

How to Identify Creditable Grains in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

This guidance applies through September 30, 2021, 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). Effective October 1, 2021, the required amounts for the grains component change to ounce equivalents.

For information on the CACFP meal patterns and grains component for children, visit the CSDE’s [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 grains component 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.



Creditable grains for the CACFP meal patterns include whole grains, enriched grains, bran, and germ. Products that are 100 percent whole grain, such as whole-wheat bread and brown rice, provide the best nutrition and should be served most often. For information on creditable grains, review the CSDE’s resources, [Crediting Whole Grains in the CACFP](#), [Crediting Enriched Grains in the CACFP](#), and [Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP](#).

Allowable Grain Foods

The grains component includes a variety of whole-grain and enriched products, such as:

- breads, biscuits, bagels, rolls, tortillas, and muffins;
- snack products, such as crackers (including animal crackers and graham crackers), hard pretzels, hard breadsticks, tortilla chips, and popcorn;
- cereal grains, such as buckwheat, brown rice, bulgur, and quinoa;
- RTE breakfast cereals;
- cooked breakfast cereals (instant and regular), such as oatmeal;
- bread products used as an ingredient in another menu item, such as combination foods, e.g., breading on fish or poultry and pizza crust in pizza; and
- pasta products, such as macaroni, spaghetti, noodles, orzo, and couscous.

Grain-based desserts cannot credit in the CACFP meal patterns. Examples of grain-based desserts include brownies, cookies, cakes, cupcakes, coffee cakes, cinnamon streusel quick breads, piecrusts

How to Identify Creditable Grains in the CACFP

in sweet pies (e.g., apple, coconut, blueberry, and pecan), cinnamon rolls, doughnuts, cereal bars, granola bars, breakfast bars, sweet rolls, pastries, toaster pastries, sweet scones (e.g., blueberry, raisin, and orange cranberry), rice pudding, and sweet bread pudding. For more information, visit the USDA's webpage, [Grain-based Desserts in the CACFP](#).

Crediting Criteria

The CACFP crediting requirements are different for commercial grain products, breakfast cereals, combination foods that contain a grain portion, and grain foods made on site. These requirements are summarized below. **Note:** Groups A-E and H-I refer to the USDA's Exhibit A chart. For more information, see "[Serving Size for Creditable Grains](#)" in this document.

Commercial grain products

[Table 1](#) summarizes the steps for identifying creditable commercial grain products in groups A-E (baked goods such as breads, rolls, muffins, crackers, and waffles) and group H (pasta and cereal grains such as quinoa, rice, and millet). These commercial grain products credit as the grains component if:

- a creditable grain is the first ingredient (or water is the first ingredient and a creditable grain is the second ingredient); or
- the manufacturer's product formulation statement (PFS) indicates that the combined weight of all creditable grains is the greatest ingredient by weight. For information on PFS forms, review the CSDE's resources, [Using Product Formulation Statements in the CACFP](#) and [Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the CACFP](#), and the USDA's handouts, [Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Grains/Breads Servings](#) (through September 30, 2021), and [Tips for Evaluating a Manufacturer's Product Formulation Statement](#).

The ingredients statements below show examples of creditable commercial grain products.

- Ingredients: *Enriched wheat flour (flour, niacin, reduced iron, thiamine mononitrate, riboflavin, folic acid)*, canola and/or sunflower oil, salt, contains 2% or less of: yeast, nonfat milk, sugar, baking soda, monocalcium phosphate, paprika, spices, celery, onion powder.
- Ingredients: Water, *whole-wheat flour*, yeast, wheat gluten, contains less than 2% of each of the following: soybean oil, sugar, salt, calcium propionate (preservative), fumaric acid, baking soda, monocalcium phosphate, calcium sulfate, ammonium sulfate.
- Ingredients: Water, *enriched flour (wheat flour, niacin, reduced iron, vitamin B1 [thiamin mononitrate], vitamin B2 [riboflavin], folic acid)*, *whole-wheat flour*, vegetable oil (soybean, palm, and/or canola oil), egg whites, *wheat bran*, sugar, contains 2% or less of leavening (baking soda, sodium aluminum phosphate, monocalcium phosphate), salt, malt flavoring, whey, soy lecithin.

