

Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

This guidance applies to reimbursable meals and snacks served in child care centers, family day care homes, emergency shelters, at-risk afterschool care centers, and adult day care centers that participate in the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). For information on the CACFP meal patterns and requirements for crediting foods, visit the visit the Connecticut State Department of Education’s (CSDE) [Meal Patterns for CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage and the “[Grains Component for CACFP Child Care Programs](#)” section of the CSDE’s Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs webpage. For information on the CACFP meal patterns and crediting foods for adult participants, visit the CSDE’s [Meal Patterns for CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) webpage and the “[Grains Component for CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#)” section of the CSDE’s Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers webpage.



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Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP

Definition of Breakfast Cereals

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations ([21 CFR 170.3\(n\)\(4\)](#)) define breakfast cereals as ready-to-eat (RTE) cereals (such as puffed cereals, round or flaked cereals, and granola) and instant and regular hot cereals (such as oatmeal, cream of wheat, and farina). RTE breakfast cereals can be eaten as sold and are typically fortified with vitamins and minerals.

Overview of Crediting Requirements

Breakfast cereals must meet two criteria to credit as the grains component in the CACFP meal patterns: 1) a creditable grain (whole, enriched, bran, or germ) must be the first ingredient or the cereal must be fortified; and 2) sugars cannot exceed 6 grams per dry ounce.

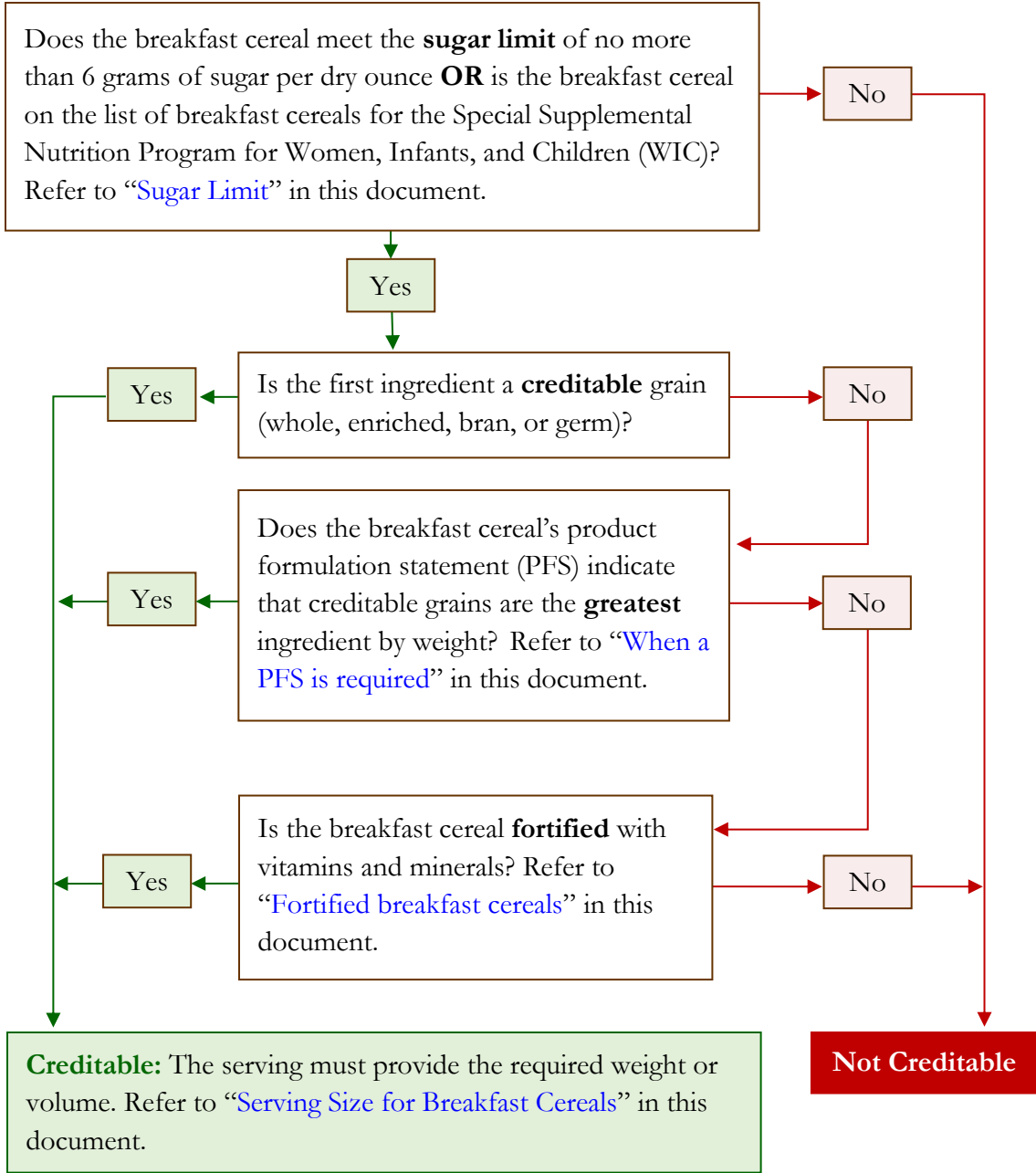
The CSDE recommends that CACFP facilities check the cereal's sugar content first, before determining if the cereal contains creditable grains. Breakfast cereals that exceed the sugar limit do not credit in the CACFP meal patterns.

Table 1 summarizes the steps for determining if breakfast cereals credit as the grains component in the CACFP meal patterns. Breakfast cereals must meet additional requirements to credit as a whole grain-rich (WGR) food (refer to "[WGR Requirement](#)" in this document).



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Table 1. How to identify creditable breakfast cereals for the CACFP ¹



¹ To credit as a WGR food, RTE and cooked breakfast cereals must meet additional requirements (refer to **“WGR Requirement”** in this document).

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Sugar Limit

RTE and cooked breakfast cereals cannot exceed 6 grams of sugars per dry ounce (no more than 21.2 grams of sucrose and other sugars per 100 grams of dry cereal). This sugar limit applies to breakfast cereals as purchased.

