

Glossary

a la carte sales: Foods and beverages that are sold separately from reimbursable meals in the USDA’s school nutrition programs. For more information, refer to “competitive foods” in this section.

added sugars: Sugars and syrups added to foods in processing or preparation, as opposed to the naturally occurring sugars found in foods like fruits, vegetables, grains, and dairy products. Names for added sugars include brown sugar, corn sweetener, corn syrup, dextrose, fructose, fruit juice concentrates, glucose, high-fructose corn syrup, honey, invert sugar, lactose, malt syrup, maltose, molasses, raw sugar, sucrose, sugar, and syrup. For more information, refer to “Sources of Added Sugars” in section 6.

Administrative Review (AR): The state agency’s comprehensive offsite and onsite evaluation of all SFAs participating in the NSLP and SBP. The review cycle is every three years for each SFA and includes a review of critical and general areas. For more information, visit the CSDE’s [Administrative Review for School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

Afterschool Snack Program (ASP): The USDA’s federally assisted snack program implemented through the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). The ASP provides cash reimbursement to help schools serve snacks to children in afterschool activities aimed at promoting the health and well-being of children and youth. Schools must provide children with regularly scheduled activities in an organized, structured, and supervised environment that includes educational or enrichment activities, e.g., mentoring/tutoring programs. Programs must meet state or local licensing requirements and health and safety standards. For more information, visit the CSDE’s [Afterschool Snack Program](#) webpage.

age/grade groups: The three grade groupings (K-5, 6-8, and 9-12) of the USDA’s meal patterns for breakfast and lunch. The classification of grade groups is based on children’s nutritional needs and the ages that typically correspond with these grade levels (ages 5-10 for grades K-5, ages 11-13 for grades 6-8, and ages 14-18 for grades 9-12).

alternate protein products (APPs): APPs are generally single ingredient powders that are added to foods. Examples include soy flours, soy concentrates, soy isolates, whey protein concentrate, whey protein isolates, and casein. APPs include vegetable protein products. The USDA has specific requirements for the crediting of APPs in Child Nutrition Programs. For more information, refer to “Crediting Alternate Protein Products (APPs)” in section 3 and the CSDE’s resource, [Requirements for Alternate Protein Products](#).

artificial sweeteners: A category of nonnutritive sweeteners used as sugar substitutes to sweeten foods and beverages. The six artificial sweeteners approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) include 1) acesulfame potassium (Ace-K) (e.g., Sweet One®, Sunett®, and Sweet & Safe®); 2) advantame; 3) aspartame (e.g., Nutrasweet®, Equal®, and Sugar Twin®); 4) neotame (e.g., Newtame®); 5) saccharin (e.g., Sweet and Low®, Sweet Twin®, and Necta Sweet); and 6) sucralose (Splenda®). These nonnutritive sweeteners are calorie-free except for aspartame, which is very low in calories. For more information, refer to “nonnutritive sweeteners” in this section.

beans and peas (legumes): Refer to “legumes” in this section.

bran: The seed husk or outer coating of cereal grains such as wheat, rye, and oats. Examples include oat bran, wheat bran, corn bran, rice bran, and rye bran. Bran is not a whole grain and does not credit in the NSLP and SBP meal patterns for grades K-12. Bran counts toward the limit for noncreditable grains. For information on noncreditable grains, refer to the CSDE’s guide, *Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the NSLP and SBP Meal Patterns for Grades K-12*.

calories: The measurement of energy provided by foods. The dietary specifications for school meals require calorie ranges for each grade group at the lunch and breakfast, which are based on the average calories over the week. For more information, refer to “dietary specifications” in this section.

carbohydrates: A category of nutrients that includes sugars (simple carbohydrates) and starch and fiber (complex carbohydrates). Carbohydrates are easily converted by the body to energy (calories). Foods that provide carbohydrates (fruits, vegetables, breads, cereals, grains, milk, and dairy products) are important sources of many nutrients. However, foods containing large amounts of added sugars provide calories but few, if any, nutrients. For more information, refer to “added sugars” and “simple carbohydrates” in this section.

cereal grains: The seeds that come from grasses. Cereal grains can be whole grain (such as amaranth, barley, buckwheat, corn, millet, oats, quinoa, rice, rolled wheat, rye, sorghum, triticale, wheat, and wheat berries) or enriched (such as enriched cornmeal, corn grits, and farina).

Child Nutrition (CN) label: A statement that clearly identifies the contribution of a food product toward the meal pattern requirements, based on the USDA’s evaluation of the product’s formulation. Products eligible for CN labels include main dish entrees that contribute to the meat/meat alternates component, e.g., beef patties, cheese or meat pizzas, meat or cheese and bean burritos, egg rolls, and breaded fish portions. CN labels usually indicate the contribution of other meal components (such as vegetables, grains, and fruits) that are part of these products. For more information, refer to “Child Nutrition (CN) labels” in section 2, refer to the CSDE’s resource, [Child Nutrition \(CN\) Labeling Program](#), and visit the USDA’s [Child Nutrition \(CN\) Labeling](#) webpage.

