

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 2023-24 (July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024)

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

For more information, refer to the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) [Menu Planning Guide for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program](#), [Afterschool Snack Program Handbook](#), [ASP Meal Pattern for Preschoolers](#), and [ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12](#), and visit the CSDE's [Afterschool Snack Program](#) 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 chart, [Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program](#). For summary charts of the crediting requirements, refer to the CSDE's [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 based on the USDA's policy guidance for the school meal patterns. The CSDE will notify SFAs 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

The meal patterns for preschoolers and grades K-12 have different requirements. SFAs must consider these requirements when making menu planning and purchasing decisions for ASP snacks that will be served to both groups. 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. The example below illustrates this requirement:

- The ASP preschool meal pattern requires a sugar limit for yogurt and breakfast cereals, but the ASP meal pattern for grades K-12 does not. Yogurt and breakfast cereals served to both 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 the prohibition of grain-based desserts (refer to “[G7: Grain-based Desserts](#)”) and a daily juice limit (refer to “[VF4: Full-strength \(100%\) Juice](#)”).

Preschoolers Eating with Grades K-12 (Co-Mingling) in the ASP

“Co-mingling” is the practice of serving meals to a variety of grades in the same service area at the same time. This typically occurs due to operational constraints within a school, such as limited time and space. When students are co-mingled, the school may use the meal pattern of the older grades for preschoolers if: 1) the preschoolers and students from older grade groups (K-12) are served together in the same place at the same time; 2) it is hard to tell the preschoolers from older students; and 3) it would be operationally difficult to serve different foods or different amounts of foods during the combined meal service. For example, when ASP snack is served to preschoolers and grades K-12 in the same service area at the same time, SFAs may choose to follow the ASP meal pattern for grades K-12 for both groups.

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 meals to preschoolers and older students to best address their nutritional needs.

SFAs must use the preschool meal pattern when meals are served to preschoolers in a different area or at a different time than students in older grades. For additional guidance, refer to the USDA’s resource, *Serving School Meals to Preschoolers*, and visit the “[Preschoolers Eating with Other Grades \(Comingled Meals\)](#)” section of the CSDE’s Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs webpage.

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

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.

Crediting Documentation

SFAs must be able to document that snack menus provide the required food components and quantities. Menu planners must use the USDA's [Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs](#) (FBG) to determine how foods credit and the amount that provides the required meal pattern serving. Commercial processed foods not listed in the FBG require a Child Nutrition (CN) label or product formulation statement (PFS) to document crediting information. Some examples include combination foods, deli meats, hot dogs, sausages, breaded vegetables, and other commercial products with added ingredients. For information on crediting documentation, refer to the CSDE's resources, [Using Child Nutrition \(CN\) Labels in the School Nutrition Programs](#), [Using Product Formulation Statements in the School Nutrition Programs](#), [Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program](#), and [Crediting Commercial Meat/Meat Alternate Products in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program](#), and visit the "[Crediting Commercial Processed Products](#)" section of the CSDE's Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs webpage. Training on the requirements for CN labels and PFS forms is available in Module 6: Meal Pattern Documentation of the CSDE's training program, [What's in a Meal: National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program Meal Patterns for Grades K-12](#).

Foods made from scratch must have a standardized recipe that documents the crediting information per serving. For more information, visit the "[Crediting Foods Made from Scratch](#)" section of the CSDE's Crediting Foods in School 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
MP1: Implementation	<p>The ASP meal pattern for preschoolers is defined by the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) regulations.</p> <p>Resources: USDA Final Rule (81 FR 24347): CACFP Meal Pattern Revisions Related to the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 USDA Final Rule Corrections (81 FR 75671): CACFP Meal Pattern Revisions Related to the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010</p>	<p>The ASP meal pattern for grades K-12 is defined by the NSLP regulations.</p> <p>Resources: NSLP regulations (7 CFR 210.10)</p>
MP2: Age/Grade Groups	<p>Two age groups: ages 1-2 and 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>Resources: ASP Meal Pattern for Preschoolers (CSDE) USDA Memo SP 37-2017: Flexibility for Co-Mingled Preschool Meals: Questions and Answers</p>	<p>One grade group: grades K-12.</p> <p>Resources: ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12 (CSDE)</p>