CACFP facilities may choose to add toppings to breakfast cereals to increase their appeal. However, the USDA strongly encourages CACFP facilities to offer healthy toppings for breakfast cereals, such as fruit instead of sugar. Minimizing sweet toppings helps to reduce consumption of added sugars, which contribute calories without essential nutrients.



The USDA allows three methods for determining if breakfast cereals meet the CACFP sugar limit, which are described below. A breakfast cereal meets the sugar limit if it complies with at least one of these methods.

Method 1: WIC breakfast cereals list

A breakfast cereal meets the sugar limit if it is listed on any state WIC Program's approved breakfast cereals list. WIC-approved whole-grain foods comply with the same WGR criteria as the CACFP. The Connecticut WIC food guides are available on the Connecticut State Department of Public Health's [Approved Food Guide](#) webpage.

Method 2: USDA's sugar limit chart

Method 2 eliminates the need to use calculations for the sugar limit by using the sugar limit chart listed in the USDA's resource, [Choose Breakfast Cereals that are Lower in Sugar](#). This chart includes common breakfast cereal serving sizes with the maximum grams of sugars per serving. A breakfast cereal meets the sugar limit if its sugars per serving (from the Nutrition Facts panel) do not exceed the maximum amount in the sugar limit chart. This USDA resource is available in English and Spanish on the USDA's [Choose Breakfast Cereals that are Lower in Sugar](#) webpage.

The USDA's [Choose Breakfast Cereals that are Lower in Sugar](#) webpage provides handouts, training slides, and webinars in English and Spanish on meeting the CACFP sugar limit for breakfast cereals.

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Method 3: Calculation of grams of sugars per serving (standard and rounding options)

A breakfast cereal meets the sugar limit if the CACFP facility's calculations document that the product does not contain more than 0.212 grams of sugars per dry gram of cereal weight. This is the gram equivalent of no more than 6 grams of sugars per dry ounce (28.35 grams).

Method 3 includes two options for calculating compliance with the sugar limit. Both options use the sugars per serving from the product's Nutrition Facts panel.

1. The **standard method** calculates the grams of sugars per dry gram of cereal weight.
2. The **rounding method** calculates the sugar limit (grams) based on the serving weight (grams) of the cereal. It uses the standard rules for rounding, which are:
 - round up to the next whole number if the number after the decimal point is 0.5 or greater (e.g., 4.52 rounds up to 5); and
 - round down to the next whole number if the number after the decimal point is less than 0.5 (e.g., 6.148 rounds down to 6).

The rounding method is the calculation method used in the USDA's worksheet, *Choose Breakfast Cereals that are Lower in Sugar* (refer to "[Method 2: USDA's sugar limit chart](#)" in this document).

Tables 2 and 3 show sample calculations for the standard and rounding options of method 3, using the Nutrition Facts panel for the RTE breakfast cereal on the right. Each method shows that this breakfast cereal meets the CACFP sugar limit. To credit in the CACFP meal patterns, this cereal must also meet the requirements for creditable grains and provide the required weight or volume (refer to "[Creditable grains](#)" and "[Serving Size for Breakfast Cereals](#)" in this document).

Note: The standard and rounding calculation methods are both valid ways of demonstrating that a breakfast cereal meets the sugar limit. There may be times when a breakfast cereal meets the sugar limit using one of these methods, but not the other. If a breakfast cereal meets the sugar limit using at least one of these calculation methods, it complies with the CACFP sugar limit.

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size	¾ cup (29 g)
Amount Per Serving	
Calories	110
	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 0 g	8%
Saturated Fat 0g	
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 150 mg	1%
Potassium 35 mg	1%
Total Carbohydrates 26g	1%
Dietary Fiber 1g	20%
Sugars 4g	
Including 0g Added Sugars	
Protein 3 g	

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Table 2. Calculating compliance with CACFP sugar limit using standard method

1. List the grams (g) of sugars per serving from the cereal’s Nutrition Facts label.	A	4	grams of sugars per serving of cereal
2. List the serving size in grams from the cereal’s Nutrition Facts label.	B	29	grams serving size (grams)
3. Calculate the grams of sugars per gram of serving weight (Divide A by B).	C	0.1379	sugars per gram
4. Is C equal to or less than 0.212? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If “yes,” the breakfast cereal meets the CACFP sugar limit.			

Table 3. Calculating compliance with CACFP sugar limit using rounding method

1. List the serving size in grams (g) from the cereal’s Nutrition Facts label.	A	29	grams
2. Calculate the sugar limit for the product’s serving size: Multiply A by 0.212.	B	6.148	grams of sugars per serving (required limit)
3. Calculate the rounded sugar limit: If the number in B ends in 0.5 or more, round up to the next whole number. If the number in B ends in 0.49 or less, round down to the next whole number.	C	6	allowable grams of sugars per serving (rounded limit)
4. List the grams (g) of sugars per serving from the cereal’s Nutrition Facts label	D	4	grams of sugars per serving of cereal
5. Is D equal to or less than C? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If “yes,” the breakfast cereal meets the CACFP sugar limit.			

Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP

Creditable Grains

Creditable grains are the ingredients in a grain product or recipe that count toward the grains component. They include whole grains, enriched grains, bran, and germ. Bran and germ credit the same as enriched grains.

Breakfast cereals must meet the following criteria to credit as the grains component in the CACFP meal patterns: 1) A creditable grain must be the first ingredient, or the cereal must be fortified; and 2) the cereal cannot exceed 6 grams of sugars per dry ounce (refer to “[Sugar Limit](#)” in this document).

Menu planners must check the ingredients statement and Nutrition Facts label to determine if breakfast cereals meet these crediting criteria. The CSDE recommends checking the cereal’s sugar content first, before determining if the cereal contains creditable grains. Breakfast cereals that exceed the sugar limit do not credit in the CACFP meal patterns.

The three types of creditable RTE and cooked breakfast cereals include whole-grain breakfast cereals, enriched breakfast cereals, and fortified breakfast cereals. Crediting guidance for each type of breakfast cereal is summarized below.

Whole-grain breakfast cereals

A breakfast cereal that is 100 percent whole grain contains only whole grains and will list a whole grain as the first ingredient. Whole grains consist of the entire cereal grain seed or kernel (starchy endosperm, fiber-rich bran, and nutrient-rich germ) after removing the inedible outer husk or hull. Breakfast cereals that are 100 percent whole grain credit as WGR foods in the CACFP meal patterns. The ingredients statement below shows an example of a whole-grain breakfast cereal.

