

Using Product Formulation Statements 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 for children and crediting requirements, 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 adult meal patterns and crediting requirements, 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 that commercial processed foods (such as pizza, chicken nuggets, and macaroni and cheese) provide the amount of the food components credited toward the CACFP meal patterns. For example, to credit cheese pizza as 2 ounces of the meat/meat alternates component, CACFP facilities must obtain documentation from the manufacturer indicating that one serving of the product contains 2 ounces of cheese.


Menu planners cannot determine the amount of the meal pattern components in a product by reading the Nutrition Facts label or ingredients statement. If a commercial processed product does not have a Child Nutrition (CN) label, CACFP facilities must obtain a product formulation statement (PFS) from the manufacturer that indicates the product’s meal pattern contribution.

A PFS is a document developed by manufacturers that provides specific information about how a product credits toward the USDA 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. The information on PFS forms can vary among manufacturers because these forms are not monitored by the USDA. Table 1 shows an example of a completed USDA PFS form for a commercial grain product.



Using Product Formulation Statements in the CACFP

Table 1. Example of a completed PFS for a commercial grain product



**Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Grains
in Child Nutrition Programs**

(Crediting Standards Based on Grams of Creditable Grains (ounce equivalent))

Program operators should include a copy of the label from the purchased product package in addition to the following information on letterhead signed by an official company representative. Program operators have the option to choose the crediting method that fits their specific menu planning needs.

Product Name: Wheat Smile Pancakes Code No.: 14005

Manufacturer: ABC Bread Company Serving Size: 2 pancakes: 50 grams (1.75 ounces)
(raw dough weight may be used to calculate creditable grains)

I. Does the product meet the whole grain-rich criteria? Yes No

II. Does the product contain non-creditable grains? Yes No **How many grams?**
(Products with more than 0.24 ounce equivalent (oz eq) or 3.99 grams (g) for Groups A-G or 6.99g for Groups H and I of non-creditable grains do not credit toward the grains requirement for school meals.)

III. Use Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs in the Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs (FBG) to determine if the product fits into Groups A-G (baked goods), Group H (cereal grains) or Group I (RTE breakfast cereals). *(Different methodologies are applied to calculate the grains contribution based on creditable grains. Groups A-G use the standard of 16g creditable grains per oz eq; Groups H and I use the standard of 28g creditable grains per oz eq or volume.)*

Indicate which Exhibit A Group (A-I) the product belongs: C

DESCRIPTION OF CREDITABLE GRAIN INGREDIENT*	GRAMS OF CREDITABLE GRAIN INGREDIENT PER PORTION ¹ A	GRAM STANDARD OF CREDITABLE GRAINS PER OZ EQ (16g or 28g) ² B	CREDITABLE AMOUNT A ÷ B
Whole wheat flour (30%)	15	16	0.9375
Enriched flour (22%)	11	16	0.6875
Total			1.625
Total Creditable Amount³			1.50

* Creditable grains vary by Program. See the FBG for specific Program requirements.
¹ (Serving size) X (% of creditable grains in formula); serving sizes other than grams must be converted to grams.
² Standard grams of creditable grains from the corresponding Group in Exhibit A.
³ Total Creditable Amount must be rounded **down** to the nearest quarter (0.25) oz eq. Do **not** round up.

Total weight (per portion) of product as purchased 50 g (1.75 oz)

Total contribution of product (per portion) 1.5 oz eq

I certify that the above information is true and correct and that a 1.75 ounce portion of this product (ready for serving) provides 1.5 oz eq grains. I further certify that non-creditable grains **are not** above 0.24 oz eq per portion. Products with more than 0.24 oz eq or 3.99g for Groups A-G or 6.99g for Groups H and I of non-creditable grains do not credit toward the grains requirement for school meals.

John Smith

Signature

John Smith

Printed Name

President, ABC Bread Company

Title

07/01/2022 (123) 456-7890

Date Phone Number

September 2020

Using Product Formulation Statements in the CACFP

PFS Forms versus Child Nutrition (CN) Labels

PFS forms are not the same as CN labels. CN labels are the definitive documentation for verifying a product's crediting information for the Child Nutrition Programs. Table 2 compares the criteria for CN labels and PFS forms.

Table 2. Comparison of CN labels and PFS forms		
Criteria	CN labels ¹	PFS forms
Standard information required	✓	
Reviewed and monitored by the USDA	✓	
Includes USDA's guarantee of meal component contribution for Child Nutrition Programs	✓	
Distinct six-digit product identification number	✓	
CACFP facilities must check crediting information for accuracy		✓

¹ For information on CN labels, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Using Child Nutrition \(CN\) Labels in the CACFP](#), and visit the USDA's [CN Labeling Food Manufacturers/Industry](#) webpage.

Unlike CN labels, PFS forms are not monitored by the USDA and do not guarantee compliance with the USDA meal patterns. Therefore, CACFP facilities must check the manufacturer's crediting information for accuracy (and request supporting documentation if needed) **prior** to including the product in reimbursable meals and snacks. All creditable ingredients in the PFS must match a description in the FBG.

Manufacturers are responsible for ensuring that the product is processed to meet the meal pattern contribution stated on the PFS. CACFP facilities are responsible for verifying the crediting information on the PFS, and maintaining this documentation on file for the CSDE's Administrative Review of the CACFP

Using Product Formulation Statements in the CACFP

Required Information for PFS Forms

To document a product's crediting information, the manufacturer's PFS must:

- list the product name, product code, serving size, and creditable ingredients;
- indicate how the product credits toward the USDA's meal pattern requirements;
- document how the manufacturer obtained the crediting information by citing specific Child Nutrition Program resources or regulations, such as the USDA's [Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs](#) (FBG) and USDA policy on crediting foods (e.g., [USDA policy memos for Child Nutrition Programs](#) and [Food and Nutrition Service \(FNS\) instructions for Child Nutrition Programs](#)); and
- be prepared on company letterhead with the signature of a company official and the date of issue. The signature can be handwritten, stamped, or electronic.

