

# Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for the Grains Component in the School Nutrition Programs

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has different crediting requirements for the grains component in the meal patterns for preschoolers (ages 1-4) and grades K-12 in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), Seamless Summer Option (SSO) of the NSLP, and Afterschool Snack Program (ASP) of the NSLP. The requirements for preschoolers are defined by the USDA regulations for the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) below, which update the meal patterns for preschoolers in the NSLP, SBP, SSO, and ASP.

- Final Rule (81 FR 24347): *Child and Adult Care Food Program: Meal Pattern Revisions Related to the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010* (April 25, 2016):  
<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2016/04/25/2016-09412/child-and-adult-care-food-program-meal-pattern-revisions-related-to-the-healthy-hunger-free-kids-act>
- Final Rule Correction (81 FR 75671): *CACFP Meal Pattern Revisions Related to the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010* (November 1, 2016):  
<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2016/11/01/2016-26339/child-and-adult-care-food-program-meal-pattern-revisions-related-to-the-healthy-hunger-free-kids-act>
- Final Rule (84 FR 50287): *Delayed Implementation of Grains Ounce Equivalents in the Child and Adult Care Food Program* (September 25, 2019):  
<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2019/09/25/2019-20808/delayed-implementation-of-grains-ounce-equivalents-in-the-child-and-adult-care-food-program>



This document summarizes the meal pattern requirements and applicable resources for the grains component of each school nutrition program. School food authorities (SFAs) must ensure that all foods served as the grain component meet the specific meal pattern requirements for each school nutrition program. For additional guidance on the grains component, visit the “[Grains Component for Grades K-12](#),” “[Grains Component for Preschoolers](#),” and “[Crediting Foods for Grades K-12 in the ASP](#)” sections of the Connecticut State Department of Education’s (CSDE) webpages for school nutrition programs. For a comparison of the meal pattern requirements for preschoolers and grades K-12, see the CSDE’s handout, *Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschool and Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs*. For more information on the meal patterns and crediting foods, review the CSDE’s guides, *Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12*, *Menu Planning Guide for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP*, and *Afterschool Snack Program Handbook*.

This information is subject to change as the USDA continues to issue policy guidance on the school meal patterns. The CSDE will notify SFAs when new guidance is available.

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## Serving the Same Grain Foods to Preschoolers and Grades K-12

SFAs must consider the different meal pattern requirements for preschoolers and grades K-12 when making menu planning and purchasing decisions for grain foods. When SFAs serve the same grain foods to preschoolers and grades K-12, these foods must comply with whichever meal pattern requirements are stricter. The examples below illustrate this requirement.

- The NSLP and SBP meal patterns for grades K-12 have stricter whole-grain rich (WGR) criteria than the preschool meal patterns. Grain foods served to both groups must comply with the WGR criteria for grades K-12.
- Grain-based desserts credit in the NSLP and SBP meal patterns for grades K-12, but not the preschool meal patterns. For more information, see “R8: Grain-based Desserts.”
- The preschool meal patterns require a sugar limit for breakfast cereals, but the meal patterns for grades K-12 do not. Breakfast cereals served to both groups must comply with the preschool sugar limits. For more information, see “R12: Sugar Limit for Breakfast Cereals.”

The only exceptions to these requirements are when SFAs choose to follow the K-5 meal pattern for preschoolers and grades K-5 who eat together in the same service area at the same time; or the ASP K-12 meal pattern for preschoolers and grades K-12 who eat together in the same service area at the same time.

## Preschoolers and grades K-5 eating together in the NSLP, SBP, and SSO

SFAs that serve meals to preschoolers and grades K-5 in the same service area at the same time may choose to 1) follow the grade-appropriate meal patterns for each grade group (i.e., use the preschool meal patterns for ages 1-4 and the K-5 meal pattern for grades K-5); or 2) serve the K-5 meal pattern to both grade groups. SFAs must follow the preschool meal pattern when meals are served to preschoolers in a different area or at a different time than K-5 students. The USDA allows the option to serve the K-5 meal pattern to preschoolers **only** when preschoolers are co-mingled with K-5 students during the meal service. For more information, see [USDA Memo SP 37-2017: Flexibility for Co-Mingled Preschool Meals: Questions and Answers](#).

## Preschoolers and grades K-12 eating together in the ASP

SFAs that serve ASP snacks to preschoolers and grades K-12 in the same service area at the same time may choose to 1) follow the grade-appropriate ASP meal patterns for each grade group (i.e., use the preschool ASP meal pattern for ages 1-4 and the K-12 ASP meal pattern for grades K-12); or 2) serve the K-12 ASP meal pattern to both grade groups. SFAs must follow the preschool ASP meal pattern when ASP snacks are served to preschoolers in a different area or at a different time than K-12 students. The USDA allows the option to serve the K-12 ASP meal pattern to preschoolers **only** when

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preschoolers are co-mingled with K-12 students during the ASP snack service. *For more information, see [USDA Memo SP 37-2017: Flexibility for Co-Mingled Preschool Meals: Questions and Answers](#).*

The preschool meal patterns provide the amounts and types of foods that most younger children need for healthy growth and development. The USDA strongly encourages SFAs to find ways to serve grade-appropriate snacks to preschoolers and older students to best address their nutritional needs.

