

Menu Requirements

Healthy School Meals

The concept of a healthy school meal encompasses more than just meeting the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. It also means considering the following additional goals whenever possible:

1. Incorporate culinary principles of taste and presentation.
2. Focus on customers served, incorporating regional, cultural, ethnic and other preferences.
3. Provide safe meals for children.
4. Make meals accessible to all children.
5. Reinforce classroom nutrition education by providing a "learning laboratory" for healthy food choices.
6. Assist in increasing appreciation of food origins, cultural food history, variety of foods and relationship to environment and agriculture.
7. Support and teach the principles of the "social meal."
8. Provide education in the preparation and service of healthy, economical meals.
9. Serve in an encouraging environment with adequate time for meal service.
10. Link with a school nutrition policy promoting healthy food choices throughout the school.

Implementing the New Meal Pattern under the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act

On December 13, 2010, President Obama signed into law Public Law 111-296, the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (HHFKA). The timing of this legislation and USDA's standards are critically needed to combat the epidemic of childhood obesity as well as the urgent problem of childhood hunger.

The final rule makes significant improvements to school meals, while modifying several key proposed requirements to address public comments regarding cost, timing/implementation, food waste and administrative burden. The final rule, in comparison to current requirements:

NSLP

- Three grade groups: K-5, 6-8 and 9-12
- Weekly meat/meat alternate ranges
- Lower daily minimum option for grades K-8 meat/meat alternate
- Weekly requirement for dark green, red/orange, beans/peas (legumes), starchy, and "other" vegetables.
- Increased quantity of combined fruits and vegetables
- Increased daily minimum of grain for grades 9-12
- In the first year of implementation (2012-2013 SY), at least half of grains offered must be whole grain-rich

SBP (beginning school year 2013-2014)

- Three grade groups: K-5, 6-8 and 9-12
- Meat/meat alternate may be offered after minimum grains requirement is met
- At least half of the grains offered during the school week must be whole grain rich
- In the 2013-2014 SY, fruit quantity is increased
- Breakfast is included in CDE OSN administrative reviews

NSLP and SBP

- One food-based menu planning approach and same age/grade groups
- Fruits and vegetables are two separate components
- Under Offer vs. Serve, students must select at least ½ cup of the fruit and/or the vegetable component as part of a reimbursable meal.
- Weekly grain range plus daily grain minimum requirements
- In the 2014-2015 SY, all grains offered during the school week must be whole grain-rich
- Fat free (unflavored or flavored) and unflavored 1% milk only
- Calorie minimum and maximum levels

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- Intermediate (Target 1 and Target 2) and final sodium reductions
- Trans fat limit
- Limit on saturated fat only (not on total fat)
- 3-year administrative review cycle

Implementation Dates

The new lunch meal pattern is effective July 1, 2012, the beginning of school year (SY) 2012-2013. With the exception of the new milk requirement, changes to the breakfast program will be phased-in beginning July 1 2013 (SY 2013-2014). See the implementation chart on the FNS website, <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Governance/Legislation/nutritionstandards.htm>

Nutrient Standards

The CDE Office of School Nutrition (OSN) has set the following quantity standards for cholesterol, sodium and fiber.

BREAKFAST

| Nutrient | Preschool | Grades K-12 | Grades 7-12 (Optional) |
|------------------|-----------|-------------|------------------------|
| Cholesterol (mg) | 75* | 75 | 75 |
| Sodium** (mg) | 600 | 600 | 600 |
| Fiber (g) | 1*** | 4 | 5 |

LUNCH

| Nutrient | Preschool | Grades K-5 | Grades 6-8 | Grades 9-12 |
|------------------|-----------|------------|------------|-------------|
| Cholesterol (mg) | 150* | 150 | 150 | 150 |
| Sodium** (mg) | 1200 | 1200 | 1200 | 1200 |
| Fiber (g) | 1*** | 4.5 | 5.5 | 6.5 |

*Cholesterol should not be lowered in children less than 2 years of age.

**Sodium guideline is set for food "as served."

***Fiber guidelines are for ages 2 years and older.

Nutrient Analysis

CDE will monitor calories, saturated fat, cholesterol, fiber and sodium in the meals offered grades K-12 during the administrative review (three year cycle).

School districts/SFAs are not required to conduct a nutrient analysis. CDE OSN will provide technical assistance to aide in planning meals that are consistent with the nutrient standards. However, SFAs may choose to conduct their own nutrient analysis; the SFA nutrient analysis may not be used for the CDE administrative review.

IMPORTANT POINT

If an SFA purchases nutrient analysis software, it must be on the list of USDA-approved software to be considered an allowable cost to the non-profit school food service account. A list of USDA-approved software can be found at:
<http://healthymeals.nal.usda.gov/menu-planning/software-approved-usda-administrative-reviews/list-approved-software%0B-administrative>

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| USDA Calorie Ranges (minimum and maximum) | | |
|---|---|--|
| | Breakfast | Lunch |
| K-5 | 350-500 | 550-650 |
| 6-8 | 400-550 | 600-700 |
| K-8 | ----- | 600-650 |
| 9-12 | 450-600 | 750-850 |
| USDA Fat Targets | | |
| Saturated Fat <10% of total calories | | Trans Fat* 0 gram (less than .5 gram) per serving |
| USDA & Colorado Sodium Standards K-12 | | |
| Colorado Target 1: SY 2014-15 <i>Lunch</i> ≤1200 mg (K-5) ≤1200 mg (6-8) ≤1200 mg (9-12) <i>Breakfast</i> ≤540mg (K-5) ≤600mg (6-8) ≤600mg (9-12) | Target 2: SY 2017-18 <i>Lunch</i> ≤935 mg (K-5, K-8) ≤1035 mg (6-8) ≤1080 mg (9-12) <i>Breakfast</i> ≤485 mg (K-5) ≤535 mg (6-8) ≤570 mg (9-12) | Final target: 2022-23 <i>Lunch</i> ≤640 mg (K-5, K-8) ≤710 mg (6-8) ≤740 mg (9-12) <i>Breakfast</i> ≤430 mg (K-5) ≤470 mg (6-8) ≤500 mg (9-12) |

RCCIs and Small K-12 Schools

If it is not possible to use the established age/grade groups, program operators have some flexibility. At lunch, there is overlap for grades K-5 and 6-8; therefore, a single menu can be used to meet the needs of children in grades K-8. The daily minimum requirements for food components are identical. However, in order to accommodate the average daily nutrient limits and weekly minimums/maximums for both grains and meat/meat alternates, menu planners must work within the following parameters: 8-9 oz. eq. grains/week, 9-10 oz. eq. meat/meat alternates/week, and average daily calorie range 600-650.

However, menu planners must adapt in order to offer menus that meet requirements for grades 6-8 and 9-12 in a single school, since one single menu with the same amounts of food will not meet calorie requirements for both groups. Additionally, the new meal pattern does not allow for schools with a grade configuration with one grade above or below the grade grouping to follow the predominant grade group requirements (as was previously allowable). However, modest adaptations can be made to menus to accommodate both grade groups in a single school.

One menu planning option for these 2 grade groups within one school is to start with a menu that is appropriate for grades 6-8 and 9-12 (2 oz. eq. daily of meat/meat alternate and grain) and make the full 1 cup fruit and vegetables required for grades 9-12 available to both grade groups (if this does not exceed the calorie level for grades 6-8). One method of doing so would be offering a salad bar to all students. Or, to meet the additional calorie needs of the 9-12 grade group, consider an additional ounce equivalent of grain or meat/meat alternate served to the older children (i.e., additional grain, larger main dish serving.)

Special Situations

Athletes, Pregnant Teens and RCCI Residents Engaged in High Energy, Physical Work

If the SFA serves pregnant teens, please contact OSN for additional information concerning modifications to the meal patterns. Athletes may receive additional servings of fruits, vegetables, and milk at lunch as long as the calories still stay within the age-appropriate calorie ranges. Schools can structure afterschool snack and supper programs to provide additional foods for those that need them. There are also no limits on the amount of food students may purchase as a la carte items. Any special programs/schools requesting additional calories for any/all students must seek approval from CDE OSN.

Older or Younger Students in Groups Outside Their Age/Grade Group

Schools are allowed, on a case-by-case basis, to offer age-appropriate meals to individual students in unique situations (for example, a 16 year-old with developmental issues placed with age/grade group K-5). Contact CDE Office of School Nutrition to seek permission prior to deviating from the required meal pattern. A

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special dietary needs (SDN) request may need to be submitted by a parent/guardian per SDN guidelines.

| NEW MEAL PATTERN LUNCH REQUIREMENTS | Grades K-5 | Grades 6-8 | Grades K-8 | Grades 9-12 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| MEAT/MEAT ALTERNATE | 8-10 oz./week 5 day week (1 oz./day minimum) | 9-10/week 5 day week (1 oz./day minimum) | 9-10/week 5 day week (1 oz./day minimum) | 10-12/week 5 day week (2 oz./day minimum) |
| | 6.5-8 oz./week 4 day week (1 oz./day minimum) | 7-8 oz./week 4 day week (1 oz./day minimum) | 7-8 oz./week 4 day week (1 oz./day minimum) | 8-9.5 oz./week 4 day week (2 oz./day minimum) |
| | 11-14 oz./week 7 day week (1 oz./day minimum) | 12.5-14 oz./week 7 day week (1 oz./day minimum) | 12.5-14 oz./week 7 day week (1 oz./day minimum) | 14-17 oz./week 7 day week (2 oz./day minimum) |
| Grain Half of weekly total must be whole grain rich (50% or more whole grain) | 8-9/week 5 day week (1 oz./day minimum) | 8-10/week 5 day week (1 oz./day minimum) | 8-9/week 5 day week (1 oz./day minimum) | 10-12/week 5 day week (2 oz./day minimum) |
| | 6.5-7 oz./week 4 day week (1 oz./day minimum) | 6.5-8 oz./week 4 day week (1 oz./day minimum) | 6.5-7 oz./week 4 day week (1 oz./day minimum) | 8-9.5 oz./week 4 day week (2 oz./day minimum) |
| | 11-12.5 oz./week 7 day week (1 oz./day minimum) | 11-14 oz./week 7 day week (1 oz./day minimum) | 11-12.5 oz./week 7 day week (1 oz./day minimum) | 14-17 oz./week 7 day week (2 oz./day minimum) |
| FRUIT | ½ cup/day | ½ cup/day | ½ cup/day | 1 cup/day |
| VEGETABLE | ¾ cup/day | ¾ cup/day | ¾ cup/day | 1 cup/day |
| DARK GREEN | ½ cup/week | ½ cup/week | ½ cup/week | ½ cup/week |
| RED/ORANGE | ¾ cup/week | ¾ cup/week | ¾ cup/week | 1¼ cup/week |
| BEANS/PEAS | ½ cup/week | ½ cup/week | ½ cup/week | ½ cup/week |
| STARCHY | ½ cup/week | ½ cup/week | ½ cup/week | ½ cup/week |
| OTHER (excludes starchy) | ½ cup/week | ½ cup/week | ½ cup/week | ¾ cup/week |
| ADDITIONAL (includes starchy) | 1 cup/week 5 day week | 1 cup/week 5 day week | 1 cup/week 5 day week | 1½ cups/week 5 day week |
| | ¼ cup/week 4 day week | ¼ cup/week 4 day week | ¼ cup/week 4 day week | ½ cup/week 4 day week |
| | 2½ cups/week 7 day week | 2½ cups/week 7 day week | 2½ cups/week 7 day week | 3½ cups/week 7 day week |
| MILK | ½ pint/day | ½ pint/day | ½ pint/day | ½ pint/day |

