

Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)

Meal Patterns for Children (October 1, 2017, through September 30, 2019)

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*, updates the CACFP meal patterns, effective October 1, 2017. These meal patterns apply through September 30, 2019. Effective October 1, 2019, the serving sizes for the grains component change to ounce equivalents.

For more information on the CACFP meal patterns for children, review the CSDE’s guide, *Meal Pattern Requirements for CACFP Child Care Programs*, and visit the Connecticut State Department of Education’s (CSDE) [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	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	½ slice	1 slice	1 slice
WGR or enriched bread product, e.g., biscuit, roll, or muffin	½ serving	½ serving	1 serving	1 serving
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 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 information on crediting commercial foods, see the CSDE’s handouts, *Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the CACFP*, *Using Child Nutrition (CN) Labels in the CACFP*, and *Using Product Formulation Statements in the CACFP*.

² This age group applies only to at-risk afterschool programs and emergency shelters. Larger portion sizes may be needed to meet the nutritional needs of children ages 13-18.

Breakfast

Menu planning notes for breakfast, continued

- ³ Serve unflavored whole milk to age 1 and unflavored low-fat (1%) or unflavored fat-free milk to ages 2 and older. Flavored fat-free milk can be served to ages 6 and older, but the USDA's *CACFP Best Practices* recommends serving only unflavored milk.
- ⁴ Vegetables include fresh, frozen, and canned. Raw leafy greens such as lettuce or spinach credit as half the volume served, e.g., ½ cup of raw leafy greens credits as ¼ cup of the vegetables component. The USDA's *CACFP Best Practices* recommends 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*.
- 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*.
- ⁶ Fruits include fresh, frozen, canned, and dried. 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. The USDA's *CACFP Best Practices* recommends serving whole fruits (fresh, frozen, canned, and dried) more often than juice.
- ⁷ To credit as the grains component, a whole grain, enriched grain, bran, or germ must be the first ingredient or the greatest ingredient by weight. For information on identifying creditable grains, see the CSDE's handout, *How to Identify Creditable Grains in the CACFP*.
- 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 contain at least 50 percent whole grains and any remaining grains are enriched. For more information, see the CSDE's handout, *Whole Grain-rich Criteria for the CACFP*.
- ⁹ Except for sweet crackers such as graham crackers and animal crackers, grain-based desserts cannot credit, e.g., cookies, sweet pie crusts, 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, see the USDA's handout, *Grain-Based Desserts in the CACFP*.
- ¹⁰ Through September 30, 2019, all grains must meet the applicable weights or volumes in *Serving Sizes for Grains in 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*. Beginning October 1, 2019, the grains component changes to ounce equivalents. For more information, see CSDE's handout, *WGR Ounce Equivalents for the CACFP*.
- ¹¹ Meat/meat alternates may substitute for the entire grains component at breakfast up to three times per week. A 1-ounce serving of meat/meat alternates substitutes for 1 serving of the grains component. For more information, see the USDA's handout, *Serving Meat and Meat Alternates at Breakfast*.

Breakfast

Menu planning notes for breakfast, continued

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 Beginning October 1, 2019, the serving size for cold breakfast cereals is in ounce equivalents. The required volume for 1 ounce equivalent is 1 cup of flakes or rounds, 1 ¼ cups of puffed cereal, and ¼ cup of granola. The required volume for ½ ounce equivalent is ½ cup of flakes or rounds, ¾ cups of puffed cereal, and ⅛ cup of granola.

CACFP Meal Patterns for Children (October 1, 2017, through September 30, 2019)