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
MP3: Food components	<p>Required components: Choose two of the five components: 1) milk; 2) meat/meat alternates (MMA); 3) vegetables; 4) fruits; and 5) grains.</p> <p>Serving one vegetable and one fruit: 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>Serving more than two food items: Snacks that include more than two food items must include the minimum serving of at least two components.</p> <p>Resources: Afterschool Snack Program Handbook (CSDE) ASP Meal Pattern for Preschoolers (CSDE) ASP Sample Menu for Ages 3-4 (CSDE) USDA Memo CACFP 15-2016: Optional Best Practices to Further Improve Nutrition in the CACFP</p>	<p>Required components: Choose two of the four components: 1) milk; 2) meat/meat alternates (MMA); 3) vegetables/fruits; and 5) grains/breads.</p> <p>Serving one vegetable and one fruit: 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>Serving more than two food items: Snacks that include more than two food items must include the minimum serving of at least two components.</p> <p>Resources: Afterschool Snack Program Handbook (CSDE) ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12 (CSDE) ASP Sample Menu for Grades K-12 (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
M1: Milk	<p>Allowable types of milk: Whole milk for ages 1-2 and low-fat or fat-free milk for ages 3-4. Milk must be unflavored. Allowable types of milk includes any of the following that meet the fat content restrictions: lactose-reduced milk, lactose-free milk, acidified milk, cultured milk, cultured buttermilk, and Ultra High Temperature (UHT) milk. Breastmilk meets the milk component and may be served in place of fluid milk.</p> <p>Milk variety: Not required. SFAs may serve one type of allowable milk to all preschoolers.</p> <p>State milk requirement: In addition to the USDA requirements, all milk served in public schools must meet the beverage requirements of Section 10-221q of the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.). Milk cannot contain more than 4 grams of sugars per ounce. Products that meet the federal and state requirements are in list 16 on the CSDE's List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages webpage.</p> <p>Beverage limit: Only one of the two required snack components may be a creditable beverage. Milk cannot be served when juice is the only other snack component.</p> <p>Resources: Beverage Requirements (CSDE webpage) List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages (CSDE webpage) Milk Component for Preschoolers (CSDE webpage) Serving Milk in the CACFP (USDA) USDA Memo CACFP 17-2016: Nutrition Requirements for Fluid Milk and Fluid Milk Substitutions in the CACFP, Q&As</p>	<p>Allowable types of milk: Low-fat (1%) milk and fat-free milk, either unflavored or flavored. Allowable types of milk includes any of the following that meet the fat content restrictions: lactose-reduced milk, lactose-free milk, acidified milk, cultured milk, cultured buttermilk, and Ultra High Temperature (UHT) milk.</p> <p>Milk variety: Not required. SFAs may serve one type of allowable milk to all grades.</p> <p>State milk requirement: In addition to USDA requirements, all milk served in public schools must meet the beverage requirements of the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) Section 10-221q. Milk cannot contain more than 4 grams of sugars per ounce. Products that meet the federal and state requirements are in list 16 on the CSDE's List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages webpage.</p> <p>Beverage limit: Only one of the two required snack components may be a creditable beverage. Milk cannot be served when juice is the only other snack component.</p> <p>Resources: Beverage Requirements (CSDE webpage) 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) List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages (CSDE webpage) Milk Component for Grades K-12 (CSDE webpage)</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
M2: Nondairy Milk Substitutes for Children without a Disability	<p>Allowable nondairy beverages: 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 NSLP regulations (7 CFR 210.10).</p> <p>Breastmilk: Breastmilk meets the milk component and may be served in place of fluid milk. A written request is not required.</p> <p>State requirement: In addition to the USDA requirements, all nondairy milk substitutes served in public schools must meet the beverage requirements of C.G.S. Section 10-221q. 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 the federal and state requirements are in list 17 on the CSDE's List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages webpage.</p> <p>Resources: Accommodating Special Diets in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE) Allowable Milk Substitutes for Children without Disabilities in the USDA School Nutrition Programs (CSDE) Beverage Requirements (CSDE webpage) Determining if Nondairy Beverages Meet the USDA's Nutrition Standards for Fluid Milk Substitutes in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE) Guide to Meal Modifications in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE) List of Acceptable Foods and Beverages (CSDE webpage) USDA Memo SP 07-2010, CACFP 04-2010, and SFSP 05-2010: Questions and Answers: Fluid Milk Substitutions</p>	Same

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
MMA1: Serving Size	<p>Amount: The preschool meal patterns list the MMA component in ounces. A 1-ounce serving of the MMA component equals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 ounce of lean meat, poultry, or fish; • 1 ounce of cheese (low-fat recommended); • 2 ounces of cottage or ricotta cheese, cheese food/spread, or cheese substitute (low-fat recommended); • ¼ cup of cooked beans and peas (legumes), e.g., kidney beans, chick peas (garbanzo beans), lentils, and split peas; • ½ large egg; • 2 tablespoons of nut or seed butters, e.g., peanut butter, almond butter, cashew butter, and sunflower seed butter; • 1 ounce of nuts or seeds, e.g., almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, filberts, macadamia nuts, peanuts, pecans, pine nuts, pistachios, soy nuts, and walnuts; • ¼ cup (2.2 ounces) of commercial tofu containing at least 5 grams of protein; • 1 ounce of tempeh (refer to “MMA3: Tempeh”); • 3 ounces of surimi (refer to “MMA2: Surimi”); • 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 “MMA5: Yogurt and Soy Yogurt”); and • 1 ounce of alternate protein product (APP) that meets the USDA’s APP requirements. 	Same

