

Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

This guidance applies to 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 crediting foods for children, visit the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) [Meal Patterns for CACFP Child Care Programs](#) and [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpages. 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](#) and [Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) webpages.



CACFP facilities must be able to document the meal pattern contribution of commercial processed foods served in CACFP meals and snacks. For example, to credit pizza as 2 ounces of the meat/meat alternates component and 2 ounce equivalents of the grains component, the manufacturer's documentation must indicate that the serving contains 2 ounces of cheese and 2 ounces of whole grain-rich (WGR) or enriched crust. The only acceptable types of documentation for commercial processed foods are:

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

CACFP facilities must maintain this documentation on file. The CSDE will review product documentation during the Administrative Review of the CACFP.

Commercial processed products without a CN label or PFS cannot credit in CACFP meals and snacks.

Table 1 compares the criteria for CN labels and PFS forms. Only CN labels provide a guarantee of the product's contribution to the USDA's meal patterns for the Child Nutrition Programs. CACFP facilities must check the crediting information on the PFS form for accuracy prior to using the product in reimbursable meals and snacks.

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Table 1. Comparison of CN labels and PFS forms		
Criteria	CN label	PFS
Standard information required	✓	
Reviewed and monitored by the USDA	✓	
Includes USDA guarantee of meal component contribution for Child Nutrition Programs	✓	
Distinct six-digit product identification number	✓	
CACFP facilities must check crediting information for accuracy prior to use		✓

Child Nutrition (CN) Labels

The USDA’s CN Labeling Program is a voluntary federal labeling program for the Child Nutrition Programs. A CN label statement clearly identifies the contribution of a commercial product toward the meal pattern requirements, based on the USDA’s evaluation of the product’s formulation. CN labeling provides a warranty that the product contributes to the meal pattern requirements, as printed on the label. Table 1 shows an example of a CN label.

Table 2. Sample CN Label	
<div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 10px; background-color: #f9f9f9;"> <p>CN Label</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 10px; margin: 10px auto; width: 80%;"> <p style="text-align: center;">1 Chicken Stir-Fry Bowl</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Ingredient Statement:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2 Chicken, brown rice, broccoli, red peppers, carrots, onions, water, olive oil, soy sauce, spices.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px; text-align: center; margin: 5px auto; width: 60%;"> <p style="text-align: center;">3 CN</p> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">XXXXXX</p> <p style="font-size: small;">Each 4.5 oz Chicken Stir-Fry Bowl provides 1.5 oz eq meat, 1.0 oz eq grains, ¼ cup dark green vegetable, ¼ cup red/orange vegetable, and ⅓ cup other vegetable for Child Nutrition Meal Pattern Requirements. (Use of this logo and statement authorized by the Food and Nutrition Service, USDA 09/16).</p> </div> <p style="text-align: center;">CN</p> </div> <p>Net Wt.: 18 pounds</p> <p style="text-align: center;">CN</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Chicken Wok Company 1234 Kluck Street • Poultry, PA 1235</p> <div style="text-align: right; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>4 </p> </div> </div>	

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CN labels are available only for main dish entrees that contribute to the meat/meat alternates component of the USDA's meal patterns, such as beef patties, pizza, and breaded fish portions. However, CN labels usually indicate the contribution of other meal components that are part of these products. For example, CN-labeled pizza may list contributions to the meat/meat alternates, grains, and vegetables components.

For more information, review the CSDE's resource, [Using Child Nutrition \(CN\) Labels in the CACFP](#), [USDA Memo SP 11-2015 \(v2\)](#), [CACFP 10-2015](#) and [SFSP 13-2015: CN Labels Copied with a Watermark](#), [Acceptable Documentation](#), and [USDA Memo SP 27-2015](#), [CACFP 09-2015](#) and [SFSP 12-2015: Administrative Review Process Regarding the Child Nutrition \(CN\) Label, Watermarked CN Label and Manufacturer's Product Formulation Statement](#). The USDA's [Authorized Labels and Manufacturers](#) webpage lists approved CN-labeled products and manufacturers.

Product Formulation Statements

A product formulation statement (PFS) is a document developed by manufacturers that provides specific information about how a product credits toward the USDA's meal patterns for Child Nutrition Programs. It generally includes a detailed explanation of what the product contains and indicates the amount of each ingredient in the product by weight. Information on PFS forms can vary among manufacturers because the USDA does not monitor PFS forms. The USDA's [Food Manufacturers/Industry](#) webpage provides PFS templates for the meat/meat alternates, grains, fruits, and vegetables components.

PFS forms must meet the requirements below. CACFP sponsors must check the manufacturer's crediting information for accuracy prior to including the product in CACFP meals and snacks.

- The PFS must be on signed company letterhead and must demonstrate how the processed product contributes to the meal pattern requirements.
- Manufacturers may modify the USDA's PFS forms for various products that contribute to more than one meal component. For example, cheese pizza could have crediting information for the vegetables/fruits component, in addition to the meat/meat alternates and grains/breads components. Manufacturers may use one PFS to document the crediting information for all meal components in a product.
- All creditable ingredients listed in the PFS must match a description in the USDA's [Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs](#). The manufacturer must clearly identify how each component contributes to the meal pattern requirements.

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- The PFS should verify that the product’s meal pattern contribution is not greater than the serving size of the product. For example, a 2.2-ounce beef patty cannot credit for more than 2 ounces of the meat/meat alternates component.
- The PFS should assure that the creditable components are visible in the finished product, such as sausage links, beans, cheese, or peanut butter. The PFS must also specify the method for crediting these items.



The USDA requires that foods must be visible (recognizable) to credit toward the meal patterns. The intent for this requirement is to ensure that children can easily identify the foods in reimbursable meals and snacks. The nutrition education aspect of the Child Nutrition Programs includes the goal of helping children recognize the food groups that contribute to healthy meals and snacks.

For more information, review the CSDE’s resource, [Using Product Formulation Statements in the CACFP](#), and the USDA’s handout, [Tips for Evaluating a Manufacturer’s Product Formulation Statement](#); and visit the “[Crediting Commercial Processed Products in CACFP Child Care Programs](#)” or “[Crediting Commercial Processed Products in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#)” sections of the CSDE’s CACFP webpages.



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Resources

Authorized Manufacturers and Labels (USDA webpage):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cnlabeling/usdausdc-authorized-labels-and-manufacturers>

Crediting Commercial Processed Products in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers (CSDE webpage):

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

Crediting Commercial Processed Products in Child Care Programs (CSDE webpage):

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

CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 7A-16, 9C-16 and 9H-16: Requirements for Documenting CACFP Meal Pattern Contribution of Processed Foods:

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/Memos/OM2016/OM07A16_09C16_09H16.pdf

Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs (USDA):

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

Food Manufacturers/Industry (USDA webpage):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cnlabeling/food-manufacturersindustry>

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>

Resources for the CACFP Meal Patterns (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/MealPattern/ResourcesCACFPMealPattern.pdf>

Reviewer's Checklist for Evaluating Manufacturer Product Formulation Statements for Meat/Meat Alternates (USDA):

https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/reviewer_checklist.pdf

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

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

Using Child Nutrition (CN) Labels in the CACFP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/Crediting/CNlabelCACFP.pdf>

Using Product Formulation Statements in the CACFP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/Crediting/PFScacfp.pdf>

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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](#) in the CSDE's Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841.

This document is available at <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/Crediting/AcceptDocumentationCACFP.pdf>.

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Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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