## Considerations for Reducing Choking Risks for Young Children

Children younger than 4 are at the highest risk of choking. Examples of grain foods that may cause choking include hard pretzels; pretzel chips; corn chips; breakfast cereals that contain nuts, whole-grain kernels (such as wheat berries), and hard chunks (such as granola); and crackers or breads with seeds, nut pieces, or whole-grain kernels. Consider children's age and developmental readiness when deciding what types of grain foods to offer in preschool menus. This consideration is also important for children with a disability that requires dietary restrictions. For additional guidance, visit the "[Choking Prevention](#)" section of the CSDE's [Food Safety for Child Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

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## USDA Requirements for the Grains Component in the Meal Patterns for the NSLP, SBP, ASP, and SSO

Requirement	Grades K-12		Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)
	NSLP, SBP, and SSO	ASP	NSLP, SBP, SSO, and ASP
<p><b>R1:</b> <b>Component name</b></p>	<p><b>Component name:</b> Grains</p> <p><b>Change for school year 2020-21:</b> On August 21, 2020, the USDA released information about a decision in April 2020 by the U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland that vacates (cancels) the USDA’s 2018 final rule, <i>Child Nutrition Programs: Flexibilities for Milk, Whole Grains, and Sodium Requirements</i> (83 FR 63775). This eliminates the previously approved meal pattern flexibilities, and reverts back to the 2012 NSLP and SBP meal patterns for grades K-12. Therefore, for school year 2020-21 (July 1, 2020, through June 30, 2021), all grains must be WGR. For more information, see question 7 in <a href="#">USDA Memo SP 24-2020, CACFP 13-2020 and SFSP 13-2020: Questions and Answers for the Child Nutrition Programs during School Year 2020-21 – #5</a>.</p> <p><b>Meal pattern waiver option:</b> Due to the coronavirus pandemic, the USDA’s <i>COVID-19: Child Nutrition Response #36, Nationwide Waiver to Allow Meal Pattern Flexibility in the Child Nutrition Programs – Extension #4</i> waives the requirements to serve meals that meet the meal pattern requirements during school year 2020-21. The USDA is allowing SFAs to use this meal pattern flexibility if they cannot meet the 2012 meal pattern requirements. SFAs must apply to the CSDE to implement this waiver. For more information, visit the “<a href="#">Current Waivers and Applications for the NSLP and SBP (School Year 2020-21)</a>” section of the CSDE’s <a href="#">Child Nutrition Programs</a> webpage.</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">Grains Component for Grades K-12</a> (CSDE webpage)  <a href="#">Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs</a> (CSDE webpage)  <a href="#">National School Lunch Program Regulations (7 CFR 210.10)</a>  <a href="#">School Breakfast Program Regulations (7 CFR 220.8)</a>  <a href="#">USDA Memo SP 24-2020, CACFP 13-2020 and SFSP 13-2020: Questions and Answers for the Child Nutrition Programs during School Year 2020-21 – #5</a></p>	<p><b>Component name:</b> Grains/breads. The ASP meal pattern for grades K-12 refers to the grains/breads component instead of the grains component because the USDA’s final rule (77 FR 4087), <i>Nutrition Standards for the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs</i>, does not apply to the ASP meal pattern for grades K-12.</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">Grains/Breads Component for Grades K-12 in the ASP</a> (CSDE webpage)</p>	<p><b>Component name:</b> Grains</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">Grains Component for Preschoolers</a> (CSDE webpage)  <a href="#">Final Rule (81 FR 24347): Child and Adult Care Food Program: Meal Pattern Revisions Related to the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010</a>  <a href="#">Final Rule Correction (81 FR 75671): CACFP Meal Pattern Revisions Related to the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010</a></p>

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## USDA Requirements for the Grains Component in the Meal Patterns for the NSLP, SBP, ASP, and SSO