How to Identify Creditable Grains in the CACFP

If a creditable grain is not the first ingredient, but the commercial grain product contains more than one creditable grain, the product's PFS must indicate that the combined weight of all creditable grains in the product is the greatest ingredient by weight.

For examples of how to determine if commercial grain products credit in the CACFP meal patterns, review the CSDE's resource, *Whole Grain-rich Criteria for the CACFP*. Menu planners may use the CSDE's Excel worksheet, *Child Care Worksheet 1: Crediting Commercial Grains in the CACFP*, to determine if commercial grain products comply with the CACFP crediting and WGR criteria. For more information, see "[Grain Crediting Worksheets](#)" in this document.

Breakfast cereals

Breakfast cereals include RTE cereals in group I (such as puffed rice cereals, round or flaked cereal, and granola) and instant and regular cooked cereals in group H (such as oatmeal, cream of wheat, and farina). Breakfast cereals credit as the grains component if the first ingredient is a creditable grain or the cereal is fortified; and the cereal contains no more than 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce. For examples of how to determine if breakfast cereals are creditable, review the CSDE's resource, *Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP*.



Commercial combination foods

Table 2 summarizes the steps for identifying creditable commercial combination food that contain a grain portion from groups A-E or H-I (such as pizza crust in pizza, noodles in lasagna, and breading or batter on meat, fish, or poultry). Commercial combination foods credit as the grains component if:

- the first grain ingredient is a creditable grain (or the first ingredient in the **grain portion** is a creditable grain, if the grain portion is listed separately); or
- the product's Child Nutrition (CN) label or manufacturer's PFS indicates that the combined weight of all creditable grains in the grain portion is the greatest ingredient by weight in the grain portion. For more information, review the CSDE's resources, *Using Child Nutrition (CN) Labels in the CACFP* and *Using Product Formulation Statements in the CACFP*.

The ingredients statement below shows an example of a breaded chicken patty that lists the grain ingredient together with the other ingredients. This product credits as the grains component because the first **grain** ingredient (whole-wheat flour) is a creditable grain.

- Ingredients: Boneless, skinless chicken breast with rib meat, water, *whole-wheat flour*, contains 2% or less of the following: dried garlic, dried onion, salt, sea salt, soybean oil, spice, sugar, torula yeast, turmeric, yeast, yeast extract. Breading set in vegetable oil.

How to Identify Creditable Grains in the CACFP

A commercial combination food that lists the ingredients for the grain portion **separately** credits as the grains component if a creditable grain is the first ingredient in the grain portion (or water is the first ingredient and a creditable grain is the second ingredient). The ingredients statement below shows an example of a breaded chicken patty that lists the grain portion separately. This product credits as the grain component because the first grain ingredient (white whole-wheat flour) in the breading (**grain portion**) is a creditable grain (white whole-wheat flour).

- Ingredients: Chicken, water, salt and natural flavor. Breaded with: *white whole-wheat flour*, water, salt, *enriched yellow corn flour*, dried onion, dried garlic, dried yeast, brown sugar, extractives of paprika, and spices. Breading set in vegetable oil.

Foods made on site

[Table 3](#) summarizes the steps for identifying creditable grain foods and combination foods made on site by the CACFP facility.

- Grain foods made on site (such as breads, rolls, muffins, waffles, and pancakes) credit as the grains component if a creditable grain (or the combined weight of all creditable grains) is the greatest ingredient by weight in the recipe.
- Combination foods made on site (such as pizza, lasagna, and breaded chicken) credit as the grains component if a creditable grain (or the combined weight of all creditable grains) is the greatest grain ingredient by weight in the recipe.



For examples of how to determine if grain foods made on site are creditable, review the CSDE's resource, [Whole Grain-rich Criteria for the CACFP](#). Menu planners may use the CSDE's Excel worksheets, [Child Care Worksheet 4: Crediting Family-size Recipes for Grains in the CACFP](#) or [Child Care Worksheet 5: Crediting Quantity Recipes for Grains in the CACFP](#), to determine if grain foods made on site comply with the CACFP crediting and WGR criteria. For more information, see "[Grain Crediting Worksheets](#)" in this document.