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Meat/Meat Alternate Component at Lunch

A minimum of one ounce of meat/meat alternate (M/MA) must be offered daily to grades K-8; and two ounces daily for grades 9-12.

There are weekly minimum and maximum servings for grades K-5, 6-8 and 9-12. To determine the weekly minimum and maximum levels when there are two or more main dish choices available:

1. Add the meat/meat alternate contribution from the main dish with the lowest contribution each day of the week for each grade level. This will provide the weekly minimum.
2. Add the meat/meat alternate contribution from the entrees with the largest contribution each day of the week. This will provide the weekly maximum.

Example: High School Menu (Weekly Target = 10-12 oz. M/MA)

| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Baked Chicken (2 oz. M/MA) | Bean & Cheese Burrito (2.5 oz. M/MA) | Stir Fry Pork (2 oz. M/MA) | Chicken Caesar Salad (2 oz. M/MA) | BBQ Chicken Pizza (2 oz. M/MA) |
| Hamburger on bun (2.5 oz. M/MA) | Meatloaf (2.5 oz. M/MA) | Veggie Wrap (2 oz. M/MA) | Rigatoni with Meat Sauce (2 oz. M/MA) | Fish Tacos (3 oz. M/MA) |

| | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Weekly Minimum and Maximum |
|---------|--------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|----------------------------|
| Lowest | 2 | 2.5 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 10.5-12 |
| Highest | 2.5 | 2.5 | 2 | 2 | 3 | |

Seconds

If a school elects to offer second servings of any part of the reimbursable meal, these foods must be counted toward the daily and weekly component contributions, as well as the weekly nutrient standards. However, if second helpings or second meals are sold a la carte, they do not contribute toward the components or nutrient standards for reimbursable meals.

Occasional, small quantities of leftover food served on another day will not be counted toward the meal component requirements, including the vegetable subgroups. CDE has discretion to determine whether such leftovers are of a reasonable amount and are not occurring on a regular basis. SFAs may also freeze leftovers and serve them first on the serving line, following standard HACCP protocols, the next time that particular item appears in the menu cycle.

Crediting Meat/Meat Alternate Items

It is sometimes difficult to determine the contribution various meat products make toward meeting the meat/meat alternate requirement of the school lunch by reading the label. The following important questions should be resolved regarding these meat products served in school lunches or breakfasts.

1. What percentage of fat is in the meat?
2. If cooked dry beans are used, what is the volume measure? *Note:* The serving size of beans is measured by volume, not weight.
3. If alternate protein products (APP) are used to contribute toward the meat/meat alternate requirement, is it used in compliance with regulations? *See pages 12.7-12.10.*
4. Finally, what contribution does the total product make toward meeting the meat/meat alternate requirement? *See page 12.6.*

A food item that contributes 2.6 oz. M/MA would be counted as a 2.5 oz. eq. Always use ¼ oz. increments and round down.

Minimum Amounts to be Credited

Small amounts (less than ¼ oz.) of meat/meat alternate used as garnishes, seasoning or in breading do not count toward meeting the meat/meat alternate requirement of the meal. Examples are grated Parmesan cheese used as a garnish over spaghetti or egg used in breading. Although use of such garnishes is encouraged to make the lunch more appealing, the amounts are not sufficient to make a real nutritional contribution to the lunch.

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Using Combinations

The meat/meat alternate must be served in the main dish or in the main dish with one other menu item. This means that two menu items are the maximum number that may be used to meet the meat/meat alternate requirement.

Example: 1 ounce of cheese in a grilled cheese sandwich and 1 ounce of chicken in vegetable soup.

The two items should be merchandised together as a single item. For example, a soup and sandwich combo may be offered, encouraging students to select both items. Splitting the main dish between two items may be confusing to the students and staff since the full M/MA serving must be taken to count as one of the three minimum items to meet the reimbursable meal requirement.

Cooked Dry Beans or Peas

Cooked dry beans or peas may be used as a meat alternate or as a vegetable but cannot meet the requirement for both components in the same meal. *Examples:* 1) Beans in the chili served as the main dish may be credited as the meat alternate or as the vegetable component but not as both in the same meal. 2) Beans in the burrito may not be credited as the meat alternate if beans are served as a vegetable in the same meal.

Nuts and Seeds

Peanuts, soy nuts, tree nuts or seeds can only count as one-half of the meat/meat alternate requirement.

They must be combined in the meal with another meat/meat alternate (lean meat, poultry, fish, cheese, large egg, cooked dry beans or peas, peanut butter or other nut or seed butters) to fulfill the requirement.

Example: 1 ounce of chopped nuts served in a chicken dish with 1 ounce chicken or 1 ounce of peanuts served with a sandwich containing 1 ounce of cheese fulfills a 2 oz. meat/meat alternate portion.

Determine the Contribution of a Menu Item to the Meat/Meat Alternate Component of the School Lunch Pattern

Directions: 1. Identify the product. 2. Begin with Question 1 and proceed through Question 4, advancing until the answer is "Yes."

■ Question 1

Is the product made in a kitchen in the district "from scratch?"

OR

Do you know the total weight or measure of the ingredients contributing to the meat/meat alternate component (and the fat content when applicable)?

Examples:

Kitchen-made chili con carne, tuna noodle casserole, turkey pot pie and beef patties shaped from bulk ground beef.

If YES, use the Food Buying Guide and your district's recipe for the product to determine if the total amount of meat/meat alternate used will yield the projected number of servings.

■ Question 2

Is the purchased-prepared meat item 100% meat/meat alternate?

Examples:

Preformed ground beef patties

and unbreaded fish portions.

If YES, weigh the cooked product.

■ Question 3

Is it possible to separate the meat/meat alternate from the other ingredients in the purchased-prepared menu item?

Examples:

Beef in barbecue sauce, corn dog and breaded fish portion.

If YES, separate the meat/meat alternate from the other ingredients and weigh the cooked meat/meat alternate.

OR

Purchase a CN labeled product.

OR

Secure a product specification sheet before serving the product (sample on page 12.16).

■ Question 4

Is the purchased-prepared menu item a combination of foods from

which the meat/meat alternate cannot be separated from the other ingredients?

Examples:

All products containing APP and all canned dry cheese sauces.

If YES, purchase a CN-labeled product

OR

Secure a product specification sheet before serving the product.

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Crediting Lowfat and Reduced-Fat Cheeses

The FDA has regulations/requirements for foods named by use of a nutrient content claim and a standardized term for these products. The regulations allow manufacturers to reduce the fat content of their products and call them "low fat," "light" or "reduced," as appropriate, as long as the food is still nutritionally equivalent and otherwise complies with the standardized version.

In light of the FDA regulations, the Nutrition and Technical Services Division has removed its restriction and allows low-fat and reduced-fat cheeses that fall under the FDA's "Food Standards: Requirements for Foods Named by Use of a Nutrient Content Claim and a Standardized Term" to be credited toward meeting meal pattern requirements in the child nutrition programs on an ounce-per-ounce basis, the same as regular fat cheeses. These products can be served by themselves or in combination with regular fat cheeses. For companies to make low-fat or reduced-fat claims, these criteria must be followed: low-fat cheese must contain 3 grams or less total fat per 50 grams of product, and reduced-fat cheese must contain at least 25 percent less fat per 50 grams than the regular product.

Alternative Foods

Two alternative foods are authorized to meet part of the meat/meat alternate requirement: enriched macaroni with fortified protein and alternate protein products (APP) – formerly vegetable protein products (TVP).

Enriched Macaroni with Fortified Protein

Enriched macaroni with fortified protein is a macaroni product to which protein has been added. It is not the same as regular enriched macaroni. Enriched macaroni with fortified protein must be combined with meat, poultry, fish or cheese. Dry enriched macaroni with fortified protein may be used to meet no more than 50 percent of the meat/meat alternate requirement. Only products that appear on the USDA listing of acceptable enriched macaroni with fortified protein and have basically the following statement on the label may be used: "One ounce dry weight of this product meets one-half of the meat or meat alternate requirements of lunch or supper of the USDA Child Nutrition Programs when served in combination with one or more ounces of cooked meat, poultry, fish or cheese."

Alternate Protein Products (APP)

Because of their low cost and their protein quality, vegetable protein products could be used with meat, poultry and seafood in food items. This blending enhanced use of both meat and vegetable protein products and resulted in menu flexibility and increased value for food dollars. Today, alternate protein products are no longer only vegetable-based. These APPs are safe and suitable products derived from vegetable (plant) sources such as soybeans, peanuts, wheat and corn, or animal sources such as whey-based protein products.

What are the Criteria for Alternate Protein Products (APP) used in the National School Breakfast and Lunch Programs?