Requirement	Grades K-12		Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)
	NSLP, SBP, and SSO	ASP	NSLP, SBP, SSO, and ASP
<b>R2: Creditable Grains</b>	<p><b>Creditable grains:</b> Whole and enriched grains.</p> <p><b>Corn:</b> Corn ingredients credit if they are whole grain, enriched, or treated with lime (nixtamalized). Nixtamalization is 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.</p> <p><b>Hominy, corn masa, and masa harina:</b> Ingredients labeled as hominy, corn masa, or masa harina are nixtamalized, and therefore credit as whole grains. However, cornmeal and corn flour do not credit unless they are whole grain, enriched, or nixtamalized. If the product’s ingredients statement does not provide sufficient information, SFAs must obtain a product formulation statement (PFS) from the manufacturer to document that cornmeal and corn flour ingredients meet one of these requirements. Corn flour ingredients that are not whole grain, enriched, or nixtamalized count toward the limit for noncreditable grains under the WGR criteria (see “R6: WGR Criteria”).</p> <p><b>Bran and germ:</b> SFAs must count bran (such as oat bran, wheat bran, corn bran, rice bran, and rye bran) and germ (such as wheat germ) with all other noncreditable grains toward the limit for noncreditable grains required by the USDA’s WGR criteria for school meals (see “R6: WGR Criteria”).</p>	<p><b>Creditable grains:</b> Whole grains, enriched grains, bran (such as oat bran, wheat bran, corn bran, rice bran, and rye bran) and germ (such as wheat germ).</p> <p><b>Corn:</b> Corn ingredients credit if they are whole grain, enriched, or treated with lime (nixtamalized). Nixtamalization is 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.</p> <p><b>Hominy, corn masa, and masa harina:</b> Ingredients labeled as hominy, corn masa, or masa harina are nixtamalized, and therefore credit as whole grains. However, cornmeal and corn flour do not credit unless they are whole grain, enriched, or nixtamalized. If the product’s ingredients statement does not provide sufficient information, SFAs must obtain a PFS from the manufacturer to document that cornmeal and corn flour ingredients meet one of these requirements.</p>	<p><b>Creditable grains:</b> Whole grains, enriched grains, bran (such as oat bran, wheat bran, corn bran, rice bran, and rye bran) and germ (such as wheat germ).</p> <p><b>Corn:</b> Corn ingredients credit if they are whole grain, enriched, or treated with lime (nixtamalized). Nixtamalization is 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.</p> <p><b>Hominy, corn masa, and masa harina:</b> Ingredients labeled as hominy, corn masa, or masa harina are nixtamalized, and therefore credit as whole grains. However, cornmeal and corn flour do not credit unless they are whole grain, enriched, or nixtamalized. If the product’s ingredients statement does not provide sufficient information, SFAs must obtain a PFS from the manufacturer to document that cornmeal and corn flour ingredients meet one of these requirements.</p>

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## USDA Requirements for the Grains Component in the Meal Patterns for the NSLP, SBP, ASP, and SSO

Requirement	Grades K-12		Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)
	NSLP, SBP, and SSO	ASP	NSLP, SBP, SSO, and ASP
<b>R2:</b> <b>Creditable Grains,</b> <i>continued</i>	<b>Resources:</b> <a href="#">Crediting Enriched Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a> <a href="#">Crediting Whole Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a> <a href="#">PFS for Grain Ounce Equivalents (USDA)</a> <a href="#">PFS for Grain Ounce Equivalents: Completed Sample (USDA)</a> <a href="#">Grains Component for Grades K-12 (CSDE webpage)</a> <a href="#">USDA Memo SP 34-2019, CACFP 15-2019 and SFSP 15-2019: Crediting Coconut, Hominy, Corn Masa, and Masa Harina in the Child Nutrition Programs</a> <a href="#">USDA Memo SP 38-2019: Meal Requirements under the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program: Q&amp;As for Program Operators</a> <a href="#">Whole Grain-rich Criteria for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a>	<b>Resources:</b> <a href="#">Afterschool Snack Program Handbook (CSDE)</a> <a href="#">Crediting Enriched Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a> <a href="#">Crediting Whole Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a> <a href="#">Grains/Breads Component for Grades K-12 in the ASP (CSDE webpage)</a> <a href="#">PFS for Grain Servings (USDA)</a> <a href="#">PFS for Grain Servings: Completed Sample (USDA)</a> <a href="#">USDA Memo SP 34-2019, CACFP 15-2019 and SFSP 15-2019: Crediting Coconut, Hominy, Corn Masa, and Masa Harina in the Child Nutrition Programs</a>	<b>Resources:</b> <a href="#">Child Care Worksheet 1: Crediting Commercial Grains in the CACFP (CSDE)</a> <a href="#">Child Care Worksheet 2: Crediting Ready-to-eat (RTE) Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP (CSDE)</a> <a href="#">Child Care Worksheet 3: Crediting Cooked Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP (CSDE)</a> <a href="#">Child Care Worksheet 4: Crediting Family-size Recipes for Grains in the CACFP (CSDE)</a> <a href="#">Child Care Worksheet 5: Crediting Quantity Recipes for Grains in the CACFP (CSDE)</a> <a href="#">Crediting Enriched Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a> <a href="#">Crediting Whole Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a> <a href="#">Grains Component for Preschoolers (CSDE webpage)</a> <a href="#">How to Identify Creditable Grains for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a> <a href="#">PFS for Grain Servings (through September 30, 2021) (USDA)</a> <a href="#">PFS for Grain Servings: Completed Sample (through September 30, 2021) (USDA)</a> <a href="#">PFS for Grain Ounce Equivalents (effective October 1, 2021) (USDA)</a> <a href="#">PFS for Grain Ounce Equivalents: Completed Sample (effective October 1, 2021) (USDA)</a> <a href="#">USDA Memo CACFP 09-2018: Grain Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answers</a> <a href="#">USDA Memo SP 34-2019, CACFP 15-2019 and SFSP 15-2019: Crediting Coconut, Hominy, Corn Masa, and Masa Harina in the Child Nutrition Programs</a>