Child Nutrition Programs: The USDA’s federally funded programs that provide nutritious meals and snacks to children, including the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), Afterschool Snack Program (ASP), Special Milk Program (SMP), Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), Seamless Summer Option (SSO) of the NSLP, Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP), and Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). The CACFP also provides nutritious meals and snacks to the frail elderly in adult day care centers. For more information, visit the CSDE’s [Child Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

combination foods: Foods that contain more than one food component, such as pizza, burritos, and smoothies made with milk and fruit. For example, macaroni and cheese contains pasta (grains) and cheese (meat/meat alternate). Combination foods generally cannot be separated (such as pizza and burritos) or are not intended to be separated (such as a hamburger on a bun or turkey sandwich).

competitive foods: Any foods and beverages sold to students anytime on school premises other than meals served through the USDA’s school meal programs. Competitive food sales include, but are not limited to, cafeteria a la carte sales, vending machines, school stores, and fundraisers. For more information, refer to “a la carte sales” in this section and visit the CSDE’s [Competitive Foods in Schools](#) webpage and the CSDE’s guides, [Guide to Competitive Foods in HFC Public Schools](#), [Guide to Competitive Foods in Non-HFC Public Schools](#), [Guide to Competitive Foods in Private Schools and RCCIs](#), and [Guide to Competitive Foods in Private Schools and Residential Child Care Institutions](#).

Connecticut Nutrition Standards: State nutrition standards developed by the Connecticut State Department of Education per Section 10-215e of the Connecticut General Statutes. These standards address the nutritional content of all foods sold to students separately from reimbursable meals. They focus on limiting fat, saturated fats, trans fats, sodium, and added sugars, moderating portion sizes, and increasing consumption of nutrient-rich foods such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy, lean meats, and legumes. All schools in any district that chooses to comply with the healthy food option of Healthy Food Certification under Section 10-215f of the Connecticut General Statutes must follow the Connecticut Nutrition Standards for all sources of food sales to students, including school cafeterias, vending machines, school stores, fundraisers, and any other sources. The Connecticut Nutrition Standards also apply to all snacks served in the Afterschool Snack Program. For more information, visit the CSDE's [Connecticut Nutrition Standards](#) webpage.

corn masa: Dough made from masa harina that is used for making corn products such as tortillas, tortilla chips, and tamales. Corn masa is nixtamalized and credits as a whole grain. For more information, refer to “nixtamalization” in this section.

cornmeal: Meal made from ground, dried corn.

creditable food: A food or beverage that counts toward meeting the meal pattern requirements for reimbursable meals and ASP snacks in the USDA's Child Nutrition Programs. For more information, refer to section 3 and visit the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

cycle menu: A series of menus planned for a specific period, with a different menu for each day. Cycle menus can help schools comply with the meal pattern requirements, increase variety, control food cost, control inventory, and save time.

Dietary Guidelines for Americans: A federal document that provides science-based advice for Americans ages 2 and older to promote health and reduce risk for chronic diseases through diet and physical activity. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Department of Agriculture jointly publish the *Dietary Guidelines* every five years. This document forms the basis of federal food, nutrition education, and information programs. For more information, visit the [Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#) webpage.

dietary specifications: The USDA's nutrition standards for meals in the NSLP and SBP. The dietary specifications include weekly calorie ranges and limits for saturated fats and sodium. In addition, Nutrition Facts labels and manufacturer specifications must indicate zero grams of trans fats per serving for all food products and ingredients used to prepare school meals. For information on the specific dietary specifications for each grade group, refer to the meal patterns in section 1. For information on planning school meals to meet the dietary specifications, refer to section 6.

disability: A condition in which a person has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, has a record of such an impairment, or is regarded as having such an impairment. For more information, refer to the CSDE’s guide, *Accommodating Special Diets in School Nutrition Programs*.

edible portion: The portion of a food that can actually be eaten after the nonedible parts are removed. Examples include cooked, lean meat without bone, and fruit without seeds or pits.

endosperm: The soft, white inside portion of the whole-grain kernel. The endosperm contains starch, protein, and small amounts of B vitamins.

enriched grains: Refined grains (such as wheat, rice, and corn) and grain products (such as cereal, pasta, and bread) that have some vitamins and minerals added to replace the nutrients lost during processing. The five enrichment nutrients are added within limits specified by the FDA, and include thiamin (B₁), riboflavin (B₂), niacin (B₃), folic acid, and iron. For more information, refer to “Enriched grains” in section 3, and the CSDE’s resource, *Crediting Enriched Grains in the NSLP and SBP*.

enrichment: Adding back nutrients (usually vitamins or minerals) originally present in a food that were lost during processing. Enrichment nutrients are added back in approximately the same levels as were originally present in the food. For more information, refer to “enriched grains” in this section.

entree: Refer to “main dish” in this section.

Exhibit A chart: A USDA chart that indicates the required weight (groups A-G) or volume (groups H-I) for a grain food to provide 1 ounce equivalent (NSLP and SBP) or 1 serving (ASP) of the grains component. This chart may be used for commercial grain products and for standardized recipes that indicate the weight of the prepared (cooked) serving. The required amounts for the grains component are not the same for all Child Nutrition Programs. The CSDE’s resource, *Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP*, lists the Exhibit A grain ounce equivalents that apply to grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP. For more information, refer to the USDA’s *Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs*.

family-style meal service: A method of meal service that allows children to serve themselves from common platters of food with assistance from supervising adults, if needed. For more information, refer to “Family-style Meal Service” in section 5.

flour: Finely ground and sifted wheat or other grains such as rye, corn, rice, or buckwheat.

fluid milk substitutes: Nondairy beverages (such as soy milk) that can be used as a substitute for fluid milk in the USDA Child Nutrition Programs. For reimbursable meals and ASP snacks, nondairy beverages served to children without disabilities must comply with the USDA nutrition standards for milk substitutes. For more information, refer to “[USDA’s nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes](#)” in section 3 and the CSDE’s resource, *Allowable Milk Substitutes for Children without Disabilities in School Nutrition Programs*.

