

Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Meal Patterns for Children

July 1, 2020, through July 30, 2021

The CACFP meal patterns for children are defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) final rule, *Child and Adult Care Food Program: Meal Pattern Revisions Related to the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010*. For more information, refer to the Connecticut State Department of Education’s (CSDE) guide, *Meal Pattern Requirements for CACFP Child Care Programs*, and visit the CSDE’s [Meal Patterns for CACFP Child Care Programs](#) and [Crediting Foods for CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpages.

Breakfast				
Food components ¹	Ages 1-2	Ages 3-5	Ages 6-12	Ages 13-18 ²
Milk, fluid ³ Age 1: Unflavored whole milk Ages 2 and older: Unflavored low-fat (1%) or fat-free milk	4 fluid ounces (fl oz) (½ cup)	6 fl oz (¾ cup)	8 fl oz (1 cup)	8 fl oz (1 cup)
Vegetables, fruits, or portions of both ^{4,5,6}	¼ cup	½ cup	½ cup	½ cup
Grains ^{7,8,9,10,11} Whole grain-rich (WGR) or enriched bread	½ slice ¹¹	½ slice ¹¹	1 slice ¹¹	1 slice ¹¹
WGR or enriched bread product, e.g., biscuit, roll, or muffin	½ serving ¹¹	½ serving ¹¹	1 serving ¹¹	1 serving ¹¹
WGR, enriched, or fortified cooked breakfast cereal ¹² , cereal grain ¹³ , or pasta	¼ cup	¼ cup	½ cup	½ cup
WGR, enriched, or fortified ready-to-eat (RTE) breakfast cereal (dry, cold) ^{12,14}	¼ cup or ⅓ ounce	⅓ cup or ½ ounce	¾ cup or 1 ounce	¾ cup or 1 ounce

◀ See below for important menu planning notes ▶

Menu planning notes for breakfast

- ¹ Breakfast must include the minimum serving of all three components. Use the USDA’s [Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs](#) (FBG) to determine the amount of purchased food that meets the requirements. For processed foods, review the product’s Child Nutrition (CN) label or product formulation statement (PFS). For more information, see the CSDE’s handouts, [Using Child Nutrition \(CN\) Labels in the CACFP](#), [Using Product Formulation Statements in the CACFP](#), [Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the CACFP](#), and [Crediting Commercial Meat/Meat Alternate Products in the CACFP](#); and visit the “[Crediting Commercial Processed Products](#)” section of the CSDE’s [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage. Foods made on site must have a recipe that documents crediting information. For more information, visit the “[Crediting Foods Prepared on Site](#)” section of the CSDE’s [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage.
- ² 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.
- ³ Milk must be unflavored whole milk for age 1 and unflavored low-fat (1%) or fat-free milk for ages 2 and older. Flavored milk cannot be served. For more information, visit the “[Milk Component](#)” section of the CSDE’s [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage.