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Requirement	Grades K-12		Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)
	NSLP, SBP, and SSO	ASP	NSLP, SBP, SSO, and ASP
<b>R3:</b> Serving Size	<p><b>Required amounts:</b> The meal pattern lists the grains component in <b>ounce equivalents</b>. An ounce equivalent is the amount of food that meets the USDA’s requirement for 1 ounce of the grains component in the NSLP and the SBP meal patterns.</p> <p><b>Methods to determine grain ounce equivalents:</b> The USDA allows two methods for determining the grain ounce equivalents of creditable products and recipes. Method 1 is used for commercial grain products and may also be used for standardized recipes that indicate the weight of the prepared (cooked) serving. Method 2 is used for standardized recipes and may also be used for commercial grain products that have a product formulation statement (PFS) stating the weight of creditable grains per serving. SFAs may use either method, but must document how the crediting information was obtained.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Method 1</b> uses the amount for the appropriate grain group in the USDA’s chart, <i>Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs</i>. Exhibit A provides minimum weights (groups A-G) and volumes (groups H-I) for nine groups of grain foods, based on the average grain content of similar products. The CSDE’s handout,</li> </ul>	<p><b>Required amounts:</b> The meal pattern lists the grains component in <b>servings</b>.</p> <p><b>Methods to determine grain ounce equivalents:</b> The USDA allows two methods for determining the grain servings of creditable products and recipes. Method 1 is used for commercial grain products and may also be used for standardized recipes that indicate the weight of the prepared (cooked) serving. Method 2 is used for standardized recipes and may also be used for commercial grain products that have a product formulation statement (PFS) stating the weight of creditable grains per serving. SFAs may use either method, but must document how the crediting information was obtained.</p> <p><b>Method 1</b> uses the amount for the appropriate grain group in the USDA’s chart, <i>Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs</i>. Exhibit A provides minimum weights (groups A-G) and volumes (groups H-I) for nine groups of grain foods, based on the average grain content of similar products. The CSDE’s handout, <i>Servings for Grains/Breads for Grades K-12 in the ASP</i>, lists the Exhibit A servings that apply to the ASP meal pattern for grades K-12.</p>	<p><b>Required amounts:</b> The meal pattern lists the grains component in <b>servings</b> through September 30, 2021, and changes to <b>ounce equivalents</b> effective October 1, 2021. The required preschool amount is ½ serving/ounce equivalent.</p> <p><b>Methods to determine grain servings/ounce equivalents:</b> The USDA allows two methods for determining the grain servings/ounce equivalents of creditable products and recipes. Method 1 is used for commercial grain products and may also be used for standardized recipes that indicate the weight of the prepared (cooked) serving. Method 2 is used for standardized recipes and may also be used for commercial grain products that have a product formulation statement (PFS) stating the weight of creditable grains per serving. SFAs may use either method, but must document how the crediting information was obtained.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Method 1</b> uses the amount for the appropriate grain group in the USDA’s chart, <i>Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs</i>. Exhibit A provides minimum weights (groups A-G) and volumes (groups H-I) for nine groups of grain foods, based on the average grain content of similar products. The CSDE’s handout, <i>Grain Servings for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP</i>, lists the Exhibit A servings that apply to the NSLP and SBP preschool</li> </ul>