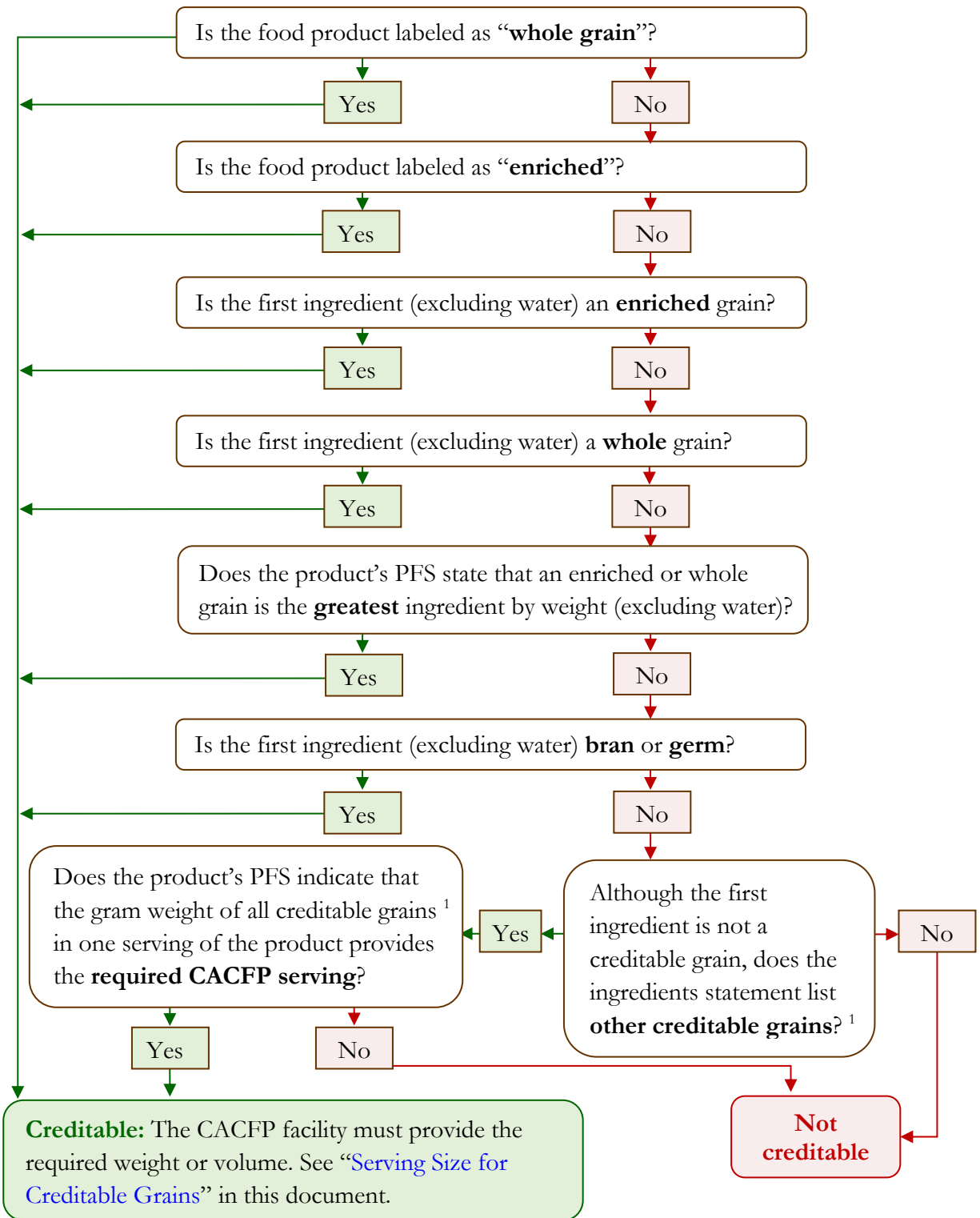
Whole Grain-rich (WGR) Requirement

The CACFP meal patterns require at least one serving of WGR grains per day. The USDA's [CACFP Best Practices](#) recommends at least two servings of WGR grains per day. The WGR requirement does not apply to the CACFP infant meal patterns.