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
MMA1: Serving Size, <i>continued</i>	<p>Edible portion: The serving size of the MMA 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 MMA component is sometimes more than a measured ounce, depending on the food's density and nutrition content. Commercial processed MMA products that contain added ingredients (such as combination foods, deli meats, hot dogs, and sausages) do not credit based on weight, i.e., 1 ounce does not equal 1 ounce of MMA; these foods require a CN label or PFS to document crediting information (refer to "Crediting Documentation" on page 3).</p> <p>Resources: Food Buying Guide Section 1: Overview of Crediting Requirements for the Meat/Meat Alternates Component (USDA) Food Buying Guide Section 1: Yield Table for Meat/Meat Alternates(USDA) Meat/Meat Alternates Component for Preschoolers (CSDE webpage) Recipe Analysis Workbook (USDA's Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs)</p>	Same
MMA2: Surimi	<p>Crediting: A 3-ounce serving of surimi credits as 1 ounce of the MMA component. To credit surimi seafood differently, SFAs must obtain a CN label or manufacturer's PFS that documents how the crediting is determined (refer to "Crediting Documentation" on page 3).</p> <p>Resources: USDA Memo SP 24-2019, CACFP 11-2019, and SFSP 10-2019: Crediting Surimi Seafood in the Child Nutrition Programs.</p>	Same

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
MMA3: Tempeh	<p>Crediting: A 1-ounce serving of tempeh credits as 1 ounce of the MMA 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 manufacturer's PFS that documents how the crediting is determined (refer to "Crediting Documentation" on page 3).</p> <p>Resources: USDA Memo SP 25-2019, CACFP 12-2019, and SFSP 11-2019: <i>Crediting Tempeh in the Child Nutrition Programs</i> USDA Webinar: Additional Meat/Meat Alternates Options for CNPs: Crediting Tempeh and Surimi</p>	Same
MMA4: Tofu and Tofu Products	<p>Crediting: Tofu and tofu products that contain 5 grams of protein in 2.2 ounces by weight (1/4 cup) credit as 1 ounce of the MMA component.</p> <p>Resources: Crediting Tofu and Tofu Products in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (CSDE) USDA Memo SP 02-2024, CACFP 02-2024, and SFSP 02-2024: Revised: Crediting Tofu and Soy Yogurt Products in the School Meal Programs, CACFP, and SFSP</p>	Same

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
MMA5: Yogurt and Soy Yogurt	<p>Sugar limit: No more than 23 grams of total sugars per 6 ounces, i.e., ≤3.83 grams per ounce.</p> <p>Resources: Calculating Sugar Limits for Yogurt in the CACFP (USDA) Choose Yogurts that are Lower in Added Sugars (USDA) Crediting Yogurt for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (CSDE)</p>	<p>Sugar limit: None</p> <p>Serving the same yogurt/soy yogurt to preschoolers and grades K-12: The same yogurt or soy yogurt served to preschoolers must meet the preschool sugar limit. The exception is when SFAs choose to use the K-12 meal pattern for preschoolers and grades K-5 who eat in the same service area at the same time (refer to “Preschoolers and grades K-5 eating together in the ASP” on page 2).</p>

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

Vegetables Component and Fruits Component		
Requirement	ASP Meal Pattern for Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)	ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12
VF1: Components	<p>Components: Vegetables and fruits are two separate components.</p> <p>Resources: USDA Memo CACFP 09-2017: Vegetable and Fruit Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answers Fruits Component for Preschoolers (CSDE webpage) Vegetables Component for Preschoolers (CSDE webpage)</p>	<p>Components: Vegetables and fruits are one component.</p>
VF2: Crediting Vegetables and Fruits	<p>Crediting amounts: All vegetables and fruits credit based on the served volume (cups), except for dried fruits and raw leafy greens.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dried fruits: Credit as twice 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. Raw leafy greens: Credit as half 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. <p>Resources: Food Buying Guide Section 2: Overview of Crediting Requirements for the Vegetables Component (USDA) Food Buying Guide Section 2: Yield Table for Vegetables (USDA) Food Buying Guide Section 3: Overview of Crediting Requirements for the Fruits Component (USDA) Food Buying Guide Section 3: Yield Table for Fruits (USDA) Recipe Analysis Workbook (USDA's Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs)</p>	<p>Crediting amounts: All vegetables and fruits credit based on the served volume (cups), including dried fruits and raw leafy greens, e.g., ½ cup of fruits or vegetables credit as ½ cup of the vegetables/fruits component.</p> <p>Resources: Food Buying Guide Section 2: Overview of Crediting Requirements for the Vegetables Component (USDA) Food Buying Guide Section 2: Yield Table for Vegetables (USDA) Food Buying Guide Section 3: Overview of Crediting Requirements for the Fruits Component (USDA) Food Buying Guide Section 3: Yield Table for Fruits (USDA) Recipe Analysis Workbook (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		
Requirement	ASP Meal Pattern for Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)	ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12
VF3: Coconut	<p>Fresh and frozen coconut: 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>Dried coconut: Credits the same as other dried fruits. Dried fruits credit as twice the volume served (refer to “VF2: Crediting Vegetables and Fruits”).</p> <p>Coconut water: 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 daily juice limit (refer to “VF4: Full-strength (100%) juice”).</p> <p>Crediting considerations: 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>Noncreditable coconut products: Coconut flour, coconut oil, and coconut milk.</p> <p>Resources: 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:</p>	<p>Fresh and frozen coconut: 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>Dried coconut: Credits based on the served volume served (refer to “VF2: Crediting Vegetables and Fruits”).</p> <p>Coconut water: Juices labeled as 100 percent juice, including coconut water, credit toward the fruits component based on the served volume.</p> <p>Crediting considerations: Same</p> <p>Noncreditable coconut products: Same</p> <p>Resources: 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:</p>