CACFP Meal Patterns for Children

Breakfast

Menu planning notes for breakfast, *continued*

- 4 The vegetables component includes fresh, frozen, canned, and rehydrated dried vegetables. Dried vegetables require a PFS. A serving of cooked vegetables must be drained. Vegetables credit based on volume, except raw leafy greens such as lettuce and spinach credit as half the volume served (e.g., 1 cup credits as ½ cup of vegetables), and tomato paste and puree credit based on the volume as if reconstituted (see the FBG). The USDA’s *CACFP Best Practices* recommends that CACFP menus include at least one serving per week of dark green vegetables, red and orange vegetables, beans and peas (legumes), starchy vegetables, and other vegetables. For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, *Vegetable Subgroups in the CACFP*, and visit the “[Vegetables Component](#)” section of the CSDE’s [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage.
- 5 Pasteurized full-strength juice credits as the vegetables or fruits component at only one meal or snack per day. Juice includes all fruit and vegetable juice, frozen pops made from 100 percent juice, pureed fruits and vegetables in smoothies, and juice from canned fruit in 100 percent juice. For more information, see the CSDE’s handouts, *Crediting Juice in the CACFP* and *Crediting Smoothies in the CACFP*. The USDA’s *CACFP Best Practices* recommends serving whole fruits (fresh, frozen, canned, and dried) more often than juice.
- 6 The fruits component includes fresh, frozen, canned, and dried fruit. Serve canned fruit in juice, water, or light syrup. A serving of canned fruit may include the 100 percent juice in which the fruit is packed, but cannot include water or syrup. Dried fruit credits as twice the volume served, e.g., ¼ cup of raisins credits as ½ cup of the fruits component. For more information, visit the “[Fruits Component](#)” section of the CSDE’s [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage.
- 7 To credit as the grains component, a creditable grain (whole, enriched, bran, or germ) must be the first ingredient (excluding water) or the greatest ingredient by weight. For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, *How to Identify Creditable Grains in the CACFP*, and visit the “[Grains Component](#)” section of the CSDE’s [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage.
- 8 At least one serving per day must be WGR. The USDA’s *CACFP Best Practices* recommends at least two servings of WGR grains per day. WGR foods for the CACFP contain at least 50 percent whole grains and the remaining grain ingredients are enriched, bran, or germ. For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, *Whole Grain-rich Criteria for the CACFP*, and visit the “[Whole Grain-rich Requirement](#)” section of the CSDE’s [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage.
- 9 Except for sweet crackers (such as graham crackers and animal crackers), grain-based desserts cannot credit. Examples include cookies, piecrusts in sweet pies, doughnuts, cereal bars, granola bars, sweet rolls, pastries, toaster pastries, cake, and brownies. The CSDE recommends not serving sweet crackers more than twice per week between all meals and snacks. For more information, visit the USDA’s webpage, [Grain-based Desserts in the CACFP](#).
- 10 Meat/meat alternates may substitute for the entire grains component at breakfast up to three times per week. A 1-ounce serving of the meat/meat alternates component substitutes for one serving of the grains component. For more information, visit the USDA’s webpage, [Serving Meat and Meat Alternates at Breakfast](#).
- 11 Through September 30, 2021, grains must meet the required weights or volumes in *Grain Servings for the CACFP*, or provide the minimum creditable grains per serving. For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, *Calculation Methods for Grain Servings in the CACFP*. Effective October 1, 2021, the required amounts for the grains component change to ounce equivalents. For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, *Grain Ounce Equivalents for the CACFP*, and visit the “[Serving Size for Grains](#)” section of the CSDE’s [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage.
- 12 Breakfast cereals cannot contain more than 6 grams of sugars per dry ounce (no more than 21.2 grams of sucrose and other sugars per 100 grams of dry cereal). For more information, see the CSDE’s handout, *Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP*.
- 13 Examples of cereal grains include amaranth, barley, buckwheat, cornmeal, corn grits, kasha, millet, oats, quinoa, wheat berries, and rolled wheat.
- 14 Effective October 1, 2021, the required amounts for RTE breakfast cereals change to ounce equivalents. The required amount for ages 1-2 and 3-5 (½ ounce equivalent) is ½ cup of flakes or rounds, ¾ cups of puffed cereal, and ⅛ cup of granola. The required amount for ages 6-12 and 13-18 (1 ounce equivalent) is 1 cup of flakes or rounds, 1¼ cups of puffed cereal, and ¼ cup of granola.