PFS forms that do not meet these requirements cannot be accepted as crediting documentation. CACFP facilities must request a revised PFS (and supporting documentation if needed) from the manufacturer.

Manufacturers may modify the USDA's PFS forms for various types of commercial products. For example, cheese pizza could have crediting information for the vegetables component in addition to the meat/meat alternates and grains components. Manufacturers may choose to use one PFS to document the crediting information for each meal component but must clearly identify how each component contributes to the meal pattern requirements. The PFS must include the information needed for CACFP sponsors to determine how the product contributes to the meal pattern requirements.



Using Product Formulation Statements in the CACFP

Reviewing PFS Forms

An appropriate PFS form will provide specific information about the product and show how the manufacturer obtained the meal pattern crediting information by citing [Child Nutrition Program regulations](#) or USDA resources such as [USDA policy memos](#), [FNS instructions](#), and other USDA policy guidance. Sponsors must review this information for accuracy using the guidance below.

- 1. Review the PFS prior to purchasing processed products.** The USDA's [Food Manufacturers/Industry](#) webpage contains resources to assist sponsors with this process, including sample PFS forms for the meat/meat alternates, grains, fruits, and vegetables components; and other resources for reviewing crediting documentation for commercial products. These resources are listed below.

Meat/Meat Alternates

- Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Meats/Meat Alternates (M/MA) in Child Nutrition Programs (USDA):
https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource-files/PFS_Meats-Meat_Alternates_Fillable_508.pdf
- Questions and Answers on Alternate Protein Products (APP):
<https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/APPindustryfaqs.pdf>
- Reviewer's Checklist for Evaluating Manufacturer Product Formulation Statements (Product Analysis) for Meat/Meat Alternate (M/MA) Products:
https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/reviewer_checklist.pdf

Vegetables and Fruits

- Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Vegetables and Fruits in the Child and Adult Care Food Program, Summer Food Service Program, and NSLP Afterschool Snacks (USDA):
https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource-files/PFS_Total_Veg_Fruits_Fillable_508.pdf

Grains

- 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

Using Product Formulation Statements in the CACFP

- 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

For guidance on how to review PFS forms for grains, refer to “How to Evaluate a PFS” in section 6 of the CSDE’s guide, *Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the NSLP and SBP Meal Patterns for Grades K-12*.

2. **Verify the accuracy of the PFS.** Sponsors must review the information below.

- Determine that the creditable ingredients listed in the PFS match a description in the FBG. If a PFS for a specific product claims to provide a higher meal component credit than the amount listed in the FBG, the PFS must clarify all credited ingredients and demonstrate how the product provides that credit according to the USDA’s regulations, guidance, or policy.
- Verify that the product’s stated credit toward the USDA’s meal pattern requirements 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.
- Assure that the creditable components are visible in the finished product. To claim a contribution toward the meat/meat alternates component, the product must have a visible meat or meat alternate (such as a sausage link, beans, cheese, or peanut butter), and the PFS must specify the method for crediting these items.



The USDA encourages careful review of product literature. Sponsors are accountable for ensuring that reimbursable meals and snacks meet the meal pattern requirements.

For additional guidance on accepting product documentation, refer to the CSDE’s resource, *Accepting Processed Product Documentation 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 Child Care Programs” or “Crediting Commercial Processed Products in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers” sections of the CSDE’s CACFP webpages.

Using Product Formulation Statements in the CACFP

Resources

Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the CACFP (CSDE):

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

Bite Size: Meeting the CACFP Meal Patterns for Children: Module 2: Meal Pattern Documentation (CSDE):

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

Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE Webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Child-and-Adult-Care-Food-Program>

Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers (CSDE webpage):

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

Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs (CSDE webpage):

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

Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) instructions (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/FNS-Instructions-for-Child-Nutrition-Programs>

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>

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 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>

Presentation: CN Labels and Product Formulation Statements (USDA):

<https://theicn.org/resources/930/march-2016/109876/manufacturers-product-formulation-statement-pfs03-31-16.pdf>

Resources for the CACFP Meal Patterns (CSDE):

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

Using Product Formulation Statements in the CACFP

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

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

USDA Policy Memos for the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) (USDA's FNS Documents & Forms webpage):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/resources>

USDA Product Formulation Statements (USDA's Food Manufacturers/Industry webpage):

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

Using Product Formulation Statements 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, School Health, Nutrition and Family Services, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841.

This document is available at http://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/Crediting/Using_Product_Formulation_Statements_CACFP.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, audiotope, 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/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.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 affirmative action/equal opportunity 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 age, ancestry, color, civil air patrol status, criminal record (in state employment and licensing), gender identity or expression, genetic information, intellectual disability, learning disability, marital status, mental disability (past or present), national origin, physical disability (including blindness), race, religious creed, retaliation for previously opposed discrimination or coercion, sex (pregnancy or sexual harassment), sexual orientation, veteran status or workplace hazards to reproductive systems, 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: Levy Gillespie, Equal Employment Opportunity Director/Americans with Disabilities Coordinator (ADA), Connecticut State Department of Education, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 505, Hartford, CT 06103, 860-807-2071, levy.gillespie@ct.gov.