

2 — Menu Records

SFAs must maintain records to document that foods used in reimbursable meals provide the food components and serving sizes required by the NSLP and SBP meal patterns. Without appropriate documentation, foods cannot credit toward reimbursable meals.

Table 2-1 summarizes the records required to document the meal pattern compliance of commercial foods and foods made from scratch. SFAs must maintain these records on file for the CSDE’s Administrative Review of the school nutrition programs.

Table 2-1. Documentation for meal pattern compliance	
Commercial foods	Foods made from scratch
Menus Production records Child Nutrition (CN) labels Product formulation statement (PFS) forms Nutrition information (Nutrition Facts labels and ingredients) Compliance with Buy American provision	Menus Production records Standardized recipes Nutrition information

This section provides information on each requirement.

Menus

SFAs must maintain menu records that document the service of reimbursable meals to students in grades K-12. Menus should reflect all meal choices and types of milk.

The CSDE recommends that SFAs develop and use cycle menus. A cycle menu is a series of menus planned for a specific period, such as four weeks, with a different menu for each day. Cycle menus can help SFAs comply with the meal pattern requirements, increase variety, control food cost, control inventory, and save time. For additional guidance and resources on cycle menus, review



chapter 3 in the USDA’s guide, *Menu Planner for School Meals*.

USDA certification of meal pattern compliance

The USDA’s menu worksheets indicate whether menus for grades K-12 comply with the NSLP and SBP meal patterns, including the meal components and dietary specifications. These are the worksheets that SFAs must use to demonstrate compliance for the USDA’s additional 7 cents funding for compliant school meals. These worksheets are available on the CSDE’s [Certification of Meal Pattern Compliance](#) webpage.

CSDE lunch menu planning checklists

The CSDE’s lunch menu planning checklists help SFAs determine if lunch menus comply with the meal pattern requirements. These checklists are available in the “[Documents/Forms](#)” section of the CSDE’s [Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage. For sample menus and more resources, review the CSDE’s resource list, [Menu Planning and Food Production](#). For guidance on menu planning and additional menu checklists, review chapter 3 in the USDA’s guide, *Menu Planner for School Meals*.

Production Records

The USDA regulations for the NSLP ([7 CFR 210.10\(a\)\(3\)](#)) and SBP ([7 CFR 220.8\(a\)\(3\)](#)) require that SFAs must maintain daily production records for all school meals. Production records are working tools that outline the type and quantity of foods that must be purchased and available for the meal service. They document that SFAs serve reimbursable meals and provide valuable information to help with menu planning, forecasting products and amounts, purchasing foods, controlling waste, and identifying acceptable menu items.

Production records must show how the offered meals contribute to the required food components and food quantities for each meal served to each grade group every day. Table 2-2 indicates the elements that production records should include and when food service personnel should complete the required information.

The USDA requires that school nutrition programs must complete daily menu production records that document the service of reimbursable meals. Production records must demonstrate how meals contribute to the required food components for each day of operation.

During the Administrative Review of the school nutrition programs, the CSDE will evaluate the SFA's production records to ensure that they:

- include all information necessary to support the claiming of reimbursable meals, i.e., all menu items are listed and all required meal components are offered;
- are used for proper planning, such as determining meal consumption and leftovers;
- document that the prepared foods are creditable for the total number of reimbursable meals offered and served;
- document a la carte sales, adult meals, and other nonreimbursable meals (such as student purchases of second meals), including the number of portions for each of these food items;
- document that menus meet the requirements for fluid milk, the weekly vegetable subgroups, the weekly juice limits, and the weekly limit for grain-based deserts at lunch;
- document that menus meet the weekly quantity requirements for fluid milk, vegetables, fruits, grains, and meats/meat alternates; and
- align with standardized recipes, i.e., the ingredients in the SFA's standardized recipes correspond to the menu items listed on the production records.

SFAs must keep production records on file for three years plus the current school year.

Sample production records

The CSDE's sample production records include forms for different grade groups based on food items or food components. These forms help SFAs provide the information required to comply with the USDA's regulations for production records. SFAs may use these production records for breakfast and lunch.