food components: The five food groups that comprise reimbursable meals in the NSLP (milk, fruits, vegetables, grains, and meat/meat alternates) and the three food groups that comprise reimbursable breakfasts in the SBP (grains with optional meat/meat alternate substitutions, fruits with optional vegetable substitutions, and milk). For information on the individual food components, refer to section 3 and visit the CSDE’s [Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

food item: A specific food offered within the food components that comprise reimbursable meals in the USDA’s school nutrition programs. A food item may contain one or more food components or more than one serving of a single component. For example, an entree could provide 1 ounce equivalent of the grains component and 1 ounce equivalent of the meat/meat alternates component, and a 2-ounce whole grain or enriched bagel could provide 2 ounce equivalents of the grains component.

food-based menu planning: A type of menu planning for the USDA’s Child Nutrition Programs that uses a meal pattern with specific food components in certain amounts based on specific age/grade groups. For more information, refer to “food components” in this section and the meal patterns in section 1.

fortification: Adding nutrients (usually vitamins or minerals) that were not originally present in a food or beverage, or adding nutrients at levels that are higher than originally present. Fortification is used for naturally nutrient-rich products based on scientifically documented health needs (such as fortifying milk with vitamin D to increase the body’s absorption of calcium), or to enhance the perceived nutritional value of products with little or no natural nutritional value, e.g., fortifying “energy” bars made from processed flour with multiple vitamins and minerals. Fortification nutrients are added to products in varying amounts, from small percentages up to amounts greater than recommended intakes.

fruits component: The meal component of the USDA meal patterns that is comprised of fruits (fresh, frozen, canned, and dried) and pasteurized full-strength juice. Fruit juice cannot exceed half of the weekly fruit offerings. For more information, refer to “Fruits Component” in section 3 and visit the “[Fruits Component for Grades K-12](#)” section of the CSDE’s [Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

full component: The daily quantity designated by the menu planner (no less than the established minimum) to meet the required weekly ranges.

full serving: Refer to “full component” in this section.

full-strength fruit or vegetable juice: An undiluted product obtained by extraction from sound fruit. Full-strength juice may be fresh, canned, frozen or reconstituted from concentrate and may be served in either liquid or frozen state or as an ingredient in a recipe. The name of the full-strength fruit juice on the label must include one of the following terms: “juice,” “full-strength juice,” “100 percent juice,” “reconstituted juice,” or “juice from concentrate.” For more information, refer to “Fruit Juice” and “Vegetable Juice” in section 3, and the CSDE’s resource, *Crediting Juice for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP*.

germ: The vitamin-rich sprouting section of the whole-grain kernel. Germ is not a whole grain and does not credit in the NSLP and SBP meal patterns for grades K-12. It must count toward the limit for noncreditable grains. For information on noncreditable grains, refer to the CSDE’s guide, *Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the NSLP and SBP Meal Patterns for Grades K-12*.

grade groups: Refer to “age/grade groups” in this section.

grains component: The meal component of the USDA meal patterns that is comprised of cereal grains and products made from their flours. Grain products and recipes must be WGR to credit as the grains component in the NSLP and SBP meal patterns for grades K-12. For more information, refer to “Grains Component” in section 3 and visit the “[Grains Component for Grades K-12](#)” section of the CSDE’s Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs webpage.

grains: Plants in the grass family, which produce a dry, edible fruit commonly called a kernel, grain, or berry.

Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP): A preventative food safety program to control food safety hazards during all aspects of food service operations. HACCP reduces the risk of foodborne hazards by focusing on each step of the food preparation process from receiving to service.

Healthy Food Certification: A state statute (Section 10-215f of the Connecticut General Statutes) that requires each board of education or governing authority for all public schools participating in the NSLP to certify annually to the CSDE whether they will follow the Connecticut Nutrition Standards (CNS) for all foods sold to students separately from reimbursable meals. Districts that choose to implement the CNS receive additional funding per lunch, based on the total number of reimbursable lunches (paid, free, and reduced) served in the district in the prior school year. For more information, refer to “Connecticut Nutrition Standards” in this section and visit the CSDE’s [Healthy Food Certification](#) webpage.

hominy: A traditional food in Mexican and Native American cultures that is commonly served as a vegetable or milled grain product, e.g., hominy grits. Hominy is made from whole kernels of maize (dried field corn) that have been soaked in an alkaline solution (nixtamalized). This process removes the hull and germ, causes the corn to puff up to about double its normal size, and increases the bioavailability of certain nutrients, such as calcium and niacin. For crediting information, refer to “Crediting Hominy as Vegetables” and “Crediting Hominy as Grains” in section 3.

hydrogenated oils: Oils that have undergone hydrogenation, a chemical process that adds hydrogen and changes the structure of unsaturated fatty acids to increase shelf life and flavor stability. Hydrogenation turns oils that are liquid at room temperature into solids, e.g., shortening and margarine. Oils can be either completely or partially hydrogenated. Partial hydrogenation results in the formation of trans fats, a type of fat that increases the risk for cardiovascular disease. When foods contain partially hydrogenated oils, they are listed in the ingredients, e.g., partially hydrogenated cottonseed and partially hydrogenated soybean oil. For more information, refer to “trans fats” in this section.