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Requirement	Grades K-12		Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)
	NSLP, SBP, and SSO	ASP	NSLP, SBP, SSO, and ASP
<p><b>R3:</b>  <b>Serving Size,</b>  <i>continued</i></p>	<p><i>Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP</i>, lists the Exhibit A ounce equivalents that apply to the NSLP and SBP meal patterns for grades K-12.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Method 2</b> calculates the total weight (grams) of creditable grains (whole and enriched) per manufacturer’s serving or recipe serving. A food in groups A-G must contain 16 grams of creditable grains to credit as 1 ounce equivalent, and at least 8 grams of whole grains per ounce equivalent to be WGR. A food in group H must contain 28 grams of creditable grains to credit as 1 ounce equivalent, and at least 14 grams of whole grains per ounce equivalent to be WGR. Required documentation for method 2 is a PFS for commercial products (stating the weight of creditable grains per serving) and a standardized recipe for foods made on site (listing the weight of creditable grains).</li> </ul> <p><b>When method 2 is required:</b> There are specific situations when SFAs must use method 2 (instead of the USDA’s Exhibit A chart) to determine the grain ounce equivalents for commercial products. For more</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Method 2</b> calculates the total weight (grams) of creditable grains (whole and enriched) per manufacturer’s serving or recipe serving. To credit as one serving, a food in groups A-G must contain 14.75 grams of creditable grains, and a food in group H must contain 25 grams of creditable grains. Required documentation for method 2 is a PFS for commercial products (stating the weight of creditable grains per serving) and a standardized recipe for foods made on site (listing the weight of creditable grains).</li> </ul> <p><b>When method 2 is required:</b> There are specific situations when SFAs must use method 2 (instead of the USDA’s Exhibit A chart) to determine the grain servings for commercial products. For more information, and detailed guidance on both methods, see the CSDE’s handout, <i>Calculation Methods for Grains/Breads Servings for Grades K-12 in the ASP</i>.</p> <p><b>Option for ounce equivalents:</b> SFAs may choose to use the ounce equivalents in <i>Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP</i>, instead of serving sizes. This provides consistency with NSLP and SBP meals and more nutrient-dense choices for children</p>	<p>meal patterns through September 30, 2021. The CSDE’s handout, <i>Grain Ounce Equivalents for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP</i>, lists the Exhibit A ounce equivalents that apply to the NSLP and SBP preschool meal patterns effective October 1, 2021. Groups F and G are not included because grain-based desserts do not credit as the grains component in the preschool meal patterns.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Method 2</b> calculates the total weight (grams) of creditable grains (whole and enriched) per manufacturer’s serving or recipe serving. To credit as ½ serving <b>through September 30, 2021</b>, a food in groups A-G must contain 7.38 grams of creditable grains, and a food in group H must contain 13 grams of creditable grains. To credit as ½ ounce equivalent <b>effective October 1, 2021</b>, a food in groups A-G must contain 8 grams of creditable grains, and a food in group H must contain 14 grams of creditable grains. Required documentation for method 2 is a PFS for commercial products (stating the weight of creditable grains per serving) and a standardized recipe for foods made on site (listing the weight of creditable grains).</li> </ul>

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Requirement	Grades K-12		Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)
	NSLP, SBP, and SSO	ASP	NSLP, SBP, SSO, and ASP
<b>R3:</b> <b>Serving Size,</b> <i>continued</i>	<p>information, and detailed guidance on both methods, see the CSDE’s handout, see the CSDE’s handout, <i>Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP</i>.</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs (USDA)</a>  <a href="#">Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage)</a>  <a href="#">PFS for Grain Ounce Equivalents (USDA)</a>  <a href="#">PFS for Grain Ounce Equivalents: Completed Sample (USDA)</a>  <a href="#">USDA Memo SP 30-2012: Grain Requirements for the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program</a>  <a href="#">Whole Grain Resource for the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs (USDA)</a>  <a href="#">Webinar: Exhibit A Grains Tool to the Rescue (USDA)</a>  <a href="#">Webinar: How to Maximize the Exhibit A Grains Tool (USDA)</a></p>	<p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">Afterschool Snack Program Handbook (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12 (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">Calculation Methods for Grains/Breads Servings for Grades K-12 in the ASP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs (USDA)</a>  <a href="#">PFS for Grain Servings (USDA)</a>  <a href="#">PFS for Grain Servings: Completed Sample (USDA)</a>  <a href="#">Servings for Grains/Breads for Grades K-12 in the ASP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">Webinar: Exhibit A Grains Tool to the Rescue (USDA)</a>  <a href="#">Webinar: How to Maximize the Exhibit A Grains Tool (USDA)</a></p>	<p><b>When method 2 is required:</b> There are specific situations when SFAs must use method 2 (instead of the USDA’s Exhibit A chart) to determine the grain servings or ounce equivalents for commercial products. For more information, and detailed guidance on both methods, see the CSDE’s handout, see the CSDE’s handout, <i>Calculation Methods for Grain Servings for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP</i>.</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">Calculation Methods for Grain Servings for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">Child Care Worksheet 1: Crediting Commercial Grains in the CACFP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">Child Care Worksheet 2: Crediting Ready-to-eat (RTE) Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">Child Care Worksheet 3: Crediting Cooked Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">Child Care Worksheet 4: Crediting Family-size Recipes for Grains in the CACFP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">Child Care Worksheet 5: Crediting Quantity Recipes for Grains in the CACFP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs (USDA)</a>  <a href="#">Grain Ounce Equivalents for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP (effective October 1, 2021)(CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">Grain Servings for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP (through September 30, 2021) (CSDE)</a></p>