- Alternate Protein Products must be processed so that some portion of the non-protein constituents of the food is removed. These alternate protein products must be safe and suitable edible products produced from plant or animal sources.
- The biological quality of the protein in the alternate protein product must be at least 80 percent that of casein, determined by performing a Protein Digestibility Corrected Amino Acid Score (PDAAS).
- The alternate protein product must contain at least 18 percent protein by weight when fully hydrated or formulated. ("When hydrated or formulated" refers to a dry alternate protein product and the amount of water, fat, oil, colors, flavors or any other substances which have been added).
- Manufacturers should provide information on the percent protein contained in the dry alternate protein product and on an as prepared basis.
- The identification of meat, poultry or seafood products or dishes containing more than 30 percent VPP on existing menus, etc. in a way that does not characterize them solely as meat, poultry or seafood products or dishes.
- For an alternate protein product mix, manufacturers provide information on :
 - 1) The amount by weight of dry alternate protein product in the package;
 - 2) Hydration instructions; and
 - 3) Instructions on how to combine the mix with meat, poultry or seafood.

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What food products provide the best opportunities for using APP as an alternate food?

Schools, institutions, and service institutions may use APP to fulfill all or part of the meat/meat alternate component. The APP may be used alone or in combination with other food ingredients. Examples of combination items are beef patties, beef crumbles, pizza topping, meatloaf, meat sauce, taco filling, burritos and tuna salad.

Alternate protein products may be used in the dry form (nonhydrated), partially hydrated or fully hydrated form. The moisture content of the fully hydrated APP (if prepared from a dry concentrated form) must be such that the mixture will have a minimum of 18 percent protein by weight or equivalent amount for the dry or partially hydrated form (based on the level that would be provided if the product were fully hydrated).

When can APP not be used as an alternate food for credit?

Alternate Protein Products cannot be used as an *alternate food* when substituting for a starch in foods, such as pizza crust or as a breading on a meat, poultry or seafood product. Also, APP cannot be used as an *alternate food* when used as functional ingredients, such as binders in products (i.e., binders in meat products) and thickening agents in sauces. However, this does not prevent the *use* of APP in the products, such as pizza crust.

How are commercially prepared products used in the National School Lunch Program?

Schools, institutions and service institutions may use a commercially prepared meat, poultry or seafood product combined with alternate protein products or use a commercially prepared product that contains only alternate protein products.

When APP is used in the National School Lunch Program, is it subject to nutritional labeling regulations of the Food and Drug Administration?

No. Food products used in the National School Lunch Program are exempt from nutritional labeling by virtue of the fact that they are supplied for institutional foodservice only. However, manufacturers are *required* to provide the nutrition information to school foodservice personnel in literature or technical brochures on a current basis.

How are APP products labeled?

- The name of the substitute food must include the term *alternate protein product* in the principal display area of the label.
- The ingredient listing of the label must also state the type(s) and source(s) of APP contained in the substitute food, along with added nutrients, colorings, flavorings, etc.
- An APP (substitute food or APP mix) that meets the specifications of the regulations must have a label stating, "this product meets USDA-FCS requirements for use in meeting a portion of the meat/meat alternate requirement of the child nutrition programs."
- Schools may use a commercially-prepared meat, poultry or seafood product combined with APP to meet all or part of the meat/meat alternate requirement if the product has a label containing the statement, "this item contains alternate protein product(s), which is authorized as an alternate food in the child nutrition programs." This designates that the APP used in the formulation of the meat, poultry or seafood item complies with the naming and nutritional specifications established in the regulations. The presence of this label does not ensure the proper level of hydration, ratio of substitution or the contribution that the product makes toward the meat pattern requirements. To determine the latter the school district may want to request additional information from the manufacturer.

Does USDA-FCS require that APP be fortified with essential nutrients?

No. The final rule on the modifications to the vegetable protein products removed the fortification requirement. The biological quality of the protein in the APP must be at least 80 percent that of casein, determined by performing a Protein Digestibility Corrected Amino Acid Score (PDCAAS) assay.

How do you determine the hydration levels for APP?

The regulations provide for the appropriate hydration for APP by setting the protein quantity requirements for a product when fully hydrated at 18 percent by weight. The various APP will require different amounts of water (or other liquid) for full hydration. It is expected that manufacturers will provide information on the percent protein in the APP as purchased or adequate instructions so that the APP can be properly

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hydrated. With this information, the steps shown on the next page may be used to determine the hydration of any APP for full credit.

1. Determine the ratio of APP to water or other liquid (allowed for full hydration) using the following formula:

$$\frac{\% \text{ protein in APP as purchased}}{18\% \text{ minimum protein}} = \text{total parts hydrated product}$$

2. Total parts hydrated product minus 1 part APP = parts water or other liquid for full hydration.
What are APP mixes?

APP mixes are dry products containing APP along with substantial levels (more than 5 percent) of seasonings, bread crumbs, flavorings, etc. For example, a mix may contain 80 percent dry APP and 20 percent seasonings. Only the APP portion of the mix may be credited as a meat alternate in the child nutrition programs. The regulations recommend that manufacturers provide information on the amount by weight of dry APP in the package and instructions on how to use and hydrate the APP mix.

The following examples illustrate the amounts of dry APP and liquid to use to replace each pound of raw meat in a recipe. The percent protein in each type of APP is representative only. The ratio of dry APP to liquid may vary depending upon the protein content of the product actually purchased.

| Alternate Protein Product - Flour (50% protein) | | | | |
|--|----------|---------|--------|---------------|
| Hydrated APP | Raw Meat | Dry APP | Liquid | Total Product |
| Substitution Percent | Pound | Pound | Pound | Pound |
| 30 | .70 | .11 | .19 | 1.00 |
| 25 | .75 | .10 | .15 | 1.00 |
| 20 | .80 | .08 | .12 | 1.00 |
| 15 | .85 | .06 | .09 | 1.00 |
| 10 | .90 | .04 | .06 | 1.00 |
| Alternate Protein Product - Concentrate (65% protein) | | | | |
| Hydrated APP | Raw Meat | Dry APP | Liquid | Total Product |
| Substitution Percent | Pound | Pound | Pound | Pound |
| 30 | .70 | .09 | .21 | 1.00 |
| 25 | .75 | .07 | .18 | 1.00 |
| 20 | .80 | .06 | .14 | 1.00 |
| 15 | .85 | .05 | .10 | 1.00 |
| 10 | .90 | .03 | .07 | 1.00 |
| Alternate Protein Product-Isolate (85% protein) | | | | |
| Hydrated APP | Raw Meat | Dry APP | Liquid | Total Product |
| Substitution percent | Pound | Pound | Pound | Pound |
| 30 | .70 | .07 | .23 | 1.00 |
| 25 | .75 | .06 | .19 | 1.00 |
| 20 | .80 | .05 | .15 | 1.00 |
| 15 | .85 | .04 | .11 | 1.00 |
| 10 | .90 | .03 | .07 | 1.00 |

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How do you credit APP mixes?

Example:

Meatloaf with APP -

65 percent APP (53 percent protein)

35 percent bread crumbs, seasonings

Total amount of mix used is 4 lbs.

Step 1. Determine the amount of creditable APP:

$4 \text{ lbs.} \times .65 = 2.6 \text{ lbs. APP}$

Step 2. Determine the hydration for credit:

$\frac{53 \text{ percent protein}}{18 \text{ percent}} = 2.9 \text{ parts total hydrated product}$

$2.9 \text{ parts} - 1 \text{ part APP} = 1.9 \text{ parts liquid for hydration}$

Step 3. Determine the total amount of liquid allowed for hydration. $2.6 \text{ lbs. APP} \times 1.9 = 4.94 \text{ lbs. total liquid.}$ *Note: 4.94 lbs. of liquid used with 4 lbs. of APP mix will provide full hydration of the APP.*

Step 4. Determine the pounds of hydrated APP that can be credited toward the meal requirements.

$2.60 \text{ lbs. APP} + 4.94 \text{ lbs. liquid} = 7.54 \text{ lbs. hydrated APP}$

Crediting Frankfurters

USDA current policy of allowing ounce-per-ounce credit for frankfurters containing no meat or poultry byproducts, cereals, binders or extenders has been extended to include those frankfurters containing fortified APPs within the following limits: 3.5 percent for soy flours and soy protein concentrates and 2.0 percent for isolated soy protein. No other binders or extenders may be used in conjunction with the soy products to receive the ounce-per-ounce crediting. The fortified APP used must meet the minimum nutrient requirements as stated in FCS regulations to be approved for use in child nutrition programs.

To ensure that the frankfurters conform with the above requirements, the product must be labeled "frankfurter," "frank," "furter," "hotdog" or "wiener." Products that exceed the amount of APP listed in the preceding paragraph would have to be labeled differently and would perhaps be called a "frankfurter with alternate protein product" or "imitation frankfurter." Those products would not be acceptable for one-to-one crediting. District procurement personnel must ensure that the APP portion of the product complies with Food and Consumer Service regulations or APPs. That information can be obtained from the manufacturer.

Also, the ingredient statement of the frankfurter must reflect the common and usual name "Alternate protein product," with a sublisting of ingredients including the nutrient fortification in parentheses. If the label uses any product name other than one of those listed previously in this article, the product must have a Child Nutrition (CN) label or a valid product analysis and must be credited accordingly.

This change should allow frankfurters that may be lower in fat content to be marketed to schools while assuring the nutritional integrity of the APP which will replace a portion of the meat in the frankfurter.

Basis for Crediting Meat, Poultry and Seafood Products

Meat, poultry and seafood products used in the child nutrition programs are credited on the **raw** basis using the appropriate cooking yields listed in the *Food Buying Guide*. This is done to provide equity in crediting different types of products regardless of the cooking methods used or the addition of binders or extenders. This in turn provides for comparable nutritional value (e.g., protein content) of a product when it is cooked by several different methods. For example, ground beef patties weighing 3 ounces are cooked three different ways: (1) pan-fried, (2) oven broiled and (3) grilled. Their cooked weights are 2.20 ounces, 2.75 ounces and 2.63 ounces, respectively. If these patties were to be credited according to their cooked weights, patty (2) would receive more credit than patty (1) or (3) even though all the patties were prepared with exactly the same amount of meat. The variation in cooked weights is due to differences in fat and water losses with only a minimal loss of nutrients.

Another illustration of differences in crediting is when 3-ounce beef patties are cooked by the same methods described above, but contain 28 percent hydrated soy protein flour. The presence of the soy protein flour will decrease the amount of fat and water lost during cooking; therefore, the cooked weights of the beef-soy patties will be greater than the cooked weights of the all-beef patties. The nutritional value of the beef-soy patties, as served, is not greater. Their higher weights reflect an increased retention of fat and water only.