Ingredients: Whole grain rolled oats, sugar, natural flavors, salt.

This cooked breakfast cereal is 100 percent whole grain because the first and only grain ingredient (whole grain rolled oats) is a whole grain. To credit as the grains component, this cereal must also comply with the CACFP sugar limit.

For information on identifying whole grains, refer to the CSDE’s resource, [Crediting Whole Grains in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#).

Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP

Enriched breakfast cereals

Enriched breakfast cereals contain five vitamins and minerals added in amounts required by the FDA to replace some of the nutrients lost during processing. The enrichment nutrients include:

- thiamin (vitamin B₁, thiamin mononitrate, or thiamin hydrochloride);
- riboflavin (vitamin B₂); niacin (vitamin B₃ or niacinamide);
- folic acid (folate); and
- iron (reduced iron, ferrous sulfate, or ferric orthophosphate).

A breakfast cereal is enriched if the food is labeled as “enriched” or an enriched grain is the first ingredient. The ingredients statement below shows an example of an enriched breakfast cereal.

Ingredients: Puffed rice, ferrous sulfate (a source of iron), niacinamide, citric acid, thiamin mononitrate, riboflavin, folic acid.

This cereal is enriched because the ingredients statement lists the five enrichment nutrients (ferrous sulfate, niacinamide, thiamin mononitrate, riboflavin, and folic acid). To credit as the grains component, this cereal must comply with the CACFP sugar limit.

For information on identifying enriched grains, refer to the CSDE’s resource, [Crediting Enriched Grains in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#).

Fortified breakfast cereals

Fortified breakfast cereals have nutrients added by the manufacturer that were not originally present, or that are at higher levels than originally present. Manufacturers may choose which additional nutrients to use for fortification. Fortified breakfast cereals typically contain the five enrichment nutrients plus other vitamins and minerals that do not exist naturally in grains.

Different cereal brands may list different fortification nutrients. The USDA does not specify a minimum number of nutrients or a minimum percentage for the level of fortification for breakfast cereals in the Child Nutrition Programs. A fortified breakfast cereal is not required to be enriched.

A breakfast cereal is fortified if the food is labeled as “fortified” or the ingredients statement lists the vitamins and minerals added to the product. These nutrients are typically listed after “Vitamins and Minerals.”

Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP

The ingredients statements below show some examples of fortified breakfast cereals.

Ingredients: Milled corn, sugar, malt flavor, contains 2% or less of salt. **Vitamins and Minerals:** Iron, vitamin C (sodium ascorbate, ascorbic acid), niacinamide, vitamin B6 (pyridoxine hydrochloride), vitamin B2 (riboflavin), vitamin B1 (thiamin hydrochloride), vitamin A palmitate, folic acid, vitamin D, vitamin B12.

This cereal is fortified because it contains added nutrients listed after the statement, “Vitamins and Minerals.” However, it is not WGR because milled corn is not a whole grain. To credit as the grains component, this cereal must comply with the CACFP sugar limit.

Ingredients: Whole-grain wheat, raisins, wheat bran, sugar, brown sugar syrup, contains 2% or less of salt, malt flavor. **Vitamins and Minerals:** Potassium chloride, niacinamide, reduced iron, vitamin B6 (pyridoxine hydrochloride), zinc oxide, vitamin B2 (riboflavin), vitamin B1 (thiamin hydrochloride), vitamin A palmitate, folic acid, vitamin D, vitamin B12.

This cereal is fortified because it contains added nutrients listed after “Vitamins and Minerals.” It is WGR because whole-grain wheat is the first ingredient and the cereal is fortified. To credit as the grains component, this cereal must comply with the sugar limit.

If the ingredients statement does not list any vitamins and minerals, the breakfast cereal is not fortified. To credit as the grains component, breakfast cereals that are not fortified must contain a creditable grain as the first ingredient or the greatest ingredient by weight.

If a creditable grain is not the first ingredient, but the breakfast cereal contains more than one creditable grain, the SFA must obtain a product formulation statement (PFS) from the manufacturer. The PFS must indicate that the combined weight of all creditable grains is the greatest ingredient by weight. For more information, refer to “[Crediting Documentation for Breakfast Cereals](#)” in this document.

Fortified RTE breakfast cereals that contain a whole grain as the first ingredient credit as WGR foods in the CACFP meal patterns.

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Crediting bran and germ

Bran and germ credit the same as enriched grains. Bran (such as oat bran, wheat bran, corn bran, rice bran, and rye bran) is the seed husk or outer coating of cereal grains such as wheat, rye, and oats. Germ (such as wheat germ) is the vitamin-rich embryo of the grain kernel.

The ingredients statement below shows an example of a breakfast cereal that contains wheat bran as the first ingredient.



Ingredients: Wheat bran, sugar, malt flavor, contains 2% or less of salt. **Vitamins and Minerals:** Calcium carbonate, vitamin C (sodium ascorbate and ascorbic acid), reduced iron, niacinamide, vitamin B₆ (pyridoxine hydrochloride), vitamin B₂ (riboflavin), folic acid, vitamin B₁ (thiamin hydrochloride), vitamin A palmitate, vitamin B₁₂, vitamin D.

This cereal is fortified because it contains added nutrients listed after the statement, “Vitamins and Minerals.” However, it is not WGR because wheat bran is not a whole grain; it credits the same as enriched grains. To credit as the grains component, this cereal must comply with the sugar limit

Crediting Documentation for Breakfast Cereals

CACFP facilities must be able to document that breakfast cereals meet the crediting requirements of the CACFP meal patterns, including the sugar limit and WGR criteria. A PFS from the manufacturer is required if the product’s ingredients statement and packaging do not provide sufficient information to determine if the product meets the crediting or WGR criteria. For guidance on when a PFS is required and the information it must include, refer to the CSDE’s resource, [When Commercial Grain Products Require a Product Formulation Statement to Credit in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#).

CACFP facilities must verify the accuracy of the PFS before including the breakfast cereal in reimbursable meals and snacks. If the manufacturer will not supply a PFS or the PFS does not provide the appropriate documentation, the breakfast cereal cannot credit as the grains component in the CACFP meal patterns. Crediting documentation must be maintained on file. The CSDE will review this information during the Administrative Review of the CACFP.

