannot be claimed for reimbursement because the child has chosen not to participate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At snack time, a child is crying and upset over an altercation with another child. The teacher asks her to come to the table but she refuses.</td>
<td><strong>No.</strong> The meal cannot be claimed for reimbursement because the child has chosen not to participate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A child willingly comes to the table at mealtime. He helps himself to several meal components, takes one bite, then stops eating because he does not feel well.</td>
<td><strong>Yes.</strong> The meal may be claimed for reimbursement because the child chose to participate and had the intent to eat, even though he changed his mind when he did not feel well.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A child gets sick just before lunch. She is lying on a cot, waiting for her parent to pick her up.</td>
<td><strong>No.</strong> The meal cannot be claimed for reimbursement because the child does not have the intent to participate in the meal.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WATER AVAILABILITY

USDA memo CACFP 18-2016: Resources for Making Potable Water Available in Schools and Child Care Facilities summarizes the requirements for water availability in the CACFP. CACFP facilities must make drinking water available to children, as nutritionally appropriate. Throughout the day (including mealtimes), water must be made available to children to drink upon their request. CACFP facilities can also choose to make water available for children to self-serve, for example:

- providing disposable cups near sinks that are available to children, with a step stool if children are unable to reach the sink; and
- providing covered water pitchers and disposable cups if water fountains are not available.

While drinking water must be made available to children during mealtimes, it is not part of the reimbursable meal or snack and cannot be served instead of fluid milk. Additionally, if juice is served as one of the two required snack components, water cannot be served as a choice instead of juice.

Caregivers should not serve young children too much water before and during mealtimes. Excess water may reduce the amount of food and milk that children consume. CACFP facilities should serve water with snacks when no other beverage is being served. Water should also be made available instead of high-calorie, sweetened beverages that are served outside mealtimes, such as juice drinks, soda, and sports drinks. Note: The CSDE recommends not serving these types of beverages in child care programs. For more information, see the CSDE’s Action Guide for Child Care Nutrition and Physical Activity Policies.

If safe water is not readily available in a facility, purchasing water for children is a reasonable and allowable cost for CACFP facilities. However, purchasing water for adult or employee consumption is not an allowable cost.
MEALS CONSUMED OFF SITE

The USDA regulations define meals as foods meeting the nutrition requirements that are served to enrolled participants at the CACFP facility. CACFP facilities receive reimbursement for meals and snacks served to children on the premises. A meal consumed off site is not reimbursable because a child who has left the premises is no longer participating in the activities of the institution.

If a child leaves the meal service early, uneaten meal or snack components cannot be packed “to go.” By leaving the facility and consuming the food off site, the child is not participating in the meal or snack service with the rest of the group. These meals and snacks cannot be claimed for CACFP reimbursement.

The CACFP is a congregate feeding program intended to provide meals that are consumed on site unless children are on an approved field trip. Meals served on field trips are reimbursable if they meet the CACFP meal pattern requirements, and are served and consumed as part of a related function of the CACFP facility.

OFFER VERSUS SERVE

Offer versus serve (OVS) is an optional approach to menu planning and meal service that allows children to decline some of the foods offered in a reimbursable breakfast, lunch, or supper. OVS is not allowed at snack. OVS is only allowed in:

- CACFP at-risk afterschool programs; and
- CACFP centers that serve meals prepared by a SFA participating in the NSLP and SBP. For information on the school meal patterns, see the CSDE’s Meal Patterns for School Nutrition Programs webpage.

Generally, OVS is not considered appropriate for preschool children because it may interfere with CACFP nutrition goals and the CACFP facility’s efforts to introduce new foods to children. The USDA encourages CACFP institutions to consider using family-style meal service as a way to provide younger children some choice in the types and amounts of food selected. For more information, see “Family-style Meal Service” in this section.

CACFP institutions that may benefit from the use of OVS include those caring for school-age children in outside-school-hours care centers or at-risk afterschool care centers. These schools or community-based centers could be operated by the school or SFA, or by another CACFP institution that contracts with the SFA for meals. Eligible CACFP facilities that choose to implement OVS must notify CSDE.

Note: In Connecticut, all at-risk afterschool centers currently operate under the NSLP, not the CACFP. The OVS requirements for the NSLP are different from the OVS requirements for the CACFP. For more information, see the CSDE’s Offer Versus Serve for School Nutrition Programs webpage.
OVS in CACFP At-risk Meals

Table 4-2 summarizes the OVS requirements for CACFP meals in at-risk afterschool centers.

- For a reimbursable breakfast, the CACFP center must offer at least four food items and the child must select at least three food items.
- For a reimbursable lunch or supper, the CACFP center must offer all five food components and the child must select at least three food components.

For more information on OVS, see the CSDE’s handout, *Offer Versus Serve in At-risk Afterschool Centers*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4-2. OVS Requirements for CACFP Meals in At-risk Afterschool Centers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>BREAKFAST</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Must Offer at Least Four Food Items from Three Food Components</strong>¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. One serving of milk ², ³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. One serving of vegetables and fruits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. One serving of grains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. One serving of meat/meat alternates or one additional serving of fruits and vegetables or grains</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>LUNCH AND SUPPER</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Must Offer Five Components</strong>¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. One serving of milk ³</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. One serving of fruits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. One serving of vegetables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. One serving of grains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. One serving of meat/meat alternates</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Serving sizes must be at least the minimum required quantities in the CACFP meal patterns for children.
² The four food items cannot include two serving of milk.
³ Milk must be unflavored low-fat or unflavored fat-free. Flavored fat-free milk can be served to ages 6 and older, but the USDA’s *CACFP Best Practices* recommends only unflavored milk.
OVS in NSLP and SBP Meals

The CACFP regulations permit the substitution of the NSLP meal pattern, including the use of OVS, when meals are prepared by schools and served by schools or other institutions participating in the CACFP. Table 4-3 summarizes the OVS requirements for centers operating under the NSLP and SBP meal patterns.