How to calculate the actual credit that these various patties receive depends not on their cooked weight but on their raw weight and appropriate cooking yield from the *Food Buying Guide*. To provide equity in crediting meat/meat alternate products regardless of cooking methods, FCS credits meat/meat alternate products on the raw basis and uses the term "equivalent meat" for crediting.

As the above examples imply, the basic concept underlying product crediting in the child nutrition programs is "nutrient concentration" - the amount of nutrients by weight in a finished cooked product.

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When a product is cooked, fat and water are lost while the essential nutrients are retained in a slightly more concentrated form.

Cheese Substitutes

USDA passed a rule that eliminates the specifications governing the use of cheese alternate products in the National School Lunch Program and allows any cheese **substitute** to be used.

Cheese Food and Cheese Spread Substitutes

Cheese food substitutes and cheese spread substitutes would receive the same credit as cheese foods and cheese spreads (2 ounces provide 1 ounce of equivalent meat alternate). The chart below gives the addition to the *Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs*. Remember that cheese food and cheese spread are items that have a specific standard of identity. The term "cheese product" is a category name and is non-standardized, therefore **any item that only has the name "cheese product" would receive no credit toward the meal pattern requirement**. Similarly, while substitutes may receive credit in the child nutrition programs, **any product labeled as an imitation is not creditable**.

| <i>Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs</i> | | | | | |
|--|---------------|----------------------------|---|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Food as purchased | Purchase unit | Servings per purchase unit | Serving or portion and contribution to the meal requirement | Purchase unit 100 servings | Additional yield information |
| Meat and Meat Alternates Page 31-ADD this new data: Cheese Substitutes ¹ American, cheddar, mozzarella or Swiss substitute (natural or process) includes reduced fat, lite or nonfat substitutes | Pound | 16.0 | 1 oz. cheese | 6.3 | 1 lb. =about 4 cups shredded |
| | | 10.6 | 1½ oz. cheese | 9.4 | |
| Parmesan or Romano reduced fat, lite or non-fat substitutes | Pound | 16.0 | 3/8 cup serving (1 oz. cheese) | 6.3 | 1# =about 5-2/3 cups shredded |
| | | 10.6 | 5/8 cup serving (1½ oz. cheese) | 9.4 | |
| Cheese Food/Spread Substitutes include reduced fat, light or nonfat substitutes | Pound | | | | 1 lb. =about 5-2/3 cups shredded |
| Cheese Food Substitute (process) and | | 8.0 | 2 oz. serving (1 oz. meat alternate) | 12.5 | |
| Cheese Spread Substitute (process) | | 5.3 | 3 oz. serving (1½ oz. meat alternate) | 18.8 | |

¹Imitation Cheese provides no contribution to the meal pattern requirements.

Standards for Meat and Poultry Products

USDA standards for meat and poultry products set legal requirements for content, preparation and labeling before being manufactured and sold in commerce. Standards of identity set specific (and optional) ingredients a food must contain -- such as the kind and amount of meat, percentage of fat or moisture and additives, if any -- when a product is to be labeled or identified by a common product name.

See <http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?type=simple;c=ecfr;cc=ecfr;idno=9;region=DIV1;q1=319;rgn=div5;sid=6233abe5a7e8d99a0acc1c327f09c724;view=text;node=9%3A2.0.2.1.20> , for Standards of Identity for various meat products.

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Tofu

In the school meal programs, 2.2 ounces (¼ cup) of commercially prepared tofu, containing at least 5 grams of protein, is creditable as a 1 ounce equivalent meat alternate. Tofu yogurt is not creditable, however ½ cup of soy yogurt (4 fl. oz.) may credit as a 1 oz. equivalent meat alternate.

Firm tofu can be diced into miso soup and credited since it is recognized as a meat alternate. The miso ingredient, dissolved into the broth of the miso soup, is a fermented soy product which does not credit – it is not tofu. Similarly, a soft tofu, pureed into a soup does not credit because it is not recognizable and does not represent a meat substitute. Therefore, the blended tofu is not creditable. Noodles made from tofu do not represent a meat substitute and are not composed of grains.

When considering processed tofu products such as links and sausages made from tofu as meat alternates for the reimbursable meal, the tofu ingredient must contain the required 5 grams of protein per 2.2 ounces by weight. However, the additional ingredients beyond the tofu in a meat substitute such as tofu sausage are also included on the nutrition label. Therefore, the protein amount listed on the label for the meat substitute does not necessarily indicate the protein of the tofu for verification of FNS tofu requirements. This information would need to be obtained from the tofu manufacturer.

CN Labeling Program

The CN Labeling Program is a **voluntary** federal labeling program run by the FCS of the USDA. This program is responsible for reviewing a product formulation to determine the contribution that a single serving of that product makes toward the child nutrition meal pattern requirements. The meal pattern requirements specify the foods and the minimum amounts that must be served in institutions participating in the child nutrition programs.

Federal Inspection

All CN labeled products must be produced under an appropriate USDA or U.S. Department of Commerce (USDC) federal inspection program to ensure that the label statement accurately reflects the amount of each ingredient used in the product. This will help protect local foodservice directors from misinformation and will ensure that manufacturers with CN-labeled products are competing for sales on a common basis. Federal agencies inspecting these products include:

- FSIS of USDA
- Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) of USDA
- National Marine Fisheries Services (NMFS) of USDC.

How to Identify a CN Label

A CN label must have this information printed on the principal display panel of the label:

- CN label statement
- Product name
- Ingredient listing in descending order of predominance by weight for all ingredients
- Establishment number (meat, poultry and seafood items only)
- Manufacturer's or distributor's name and address
- Inspection legend for the appropriate inspection.

Label Statement

The CN label statement must be an integral part of the product label and include this information:

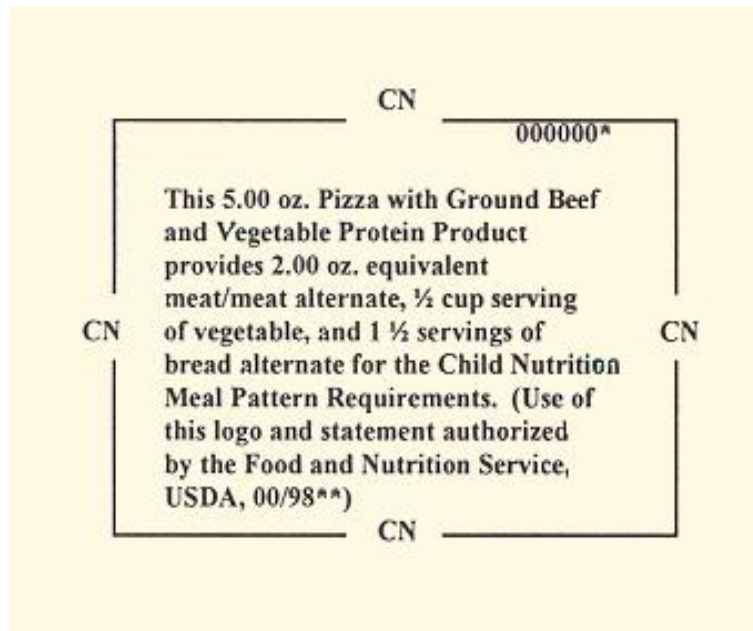
- A six-digit product identification number assigned by FCS, which will appear in the upper right-hand corner of the CN label statement.
- A distinct border around the CN statement.
- The statement of the product's contribution toward meal pattern requirements for the child nutrition programs. This identifies the contribution of a specific portion of a meat/meat alternate product toward the meat/meat alternate, grains, vegetable and fruit component of the meal pattern requirements.
- A statement specifying that the use of the logo and CN label statement is authorized by FCS.
- The month and year the label was approved in final by FCS.

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Penalty for Misuse of CN Logo

FCS has developed a logo to protect the integrity of the CN Labeling Program, to avoid possible abuse and to make the CN label statement easy to identify. The logo is a distinctive border design that surrounds the label statement. Companies will not be allowed to use the logo or statement without permission from FCS.

If a company uses the CN logo inappropriately, FCS will notify the company and give it 30 days to discontinue use of the logo. If the company continues to use the label, its name will be put on a list that will be sent quarterly to all FCS Nutrition and Technical Services regional offices. Regional offices then will circulate the list to the states. In addition, other actions may be taken.



Advantages of Using CN-labeled Products

All CN-labeled products that are federally approved and have a CN logo carry a warranty. If a school district participating in the child nutrition programs purchases such a product and uses it according to the manufacturer's directions, the institution will not have an audit claim filed against it, for that CN-labeled product, for non-compliance with the meal pattern requirements. If a state or federal auditor finds that a CN-labeled product does not actually meet meal pattern requirements claimed on the label, the auditor will report this finding to the FCS national office. FCS will prepare a report on the findings and send it to the appropriate division of FSIS, AMS, NWS, FDA or the Department of Justice for action against the company. That office then will be responsible for auditing production records to determine whether the product, as produced, met the conditions of the CN label statement before it left the plant.

If the audit shows that the product, as produced, does not meet the label statement, any or all of the following actions may be taken:

- The company's CN label may be revoked for a specific period of time.
- The appropriate agency may pursue a misbranding or mislabeling action against the company producing the product.
- The company's name will be circulated to FCS regional offices or FCS will require the foodservice program involved to notify the state office of the labeling violation.

The CN label statement tells how the labeled product can be "credited" or "counted" toward meeting the meal pattern requirements of the child nutrition programs.

Manufacturers must not use the CN label statement to promote a product's nutritional value or acceptability. For additional information about the CN Labeling Program, refer to the USDA website, <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/cnlabeling/default.htm>

A CN LABEL STATEMENT DOES NOT:

- Assure that a product is "good for children"
- Assure that a product is "acceptable" to children
- Suggest that products without CN statements are inferior
- Cost more
- Assure that a product meets Dietary Guidelines

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The CN label statement should not be confused with fact sheets, nutritional analyses and letters of certification (product specification sheets). Letters of certification are statements provided by a company official that tell a product's contribution toward the meal pattern requirements. These may contain pertinent information but are not recognized by auditors as official documentation of the product's contribution toward meal pattern requirements. These letters and fact sheets have not been reviewed by FCS and may or may not be accurate. Label statements approved at the state level for state-inspected plants also are **not** reviewed by FCS. State-approved labels and fact sheets are **not** covered by the CN label warranty.