For more information on PFS forms, refer to the CSDE’s resources, [Using Product Formulation Statements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#) and [Using Child Nutrition \(CN\) Labels in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#), and the USDA’s [Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Grains in Child Nutrition Programs](#) and [Tips for Evaluating a Manufacturer’s Product Formulation Statement](#). The steps for how to evaluate a grain product’s PFS are available in section 7 of the CSDE’s [Guide to Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the CACFP](#).

Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP

WGR Requirement

The CACFP meal patterns require at least one serving of WGR grains per day, between all meals and snacks served in the CACFP facility. The USDA’s [CACFP best practices](#) recommend at least two servings of WGR grains per day. For guidance on menu planning considerations for the WGR requirement, refer to the CSDE’s [Guide to Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#).

WGR criteria for breakfast cereals

The CACFP meal patterns require different WGR criteria for RTE breakfast cereals in group I (such as puffed cereals, flaked or round cereals, and granola) and cooked breakfast cereals in group H (such as oatmeal, cream of wheat, and farina). Groups H and I refer to the USDA’s chart, [Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs](#).

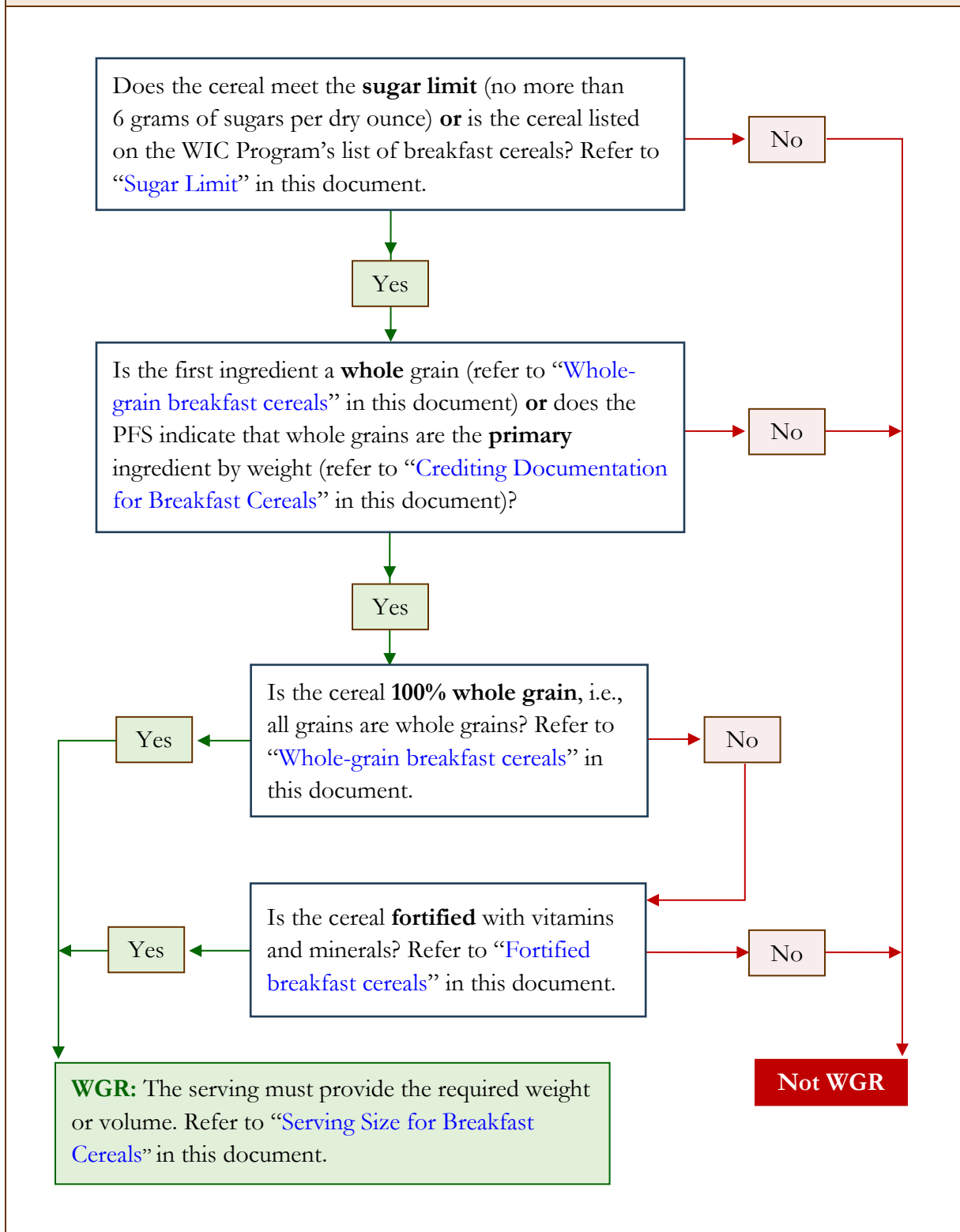
The Exhibit A grain quantities are not the same for all Child Nutrition Programs because the meal patterns are different. The CSDE’s resource, [Grain Ounce Equivalents for the CACFP](#), indicates the Exhibit A ounce equivalents (oz eq) that apply to the CACFP meal patterns. Groups F and G (grain-based desserts) are not included because grain-based desserts do not credit as the grains component in the CACFP.

To be WGR, breakfast cereals must meet the sugar limit (refer to “[Sugar Limit](#)” in this document) and comply with the requirements below.

- **WGR criteria for RTE breakfast cereals (group I):** The first ingredient must be a whole grain and the cereal must be fortified, or the cereal must be 100 percent whole grain. Fortification is not required for RTE breakfast cereals that are 100 percent whole grain. Table 4 summarizes the steps for determining if RTE breakfast cereals meet the WGR criteria.
- **WGR criteria for cooked breakfast cereals (group H):** Cooked breakfast cereals must preschool meal patterns the USDA’s Rule of Three criteria for WGR foods. The Rule of Three requires that the first ingredient must be a whole grain and the next two grain ingredients (if any) must be whole grain, enriched, bran, or germ. Noncreditable grains (such as yellow corn flour, wheat flour, and soy flour) cannot be one of the first three grain ingredients. For guidance on the Rule of Three, refer to the CSDE’s [Guide to Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#). Table 5 summarizes the steps for determining if cooked breakfast cereals meet the WGR criteria.