- At breakfast, the meal must offer at least four food items and the child must select at least three food items including at least ½ cup of fruit (or vegetable substitutions, if offered).
- At lunch, the meal must offer all five components and the child must select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables, and the full portion (minimum serving size) of at least two other components.

For schools, OVS must be implemented in senior high schools for lunch but is optional for breakfast. For junior high, middle schools and elementary schools, OVS is optional for both breakfast and lunch. For all grades other than high school, the local SFA makes the decision of whether to implement OVS.

For CACFP facilities receiving meals from schools, OVS is an option for breakfast, lunch and supper, but not for snack. CACFP facilities electing this option must implement OVS in accordance with the method used by the school providing the meals. OVS cannot be used with snack services under either the NSLP or CACFP.

For more information, see the CSDE’s Offer Versus Serve for School Nutrition Programs webpage.
### Table 4-3. OVS Requirements for NSLP and SBP Meals in At-risk Afterschool Centers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>BREAKFAST</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Must Offer at Least Four Food Items from Three Food Components</strong>&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. One serving of milk&lt;sup&gt;2,3&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. One serving of vegetables and fruits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. One serving of grains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Additional food item from either fruits (including optional vegetable substitutions) or grains (including meat/meat alternate substitutions)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>LUNCH AND SUPPER</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Must Offer Five Components</strong>&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One serving of milk&lt;sup&gt;3&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One serving of fruits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One serving of vegetables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One serving of grains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One serving of meat/meat alternates</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<sup>1</sup> Serving sizes must be at least the minimum daily required quantities in the NSLP and SBP meal patterns. The menu planner determines the daily serving size to meet the required weekly amounts for each component.

<sup>2</sup> The four food items cannot include two serving of milk.

<sup>3</sup> The NSLP and SBP meal patterns for grades K-12 require that schools offer a choice of at least two different varieties of milk, e.g., unflavored low-fat milk, unflavored fat-free milk, or flavored fat-free milk.
5 — Nutrition Policies

The CSDE strongly encourages all CACFP facilities to develop and implement nutrition policies that promote healthy practices for children, staff members, and families. Written policies benefit the child care program by helping to:

- identify the child care program’s plan for quality nutrition programs;
- document applicable federal and state requirements and accreditation standards;
- provide clear guidelines for staff members and families;
- standardize consistent practices between classrooms and among all staff members;
- communicate the child care program’s benefits to potential families;
- provide a basis to evaluate program activities and staff members;
- demonstrate the child care program’s commitment to children’s health and well-being;
- educate families regarding the child care program’s nutrition practices; and
- ensure compliance with best practices based on current science, public health research, and national health recommendations.

The CSDE’s Action Guide for Child Care Nutrition and Physical Activity Policies addresses comprehensive nutrition and physical activity policies to create the healthiest possible environment for infants and children in child care settings. It is intended to help local and community child care, early education, and afterschool programs establish and implement policies and practices that encourage healthy lifestyles in children.

The action guide includes best practices for promoting healthy eating and physical activity based on current science, public health research, and national recommendations and standards. It addresses six policy components for creating a healthy child care environment, including:

- Nutrition Standards (CCCNS);
- Eating Environment;
- Nutrition Education;
- Physical Activity;
- Communication and Promotion; and
- Evaluation.

The CSDE strongly encourages all CACFP facilities to use the Action Guide for Child Care Nutrition and Physical Activity Policies to develop and implement nutrition policies for all foods and beverages available in child care. Following the policy recommendations in the action guide will help all Connecticut child care programs implement best practices for creating a healthy child care environment.
CHILD CARE MEALS AND SNACKS

When meals and snacks are provided by the CACFP facility, policies should address the program’s approach to feeding children, such as menu planning, nutrition standards, eating environment, meal schedules, family-style meal service, modeling healthy behaviors, and procedures for handling special dietary needs. The CACFP facility should adopt nutrition standards that address foods and beverages served throughout the child care environment, including CACFP meals and snacks, celebrations, learning experiences, and other activities where foods and beverages are provided by the child care program or families. For more information, see the CSDE’s Action Guide for Child Care Nutrition and Physical Activity Policies.

FAMILY-PROVIDED FOODS

Situations may arise when families want to bring food for their child as a substitution for a CACFP meal component or an entire meal. This may be due to cultural, religious, or personal food preferences, or a special dietary need. If a CACFP facility allows parents to provide foods and beverages from home, it must clearly define the policies and requirements for making any substitutions or modifications to the planned CACFP menus.

CACFP facilities must carefully consider food safety issues and the liability that might arise if a child gets a foodborne illness as a result of allowing families to bring food from home. Connecticut’s Public Health Code 19-13-B42 applies to all foods served in child care centers and emergency shelters, regardless of whether they are prepared on site or brought from home.

Public Health Code 19-13-B42 does not apply to family day care homes. However, family day care homes must follow proper procedures to ensure the safety of meals served to children in the CACFP. For information on food safety, see the CSDE’s Food Safety in CACFP Child Care Programs webpage.

Program policies should address nutrition and food safety issues for foods brought from home. Nutrition standards for allowable foods and beverages should be based on the CACFP meal patterns for children and the CCCNS. Policies should specify food restrictions for nutrition reasons, e.g., prohibiting foods of poor nutritional value (such as soda, iced tea, fruit drinks, cakes, cookies, and candy), either for an individual child’s consumption or to be shared with all children for parties and other events. The CSDE strongly recommends that CACFP facilities follow the CCCNS for all foods and beverages available in the child care setting, including those allowed from home.