juice drink: A product resembling juice that contains full-strength juice along with added water and possibly other ingredients, such as sweeteners, spices or flavorings. Juice drinks do not credit toward the meal pattern requirements.

lactose: The naturally occurring sugar found in milk. Lactose contains glucose and galactose. For more information, refer to “simple carbohydrates (sugars)” in this section.

lean meat and poultry: Defined by the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* as meat and poultry that contains less than 10 grams of fat, no more than 4.5 grams of saturated fat, and less than 95 milligrams of cholesterol per 100 grams and per labeled serving size, based on the USDA’s definitions for food label use. Examples include 95 percent lean cooked ground beef, beef top round steak or roast, beef tenderloin, pork top loin chop or roast, pork tenderloin, ham or turkey deli slices, skinless chicken breast, and skinless turkey breast.

legumes: Plants that grow in pods. Legumes include pulses, which are the edible dried seeds of plants in the legume family, such as beans, lentils, chickpeas, and split peas. Pulses include all beans, peas, and lentils cooked from dry, canned, or frozen, such as kidney beans, pinto beans, black beans, pink beans, black-eyed peas, garbanzo beans (chickpeas), split peas, pigeon peas, mung beans, and lentils. The meal patterns for Child Nutrition Programs allow legumes to credit as either the meat/meat alternates component or the vegetable component. For more information, refer to “Crediting Legumes as Meat/Meat Alternates” and “Crediting Legumes as Vegetables” in section 3.

local educational agency (LEA): A public board of education or other public or private nonprofit authority legally constituted within a state for either administrative control or direction of, or to perform a service function for, public or private nonprofit elementary schools or secondary schools in a city, county, township, school district, or other political subdivision of a state, or for a combination of school districts or counties that is recognized in a state as an administrative agency for its public or private nonprofit elementary schools or secondary schools. The term also includes any other public or private nonprofit institution or agency having administrative control and direction of a public or private nonprofit elementary school or secondary school, including residential child care institutions, Bureau of Indian Affairs schools, and educational service agencies and consortia of those agencies, as well as the state educational agency in a state or territory in which the state educational agency is the sole educational agency for all public or private nonprofit schools.

main dish: The main dish is generally considered the main food item in the menu, which is complemented by the other food items. Examples of main dish items include pizza, chicken stir-fry, and chef’s salad with ham, hard-boiled egg, and cheese.

masa harina: Corn flour used for making corn products such as tortillas, tortilla chips, and tamales. Masa harina is nixtamalized and credits as a whole grain. For more information, refer to “nixtamalization” in this section and “Crediting Corn Masa, Masa Harina, Corn Flour, and Cornmeal” in section 3.

meal pattern: The required food components and minimum serving sizes that schools and institutions participating in the USDA’s Child Nutrition Programs must provide to receive federal reimbursement for meals and ASP snacks served to children. For more information, refer to the breakfast and lunch meal patterns in section 1 and visit the CSDE’s [Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

meal: A grain made by coarsely grinding corn, oats, wheat, or other grains. Whole grain, enriched, or fortified meal credits toward the grains component of the USDA’s meal patterns. For more information, refer to “Part B: Creditable Grains” in section 3.

meals: Refer to “reimbursable meals” in this section.

meat alternates: Foods that provide a similar protein content to meat. Meat alternates include alternate protein products, cheese, eggs, cooked dry beans and peas, nuts and seeds and their butters (except for acorn, chestnut, and coconut), yogurt, soy yogurt, commercial tofu containing at least 5 grams of protein in a ¼-cup (2.2 ounces) serving, and tempeh. For more information, refer to “Meat/Meat Alternates Component” in section 3 and visit the [“Meat/Meat Alternates Component for Grades K-12”](#) section of the CSDE’s Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs webpage.

meat/meat alternates component: The meal component of the USDA meal patterns that includes meats (e.g., beef, poultry, and fish) and meat alternates, such as eggs, cheese, yogurt, beans and peas (legumes) nuts, and seeds. For more information, refer to “Meat/Meat Alternates Component” in section 3 and visit the [“Meat/Meat Alternates Component for Grades K-12”](#) section of the CSDE’s Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs webpage.

medical statement: A document that identifies the specific medical conditions and appropriate dietary accommodations for children with special dietary needs. For more information, refer to the CSDE’s guide, *Accommodating Special Diets in School Nutrition Programs*, and visit the CSDE’s [Special Diets in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

menu item: Any planned main dish, vegetable, fruit, bread, grain, or milk that is part of the reimbursable meal. Menu items consist of food items. For more information, refer to “food item” in this section.

milk component: The meal component of the USDA meal patterns that includes pasteurized fluid milk that meets the fat content and flavor requirements of the USDA regulations. The milk component also includes fluid milk substitutes that meet the USDA’s nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes. For more information, refer to “fluid milk substitutes” and “nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes” in this section, and visit the [“Milk Component for Grades K-12”](#) section of the CSDE’s Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs webpage.

monosaturated fats: A type of unsaturated fat found in olive, canola, peanut, sunflower, and safflower oils, and in avocados, peanut butter, and most nuts. Monosaturated fats may help lower blood cholesterol when used as part of an overall diet that is moderate in fat.

MyPlate: Released in June 2011, MyPlate is the USDA’s food guidance system to translate the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* into a healthy eating plan. MyPlate emphasizes consuming more fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy. For more information, visit the USDA’s [Choose MyPlate](#) website.