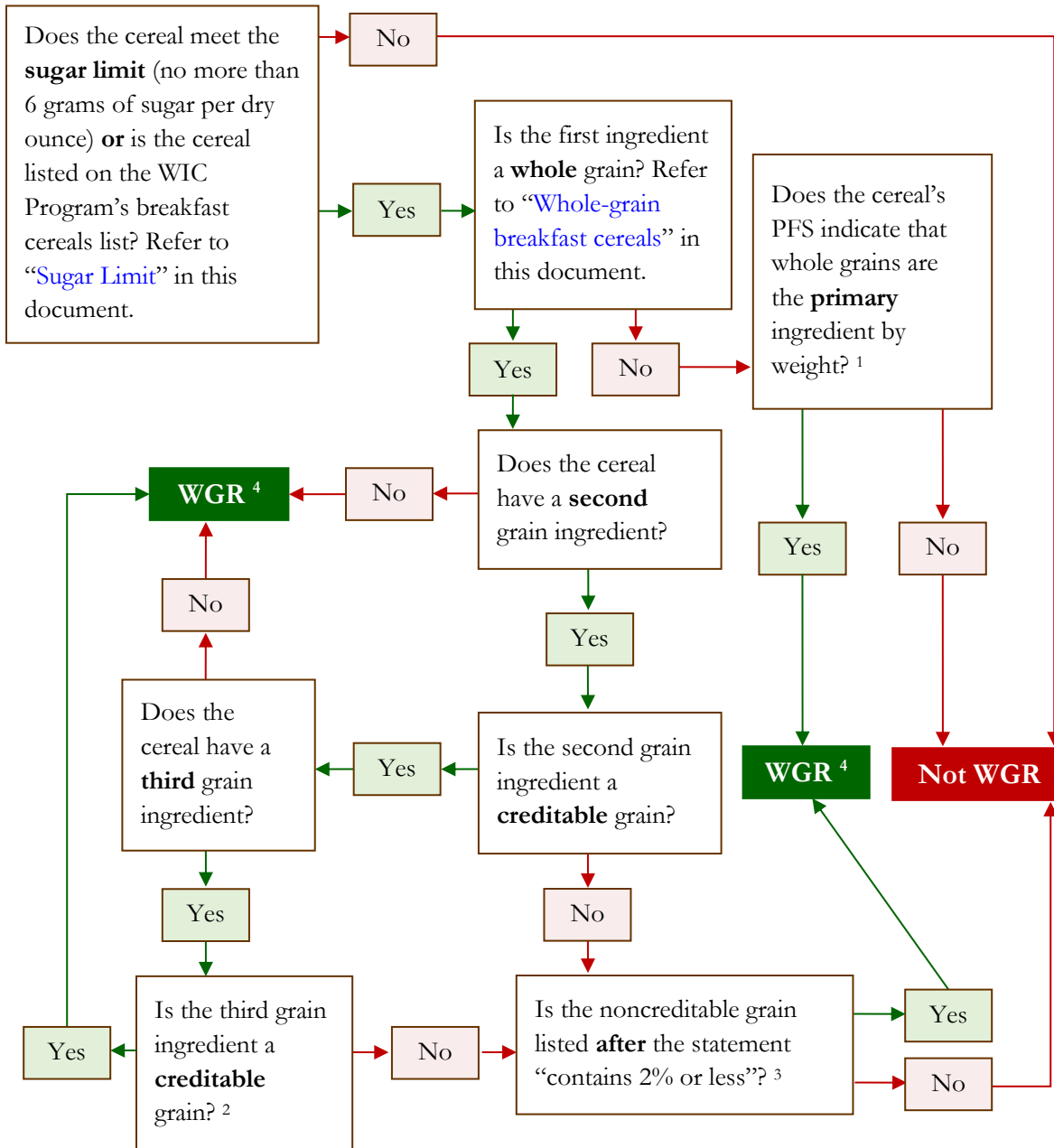
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Table 4. How to determine if RTE breakfast cereals (group I) meet the WGR criteria



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Table 5. How to determine if cooked breakfast cereals (group H) meet the WGR criteria



¹ The CACFP facility must obtain a PFS from the manufacturer (refer to the CSDE's resource, [Using Product Formulation Statements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#)).

² Creditable grains include whole grains, enriched grains, bran, and germ.

³ Ignore noncreditable grains listed after "contains 2% or less" or in the sublisting for a non-grain ingredient (refer to "[Noncreditable grains](#)" in this document).

⁴ The serving must provide the required weight or volume (refer to "[Serving Size for Breakfast Cereals](#)" in this document).

Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP

How to Determine if Commercial Breakfast Cereals are WGR

This section contains five examples of how to evaluate commercial RTE and cooked breakfast cereals for compliance with the CACFP crediting and WGR criteria for breakfast cereals. The information below summarizes the color-coding used to identify the creditable and noncreditable grains in the product's ingredients statement for each example.

- Whole grains are indicated in **bold** text. For examples of whole grains, refer to the CSDE's resource, *Crediting Whole Grains in the Child and Adult Care Food Program*.
- Noncreditable grains (such as wheat flour and yellow corn flour) are indicated in *italicized* text. Depending on the type of breakfast cereal, noncreditable grains are included or ignored when determining WGR compliance.
 - **Cooked breakfast cereals (group H), e.g., oatmeal:** Menu planners must include noncreditable grains when reviewing a cooked breakfast cereal for compliance with the CACFP Rule of Three WGR criteria, unless they are listed after the statement "contains 2% or less" or in the sublisting for a non-grain ingredient such as a dough conditioner.
 - **RTE breakfast cereals (group I):** Menu planners can ignore all noncreditable grains if a whole grain is the first ingredient and the cereal is fortified.

Crediting worksheets for breakfast cereals

The CSDE's crediting worksheets for breakfast cereals help CACFP facilities determine if a breakfast cereal meets the CACFP crediting requirements and WGR criteria. The adult day care center crediting worksheets are available in the "[CSDE Crediting Worksheets for CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#)" section of the CSDE's Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers webpage.