Policies should also address food safety standards for any foods allowed from home, including:

- clearly labeling all foods with the child’s name, date, and type of food;
- storing foods at an appropriate temperature until they are eaten;
- prohibiting children from sharing lunches and snacks brought from home with other children; and
- restricting foods for food safety reasons, e.g., foods provided by families to be shared with other children for parties and other events cannot be homemade and must be
either whole fruits or commercially prepared packaged foods that are unopened and, when possible, individually wrapped.

The CSDE’s *Action Guide for Child Care Nutrition and Physical Activity Policies* provides policy recommendations and implementation strategies for family-provided meals and snacks. Section 5 of the CSDE’s guide, *Accommodating Special Diets in CACFP Child Care Programs*, provides guidance on developing policies for meal modifications for special diets.

**Note:** The final rule allows CACFP facilities to claim reimbursement for meals that contain one family-provided meal component. The USDA will be developing guidance on family-provided meal components for children without disabilities. As of the date of this publication, the USDA has not released policy guidance on the implementation requirements for this provision. Until the USDA guidance is released, CACFP facilities cannot claim reimbursement for meals that contain a family-provided meal component for children without a disability that restricts their diet. For more information, see “Family-provided Foods” in the CSDE’s guide, *Accommodating Special Diets in CACFP Child Care Programs*.

**TRAINING STAFF MEMBERS**

Program staff members are critical to the successful implementation of the CACFP facility’s nutrition policy. All staff members need training on the nutrition policy for it to be effective. Be sure to include all staff members involved with the child care program, such as program directors, teachers, teacher’s aides, food service personnel (e.g., directors, coordinators, cooks, and general workers), and consultants (e.g., registered dietitians, nurses, and education consultants). Family day care home sponsors should address nutrition policy as part of their training for providers.

Written policies assist teachers and other staff members in responding appropriately and consistently to any food and nutrition issues in the child care setting. Training helps staff members understand why the nutrition policy is important, and its effect on children’s overall health. Training also helps provide clear and consistent messages regarding the nutrition services component of the CACFP facility. Staff members can better understand the program’s expectations for themselves, the children, and their families. This enables all child care personnel to better implement local nutrition policies and prepares them to deal with any problems that might arise. For more information, see the CSDE’s *Action Guide for Child Care Nutrition and Physical Activity Policies*. 
6 — Resources

This section includes links to federal and state regulations, policy memoranda, websites, and the CSDE’s guides, resource lists, forms, and handouts.

CSDE FORMS AND HANDOUTS

Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the CACFP

Allowable Milk Substitutes for Children without Disabilities in the CACFP

Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Meal Pattern for Children

Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP

Crediting Enriched Grains in the CACFP

Crediting Deli Meats in the CACFP

Crediting Juice in the CACFP

Crediting Legumes in the CACFP

Crediting Smoothies in the CACFP

Crediting Soup in the CACFP

Crediting Tofu and Tofu Products in the CACFP

Crediting Whole Grains in the CACFP

Noncreditable Foods in the CACFP

Offer Versus Serve in At-risk Afterschool Centers

Requirements for Alternate Protein Products in the CACFP

Serving Sizes for Grains in the CACFP (October 1, 2017, through September 30, 2019)
Whole Grain-rich Criteria for the CACFP

Whole Grain-rich Ounce Equivalents for the CACFP (Effective October 1, 2019)

Using Child Nutrition (CN) Labels in the CACFP

Using Product Formulation Statements in the CACFP

Vegetable Subgroups in the CACFP

**Crediting Worksheets**

Child Care Worksheet 1: *Crediting Purchased Grains in the CACFP*
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/excel/deps/nutrition/cacfpcredit1.xls

Child Care Worksheet 2: *Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP*
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/excel/deps/nutrition/cacfpcredit2.xls

Child Care Worksheet 3: *Crediting Family-Size Recipes for Grains in the CACFP*
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/excel/deps/nutrition/cacfpcredit3.xls

Child Care Worksheet 4: *Crediting Quantity Recipes for Grains in the CACFP*
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/excel/deps/nutrition/cacfpcredit4.xls

Child Care Worksheet 5: *Nutrition Standards for Processed Fruits and Vegetables*
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/excel/deps/nutrition/cacfpcredit5.xls

Child Care Worksheet 6: *Nutrition Standards for Soup*
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/excel/deps/nutrition/cacfpcredit6.xls

Child Care Worksheet 7: *Nutrition Standards for Meat/Meat Alternates*
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/excel/deps/nutrition/cacfpcredit7.xls

Child Care Worksheet 8: *Crediting Yogurt in the CACFP*
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/excel/deps/nutrition/cacfpcredit8.xls

Child Care Worksheet 9: *Nutrient Analysis of Recipes*
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/excel/deps/nutrition/cacfpcredit9.xls
Menu Forms

At-risk Supper and Snack

At-risk Snack for Ages 6-18
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/word_docs/deps/nutrition/cacfp/forms/mfattrisksnack618.doc

At-risk Snack and Supper for Ages 6-18
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/word_docs/deps/nutrition/cacfp/forms/mfattrisksnacksup618.doc

Two-weeks At-risk Supper for Ages 6-18
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/word_docs/deps/nutrition/cacfp/forms/mfattrisksup2wk618.doc

Breakfast, Lunch, and Snack

Breakfast, Lunch, and Snack for Ages 1-2
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/word_docs/deps/nutrition/cacfp/forms/mfbreaklunchsnack12.doc