CACFP Meal Patterns for Children

Lunch and Supper				
Food components ¹	Ages 1-2	Ages 3-5	Ages 6-12	Ages 13-18 ²
Milk, fluid ³ Age 1: Unflavored whole milk Ages 2 and older: Unflavored low-fat (1%) or fat-free milk	4 fl oz ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup)	6 fl oz ($\frac{3}{4}$ cup)	8 fl oz (1 cup)	8 fl oz (1 cup)
Meat/meat alternates ⁴ Lean meat, poultry, or fish	1 ounce	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces	2 ounces	2 ounces
Surimi ⁵	3 ounces	4.4 ounces	6 ounces	6 ounces
Tofu, soy products, tempeh, or alternate protein products (APPs) ⁶	1 ounce	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces	2 ounces	2 ounces
Cheese	1 ounce	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces	2 ounces	2 ounces
Cottage cheese	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup	$\frac{3}{8}$ cup	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup
Egg, large	$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{3}{4}$	1	1
Cooked dry beans or peas ⁷	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup	$\frac{3}{8}$ cup	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup
Peanut butter, soy nut butter, or other nut or seed butters	2 tablespoons	3 tablespoons	4 tablespoons	4 tablespoons
Peanuts, soy nuts, tree nuts, or seeds ⁸	$\frac{1}{2}$ ounce = 50%	$\frac{3}{4}$ ounce = 50%	1 ounce = 50%	1 ounce = 50%
Yogurt or soy yogurt, plain or flavored, unsweetened or sweetened ⁹	4 ounces or $\frac{1}{2}$ cup	6 ounces or $\frac{3}{4}$ cup	8 ounces or 1 cup	8 ounces or 1 cup
Vegetables ^{10,11}	$\frac{1}{8}$ cup	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup
Fruits ^{11, 12, 13}	$\frac{1}{8}$ cup	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup
Grains ^{14, 15, 16, 17} WGR or enriched bread	$\frac{1}{2}$ slice ¹⁷	$\frac{1}{2}$ slice ¹⁷	1 slice ¹⁷	1 slice ¹⁷
WGR or enriched bread product, e.g., biscuit, roll, or muffin	$\frac{1}{2}$ serving ¹⁷	$\frac{1}{2}$ serving ¹⁷	1 serving ¹⁷	1 serving ¹⁷
WGR, enriched, or fortified cooked breakfast cereal ¹⁸ , cereal grain ¹⁹ , or pasta	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup
WGR, enriched, or fortified ready-to-eat (RTE) breakfast cereal (dry, cold) ^{18,20}	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup or $\frac{1}{3}$ ounce	$\frac{1}{3}$ cup or $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce	$\frac{3}{4}$ cup or 1 ounce	$\frac{3}{4}$ cup or 1 ounce
◀ See next page for important menu planning notes ▶				

CACFP Meal Patterns for Children

Lunch and Supper

Menu planning notes for lunch and supper

- ¹ Lunch and supper must include the minimum serving of all five components. Use the USDA's *Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs* (FBG) to determine the amount of purchased food that meets the requirements. For processed foods, review the product's Child Nutrition (CN) label or product formulation statement (PFS). For more information, see the CSDE's handouts, *Using Child Nutrition (CN) Labels in the CACFP*, *Using Product Formulation Statements in the CACFP*, *Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the CACFP*, and *Crediting Commercial Meat/Meat Alternate Products in the CACFP*; and visit the "Crediting Commercial Processed Products" section of the CSDE's *Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs* webpage. Foods made on site must have a recipe that documents crediting information. For more information, visit the "Crediting Foods Prepared on Site" section of the CSDE's *Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs* webpage.
- ² 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.
- ³ Milk must be unflavored whole milk for age 1 and unflavored low-fat (1%) or fat-free milk for ages 2 and older. Flavored milk cannot be served. For more information, visit the "Milk Component" section of the CSDE's *Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs* webpage.
- ⁴ A serving is the edible portion of cooked lean meat, poultry, or fish, e.g., cooked lean meat without bone, breading, binders, fillers, or other ingredients. For more information, see the CSDE's handouts, *Crediting Meat/Meat Alternates in the CACFP* and *Crediting Deli Meats in the CACFP*. The USDA's *CACFP Best Practices* recommends serving only lean meats, nuts, and legumes; limiting processed meats to one serving per week; and serving only low-fat or reduced-fat natural cheese.
- ⁵ Surimi seafood is a pasteurized, ready-to-eat, restructured seafood product usually made from pollock (fish). A CN label or manufacturer's PFS is required to credit surimi seafood differently from these amounts.
- ⁶ APPs must meet the requirements in [appendix A](#) of the CACFP regulations (7 CFR 226). Tofu must contain at least 5 grams of protein in 2.2 ounces (weight) or ¼ cup (volume). For more information, see the CSDE's handouts, *Requirements for Alternate Protein Products in the CACFP* and *Crediting Tofu and Tofu Products in the CACFP*. A 1-ounce serving of tempeh credits as 1 ounce of the meat/meat alternates component if the product's ingredients include only soybeans (or other legumes), water, tempeh culture, and for some varieties, vinegar, seasonings, and herbs. If a tempeh product contains other ingredients, a CN label or PFS is required to document crediting information.
- ⁷ Legumes (cooked dry beans and peas) credit as either the meat/meat alternates component or the vegetables component, but not both in the same meal. For more information, see the CSDE's handout, *Crediting Legumes in the CACFP*.
- ⁸ Creditable nuts and seeds include almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, filberts, macadamia nuts, peanuts, pecans, walnuts, pine nuts, pistachios, and soy nuts. Nuts and seeds cannot credit for more than half of the meat/meat alternates component. They must be combined with another meat/meat alternate to meet the total requirement. **Note:** Children younger than 4 are at the highest risk of choking. The USDA recommends that any nuts or seeds served to young children are in a prepared food, and are ground or finely chopped. For more information, see the CSDE's handout, *Crediting Nuts and Seeds in the CACFP*.
- ⁹ Yogurt and soy yogurt cannot contain more than 23 grams of total sugars per 6 ounces (no more than 3.83 grams per ounce). For more information, see the CSDE's handout, *Crediting Yogurt in the CACFP*.
- ¹⁰ The vegetables component includes fresh, frozen, canned, and rehydrated dried vegetables. Dried vegetables require a PFS. A serving of cooked vegetables must be drained. Vegetables credit based on volume, except raw leafy greens such as lettuce and spinach credit as half the volume served (e.g., 1 cup credits as ½ cup of vegetables), and tomato paste and puree credit based on the volume as if reconstituted (see the FBG). The USDA's *CACFP Best Practices* recommends that CACFP menus include at least one serving per week of dark green vegetables, red and orange vegetables, beans and peas (legumes), starchy vegetables, and other vegetables. For more information, see the CSDE's handout, *Vegetable Subgroups in the CACFP*, and visit the "Vegetables Component" section of the CSDE's *Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs* webpage.