- Adult Center Worksheet 2: Crediting Ready-to-eat (RTE) Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP
- Adult Center Worksheet 3: Crediting Cooked Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP

The child care crediting worksheets are available in the "[Crediting Worksheets for CACFP Child Care Programs](#)" section of the CSDE's Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs webpage.

- Child Care Worksheet 2: Crediting Ready-to-eat (RTE) Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP
- Child Care Worksheet 3: Crediting Cooked Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP

Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP

Product 1: Spiced instant oatmeal (commercial cooked breakfast cereal)

Ingredients: **Whole-grain rolled oats**, sugar, salt, cinnamon and other spices, calcium carbonate, guar gum, caramel color, niacinamide, reduced iron, vitamin A palmitate, pyridoxine hydrochloride, riboflavin, thiamin mononitrate, folic acid.

Part 1: Grain ingredients ¹

- A. **First ingredient:** Whole-grain rolled oats
- B. **Second grain ingredient:** None
- C. **Third grain ingredient:** None
- D. **Fortification nutrients:** Calcium carbonate, niacinamide, reduced iron, vitamin A palmitate, pyridoxine hydrochloride, riboflavin, thiamin mononitrate, folic acid.

Part 2: CACFP crediting criteria for group H (cooked breakfast cereals)

Crediting requirements: 1) The first ingredient is a creditable grain **or** the cereal is fortified; and 2) the cereal meets the sugar limit. ² Read the ingredients statement and check all that apply.

- The first ingredient is a creditable grain ¹ (refer to Part 1A above).
- The cereal is fortified (refer to Part 1D above).

This cooked breakfast cereal is creditable if meets the sugar limit. ^{2, 3}

Part 3: CACFP Rule of Three WGR criteria for group H (cooked breakfast cereals)

WGR requirements: The first ingredient is a whole grain and the next two grain ingredients (if any) are creditable.

1. Is the first ingredient a whole grain (refer to Part 1A above)?
 Yes No
2. Is the second grain ingredient (if any) a creditable grain ¹ (refer to Part 1B above)?
 Yes No Not applicable (no second grain ingredient or can be ignored) ²
3. Is the third grain ingredient (if any) a creditable grain ¹ (refer to Part 1C above)?
 Yes No Not applicable (no third grain ingredient or can be ignored) ²

This cooked breakfast cereal is 100 percent whole grain and credits as a WGR food if meets the sugar limit. ^{2, 3}

¹ Creditable grains include whole grains, enriched grains, bran, and germ.

² Breakfast cereals cannot exceed 6 grams of sugars per dry ounce (refer to “[Sugar Limit](#)” in this document).

³ The serving must provide the required weight or volume (refer to “[Serving Size for Breakfast Cereals](#)” in this document).

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Product 2: Farina hot cereal (commercial cooked breakfast cereal)

Ingredients: *Wheat farina*, calcium carbonate, ferric orthophosphate (source of iron), niacinamide (vitamin B3), pyridoxine hydrochloride (vitamin B6), folic acid, thiamin mononitrate (vitamin B1) riboflavin (vitamin B2).

Part 1: Grain ingredients ¹

- E. **First ingredient:** Wheat farina (noncreditable grain)
- F. **Second grain ingredient:** None
- G. **Third grain ingredient:** None
- H. **Fortification nutrients:** Calcium carbonate, ferric orthophosphate (source of iron), niacinamide (vitamin B3), pyridoxine hydrochloride (vitamin B6), folic acid, thiamin mononitrate (vitamin B1) riboflavin (vitamin B2)

Part 2: CACFP crediting criteria for group H (cooked breakfast cereals)

Crediting requirements: 1) The first ingredient is a creditable grain **or** the cereal is fortified; and 2) the cereal meets the sugar limit. ² Read the ingredients statement and check all that apply.

- The first ingredient is a creditable grain ¹ (refer to Part 1A above).
- The cereal is fortified (refer to Part 1D above).

This cooked breakfast cereal is creditable if meets the sugar limit. ^{2, 3}

Part 3: CACFP Rule of Three WGR criteria for group H (cooked breakfast cereals)

WGR requirements: The first ingredient is a whole grain and the next two grain ingredients (if any) are creditable.

- 2. Is the first ingredient a whole grain (refer to Part 1A above)?
 Yes No
- 4. Is the second grain ingredient (if any) a creditable grain ¹ (refer to Part 1B above)?
 Yes No Not applicable (no second grain ingredient or can be ignored) ²
- 5. Is the third grain ingredient (if any) a creditable grain ¹ (refer to Part 1C above)?
 Yes No Not applicable (no third grain ingredient or can be ignored) ²

This cooked breakfast cereal does not contain any whole grains and is not WGR.

¹ Creditable grains include whole grains, enriched grains, bran, and germ.

² Breakfast cereals cannot exceed 6 grams of sugars per dry ounce (refer to “[Sugar Limit](#)” in this document).

³ The serving must provide the required weight or volume (refer to “[Serving Size for Breakfast Cereals](#)” in this document).

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Product 3: Whole-grain oat cereal (commercial RTE breakfast cereal)

Ingredients: **Whole-grain oat flour**, sugar, *corn flour*, **whole-wheat flour**, *rice flour*, salt, calcium carbonate, disodium phosphate, reduced iron, niacinamide, zinc oxide, BHT (a preservative), yellow 5, yellow 6, thiamin mononitrate, pyridoxine hydrochloride, riboflavin, folic acid.

Part 1: Grain ingredients ¹

- A. **First ingredient:** Whole-grain oat flour
- B. **Fortification nutrients:** Calcium carbonate, reduced iron, niacinamide, zinc oxide, thiamin mononitrate, pyridoxine hydrochloride, riboflavin, folic acid

Part 2: Preschool crediting criteria for group I (RTE breakfast cereals)

Crediting requirements: 1) The first ingredient is a creditable grain **or** the cereal is fortified; and 2) the cereal meets the sugar limit. ² Read the ingredients statement and check all that apply.

- The first ingredient is a creditable grain ¹ (refer to Part 1A above).
- The cereal is fortified (refer to Part 1B above).