The CSDE's production records are available on the CSDE's [Production Records for School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage. The CSDE's resource, [Requirements for Production Records in School Nutrition Programs](#), summarizes the requirements for production records. For additional guidance on production records, review chapter 4 of the USDA's guide, [Menu Planner for School Meals](#).

Table 2-2. Required elements for production records	
Complete before meal service	Complete after meal service
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name of site • Meal date • Meal type (breakfast or lunch) • All planned menu items including all meal choices, food components, types of milk, leftovers, substitutions, and all other food items such as condiments and other noncreditable foods • Recipe name and number or product name and code • Planned serving size and number of servings for reimbursable meals for each age/grade group, and if applicable, nonreimbursable meals (e.g., second meals and adult meals), and a la carte sales 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temperatures (complete throughout meal service) ¹ • Total amount/quantity of food prepared for each food item or menu item, e.g., number of servings, pounds, cans, and pieces • Amount of leftover food for each food item or menu item • Total amount of food served • Number of reimbursable meals served for each age/grade group • Number of nonreimbursable meals served, e.g., second meals and adult meals
<p>¹ Food service staff should record temperatures throughout the meal service to ensure that hot foods are held at 140 °F or above and cold foods at held at 41 °F or below. For additional guidance, visit the CSDE’s Food Safety for Child Nutrition Programs webpage.</p>	



Guidance for completing production records

Production records must be completed correctly to provide accurate documentation of reimbursable meals. When using production records, SFAs should ensure that food service personnel:

- complete all information, i.e., ensure that information is not missing or incomplete;
- record the information so it is legible, i.e., ensure that handwriting can be read;
- use the proper weight or volume measure for each food item, e.g., use cups for fruits and vegetables instead of ounces (see “Volume versus weight” on the next page);
- enter the number of servings, pounds, cans, or pieces (not the number of portions prepared) in the column for the total quantity of food used;
- separately list each type of milk served;
- list all condiments;
- list portion sizes accurately and ensure that listed portion sizes are the same as what is actually being served to students;
- list all items prepared for the meal including daily items and alternate meal choices;
- accurately record the “planned” servings for each age/grade group;
- separately list nonreimbursable adult meals and second student meals (do not include as part of reimbursable student meals);
- add any extra amounts of food needed during the meal service period;
- note if any substitutions are made or leftovers are used; and
- use a production record for each site, including satellite locations.

SFAs should maintain production records on file with other required documentation. The CSDE will review menu documentation during the Administrative Review of the school nutrition programs.

Volume versus weight

During the Administrative Review of the school nutrition programs, the CSDE frequently incorrect information on production records for the amounts of a menu item. Production records must reflect the measurements required by the NSLP and SBP meal patterns. The meal patterns indicate servings of the food components by weight (ounces) or volume (fluid ounces). These measurements are not the same. Volume is the amount of space an ingredient occupies in a measuring container. Volume measures include teaspoon, tablespoon, fluid ounce, cup, pint, quart and gallon.

The weight of a volume measure of food varies depending on the density of the food. For example, ½ cup of lettuce weighs less than ½ cup of cooked butternut squash; and 1 cup of

whole-grain cereal weighs less than 1 cup of baked beans. For most foods, a specific measure of volume generally does not equal the same measure of weight, e.g., ½-cup (4 fluid ounces) does not weigh 4 ounces. Yogurt is an exception; a ½-cup serving and 4 ounces (weight) are equivalent.

Production records must reflect the NSLP and SBP meal pattern servings. For example, the meal patterns list servings in volume (cups) for the vegetables component and fruits component, and some foods in the meat/meat alternates component, e.g., peanut butter (tablespoons) and legumes (cups). Therefore, production records must list the servings of vegetable, fruits, peanut butter, and legumes by volume, not weight.

For information on weights and measures, review the Institute of Child Nutrition’s (ICN) handout, *Basics at a Glance*, and the “Weights and Measures” section of the CSDE’s Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs webpage.

Resources for production records

The websites and resources below provide guidance on developing and using production records.