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

Vegetables Component and Fruits Component		
Requirement	ASP Meal Pattern for Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)	ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12
VF4: Full-strength (100%) Juice	<p>Juice limit: Juice may count toward the entire vegetables component or fruits component at only one meal or snack per day, between all meals and s ASP snacks served to preschoolers. The juice limit includes fruit and vegetable juice, frozen pops made from 100 percent juice, and pureed fruits and vegetables in smoothies. The juice from canned fruit counts toward the juice limit if the menu planner credits the juice toward the fruits component or the vegetables component.</p> <p>Juice from canned fruit: The juice from canned fruit counts toward the juice limit if the menu planner credits the juice toward the fruits component. Juice from canned fruit does not count toward the weekly juice limit when it is planned an extra food. 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>Beverage limit at snack: Only one of the two required snack components may be a creditable beverage. Juice cannot be served when milk is the only other snack component.</p> <p>Best practice: The USDA’s CACFP best practices recommend serving a variety of fruits and choosing whole fruits (fresh, canned, dried, or frozen) more often than juice.</p> <p>Resources: Crediting Juice for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (CSDE) Crediting Smoothies for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (CSDE) USDA Memo CACFP 15-2016: Optional Best Practices to Further Improve Nutrition in the CACFP USDA Memo SP 40-2019, CACFP 17-2019, and SFSP 17-2019: Crediting of Smoothies in Child Nutrition Programs</p>	<p>Juice limit: 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. For more nutritious snacks, limit juice and serve more fruits and vegetables.</p> <p>Beverage limit at snack: Only one of the two snack components may be a creditable beverage. Juice cannot be served when milk is the only other snack component.</p> <p>Resources: Crediting Juice for Grades K-12 in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (CSDE) Crediting Smoothies for Grades K-12 in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (CSDE) USDA Memo SP 40-2019, CACFP 17-2019, and SFSP 17-2019: Crediting of Smoothies in Child Nutrition Programs</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
G1: Component name	<p>Name: Grains</p> <p>Resources: Grains Component for Preschoolers (CSDE webpage) Final Rule (81 FR 24347): Child and Adult Care Food Program: Meal Pattern Revisions Related to the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 Final Rule Correction (81 FR 75671): CACFP Meal Pattern Revisions Related to the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010</p>	<p>Name: 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>Resources: Grains/Breads Component for Grades K-12 in the ASP (CSDE webpage)</p>
G2: Creditable Grains	<p>Creditable grains: Whole grains, enriched grains, bran (such as oat bran, wheat bran, corn bran, rice bran, and rye bran) and germ (such as wheat germ). Bran and germ credit the same as enriched grains.</p> <p>Corn: Commercial corn products such as tortilla chips, taco shells, and tamales credit as whole grains if the product is labeled "whole grain," or the corn ingredient is nixtamalized (treated with lime). Nixtamalization is the process of soaking and cooked dried corn in an alkaline (slaked lime) solution. This process results in a product with similar nutrition to whole-grain corn.</p> <p>Hominy, corn masa, and masa harina: 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 (refer to "Crediting Documentation" on page 3).</p>	Same.

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
G2: Creditable Grains, <i>continued</i>	Resources: Child Care Worksheet 1: Crediting Commercial Grains in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE) Child Care Worksheet 2: Crediting Ready-to-eat (RTE) Breakfast Cereals in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE) Child Care Worksheet 3: Crediting Cooked Breakfast Cereals in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE) Child Care Worksheet 4: Crediting Family-size Recipes for Grains in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE) Child Care Worksheet 5: Crediting Quantity Recipes for Grains in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE) Crediting Enriched Grains in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (CSDE) Crediting Whole Grains in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (CSDE) Grains Component for Preschoolers (CSDE webpage) How to Identify Creditable Grains for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (CSDE) Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Grains in Child Nutrition Programs (USDA) Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Grains in Child Nutrition Programs: Completed Sample (USDA) 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 When Commercial Grain Products Require a Product Formulation Statement to Credit in the School Nutrition Programs (CSDE)	Resources: Afterschool Snack Program Handbook (CSDE) Crediting Enriched Grains in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (CSDE) Crediting Whole Grains in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (CSDE) Grains/Breads Component for Grades K-12 in the ASP (CSDE webpage) 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) 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) 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 When Commercial Grain Products Require a Product Formulation Statement to Credit in the School Nutrition Programs (CSDE)