Advertising Literature, CN Labels and Product Specification Sheets

Food purchasing for the CN programs is a difficult and specialized job. Like all buyers, one must be able to recognize value and quality to make a reliable price comparison. Unlike other buyers, the person purchasing for CN programs must also purchase products that meet the federal meal pattern requirements for the CN programs. One area of particular concern is the procurement of commercially prepared meat and poultry products. It is often difficult to determine these products' contributions toward meal pattern requirements.

Important questions that should be resolved regarding such meat products served in school lunches are:

- *What percent fat is in the meat?*
- *If cooked dry beans are used, what is the volume measure? (Note: Breakfast and lunch requirement for beans is measured by volume, not ounces.)*
- *If APP is used to contribute toward the meat/meat alternate requirement, is it used in compliance with FNS regulations?*
- *Finally, what contribution does the total product make toward meeting the lunch requirement?*

The CN buyer has various purchasing tools to help in this task. Each tool provides valuable information for the buyer; however, the buyer should be aware of their differences. Additionally, many manufacturers provide buyers with advertising literature that may make statements regarding the contribution of a particular product to the school breakfast and lunch patterns. **Advertising literature is not acceptable for use in supporting reimbursement claims.**

What is advertising literature?

Advertising literature is information provided by the company that may contain valuable information about one or more of the company's products, but it **may not be used to support the contribution that a product makes toward the Child Nutrition meal patterns.**

What is a product specification sheet?

A product specification sheet contains a statement that clearly identifies the contribution that the product makes toward the CN meal pattern requirements. This statement is based on formulation and/or laboratory testing and is signed by a high-ranking official in the company. **A product specification sheet carries no USDA warranty.** See page 12.28 for a sample product specification sheet.

On occasion, product specification sheets have contained phrases like "to the best of our knowledge" and/or "contribution of the product is approximately." A school food authority should not accept a product specification sheet containing such language. Only product specification sheets that certify the contribution of the product to the meal pattern requirements should be accepted.

Who reviews and monitors product specification sheets?

Product specification sheets are written, designed and distributed by the individual manufacturer. Although an officer of the company signs these sheets to attest to the printed information, school officials are trusting that the company officials are making sure that the product label and production records match the description of the product on the product specification sheet. **USDA does not** monitor these documents for compliance with the product formulation or the child nutrition meal pattern requirements.

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Sulfiting Agents in Foods

Medical findings have linked sulfiting agents to severe adverse reaction by sensitive individuals. Individuals have been reported to suffer life-threatening respiratory distress, shock and even coma after eating food treated with sulfiting agents.

Sulfiting agents are used in many processed foods and in cafeterias and restaurants to prevent fruits, green vegetables, potatoes and salads from turning brown and to enhance their crispness.

For schools participating in the child nutrition programs, the USDA recommends:

1. Prohibiting the addition of sulfites, such as "vegetable fresheners" and "potato whiteners," to any foods during meal preparation.
2. If possible, discontinuing the purchase of foods treated with sulfiting agents.

Any questions regarding the use of sulfiting agents should be referred to local or state health authorities.

COMMON PROBLEMS: MEAT/MEAT ALTERNATE

It is seldom noted on an administrative review that a menu did not offer a M/MA; however, it is often noted that the M/MA was offered in insufficient amounts. To assist in evaluating the M/MA menu items offered, refer to the flow chart on page 12.6.

1. *Meat products with an unknown meat and fat content are being purchased and served as a reimbursable component of the lunch.*

Solution: Secure a CN label or product analysis sheet before serving the menu item. Monitor deliveries to ensure products used are those ordered and documented. Use the USDA standards for meat and poultry products to determine the content of certain products used in the program. See

<http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?type=simple;c=ecfr;cc=ecfr;idno=9;region=DIV1;q1=319;rgn=div5;sid=6233abe5a7e8d99a0acc1c327f09c724;view=text;node=9%3A2.0.2.1.20>

2. *The recipe does not include a sufficient amount of M/MA to yield the predicted number of servings.*

Solution: Check all district recipes against the Food Buying Guide. See question #1 on the flowchart on page 12.6.

3. *The menu item is served with the wrong size utensils, thus changing the contribution of menu item to the M/MA component.*

Solution: List serving size or proper utensil to be used on production record as well as recipe card. Monitor meal service and production records for unexpected leftovers or shortages.

4. *Cooked dry beans or peas are used as meat alternate and vegetable in the same meal.*

Solution: When using cooked dry beans or peas as the M/MA in a menu item, such as burritos, remember to plan two other vegetables or fruits in sufficient amounts.

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Example of a Product Specification Sheet

This product specification sheet is an **example** of one that provides information to assist the purchaser in determining the extent a meat product is purported to contribute to the meal pattern requirement.

Product Name: _____ Code No.: _____

Manufacturer: _____

Case/Pack/Count/Portion Size: _____

Variety(ies) and Cuts of Meat Used in Product: _____

Total Weight Per Portion of Uncooked Product: _____

Weight of Raw Meat Per Portion (List each variety separately): _____

Percentage of Fat in Raw Meat (List fat in each variety separately): _____

Weight/Measure (as appropriate) of Meat Alternates* (specify): _____

- Source (e.g., soy, peanut), type (e.g., flour, isolate, concentrate) and percentage of protein in APP as purchased:

- Weight of Dry APP in One Portion of Product*:

- Weight of Water (Liquid) to Fully Hydrate Dry APP in One Portion of Product:

- Total Weight Per Portion of Product as Purchased:

I certify that the above information is true and correct, and that a _____-ounce serving of the above product (ready for serving) contains _____ ounces of cooked lean meat/meat alternate when prepared according to directions.

I further certify that any APP used in this product is authorized as an alternate food in the Child Nutrition Programs and its use conforms to Food and Consumer Service regulations (7 CTR Part S 210,225 OR 226, Appendix A).

Signature

Title

Printed Name

Date

*For the identification of meat, poultry or seafood products or dishes containing more than 30 percent APP (cannot be menued in a way that characterizes them solely as meat, poultry or seafood products or dishes).

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Comparison Chart

| | CN Labels | Product Specification Sheets that contain meal pattern contribution statements and are signed by a high-ranking company official | Advertising Literature |
|--|--|--|---|
| Description | Product label that contains a statement which clearly identifies the meal pattern contribution of the product. | Document that contains a statement that clearly identifies the meal pattern contribution of the product (must be signed). | Any printed material that contains varied information about one or more products. |
| Standard Information is Required | Yes | No | No |
| Reviewed and Monitored by USDA | Yes | No | No |
| Carried a USDA Guarantee | Yes - provides warranty | No | No |
| Product Identification Numbers | Each CN-labeled product is assigned its own distinct 6-digit identification number. | The product must be identifiable by name, code number, weight, ingredient listing, etc. | No standards. |
| Accepted on Administrative Review | Yes | Yes | No |

The CN label statement should not be confused with Product Specification Sheets. Product specification sheets are documents provided and signed by a high-ranking company official that tell a product's contribution toward the meal pattern requirements. These may contain pertinent information but are not recognized by auditors or reviewers as **official** documentation of the product's contribution toward meal pattern requirements. These statements have not been reviewed by FCS and may or may not be accurate. Label statements approved at the state level for state-inspected plants also are **not** reviewed by FCS. State approved labels are **not covered by the CN-label warranty**. For the purpose of the state administrative review, both CN labels and signed product specification sheets will be accepted as supporting the contribution of a particular product to the reimbursable breakfast and/or lunch. However, the information provided will be reviewed for questionable statements. **Unsigned advertising literature cannot be used to support the contribution of any product.**

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Vegetable Component at Lunch

The minimum required serving size of the vegetable component is $\frac{3}{4}$ cup per day for grades K-8 and 1 cup per day for grades 9-12. Menu items such as mixed vegetables and California blend are considered as only one serving. However, large combination vegetable salads that contain the minimum daily quantity by grade groups of vegetables in combination with a meat/meat alternate intended to fulfill the role of an entree, such as a chef's salad are considered as two or more servings of vegetable and will meet the full requirement. Leafy lettuce/greens (i.e., spinach, iceberg, romaine, leaf lettuce) only contribute $\frac{1}{2}$ of their volume towards the daily minimum vegetable requirement. For example, 1 cup of mixed lettuce may only be counted as $\frac{1}{2}$ cup vegetable.

Examples of combinations that meet the minimum daily $\frac{3}{4}$ cup vegetable requirement (grades K-8):

- 1 cup mixed green salad + $\frac{1}{4}$ cup vegetable
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup mixed green salad + $\frac{1}{4}$ cup vegetable + $\frac{1}{4}$ cup vegetable
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup vegetable + $\frac{1}{4}$ cup vegetable
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup vegetable + $\frac{1}{4}$ cup vegetable + $\frac{1}{4}$ cup vegetable
- $\frac{3}{8}$ cup vegetable + $\frac{1}{4}$ cup vegetable + $\frac{1}{8}$ cup vegetable
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup vegetable juice (full strength) + $\frac{1}{2}$ cup vegetable
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup vegetable juice (full strength) + $\frac{1}{4}$ cup vegetable

Examples of combinations that meet the daily minimum 1 cup vegetable requirement (grades 9-12):

- $\frac{3}{8}$ cup vegetable + $\frac{3}{8}$ cup vegetable + $\frac{1}{4}$ cup vegetable
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup vegetable + $\frac{1}{2}$ cup vegetable
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup vegetable juice (full strength) + $\frac{1}{2}$ cup vegetable
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup vegetable + $\frac{1}{4}$ cup vegetable + $\frac{1}{4}$ cup fruit

Students may take more than one serving of the same vegetable since vegetables are a separate component. The decision to make this option available to students shall be made by the SFA.

Minimum Amounts to be Credited

The minimum amount that may be credited towards the daily requirement of vegetable is $\frac{1}{8}$ cup. Small amounts (less than $\frac{1}{8}$ cup) of vegetables used for flavoring or as an optional ingredient, such as a garnish, should not be counted toward the vegetable requirement.