National School Lunch Program (NSLP): The USDA’s federally assisted meal program operating in public and nonprofit private schools and residential child care institutions. The NSLP provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost, or free lunches to children each school day. The NSLP was established under the National School Lunch Act, signed by President Harry Truman in 1946. For more information, visit the CSDE’s [National School Lunch Program](#) webpage.

natural cheese: Cheese that is produced directly from milk. Examples include cheddar, Colby, Monterey Jack, mozzarella, Muenster, provolone, Swiss, feta, and brie. Natural cheese also includes pasteurized blended cheese that is made by blending one or more different kinds of natural cheese. Natural cheeses do not include pasteurized process cheese (e.g., American), pasteurized process cheese food, pasteurized process cheese spread, or pasteurized process cheese products. For more information, refer to “Crediting Cheeses” in section 3.

nixtamalization: A process in which dried corn is soaked and cooked in an alkaline (slaked lime) solution. This process increases the bioavailability of certain nutrients and provides a nutritional profile similar to whole-grain corn. Nixtamalized corn is used to make hominy, masa harina (corn flour), corn masa (dough from masa harina), and certain types of cornmeal. Nixtamalized corn credits as a whole grain. For more information, refer to “Crediting Corn Masa, Masa Harina, Corn Flour, and Cornmeal” in section 3.

noncreditable foods: Foods and beverages that do not contribute toward the meal patterns for the USDA’s Child Nutrition Programs. Noncreditable foods and beverages are either in amounts too small to credit (i.e., foods and beverage that do not provide the minimum creditable amount of a food component) or they do not fit into one of the meal pattern components. For more information, refer to “Noncreditable Foods” in section 3 and the CSDE’s resource, [Noncreditable Foods for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP](#).

noncreditable grains: Grain ingredients that do not contribute to the grains component. Examples include fiber, bran, germ, and modified food starch (including potato, legume, and other vegetable flours). For more information, refer to the CSDE’s guide, [Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the NSLP and SBP Meal Patterns for Grades K-12](#).

nonnutritive sweeteners: Ingredients without calories that are hundreds of times sweeter than sugars and that are used as sugar substitutes to sweeten foods and beverages. Nonnutritive sweeteners include the six FDA-approved artificial sweeteners (acesulfame potassium (Ace-K), advantame, aspartame, neotame, saccharin, and sucralose) and three plant-based sweeteners (stevia, monk fruit, and thaumatin) that are [Generally Recognized as Safe \(GRAS\)](#) by the FDA. For more information on nonnutritive sweeteners, refer to “[Additional Information about High-Intensity Sweeteners Permitted for Use in Food in the United States](#)” on the FDA’s webpage.

nutrient assessment: A review of school menu records to determine whether they meet the USDA’s dietary specifications for calories, saturated fats, trans fats, and sodium. For more information, refer to “dietary specifications” in this section and “Nutrient analysis” in section 2.

nutrient-dense foods: Foods and beverages that provide vitamins, minerals, and other substances that contribute to adequate nutrient intakes or may have positive health effects, and contain little or no solid fats, added sugars, refined starches, or sodium. Ideally, these foods and beverages are also in forms that retain naturally occurring components, such as dietary fiber. Examples include all vegetables, fruits, whole grains, seafood, eggs, beans and peas, unsalted nuts and seeds, fat-free and low-fat dairy products, and lean meats and poultry (when prepared with little or no added solid fats, sugars, refined starches, and sodium). The term “nutrient dense” indicates the nutrients and other beneficial substances in a food have not been “diluted” by the addition of calories from added solid fats, sugars, or refined starches, or by the solid fats naturally present in the food.

nutrient-rich foods: Refer to “nutrient-dense foods” in this section.

nutritive sweeteners: Sugars and sweeteners that contain calories and are used to sweeten foods and beverages. Examples include brown rice syrup, brown sugar, corn sweetener, corn syrup, corn syrup solids, dextrin, dextrose, fructose, fruit juice concentrate, glucose, high-fructose corn syrup, honey, invert sugar, lactose, malt syrup, maltose, molasses, maple syrup, nectars (e.g., peach nectar, pear nectar), raw sugar, sorghum syrup, sucrose, and syrup. For more information, refer to “added sugars” and “simple carbohydrates (sugars)” in this section.

nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes: The nutrition requirements for nondairy beverages (such as soy milk) used as fluid milk substitutes in the USDA Child Nutrition Programs. The USDA requires that any fluid milk substitutes are nutritionally equivalent to cow’s milk and meet the following nutrients based on a 1-cup serving (8 fluid ounces): 276 milligrams (mg) of calcium; 8 grams (g) of protein; 500 international units (IU) of vitamin A; 100 IU of vitamin D; 24 mg of magnesium; 222 mg of phosphorus; 349 mg of potassium; 0.44 mg of riboflavin; and 1.1 micrograms (mcg) of vitamin B-12. For more information, refer to “USDA’s nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes” in section 3 and the CSDE’s resource, *Allowable Milk Substitutes for Children without Disabilities in School Nutrition Programs*.

offer versus serve (OVS): A provision that applies to menu planning and the determination of reimbursable meals for grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP. OVS allows students to decline a certain number of food components or food items in the meal. The SFA must offer the required meal components to each student. For the NSLP, students must select at least ½ cup of fruits or vegetables and the full portion (minimum serving size) of at least two other components. For the SBP, students must select at least three food items including at least ½ cup of fruit (or vegetable substitutions, if offered). OVS must be implemented in senior high schools for lunch but is optional for breakfast. For junior high, middle schools and elementary schools, OVS is optional for both breakfast and lunch. For more information, refer to the CSDE’s *Offer versus Serve Guide for School Meals*, and visit the CSDE’s [OVS](#) webpage.