- Basics at a Glance Portion Control Poster (ICN):
<https://theicn.org/icn-resources-a-z/basics-at-a-glance/>
- Production Records for School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):
<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Production-Records-for-School-Nutrition-Programs>
- Requirements for Production Records in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):
<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Forms/ProdRecord/ProductionRecords.pdf>
- Weights and Measures (CSDE's Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs webpage)
<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-School-Nutrition-Programs#WeightsMeasures>

The CSDE’s document, *Requirements for Production Records in School Nutrition Programs*, summarizes the requirements and guidance for using production records in school nutrition programs.

Standardized Recipes

The USDA's regulations [7 CFR 210.10\(b\)\(5\)](#) require that SFAs develop and follow standardized recipes for foods prepared on site. The USDA defines a standardized recipe as one that has been tried, adapted, and retried several times for use by a given foodservice operation; and has been found to produce the same good results and yield every time when the exact procedures are used with the same type of equipment, and the same quantity and quality of ingredients. Standardized quantity recipes produce 25 or more servings.

Standardized recipes are required for foods prepared from scratch, such as cornbread, coleslaw, potato salad, soup, lasagna, chicken stir-fry, and macaroni and cheese; and for foods that require some additional processing by adding other ingredients after purchasing. Examples include making rice or pasta with butter, sautéing vegetables in oil, adding dressing to salad, assembling a sandwich, adding eggs and oil to a muffin mix, and reconstituting canned soup with milk.

Standardized recipes are not required for foods that do not contain any added ingredients, such as fresh fruits and vegetables, purchased breads and rolls, and commercially prepared entrees and side dishes.

Benefits of standardized recipes

Standardized recipes document the specific meal pattern contribution of one serving. For example, a standardized lasagna recipe might indicate that one serving credits as 2 ounce equivalents of the meat/meat alternates component, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of the vegetables component, and 2 ounce equivalents of the grains component. In addition to documenting the meal pattern contribution, standardized recipes provide many other benefits. Standardized recipes help school nutrition programs ensure:

- consistent food quality;
- predictable yield;
- accurate meal component contributions;
- consistent nutrient content;
- food safety through preparation steps that avoid cross-contamination and ensure appropriate time and temperature;
- customer satisfaction;
- food cost control;
- efficient purchasing procedures;
- inventory control;
- labor cost control;

- increased employee confidence;
- reduced recordkeeping; and
- successful completion of the CSDE’s Administrative Review of the school nutrition programs.

Information to include on standardized recipes

SFAs may standardize their own local recipes or use existing standardized recipes such as the USDA’s recipes. Standardized recipes should include the following:

- recipe name that describes the recipe;
- recipe number that is unique to each recipe;
- recipe category classification, e.g., main dish, grains, and vegetables;
- recipe yield (weight and/or volume and number of servings), i.e., the amount produced when production is complete;
- ingredients used;
- ingredient amounts per yield, i.e., the quantity (weight or volume) of all ingredients for each yield, such as 50 servings or 100 servings;
- preparation equipment and utensil, such as pans, steamers and mixers;
- food safety Critical Control Points (CCPs), i.e., time and temperature critical limits for each step of preparing, holding, serving, and storing (visit the CSDE’s [Food Safety for Child Nutrition Programs](#) webpage);
- cooking time and temperature, as required (visit the CSDE’s [Food Safety for Child Nutrition Programs](#) webpage);
- serving size (the weight and/or volume of the single portion size);
- serving utensils such as scoops, ladles, and spoodles; and
- meal pattern component contributions per serving, e.g., fruits component, vegetables component, grains component, and meats/meat alternates component.

The CSDE’s *Standardized Recipe Form for School Nutrition Programs* provides a template that SFAs may use to develop standardized recipes. For more information, see “[Determining Food Yields and Crediting](#)” in this section, and the resources below.

Vendor-prepared foods

Vendors that prepare foods for SFAs must have a standardized recipe that documents the meal pattern contribution per serving. SFAs are responsible for reviewing the crediting information to ensure that it is accurate.