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	NSLP, SBP, and SSO	ASP	NSLP, SBP, SSO, and ASP
<b>R3:</b> <b>Serving Size,</b> <i>continued</i>			<a href="#">PFS for Grain Servings: Completed Sample</a> (through September 30, 2021) (USDA) <a href="#">PFS for Grain Ounce Equivalents</a> (effective October 1, 2021) (USDA) <a href="#">PFS for Grain Ounce Equivalents: Completed Sample</a> (effective October 1, 2021) (USDA) USDA Final Rule (84 FR 50287): Delayed Implementation of Grains Ounce Equivalents in the Child and Adult Care Food Program Webinar: <a href="#">Exhibit A Grains Tool to the Rescue</a> (USDA) Webinar: <a href="#">How to Maximize the Exhibit A Grains Tool</a> (USDA)

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Requirement	Grades K-12		Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)																														
	NSLP, SBP, and SSO	ASP	NSLP, SBP, SSO, and ASP																														
<p><b>R4:</b> <b>Weekly Ranges for Grains</b></p>	<p><b>Weekly requirement:</b> The lunch and breakfast meal patterns require weekly ranges for the grains component. Menus are not required to comply with the maximums, but must meet the minimums and stay within the weekly calorie range for each age group. The weekly maximum provides a guide for planning age-appropriate meals that meet the dietary specifications for calories, saturated fat, and sodium. For information on the dietary specifications, see the meal patterns for grades K-12 (available on the CSDE’s <a href="#">Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs</a> webpage) and section 6 of the CSDE’s guide, <a href="#">Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12</a>.</p> <table border="1" style="margin: 10px auto; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="3">Required weekly grain ounce equivalents at breakfast</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Grade group</th> <th>Five-day week</th> <th>Seven-day week</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>K-5</td> <td>7-10</td> <td>10-14</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6-8</td> <td>8-10</td> <td>11-14</td> </tr> <tr> <td>9-12</td> <td>9-10</td> <td>12½-14</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1" style="margin: 10px auto; border-collapse: collapse; text-align: center;"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="3">Required weekly grain ounce equivalents at lunch</th> </tr> <tr> <th>Grade group</th> <th>Five-day week</th> <th>Seven-day week</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>K-5</td> <td>8-9</td> <td>11-12½</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6-8</td> <td>8-10</td> <td>11-14</td> </tr> <tr> <td>9-12</td> <td>10-12</td> <td>14-17</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs</a> (CSDE webpage)  <a href="#">Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12 (Grades K-12)</a> (CSDE)</p>	Required weekly grain ounce equivalents at breakfast			Grade group	Five-day week	Seven-day week	K-5	7-10	10-14	6-8	8-10	11-14	9-12	9-10	12½-14	Required weekly grain ounce equivalents at lunch			Grade group	Five-day week	Seven-day week	K-5	8-9	11-12½	6-8	8-10	11-14	9-12	10-12	14-17	<p><b>Weekly requirement:</b> None</p>	<p><b>Weekly requirement:</b> None</p>
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# Comparison of Requirements for the Grains Component in the School Nutrition Programs

## USDA Requirements for the Grains Component in the Meal Patterns for the NSLP, SBP, ASP, and SSO

Requirement	Grades K-12		Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)
	NSLP, SBP, and SSO	ASP	NSLP, SBP, SSO, and ASP
<p><b>R5: WGR Requirement</b></p>	<p><b>Frequency:</b> For school year 2020-21, all grains must be WGR. Products that contain only enriched grains do not credit (see “R6: Products Containing Only Enriched Grains (No Whole Grains)”).</p> <p><b>Change for school year 2020-21:</b> On August 21, 2020, the USDA released information about a decision in April 2020 by the U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland that vacates (cancels) the USDA’s 2018 final rule, <i>Child Nutrition Programs: Flexibilities for Milk, Whole Grains, and Sodium Requirements</i> (83 FR 63775). This eliminates the previously approved meal pattern flexibilities, and reverts back to the 2012 NSLP and SBP meal patterns for grades K-12. Therefore, for school year 2020-21 (July 1, 2020, through June 30, 2021), all grains must be WGR. For more information, see question 7 in <a href="#">USDA Memo SP 24-2020, CACFP 13-2020 and SFSP 13-2020: Questions and Answers for the Child Nutrition Programs during School Year 2020-21 – #5</a>.</p> <p><b>Meal pattern waiver option:</b> Due to the coronavirus pandemic, the USDA’s <i>COVID-19: Child Nutrition Response #36, Nationwide Waiver to Allow Meal Pattern Flexibility in the Child Nutrition Programs – Extension #4</i> waives the requirements to serve meals that meet the meal pattern requirements during school year 2020-21. The USDA is allowing SFAs to use this meal pattern flexibility if they cannot meet the 2012 meal pattern requirements. SFAs must apply to the CSDE to implement this waiver. For more information, visit the</p>	<p><b>Frequency:</b> None</p> <p><b>Documentation:</b> None</p> <p><b>Best practice:</b> Serve only WGR grains and serve 100 percent whole grains most often.</p>	<p><b>Frequency:</b> At least <b>one serving per day</b> must be WGR, between all meals and ASP snacks served to preschoolers. The USDA’s <i>CACFP Best Practices</i> recommends at least two servings of WGR grains per day. If the SFA serves preschoolers a WGR grain at breakfast or lunch, a WGR grain at ASP snack is not required. If the SFA only serves preschool snack, any grains served at snack must be WGR.</p> <p><b>Documentation:</b> SFAs must maintain documentation to indicate that at least one serving per day is WGR. SFAs must obtain a PFS for commercial foods and a standardized recipe for foods prepared on site.</p> <p><b>Best practice:</b> Serve only WGR grains and serve 100 percent whole grains most often.</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">Adding Whole Grains to Your CACFP Menu</a> (USDA)  <a href="#">CACFP Best Practices</a> (USDA)  <a href="#">Crediting Commercial Processed Products in Preschool Menus</a> (CSDE webpage)  <a href="#">Crediting Enriched Grains in the NSLP and SBP</a> (CSDE)  <a href="#">Crediting Foods Prepared on Site in Preschool Menus</a> (CSDE webpage)  <a href="#">Crediting Whole Grains in the NSLP and SBP</a> (CSDE)  <a href="#">USDA Memo CACFP 09-2018: Grain Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answers</a></p>