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
G3: Serving Size	<p>Required amounts: The required quantities for the grains component are in ounce equivalents (oz eq). Oz eq are a unit of measure that indicates the contribution of a given serving size toward the grains component of the NSLP and SBP meal patterns. One ounce equivalent provides 16 grams of credible grains. The amount of a grain food that provides 1 ounce equivalent varies because different types of foods contain different amounts of creditable grains. The required preschool amount is ½ oz eq.</p> <p>Methods to determine oz eq: The USDA allows two methods for determining the oz eq of creditable grain 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 PFS stating the weight of creditable grains per serving (refer to “Crediting Documentation” on page 3). SFAs may use either method but must document how the crediting information was obtained.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Method 1 uses the amount for the appropriate grain group in the USDA’s chart, Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs. 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 Grain Ounce Equivalents for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program lists the Exhibit A oz eq that apply to the preschool meal patterns. Groups F and G (grain-based desserts) are not included because grain-based desserts do 	<p>Required amounts: The required quantities for the grains/breads component are in in servings. One grains/breads serving provides 14.75 grams of credible grains. The amount of a grain food that provides one grains/breads serving varies because different types of foods contain different amounts of creditable grains. One grains/breads serving is slightly less than 1 oz eq.</p> <p>Methods to determine grain servings: The USDA allows two methods for determining the grains/breads 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 PFS stating the weight of creditable grains per serving (refer to “Crediting Documentation” on page 3). SFAs may use either method but must document how the crediting information was obtained.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Method 1 uses the amount for the appropriate grain group in the USDA’s chart, Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs. 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 Servings for Grains/Breads for Grades K-12 in the Afterschool Snack Program lists the Exhibit A servings that apply to the ASP meal pattern for grades K-12. Refer to the CSDE’s How to Use the How to Use the Grains/Breads Servings Chart for Grades K-12 in the Afterschool Snack Program. • Method 2 calculates the total weight (grams) of creditable grains (whole and enriched) per manufacturer’s serving or recipe serving. To credit as one grains/breads serving, foods in groups

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

G3: Serving Size, *continued*

not credit as the grains component in the preschool meal patterns. Refer to the CSDE's [How to Use the Grain Ounce Equivalents Chart for the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program](#).

- **Method 2** calculates the total weight (grams) of creditable grains (whole and enriched) per manufacturer's serving or recipe serving. **To credit as ½ oz eq of an enriched grain**, foods in groups A-E must contain 8 grams of creditable grains; and foods in group H must contain 14 grams of creditable grains. **To credit as ½ oz eq of a WGR food**, foods in groups A-E must contain 8 grams of creditable grains (including at least 4 grams of whole grains); and foods 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 that states the weight of creditable grains per serving or a standardized recipe for foods prepared from scratch that lists the weight of creditable grains (refer to "[Crediting Documentation](#)" on page 3).

For detailed guidance on both methods, refer to the CSDE's [Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program](#) and module 13 of the CSDE's training program, [What's in a Meal: National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program Meal Patterns for Grades K-12](#).

When method 2 is required: There are specific situations when SFAs must use method 2 (instead of the USDA's Exhibit A chart) to determine the oz eq for commercial grain products (refer to the CSDE's [When Commercial Grain Products Require a Product Formulation Statement to Credit in the School Nutrition Programs](#)).

A-G must contain 14.75 grams of creditable grains. Foods 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) and a standardized recipe for foods prepared from scratch that lists the weight of creditable grains (refer to "[Crediting Documentation](#)" on page 3).

For detailed guidance on both methods, refer to the CSDE's [Calculation Methods for Grains/Breads Servings for Grades K-12 in the Afterschool Snack Program](#)

When method 2 is required: There are specific situations when SFAs must use method 2 (instead of the USDA's Exhibit A chart) to determine the grains/breads servings for commercial grain products (refer to the CSDE's [When Commercial Grain Products Require a Product Formulation Statement to Credit in the School Nutrition Programs](#)).

Option to use oz eq: SFAs may choose to use the oz eq in [Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program](#), instead of servings. This provides consistency with NSLP and SBP meals and more nutritious choices for children.

Resources:

Afterschool Snack Program Handbook (CSDE)
 ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12 (CSDE)
 Calculation Methods for Grains/Breads Servings for Grades K-12 in the Afterschool Snack Program (CSDE)
 Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs (USDA)
[How to Use the Grain Ounce Equivalents Chart for the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program](#) (CSDE)

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

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
G3: Serving Size, <i>continued</i>	Resources: Calculation Methods for Grain Servings for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (CSDE) Child Care Worksheet 1: Crediting Commercial Grains in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE) Child Care Worksheet 2: Crediting Ready-to-eat (RTE) Breakfast Cereals in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE) Child Care Worksheet 3: Crediting Cooked Breakfast Cereals in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE) Child Care Worksheet 4: Crediting Family-size Recipes for Grains in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE) Child Care Worksheet 5: Crediting Quantity Recipes for Grains in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE) Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs (USDA) Grain Ounce Equivalents for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (CSDE) How to Use the Grain Ounce Equivalents Chart for the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (CSDE) Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Grains in Child Nutrition Programs (USDA) Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Grains in Child Nutrition Programs: Completed Sample (USDA) Recipe Analysis Workbook (USDA's Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs) USDA Final Rule (84 FR 50287): Delayed Implementation of Grains Ounce Equivalents in the Child and Adult Care Food Program Webinar: Exhibit A Grains Tool to the Rescue (USDA) Webinar: How to Maximize the Exhibit A Grains Tool (USDA)	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) 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) Recipe Analysis Workbook (USDA's Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs) Servings for Grains/Breads for Grades K-12 in the Afterschool Snack Program (CSDE) Webinar: Exhibit A Grains Tool to the Rescue (USDA) Webinar: How to Maximize the Exhibit A Grains Tool (USDA)