Requirements for standardized recipes

SFAs may standardize their own local recipes or use existing standardized recipes such as the USDA’s recipes. Standardized recipes must include the following:

- recipe name that describes the recipe;
- recipe number that is unique to each recipe;
- recipe category classification, e.g., main dish, grains, and vegetables;
- recipe yield (weight and/or volume and number of servings), i.e., the amount produced when production is complete;
- ingredients used;
- ingredient amounts per yield, i.e., the quantity (weight or volume) of all ingredients for each yield, such as 50 servings or 100 servings;
- preparation equipment and utensil, such as pans, steamers and mixers;
- food safety Critical Control Points (CCPs), i.e., time and temperature critical limits for each step of preparing, holding, serving, and storing;
- cooking time and temperature, as required;
- serving size (the weight and/or volume of the single portion size);
- serving utensils such as scoops, ladles, and spoodles; and
- meal pattern component contributions per serving, e.g., fruits component, vegetables component (including subgroups), grains component, and meats/meat alternates component.

The CSDE’s *Standardized Recipe Form for School Nutrition Programs* provides a template that SFAs may use to develop standardized recipes. For more information, see “[Determining Food Yields and Crediting](#)” and “[Resources for standardized recipes](#)” in this section.



Resources for standardized recipes

The websites and resources below assist SFAs with developing and using standardized recipes.

- Basics at a Glance Portion Control Poster (ICN):
<https://theicn.org/icn-resources-a-z/basics-at-a-glance/>
- Crediting Foods Prepared on Site in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE's Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs webpage):
<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-School-Nutrition-Programs#PreparedonSite>
- Recipes for Child Nutrition Programs (CSDE's Menu Planning for Child Nutrition Programs webpage):
<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Menu-Planning#Recipes>
- Resource List for Menu Planning and Food Production in Child Nutrition Programs (CSDE):
<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/Resources/ResourcesMenuPlanning.pdf>
- Standardized Recipe Form for School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):
<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/StandardizedRecipeSchools.doc>
- Standardized Recipes (Chapter 4: Meal Preparation Documentation of the USDA's Menu Planner for School Meals):
https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/tn/USD-114%20-%20MenuPlanner_Ch4.pdf
- Standardized Recipes (CSDE's Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs webpage):
<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-School-Nutrition-Programs#StandardizedRecipes>
- Why Use Standardized Recipes? Fact Sheet (ICN):
<https://theicn.org/resources/527/food-service-management-skills/107291/why-use-standardized-recipes.pdf>

SFAs must ensure that local menus comply with the NSLP and SBP meal patterns. When using recipes and menus that are not from USDA, menu planners should check these resources for compliance with the NSLP and SBP meal patterns, and adapt as needed.

Documentation for Commercial Products

SFAs must be able to document the meal pattern contribution of commercial processed foods served in school meals. For example, to credit a breaded chicken patty product as 2 ounce equivalents of the meat/meat alternates component and 1 ounce equivalent of the grains component, the manufacturer’s documentation must indicate that one serving of the product contains 2 ounces of cooked chicken and 0.8 ounce (22 grams) of WGR breading. To credit commercial products, SFAs must obtain either:

- the original CN label from the product carton or a photocopy or photograph of the CN label shown attached to the original product carton; or
- a PFS signed by an official of the manufacturer stating the amount of each meal pattern component contained in one serving of the product.

The CSDE will review product documentation during the Administrative Review of the school nutrition programs.

Commercial processed products without a CN label or PFS cannot credit in school meals.

Table 2-3 compares the criteria for CN labels and PFS forms. Only CN labels provide a guarantee of the product’s contribution to the USDA’s meal patterns for the Child Nutrition Programs. SFAs must check the crediting information on the PFS form for accuracy prior to using the product in reimbursable meals and snacks.

Table 2-3. Comparison of CN labels and PFS forms		
Criteria	CN label	PFS
Standard information required	✓	
Reviewed and monitored by the USDA	✓	
Includes USDA guarantee of meal component contribution for Child Nutrition Programs	✓	
Distinct six-digit product identification number	✓	
SFAs must check crediting information for accuracy prior to use		✓

For additional guidance on accepting product documentation, review the CSDE’s resource, [Accepting Processed Product Documentation](#), and visit the “[Crediting Commercial Processed](#)

Products for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs” section of the CSDE’s [Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

Child Nutrition (CN) labels

The USDA’s CN Labeling Program is a voluntary federal labeling program for the Child Nutrition Programs. A CN label statement clearly identifies the contribution of a commercial product toward the meal pattern requirements, based on the USDA’s evaluation of the product’s formulation. CN labeling provides a warranty that the product contributes to the meal pattern requirements, as printed on the label.