Breakfast, Lunch, and Snack for Ages 3-5
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/word_docs/deps/nutrition/cacfp/forms/mfbreaklunchsnack35.doc

Breakfast, Lunch, and Snack for Ages 6-12
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/word_docs/deps/nutrition/cacfp/forms/mfbreaklunchsnack612.doc

Breakfast and Snack

Breakfast, AM Snack, and PM Snack for Ages 3-5
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/word_docs/deps/nutrition/cacfp/forms/mfsnackbreaksnack35.doc

Breakfast and PM Snack for Ages 3-5
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/word_docs/deps/nutrition/cacfp/forms/mfbreakpmsnack35.doc

Breakfast and PM Snack for Ages 6-12
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/word_docs/deps/nutrition/cacfp/forms/mfbreakpmsnack612.doc
Emergency Shelters

**AM, PM, and Evening Snack for Ages 6-18 in Emergency Shelters**
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/word_docs/deps/nutrition/cacfp/forms/mfemergsnack618.doc

**Breakfast, Lunch, and Supper for Ages 6-18 in Emergency Shelters**
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/word_docs/deps/nutrition/cacfp/forms/mfemergbreaklunchsup618.doc

Lunch and Snack

**AM Snack, Lunch, and PM Snack for Ages 3-5**
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/word_docs/deps/nutrition/cacfp/forms/mfsnacklunchsnack35.doc

**Snack**

**AM and PM Snack for Ages 3-5**
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/word_docs/deps/nutrition/cacfp/forms/mfsnackkpm35.doc

**Two-week AM or PM Snack for Ages 3-5**
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/word_docs/deps/nutrition/cacfp/forms/mf snackk2wk35.doc

Production Records

**Any Meal**
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/word_docs/deps/nutrition/cacfp/forms/prcomponents.doc

**AM and PM Snack**
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/word_docs/deps/nutrition/cacfp/forms/prsna ckmf35.doc

**AM, PM, and Evening Snack for Emergency Shelter:**
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/word_docs/deps/nutrition/cacfp/forms/premergsnack.doc

**AM Snack, Lunch, and PM Snack**
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/word_docs/deps/nutrition/cacfp/forms/prsnacklunchsnack.doc

**At-Risk Snack and Supper**
Breakfast, AM Snack, and PM Snack
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/word_docs/deps/nutrition/cacfp/forms/prsnackbreaksnack.doc

Breakfast and PM Snack
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/word_docs/deps/nutrition/cacfp/forms/prbreakpmsnack.doc

Breakfast, Lunch, and Snack (AM or PM)
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/word_docs/deps/nutrition/cacfp/forms/prbreaklunchsnsack.doc

Breakfast, Lunch, and Supper for Emergency Shelters
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/word_docs/deps/nutrition/cacfp/forms/premergbreaklunchsup.doc

Sample Menus

Cold Breakfast Menus for the CACFP

Hot Breakfast Menus for the CACFP

Cold Lunch/Supper Menus for the CACFP

Hot Lunch/Supper Menus for the CACFP

Snack Menus for the CACFP

All forms and handouts are available on the CSDE’s Meal Patterns for CACFP Child Care Programs webpage.
CSDE GUIDES

Action Guide for Child Care Nutrition and Physical Activity Policies

Nutrition Policies and Guidance for CACFP Child Care Programs

- Accommodating Special Diets in CACFP Child Care Programs

- Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs

- Feeding Infants in CACFP Child Care Programs

- Food Safety in CACFP Child Care Programs

- Planning Healthy Meals in CACFP Child Care Programs

- Meal Pattern Requirements in CACFP Child Care Programs

CSDE RESOURCE LISTS


Nutrition Resource Lists

- Child Nutrition Programs
- Dietary Guidelines and Nutrition Information
- Food Safety
- Menu Planning and Food Production
- Special Diets

Healthy School Environment Resource Lists

- Competitive Foods
- Health and Achievement
- Nutrition Education
- Physical Activity and Physical Education
- Promoting Healthy Weight
- Wellness Policies for Schools and Child Care
WEBSITES
CACFP Afterschool Programs (USDA):
www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/afterschool-programs
CACFP At-risk Afterschool Care Centers (CSDE):
CACFP Child Care Centers (CSDE):
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=321580
CACFP Emergency Shelters (CSDE):
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=321582
CACFP Family Day Care Homes (CSDE):
CACFP Handbooks (USDA):
www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/cacfp-handbooks
Child Care Nutrition and Physical Activity Policies (CSDE):
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2678&q=322562
Child Nutrition (CN) Labeling (USDA):
www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/cnlabeling/default.htm
Child Nutrition Programs (CSDE):
Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs (CSDE):
FNS Instructions for Child Nutrition Programs (CSDE):
Food Safety in CACFP Child Care Programs (CSDE):
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=336520
Laws and Regulations for Child Nutrition Programs (CSDE):
Manuals and Guides (CSDE):
Meal Patterns for CACFP Child Care Programs (CSDE):
Operational Memoranda for the CACFP (CSDE):
Menu Planning (CSDE):
Nutrition Education Resources (CSDE):
Planning Healthy Meals (CSDE):
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=336522
Program Guidance for CACFP Child Care Programs (CSDE):  

Resources for Child Nutrition Programs (CSDE):  

Special Diets in CACFP Child Care Programs (CSDE):  

**USDA REGULATIONS AND POLICY**

CACFP Policy Memos (USDA):  
www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/policy

CACFP Regulations (USDA):  
www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/regulations

CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 2C-18 and 2H-18: Requirements for Meal Modifications in CACFP Child Care Centers and Family Day Care Homes:  
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/cacfp/memos/memos18/OM02C18_02H18.pdf

CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 4A-16, 5C-16 and 5H-16: New Meal Pattern Requirements for the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP):  
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/cacfp/memos/memos16/om04a16_05c16_05h16.pdf

CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 3A-16, 4C-16 and 4H-16: Statements Supporting Accommodations for Participants with Disabilities in the Child Nutrition Programs:  

CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 11C-11 and 04H-11: Fluid Milk and Milk Substitutions in the CACFP:  

CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 10C-11 and 13H-11: Water Availability in the Child and Adult Care Food Program:  

CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 03C-07 and 03H-07: Reimbursement for Meals Provided by Parents for Medical Reasons in CACFP:  
www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/cacfp/memos/memosold/om03c07_03h07.pdf

Final Rule: Child and Adult Care Food Program: Meal Pattern Revisions Related to the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (81 FR 24348):  

Final Rule Correction: Child and Adult Care Food Program: Meal Pattern Revisions Related to the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (81 FR 24348):  
www.fns.usda.gov/fr-110116

Final Rule: Child and Adult Care Food Program: At-Risk Afterschool Meals in Eligible States (75 FR 16325):  
www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/At-Risk_Meals_FR.pdf
REFERENCES

- FNS Instruction 783-13, Revision 3: *Variations in Meal Requirements for Religious Reasons: Jewish Schools, Institutions and Sponsors.*

- Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (Public Law 111-296):

- Nutrition Standards for CACFP Meals and Snacks (USDA):
  - www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/meals-and-snacks

- Operational Memos for the CACFP (CSDE):
  - www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/fnsinstructions/783
  - www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/vegetable
  - www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/optional

- USDA Memo CACFP 05-2016: *Grain Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answers:* www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/grain-requirements-child-and-adult-care-food-program-questions-and-answers


- USDA Memo CACFP 09-2017: *Vegetable and Fruit Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answers:* www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/vegetable-and-fruit-requirements-cacfp-qas


USDA Memo SP 01-2016 CACFP 01-2016 SFSP 01-2016: Procuring Local Meat, Poultry, Game, and Eggs for Child Nutrition Programs: www.fns.usda.gov/procuring-local-meat-poultry-game-and-eggs-child-nutrition-programs


Glossary

**Administrative Review:** A periodic review of an institution’s operations by the Connecticut State Department of Education to monitor performance and assess compliance with all USDA regulations.

**alternate protein products (APP):** APPs are generally single ingredient powders that are added to foods. Some examples include soy flours, soy concentrates, soy isolates, whey protein concentrate, whey protein isolates, and casein. APPs include vegetable protein products. The USDA has specific requirements for the crediting of APP in Child Nutrition Programs. For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, *Requirements for Alternate Protein Products in the CACFP*.

**at-risk afterschool care centers:** The at-risk afterschool meals component of the CACFP provides reimbursement for snacks and suppers served to children through age 18 who are participating in afterschool programs in eligible (at-risk) areas. The program provides funds to public and private nonprofit (federal tax-exempt) and for-profit organizations, and schools, for nutritious snacks and suppers served as part of organized programs of care, which are known to help reduce or prevent children’s involvement in high-risk behaviors. All snacks must meet the requirements of the CACFP meal patterns for children. For more information, see the USDA’s CACFP Afterschool Programs webpage.

**bran:** The protective coating around the whole-grain kernel that is rich in nutrients, fiber, and other health-promoting substances called phytochemicals.

**Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP):** The USDA’s federally assisted meal program providing nutritious meals and snacks to children in child care centers, family day care homes, and emergency shelters, and snacks and suppers to children participating in eligible at-risk afterschool care programs. The CACFP also provides meals and snacks to adults who receive care in nonresidential adult day care centers. For more information, see the USDA’s CACFP webpage and the CSDE’s CACFP webpage.

**CACFP facilities:** Child care centers, family day care homes, emergency shelters, and at-risk afterschool care centers that participate in the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program.

**CACFP meal patterns for children:** The required food components and minimum serving sizes that facilities participating in the CACFP must provide to receive federal reimbursement for meals and snacks served to children. The CACFP meal patterns for children apply to children ages 1-12; children ages 15 and younger of migrant workers; children of any age with disabilities; and children through age 18 in at-risk afterschool care centers and emergency shelters. For more information, see section 1.

**CACFP meal pattern for infants:** The required food components and minimum serving sizes that facilities participating in the CACFP must provide to infants from birth through 11 months to receive federal reimbursement for meals and snacks served to infants. For more information, see the CACFP Infant Meal Pattern, and the CSDE’s Feeding Infants in CACFP Child Care Programs webpage.
CACFP sponsor: A public or private nonprofit organization that is entirely responsible for the administration of the CACFP in one or more day care homes, child care centers, emergency shelters, at-risk afterschool care centers, or adult day care centers. In some situations, for-profit institutions may also be eligible to participate in the CACFP. For more information, see Section 226.2 of the CACFP regulations (7 CFR 226).

Child Nutrition (CN) label: A statement that clearly identifies the contribution of a food product toward the meal pattern requirements, based on the USDA’s evaluation of the product’s formulation. Products eligible for CN labeling include main dish entrees that contribute to the meat/meat alternates component of the meal pattern requirements, e.g., beef patties, cheese or meat pizzas, meat or cheese and bean burritos, egg rolls, and breaded fish portions. The CN label will usually indicate the contribution of other meal components that are part of these products. For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, Using Child Nutrition (CN) Labels in the CACFP, and the USDA’s Child Nutrition (CN) Labeling webpage.