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
G4: WGR Requirement	<p>Frequency: At least one serving per day must be WGR, between all meals and ASP snacks served to preschoolers. The USDA's CACFP best practices recommend at least two servings of WGR grains per day.</p> <p>Documentation: SFAs must maintain documentation to indicate that 1) preschool menus contain at least one WWGR serving per day; and 2) grain foods counted toward the daily WGR requirement meet the preschool WGR criteria. Documentation of the WGR criteria includes a PFS for commercial foods and a standardized recipe for foods made from scratch (refer to "Crediting Documentation" on page 3).</p> <p>Best practice: Serve only WGR grains and serve 100 percent whole grains most often.</p> <p>Resources: Adding Whole Grains to Your CACFP Menu (USDA) Crediting Commercial Processed Products in Preschool Menus (CSDE webpage) Crediting Enriched Grains in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (CSDE) Crediting Foods Made from Scratch in Preschool Menus (CSDE webpage) Crediting Whole Grains in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (CSDE) Guide to Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the CACFP (CSDE) USDA Memo CACFP 09-2018: Grain Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answers USDA Memo CACFP 15-2016: Optional Best Practices to Further Improve Nutrition in the CACFP Whole Grain-rich Requirement for Preschoolers (CSDE webpage)</p>	<p>Frequency: None</p> <p>Documentation: Not applicable</p> <p>Best practice: 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		
Requirement	ASP Meal Pattern for Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)	ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12
G5: WGR Criteria	<p>Commercial grain products in groups A-G (e.g., breads, muffins, pancakes, and crackers) and group H (e.g., rice, pasta, quinoa, and cooked breakfast cereals): Commercial products must meet the “Rule of Three,” which applies only to the preschool meal pattern: 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>RTE breakfast cereals (group I): refer to “G9: WGR Criteria for Breakfast Cereals.”</p> <p>Foods made from scratch: The weight of whole grains in the SFA’s standardized recipe must be equal to or more than the combined weight of the other creditable grains (enriched grains, bran, and germ).</p> <p>Serving the same WGR foods to preschoolers and grades K-12: 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. The same grain foods served to preschoolers and grades K-5 must meet the WGR criteria for grades K-12, and the same breakfast cereals must meet the preschool sugar limit (refer to “G8: Crediting Criteria for Breakfast Cereals”).</p>	Not applicable: no WGR requirement