CN labels are available only for main dish entrees that contribute to the meat/meat alternates component of the USDA’s meal patterns for the Child Nutrition Programs, such as beef patties, cheese or meat pizzas, meat or cheese and bean burritos, egg rolls, and breaded fish portions. However, CN labels will usually indicate the contribution of other meal components that are part of these products. For example, CN-labeled pizza may list contributions to the meat/meat alternates, grains, and vegetables components; and CN-labeled breaded chicken nuggets may list contributions to the meat/meat alternates and grains components.

Table 2-4. Sample CN label

CN Label

1 Chicken Stir-Fry Bowl

Ingredient Statement:

2 Chicken, brown rice, broccoli, red peppers, carrots, onions, water, olive oil, soy sauce, spices.

3 CN

XXXXXX

Each 4.5 oz Chicken Stir-Fry Bowl provides 1.5 oz eq meat, 1.0 oz eq grains, **CN** ¼ cup dark green vegetable, ¼ cup red/orange vegetable, and ⅓ cup other vegetable for Child Nutrition Meal Pattern Requirements. (Use of this logo and statement authorized by the Food and Nutrition Service, USDA 09/16). **CN**

Net Wt.: 18 pounds

CN

4

INSPECTED
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
P-XX

Chicken Wok Company
1234 Kluck Street • Poultry, PA 1235

1 Product Name

2 Ingredient Statement

3 CN Logo

4 Inspection Legend

The CN Logo is the box with "CN" on each side, surrounding the meal pattern contribution statement. It is one of the four integral parts of a label (product name, ingredient statement, CN Logo, and inspection legend). All four parts must be on the product carton for the CN label to be valid.

Resources for CN labels

The resources below provide additional information on CN labels.

- Child Nutrition (CN) Labeling Program (CSDE):
<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CNlabel.pdf>
- Child Nutrition (CN) Labels (CSDE's Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs webpage):
<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-School-Nutrition-Programs#CNlabels>
- CN Labeling Program (USDA website):
<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/labeling-program>
- USDA Memo SP 11-2015 (v2), CACFP 10-2015 and SFSP 13-2015: CN Labels Copied with a Watermark Acceptable Documentation:
<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn-labels-copied-watermark-acceptable-documentation>
- USDA Memo SP 27-2015, CACFP 09-2015 and SFSP 12-2015: Administrative Review Process Regarding the Child Nutrition (CN) Label, Watermarked CN Label and Manufacturer's Product Formulation Statement:
<https://www.fns.usda.gov/administrative-review-process-regarding-child-nutrition-cn-label-watermarked-cn-label-and>

The USDA's [Authorized Labels and Manufacturers](#) webpage lists approved CN-labeled products and manufacturers.



Product formulation statements

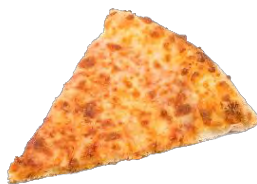
A PFS is a document developed by manufacturers that provides specific information about how a product credits toward the USDA's meal patterns for Child Nutrition Programs. It generally includes a detailed explanation of what the product contains and indicates the amount of each ingredient in the product by weight. The information on a PFS can vary among manufacturers because the USDA does not monitor PFS forms.

To document meal pattern crediting information, the 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 FBG and USDA's policy on crediting foods (such as the USDA's [policy memos for the CACFP](#) 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.

All creditable ingredients in the PFS must match a description in the FBG. The USDA's [CN Labeling](#) website provides sample PFS templates for the meat/meat alternates, vegetables, fruits, and grains components. If the PFS does not meet these requirements, the SFA cannot accept it, and the product cannot credit in school meals and ASP snacks.