WGR foods for the CACFP contain at least 50 percent whole grains and the remaining grain ingredients are enriched, bran, or germ. All WGR foods credit in the CACFP meal patterns, but not all creditable grain foods are WGR. For information on the CACFP WGR criteria, review the CSDE's resource, [Whole Grain-rich Criteria for the CACFP](#), and [USDA Memo CACFP 09-2018: Grain Requirements in the CACFP: Questions and Answers](#).

How to Identify Creditable Grains in the CACFP

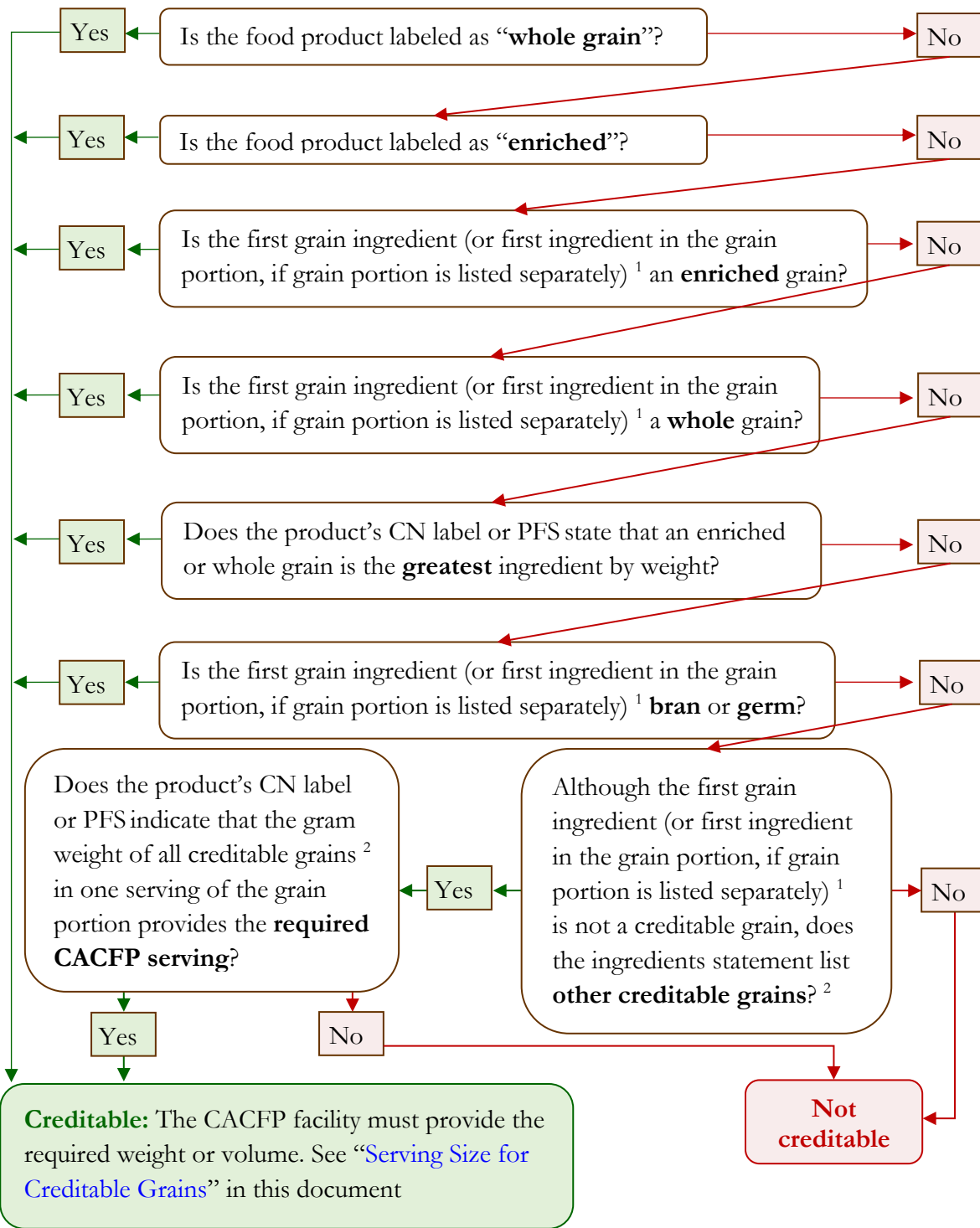
Table 1. Identifying creditable commercial grain products in groups A-E



