

# Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the Afterschool Snack Program (ASP) of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP)

**School Year 2022-23 (July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2023)**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) meal patterns for preschoolers (ages 1-4) and grades K-12 have different requirements. The ASP meal pattern for grades K-12 is defined by the NSLP regulations ([7 CFR 210.10\(o\)\(2\)](#)). The ASP preschool meal pattern follows the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) meal patterns and is defined by the CACFP regulations ([7 CFR 226.20\(c\)](#)).

This document summarizes the ASP meal pattern requirements and applicable resources for preschoolers and grades K-12. School food authorities (SFAs) must ensure that all foods served in the ASP meet the specific requirements for each grade group.

For additional guidance on the ASP meal patterns, refer to the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) resources, [Menu Planning Guide for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP](#), [ASP Handbook](#), [ASP Meal Pattern for Preschoolers](#), and [ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12](#); and visit the CSDE's [ASP](#) webpage. For a comparison of the meal pattern requirements for preschoolers and grades K-12 in the NSLP and School Breakfast Program (SBP), refer to the CSDE's resource, [Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP](#). For summary charts of the crediting requirements, refer to the CSDE's resources, [Crediting Summary Charts for the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs](#) and [Crediting Summary Charts for the Preschool Meal Patterns of the School Nutrition Programs](#).

This information is subject to change as the USDA continues to issue policy guidance on the school meal patterns. The CSDE will notify ASP sponsors when new guidance is available.

# Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the ASP

## Serving the Same Foods to Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the ASP

SFAs must consider the different ASP meal pattern requirements for preschoolers and grades K-12 when making menu planning and purchasing decisions for ASP snacks. When SFAs serve the same foods to preschoolers and grades K-12 in the ASP, these foods must comply with the stricter requirements of the preschool meal pattern. For example, since the preschool meal pattern has a sugar limit for yogurt and breakfast cereals but the meal pattern for grades K-12 does not, yogurt and breakfast cereals served to both grade groups must comply with the preschool sugar limits (refer to “[MMA5: Yogurt and Soy Yogurt](#)” and “[G11: Sugar Limit for Breakfast Cereals](#)”). Other stricter requirements in the ASP preschool meal pattern include prohibition of grain-based desserts (refer to “[G7: Grain-based Desserts](#)”) and a daily juice limit (refer to “[VF4: Full-strength \(100%\) Juice](#)”).

## Preschoolers and grades K-12 eating together in the ASP

SFAs that serve ASP snacks to preschoolers and grades K-12 in the same service area at the same time may choose to 1) follow the grade-appropriate ASP meal patterns for each grade group (i.e., use the preschool ASP meal pattern for ages 1-4 and the K-12 ASP meal pattern for grades K-12); or 2) serve the K-12 ASP meal pattern to both grade groups. SFAs must follow the preschool ASP meal pattern when ASP snacks are served to preschoolers in a different area or at a different time than K-12 students. The USDA allows the option to serve the K-12 ASP meal pattern to preschoolers **only** when preschoolers are co-mingled with K-12 students during the ASP snack service. For more information, refer to [USDA Memo SP 37-2017: Flexibility for Co-Mingled Preschool Meals: Questions and Answers](#).

The preschool meal patterns provide the amounts and types of foods that most younger children need for healthy growth and development. The USDA strongly encourages SFAs to find ways to serve grade-appropriate snacks to preschoolers and older students to best address their nutritional needs.

## Considerations for Reducing Choking Risks for Young Children

Children younger than age 4 are at the highest risk of choking. SFAs should consider children’s ages and developmental readiness when deciding what foods to offer in school menus. This consideration is especially important when serving young children or children with a disability. Serve foods in the appropriate sizes, shapes, and textures to reduce choking risks. Avoid serving foods that are as wide around as a nickel, which is about the size of a young child’s throat. For additional guidance, visit the “[Choking Prevention](#)” section of the CSDE’s [Food Safety for Child Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

# Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the ASP

Meal Pattern (MP)		
Requirement	ASP Meal Pattern for Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)	ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12
<b>MP1: Implementation</b>	<p>The meal patterns for preschoolers in the NSLP, SBP, and SSO are defined by the USDA regulations for the CACFP.</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">USDA Final Rule (81 FR 24347)</a>: CACFP Meal Pattern Revisions Related to the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010  <a href="#">USDA Final Rule (84 FR 50287)</a>: Delayed Implementation of Grains Ounce Equivalents in the Child and Adult Care Food Program  <a href="#">USDA Final Rule Corrections (81 FR 75671)</a>: CACFP Meal Pattern Revisions Related to the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010</p>	<p><b>Resources:</b>                      National School Lunch Program Regulations (7 CFR 210.10)  <a href="#">USDA Memo SP 24-2020, CACFP 13-2020 and SFSP 13-2020</a>: Questions and Answers for the Child Nutrition Programs during School Year 2020-21 – #5</p>

# Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the ASP

<i>Meal Pattern, continued</i>		
Requirement	ASP Meal Pattern for Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)	ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12
<b>MP2:</b> <b>Age/Grade Groups</b>	<p><b>Two age groups:</b> Ages 1-2 and ages 3-4.</p> <p>When a 5-year-old is in preschool or a 4-year-old is in kindergarten, the SFA may continue to serve the appropriate meal pattern for that grade.</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">ASP Meal Pattern for Preschoolers</a> (CSDE)  <a href="#">USDA Memo SP 37-2017: Flexibility for Co-Mingled Preschool Meals: Questions and Answers</a></p>	<p><b>One grade group:</b> Grades K-12.</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12</a> (CSDE)</p>
<b>MP3:</b> <b>Food components</b>	<p><b>Required components:</b> Choose two of the <b>five</b> components: 1) milk; 2) meat/meat alternates; 3) vegetables; 4) fruits; and 5) grains.</p> <p><b>Serving one vegetable and one fruit:</b> Snacks that contain one serving of vegetables (such as carrot sticks) and one serving of fruit (such as apple slices) are reimbursable because they contain two of the five components (vegetables component and fruits component).</p> <p><b>Serving more than two food items:</b> Snacks that include more than two food items must include the minimum serving of at least two components.</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">ASP Handbook</a> (CSDE)  <a href="#">ASP Meal Pattern for Preschoolers</a> (CSDE)  <a href="#">ASP Sample Menu for Ages 3-4</a> (CSDE)  <a href="#">CACFP Best Practices</a> (USDA)</p>	<p><b>Required components:</b> Choose two of the <b>four</b> components: 1) milk; 2) meat/meat alternates; 3) vegetables/fruits; and 5) grains/breads.</p> <p><b>Serving one vegetable and one fruit:</b> Snacks that contain one serving of vegetables (such as carrot sticks) and one serving of fruit (such as apple slices) are not reimbursable because they contain only one of the four components (vegetables/fruits component).</p> <p><b>Serving more than two food items:</b> Snacks that include more than two food items must include the minimum serving of at least two components.</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">ASP Handbook</a> (CSDE)  <a href="#">ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12</a> (CSDE)  <a href="#">ASP Sample Menu for Grades K-12</a> (CSDE)</p>

# Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the ASP

Milk Component (M)		
Requirement	ASP Meal Pattern for Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)	ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12
<b>M1: Milk</b>	<p><b>Allowable types of milk:</b> Whole milk for ages 1-2 and low-fat or fat-free milk for ages 3-4. Milk must be unflavored. Breastmilk meets the milk component and may be served in place of fluid milk.</p> <p><b>Milk variety:</b> Not required. SFAs may serve one type of allowable milk to all preschoolers.</p> <p><b>State milk requirement:</b> In addition to the USDA requirements, all milk served in public schools must meet the beverage requirements of <a href="#">Section 10-221q</a> of the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.). Milk cannot contain more than 4 grams of sugars per ounce. Products that meet federal and state requirements are included in <a href="#">list 16</a> on the CSDE's <a href="#">List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages</a> webpage.</p> <p><b>Beverage limit:</b> Only one of the two components may be a creditable beverage. Milk cannot be served when juice is the only other snack component.</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">Beverage Requirements</a> (CSDE webpage)  <a href="#">List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages</a> (CSDE webpage)  <a href="#">Milk Component for Preschoolers</a> (CSDE webpage)  <a href="#">Serving Milk in the CACFP</a> (USDA)  <a href="#">USDA Memo CACFP 17-2016: Nutrition Requirements for Fluid Milk and Fluid Milk Substitutions in the CACFP, Q&amp;As</a></p>	<p><b>Allowable types of milk:</b> Low-fat (1%) milk and fat-free milk, either unflavored or flavored.</p> <p><b>Milk variety:</b> Not required. SFAs may serve one type of allowable milk to all grades.</p> <p><b>State milk requirement:</b> In addition to USDA requirements, all milk served in public schools must meet the beverage requirements of the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) <a href="#">Section 10-221q</a>. Milk cannot contain more than 4 grams of sugars per ounce. Products that meet federal and state requirements are included in <a href="#">list 16</a> on the CSDE's <a href="#">List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages</a> webpage.</p> <p><b>Beverage limit:</b> Only one of the two components may be a creditable beverage. Milk cannot be served when juice is the only other snack component.</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">Beverage Requirements</a> (CSDE webpage)  <a href="#">CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 06-19: Summary of Federal and State Milk Requirements for the NSLP, SBP, SSO of the NSLP, ASP of the NSLP, and Special Milk Program (SMP)</a>  <a href="#">List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages</a> (CSDE webpage)  <a href="#">Milk Component for Grades K-12</a> (CSDE webpage)</p>

# Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the ASP

Milk Component, <i>continued</i>		
Requirement	ASP Meal Pattern for Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)	ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12
<p><b>M2:</b> Nondairy Milk Substitutes for Children without a Disability</p>	<p><b>Allowable nondairy beverages:</b> Nondairy beverages that are nutritionally equivalent to cow’s milk may be served to children with special dietary needs if requested in writing by a parent or guardian. The nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes are defined by the regulations for the NSLP (<a href="#">7 CFR 210.10</a>).</p> <p><b>Other beverages:</b> SFAs cannot offer any other beverages (including water and juice) in place of milk for reimbursable meals in the NSLP and SBP.</p> <p><b>State requirement:</b> In addition to the USDA requirements, all nondairy milk substitutes served in public schools must meet the beverage requirements of C.G.S. <a href="#">Section 10-221q</a>. Nondairy milk substitutes must contain no more than 4 grams of sugar per fluid ounce, no more than 35 percent of calories from fat, and no more than 10 percent of calories from saturated fat. Products that meet federal and state requirements are included in <a href="#">list 17</a> on the CSDE’s <a href="#">List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages</a> webpage.</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">Accommodating Special Diets in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">Allowable Milk Substitutes for Children without Disabilities in the USDA School Nutrition Programs (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">Beverage Requirements (CSDE webpage)</a></p>	<p><b>Allowable nondairy beverages:</b> Nondairy beverages that are nutritionally equivalent to cow’s milk may be served to children with special dietary needs if requested in writing by a parent or guardian. The nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes are defined by the regulations for the NSLP (<a href="#">7 CFR 210.10</a>).</p> <p><b>Other beverages:</b> SFAs cannot offer any other beverages (including water and juice) in place of milk for reimbursable meals in the NSLP and SBP.</p> <p><b>State requirement:</b> In addition to the USDA requirements, all nondairy milk substitutes served in public schools must meet the beverage requirements of C.G.S. <a href="#">Section 10-221q</a>. Nondairy milk substitutes must contain no more than 4 grams of sugar per fluid ounce, no more than 35 percent of calories from fat, and no more than 10 percent of calories from saturated fat. Products that meet federal and state requirements are included in <a href="#">list 17</a> on the CSDE’s <a href="#">List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages</a> webpage.</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">Accommodating Special Diets in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">Allowable Milk Substitutes for Children without Disabilities in the USDA School Nutrition Programs (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">Beverage Requirements (CSDE webpage)</a></p>

# Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the ASP

Meat/Meat Alternates Component (MMA)		
Requirement	ASP Meal Pattern for Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)	ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12
<b>MMA1: Serving Size</b>	<p><b>Amount:</b> The preschool meal patterns list the meat/meat alternates component in <b>ounces</b>. A 1-ounce serving of the meat/meat alternates component equals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 ounce of lean meat, poultry, or fish;</li> <li>• 1 ounce of cheese (low-fat recommended);</li> <li>• 2 ounces of cottage or ricotta cheese, cheese food/spread, or cheese substitute (low-fat recommended);</li> <li>• ¼ cup of cooked beans and peas (legumes), e.g., kidney beans, chick peas (garbanzo beans), lentils, and split peas;</li> <li>• ½ large egg;</li> <li>• 2 tablespoons of nut or seed butters, e.g., peanut butter, almond butter, cashew butter, and sunflower seed butter;</li> <li>• 1 ounce of nuts or seeds, e.g., almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, filberts, macadamia nuts, peanuts, pecans, pine nuts, pistachios, soy nuts, and walnuts;</li> <li>• ¼ cup (2.2 ounces) of commercial tofu containing at least 5 grams of protein;</li> <li>• 1 ounce of tempeh (refer to “<a href="#">MMA3: Tempeh</a>”);</li> <li>• 3 ounces of surimi (refer to “<a href="#">MMA2: Surimi</a>”);</li> <li>• ½ cup (volume) or 4 ounces (weight) of yogurt or soy yogurt containing no more than 3.83 grams of sugars per ounce (refer to “<a href="#">MMA5: Yogurt and Soy Yogurt</a>”); and</li> <li>• 1 ounce of alternate protein product (APP) that meets the USDA’s APP requirements.</li> </ul>	Same

# Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the ASP

Meat/Meat Alternates Component, <i>continued</i>		
Requirement	ASP Meal Pattern for Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)	ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12
<p><b>MMA1:</b> <b>Serving Size,</b> <i>continued</i></p>	<p><b>Edible portion:</b> The serving size of the meat/meat alternates component refers to the edible portion of cooked lean meat, poultry, or fish, e.g., cooked lean meat without bone, breading, binders, extenders, or other ingredients. A serving of the meat/meat alternates component is sometimes more than a measured ounce, depending on the food’s density and nutrition content.</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">Food Buying Guide Section 1: Overview of Crediting Requirements for the Meat/Meat Alternates Component (USDA)</a>  <a href="#">Food Buying Guide Section 1: Yield Table for Meat/Meat Alternates(USDA)</a>  <a href="#">Meat/Meat Alternates Component for Preschoolers (CSDE webpage)</a>  <a href="#">Recipe Analysis Workbook</a> (USDA’s Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs)</p>	<p>Same</p>
<p><b>MMA2:</b> <b>Surimi</b></p>	<p><b>Crediting:</b> A 3-ounce serving of surimi credits as 1 ounce of the meat/meat alternates component. To credit surimi seafood differently, SFAs must obtain a CN label or manufacturer’s PFS that documents how the crediting is determined.</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">USDA Memo SP 24-2019, CACFP 11-2019 and SFSP 10-2019: Crediting Surimi Seafood in the Child Nutrition Programs.</a></p>	<p>Same</p>



# Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the ASP

Meat/Meat Alternates Component, <i>continued</i>		
Requirement	ASP Meal Pattern for Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)	ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12
<b>MMA3: Tempeh</b>	<p><b>Crediting:</b> A 1-ounce serving of tempeh credits as 1 ounce of the meat/meat alternates component. This method of crediting applies only to tempeh products whose ingredients are limited to soybeans (or other legumes), water, tempeh culture, and for some varieties, vinegar, seasonings, and herbs. If a tempeh product contains other ingredients, SFAs must obtain a CN label or PFS to document crediting.</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">USDA Memo SP 25-2019, CACFP 12-2019 and SFSP 11-2019: Crediting Tempeh in the Child Nutrition Programs</a>            USDA Webinar: <a href="#">Additional Meat/Meat Alternates Options for CNPs: Crediting Tempeh and Surimi</a></p>	Same
<b>MMA4: Tofu and Tofu Products</b>	<p><b>Crediting:</b> Tofu and tofu products credit as 1 ounce of the meat/meat alternates component if they contain 5 grams of protein in 2.2 ounces by weight (1/4 cup).</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">Crediting Tofu and Tofu Products in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">USDA Memo SP 53-2016 and CACFP 21-2016: Crediting Tofu and Soy Yogurt Products in the School Meal Programs and the CACFP</a></p>	Same
<b>MMA5: Yogurt and Soy Yogurt</b>	<p><b>Sugar limit:</b> No more than 23 grams of total sugars per 6 ounces (≤3.83 grams per ounce).</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">Calculating Sugar Limits for Yogurt in the CACFP (USDA)</a>  <a href="#">Choose Yogurts that are Lower in Added Sugars (USDA)</a>  <a href="#">Crediting Yogurt for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a></p>	<p><b>Sugar limit:</b> None</p> <p><b>Serving the same yogurt/soy yogurt to preschoolers and grades K-12:</b> If SFAs serve the same yogurt or soy yogurt to preschoolers and grades K-12, these foods must comply with the preschool sugar limit for yogurt and soy yogurt. The exception is when SFAs choose to follow the K-12 meal pattern for preschoolers and grades K-5 who eat in the same service area at the same time (refer to <a href="#">“Preschoolers and grades K-5 eating together in the ASP”</a> on page 2).</p>

# Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the ASP

Vegetables Component and Fruits Component (VF)		
Requirement	ASP Meal Pattern for Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)	ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12
<b>VF1:</b> Components	<p><b>Components:</b> Vegetables and fruits are two separate components.</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">USDA Memo CACFP 09-2017: Vegetable and Fruit Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answers Fruits Component for Preschoolers</a> (CSDE webpage)  <a href="#">Vegetables Component for Preschoolers</a> (CSDE webpage)</p>	<p><b>Components:</b> Vegetables and fruits are one component.</p>
<b>VF2:</b> Crediting Vegetables and Fruits	<p><b>Crediting amounts:</b> All vegetables and fruits credit based on the served volume, except for dried fruits and raw leafy greens.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Dried fruits:</b> Credit as <b>twice</b> the amount served, e.g., ¼ cup of dried fruit equals ½ cup of the fruits component. Examples of dried fruits include raisins, apricots, dried cherries, dried cranberries, dried blueberries, mixed dried fruit, and dried coconut.</li> <li>• <b>Raw leafy greens:</b> Credit as <b>half</b> the amount served, e.g., 1 cup of raw leafy greens equals ½ cup of the vegetables component. Examples of raw leafy greens include kale, greens (e.g., beet, collard, mustard, and turnip), spinach, arugula, and lettuce such as iceberg, romaine, Boston, Bibb, red leaf, and spring mix.</li> </ul> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">Food Buying Guide Section 2: Overview of Crediting Requirements for the Vegetables Component</a> (USDA)  <a href="#">Food Buying Guide Section 2: Yield Table for Vegetables</a> (USDA)  <a href="#">Food Buying Guide Section 3: Overview of Crediting Requirements for the Fruits Component</a> (USDA)  <a href="#">Food Buying Guide Section 3: Yield Table for Fruits</a> (USDA)  <a href="#">Recipe Analysis Workbook</a> (USDA’s Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs)</p>	<p><b>Crediting amounts:</b> All vegetables and fruits credit based on the served volume, including dried fruits and raw leafy greens, e.g., e.g., ½ cup of fruits or vegetables credit as ½ cup of the vegetables/fruits component</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">Food Buying Guide Section 2: Overview of Crediting Requirements for the Vegetables Component</a> (USDA)  <a href="#">Food Buying Guide Section 2: Yield Table for Vegetables</a> (USDA)  <a href="#">Food Buying Guide Section 3: Overview of Crediting Requirements for the Fruits Component</a> (USDA)  <a href="#">Food Buying Guide Section 3: Yield Table for Fruits</a> (USDA)  <a href="#">Recipe Analysis Workbook</a> (USDA’s Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs)</p>

# Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the ASP

Vegetables Component and Fruits Component (VF)		
Requirement	ASP Meal Pattern for Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)	ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12
<b>VF3: Coconut</b>	<p><b>Fresh and frozen coconut:</b> Credit as the fruits component based on the served volume. For example, 1/8 cup of fresh or frozen coconut credits as 1/8 cup of the fruits component. The minimum serving is 1/8 cup.</p> <p><b>Dried coconut:</b> Credits the same as other dried fruits, i.e., as twice the volume served (refer to “VF2: Crediting Vegetables and Fruits”).</p> <p><b>Coconut water:</b> Juices labeled as 100 percent juice, including coconut water, credit toward the fruits component based on the served volume. SFAs must count coconut water with all other juices toward the juice limit (refer to “VF4: Full-strength (100%) juice”).</p> <p><b>Crediting considerations:</b> Menu planners should consider coconut’s high caloric and saturated fat content, which may limit its frequency in school menus. Coconut flour, coconut oil, and coconut milk do not credit.</p> <p><b>Noncreditable coconut products:</b> Coconut flour, coconut oil, and coconut milk</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">USDA Memo SP 34-2019</a>, <a href="#">CACFP 15-2019</a> and <a href="#">SFSP 15-2019</a>: <i>Crediting Coconut, Hominy, Corn Masa, and Masa Harina in the Child Nutrition Programs</i>:</p>	<p><b>Fresh and frozen coconut:</b> Credit as the fruits component based on the served volume. For example, 1/8 cup of fresh or frozen coconut credits as 1/8 cup of the fruits component. The minimum serving is 1/8 cup.</p> <p><b>Dried coconut:</b> Credits the same as other dried fruits, i.e., based on the served volume (refer to “VF2: Crediting Vegetables and Fruits”).</p> <p><b>Coconut water:</b> Juices labeled as 100 percent juice, including coconut water, credit toward the fruits component based on the served volume (refer to “VF4: Full-strength (100%) juice”).</p> <p><b>Crediting considerations:</b> Menu planners should consider coconut’s high caloric and saturated fat content, which may limit its frequency in school menus. Coconut flour, coconut oil, and coconut milk do not credit.</p> <p><b>Noncreditable coconut products:</b> Coconut flour, coconut oil, and coconut milk</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">USDA Memo SP 34-2019</a>, <a href="#">CACFP 15-2019</a> and <a href="#">SFSP 15-2019</a>: <i>Crediting Coconut, Hominy, Corn Masa, and Masa Harina in the Child Nutrition Programs</i>:</p>

# Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the ASP

Vegetables Component and Fruits Component, <i>continued</i>		
Requirement	ASP Meal Pattern for Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)	ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12
<p><b>VF4:</b> <b>Full-strength (100%) Juice</b></p>	<p><b>Juice limit:</b> Juice may credit toward the entire vegetables component or fruits component at only one meal or snack per day, between all meals (NSLP and SBP) and snacks (ASP) served to preschoolers. The juice limit includes all sources of 100 percent juice, including juice that is fresh, frozen, and made from concentrate, frozen pops made from 100 percent juice, pureed fruits and vegetables in smoothies, and juice from canned fruit in 100 percent juice.</p> <p><b>Juice from canned fruit:</b> Counts toward the juice limit only if the SFA credits the juice toward the fruits component. Juice from canned fruit does not count toward the juice limit if the SFA plans the juice as an extra food that does not credit toward the meal patterns. For example, the juice from canned fruit does not count toward the juice limit if food service personnel portion ½ cup of canned fruit in a 5½-ounce container and add the juice <i>after</i> measuring the full ½-cup serving of fruit. Drained canned fruit and canned fruit in light syrup or water do not count toward the juice limit.</p> <p><b>Beverage limit at snack:</b> Only one of the two components may be a creditable beverage. Juice cannot be served when milk is the only other snack component.</p> <p><b>Best practice:</b> The USDA’s <i>CACFP Best Practices</i> recommends serving a variety of fruits and choosing whole fruits (fresh, canned, dried, or frozen) more often than juice.</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">Crediting Juice for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">Crediting Smoothies for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">USDA Memo SP 40-2019, CACFP 17-2019 and SFSP 17-2019: Crediting of Smoothies in Child Nutrition Programs</a></p>	<p><b>Juice limit:</b> None. Juice may credit toward the entire vegetables/fruits component. 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.</p> <p><b>Beverage limit at snack:</b> Only one of the two components may be a creditable beverage. Juice cannot be served when milk is the only other snack component.</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">Crediting Juice for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">Crediting Smoothies for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">USDA Memo SP 40-2019, CACFP 17-2019 and SFSP 17-2019: Crediting of Smoothies in Child Nutrition Programs</a></p>

# Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the ASP

Grains component		
Requirement	ASP Meal Pattern for Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)	ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12
<b>G1:</b> <b>Component name</b>	<p><b>Name:</b> Grains</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">Grains Component for Preschoolers</a> (CSDE webpage)  <b>Final Rule (81 FR 24347):</b> Child and Adult Care Food Program: Meal Pattern Revisions Related to the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010  <b>Final Rule Correction (81 FR 75671):</b> CACFP Meal Pattern Revisions Related to the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010</p>	<p><b>Name:</b> Grains/Breads</p> <p>The ASP meal pattern for grades K-12 refers to the grains/breads component instead of the grains component because the USDA’s final rule (77 FR 4087), <i>Nutrition Standards for the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs</i>, does not apply to the ASP meal pattern for grades K-12.</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">Grains/Breads Component for Grades K-12 in the ASP</a> (CSDE webpage)</p>
<b>G2:</b> <b>Creditable Grains</b>	<p><b>Creditable grains:</b> Whole grains, enriched grains, bran, and germ.</p> <p><b>Corn:</b> Corn ingredients credit if they are whole grain, enriched, or treated with lime (nixtamalized). Nixtamalization is a process in which dried corn is soaked and cooked in an alkaline (slaked lime) solution. This process increases the bioavailability of certain nutrients and provides a nutritional profile similar to whole-grain corn.</p> <p><b>Hominy, corn masa, and masa harina:</b> Ingredients labeled as hominy, corn masa, or masa harina are nixtamalized, and therefore credit as whole grains. However, cornmeal and corn flour do not credit unless they are whole grain, enriched, or nixtamalized. If the product’s ingredients statement does not provide sufficient information, SFAs must obtain a PFS from the manufacturer to document that cornmeal and corn flour ingredients meet one of these requirements.</p>	<p>Same.</p>

# Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the ASP

Grains component, <i>continued</i>		
Requirement	ASP Meal Pattern for Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)	ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12
<b>G2: Creditable Grains, <i>continued</i></b>	<p><b>Resources:</b></p> <p><a href="#">Child Care Worksheet 1: Crediting Commercial Grains in the CACFP (CSDE)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Child Care Worksheet 2: Crediting Ready-to-eat (RTE) Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP (CSDE)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Child Care Worksheet 3: Crediting Cooked Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP (CSDE)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Child Care Worksheet 4: Crediting Family-size Recipes for Grains in the CACFP (CSDE)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Child Care Worksheet 5: Crediting Quantity Recipes for Grains in the CACFP (CSDE)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Crediting Enriched Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Crediting Whole Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Grains Component for Preschoolers (CSDE webpage)</a></p> <p><a href="#">How to Identify Creditable Grains for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Grains in Child Nutrition Programs (USDA)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Grains in Child Nutrition Programs: Completed Sample (USDA)</a></p> <p><a href="#">USDA Memo CACFP 09-2018: Grain Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answers</a></p> <p><a href="#">USDA Memo SP 34-2019, CACFP 15-2019 and SFSP 15-2019: Crediting Coconut, Hominy, Corn Masa, and Masa Harina in the Child Nutrition Programs</a></p>	<p><b>Resources:</b></p> <p><a href="#">Afterschool Snack Program Handbook (CSDE)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Crediting Enriched Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Crediting Whole Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Grains/Breads Component for Grades K-12 in the ASP (CSDE webpage)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Grains/Breads Servings in the Child and Adult Care Food Program, Summer Food Service Program, and NSLP Afterschool Snacks (USDA)</a></p> <p><a href="#">Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Grains/Breads Servings in the Child and Adult Care Food Program, Summer Food Service Program, and NSLP Afterschool Snacks: Completed Sample (USDA)</a></p> <p><a href="#">USDA Memo SP 34-2019, CACFP 15-2019 and SFSP 15-2019: Crediting Coconut, Hominy, Corn Masa, and Masa Harina in the Child Nutrition Programs</a></p>

# Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the ASP

Grains component, <i>continued</i>		
Requirement	ASP Meal Pattern for Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)	ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12
<b>G3:</b> Serving Size	<p><b>Required amounts:</b> The required quantities for the grains component are in <b>ounce equivalents</b>. The required preschool amount is ½ ounce equivalent.</p> <p><b>Methods to determine grain ounce equivalents:</b> The USDA allows two methods for determining the grain ounce equivalents of creditable products and recipes. Method 1 is used for commercial grain products and may also be used for standardized recipes that indicate the weight of the prepared (cooked) serving. Method 2 is used for standardized recipes and may also be used for commercial grain products that have a product formulation statement (PFS) stating the weight of creditable grains per serving. SFAs may use either method but must document how the crediting information was obtained.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Method 1</b> uses the amount for the appropriate grain group in the USDA’s chart, <i>Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs</i>. Exhibit A provides minimum weights (groups A-E) and volumes (groups H-I) for nine groups of grain foods, based on the average grain content of similar products. The CSDE’s <i>Grain Ounce Equivalents for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP</i> lists the Exhibit A ounce equivalents that apply to the NSLP and SBP preschool meal patterns. Groups F and G (grain-based desserts) are not included because grain-based desserts do not credit as the grains component in the preschool meal patterns.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Required amounts:</b> The required quantities for the grains component are in <b>ounce equivalents</b>.</p> <p><b>Methods to determine grain servings:</b> The USDA allows two methods for determining the grain servings of creditable products and recipes. Method 1 is used for commercial grain products and may also be used for standardized recipes that indicate the weight of the prepared (cooked) serving. Method 2 is used for standardized recipes and may also be used for commercial grain products that have a product formulation statement (PFS) stating the weight of creditable grains per serving. SFAs may use either method but must document how the crediting information was obtained.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Method 1</b> uses the amount for the appropriate grain group in the USDA’s chart, <i>Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs</i>. Exhibit A provides minimum weights (groups A-G) and volumes (groups H-I) for nine groups of grain foods, based on the average grain content of similar products. The CSDE’s <i>Servings for Grains/Breads for Grades K-12 in the ASP</i> lists the Exhibit A servings that apply to the ASP meal pattern for grades K-12.</li> <li>• <b>Method 2</b> calculates the total weight (grams) of creditable grains (whole and enriched) per manufacturer’s serving or recipe serving. To credit as one serving, a food in groups A-G must contain 14.75 grams of creditable grains, and a food in group H must contain 25 grams of creditable grains. Required documentation for method 2 is a PFS for commercial products (stating the weight of creditable grains per serving) or a standardized recipe for foods made from scratch (listing the weight of creditable grains).</li> </ul>

# Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the ASP

Grains Component, <i>continued</i>		
Requirement	ASP Meal Pattern for Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)	ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12
<p><b>G3:</b> Serving Size, <i>continued</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Method 2</b> calculates the total weight (grams) of creditable grains (whole and enriched) per manufacturer’s serving or recipe serving. To credit as ½ ounce equivalent (the required preschool serving), a food in groups A-E must contain 8 grams of creditable grains, and a food in group H must contain 14 grams of creditable grains. To credit as ½ ounce equivalent of a WGR food, a food in groups A-E must contain 8 grams of creditable grains (including at least 4 grams of whole grains), and a food in group H must contain 14 grams of creditable grains (including at least 7 grams of whole grains). Required documentation for method 2 is a PFS for commercial products (stating the weight of creditable grains per serving) or a standardized recipe for foods prepared from scratch (listing the weight of creditable grains).</li> </ul> <p><b>When method 2 is required:</b> There are specific situations when SFAs must use method 2 (instead of the USDA’s Exhibit A chart) to determine the grain ounce equivalents for commercial products. For more information and detailed guidance on both methods, refer to the CSDE’s resource, <a href="#">Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP</a>.</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">Calculation Methods for Grain Servings for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP</a> (CSDE)  <a href="#">Child Care Worksheet 1: Crediting Commercial Grains in the CACFP</a> (CSDE)  <a href="#">Child Care Worksheet 2: Crediting Ready-to-eat (RTE) Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP</a> (CSDE)</p>	<p><b>When method 2 is required:</b> There are specific situations when SFAs must use method 2 (instead of the USDA’s Exhibit A chart) to determine the grain servings for commercial products. For more information and detailed guidance on both methods, refer to the CSDE’s resource, <a href="#">Calculation Methods for Grains/Breads Servings for Grades K-12 in the ASP</a>.</p> <p><b>Option for ounce equivalents:</b> SFAs may choose to use the ounce equivalents in <a href="#">Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP</a>, instead of serving sizes. This provides consistency with NSLP and SBP meals and more nutrient-dense choices for children.</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">Afterschool Snack Program Handbook</a> (CSDE)  <a href="#">ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12</a> (CSDE)  <a href="#">Calculation Methods for Grains/Breads Servings for Grades K-12 in the ASP</a> (CSDE)  <a href="#">Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs</a> (USDA)  <a href="#">Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Grains/Breads Servings in the Child and Adult Care Food Program, Summer Food Service Program, and NSLP Afterschool Snacks</a> (USDA)  <a href="#">Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Grains/Breads Servings in the Child and Adult Care Food Program, Summer Food Service Program, and NSLP Afterschool Snacks: Completed Sample</a> (USDA)  <a href="#">Recipe Analysis Workbook</a> (USDA’s Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs)  <a href="#">Servings for Grains/Breads for Grades K-12 in the ASP</a> (CSDE)  <a href="#">Webinar: Exhibit A Grains Tool to the Rescue</a> (USDA)  <a href="#">Webinar: How to Maximize the Exhibit A Grains Tool</a> (USDA)</p>



# Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the ASP

Grains Component, <i>continued</i>		
Requirement	ASP Meal Pattern for Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)	ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12
<p><b>G3:</b> Serving Size, <i>continued</i></p>	<p><a href="#">Child Care Worksheet 3: Crediting Cooked Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">Child Care Worksheet 4: Crediting Family-size Recipes for Grains in the CACFP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">Child Care Worksheet 5: Crediting Quantity Recipes for Grains in the CACFP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs (USDA)</a>  <a href="#">Grain Ounce Equivalents for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Grains in Child Nutrition Programs (USDA)</a>  <a href="#">Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Grains in Child Nutrition Programs: Completed Sample (USDA)</a>  <a href="#">Recipe Analysis Workbook (USDA’s Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs)</a>  <a href="#">USDA Final Rule (84 FR 50287): Delayed Implementation of Grains Ounce Equivalents in the Child and Adult Care Food Program</a>  <a href="#">Webinar: Exhibit A Grains Tool to the Rescue (USDA)</a>  <a href="#">Webinar: How to Maximize the Exhibit A Grains Tool (USDA)</a></p>	

# Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the ASP

Grains Component, <i>continued</i>		
Requirement	ASP Meal Pattern for Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)	ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12
<b>G4: WGR Requirement</b>	<p><b>Frequency:</b> At least <b>one serving per day</b> must be WGR, between all meals and ASP snacks served to preschoolers. The USDA’s <i>CACFP Best Practices</i> recommends at least two servings of WGR grains per day.</p> <p><b>Documentation:</b> SFAs must maintain documentation to indicate that at least one serving per day is WGR. SFAs must obtain a PFS for commercial foods and a standardized recipe for foods made from scratch</p> <p><b>Best practice:</b> Serve only WGR grains and serve 100 percent whole grains most often.</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">Adding Whole Grains to Your CACFP Menu (USDA)</a>  <a href="#">CACFP Best Practices (USDA)</a>  <a href="#">Crediting Commercial Processed Products in Preschool Menus (CSDE webpage)</a>  <a href="#">Crediting Enriched Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">Crediting Foods Made from Scratch in Preschool Menus (CSDE webpage)</a>  <a href="#">Crediting Whole Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the CACFP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">USDA Memo CACFP 09-2018: Grain Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answers</a>  <a href="#">Whole Grain-rich Requirement for Preschoolers (CSDE webpage)</a></p>	<p><b>Frequency:</b> None</p> <p><b>Documentation:</b> Not applicable</p> <p><b>Best practice:</b> Serve only WGR grains and serve 100 percent whole grains most often.</p>

# Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the ASP

Grains Component, <i>continued</i>		
Requirement	ASP Meal Pattern for Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)	ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12
<b>G5: WGR Criteria</b>	<p><b>Commercial grain products:</b> The first ingredient must be a whole grain (or water is the first ingredient and a whole grain is the next ingredient), and the next two grain ingredients (if any) are whole, enriched, bran, or germ. The preschool WGR criteria do not require a specific limit for noncreditable grains.</p> <p><b>Foods made from scratch:</b> The weight of whole grains in the SFA’s standardized recipe is the same as or more than the weight of the other creditable grains.</p> <p><b>Serving the same WGR foods to preschoolers and grades K-12:</b> Grain foods that meet the WGR criteria for grades K-12 will meet the preschool WGR criteria. However, grain foods that meet the preschool WGR criteria may or may not meet the WGR criteria for grades K-12. If SFAs serve the same grain foods to preschoolers and grades K-5, these foods must meet the WGR criteria for grades K-12; and must also meet the preschool sugar limit (refer to “G8: Crediting Criteria for Breakfast Cereals”).</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">Child Care Worksheet 1: Crediting Commercial Grains in the CACFP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">Child Care Worksheet 2: Crediting Ready-to-eat (RTE) Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">Child Care Worksheet 3: Crediting Cooked Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">Child Care Worksheet 4: Crediting Family-size Recipes for Grains in the CACFP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">Child Care Worksheet 5: Crediting Quantity Recipes for Grains in the CACFP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">Crediting Enriched Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">Crediting Whole Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">Identifying Whole Grain-rich Foods for the CACFP (USDA)</a>  <a href="#">How to Spot Whole Grain-Rich Foods for the CACFP (USDA)</a>  <a href="#">Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the CACFP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Grains in Child Nutrition Programs (USDA)</a>  <a href="#">Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Grains in Child Nutrition Programs: Completed Sample (USDA)</a></p>	Not applicable (no WGR requirement)

# Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the ASP

Grains Component, <i>continued</i>		
Requirement	ASP Meal Pattern for Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)	ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12
<p><b>G5:</b> <b>WGR Criteria,</b> <i>continued</i></p>	<p>USDA Memo CACFP 09-2018: Grain Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answers                      USDA Memo SP 34-2019, CACFP 15-2019 and SFSP 15-2019: Crediting Coconut, Hominy, Corn Masa, and Masa Harina in the Child Nutrition Programs  <a href="#">Whole Grain-rich Requirement for Preschoolers</a> (CSDE webpage)</p>	<p>Not applicable (no WGR requirement)</p>
<p><b>G6:</b> <b>Products Containing Only Enriched Grains (No Whole Grains),</b> e.g., enriched white bread, enriched crackers, enriched white rice, enriched cream of wheat cereal, and enriched corn grits</p>	<p><b>Crediting:</b> Enriched grain products credit as the grains component if the SFA offers at least one WGR food per day, between all meals and ASP snacks served to preschoolers (refer to “<a href="#">G4: WGR Requirement</a>”).</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">ASP Meal Pattern for Preschoolers</a> (CSDE)  <a href="#">Crediting Enriched Grains in the NSLP and SBP</a> (CSDE)  <a href="#">Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Grains in Child Nutrition Programs</a> (USDA)  <a href="#">Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Grains in Child Nutrition Programs: Completed Sample</a> (USDA)                      USDA Memo CACFP 09-2018: Grain Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answers  <a href="#">Whole Grain-rich Criteria for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP</a> (CSDE)  <a href="#">Whole Grain-rich Requirement for Preschoolers</a> (CSDE webpage)</p>	<p><b>Crediting:</b> Enriched grain products credit as the grains component.</p> <p><b>Resources</b>  <a href="#">ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12</a> (CSDE)  <a href="#">Crediting Enriched Grains in the NSLP and SBP</a> (CSDE)                      NSLP Regulations 7 CFR 210.10 (o)(2)(iv): Meal requirements for lunches and requirements for afterschool snacks  <a href="#">Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Grains/Breads Servings in the Child and Adult Care Food Program, Summer Food Service Program, and NSLP Afterschool Snacks</a> (USDA)  <a href="#">Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Grains/Breads Servings in the Child and Adult Care Food Program, Summer Food Service Program, and NSLP Afterschool Snacks: Completed Sample</a> (USDA)</p>

# Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the ASP

Grains component, <i>continued</i>		
Requirement	ASP Meal Pattern for Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)	ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12
<p><b>G7:</b> <b>Grain-based Desserts</b></p>	<p><b>Restrictions:</b> Grain-based desserts cannot credit in preschool meals and ASP snacks.</p> <p><b>Examples of grain-based desserts:</b> Breakfast bars, brownies, cakes (including cupcakes and coffee cakes), cereal bars, cinnamon rolls, cinnamon streusel quick breads, cookies (all kinds, including vanilla wafers), doughnuts, gingerbread, granola bars, ice cream cones, marshmallow cereal treats, pastries (e.g., cinnamon buns, Danish, eclairs, sweet buns, sweet rolls, and toaster pastries) piecrusts in sweet pies (e.g., apple, coconut, blueberry, and pecan), sweet biscotti (such as those made with fruits, chocolate, or icing) sweet bread pudding, sweet croissants (e.g., chocolate filled), sweet scones (e.g., blueberry, raisin, and orange cranberry), and rice pudding. The CSDE’s resource, <a href="#">Grain Ounce Equivalents for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP</a>, does not include grain-based desserts.</p> <p>Grain-based desserts do not include muffins, quick breads, e.g., banana bread and zucchini bread (except for cinnamon streusel), cornbread, pancakes, waffles, French toast, savory scones (such as cheese and herb), and piecrusts in entrees such as quiche, meat pies, and chicken potpie, and sweet crackers, e.g., graham crackers and animal crackers. The USDA encourages preschool menus to limit sweet crackers because of their higher sugar content. The CSDE recommends not serving sweet crackers more than twice per week, between all meals and ASP snacks served to preschoolers.</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">Grain-based Desserts in the CACFP</a> (USDA)  <a href="#">Grain Ounce Equivalents for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP</a> (CSDE)  <a href="#">Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs</a> (CSDE webpage)            USDA Memo CACFP 09-2018: Grain Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answers            USDA Memo CACFP 16-2017: Grain-based Desserts in the Child and Adult Care Food Program</p>	<p><b>Restrictions:</b> None. The CSDE recommends limiting grain-based desserts to no more than twice per week and serving nutrient-dense whole grains instead. Grain-based desserts often contain more solid fats and added sugars than traditional grains.</p> <p><b>Examples of grain-based desserts:</b> Sweet crackers (graham crackers and animal crackers), brownies, cookies, cakes, coffee cakes, cinnamon streusel quick breads, piecrusts in sweet pies (e.g., apple and blueberry), cinnamon rolls, doughnuts, cereal bars, granola bars, breakfast bars, sweet rolls, pastries, toaster pastries, sweet scones (e.g., blueberry and raisin), rice pudding, and sweet bread pudding. The CSDE’s resource, <a href="#">Servings for Grains/Breads for Grades K-12 in the ASP</a>, indicates grain-based desserts with the footnote 1.</p> <p>Grain-based desserts do not include muffins, quick breads, e.g., banana bread and zucchini bread (except for cinnamon streusel), cornbread, pancakes, waffles, French toast, savory scones (such as cheese and herb), and piecrusts in entrees such as quiche, meat pies, and chicken potpie.</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12</a> (CSDE)  <a href="#">Servings for Grains/Breads for Grades K-12 in the ASP</a> (CSDE)</p>

# Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the ASP

Grains component, <i>continued</i>		
Requirement	ASP Meal Pattern for Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)	ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12
<b>G8: Crediting Criteria for Breakfast Cereals</b>	<p><b>Allowable types:</b> Breakfast cereals include ready-to-eat (RTE) cereals (group I) and cooked cereals (group H) such as oatmeal (including regular and instant) and cream of wheat.</p> <p><b>Crediting criteria:</b> Breakfast cereals must 1) contain a creditable grain (whole or enriched) as the first ingredient or be fortified; 2) meet the sugar limit (refer to “<a href="#">G11: Sugar Limit for Breakfast Cereals</a>”); and 3) provide the required volume or weight (refer to “<a href="#">G10: Serving Size for Breakfast Cereals</a>”).</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">Child Care Worksheet 2: Crediting Ready-to-eat (RTE) Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP</a> (CSDE)  <a href="#">Child Care Worksheet 3: Crediting Cooked Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP</a> (CSDE)  <a href="#">Crediting Breakfast Cereals for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP</a> (CSDE)  <a href="#">Crediting Enriched Grains in the NSLP and SBP</a> (CSDE)  <a href="#">Crediting Whole Grains in the NSLP and SBP</a> (CSDE)  <a href="#">How to Identify Creditable Grains for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP</a> (CSDE)  <a href="#">USDA Memo CACFP 09-2018: Grain Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answers</a></p>	<p><b>Allowable types:</b> Same.</p> <p><b>Crediting criteria:</b> Breakfast cereals must 1) contain a creditable grain (whole or enriched) as the first ingredient or be fortified; and 2) provide the required volume or weight (refer to “<a href="#">G10: Serving Size for Breakfast Cereals</a>”).</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">Crediting Breakfast Cereals for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP and SBP</a> (CSDE)  <a href="#">Crediting Enriched Grains in the NSLP and SBP</a> (CSDE)  <a href="#">Crediting Whole Grains in the NSLP and SBP</a> (CSDE)</p>

# Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the ASP

Grains component, <i>continued</i>		
Requirement	ASP Meal Pattern for Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)	ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12
<p><b>G9:</b> <b>WGR Criteria for Breakfast Cereals</b></p>	<p><b>RTE breakfast cereals:</b> The first ingredient must be a whole grain and the cereal must be fortified. The cereal must also meet the sugar limit (refer to “<a href="#">G11: Sugar Limit for Breakfast Cereals</a>”).</p> <p><b>Cooked breakfast cereals:</b> The first ingredient must be a whole grain (or water is the first ingredient and a whole grain is the next ingredient), and the next two grain ingredients (if any) are whole, enriched, bran, or germ. The cereal must also meet the sugar limit (refer to “<a href="#">G11: Sugar Limit for Breakfast Cereals</a>”).</p> <p><b>Serving the same WGR cooked breakfast cereals to preschoolers and grades K-12:</b> Cooked breakfast cereals foods that meet the preschool WGR criteria may or may not meet the WGR criteria for grades K-12. If SFAs serve the same grain foods to preschoolers and grades K-12, these foods must <b>meet the WGR criteria for grades K-12</b>; and must also meet the preschool sugar limit (refer to “<a href="#">Preschoolers and Grades K-5 Eating Together in the NSLP, SBP, and SSO</a>” on page 2).</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">Crediting Breakfast Cereals for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the CACFP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">USDA Memo CACFP 09-2018: Grain Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answers</a></p>	<p><b>RTE breakfast cereals:</b> None. The ASP meal pattern for grades K-12 does not have a WGR requirement.</p> <p><b>Cooked breakfast cereals:</b> None. The ASP meal pattern for grades K-12 does not have a WGR requirement.</p>

# Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the ASP

Grains component, <i>continued</i>		
Requirement	ASP Meal Pattern for Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)	ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12
<b>G10:</b> Serving Size for Breakfast Cereals	<p><b>Amount for cooked breakfast cereals (group H):</b> Effective October 1, 2021, the required preschool amount is ½ ounce equivalent, which equals ¼ cup cooked or 14 grams dry.</p> <p><b>Amount for RTE breakfast cereals (group I):</b> Effective October 1, 2021, the required preschool amount is ½ ounce equivalent, which equals ½ cup of flaked or round cereal, ¾ cup of puffed cereal, and ⅛ cup of granola.</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Grains in Child Nutrition Programs (USDA)</a>  <a href="#">Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Grains in Child Nutrition Programs: Completed Sample (USDA)</a>  <a href="#">USDA Final Rule (84 FR 50287): Delayed Implementation of Grains Ounce Equivalents in the Child and Adult Care Food Program</a></p>	<p><b>Amount for cooked breakfast cereals (group H):</b> 1 serving equals ½ cup cooked or 25 grams dry.</p> <p><b>Amount for RTE breakfast cereals (group I):</b> 1 serving equals ¾ cup or 1 ounce.</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12 (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Grains/Breads Servings in the Child and Adult Care Food Program, Summer Food Service Program, and NSLP Afterschool Snacks ((USDA)</a>  <a href="#">Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Grains/Breads Servings in the Child and Adult Care Food Program, Summer Food Service Program, and NSLP Afterschool Snacks: Completed Sample (USDA)</a>  <a href="#">Servings for Grains/Breads for Grades K-12 in the ASP (CSDE)</a></p>
<b>G11:</b> Sugar Limit for Breakfast Cereals	<p><b>Limit:</b> Breakfast cereals (RTE and cooked) cannot contain more than 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce (≤ 21.2 grams of sucrose and other sugars per 100 grams of dry cereal).</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">Calculating Sugar Limits for Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP (USDA)</a>  <a href="#">Choose Breakfast Cereals that are Lower in Sugar (USDA)</a>  <a href="#">Crediting Breakfast Cereals for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">USDA Memo CACFP 09-2018: Grain Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answers</a></p>	<p><b>Limit:</b> None</p> <p><b>Serving the same breakfast cereals to preschoolers and grades K-12:</b> If SFAs serve the same breakfast cereals to preschoolers and grades K-12 in the ASP, the breakfast cereals must comply with the preschool limit for sugars. The exception is when SFAs choose to follow the K-12 ASP meal pattern for preschoolers and grades K-12 who eat in the same service area at the same time (refer to “<a href="#">Preschoolers and Grades K-5 Eating Together in the ASP</a>” on page 2).</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">Crediting Breakfast Cereals for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a></p>



# Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the ASP

Noncreditable Foods (NF)		
Requirement	ASP Meal Pattern for Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)	ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12
<b>NF1:</b> Noncreditable foods	<p><b>Restrictions:</b> Noncreditable foods cannot credit in the ASP meal patterns. Examples include condiments, potato chips, pudding, ice cream, gelatin, cream cheese, bacon, and fruit roll-ups. Some noncreditable foods can be served in addition to the snack components to add variety, help improve acceptability, and satisfy appetites. Examples include maple syrup on pancakes, salad dressing on tossed greens, and condiments such as ketchup or mustard on sandwiches.</p> <p><b>Menu planning considerations:</b> Snacks that include a noncreditable food must also include the minimum serving of at least two creditable snack components. For example, a snack of strawberry gelatin (noncreditable food), whole-grain crackers (grains/breads component), and low-fat unflavored milk (milk component) is only reimbursable if the milk and crackers provide the minimum required serving.</p> <p><b>Resources:</b> <a href="#">Noncreditable Foods for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a></p>	<p><b>Restrictions:</b> Same</p> <p><b>Menu planning considerations:</b> Same</p> <p><b>Resources:</b> <a href="#">Noncreditable Foods for Grades K-12 in the ASP (CSDE)</a></p>
<b>NF2:</b> Water	<p><b>Requirement:</b> The <a href="#">Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act</a> requires that schools must make drinking water available to children at no charge where meals are served during the meal service, including the ASP. Water does not credit as a meal pattern component and cannot be offered in place of the required meal components. Snack menus cannot offer a choice between water and milk or juice.</p> <p><b>Resources:</b> <a href="#">USDA Memo SP 19-2018: Clarification on the Milk and Water Requirements in the School Meal Programs</a> <a href="#">USDA Memo SP 49-2016 and CACFP 18-2016: Resources for Making Potable Water Available in Schools and Child Care Facilities</a></p>	Same

# Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the ASP

Nutrition Standards (NS)		
Requirement	ASP Meal Pattern for Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)	ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12
<b>NS1: Nutrition Standards</b>	<p><b>Requirements:</b> The preschool meal patterns require sugar limits for yogurt (refer to “<a href="#">MMA5: Yogurt and Soy Yogurt</a>” and breakfast cereals (refer to “<a href="#">G8: Crediting Criteria for Breakfast Cereals</a>”), and at least one serving of WGR grains per day (refer to “<a href="#">G4: WGR Requirement</a>”).</p> <p><b>Best practices:</b> The USDA’s <i>CACFP Best Practices</i> recommends additional optional best practices that reflect recommendations from the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the National Academy of Medicine to help increase children’s consumption of vegetables, fruits, and whole grains; and reduce the consumption of added sugars and saturated fats.</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">Breakfast Meal Pattern for Preschoolers</a> (CSDE)  <a href="#">CACFP Best Practices</a> (USDA)  <a href="#">Lunch Meal Pattern for Preschoolers</a> (CSDE)  <a href="#">USDA Memo CACFP 15-2016: Optional Best Practices to Further Improve Nutrition in the Child and Adult Care Food Program Meal Pattern</a></p>	<p><b>Requirements:</b> None</p> <p><b>Serving the same foods to preschoolers and grades K-12:</b> If SFAs serve the <b>same breakfast cereals and yogurt</b> to preschoolers and grades K-12 in the ASP, these foods must comply with the preschool limit for sugars. The exception is when SFAs choose to follow the K-12 ASP meal pattern for preschoolers and grades K-12 who eat in the same service area at the same time (refer to “<a href="#">Preschoolers and Grades K-5 Eating Together in the ASP</a>” on page 2).</p> <p>If SFAs serve the <b>same grain foods</b> to preschoolers and grades K-12 in the ASP, at least one serving of grains per day must comply with the WGR criteria for preschoolers.</p>
Offer versus Serve (OVS)		
<b>OVS1: Offer versus Serve (OVS)</b>	Not allowed in the ASP.	Not allowed in the ASP.

# Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the ASP

## Regulations and Policy

Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/healthy-hunger-free-kids-act-2010>

National School Lunch Program Regulations (7 CFR 210):

<https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-7/subtitle-B/chapter-II/subchapter-A/part-210>

USDA Final Rule (81 FR 24347): CACFP Meal Pattern Revisions

Related to the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010

<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2016/04/25/2016-09412/child-and-adult-care-food-program-meal-pattern-revisions-related-to-the-healthy-hunger-free-kids-act>

USDA Final Rule Corrections (81 FR 75671): Child and Adult Care Food Program: Meal Pattern Revisions Related to the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010:

<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2016/11/01/2016-26339/child-and-adult-care-food-program-meal-pattern-revisions-related-to-the-healthy-hunger-free-kids-act>

USDA Final Rule (84 FR 50287): Delayed Implementation of Grains Ounce Equivalents in the Child and Adult Care Food Program:

<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2019/09/25/2019-20808/delayed-implementation-of-grains-ounce-equivalents-in-the-child-and-adult-care-food-program>

USDA Memo CACFP 09-2017: Vegetable and Fruit Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answer:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/vegetable-and-fruit-requirements-cacfp-qas>

USDA Memo CACFP 09-2018: Grain Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answers:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/grain-requirements-cacfp-questions-and-answers>

USDA Memo CACFP 16-2017: Grain-Based Desserts in the Child and Adult Care Food Program:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/grain-based-desserts-child-and-adult-care-food-program>

USDA Memo SP 05-2022: Meal Requirements Under the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program:

Questions and Answers for Program Operators Updated to Support the Transitional Standards for Milk, Whole Grains, and Sodium Effective July 1, 2022:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/sp052022-questions-answers-program-operators>

USDA Memo SP 34-2019, CACFP 15-2019 and SFSP 15-2019: Crediting Coconut, Hominy, Corn Masa, and Masa Harina in the Child Nutrition Programs:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/crediting-coconut-hominy-corn-masa-and-masa-harina-child-nutrition-programs>

USDA Memo SP 37-2017: Flexibility for Co-Mingled Preschool Meals: Questions and Answers:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/flexibility-co-mingled-preschool-meals-questions-and-answers>

# Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the ASP

## Resources

Afterschool Snack Program (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Afterschool-Snack-Program>

Afterschool Snack Program Handbook (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/ASP/ASP\\_Handbook.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/ASP/ASP_Handbook.pdf)

Crediting Foods for Grades K-12 in the ASP (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Afterschool-Snack-Program/Documents#CreditingFoodsGradesK-12>

Crediting Foods in Preschool Menus (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Patterns-Preschoolers-in-School-Nutrition-Programs/Related-Resources>

Crediting Summary Charts for the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/Crediting\\_Summary\\_Charts\\_SNP\\_Grades\\_K-12.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/Crediting_Summary_Charts_SNP_Grades_K-12.pdf)

Crediting Summary Charts for the Preschool Meal Patterns of the School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/Crediting/Crediting\\_Summary\\_Charts\\_SNP\\_Preschool.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/Crediting/Crediting_Summary_Charts_SNP_Preschool.pdf)

Laws and Regulations (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Laws-and-Regulations-for-Child-Nutrition-Programs>

ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12 (CSDE webpage):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/ASP/Meal\\_Pattern\\_ASP\\_grades\\_K-12.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/ASP/Meal_Pattern_ASP_grades_K-12.pdf)

Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs

(CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Patterns-Preschoolers-in-School-Nutrition-Programs>

Menu Planning Guide for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Preschool/Menu\\_Planning\\_Guide\\_Preschool.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Preschool/Menu_Planning_Guide_Preschool.pdf)

Nutrition Standards for CACFP Meals and Snacks (USDA webpage):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/meals-and-snacks>

Operational Memoranda for School Nutrition Programs

(CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Lists/Operational-Memoranda-for-School-Nutrition-Programs>

Program Guidance for School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Program-Guidance-School-Nutrition-Programs>

Resources for the Preschool Meal Patterns (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Preschool/Resources\\_Preschool\\_Meal\\_Patterns.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Preschool/Resources_Preschool_Meal_Patterns.pdf)

Resources for the School Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/MealPattern/Resources\\_School\\_Meal\\_Patterns\\_grades\\_K-12.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/MealPattern/Resources_School_Meal_Patterns_grades_K-12.pdf)

Special Diets in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Special-Diets-in-School-Nutrition-Programs>

# Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the ASP



For more information, refer to the CSDE's *Menu Planning Guide for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP* and *Afterschool Snack Program Handbook*, and visit the CSDE's [Afterschool Snack Program](#) webpage, or contact the [school nutrition programs staff](#) at the Connecticut State Department of Education, School Health, Nutrition and Family Services, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841.

This document is available at [https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/ASP/Comparison\\_Preschool\\_Grades\\_K-12\\_ASP.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/ASP/Comparison_Preschool_Grades_K-12_ASP.pdf).

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Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. **fax:** (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
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