# Comparison of Requirements for the Grains Component in the School Nutrition Programs

## USDA Requirements for the Grains Component in the Meal Patterns for the NSLP, SBP, ASP, and SSO

Requirement	Grades K-12		Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)
	NSLP, SBP, and SSO	ASP	NSLP, SBP, SSO, and ASP
<b>R5:</b> <b>WGR Requirement,</b> <i>continued</i>	<p>“Current Waivers and Applications for the NSLP and SBP (School Year 2020-21)” section of the CSDE’s <a href="#">Child Nutrition Programs</a> webpage.</p> <p><b>Documentation:</b> SFAs must maintain documentation on file to indicate that all grains are WGR. SFAs must obtain a PFS for commercial foods and a standardized recipe for foods prepared on site.</p> <p><b>Best practice:</b> Serve 100 percent whole grains most often.</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">Crediting Commercial Processed Products for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs</a> (CSDE webpage)  <a href="#">Crediting Enriched Grains in the NSLP and SBP</a> (CSDE)  <a href="#">Crediting Foods Prepared on Site for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs</a> (CSDE webpage)  <a href="#">Crediting Whole Grains in the NSLP and SBP</a> (CSDE)  <a href="#">USDA Memo SP 24-2020, CACFP 13-2020 and SFSP 13-2020: Questions and Answers for the Child Nutrition Programs during School Year 2020-2021</a>  <a href="#">USDA Memo SP 30-2012: Grain Requirements for the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program</a>  <a href="#">Whole Grain-rich Requirement for Grades K-12</a> (CSDE webpage)</p>		<p><a href="#">Whole Grain-rich Requirement for Preschoolers</a> (CSDE webpage)</p>

# Comparison of Requirements for the Grains Component in the School Nutrition Programs

## USDA Requirements for the Grains Component in the Meal Patterns for the NSLP, SBP, ASP, and SSO

Requirement	Grades K-12		Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)
	NSLP, SBP, and SSO	ASP	NSLP, SBP, SSO, and ASP
<b>R6: WGR Criteria</b>	<p><b>Commercial products:</b> Foods must meet three criteria: 1) contain at least 50 percent whole grains; 2) any other creditable grains must be enriched, and 3) any noncreditable grains must be less than 2 percent of the product formula, i.e., no more than 3.99 grams per ounce equivalent for groups A-G (baked goods), and no more than 6.99 grams per ounce equivalent for group H (cereal grains) and group I (ready-to-eat breakfast cereals).</p> <p><b>Foods made on site:</b> The weight of whole grains in the SFA’s standardized recipe is the same as or more than the weight of the enriched grains.</p> <p><b>Serving the same WGR foods to preschoolers and grades K-12:</b> Grain foods that meet the WGR criteria for grades K-12 will meet the preschool WGR criteria. However, grain foods that meet the preschool WGR criteria may or may not meet the WGR criteria for grades K-12. If SFAs serve the same grain foods to preschoolers and grades K-5, these foods must meet the WGR criteria for grades K-12; and must also meet the preschool sugar limit (see “R9: Crediting Criteria for Breakfast Cereals”).</p>	None	<p><b>Commercial products:</b> A whole grain must be the first ingredient (or water is the first ingredient and a whole grain is the second ingredient), and the next two grain ingredients (if any) are whole, enriched, bran, or germ. The preschool WGR criteria do not require a specific limit for noncreditable grains.</p> <p><b>Foods made on site:</b> The weight of whole grains in the SFA’s standardized recipe is the same as or more than the weight of the other creditable grains.</p> <p><b>Serving the same WGR foods to preschoolers and grades K-12:</b> Grain foods that meet the WGR criteria for grades K-12 will meet the preschool WGR criteria. However, grain foods that meet the preschool WGR criteria may or may not meet the WGR criteria for grades K-12. If SFAs serve the same grain foods to preschoolers and grades K-5, these foods must meet the WGR criteria for grades K-12; and must also meet the preschool sugar limit (see “R9: Crediting Criteria for Breakfast Cereals”).</p>