Unlike a CN label, a PFS does not provide any warranty against audit claims for reimbursable meals and snacks. SFAs must check the crediting information on the PFS for accuracy prior to including the product in reimbursable meals and snacks, and if needed, request supporting documentation from the manufacturer. This documentation must be maintained on file for the CSDE's Administrative Review of the school nutrition programs.



Resources for PFS forms

The USDA's [Food Manufacturers/Industry](#) website provides sample PFS templates and guidance for the meat/meat alternates, vegetables, fruits, and grains components. The PFS forms that apply to the NSLP and SBP meal patterns for grades K-12 are listed below.

- **Grain ounce equivalents PFS:** Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Grains in Child Nutrition Programs (USDA):
https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/resource-files/PFS_Document_Grains_oz_eq.pdf
- **Grain ounce equivalents PFS (completed sample):** Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Grains in Child Nutrition Programs (USDA):
https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/resource-files/PFS_Sample_oz_eq.pdf
- **Meat/Meat Alternates PFS:** Product Formulation Statement (Product Analysis) for Meat/Meat Alternate (M/MA) Products in Child Nutrition Programs (USDA):
https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/resource-files/PFS_Document_Meat_Meat_Alternate.pdf
- **Meat/Meat Alternates:** Questions and Answers on Alternate Protein Products (APP):
<https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/APPindustryfaqs.pdf>
- **Meat/Meat Alternates:** 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 PFS:** Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Vegetables and Fruits in School Meal Programs (USDA):
https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/resource-files/PFS_Document_Vegetables_Subgroups_Fruits.pdf
- **Vegetables and Fruits PFS (completed sample for vegetables):** Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Vegetables and Fruits in School Meal Programs (USDA):
<https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/resource-files/PFSsamplevegetables.pdf>

- **Vegetables and Fruits PFS (completed sample for fruits):** Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Vegetables and Fruits in School Meal Programs (USDA):
<https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/resource-files/PFSsamplefruits.pdf>

For more information, review the CSDE’s resource, *Product Formulation Statements*, and the USDA’s handout, *Tips for Evaluating a Manufacturer’s Product Formulation Statement*; and visit the “[Product Formulation Statements](#)” section of the CSDE’s Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs webpage. Additional resources for accepting documentation are available in the “[Crediting Commercial Processed Products for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs](#)” section of the CSDE’s Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs webpage.

Buy American Requirement

All foods sold in the USDA’s school nutrition programs must comply with the Buy American provision under the federal regulations for the NSLP ([7 CFR 210.21 \(d\)](#)) and SBP ([7 CFR 220.16 \(d\)](#)). This provision requires that schools and institutions purchase domestic commodities or products to the maximum extent practicable.

- A “domestic commodity or product” is an agricultural commodity that is produced in the United States, and a food product that is processed in the United States substantially using agricultural commodities that are produced in the United States.
- “Substantially” means that over 51 percent of the final processed product consists of agricultural commodities that were grown domestically.

There are **very limited exceptions** to the requirement that SFAs must purchase domestic foods. Nondomestic foods are permitted only:

- after first considering domestic alternatives; and
- when domestic foods are unavailable or prohibitively expensive.

SFAs must maintain documentation on file to indicate that any purchases of nondomestic foods meet these criteria. The CSDE’s *Buy American Justification Form* assists SFAs with meeting this requirement. The CSDE will review this information during the Administrative Review of the SFA’s school nutrition programs.

SFAs must ensure that all foods purchased using funds from the nonprofit school food service account comply with the Buy American provision. This includes foods that are part of

reimbursable meals and competitive foods sold a la carte, i.e., foods and beverages sold separately from reimbursable meals.

Resources for Buy American

The resources below provide guidance on the Buy American provision.

- Buy American Factsheet (USDA):
https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Procure/FactSheet_BuyAmerican.pdf
- Buy American Justification Form (CSDE):
<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Procure/BuyAmericanForm.pdf>
- Letter to Industry on the Buy American Provision (USDA):
https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/cn/Buy_America_Industry_Letter.pdf
- USDA Memo SP 32-2019: Buy American and the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018:
<https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/buy-american-and-agriculture-improvement-act-2018>
- USDA Memo SP 38-2017: Compliance with and Enforcement of the Buy American Provision in the NSLP:
<https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/compliance-enforcement-buy-american>

For additional guidance, visit the “[Buy American Provision](#)” section of the CSDE’s [Procurement for School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.