ounce equivalent: A weight-based unit of measure for the grains component and meat/meat alternate component of the NSLP and the SBP meal patterns for grades K-12. Ounce equivalents account for dry versus cooked grains and variations in meats/meat alternates. An ounce equivalent of the meat/meat alternates component is sometimes more than a measured ounce, depending on the food’s density and nutrition content. An ounce equivalent of the grains component is less than a measured ounce for some grain foods (such as pretzels, breadsticks, and crackers), equal to a measured ounce for some grain foods (such as bagels, biscuits, bread, rolls, cereal grains, and RTE breakfast cereals), and more than a measured ounce for some grain foods (such as muffins and pancakes). For more information, refer to the CSDE’s document, *Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP*.

partially hydrogenated oils: Oils that have been chemically altered to change their consistency from liquid to semi-solid, e.g., margarine. This process results in the formation of trans fats, a type of fat that increases the risk for cardiovascular disease. Partially hydrogenated oils will be listed in the ingredients statement, e.g., partially hydrogenated cottonseed and partially hydrogenated soybean oil. For more information, refer to “trans fats” in this section.

point-of-service (POS) meal count: The point in the food service operation where a determination can accurately be made that a reimbursable free, reduced-price, or paid lunch has been served to an eligible child.

polyunsaturated fats: A type of unsaturated fat found in corn, soybean, and cottonseed oils; walnuts; pine nuts; sesame, pumpkin, and flax seeds; and fatty cold-water fish (e.g., salmon, trout, herring, tuna, and mackerel). Polyunsaturated fats may help lower blood cholesterol when consumed as part of an overall diet that is moderate in fat.

potable water: Water that is safe for human consumption.

pre-fried foods: Commercially prepared foods such as meats, poultry, fish, and vegetables that are fried by the manufacturer during preparation. These foods are usually cooked by the food service operation in the oven or microwave. Pre-fried foods include refrigerated or frozen items that are breaded or battered, most frozen potato products, and most frozen products described as “crispy” or “crunchy.” Examples include chicken nuggets, chicken patties, fish sticks, french fries, tater tots, hash browns, and onion rings.

primary grain ingredient: The greatest grain ingredient by weight. For commercial grain foods, this is the first ingredient (excluding water) listed in the product’s ingredients statement. For commercial combination foods that contain a grain portion, this is the first grain ingredient (excluding water) listed in the product’s ingredients statement. For commercial combination foods that contain a grain portion listed separately, this is the first ingredient (excluding water) listed in the grain portion of the product’s ingredients statement. For more information, refer to “Grains Component” section 3.

product fact sheet: Refer to “product specification sheet” in this section.

product formulation statement (PFS): An information statement obtained from the manufacturer that provides specific information about how a product credits toward the USDA’s meal pattern requirements, and documents how this information is obtained citing Child Nutrition Program resources or regulations. All creditable ingredients in this statement must match a description in the USDA’s *Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs*. The PFS must be prepared on company letterhead with the signature of a company official and the date of issue. Unlike a CN label, a PFS does not provide any warranty against audit claims. SFAs must check the manufacturer’s crediting information for accuracy prior to including the product in reimbursable meals. For more information, refer to “Product formulation statements” in section 2 and the CSDE’s resources, *Product Formulation Statements* and *Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the NSLP and SBP*.

product specification sheet: Manufacturer sales literature that provides various information about the company’s products. These materials do not provide the specific crediting information that is required on a product formulation statement and cannot be used to determine a product’s contribution toward the USDA’s meal pattern components.

production record: A working tool that outlines the type and quantity of foods used to prepare school meals. Production records must demonstrate how meals contribute to the required food components, food items or menu items for each day of operation. In addition, these records must provide sufficient documentation to determine how school meals contribute to meeting the weekly dietary specifications. The USDA’s regulations require that all schools in the NSLP, SBP, and ASP must complete daily menu production records for all meals. For more information, refer to “Production Records” in section 2.

pulses: The edible dry seeds from legumes, such as beans, lentils, chickpeas, and split peas. For more information, refer to “legumes” in this section.

recognizable food item: A food that is visible in the offered breakfast or lunch, and allows students to identify the food groups and amounts recommended for consumption at mealtime. Foods must be recognizable to credit in the NSLP and SBP meal patterns. The USDA allows some exceptions, such as yogurt blended in fruit or vegetable smoothies, pureed fruits and vegetables in smoothies, and pasta made with 100 percent vegetable flours. For more information, refer to “Yogurt in smoothies” and “Crediting Legume Flour Pasta Products as Meat/Meat Alternates” in the “Meat/Meat Alternates Component” section; “Crediting Fruit and Vegetable Smoothies” and “Unrecognizable pureed fruits” in the “Fruits Component” section; and “Unrecognizable pureed vegetables” and “Crediting Pasta Products Made of Vegetable Flour” in the “Vegetables Component” section.

recognized medical authority: A state-licensed health care professional who is authorized to write medical prescriptions under state law and is recognized by the State Department of Public Health (DPH). In Connecticut, recognized medical authorities include physicians, physician assistants, doctors of osteopathy, and advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs), i.e., nurse practitioners, clinical nurse specialists, and certified nurse anesthetists who are licensed as APRNs. For more information, refer to the CSDE’s guide, *Accommodating Special Diets in School Nutrition Programs*.