Salad or Fruit and Vegetable Bars

USDA and CDE Office of School Nutrition encourage the use of fruit and vegetable bars or salad bars in schools. These food bars must be placed before the point-of-sale and a recipe must be created based on actual usage. Strict HACCP procedures should be followed to ensure food temperatures are kept at or below 41°F. The local health department is a good resource to instruct students on the proper procedures for using a self-serve food bar (i.e., food handles must be kept out of food, a clean plate must be used for seconds, etc.).

Students should be encouraged to “take what they want and eat what they take” to minimize waste. Many SFAs encourage students to take a variety of vegetables by offering “I made a rainbow on my plate!” stickers. Vegetable bars are a great way to meet the requirement to offer weekly minimum serving sizes of vegetable subgroups (*page 12.19*).

Specific Requirements Regarding Dry Peas and Beans

Cooked dry beans or peas may be used as a meat alternate or as a vegetable but not as both in the same meal. The HHS requires SFAs offer minimum amounts of a variety of vegetables each week to include the following subgroups: (*For minimum weekly amounts, see chart on page 12.4*)

Foods That May Not Be Credited as Vegetables

Rice, pasta, hominy and potato chips may not be counted as a vegetable. When in doubt about the contribution a particular food item makes to the school lunch patterns, always consult the Food Buying Guide. If the food item cannot be located in the vegetable section, it is not a creditable item. Refer to the “Other” foods section in the Food Buying Guide to find a list of foods that are not creditable towards the meal patterns for breakfast and lunch meal.

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Vegetable Subgroups

| Dark Green Vegetables | Beans and Peas (Legumes) |
|--|---|
| Broccoli Rabe | Black Beans |
| Green or Red Leaf Lettuce | Edamame |
| Bok Choy | Garbanzo Beans (Chickpeas) |
| Turnip Greens | Kidney Beans |
| Broccoli | Lentils |
| Collard Greens | Navy Beans |
| Dark Green Leafy Lettuce | Pinto Beans |
| Kale | Soy Beans |
| Mesclun | Split Peas |
| Mustard greens | White Beans |
| Romaine Lettuce | |
| Spinach | |
| Watercress | |
| Red/Orange Vegetables | Starchy Vegetables |
| Acorn Squash | Cassava |
| Butternut Squash | Corn |
| Carrots | Fresh cowpeas, field peas, or black-eyed peas (not dry) |
| Hubbard Squash | Green Peas |
| Orange Peppers | Jicama |
| Pumpkin | Green Lima Beans |
| Red Peppers | Plantains |
| Sweet Potatoes | Potatoes |
| Tomato Juice | Water Chestnuts |
| Tomatoes | Taro |
| Yellow Yams | White Yams |
| Other Vegetables** | |
| Artichokes | Green Beans |
| Asparagus | Green Peppers |
| Avocado | Iceberg Lettuce |
| Bean Sprouts | Mushrooms |
| Beets | Okra |
| Brussels Sprouts | Onions |
| Cabbage | Parsnips |
| Cauliflower | Turnips |
| Celery | Wax Beans |
| Cucumbers | Yellow and Purple Peppers |
| Eggplant | Zucchini |
| ** "Other" vegetables may include all vegetable subgroups, except starchy vegetables. | |
| "Additional" vegetables include all vegetable subgroups (dark green, beans/peas (legumes), red/orange, starchy, and other) | |

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1. Q. If a school has multiple serving lines with different menu items, must each serving line offer all of the vegetable subgroups weekly?

A. Yes.

2. Q. Can the vegetable subgroups be offered a couple of different times over the week in small amounts that add up to the required amounts for the full week?

A. Yes, as long as the week's menu as a whole meets the full subgroup requirements AND each day the school offers the full daily vegetable minimum.

3. Q. How should schools credit a vegetable mixture toward the vegetable subgroup requirement?

A. Vegetable combinations from the same subgroup (i.e., carrots and sweet potatoes) may count toward the single vegetable subgroup. Vegetable combinations that contain at least 1/8 cup each of different vegetable subgroups (i.e., carrots and corn) may credit each one toward the appropriate subgroups. If the quantities of the different vegetables are not known, the vegetable mixture counts as "additional" vegetables.

4. Q. Where may I find information to help me categorize unusual vegetables?

A. Refer to the following websites for information on vegetable subgroups:

<http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/vegetables.html>

<http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/Publications/USDAFoodPatterns/ItemClustersAndRepFoods.pdf>

Fruit Component at Lunch

The minimum required serving of fruit is ½ cup for grades K-8 and 1 cup for grades 9-12. Fruit is a separate component and must be offered daily at lunch. Although schools must offer the full amount, to minimize the potential for food waste, all students are allowed to select ½ cup fruit for a reimbursable meal under Offer vs. Serve, instead of requiring them to take the full component.

Schools may offer fruit that is fresh; canned in fruit juice, water or light syrup; frozen without added sugar, or dried. Although 100% juice can be offered, no more than half of the weekly fruit component may be juice because it lacks dietary fiber and when consumed in excess, can contribute extra calories. Schools should offer fresh fruit whenever possible.

Minimum Amounts to be Credited

The minimum amount that may be credited towards the daily requirement of fruit is ⅓ cup. Fruit in recipes that contain small amounts, less than ⅓ cup per serving, may not be credited.

Juice

The following juice products may be used toward meeting the vegetable/fruit component when these conditions are met:

1. Full-strength fruit or vegetable juice is an undiluted product obtained by extraction from sound fruit. It may be fresh, canned, frozen or reconstituted from a concentrate and may be served in either liquid or frozen state or as an ingredient in a recipe. Examples of full-strength fruit and vegetable juice are apple (including cider), grape, grapefruit, grapefruit-orange, lemon, lime or orange, pear-apple, prune, tomato, tangerine and vegetable. The name of the full-strength fruit or vegetable juice as it appears on the label must include the word(s) "juice," "full-strength juice," "single-strength juice," "100 percent juice," "reconstituted juice" or "juice from concentrate."
2. A juice concentrate may be used toward meeting the fruit component of the child nutrition programs. When a juice concentrate or a juice drink concentrate is used in its reconstituted form, it is considered a full-strength juice or a juice drink, as appropriate, and is credited accordingly. When a juice

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concentrate is used in its concentrated form, it may be credited on a reconstituted basis, that is, credited as if it were reconstituted. For example, a gelatin product containing 1 tablespoon of orange juice concentrate per serving could receive $\frac{1}{4}$ cup fruit credit since the orange juice concentrate theoretically could be reconstituted in a ratio of one part concentrate to three parts water (1 Tbsp. concentrate + 3 Tbsp. water = 4 Tbsp. or $\frac{1}{4}$ cup credit).



1. Q. Is dried fruit with added sugar allowed?

A. Yes. Dried fruit is sometimes processed with sugar to keep the fruit pieces separated. Consider maximum calorie level when menuing these items.

2. Q. How does dried fruit credit toward the meal pattern?

A. Whole dried fruit and whole dried fruit pieces credit at twice the volume served. For example, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of raisins contributes $\frac{1}{2}$ cup fruit.

Grain Component at Lunch

The minimum daily serving size for grades K-8 is one serving and two servings for grades 9-12. There are weekly minimum and maximum servings for grades K-5, 6-8, and 9-12 (see chart on page 12.4).

Whole Grain Requirement

Beginning with the 2012-2013 school year, 50% of weekly grain servings must be whole grain rich (WGR). All grains must be WGR beginning with the 2014-2015 school year. A whole grain rich food must contain at least 50% whole grain(s) and the remaining grain content must be enriched.

To determine whether a food item is whole grain rich, evaluate using one or more of the following:

1. The whole grains per serving (based on minimum serving sizes specified for grains/breads in FNS guidance) must be ≥ 8 grams. This may be determined from information provided on the product packaging or by the manufacturer. Also, manufacturers may apply for a Child Nutrition Label for qualifying products to indicate the number of grain servings that are whole grain rich.
2. The product may include the FDA-approved whole grain health claim on its packaging: "Diets rich in whole grain foods and other plant foods and low in total fat, saturated fat and cholesterol may reduce the risk of heart disease and some cancers."
3. The product ingredient listing lists whole grains first (breads, cereals) or whole grains must be the primary grain ingredients by weight (pizza, corn dogs).
4. The recipe is used as the basis for a calculation to determine whether the total weight of whole grain ingredients exceeds the total weight of non-whole grain ingredients for foods prepared by the school food service.

The Whole Grain Stamp (from the Whole Grain Council) alone cannot be used to determine if a food product meets the whole grain rich criterion. Products that display the Whole Grain Stamp contain at least 8 grams of whole grain, but they may also contain some un-enriched refined flour which does not meet the grains criteria for Child Nutrition Programs.

For more guidance on the whole grain-rich criterion, please see memo SP 30-2012 at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/governance/Policy-Memos/2012/SP30-2012os.pdf>.

Minimum Amounts to be Credited

All grains offered in amounts of $\frac{1}{4}$ ounce equivalents or greater (the minimum creditable amount must be included in the calculation of daily and weekly grain offerings).

Grains offered in amounts less than $\frac{1}{4}$ ounce equivalents are never included in the calculation of daily and weekly grain offerings.

MENU REQUIREMENTS

Weekly Minimum and Maximum

There are weekly minimum and maximum levels of grain servings for each grade group (K-5, 6-8 and 9-12). See chart on page 12.4.

To determine weekly minimum and maximum levels when offering a choice between two or more grain servings:

1. Add the grain oz. equivalent contribution from the main dishes or sides with the lowest contribution each day of the week for each grade level. This will provide the weekly minimum.
2. Add the grain oz. equivalent contribution from the entrees or sides with the largest contribution each day of the week. This will provide the weekly maximum.