Lunch and Supper				
Food Components ¹	Ages 1-2	Ages 3-5	Ages 6-12	Ages 13-18 ²
Milk, fluid ³	4 fl oz (½ cup)	6 fl oz (¾ cup)	8 fl oz (1 cup)	8 fl oz (1 cup)
Meat/Meat Alternates ⁴ Lean meat, poultry, or fish	1 ounce	1 ½ ounces	2 ounces	2 ounces
Tofu, soy product, or alternate protein products (APP) ⁵	1 ounce	1 ½ ounces	2 ounces	2 ounces
Cheese	1 ounce	1 ½ ounces	2 ounces	2 ounces
Cottage cheese	¼ cup	⅜ cup	½ cup	½ cup
Egg, large	½	¾	1	1
Cooked dry beans or peas ⁶	¼ cup	⅜ cup	½ cup	½ 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 ⁷	½ ounce = 50%	¾ ounce = 50%	1 ounce = 50%	1 ounce = 50%
Yogurt or soy yogurt, plain or flavored, unsweetened or sweetened ⁸	4 ounces or ½ cup	6 ounces or ¾ cup	8 ounces or 1 cup	8 ounces or 1 cup
Vegetables ^{9, 10}	⅓ cup	¼ cup	½ cup	½ cup
Fruits ^{10, 11, 12}	⅓ cup	¼ cup	¼ cup	¼ cup
Grains ^{13, 14, 15, 16} WGR or enriched bread	½ slice	½ slice	1 slice	1 slice
WGR or enriched bread product, e.g., biscuit, roll, or muffin	½ serving	½ serving	1 serving	1 serving
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 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 below for important menu planning notes ▶

Menu planning notes for lunch and supper

¹ Lunch and supper must include all five components. Use the USDA's [FBG](#) to determine the amount of purchased food that meets the requirements. For information on crediting commercial foods, see the CSDE's handouts, [Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the CACFP](#), [Using Child Nutrition \(CN\) Labels in the CACFP](#), and [Using Product Formulation Statements in the CACFP](#).

² This age group applies only to at-risk afterschool programs and emergency shelters. Larger portion sizes may be needed to meet the nutritional needs of children ages 13-18.

Lunch and Supper

Menu planning notes for lunch and supper, continued

- ³ Serve unflavored whole milk to age 1 and unflavored low-fat (1%) or unflavored fat-free milk to ages 2 and older. Flavored fat-free milk can be served to ages 6 and older, but the USDA's *CACFP Best Practices* recommends serving only unflavored milk.
- 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. 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. For more information, see the CSDE's handouts, *Crediting Meat/Meat Alternates in the CACFP* and *Crediting Deli Meats in the CACFP*.
- ⁵ APP 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 in the CACFP*.
- ⁶ 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*.
- ⁷ Creditable nuts and seeds include almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, filberts, macadamia nuts, peanuts, pecans, walnuts, pine nuts, pistachios, and soy nuts. At lunch and supper, 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. For more information, see the CSDE's handout, *Crediting Nuts and Seeds in the CACFP*.
- ⁸ 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*.
- ⁹ Vegetables include fresh, frozen, and canned. Raw leafy greens such as lettuce or spinach credit as half the volume served, e.g., ½ cup of raw leafy greens credits as ¼ cup of the vegetables component. The USDA's *CACFP Best Practices* recommends 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*.
- ¹⁰ 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*.
- ¹¹ Vegetables can substitute for the entire fruits component at lunch or supper. If serving two vegetables, they must be two different kinds.
- ¹² Fruits include fresh, frozen, canned, and dried. 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. The USDA's *CACFP Best Practices* recommends serving whole fruits (fresh, frozen, canned, and dried) more often than juice.

Lunch and Supper

Menu planning notes for lunch and supper, continued

- ¹³ To credit as the grains component, a whole grain, enriched grain, bran, or germ must be the first ingredient or the greatest ingredient by weight. For information on identifying creditable grains, see the CSDE's handout, *How to Identify Creditable Grains in the CACFP*.
- 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 contain at least 50 percent whole grains and any remaining grains are enriched. For more information, see the CSDE's handout, *Whole Grain-rich Criteria for the CACFP*.
- ¹⁵ Except for sweet crackers such as graham crackers and animal crackers, grain-based desserts cannot credit, e.g., cookies, sweet pie crusts, 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, see the USDA's handout, *Grain-Based Desserts in the CACFP*.
- ¹⁶ Through September 30, 2019, all grains must meet the applicable weights or volumes in *Serving Sizes for Grains in 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*. Beginning October 1, 2019, the grains component changes to ounce equivalents. For more information, see CSDE's handout, *WGR Ounce Equivalents for the CACFP*.
- 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 Beginning October 1, 2019, the serving size for cold breakfast cereals is in ounce equivalents. The required volume for 1 ounce equivalent is 1 cup of flakes or rounds, 1 ¼ cups of puffed cereal, and ¼ cup of granola.