CACFP Meal Patterns for Children

Lunch and Supper

Menu planning notes for lunch and supper, *continued*

- ¹¹ Pasteurized full-strength juice credits as the vegetables or fruits component at only one meal or snack per day. Juice includes all fruit and vegetable juice, frozen pops made from 100 percent juice, pureed fruits and vegetables in smoothies, and juice from canned fruit in 100 percent juice. For more information, see the CSDE's handouts, [Crediting Juice in the CACFP](#) and [Crediting Smoothies in the CACFP](#). The USDA's [CACFP Best Practices](#) recommends serving whole fruits (fresh, frozen, canned, and dried) more often than juice. For more information, visit the "[Fruits Component](#)" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage.
- ¹² Vegetables can substitute for the entire fruits component at lunch and supper. If lunch or supper includes two servings of vegetables, they must be different kinds.
- ¹³ The fruits component includes fresh, frozen, canned, and dried fruit. Serve canned fruit in juice, water, or light syrup. A serving of canned fruit may include the 100 percent juice in which the fruit is packed, but cannot include water or syrup. Dried fruit credits as twice the volume served, e.g., $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of raisins credits as $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the fruits component.
- ¹⁴ To credit as the grains component, a creditable grain (whole, enriched, bran, or germ) must be the first ingredient (excluding water) or the greatest ingredient by weight. For more information, see the CSDE's handout, [How to Identify Creditable Grains in the CACFP](#), and visit the "[Grains Component](#)" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage.
- ¹⁵ At least one serving per day must be WGR. The USDA's [CACFP Best Practices](#) recommends at least two servings of WGR grains per day. WGR foods for the CACFP contain at least 50 percent whole grains and the remaining grain ingredients are enriched, bran, or germ. For more information, see the CSDE's handout, [Whole Grain-rich Criteria for the CACFP](#), and visit the "[Whole Grain-rich Requirement](#)" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage.
- ¹⁶ Except for sweet crackers (such as graham crackers and animal crackers), grain-based desserts cannot credit. Examples include cookies, piecrusts in sweet pies, doughnuts, cereal bars, granola bars, sweet rolls, pastries, toaster pastries, cake, and brownies. The CSDE recommends not serving sweet crackers more than twice per week between all meals and snacks. For more information, visit the USDA's webpage, [Grain-based Desserts in the CACFP](#).
- ¹⁷ Through September 30, 2021, grains must meet the required weights or volumes in [Grain Servings for the CACFP](#), or provide the minimum creditable grains per serving. For more information, see the CSDE's handout, [Calculation Methods for Grain Servings in the CACFP](#). Effective October 1, 2021, the required amounts for the grains component change to ounce equivalents. For more information, see the CSDE's handout, [Grain Ounce Equivalents for the CACFP](#), and visit the "[Serving Size for Grains](#)" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage.
- ¹⁸ Breakfast cereals cannot contain more than 6 grams of sugars per dry ounce (no more than 21.2 grams of sucrose and other sugars per 100 grams of dry cereal). For more information, see the CSDE's handout, [Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP](#).
- ¹⁹ Examples of cereal grains include amaranth, barley, buckwheat, cornmeal, corn grits, kasha, millet, oats, quinoa, wheat berries, and rolled wheat.
- ²⁰ Effective October 1, 2021, the required amounts for RTE breakfast cereals change to ounce equivalents. The required amount for ages 1-2 and 3-5 ($\frac{1}{2}$ ounce equivalent) is $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of flakes or rounds, $\frac{3}{4}$ cups of puffed cereal, and $\frac{1}{8}$ cup of granola. The required amount for ages 6-12 and 13-18 (1 ounce equivalent) is 1 cup of flakes or rounds, $1\frac{1}{4}$ cups of puffed cereal, and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of granola.