Recommended Dietary Allowance (RDA): The average daily dietary intake level that is sufficient to meet the nutrient requirement of the majority of healthy individuals in a particular life stage and gender group. The RDA is one of four reference values that comprise the Dietary Reference Intakes (DRIs). For more information, refer to “Dietary Reference Intakes” in this section.

refined grains: Grains that have been processed to remove the bran and germ, making the product less nutritious than whole grains. Refined grains may or may not be enriched. For more information, refer to “enriched grains” in this section.

reimbursable meals: Meals and ASP snacks that meet the meal pattern requirements of the USDA’s regulations for Child Nutrition Programs. Reimbursable meals contain the minimum serving of each required food component.

residential child care institution (RCCI): RCCIs include, but are not limited to homes for the mentally, emotionally or physically impaired, and unmarried mothers and their infants; group homes; halfway houses; orphanages; temporary shelters for abused children and for runaway children; long-term care facilities for chronically ill children; and juvenile detention centers. A long-term care facility is a hospital, skilled nursing facility, intermediate care facility, or distinct part thereof, which is intended for the care of children confined for 30 days or more.

saturated fats: Types of fat that raise blood cholesterol, which is a risk factor for cardiovascular disease. Major sources of saturated fats include coconut, palm, and palm kernel oils, butter and beef fats. Saturated fats are also found in other animal fats, such as pork and chicken fats, and in other plant fats, such as nuts. For more information, refer to “solid fats” and “trans fats” in this section.

School Breakfast Program (SBP): The USDA’s federally assisted meal program operating in public and nonprofit private schools and residential child care institutions. The SBP provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost, or free breakfasts to children each school day. The SBP was established under the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 to ensure that all children have access to a healthy breakfast at school to promote learning readiness and healthy eating behaviors. For more information, visit the CSDE’s [School Breakfast Program](#) webpage.

school food authority (SFA): The governing body that is responsible for the administration of one or more schools and has the legal authority to operate the USDA’s school nutrition programs.

school nutrition programs: The USDA’s school nutrition programs include the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), Afterschool Snack Program (ASP) of the NSLP, Seamless Summer Option (SSO) of the NSLP, Special Milk Program (SMP), Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP), and Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) At-risk Supper Program implemented in schools. For more information, visit the CSDE’s [School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

Seamless Summer Option of the NSLP (SSO): The USDA’s federally assisted summer feeding program that combines features of the NSLP, SBP, and SFSP, and serves meals free of charge to children ages 18 and younger from low-income areas. School districts participating in the NSLP or SBP are eligible to apply to the CSDE to participate in the SSO. SSO meals follow the meal patterns of the NSLP and SBP. For more information, visit the [Seamless Summer Option of the NSLP](#) webpage.

serving size or portion: The weight, measure, number of pieces, or slices of a food or beverage. SFAs must provide the minimum serving sizes specified in the USDA meal patterns for meals and snacks to be reimbursable.

simple carbohydrates (sugars): Carbohydrates consisting of one sugar (e.g., fructose and galactose) or two sugars (e.g., lactose, maltose, and sucrose). Sugars can be naturally present in foods (such as the fructose in fruit or the lactose in milk) or added to foods (such as sucrose or table sugar). Foods that naturally contain simple carbohydrates (such as fruits, milk, and milk products, and some vegetables) also contain vitamins and minerals. Foods that contain large amounts of added sugars (such as cookies, candy, pastries, sweetened baked goods, regular soft drinks, and other sweetened drinks) provide calories with few, if any, nutrients. For more information, refer to “added sugars” in this section.

sodium: A mineral that helps maintain the body’s fluid balance and blood pressure. Diets that are high in sodium can increase the risk of high blood pressure in individuals who are sodium sensitive. For more information, refer to “Limiting Sodium” in section 6.

solid fats: Fats that are usually not liquid at room temperature. Solid fats are found in most animal foods but also can be made from vegetable oils through hydrogenation. Some common solid fats include butter, beef fat (tallow, suet), chicken fat, pork fat (lard), stick margarine, coconut oil, palm oil, and shortening. Foods high in solid fats include full-fat (regular) cheese, cream, whole milk, ice cream, well-marbled cuts of meats, regular ground beef, bacon, sausages, poultry skin, and many baked goods (such as cookies, crackers, donuts, pastries, and croissants). Solid fats contain more saturated fats and/or trans fats. For more information, refer to “saturated fats” and “trans fats” in this section.

Special Milk Program (SMP): The USDA’s federally assisted program that provides milk to children in schools and child care institutions that do not participate in other federal meal service programs. The SMP reimburses schools for the milk they serve. Schools in the NSLP or SBP may also participate in the SMP to provide milk to children in half-day pre-kindergarten and kindergarten programs where children do not have access to the school meal programs. For more information, visit the CSDE’s [Special Milk Program](#) webpage.

standard of identity: The mandatory government requirements that determine what a food product (like whole-wheat bread) must contain or may contain to be marketed under a certain name in interstate commerce. These standards protect consumers by ensuring that a label accurately reflects what is inside. For example, mayonnaise is not an imitation spread, and ice cream is not a similar, but different, frozen dessert. The USDA develops standards for meat and poultry products. The FDA develops standards for other food products.

standardized recipe: A recipe that a given food service operation has tested and adapted for use. This recipe produces 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 recipes include specific information such as ingredients, weights and measures, preparation directions, serving directions, yield, and portion size. For more information, refer to “Standardized Recipes” in section 2.