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

How to Identify Creditable Grains in the CACFP

Table 2. Identifying creditable commercial combination foods

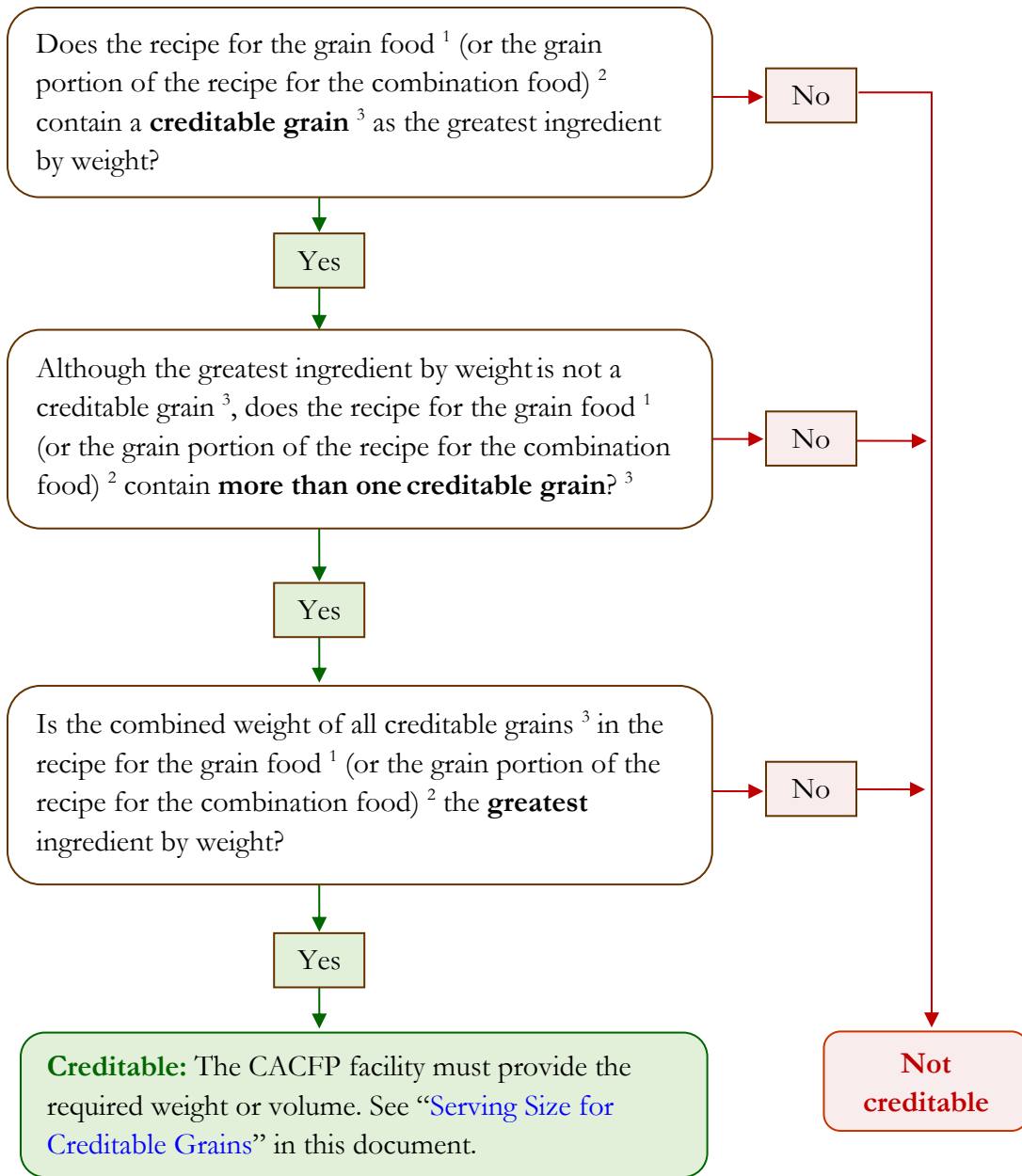


¹ For grain portions listed separately, a creditable grain must be the first ingredient in the grain portion.

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

How to Identify Creditable Grains in the CACFP

Table 3. Identifying creditable grains and combination foods made on site



¹ Examples of grain foods include breads, rolls, muffins, waffles, cereal grains (e.g., quinoa, rice, and millet), cooked breakfast cereals (e.g., oatmeal and farina), and pasta.
² Examples of combination foods include pizza, lasagna, burritos, and breaded or battered meat, fish, or poultry.
³ Creditable grains include whole grains, enriched grains, bran, and germ.

How to Identify Creditable Grains in the CACFP

Serving Size for Creditable Grains

The required amount for the CACFP grains component is in servings through September 30, 2021, and changes to ounce equivalents effective October 1, 2021. The USDA allows two methods for determining the servings or ounce equivalents of a creditable grain product or recipe. CACFP facilities may use either method, but must document how the crediting information was obtained.

- **Method 1 (USDA’s Exhibit A Chart)** is used for commercial grain products and may also be used for recipes that indicate the weight of the prepared (cooked) serving. This method uses the USDA’s chart, [Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs](#), to determine the required weight (groups A-E) or volume (groups H-I) for the appropriate grain group. The CSDE’s resource, [Grain Servings for the CACFP](#), lists the Exhibit A grain servings that apply through September 30, 2021. Groups F and G are not included because grain-based desserts do not credit as the grains component in the CACFP meal patterns.