Example: Middle School Menu (grades 6-8) (Weekly Target = 8-10 oz. equivalents; $\geq 50\%$ WGR)

| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
|---|--|--|--|---|
| Baked Chicken Sweet Potato Roll (2 oz. grain equivalents) | Bean & Cheese Burrito (whole wheat tortilla, 2 oz. grain eq.) | Stir Fry Pork $\frac{1}{2}$ cup Brown Rice (1 grain eq.) | Chicken Caesar Salad w/Whole Wheat Bread Stick (1 oz. grain eq.) | BBQ Chicken Pizza (whole wheat crust, 2 oz. grain eq.) |
| Hamburger on Whole Grain Bun (2 oz. grain eq.) | Meatloaf Whole Wheat Roll (2 oz. grain eq.) | Veggie Wrap (2 oz. grain eq.) | Rigatoni with Meat Sauce (2 grain eq.) | Fish Tacos (2 oz. whole grain eq.) |

| | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Weekly Minimum and Maximum |
|--------------------|--------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|---|
| Lowest | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 8-10 |
| Highest | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | |
| | | | | | | Percent WGR $12 \div 18 = 67\%$ |
| Total servings | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 18 |
| Total WGR servings | 2 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 12 |

MENU REQUIREMENTS



Q. How can schools ensure ranges for grains and meat/meat alternates are met when using a salad bar?

A. If grains and/or meat/meat alternates are offered on salad bars, menu planners must determine if all students will be able to select these food items in the quantities specified in the daily and weekly requirements. Therefore, menu planners must pre-determine serving sizes and meal offerings associated with salad bars, as with all serving lines. Pre-portioning food items is one way to assist students with selecting the correct components and quantities needed, as well as utilizing appropriate serving utensils. Planner may also consider offering grains and meat/meat alternates as part of a "salad bar meal" only; not available to students selecting other grains/meat/meat alternates on other serving lines. Schools might also consider issuing guidance or education to students on building a healthy salad bar meal. The memorandum on salad bars offers guidance and other options, including utilizing trained servers or standard serving utensils. See: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/governance/Policy-Memos/2011/SP02-2011osr.pdf>

2. Q. May grain-based desserts be offered more than twice a week?

A. A school may offer a total of 2 oz. equivalents or less of grain-based desserts each week. Therefore, a 2 oz. equivalent dessert may be offered once a week, or a .5 oz. equivalent dessert may be offered four times in a week.

3. Q. If a school offers a choice of grains in combination food items daily (pizza crust, rice bowl, etc.), must all of these bread items provide the minimum daily grains requirement OR must at least one grain offered daily provide the minimum?

A. Every reimbursable meal offered must meet the daily minimum requirements for all components. Therefore, if a pizza contains adequate grains to meet the minimum daily requirement, but a rice bowl does not, the rice bowl meal must contain another grain to meet the minimum daily grains requirement.

4. Q. If a recipe or menu items contains several grain sources, how does the menu planner calculate the total grains contribution from that item?

A. The menu planner should add the amount of ounce equivalents for each grain ingredient, then round down to the nearest .25 oz. eq. According to the Food Buying Guide, p A-6 (rev Nov. 2001), the instructions for calculating grains contributions in recipes are to determine the contribution of each grain first, (how many servings according to the FBG) to the total recipe, add together, divide by number of servings in the recipe, and then round the individual serving amount down to the nearest .25 oz. eq. the same process would apply to grains put together in one dish, such as for a sandwich. For example, one would add the grain contributions of 2 separate slices of bread together first (if each slice is 0.8 oz. eq., the sum is 1.6 oz. eq.) and then round the total number down (in this example, 1.6 oz. eq. rounds down to 1.5 oz. eq. of creditable grains).

MENU REQUIREMENTS

FCS Instruction 783.1 Rev 2: Exhibit A - Grains/Breads for the Food-based Menu Planning

| | |
|---|--|
| Group A | |
| Breading Type Coating Bread Sticks - hard Chow Mein Noodles Crackers - saltines and snack crackers Croutons Pretzels - hard Stuffing - dry; <i>Note:</i> weight applies to bread in stuffing | 1 serving = 20 grams or 0.7 oz. 3/4 serving = 15 grams or 0.5 oz. 1/2 serving = 10 grams or 0.4 oz. 1/4 serving = 5 grams or 0.2 oz. |
| Group B | |
| Bagels Batter Type Coating Biscuits Breads - white, French, Italian Buns - hamburger and hot dog Crackers - graham (all shapes), animal crackers Egg Roll Skins English Muffins Pita Bread Pizza Crust Pretzels - soft Rolls - white, potato Tortillas - wheat or corn Tortilla Chips - wheat or corn Taco Shells | 1 serving = 25 grams or 0.9 oz. 3/4 serving = 19 grams or 0.7 oz. 1/2 serving = 13 grams or 0.5 oz. 1/4 serving = 6 grams or 0.2 oz. |
| Group C | |
| Cookies* - plain Combread Corn Muffins Croissants Pancakes Pie Crust - dessert pies,* meat/meat alternate pies and fruit turnovers** Waffles | 1 serving = 31 grams or 1.1 oz. 3/4 serving = 23 grams or 0.8 oz. 1/2 serving = 16 grams or 0.6 oz. 1/4 serving = 8 grams or 0.3 oz. |
| Group D | |
| Doughnuts** - cake and yeast raised, unfrosted Granola, cereal and breakfast bars** - plain Muffins - all except corn Sweet Roll** - unfrosted Toaster Pastry** - unfrosted | 1 serving = 50 grams or 1.8 oz. 3/4 serving = 38 grams or 1.3 oz. 1/2 serving = 25 grams or 0.9 oz. 1/4 serving = 13 grams or 0.5 oz. |
| Group E | |
| Cookies* - with nuts, raisins, chocolate pieces and/or fruit purees Doughnuts** - cake and yeast raised, frosted or glazed French Toast Grain Fruit Bars** Granola, cereal and breakfast bars** - with nuts, raisins, chocolate pieces and/or fruit Sweet rolls** - frosted Toaster Pastry** - frosted | 1 serving = 63 grams or 2.2 oz. 3/4 serving = 47 grams or 1.7 oz. 1/2 serving = 31 grams or 1.1 oz. 1/4 serving = 16 grams or 0.6 oz. |

MENU REQUIREMENTS

| | |
|---|--|
| Group F | |
| Cake* - plain, unfrosted Coffee Cake** | 1 serving = 75 grams or 2.7 oz. 3/4 serving = 56 grams or 2 oz. 1/2 serving = 38 grams or 1.3 oz. 1/4 serving = 19 grams or 0.7 oz. |
| Group G | |
| Brownies*- plain Cake* - all varieties, frosted | 1 serving = 115 grams or 4 oz. 3/4 serving = 86 grams or 3 oz. 1/2 serving = 58 grams or 2 oz. 1/4 serving = 29 grams or 1 oz. |
| Group H | |
| Barley Breakfast Cereals - cooked*** Bulgur (cracked wheat) Macaroni - all shapes Noodles, egg - all varieties Pasta - all shapes Ravioli - noodle only Rice - enriched white or brown | 1 serving = 1/2 cup cooked or 25 grams dry |
| Group I | |
| Breakfast Cereal - cold, dry*** Granola 1/4 cup 1 1/4 cup puffed cereal | 1 serving = 3/4 cup or 1 oz., whichever is less |

*Allowed only for desserts at lunch

**Allowed for breakfast under Traditional and Enhanced Food-based Menu Planning Systems.

*** Some of the above foods, or their accompaniments, may contain more sugar, salt and/or fat than others. To meet Dietary Guidelines, serve products low in fat, sugar and salt.

IMPORTANT POINT

This chart may be used for the 2012-2013 SY and the 2013-2014 SY for non-whole grain products.

MENU REQUIREMENTS

EXHIBIT A: SCHOOL LUNCH AND BREAKFAST

WHOLE GRAIN-RICH OUNCE EQUIVALENCY (OZ EQ) REQUIREMENTS FOR SCHOOL MEAL PROGRAMS^{1 2}

| GROUP A | OZ EQ FOR GROUP A |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bread type coating Bread sticks (hard) Chow Mein noodles Savory Crackers (saltines and snack crackers) Croutons Pretzels (hard) Stuffing (dry) Note: weights apply to bread in stuffing. | 1 oz. eq. = 22 gm. or 0.8 oz. 3/4 oz. eq. = 17 gm. or 0.6 oz. 1/2 oz. eq. = 11 gm. or 0.4 oz. 1/4 oz. eq. = 6 gm. or 0.2 oz. |
| GROUP B | OZ EQ FOR GROUP B |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bagels Batter type coating Biscuits Breads (sliced whole wheat, French, Italian) Buns (hamburger and hot dog) Sweet Crackers⁴ (graham crackers - all shapes, animal crackers) Egg roll skins English muffins Pita bread (whole wheat or whole grain-rich) Pizza crust Pretzels (soft) Rolls (whole wheat or whole grain-rich) Tortillas (whole wheat or whole corn) Tortilla chips (whole wheat or whole corn) Taco shells (whole wheat or whole corn) | 1 oz. eq. = 28 gm. or 1.0 oz. 3/4 oz. eq. = 21 gm. or 0.75 oz. 1/2 oz. eq. = 14 gm. or 0.5 oz. 1/4 oz. eq. = 7 gm. or 0.25 oz. |
| GROUP C | OZ EQ FOR GROUP C |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cookies³ (plain - includes vanilla wafers) Cornbread Corn muffins Croissants Pancakes Pie crust (dessert pies³, cobbler³, fruit turnovers, and meat/meat alternate pies) Waffles | 1 oz. eq. = 34 gm. or 1.2 oz. 3/4 oz. eq. = 26 gm. or 0.9 oz. 1/2 oz. eq. = 17 gm. or 0.6 oz. 1/4 oz. eq. = 9 gm. or 0.3 oz. |

1 The following food quantities from Groups A-G, must contain at least 16 grams of whole-grain or can be made with 8 grams of whole-grain and 8 grams of enriched meal and/or enriched flour to be considered whole grain-rich.

2 Some of the following grains may contain more sugar, salt, and/or fat than others. This should be a consideration when deciding how often to serve them.

3 Allowed only as dessert at lunch as specified in §210.10.

4 Allowed for desserts at lunch as specified in §210.10, and for breakfasts served under the SBP

IMPORTANT POINT

This chart may be used for whole grain products for the 2012-2013 SY. It will be mandatory for the 2013-2014 SY and beyond for whole grain products.