Child Nutrition Programs: The USDA’s federally funded programs that provide nutritious meals and snacks to children, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), Afterschool Snack Program (ASP), Special Milk Program (SMP), Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), Seamless Summer Option (SSO) of the NSLP, Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP), and Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). The CACFP also provides nutritious meals and snacks to the frail elderly in adult day care centers. For more information, see the CSDE’s Child Nutrition Programs webpage.

Connecticut Child Care Nutrition Standards (CC CNS): The CSDE’s recommended guidelines for the nutritional content of all foods and beverages served throughout the child care environment, including CACFP meals and snacks, celebrations and any other activities where foods and beverages are provided by the child care program or families. The CCCNS reflects current nutrition science and national health recommendations, and promotes whole or minimally processed nutrient-rich foods that are low in fat, added sugars, and sodium. For more information, see the CSDE’s Action Guide for Child Care Nutrition and Physical Activity Policies.

creditable food: A food or beverage that can be counted toward meeting the meal pattern requirements for a reimbursable meal or snack in the USDA Child Nutrition Programs. For more information, see the CSDE’s Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs webpage.

cycle menu: A series of menus planned for a specific period of time, with a different menu for each day. Cycle menus can help CACFP facilities to increase variety, control food cost, and save time. For more information, see “Using Cycle Menus” in section 2.

deep-fat frying: Cooking by submerging food in hot oil or other fat. The USDA final rule for the CACFP prohibits deep-fat frying foods on site in CACFP facilities.

Dietary Guidelines for Americans: A federal document that provides science-based advice for Americans ages 2 and older to promote health and reduce risk for chronic diseases through diet and physical activity. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Department of Agriculture jointly publish the Dietary Guidelines every five years. This document forms the basis of federal food, nutrition education and information programs. For more information, see the Dietary Guidelines webpage.
disability: A condition in which a person has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, has a record of such an impairment, or is regarded as having such an impairment. For more information, see the CSDE’s guide, Accommodating Special Diets in CACFP Child Care Programs.

edible portion: The portion of a food that can actually be eaten after the nonedible parts are removed, for example, cooked lean meat without bone, and fruit without seeds or pits.

enriched grains: Refined grains (such as wheat, rice, and corn) and grain products (such as cereal, pasta, and bread) that have certain vitamins and minerals added to replace the nutrients lost during processing. The five enrichment nutrients are added within limits specified by the FDA, and include thiamin (B₁), riboflavin (B₂), niacin (B₃), folic acid, and iron. For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, Crediting Enriched Grains in the CACFP.

enrichment: Adding back nutrients (usually vitamins or minerals) originally present in a food that were lost during processing. Enrichment nutrients are added back in approximately the same levels as were originally present in the food. For more information, see “enriched grains” in this section.

family-style meal service: A type of meal service that allows children to serve themselves from common platters or bowls of food with assistance from supervising adults. For more information, see “Family-style Meal Service” in section 4.

fluid milk substitutes: Nondairy beverages (such as soy milk) that can be used as a substitute for fluid milk in the USDA Child Nutrition Programs. For reimbursable meals and snacks, nondairy beverages served to children without disabilities must comply with the USDA nutrition standards for milk substitutes. For more information, see “nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes” in this section and the CSDE’s handout, Allowable Milk Substitutes for Children without Disabilities in the CACFP.

food components: The five food groups that comprise reimbursable meals in the CACFP, including milk, meat/meat alternates, vegetables, fruits, and grains. For more information on the individual food components, see section 3 and the CSDE’s Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs webpage.

fortification: Adding nutrients (usually vitamins or minerals) that were not originally present in a food or beverage, or adding nutrients at levels that are higher than originally present. Fortification is used for naturally nutrient-rich products based on scientifically documented health needs (e.g., fortifying milk with vitamin D to increase the body’s absorption of calcium), or to enhance the perceived nutritional value of products with little or no natural nutritional value, e.g., an “energy” bar made from processed flour that is fortified with multiple vitamins and minerals. Fortification nutrients are added to products in varying amounts, from small percentages up to amounts greater than recommended intakes.

full serving: The quantity of food that meets the minimum required amount of a specific component in the CACFP meal patterns.
**full-strength fruit or vegetable juice:** An undiluted product obtained by extraction from sound fruit. Full-strength juice may be fresh, canned, frozen or reconstituted from concentrate and may be served in either liquid or frozen state. The name of the full-strength fruit juice on the label must include one of the following terms: “juice,” “full-strength juice,” “100 percent juice,” “reconstituted juice,” or “juice from concentrate.” For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, *Crediting Juice in the CACFP*.

**germ:** The sprouting section of the whole-grain kernel that contains B vitamins, vitamin E, trace minerals, healthy fats, antioxidants, and phytochemicals.

**juice drink:** A product resembling juice that contains full-strength juice along with added water and possibly other ingredients, such as sweeteners, spices, or flavorings. Juice drinks do not credit in the CACFP meal patterns.

**meal:** A grain made by coarsely grinding corn, oats, wheat, or other grains. Meal credits toward the USDA meal patterns only if it is whole grain, enriched, or fortified.

**meals:** See “reimbursable meals” in this section.

**meat alternates:** Foods that provide a similar protein content to meat. Meat alternates include alternate protein products; cheese; eggs; cooked dry beans or peas; nuts and seeds and their butters (except for acorn, chestnut and coconut); tofu and other soy products containing at least 5 grams of protein in 2.2 ounces (weight) or ¼ cup (volume); and yogurt and soy yogurt (plain or flavored) containing no more than 23 grams of sugar per 6 ounces. For more information, see the CSDE’s *Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs* webpage.