CACFP Meal Patterns for Children

Snack				
Serve any two of the five components (must be two different components) ¹	Ages 1-2	Ages 3-5	Ages 6-12	Ages 13-18 ²
Milk, fluid ³ Age 1: Unflavored whole milk Ages 2 and older: Unflavored low-fat (1%) or fat-free milk	4 fl oz (½ cup)	4 fl oz (½ cup)	8 fl oz (1 cup)	8 fl oz (1 cup)
Meat/meat alternates Lean meat, poultry, or fish ⁴	½ ounce	½ ounce	1 ounce	1 ounce
Surimi ⁵	2 ounces	2 ounces	3 ounces	3 ounces
Tofu, soy products, tempeh, or alternate protein products (APPs) ⁶	½ ounce	½ ounce	1 ounce	1 ounce
Cheese	½ ounce	½ ounce	1 ounce	1 ounce
Cottage cheese	⅛ cup	⅛ cup	¼ cup	¼ cup
Egg, large	½	½	½	½
Cooked dry beans or peas ⁷	⅛ cup	⅛ cup	¼ cup	¼ cup
Peanut butter, soy nut butter, or other nut or seed butters	1 tablespoon	1 tablespoon	2 tablespoons	2 tablespoons
Peanuts, soy nuts, tree nuts, or seeds ⁸	½ ounce	½ ounce	1 ounce	1 ounce
Yogurt or soy yogurt, plain or flavored, unsweetened or sweetened ⁹	2 ounces or ¼ cup	2 ounces or ¼ cup	4 ounces or ½ cup	4 ounces or ½ cup
Vegetables ^{10, 11}	½ cup	½ cup	¾ cup	¾ cup
Fruits ^{11, 12}	½ cup	½ cup	¾ cup	¾ cup
Grains ^{13, 14, 15, 16} WGR or enriched bread	½ slice ¹⁶	½ slice ¹⁶	1 slice ¹⁶	1 slice ¹⁶
WGR or enriched bread product, e.g., biscuit, roll, or muffin	½ serving ¹⁶	½ serving ¹⁶	1 serving ¹⁶	1 serving ¹⁶
WGR, enriched, or fortified cooked breakfast cereal ¹⁷ , cereal grain ¹⁸ , or pasta	¼ cup	¼ cup	½ cup	½ cup
WGR, enriched, or fortified ready-to-eat (RTE) breakfast cereal (dry, cold) ^{17, 19}	¼ cup or ⅓ ounce	⅓ cup or ½ ounce	¾ cup or 1 ounce	¾ cup or 1 ounce
◀ See next page for important menu planning notes ▶				