Determining Food Yields and Crediting

Yield refers to the amount (weight, volume, or number of servings) of a product at the completion of the preparation process. For example, 10 pounds of raw ground beef might yield 8 pounds after cooking; 5 pounds of fresh carrots might yield 3½ pounds after peeling and trimming; a vegetable soup recipe might yield 2 gallons after cooking, and a muffin recipe might yield 24 servings after baking. Yield affects how a product or recipe credits toward the school meal patterns.

The yield of a product or recipe depends on the type of food and the preparation process. Processed fruits and vegetables yield less than the purchased amount due to peeling and trimming. Raw meats yield less than the purchased amount because moisture and fat are lost in the cooking process. Rice and pasta yield more than the purchased (dry) amount because water is absorbed during the cooking process.

The USDA's FBG is the definitive resource for determining yields and crediting information for the Child Nutrition Programs. SFAs should ensure that menu planners use this resource to plan school meals and ASP snacks.



Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs

The USDA's FBG provides yield information for common types and customary sizes of milk, meat/meat alternates, vegetables, fruits, and grains, including commercially available foods and USDA Foods. The FBG helps menu planners determine:

- a food's specific contribution toward the meal pattern requirements;
- how many servings a specific quantity of food will provide;
- what quantity of raw product will provide the amount of ready-to-cook food in a recipe; and
- how much food to buy.

The FBG helps menu planners determine how recipes and purchased foods contribute to the school meal patterns. For example, menu planners can use the FBG to determine how much raw broccoli provides 50 servings of ½ cup of cooked vegetable or how much uncooked brown rice provides 100 servings of ½ cup of cooked rice. This information is essential for documenting compliance with the meal pattern requirements.

The FBG is available at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/food-buying-guide-for-child-nutrition-programs>. The resources below provide guidance on using the FBG.

- Webinar: Exhibit A Grains Tool to the Rescue! (USDA):
<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/exhibit-grains-tool-rescue>
- Webinar: Food Buying Guide Goes Digital! (USDA):
<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/food-buying-guide-goes-digital>
- Webinar: Navigating the Food Buying Guide FBG Calculator (USDA):
<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/navigating-food-buying-guide-fbg-calculator>

Determining in-house product yields

The yield information provided in the FBG represents average yields based on research conducted by the USDA. Many factors affect yield, including:

- the quality and condition of the food purchased;
- storage conditions and handling;
- the equipment used in preparation;
- cooking method and time;
- the form in which the food is served, e.g., whether potatoes are mashed, fried, or baked; and
- the serving utensils and portion control methods used.



If a food service operation consistently obtains a higher or lower yield for a product than the yield listed in the FBG, the SFA should conduct an in-house yield study to determine the actual number of portions of a specified size that the product provides. In-house yields are also required for products not listed in the FBG. The CSDE allows SFAs to use in-house yields if they are properly documented and follow the CSDE's yield study procedures.

Yield study procedures

SFAs can use the procedures below to determine and document in-house yields for food products.

1. Select a day when the product is served on the menu. Use at least four separate samples of the product to determine yields. A "sample" is the product pack unit, such as number 10 cans or 5-pound bags. If the food service operation uses more samples, the yield data will be more accurate.
2. For the best yield estimate, at least two people should independently portion and count the samples. Each person completes half of the samples. For example, with a

sample of four cans, each person works alone to measure and count the servings from two cans.

3. Select the appropriate measuring utensil for the portion size being served, such as a number 16 scoop/disher or ½-cup measuring spoon. For information on measuring utensils, review the Institute of Child Nutrition's (ICN) *Basics at a Glance Portion Control Poster*.
4. Fill the measuring utensil level to the top of the measure.
5. Carefully count and document the number of portions in each sample.
6. Add the total number of servings from each of the samples.
7. Divide the total number of servings by the number of samples to get the average number of servings per sample.
8. Complete the CSDE's *Yield Study Data Form* and maintain on file for review by the CSDE staff during the Administrative Review of the school nutrition programs.