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
G5: WGR Criteria, <i>continued</i>	<p>Resources:</p> <p>Child Care Worksheet 1: Crediting Commercial Grains in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE)</p> <p>Child Care Worksheet 2: Crediting Ready-to-eat (RTE) Breakfast Cereals in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE)</p> <p>Child Care Worksheet 3: Crediting Cooked Breakfast Cereals in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE)</p> <p>Child Care Worksheet 4: Crediting Family-size Recipes for Grains in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE)</p> <p>Child Care Worksheet 5: Crediting Quantity Recipes for Grains in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE)</p> <p>Crediting Enriched Grains in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (CSDE)</p> <p>Crediting Whole Grains in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (CSDE)</p> <p>Guide to Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the CACFP (CSDE)</p> <p>How to Spot Whole Grain-Rich Foods for the CACFP (USDA)</p> <p>Identifying Whole Grain-rich Foods for the CACFP (USDA)</p> <p>Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Grains in Child Nutrition Programs (USDA)</p> <p>Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Grains in Child Nutrition Programs: Completed Sample (USDA)</p> <p>USDA Memo CACFP 09-2018: Grain Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answers</p> <p>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</p> <p>When Commercial Grain Products Require a Product Formulation Statement to Credit in the School Nutrition Programs (CSDE)</p> <p>Whole Grain-rich Requirement for Preschoolers (CSDE webpage)</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
G6: Enriched Grain Products , e.g., enriched white bread, enriched crackers, enriched white rice, enriched cream of wheat cereal, and enriched corn grits	<p>Crediting: Enriched grain products credit as the grains component but at least one grain menu item per day must be WGR (refer to “G4: WGR Requirement”).</p> <p>Resources: ASP Meal Pattern for Preschoolers (CSDE) Crediting Enriched Grains in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (CSDE) Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Grains in Child Nutrition Programs (USDA) Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Grains in Child Nutrition Programs: Completed Sample (USDA) USDA Memo CACFP 09-2018: Grain Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answers When Commercial Grain Products Require a Product Formulation Statement to Credit in the School Nutrition Programs (CSDE) Whole Grain-rich Criteria for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (CSDE) Whole Grain-rich Requirement for Preschoolers (CSDE webpage) When Commercial Grain Products Require a Product Formulation Statement to Credit in the School Nutrition Programs (CSDE) </p>	<p>Crediting: Enriched grain products credit as the grains component.</p> <p>Resources ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12 (CSDE) Crediting Enriched Grains in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (CSDE) NSLP Regulations 7 CFR 210.10 (o)(2)(iv): Meal requirements for lunches and requirements for afterschool snacks 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) 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) When Commercial Grain Products Require a Product Formulation Statement to Credit in the School Nutrition Programs (CSDE) </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
G7: Grain-based Desserts	<p>Restrictions: Grain-based desserts cannot credit in preschool meals and ASP snacks.</p> <p>Examples of grain-based desserts: 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.</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>Resources: Grain-based Desserts in the CACFP (USDA) Grain Ounce Equivalents for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (CSDE) Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs (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>Restrictions: None. The CSDE recommends limiting grain-based desserts to no more than twice per week and serving whole grains instead. Grain-based desserts often contain more solid fats and added sugars than traditional grains.</p> <p>Examples of grain-based desserts: 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 <i>Servings for Grains/Breads for Grades K-12 in the Afterschool Snack Program</i>, 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>Resources: ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12 (CSDE) Servings for Grains/Breads for Grades K-12 in the Afterschool Snack Program (CSDE)</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
G8: Crediting Criteria for Breakfast Cereals	<p>Allowable types: 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>Crediting criteria for RTE and cooked breakfast cereals: 1) The first ingredient must be a creditable grain, or the cereal must be fortified; and 2) the cereal cannot exceed the sugar limit (refer to “G11: Sugar Limit for Breakfast Cereals”). The serving must provide the required volume or weight (refer to “G10: Serving Size for Breakfast Cereals”).</p> <p>Resources: Child Care Worksheet 2: Crediting Ready-to-eat (RTE) Breakfast Cereals in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE) Child Care Worksheet 3: Crediting Cooked Breakfast Cereals in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE) Crediting Breakfast Cereals for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (CSDE) Crediting Enriched Grains in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (CSDE) Crediting Whole Grains in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (CSDE) How to Identify Creditable Grains for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (CSDE) USDA Memo CACFP 09-2018: Grain Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answers </p>	<p>Allowable types: Same.</p> <p>Crediting criteria: The first ingredient must be a creditable grain or the cereal must be fortified. The serving must provide the required volume or weight (refer to “G10: Serving Size for Breakfast Cereals”).</p> <p>Resources: Crediting Breakfast Cereals for Grades K-12 in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program and SBP (CSDE) Crediting Enriched Grains in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (CSDE) Crediting Whole Grains in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (CSDE) </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
G9: WGR Criteria for Breakfast Cereals	<p>RTE breakfast cereals (group I): 1) The first ingredient must be a whole grain and the cereal must be fortified, or the cereal must be 100 percent whole grain; and 2) the cereal cannot exceed the sugar limit (refer to “G11: Sugar Limit for Breakfast Cereals”). Fortification is not required for RTE breakfast cereals that are 100 percent whole grain.</p> <p>Cooked breakfast cereals (group H): 1) The first ingredient must be a whole grain (or water is the first ingredient and a whole grain is the next ingredient); 2) the next two grain ingredients (if any) must be whole grain, enriched, bran, or germ; and 3) the cereal cannot exceed the sugar limit (refer to “R12: Sugar Limit for Breakfast Cereals”).</p> <p>Serving the same WGR cooked breakfast cereals to preschoolers and grades K-12: Cooked breakfast cereals that meet the preschool WGR criteria may or may not meet the WGR criteria for grades K-12. The same breakfast cereals served to preschoolers and grades K-5 must meet the WGR criteria for grades K-12 and the preschool sugar limit (refer to “Preschoolers and Grades K-5 Eating Together in the NSLP, SBP, and SSO” on page 2).</p> <p>Resources: Crediting Breakfast Cereals for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (CSDE) Guide to Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the CACFP (CSDE) USDA Memo CACFP 09-2018: Grain Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answers</p>	Not applicable: no WGR requirement