MENU REQUIREMENTS

| GROUP D | OZ EQ FOR GROUP D |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doughnuts⁴ (cake and yeast raised, unfrosted) • Cereal bars, breakfast bars, granola bars⁴ (plain) • Muffins (all, except corn) • Sweet roll⁴ (unfrosted) • Toaster pastry⁴ (unfrosted) | 1 oz. eq. = 55 gm. or 2.0 oz. 3/4 oz. eq. = 42 gm. or 1.5 oz. 1/2 oz. eq. = 28 gm. or 1.0 oz. 1/4 oz. eq. = 14 gm. or 0.5 oz. |
| GROUP E | OZ EQ FOR GROUP E |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cereal bars, breakfast bars, granola bars⁴ (with nuts, dried fruit, and/or chocolate pieces) • Cookies³ (with nuts, raisins, chocolate pieces and/or fruit purees) • Doughnuts⁴ (cake and yeast raised, frosted or glazed) • French toast • Sweet rolls⁴ (frosted) • Toaster pastry⁴ (frosted) | 1 oz. eq. = 69 gm. or 2.4 oz. 3/4 oz. eq. = 52 gm. or 1.8 oz. 1/2 oz. eq. = 35 gm. or 1.2 oz. 1/4 oz. eq. = 18 gm. or 0.6 oz. |
| GROUP F | OZ EQ FOR GROUP F |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cake³ (plain, unfrosted) • Coffee cake⁴ | 1 oz. eq. = 82 gm. or 2.9 oz. 3/4 oz. eq. = 62 gm. or 2.2 oz. 1/2 oz. eq. = 41 gm. or 1.5 oz. 1/4 oz. eq. = 21 gm. or 0.7 oz. |
| GROUP G | OZ EQ FOR GROUP G |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brownies ³ (plain) • Cake ³ (all varieties, frosted) | 1 oz. eq. = 125 gm. or 4.4 oz. 3/4 oz. eq. = 94 gm. or 3.3 oz. 1/2 oz. eq. = 63 gm. or 2.2 oz. 1/4 oz. eq. = 32 gm. or 1.1 oz. |
| GROUP H | OZ EQ FOR GROUP H |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cereal Grains (barley, quinoa, etc.) • Breakfast cereals (cooked)^{5, 6} • Bulgur or cracked wheat • Macaroni (all shapes) • Noodles (all varieties) • Pasta (all shapes) • Ravioli (noodle only) • Rice (enriched white or brown) | 1 oz. eq. = 1/2 cup cooked or 1 ounce (28 g) dry |
| GROUP I | OZ EQ FOR GROUP I |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ready to eat breakfast cereal (cold, dry) ^{5, 6} | 1 oz. eq. = 1 cup or 1 ounce for flakes and rounds 1 oz. eq. = 1.25 cups or 1 ounce for puffed cereal 1 oz. eq. = 1/4 cup or 1 ounce for granola |

³ Allowed only as dessert at lunch as specified in §210.10.

⁴ Allowed for desserts at lunch as specified in §210.10, and for breakfasts served under the SBP

⁵ Refer to program regulations for the appropriate serving size for supplements served to children aged 1 through 5 in the NSLP; and meals served to children ages 1 through 5 in the CACFP.

⁶ Cereals must be whole grain, or whole grain and enriched or fortified cereal.

MENU REQUIREMENTS

Milk Component at Lunch

All milk served shall be pasteurized fluid types of milk, all of which must meet state and local standards for each milk. The milk shall contain vitamins A and D at levels specified by the FDA and consistent with state and local standards.

SFAs:

- *Must* offer at least two choices of milk at breakfast and lunch from the following: fat free milk (flavored or unflavored), 1% milk (unflavored), fat free or 1% lactose-reduced milk, fat free or 1% lactose-free milk, fat free or 1% buttermilk, and fat free or 1% acidified milk; and
- *Must* provide a fluid milk substitute for students whose “disability” restricts their diet on the receipt of a written statement from a licensed physician that identifies the “disability” and specifies the substitute.

IMPORTANT POINTS

Regulations permit any of the following:

1. To offer milk as an integral part of the meal pattern and to charge a separate (a la carte) price for juice to all students. Schools are urged to consider the offerings and the pricing structure with the goal of encouraging students to accept and consume a nutritionally balanced, reimbursable meal; or
2. To incorporate juice as a creditable fruit food item within the reimbursable meal (along with milk, grains, meat/meal alternate and a vegetable). The juice may not contribute more than $\frac{1}{2}$ the total weekly fruit requirement offered. As always the charge for additional servings beyond the unit-priced meal would be subject to the district’s a la carte pricing policy.

In addition, schools *may* substitute a non-dairy beverage that is nutritionally equivalent to fluid milk and meets nutritional standards established by the Secretary for students who cannot consume fluid milk because of a “medical or other special dietary need” (other than a “disability”). The standards (among other requirements set by the Secretary) must include fortification of calcium, protein, vitamin A, and vitamin D to levels found in cow’s milk. Currently, there are no milk substitutions that meet the Colorado Beverage Rules:

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdenutritran/download/pdf/HEALTHY%20BEVERAGE%20POLICY%20RULES%20FINAL.pdf>

Schools and institutions participating in the school lunch program cannot restrict, directly or indirectly, the sale or marketing of “fluid milk products” by the school (or a person approved by the school) at any time or place on school premises or at any school-sponsored event.

Offer vs. Serve (OVS) for Lunch

OVS continues to be a requirement in the NSLP for senior high schools and is an option for lower grade levels. It is also an option for the school food authority for all schools in the SBP. Under OVS, schools must offer all the required food components and quantities, and students are required to select at least 3 full components with the following exceptions:

- Schools must offer 5 food components (milk, fruit, vegetable, grain, meat/meat alternate). Students are allowed to decline 2 of the required 5 food components, but must select at least $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of either a fruit or vegetable. Students may select $\frac{1}{4}$ cup fruit and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup vegetable to meet the $\frac{1}{2}$ cup fruit/vegetable requirement.
- Students must select the other food components in the quantities planned, unless 3 full servings (including $\frac{1}{2}$ cup fruit and/or vegetable) have already been selected. In this situation, smaller portion sizes of the remaining 2 components may be selected.
- If a student selects only 3 components, and two of these three are fruits and vegetables, the student may select $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of either the fruit or vegetable, but then must select the full component of the other.

MENU REQUIREMENTS

For example, if a student in grades 9-12 selects just milk, fruit and vegetables, the student may take ½ cup of the vegetable but must take the full 1 cup offering of the fruit. So, the minimum fruit and vegetable that must be taken at the high school level would be 1½ cups and at the K-5 and 6-8 levels, 1 cup.



1. *Q. If the menu planner offers the meat/meat alternate component as two food items (i.e., yogurt and nuts) or the grains component as two food items (i.e., pasta and bread stick), is the student required to take both items if (s)he chooses the component under OVS?*

A. Yes. Under OVS, the student must select the full components; the only exception is ½ cup of fruits or vegetables. If the menu planner offers the meat/meat alternate component (or the grains component) as two food items, the full component includes both items. A full component is the daily quantity designated by the menu planner (no less than the established minimum) to meet the required weekly ranges. The only situation where the student may decline half of the planned meat/meat alternate or grains component is when the student already has three other components on the tray.

2. *Q. Is pre-plating allowed under OVS?*

A. Pre-plated meals continue to be permitted as schools, including RCCIs. These programs are not required to change their meal service systems to accommodate OVS. However, pre-plated meals must offer all components and quantities required for each age/grade group, including the daily minimums and not exceed the weekly maximums. Schools and RCCIs are encouraged to modify their meal service systems to include OVS opportunities to the extent possible.

Off-site Meals for Field Trips

Students who are off campus at a structured school-sponsored event are eligible to participate in the school lunch program. The meals provided must meet the daily meal pattern requirements and be served to students who are the responsibility of the school until they return to campus or are released at a certain time from the event. (FNS 786-8) The meals must be consumed as part of the school-related event/activity between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m.

Food Safety Precautions

Care must be taken to ensure food safety with these meals. Use coolers with ice for milk and avoid using potentially hazardous foods for the remaining components. Any potentially hazardous foods must be surrounded by ice/ice packs or refrigerated.

Recordkeeping

The sack lunches must be recorded on the daily production record. Record as an additional meal choice with each component listed, portion sizes, etc.

Point of Service Accountability

A roster must be checked as students are served the sack lunch. The roster is returned to the lunch accountability staff person following the service of the meal. Based on the checked roster, the number of sack lunches served is added to the school lunch counts for the day.

MENU REQUIREMENTS

Children eligible for free and reduced-price meals must receive appropriate meal benefits without being overtly identified. Eligible students participating in a school-sponsored activity at another school must have the opportunity to receive benefits or eat meals at that school. The school where the child is enrolled must provide information establishing eligibility.

Meal Pattern Requirements

The meals provided must meet the daily meal pattern requirements. However, the menu planner does not have to adjust the planned weekly menu to account for occasional field trips, and does not have to pack the same vegetable offering from that day's "hot" lunch menu for a field trip. The menu planner has the option to offer a different vegetable, or a different vegetable from the same subgroup.

| | K-8 minimum amounts | Sample Menu Items | 9-12 minimum amounts | Sample Menu Items |
|------------------------|---------------------------|---|----------------------------|--|
| Meat/Meat Alternate | 1 oz. | PB & J Sandwich, Cheese and Whole Grain Crackers, Yogurt and Graham Crackers | 2 oz. | PB & J Sandwich, Cheese and Whole Grain Crackers, Yogurt and Graham Crackers |
| Grain | 1 oz. eq. | | 2 oz. eq. | |
| Fruit | ½ cup | Whole banana or orange, ½ #113 apple or #150 pear, grapes, berries, 4 oz. USDA foods fruit cup, 1.3-1.5 oz. box of raisins | 1 cup | Whole #113 apple or #150 pear, grapes, berries. Two ½ cup servings of two different fruits |
| Vegetable | ¾ cup | Fresh vegetable relishes (i.e., carrots, broccoli, cherry/grape tomatoes, cucumber, red/green peppers) | 1 cup | Fresh vegetable relishes (i.e., carrots, broccoli, cherry/grape tomatoes, cucumber, red/green peppers) |
| Milk | ½ pint | 1% unflavored or fat free flavored/unflavored | ½ pint | 1% unflavored or fat free flavored/unflavored |

Foods of minimal nutritional value (FMNV) may not be served as part of the sack lunch. FMNV include: carbonated soft drinks, water ices, chewing gum and certain candies. Refer to Section 16 for additional information and a list of foods that have received exemptions from the category of FMNV.

Field trips may be exempted from the water requirement; however, schools should make an effort to have water available.