- **Method 2 (creditable grains)** is used for recipes and may also be used for commercial grain products that have a PFS stating the weight of creditable grains per serving. This method determines the grain servings for creditable grain products and recipes by calculating the total weight (grams) of creditable grains per manufacturer’s serving (from the PFS) or recipe serving (from the quantities listed in the recipe). For some commercial grain products, CACFP facilities must use method 2 (instead of the USDA’s Exhibit A chart) to determine the grain servings.

For detailed guidance on both methods, review the CSDE’s resource, [Calculation Methods for Grain Servings in CACFP](#).

Grain Crediting Worksheets

The CSDE’s CACFP crediting worksheets evaluate grain-based foods for compliance with the CACFP crediting, WGR, and serving requirements. The grain worksheets include:

- Adult Centers Worksheet 1: Crediting Commercial Grains in the CACFP;
- Adult Centers Worksheet 2: Crediting Ready-to-eat Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP;
- Adult Centers Worksheet 3: Crediting Cooked Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP;
- Adult Centers Worksheet 4: Crediting Family-size Recipes for Grains in the CACFP;
- Adult Centers Worksheet 5: Crediting Quantity Recipes for Grains in the CACFP.
- Child Care Worksheet 1: Crediting Commercial Grains in the CACFP;
- Child Care Worksheet 2: Crediting Ready-to-eat Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP;
- Child Care Worksheet 3: Crediting Cooked Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP;
- Child Care Worksheet 4: Crediting Family-size Recipes for Grains in the CACFP; and
- Child Care Worksheet 5: Crediting Quantity Recipes for Grains in the CACFP.

How to Identify Creditable Grains in the CACFP

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. 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.