**medical statement:** A document that identifies the specific medical conditions and appropriate dietary accommodations for children with special dietary needs. For more information, see the CSDE’s guide, *Accommodating Special Diets in CACFP Child Care Programs*, and the CSDE’s *Accommodating Special Diets in CACFP Child Care Programs* webpage.

**menu item:** Any planned main dish, vegetable, fruit, bread, grain, or milk that is part of the reimbursable meal. Menu items consist of food items.

**menu of record:** The official menu that documents exactly what is served each day in the CACFP facility. This provides a record of the meal pattern components and portion sizes served to all enrolled children and infants, and provides documentation for the number of CACFP meals claimed for reimbursement.

**National School Lunch Program (NSLP):** The USDA’s federally assisted meal program operating in public and nonprofit private schools, and residential child care institutions. The NSLP provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free lunches to children each school day. It was established under the National School Lunch Act, signed by President Harry Truman in 1946. For more information, see the CSDE’s *National School Lunch Program* webpage.
**natural cheese:** Cheese that is produced directly from milk, such as cheddar, Colby, Monterey Jack, mozzarella, munster, provolone, Swiss, feta, and brie. Natural cheese also includes pasteurized blended cheese that is made by blending one or more different kinds of natural cheese. Natural cheeses do not include pasteurized process cheese (e.g., American), pasteurized process cheese food, pasteurized process cheese spread, or pasteurized process cheese products.

**noncreditable foods:** Foods and beverages that do not contribute toward any meal pattern components in the USDA Child Nutrition Programs. For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, *Noncreditable Foods in Child Care Programs in the CACFP.*

**noncreditable grains:** Grain ingredients that do not contribute toward the grains component. Examples include fiber and modified food starch (including potato, legume, and other vegetable flours). For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, *Whole Grain-rich Criteria for the CACFP.*

**nutrient-dense foods:** Foods and beverages that provide vitamins, minerals, and other substances that contribute to adequate nutrient intakes or may have positive health effects, and contain little or no solid fats, added sugars, refined starches, or sodium. Ideally, these foods and beverages are also in forms that retain naturally occurring components, such as dietary fiber. Examples include all vegetables, fruits, whole grains, seafood, eggs, beans and peas, unsalted nuts and seeds, fat-free and low-fat dairy products, and lean meats and poultry (when prepared with little or no added solid fats, sugars, refined starches, and sodium). The term “nutrient dense” indicates the nutrients and other beneficial substances in a food have not been “diluted” by the addition of calories from added solid fats, sugars, or refined starches, or by the solid fats naturally present in the food.

**nutrient-rich foods:** See “nutrient-dense foods” in this section.

**nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes:** The nutrition requirements for nondairy beverages (such as soy milk) used as fluid milk substitutes in the USDA Child Nutrition Programs. The USDA requires that any fluid milk substitutes are nutritionally equivalent to cow’s milk and meet the following nutrients based on a 1-cup serving (8 fluid ounces): 276 milligrams (mg) of calcium; 8 grams (g) of protein; 500 international units (IU) of vitamin A; 100 IU of vitamin D; 24 mg of magnesium; 222 mg of phosphorus; 349 mg of potassium; 0.44 mg of riboflavin; and 1.1 micrograms (mcg) of vitamin B-12. For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, *Allowable Milk Substitutes for Children without Disabilities in the CACFP.*

**offer versus serve (OVS):** An optional approach to menu planning and meal service that allows children to decline some of the foods offered in a reimbursable breakfast, lunch, or supper. OVS is not allowed at snack. OVS is only allowed in CACFP at-risk afterschool programs and CACFP facilities that serve meals prepared by a school food authority (SFA) participating in the National School Lunch (NSLP) and School Breakfast Programs (SBP). For more information, see “Offer versus Serve” in section 4.

**other foods:** See “noncreditable foods” in this section.
**Glossary**

**Ounce Equivalent:** The amount of food product that is considered equal to one ounce from the grains food group or meat/meat alternates food group. An ounce equivalent for some foods may be less than a measured ounce if the food is concentrated or low in water content (e.g., nuts, peanut butter, dried meats, and flour) or more than an ounce if the food contains a large amount of water (e.g., tofu, cooked beans, cooked rice, or cooked pasta). The CACFP meal patterns for children use ounce equivalents for the grains component, effective October 1, 2019. For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, *Whole Grain-rich Ounce Equivalents for the CACFP*.

**Point-of-Service (POS) Meal Count:** A meal count taken as the children are seated and eating.

**Potable Water:** Water that is safe for human consumption.

**Pre-Fried Foods:** Commercially prepared foods such as meats, poultry, fish, and vegetables that are fried by the manufacturer during preparation. These foods are usually cooked by the food service operation in the oven or microwave. Pre-fried foods include refrigerated or frozen items that are breaded or battered, most frozen potato products, and most frozen products described as “crispy” or “crunchy.” Examples include chicken nuggets, chicken patties, fish sticks, french fries, tater tots, hash browns, and onion rings.

**Product Fact Sheet:** See “product specification sheet” in this section.

**Product Formulation Statement (PFS):** An information statement obtained from the manufacturer that provides specific information about how the product credits toward the USDA meal pattern requirements, and documents how this information is obtained citing Child Nutrition Program resources or regulations. All creditable ingredients in a PFS must match a description in the USDA’s FBG. Unlike a CN label, a PFS does not provide any warranty against audit claims. CACFP facilities must check the manufacturer’s crediting information for accuracy. For more information, see the CSDE’s handouts, *Using Product Formulation Statements in the CACFP* and *Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the CACFP*.