CACFP Meal Patterns for Children (October 1, 2017, through September 30, 2019)

Snack				
Food Components (Serve any two of the five components) ¹	Ages 1-2	Ages 3-5	Ages 6-12	Ages 13-18 ²
Milk, fluid ³	4 fl oz (½ cup)	4 fl oz (½ cup)	8 fl oz (1 cup)	8 fl oz (1 cup)
Meat/Meat Alternates ⁴ Lean meat, poultry, or fish	½ ounce	½ ounce	1 ounce	1 ounce
Tofu, soy product, or alternate protein products (APP) ⁵	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 ⁶	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 ⁷	½ ounce	½ ounce	1 ounce	1 ounce
Yogurt or soy yogurt, plain or flavored, unsweetened or sweetened ⁸	2 ounces or ¼ cup	2 ounces or ¼ cup	4 ounces or ½ cup	4 ounces or ½ cup
Vegetables ^{9, 10}	½ cup	½ cup	¾ cup	¾ cup
Fruits ^{10, 11, 12}	½ cup	½ cup	¾ cup	¾ cup
Grains ^{13, 14, 15, 16} WGR or enriched bread	½ slice	½ slice	1 slice	1 slice
WGR or enriched bread product, e.g., biscuit, roll, or muffin	½ serving	½ serving	1 serving	1 serving
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 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 below for important menu planning notes ▶

¹ Snack must include 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 *FBG* to determine the amount of purchased food that meets the requirements. For information on crediting commercial foods,

see the CSDE's handouts, *Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the CACFP*, *Using Child Nutrition (CN) Labels in the CACFP*, and *Using Product Formulation Statements in the CACFP*.

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Snack

Menu planning notes for snack

- ³ Serve unflavored whole milk to age 1 and unflavored low-fat (1%) or unflavored fat-free milk to ages 2 and older. Flavored fat-free milk can be served to ages 6 and older, but the USDA's *CACFP Best Practices* recommends serving only unflavored milk.
- 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. 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. For more information, see the CSDE's handouts, *Crediting Meat/Meat Alternates in the CACFP* and *Crediting Deli Meats in the CACFP*.
- ⁵ APP 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 in the CACFP*.
- ⁶ 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*.
- ⁷ Creditable nuts and seeds include almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, filberts, macadamia nuts, peanuts, pecans, walnuts, pine nuts, pistachios, and soy nuts. At lunch and supper, 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. For more information, see the CSDE's handout, *Crediting Nuts and Seeds in the CACFP*.
- ⁸ 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*.
- ⁹ Vegetables include fresh, frozen, and canned. Raw leafy greens such as lettuce or spinach credit as half the volume served, e.g., ½ cup of raw leafy greens credits as ¼ cup of the vegetables component. The USDA's *CACFP Best Practices* recommends 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*.
- ¹⁰ 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*.
- ¹¹ Vegetables can substitute for the entire fruits component at lunch or supper. If serving two vegetables, they must be two different kinds.

Snack

Menu planning notes for snack

- ¹² Fruits include fresh, frozen, canned, and dried. 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. The USDA's *CACFP Best Practices* recommends serving whole fruits (fresh, frozen, canned, and dried) more often than juice.
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- ¹⁵ Except for sweet crackers such as graham crackers and animal crackers, grain-based desserts cannot credit, e.g., cookies, sweet pie crusts, 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, see the USDA's handout, *Grain-Based Desserts in the CACFP*.
- ¹⁶ Through September 30, 2019, all grains must meet the applicable weights or volumes in *Serving Sizes for Grains in 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*. Beginning October 1, 2019, the grains component changes to ounce equivalents. For more information, see CSDE's handout, *WGR Ounce Equivalents for the CACFP*.
- 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 Beginning October 1, 2019, the serving size for cold breakfast cereals is in ounce equivalents. The required volume for 1 ounce equivalent is 1 cup of flakes or rounds, 1 ¼ cups of puffed cereal, and ¼ cup of granola.



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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