

Considerations for Providing Meal Components in Bulk Sizes at Non-congregate Meal Service Sites

This document provides information about the logistics that sponsors of the Child Nutrition Programs must consider before choosing to distribute foods in bulk from approved non-congregate meal service sites during school year 2020-21. This guidance applies to sponsors of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), Seamless Summer Option (SSO), and Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).

Sponsors may decide to provide meal components in bulk for a variety of reasons, such as: adhering to social distancing recommendations; accommodating staffing capacity; addressing a lack of storage in the food service facility or households; decreasing the frequency of meal distribution; and challenges with increased costs and environmental impacts of unitized, individual packaging.

- Sponsors should contact their vendors to ensure that meal components are available in bulk form for delivery when needed.
- Sponsors must provide sufficient quantities of the required meal components to ensure that each household receives the correct amount of each component for every reimbursable meal indicated in each bulk food distributed.
- Sponsors must maintain documentation to show the number of reimbursable meals obtained from each meal component distributed in bulk. For example, the number of servings of macaroni and cheese provided in a quart container, or the number of ½-cup servings of fruits or vegetables provided in a number 10 can.
- Sponsors should provide households with menus and directions to indicate which food items and portion sizes should be used for each meal. All meal components distributed in bulk must be clearly identifiable as constituting reimbursable meals. Sponsors should also consider including other appropriate instructions, such as food preparation and food safety instructions, especially the appropriate temperatures for safely reheating foods.
- Meal components distributed in bulk must be ready-to-eat or require only minimal preparation. Sponsors should not provide meal components distributed in bulk as ingredients for recipes that require chopping, mixing, baking, cooking, or other types of preparation. Examples include dry pasta and rice, and raw meats.
- When providing foods that require refrigeration or further preparation (such as reheating), sponsors should consider whether households have access to the appropriate equipment to safely store bulk foods and prepare meals.
- Sponsors should consider contacting their local health department for guidance on food safety and providing meals in bulk.

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For more information, visit the CSDE's [Operation of Child Nutrition Programs during Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Outbreaks](#) webpage or contact the [school nutrition programs staff](#), [summer meals staff](#), or [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/COVID-19/Bulk_Foods_Considerations.pdf.

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