**Product Specification Sheet:** Manufacturer sales literature that provides various information about the company’s products. These materials do not provide the specific crediting information that is required on a product formulation statement, and cannot be used to determine a product’s contribution toward the USDA meal pattern components.

**Production Record:** A working tool that outlines the type and quantity of foods used to prepare CACFP meals. Production records demonstrate how meals contribute to the required food components, food items or menu items for each day of operation. Production records are only required for CACFP sponsors that follow the NLSP meal pattern. For more information, see “Production Records” in section 2 and the CSDE’s sample production records on the CSDE’s Meal Patterns for CACFP Child Care Programs webpage.
**recognized medical authority:** A state-licensed health care professional who is authorized to write medical prescriptions under state law and is recognized by the State Department of Public Health. In Connecticut, recognized medical authorities include physicians, physician assistants, doctors of osteopathy, and advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs), i.e., nurse practitioners, clinical nurse specialists, and certified nurse anesthetists who are licensed as APRNs. For more information, see the CSDE’s guide, *Accommodating Special Diets in CACFP Child Care Programs.*

**refined grains:** Grains that have been processed to remove the bran and germ, making the product less nutritious than whole grains. Refined grains may or may not be enriched. For more information, see “enriched grains” in this section.

**reimbursable meals:** Meals and snacks that meet the meal pattern requirements of the CACFP regulations, and are eligible for USDA funds.

**School Breakfast Program (SBP):** The USDA’s federally assisted meal program operating in public and nonprofit private schools, and residential child care institutions. The SBP provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free breakfasts to children each school day. The program was established under the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 to ensure that all children have access to a healthy breakfast at school to promote learning readiness and healthy eating behaviors. For more information, see the CSDE’s *School Breakfast Program* webpage.

**school food authority (SFA):** The governing body that is responsible for the administration of one or more schools and that has the legal authority to operate the school meals programs in those schools.

**serving size or portion:** The weight, measure, or number of pieces or slices of a food or beverage. CACFP facilities must provide the minimum serving sizes in the USDA meal patterns for meals and snacks to be reimbursable.

**standardized recipe:** A recipe that a given food service operation has tested and adapted for use. This recipe produces the same good results and yield every time when the exact procedures are used with the same type of equipment, and the same quantity and quality of ingredients. Standardized recipes include specific information such as ingredients, weights and measures, preparation directions, serving directions, yield and portion size. For more information, see “Standardized Recipes” in section 2.

**supplements:** Reimbursable snacks served in the CACFP.

**USDA Foods:** Foods available to the USDA Child Nutrition Programs through the CSDE Food Distribution Program. For more information, see the USDA’s *Food Distribution Programs* webpage, and the CSDE’s *Food Distribution Program* webpage.

**wheat bread:** Bread that often has wheat flour or enriched wheat flour (not whole-wheat flour) as an ingredient. Wheat bread is not whole grain unless it is labeled “whole-wheat bread.” Wheat bread is low in fiber unless the manufacturer has added fiber.

**whole foods:** Foods that are unprocessed or minimally processed, and do not contain added ingredients such as fat, sugars, and sodium.
**whole fruits and vegetables:** Fresh, frozen, canned, and dried fruits and vegetables that are unprocessed or minimally processed, and do not contain added ingredients such as fat, sugars, or sodium.

**whole-grain flour:** Flour made by grinding the entire whole-grain kernel, including the fiber-rich bran, nutrient-rich germ, and starchy endosperm. Flour or meal that does not contain all parts of the grain is not whole grain, e.g., degermed corn, milled rice, and wheat flour.

**whole grain-rich (WGR):** For the CACFP, WGR products contain at least 50 percent whole grains and any other grain ingredients are enriched. A grain food meets the WGR criteria if a whole grain is the first ingredient (or second after water), and the next two grain ingredients (if any) are whole grains, enriched grains, bran, or germ. A RTE breakfast cereal meets the WGR criteria if it has a whole grain as the first ingredient (or second after water) and it is fortified. A combination food meets the WGR criteria if a whole grain is the first grain ingredient (or second after water), and the next two grain ingredients (if any) are whole grains, enriched grains, bran, or germ. The CACFP meal patterns for children require at least one serving of WGR grains per day. **Note:** For school nutrition programs that work with CACFP child care centers, the CACFP WGR definition is different from the WGR definition for grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP. Foods that meet the WGR requirements for grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP may or may not comply with the CACFP WGR requirements. Foods that meet the CACFP WGR requirements may or may not comply with the WGR requirements for grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP. If the same grain foods are served to children in the CACFP and grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP, the SFA must ensure that each food meets the specific crediting and WGR criteria for each age group. For more information, see the CSDE’s handouts, *Whole Grain-rich Criteria for the CACFP* and *Crediting Whole Grains in the CACFP*.

**whole grains:** Grains that consist of the entire kernel, including the starchy endosperm, the fiber-rich bran, and the nutrient-rich germ. All grains start out as whole grains, but many are processed to remove the bran and germ, which also removes many of the nutrients. Whole grains are nutrient rich, containing vitamins, minerals, fiber, antioxidants, and health-enhancing phytonutrients such as lignans and flavonoids. Examples of whole grains include whole wheat, whole oats, oatmeal, whole-grain cornmeal, brown rice, whole rye, whole barley, wild rice, buckwheat, and bulgur (cracked wheat). For more information, see table 3-5 in section 3 and the CSDE’s handout, *Crediting Whole Grains in the CACFP*.

**whole-wheat bread:** Bread that contains the whole grain, including the fiber-rich bran, nutrient-rich germ, and starchy endosperm. Whole-wheat flour will be listed as the first grain ingredient.