This RTE breakfast cereal is creditable if meets the sugar limit. ^{2, 3}

Part 3: Preschool WGR criteria for group I (RTE breakfast cereals)

WGR requirements: 1) A whole grain is the first ingredient and the cereal is fortified, **or** the cereal is 100 percent whole grain; and 2) the cereal meets the sugar limit. ^{2, 3} Read the ingredients statement and check all that apply.

- A whole grain is the first ingredient (refer to Part 1A above) and the cereal is fortified (refer to Part 1B above).
- The cereal is 100 percent whole grain (all grains are whole grains).

This RTE breakfast cereal credits as a WGR food if meets the sugar limit. ^{2, 3}

¹ Creditable grains include whole grains, enriched grains, bran, and germ.

² Breakfast cereals cannot exceed 6 grams of sugars per dry ounce (refer to “[Sugar Limit](#)” in this document).

³ The serving must provide the required weight or volume (refer to “[Serving Size for Breakfast Cereals](#)” in this document).

Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP

Product 4: Crispy rice cereal (commercial RTE breakfast cereal)

Ingredients: *Rice*, sugar, contains 2% or less of salt, malt flavor. BHT added to packaging for freshness. Vitamins and Minerals: Iron, vitamin C (ascorbic acid), vitamin E (alpha tocopherol acetate), niacinamide, vitamin A palmitate, vitamin B6 (pyridoxine hydrochloride), vitamin B2 (riboflavin), vitamin B1 (thiamin hydrochloride), folic acid, vitamin B12, vitamin D.

Part 1: Grain ingredients ¹

- A. **First ingredient:** Rice (noncreditable grain)
- B. **Fortification nutrients:** Iron, vitamin C (ascorbic acid), vitamin E (alpha tocopherol acetate), niacinamide, vitamin A palmitate, vitamin B6 (pyridoxine hydrochloride), vitamin B2 (riboflavin), vitamin B1 (thiamin hydrochloride), folic acid, vitamin B12, vitamin D

Part 2: Preschool crediting criteria for group I (RTE breakfast cereals)

Crediting requirements: 1) The first ingredient is a creditable grain **or** the cereal is fortified; and 2) the cereal meets the sugar limit. ² Read the ingredients statement and check all that apply.

- The first ingredient is a creditable grain ¹ (refer to Part 1A above).
- The cereal is fortified (refer to Part 1B above).

This RTE breakfast cereal is creditable if meets the sugar limit. ^{2, 3}

Part 3: Preschool WGR criteria for group I (RTE breakfast cereals)

WGR requirements: 1) A whole grain is the first ingredient and the cereal is fortified, **or** the cereal is 100 percent whole grain; and 2) the cereal meets the sugar limit. ^{2, 3} Read the ingredients statement and check all that apply.

- A whole grain is the first ingredient (refer to Part 1A above) and the cereal is fortified (refer to Part 1B above).
- The cereal is 100 percent whole grain (all grains are whole grains).

This RTE breakfast cereal does not contain any whole grains and does not meet the WGR criteria.

¹ Creditable grains include whole grains, enriched grains, bran, and germ.

² Breakfast cereals cannot exceed 6 grams of sugars per dry ounce (refer to “[Sugar Limit](#)” in this document).

³ The serving must provide the required weight or volume (refer to “[Serving Size for Breakfast Cereals](#)” in this document).

Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP

Product 5: Crunchy wheat cereal (commercial RTE breakfast cereal)

Ingredients: **Whole-grain wheat**, sugar, *rice flour*, *oat fiber*, sunflower oil, dextrose, molasses, baking soda, sea salt.

Part 1: Grain ingredients ¹

A. **First ingredient:** Whole-grain wheat

B. **Fortification nutrients:** None

Part 2: Preschool crediting criteria for group I (RTE breakfast cereals)

Crediting requirements: 1) The first ingredient is a creditable grain **or** the cereal is fortified; and 2) the cereal meets the sugar limit. ² Read the ingredients statement and check all that apply.

The first ingredient is a creditable grain ¹ (refer to Part 1A above).

The cereal is fortified (refer to Part 1B above).

This RTE breakfast cereal is creditable if meets the sugar limit. ^{2, 3}

Part 3: Preschool WGR criteria for group I (RTE breakfast cereals)

WGR requirements: 1) A whole grain is the first ingredient and the cereal is fortified, **or** the cereal is 100 percent whole grain; and 2) the cereal meets the sugar limit. ^{2, 3} Read the ingredients statement and check all that apply.

A whole grain is the first ingredient (refer to Part 1A above) and the cereal is fortified (refer to Part 1B above).

The cereal is 100 percent whole grain (all grains are whole grains).

This RTE breakfast cereal is 100 percent whole grain and credits as a WGR food if meets the sugar limit. ^{2, 3}

¹ Creditable grains include whole grains, enriched grains, bran, and germ.

² Breakfast cereals cannot exceed 6 grams of sugars per dry ounce (refer to “[Sugar Limit](#)” in this document).

³ The serving must provide the required weight or volume (refer to “[Serving Size for Breakfast Cereals](#)” in this document).

Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP

Serving Size for Breakfast Cereals

The required quantities for breakfast cereals are in oz eq. The minimum amount that credits toward the grains component is ¼ oz eq. Table 8 shows the required oz eq for RTE and cooked breakfast cereals.

Table 6. Required oz eq for breakfast cereals in the CACFP

Type of cereal		½ oz eq		1 oz eq	
		Ages 1-2	Ages 3-5	Ages 6-12 and 13-18 ¹	Adult participants ²
Group H	RTE flakes or rounds	½ cup	½ cup	1 cup	1 cup
	RTE puffed	¾ cup	¾ cup	1¼ cups	1¼ cups
	RTE granola	⅛ cup	⅛ cup	¼ cup	¼ cup
Group I	Cooked hot	¼ cup cooked or 14 grams (½ ounce) dry	¼ cup cooked or 14 grams (½ ounce) dry	½ cup cooked or 28 grams (1 ounce) dry	½ cup cooked or 28 grams (1 ounce) dry

¹ This age group applies only to at-risk afterschool programs and emergency shelters. Larger portions may be needed to meet the nutritional needs of children ages 13-18.

² The adult meal patterns require 2 oz eq of the grains component at breakfast, lunch, and supper.