CACFP Meal Patterns for Children

Snack

Menu planning notes for snack

- ¹ Snack must include the minimum serving of two of the five components. Only one of the two components may be a creditable beverage. The USDA's *CACFP Best Practices* recommends serving a vegetable or fruit for at least one snack component. Use the USDA's *Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs* (FBG) to determine the amount of purchased food that meets the requirements. For processed foods, review the product's Child Nutrition (CN) label or product formulation statement (PFS). For more information, see the CSDE's handouts, *Using Child Nutrition (CN) Labels in the CACFP*, *Using Product Formulation Statements in the CACFP*, *Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the CACFP*, and *Crediting Commercial Meat/Meat Alternate Products in the CACFP*; and visit the "Crediting Commercial Processed Products" section of the CSDE's *Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs* webpage. Foods made on site must have a recipe that documents crediting information. For more information, visit the "Crediting Foods Prepared on Site" section of the CSDE's *Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs* webpage.
- ² 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.
- ³ Milk must be unflavored whole milk for age 1 and unflavored low-fat (1%) or fat-free milk for ages 2 and older. Flavored milk cannot be served. For more information, visit the "Milk Component" section of the CSDE's *Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs* webpage.
- ⁴ A serving is the edible portion of cooked lean meat, poultry, or fish, e.g., cooked lean meat without bone, breading, binders, fillers, or other ingredients. For more information, see the CSDE's handouts, *Crediting Meat/Meat Alternates in the CACFP* and *Crediting Deli Meats in the CACFP*. The USDA's *CACFP Best Practices* recommends serving only lean meats, nuts, and legumes; limiting processed meats to one serving per week; and serving only low-fat or reduced-fat natural cheese.
- ⁵ Surimi seafood is a pasteurized, ready-to-eat, restructured seafood product usually made from pollock (fish). A CN label or manufacturer's PFS is required to credit surimi seafood differently from these amounts.
- ⁶ APPs must meet the requirements in [appendix A](#) of the CACFP regulations (7 CFR 226). Tofu must contain at least 5 grams of protein in 2.2 ounces (weight) or ¼ cup (volume). For more information, see the CSDE's handouts, *Requirements for Alternate Protein Products in the CACFP* and *Crediting Tofu and Tofu Products in the CACFP*. A 1-ounce serving of tempeh credits as 1 ounce of the meat/meat alternates component if the product's ingredients include only soybeans (or other legumes), water, tempeh culture, and for some varieties, vinegar, seasonings, and herbs. If a tempeh product contains other ingredients, a CN label or PFS is required to document crediting information.
- ⁷ Legumes (cooked dry beans and peas) credit as either the meat/meat alternates component or the vegetables component, but not both in the same snack. For more information, see the CSDE's handout, *Crediting Legumes in the CACFP*.
- ⁸ Creditable nuts and seeds include almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, filberts, macadamia nuts, peanuts, pecans, walnuts, pine nuts, pistachios, and soy nuts. **Note:** Children younger than 4 are at the highest risk of choking. The USDA recommends that any nuts or seeds served to young children are in a prepared food, and are ground or finely chopped. For more information, see the CSDE's handout, *Crediting Nuts and Seeds in the CACFP*.
- ⁹ Yogurt and soy yogurt cannot contain more than 23 grams of total sugars per 6 ounces (no more than 3.83 grams per ounce). For more information, see the CSDE's handout, *Crediting Yogurt in the CACFP*.
- ¹⁰ The vegetables component includes fresh, frozen, canned, and rehydrated dried vegetables. Dried vegetables require a PFS. A serving of cooked vegetables must be drained. Vegetables credit based on volume, except raw leafy greens such as lettuce and spinach credit as half the volume served (e.g., 1 cup credits as ½ cup of vegetables), and tomato paste and puree credit based on the volume as if reconstituted (see the FBG). The USDA's *CACFP Best Practices* recommends that CACFP menus include at least one serving per week of dark green vegetables, red and orange vegetables, beans and peas (legumes), starchy vegetables, and other vegetables; and serving a vegetable or fruit as at least one of the two required snack components. For more information, see the CSDE's handout, *Vegetable Subgroups in the CACFP*, and visit the "Vegetables Component" section of the CSDE's *Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs* webpage.