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
G10: Serving Size for Breakfast Cereals	<p>Amount for cooked breakfast cereals (group H): $\frac{1}{2}$ oz eq = $\frac{1}{4}$ cup cooked or 14 grams dry.</p> <p>Amount for RTE breakfast cereals (group I): $\frac{1}{2}$ oz eq = $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of flaked or round cereal, $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of puffed cereal, and $\frac{1}{8}$ cup of granola.</p> <p>Resources: Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Grains in Child Nutrition Programs (USDA) Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Grains in Child Nutrition Programs: Completed Sample (USDA)</p>	<p>Amount for cooked breakfast cereals (group H): 1 serving = $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooked or 25 grams dry.</p> <p>Amount for RTE breakfast cereals (group I): 1 serving = $\frac{3}{4}$ cup or 1 ounce, whichever or less.</p> <p>Resources: ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12 (CSDE) 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) 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) Servings for Grains/Breads for Grades K-12 in the Afterschool Snack Program (CSDE)</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
G11: Sugar Limit for Breakfast Cereals	<p>Limit: RTE and cooked breakfast cereals cannot exceed 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce, i.e., ≤ 21.2 grams of sucrose and other sugars per 100 grams of dry cereal.</p> <p>Resources: Calculating Sugar Limits for Breakfast Cereals in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (USDA) Choose Breakfast Cereals that are Lower in Sugar (USDA) Crediting Breakfast Cereals for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (CSDE) USDA Memo CACFP 09-2018: Grain Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answers</p>	<p>Limit: None</p> <p>Serving the same breakfast cereals to preschoolers and grades K-12: If SFAs serve the same breakfast cereals to preschoolers and grades K-12, these cereals must comply with the preschool limit for sugars. The exception is when SFAs choose to use 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 “Preschoolers and Grades K-5 Eating Together in the ASP” on page 2).</p> <p>Resources: Crediting Breakfast Cereals for Grades K-12 in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (CSDE)</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
NF1: Noncreditable foods	<p>Restrictions: Noncreditable foods do not count toward the ASP meal pattern. Examples include condiments, potato chips, pudding, ice cream, gelatin, cream cheese, bacon, and fruit roll-ups. Some noncreditable foods may 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>Menu planning considerations: 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) must provide the minimum required serving of milk and crackers.</p> <p>Resources: Noncreditable Foods for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (CSDE)</p>	<p>Restrictions: Same</p> <p>Menu planning considerations: Same</p> <p>Resources: Noncreditable Foods for Grades K-12 in the Afterschool Snack Program (CSDE)</p>
NF2: Water	<p>Requirement: The Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act 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>Resources: USDA Memo SP 19-2018: Clarification on the Milk and Water Requirements in the School Meal Programs USDA Memo SP 49-2016 and CACFP 18-2016: Resources for Making Potable Water Available in Schools and Child Care Facilities What's in a Meal Module 14: Water Availability during Meal Service (CSDE)</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
NS1: Nutrition Standards	<p>Requirements: The preschool meal patterns require sugar limits for yogurt (refer to “MMA5: Yogurt and Soy Yogurt” and breakfast cereals (refer to “G8: Crediting Criteria for Breakfast Cereals”), and at least one serving of WGR grains per day (refer to “G4: WGR Requirement”).</p> <p>Best practices: The USDA’s CACFP best practices recommend 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>Resources: Breakfast Meal Pattern for Preschoolers (CSDE) Lunch Meal Pattern for Preschoolers (CSDE) USDA Memo CACFP 15-2016: Optional Best Practices to Further Improve Nutrition in the Child and Adult Care Food Program Meal Pattern</p>	<p>Requirements: None</p> <p>Serving the same foods to preschoolers and grades K-12: If SFAs serve the same breakfast cereals and yogurt 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 use 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 “Preschoolers and Grades K-5 Eating Together in the ASP” on page 2).</p> <p>If SFAs serve the same grain foods 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)		
OVS1: Offer versus Serve (OVS)	<p>Not allowed in the ASP.</p>	<p>Not allowed in the ASP.</p>

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

Regulations and Policy

School Meals Legislation and Regulations:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/program-legislation-regulations>

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 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 10-2012 (v9): Q&As on Final Rule “Nutrition Standards in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs”:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/qas-final-rule-nutrition-standards-national-school-lunch-and-school-breakfast-programs>

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>

USDA NSLP Regulations (7 CFR 210):

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

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

Crediting Foods for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-School-Nutrition-Programs>

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

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

Laws and Regulations for Child Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):

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

Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):

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

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 National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Preschool/Menu_Planning_Guide_Preschool.pdf

Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12 (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Menu-Planning-Guide-for-School-Meals>

Operational Memoranda for School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):

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

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

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

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

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 National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program* and *Afterschool Snack Program Handbook* and visit the CSDE's [ASP](#) webpage, or contact the [school nutrition programs staff](#) at the Connecticut State Department of Education, Bureau of Child Nutrition Programs, 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.

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
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
3. email: program.intake@usda.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

The Connecticut State Department of Education is committed to a policy of equal opportunity/affirmative action for all qualified persons. The Connecticut Department of Education does not discriminate in any employment practice, education program, or educational activity on the basis of race; color; religious creed; age; sex; pregnancy; sexual orientation; workplace hazards to reproductive systems, gender identity or expression; marital status; national origin; ancestry; retaliation for previously opposed discrimination or coercion, intellectual disability; genetic information; learning disability; physical disability (including, but not limited to, blindness); mental disability (past/present history thereof); military or veteran status; status as a victim of domestic violence; or criminal record in state employment, unless there is a bona fide occupational qualification excluding persons in any of the aforementioned protected classes. Inquiries regarding the Connecticut State Department of Education's nondiscrimination policies should be directed to: Attorney Louis Todisco, Connecticut State Department of Education, by mail 450 Columbus Boulevard, Hartford, CT 06103-1841; or by telephone 860-713-6594; or by email louis.todisco@ct.gov.