Crediting Grains in the CACFP Infant Meal Pattern

The grains component and WGR requirement for the CACFP meal patterns for children do not apply to the CACFP infant meal pattern for birth through 11 months. When infants are developmentally ready (typically ages 6-11 months), creditable grains in the CACFP infant meal pattern include only:

- iron-fortified infant cereal at breakfast, lunch/supper, and snack;
- whole-grain or enriched breads and crackers at snack only; and
- RTE breakfast cereals at snack only, if they meet the sugar limit, and are made with enriched or whole-grain meal or flour, or are fortified.



Examples of creditable breads and crackers for infants include small strips or pieces of whole-grain or enriched dry bread or toast, such as whole-wheat, French, or Italian bread; small pieces of whole-grain or enriched soft tortilla, soft pita bread, English muffins, rolls, cornbread, or corn muffins; whole grain or enriched teething crackers, biscuits, and toasts; small pieces of whole-grain or enriched crackers without seeds, nuts, or whole-grain kernels; and RTE breakfast 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, visit the CSDE’s [Feeding Infants in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage.

Considerations for Reducing Choking Risks for Young Children

Children younger than 4 are at the highest risk of choking. Examples of grain foods that may cause choking include hard pretzels; pretzel chips; corn chips; breakfast cereals that contain nuts, whole-grain kernels (such as wheat berries), and hard chunks (such as granola); and crackers or breads with seeds, nut pieces, or whole-grain kernels. Consider children’s age and developmental readiness when deciding what types of grain foods to offer in CACFP menus. This consideration is also important for children or adult participants with a disability that requires dietary restrictions. For additional guidance, visit the “[Choking Prevention](#)” section of the CSDE’s [Food Safety for Child Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

How to Identify Creditable Grains in the CACFP

Resources

Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the CACFP (CSDE):

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

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

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

CACFP Training Tools (USDA):

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

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

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

Calculation Methods for Grain Servings in the CACFP (*through September 30, 2021*) (CSDE):

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

Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP (CSDE):

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

Crediting Enriched Grains in the CACFP (CSDE):

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

Crediting Whole Grains in the CACFP (CSDE):

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

Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs (USDA):

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

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

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

Grain Crediting Worksheets for CACFP Adult Day Care Centers (Worksheets 1-5)

(“Documents/Forms” section of the CSDE’s Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers webpage):

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

Grain Crediting Worksheets for CACFP Child Care Program (Worksheets 1-5)

(“Documents/Forms” section of the CSDE’s Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs webpage):

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

How to Identify Creditable Grains in the CACFP

Grain Ounce Equivalents for the CACFP (*effective October 1, 2021*) (CSDE):

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

Grain Servings for the CACFP (*through September 30, 2021*) (CSDE):

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

Grain-based Desserts in the CACFP – Handouts and webinars in English and Spanish (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/grain-based-desserts-cacfp>

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>

How to Spot Whole Grain-Rich Foods for the CACFP – Handouts in English and Spanish

(USDA): <https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/how-spot-whole-grain-rich-foods-cacfp>

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

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

Is My Recipe Whole Grain-Rich in the CACFP? – Handouts in English and Spanish (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/my-recipe-whole-grain-rich-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

(*effective October 1, 2021*) (USDA):

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

Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Grains in Child Nutrition Programs

(*effective October 1, 2021*) – Completed Sample (USDA):

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

Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Grains/Breads Servings in the Child and Adult Care Food Program, Summer Food Service Program, and NSLP Afterschool Snacks (*through September 30, 2021*) (USDA):

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

How to Identify Creditable Grains in the CACFP

Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Grains/Breads Servings in the Child and Adult Care Food Program, Summer Food Service Program, and NSLP Afterschool Snacks (*through September 30, 2021*) – Completed Sample (USDA):

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

Resources for the CACFP Meal Patterns (CSDE):

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

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

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

USDA Memo CACFP 09-2018: 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>

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>

Webinar: Exhibit A Grains Tool to the Rescue (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/exhibit-grains-tool-rescue>

Webinar: How to Maximize the Exhibit A Grains Tool (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/how-maximize-exhibit-grains-tool>

Whole Grain-rich Criteria for the CACFP (CSDE):

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

How to Identify Creditable Grains 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](#) 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/IdentifyCreditableGrainsCACFP.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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