For additional assistance with yield studies, contact the CSDE's [school nutrition programs staff](#).

Nutrition Information

SFAs must obtain nutrition information for all commercially prepared foods used to prepare school meals. If a processed product does not have a Nutrition Facts panel, the SFA is responsible for obtaining the necessary information from the manufacturer. This information must be readily available for use by the CSDE in conducting the nutrient analysis of school menus, as part of the CSDE's Administrative Review of the school nutrition programs.

The USDA considers providing nutrition information for foods served in school meals a component of reasonable meal modifications for children whose disability restricts their diet. SFAs are responsible for making nutrition information for school meals available to students, families, school nurses, and others as needed. For information on the requirements for meal modifications, review the CSDE's guide, *Accommodating Special Diets in School Nutrition Programs*, and visit the CSDE's [Special Diets in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.



The USDA encourages SFAs to inform students, parents, and the public about efforts they are making to meet the meal requirements for school meals.

Nutrition information for USDA Foods

The USDA's [USDA Foods in Schools Product Information Sheets](#) webpage provides product information sheets for USDA Foods. These product information sheets include the product's description, crediting and yield information, culinary tips and recipes, food safety information, and a general Nutrition Facts label. However, they do not include a product-specific Nutrition Facts label or ingredients statement.

For further processed USDA Foods, the nutrition information and ingredients for USDA direct delivery food items (brown box) may vary based on the vendor who received the bid. If a SFA requires product information for students with food allergies or other dietary needs, the SFA must obtain product-specific information from the manufacturer.

To find the nutrition information for USDA direct delivery food items, check the outside of the case or the inside packaging. If nutrition information is not available, check with the product's manufacturer. The processor's agreement with the Connecticut Food Distribution Program (FDP) requires that the processor must provide product nutrition information to SFAs upon request, and must make available product nutrition information on their website. For additional assistance, contact the [Connecticut FDP staff](#).

Trans fats

Labels or manufacturer specifications for all food products and ingredients used to prepare school meals must indicate zero grams of trans fats per serving. Menu planners cannot use nutrient databases to determine values for trans fats because nutrient databases do not currently have complete data for trans fats.

SFAs must add the specification for zero trans fats to procurement contracts and request the required documentation (nutrition label or manufacturer specifications) from manufacturers. Menu planners must review all commercially prepared products for trans fats content before purchasing.

On January 23, 2020, the USDA issued the proposed rule, *Simplifying Meal Service and Monitoring Requirements in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs* (85 FR 4094). This rule proposes to remove trans fat as a dietary specification, effective July 1, 2021. The USDA indicates that the trans fat dietary specification is no longer needed because the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is regulating trans fat out of U.S. food supply. However, the current trans fat standard still applies until the proposed rule is finalized.

Nutrient analysis

During the Administrative Review of the school nutrition programs, the CSDE must assess whether meals offered to students in grades K-12 are consistent with the USDA's dietary specifications (nutrition standards) for calories, saturated fat, trans fat, and sodium. The CSDE's Administrative Review of the school nutrition programs will include the SFA's:

- menus;
- production records;
- standardized recipes;
- product formulation statements and CN labels; and
- if applicable, nutrition information showing how the products contribute toward the meal pattern requirements.

If a nutrient analysis is required as part of the CSDE's Administrative Review of the school nutrition programs, it will include all foods (including condiments) and beverages offered as part of reimbursable meals during the one-week review period. SFAs are not required to conduct a nutrient analysis of their own menus because SFAs are expected to follow the meal patterns to meet nutrient targets. However, SFAs may choose to conduct a nutrient analysis of menus to assist in their efforts to ensure they are meeting the dietary specifications.

Nutrition disclosure

The USDA's regulations (210.10 (n)) require that SFAs must accurately represent foods on breakfast and lunch menus. Menus cannot claim that a food item is beef, pork, poultry (such as chicken or turkey) or seafood (such as fish or tuna) if the food item contains more than 30 percent alternate protein product (APP). The names used for these menu items must reflect that they are not 100 percent meat, poultry, or fish. For more information on APPs, see "Crediting Alternate Protein Products (APPs)" in section 3.