CACFP Meal Patterns for Children

Snack

Menu planning notes for snack, *continued*

- ¹¹ Pasteurized full-strength juice credits as the vegetables or fruits component at only one meal or snack per day. Juice includes all fruit and vegetable juice, frozen pops made from 100 percent juice, pureed fruits and vegetables in smoothies, and juice from canned fruit in 100 percent juice. For more information, see the CSDE's handouts, [Crediting Juice in the CACFP](#) and [Crediting Smoothies in the CACFP](#). The USDA's [CACFP Best Practices](#) recommends serving whole fruits (fresh, frozen, canned, and dried) more often than juice.
- ¹² The fruits component includes fresh, frozen, canned, and dried fruit. Serve canned fruit in juice, water, or light syrup. A serving of canned fruit may include the 100 percent juice in which the fruit is packed, but cannot include water or syrup. Dried fruit credits as twice the volume served, e.g., $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of raisins credits as $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the fruits component. The USDA's [CACFP Best Practices](#) recommends serving a fruit or vegetable as at least one of the two required snack components. For more information, visit the "Fruits Component" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage.
- ¹³ To credit as the grains component, a creditable grain (whole, enriched, bran, or germ) must be the first ingredient (excluding water) or the greatest ingredient by weight. For more information, see the CSDE's handout, [How to Identify Creditable Grains in the CACFP](#), and visit the "Grains Component" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage.
- ¹⁴ At least one serving per day must be WGR. The USDA's [CACFP Best Practices](#) recommends at least two servings of WGR grains per day. WGR foods for the CACFP contain at least 50 percent whole grains and the remaining grain ingredients are enriched, bran, or germ. For more information, see the CSDE's handout, [Whole Grain-rich Criteria for the CACFP](#), and visit the "Whole Grain-rich Requirement" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage.
- ¹⁵ Except for sweet crackers (such as graham crackers and animal crackers), grain-based desserts cannot credit. Examples include cookies, piecrusts in sweet pies, doughnuts, cereal bars, granola bars, sweet rolls, pastries, toaster pastries, cake, and brownies. The CSDE recommends not serving sweet crackers more than twice per week between all meals and snacks. For more information, visit the USDA's webpage, [Grain-based Desserts in the CACFP](#).
- ¹⁶ Through September 30, 2021, grains must meet the required weights or volumes in [Grain Servings for the CACFP](#), or provide the minimum creditable grains per serving. For more information, see the CSDE's handout, [Calculation Methods for Grain Servings in the CACFP](#). Effective October 1, 2021, the required amounts for the grains component change to ounce equivalents. For more information, see the CSDE's handout, [Grain Ounce Equivalents for the CACFP](#), and visit the "Serving Size for Grains" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage.
- ¹⁷ Breakfast cereals cannot contain more than 6 grams of sugars per dry ounce (no more than 21.2 grams of sucrose and other sugars per 100 grams of dry cereal). For more information, see the CSDE's handout, [Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP](#).
- ¹⁸ Examples of cereal grains include amaranth, barley, buckwheat, cornmeal, corn grits, kasha, millet, oats, quinoa, wheat berries, and rolled wheat.
- ¹⁹ Effective October 1, 2021, the required amounts for RTE breakfast cereals change to ounce equivalents. The required amount for ages 1-2 and 3-5 ($\frac{1}{2}$ ounce equivalent) is $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of flakes or rounds, $\frac{3}{4}$ cups of puffed cereal, and $\frac{1}{8}$ cup of granola. The required amount for ages 6-12 and 13-18 (1 ounce equivalent) is 1 cup of flakes or rounds, $1\frac{1}{4}$ cups of puffed cereal, and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of granola.

CACFP Meal Patterns for Children



For more information, review the CSDE's guide, *Meal Pattern Requirements for CACFP Child Care Programs*, and visit the CSDE's [Meal Patterns for CACFP Child Care Programs](#) and [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpages, or contact the [CACFP staff](#) in the CSDE, 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/MealPattern/CACFPmealpattern.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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