sucrose: Another name for table sugar. Sucrose contains glucose and fructose. For more information, refer to “simple carbohydrates (sugars) in this section.

sugar alcohols (polyols): A type of carbohydrate used as sugar substitutes to sweeten foods and beverages. Sugar alcohols are incompletely absorbed and metabolized by the body, and contribute fewer calories than most sugars. They also perform other functions such as adding bulk and texture to foods. Common sugar alcohols include sorbitol, mannitol, xylitol, maltitol, maltitol syrup, lactitol, erythritol, isomalt, and hydrogenated starch hydrolysates (HSH). Products with sugar alcohols are often labeled “sugar free.” Large amounts of sugar alcohols may cause bloating, gas, or diarrhea. For more information, refer to “nonnutritive sweeteners” in this section.

sugars: Refer to “added sugars” and “simple carbohydrates” in this section.

Summer Food Service Program (SFSP): The USDA’s federally assisted summer feeding program for children ages 18 and younger that provides nutritious meals when schools end for the summer. For more information, visit the CSDE’s [Summer Food Service Program](#) webpage.

surimi: Pasteurized, ready-to-eat, restructured seafood usually made from pollock (fish). A 3-ounce serving of surimi credits as 1 ounce equivalent of the meat/meat alternates component. For more information, refer to “Crediting Surimi” in section 3.

tempeh: A highly nutritious fermented soybean cake traditionally made from whole soybeans. A 1-ounce serving of tempeh credits as 1 ounce equivalent of the meat/meat alternates component. For more information, refer to “Crediting Tempeh” in section 3.

trans fats: A type of unsaturated fat that is structurally different from the unsaturated fatty acids that occur naturally in plant foods, and therefore has different health effects. Trans fats increase the risk of cardiovascular disease. Most trans fats are artificially made as the result of “hydrogenation.” This manufacturing process transforms liquid vegetable oils into a solid (saturated) fat to increase shelf life and enhance the flavor and texture of food products. Sources of trans fatty acids include partially hydrogenated vegetable oils used in processed foods such as desserts, microwave popcorn, frozen pizza, some margarines, and coffee creamer. Trans fats are also present naturally in foods that come from ruminant animals (e.g., cattle and sheep) such as dairy products, beef, and lamb. For more information, refer to “partially hydrogenated oils” in this section and “Trans Fats” in section 6.

USDA Foods: Foods available to the USDA Child Nutrition Programs through the CSDE’s Food Distribution Program. For more information, visit the USDA’s [USDA Foods Programs](#) webpage and the CSDE’s [Food Distribution Program](#) webpage.

vegetable subgroups: The five categories of vegetables within the vegetables component that are required over the week in the NSLP meal pattern. The subgroups include dark green, red/ orange, beans and peas (legumes), starchy, and other vegetables. For more information, refer to “Vegetable Subgroups at Lunch” in section 3 and visit the “[Vegetables Component for Grades K-12](#)” section of the CSDE’s Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs webpage.

vegetables component: The meal component of the USDA meal patterns that is comprised of vegetables (fresh, frozen, canned, and dried) and pasteurized full-strength juice; and includes five subgroups. Vegetable juice cannot exceed half of the weekly vegetable offerings. For more information, refer to “Vegetables Component” in section 3.

wheat bread: Bread that often has wheat flour or enriched wheat flour (not whole-wheat flour) as an ingredient. Wheat bread is not whole grain unless it is labeled “whole-wheat bread.”

whole foods: Foods that are unprocessed or minimally processed and do not contain added ingredients such as fat, sugars, or sodium.

whole fruits and vegetables: Fresh, frozen, canned, and dried fruits and vegetables that are unprocessed or minimally processed, and do not contain added ingredients such as fat, sugars, or sodium.

whole grain-rich: For the NSLP and SBP meal patterns for grades K-12, whole grain-rich foods must contain at least 50 percent whole grains, any other grain ingredients must be enriched, and any noncreditable grains must be less than two percent ($\frac{1}{4}$ ounce equivalent) of the product formula. For more information, refer to “Part C: WGR Criteria” in section 3 and the CSDE’s guide, *Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the NSLP and SBP Meal Patterns for Grades K-12*.

whole grains: Grains that consist of the entire kernel, including the starchy endosperm, the fiber-rich bran, and the nutrient-rich germ. All grains start out as whole grains, but many are processed to remove the bran and germ, which also removes many of the nutrients. Whole grains are nutrient rich, containing vitamins, minerals, fiber, antioxidants, and health-enhancing phytonutrients such as lignans and flavonoids. Examples of whole grains include whole wheat, whole oats, oatmeal, whole-grain cornmeal, brown rice, whole rye, whole barley, wild rice, buckwheat, and bulgur (cracked wheat). For more information, refer to “Whole grains” in section 3 and the CSDE’s resource, *Crediting Whole Grains in the NSLP and SBP*.

whole-grain flour: Flour made by grinding the entire whole-grain kernel, including the fiber-rich bran, nutrient-rich germ, and starchy endosperm. Flour or meal that does not contain all parts of the grain is not whole grain, e.g., degermed corn, milled rice, and wheat flour. For more information, refer to “Whole grains” in section 3 and the CSDE’s resource, [*Crediting Whole Grains in the NSLP and SBP*](#).

whole-wheat bread: Bread that contains the whole grain, including the starchy endosperm, the fiber-rich bran, and the nutrient-rich germ. Whole-wheat flour will be listed as the first grain ingredient.



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