Crediting RTE Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP Infant Meal Patterns

The grains component and WGR requirement of the CACFP meal patterns for children do not apply to the CACFP infant meal patterns for birth through 11 months. For developmentally ready infants (typically ages 6-11 months), RTE breakfast cereals credit only at snack. RTE breakfast cereals must be made with enriched or whole grains or be fortified, and cannot exceed 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce.

Some RTE cereals may be a choking hazard. CACFP facilities should choose cereals that dissolve easily in the mouth and do not include nuts, dried fruits, or other hard food items. For guidance on crediting foods in the CACFP infant meal pattern, refer to the USDA’s guide, *Feeding Infants in the Child and Adult Care Food Program*, and visit the CSDE’s [Feeding Infants in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage.



Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP

Considerations for Reducing Choking Risks for Young Children

Children younger than 4 are at the highest risk of choking. Breakfast cereals that contain nuts, whole-grain kernels such as wheat berries, and hard chunks (such as granola) may be choking hazards for young children. Consider children’s age and developmental readiness when deciding what types of breakfast cereals to offer in CACFP menus and modify foods and menus as appropriate. For additional guidance, visit the “[Choking Prevention](#)” section of the CSDE’s [Food Safety for Child Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

Resources

Adult Center Worksheet 2: Crediting Ready-to-eat (RTE) Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/Crediting/CACFP_Adult_Centers_Worksheet2_Crediting_RTE_Breakfast_Cereals.xlsx

Adult Center Worksheet 3: Crediting Cooked Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/Crediting/CACFP_Adult_Centers_Worksheet3_Crediting_Cooked_Cereals.xlsx

Approved Food Guide for Connecticut WIC (Connecticut Department of Public Health):

<https://portal.ct.gov/DPH/WIC/Approved-Food-Guide>

Bite Size Module 7A: Grains Component Crediting Requirements (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Patterns-CACFP-Child-Care-Programs/Related-Resources#BiteSize>

Bite Size Module 7B: Grains Component Whole Grain-rich Requirement (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Patterns-CACFP-Child-Care-Programs/Related-Resources#BiteSize>

Bite Size Module 7C: Grains Component Ounce Equivalents (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Patterns-CACFP-Child-Care-Programs/Related-Resources#BiteSize>

CACFP Training Tools (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp-training-tools>

Calculating Sugar Limits for Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP (USDA handouts and webinars in English and Spanish):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/calculating-sugar-limits-breakfast-cereals-cacfp>

Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/Crediting/Grain_Calculation_CACFP_Oz_Eq.pdf

Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP

Child Care Worksheet 2: Crediting Ready-to-eat Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/Crediting/CACFP_Child_Care_Worksheet2_Crediting_RTE_Breakfast_Cereals.xlsx

Child Care Worksheet 3: Crediting Cooked Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/Crediting/CACFP_Child_Care_Worksheet3_Crediting_Cooked_Cereals.xlsx

Choking Prevention (CSDE's Food Safety for Child Nutrition Programs webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Food-Safety-for-Child-Nutrition-Programs/Documents#ChokingPrevention>

Choose Breakfast Cereals that are Lower in Sugar (USDA handouts, training slides, and webinars in English and Spanish):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/choose-breakfast-cereals-are-lower-sugar>

Crediting Enriched Grains in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/Crediting/Credit_Enriched_Grains_CACFP.pdf

Crediting Whole Grains in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/Crediting/Credit_Whole_Grains_CACFP.pdf

Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs (USDA):

<https://foodbuyingguide.fns.usda.gov/Content/TablesFBG/ExhibitA.pdf>

Feeding Infants in CACFP Child Care Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Feeding-Infants-in-CACFP-Child-Care-Programs>

Feeding Infants in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/feeding-infants-child-and-adult-care-food-program>

Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/food-buying-guide-for-child-nutrition-programs>

Grain Ounce Equivalents for the CACFP (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/Crediting/Grain_Oz_Eq_CACFP.pdf

Grains Component for CACFP Adult Day Care Centers (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-CACFP-Adult-Day-Care-Centers/Documents#Grains>

Grains Component for CACFP Child Care Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-CACFP-Child-Care-Programs/Documents#Grains>

Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP

Guide to Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the CACFP (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/Crediting/WGR_Requirement_CACFP.pdf

How to Identify Creditable Grains for the CACFP (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/Crediting/Identify_Creditable_Grains_CACFP.pdf

Identifying Whole Grain-rich Foods for the CACFP (USDA handouts and webinars in English and Spanish):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/identifying-whole-grain-rich-foods-cacfp>

Meal Patterns for CACFP Adult Day Care Centers (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Patterns-CACFP-Adult-Centers>

Meal Patterns for CACFP Child Care Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Patterns-CACFP-Child-Care-Programs>

Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Grains in Child Nutrition Programs (USDA):

https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource-files/PFS_Grains_Oz_Eq_Fillable_508.pdf

Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Grains in Child Nutrition Programs – Completed Sample (USDA):

https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource-files/PFS_Example_Grains_Oz_Eq.pdf

Resources for the CACFP Meal Patterns (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/MealPattern/Resources_CACFP_Meal_Patterns.pdf

Tips for Evaluating a Manufacturer’s Product Formulation Statement (USDA):

<https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/manufacturerPFStipsheet.pdf>

USDA Memo CACFP 02-2016: Optional Best Practices to Further Improve Nutrition in the CACFP:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/optional-best-practices-further-improve-nutrition-cacfp>

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>

Using Ounce Equivalent for Grains in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (USDA handouts in English and Spanish):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/using-ounce-equivalents-grains-cacfp>

Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP

Using Product Formulation Statements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE):

[http://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/Crediting/
Using_Product_Formulation_Statements_CACFP.pdf](http://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/Crediting/Using_Product_Formulation_Statements_CACFP.pdf)

Using the WIC Food Lists to Identify Grains for the CACFP (USDA handouts and webinars in English and Spanish):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/using-wic-food-lists-identify-grains-cacfp>

When Commercial Grain Products Require a Product Formulation Statement to Credit in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/Crediting/
When_Commercial_Grain_Products_Require_PFS_CACFP.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/Crediting/When_Commercial_Grain_Products_Require_PFS_CACFP.pdf)

Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP



For more information, visit the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) and [Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) webpages or contact the [CACFP 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/CACFP/Crediting/Credit_Cereals_CACFP.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
3. email: program.intake@usda.gov

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