# Comparison of Requirements for the Grains Component in the School Nutrition Programs

## USDA Requirements for the Grains Component in the Meal Patterns for the NSLP, SBP, ASP, and SSO

Requirement	Grades K-12		Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)
	NSLP, SBP, and SSO	ASP	NSLP, SBP, SSO, and ASP
<b>R6:</b> <b>WGR</b> <b>Criteria,</b> <i>continued</i>	<b>Resources:</b> <a href="#">Crediting Enriched Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a> <a href="#">Crediting Whole Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a> <a href="#">PFS for Grain Ounce Equivalents (USDA)</a> <a href="#">PFS for Grain Ounce Equivalents: Completed Sample (USDA)</a> <a href="#">Tools for Schools: Serving WGR (USDA website)</a> <a href="#">USDA Memo SP 30-2012: Grain Requirements for the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program</a> <a href="#">USDA Memo SP 34-2019, CACFP 15-2019 and SFSP 15-2019: Crediting Coconut, Hominy, Corn Masa, and Masa Harina in the Child Nutrition Programs</a> <a href="#">Whole Grain Resource for the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs (USDA)</a> <a href="#">Whole Grain-rich Criteria for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a>	None	<b>Resources:</b> <a href="#">Child Care Worksheet 1: Crediting Commercial Grains in the CACFP (CSDE)</a> <a href="#">Child Care Worksheet 2: Crediting Ready-to-eat (RTE) Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP (CSDE)</a> <a href="#">Child Care Worksheet 3: Crediting Cooked Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP (CSDE)</a> <a href="#">Child Care Worksheet 4: Crediting Family-size Recipes for Grains in the CACFP (CSDE)</a> <a href="#">Child Care Worksheet 5: Crediting Quantity Recipes for Grains in the CACFP (CSDE)</a> <a href="#">Crediting Enriched Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a> <a href="#">Crediting Whole Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a> <a href="#">Identifying Whole Grain-rich Foods for the CACFP (USDA)</a> <a href="#">How to Spot Whole Grain-Rich Foods for the CACFP (USDA)</a> <a href="#">PFS for Grain Servings (through September 30, 2021) (USDA)</a> <a href="#">PFS for Grain Servings: Completed Sample (through September 30, 2021) (USDA)</a> <a href="#">PFS for Grain Ounce Equivalents (effective October 1, 2021) (USDA)</a> <a href="#">PFS for Grain Ounce Equivalents: Completed Sample (effective October 1, 2021) (USDA)</a> <a href="#">USDA Memo CACFP 09-2018: Grain Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answers</a> <a href="#">USDA Memo SP 34-2019, CACFP 15-2019 and SFSP 15-2019: Crediting Coconut, Hominy, Corn Masa, and Masa Harina in the Child Nutrition Programs</a> <a href="#">Whole Grain-rich Criteria for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a>

# Comparison of Requirements for the Grains Component in the School Nutrition Programs

## USDA Requirements for the Grains Component in the Meal Patterns for the NSLP, SBP, ASP, and SSO

Requirement	Grades K-12		Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)
	NSLP, SBP, and SSO	ASP	NSLP, SBP, SSO, and ASP
<p><b>R7: Products Containing Only Enriched Grains (No Whole Grains)</b>, e.g., enriched white bread, enriched crackers, enriched white rice, enriched cream of wheat cereal, and enriched corn grits</p>	<p><b>Crediting:</b> Enriched grain products do not credit as the grains component in school year 2020-21 (see “R5: WGR Requirement”). Enriched grains credit only when they are an ingredient of a WGR product or recipe. Examples include a rice mixture of ¼ cup of brown rice and ¼ cup of enriched rice; and a sandwich made with one slice of enriched white bread and one slice of whole-grain bread. A recipe that contains whole and enriched grains is WGR if the whole grains are equal to or more than the enriched grains.</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">Crediting Enriched Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">PFS for Grain Ounce Equivalents (USDA)</a>  <a href="#">PFS for Grain Ounce Equivalents: Completed Sample (USDA)</a>  <a href="#">USDA Memo SP 24-2020, CACFP 13-2020 and SFSP 13-2020: Questions and Answers for the Child Nutrition Programs during School Year 2020-2021</a>  <a href="#">USDA Memo SP 38-2019: Meal Requirements under the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program: Q&amp;As for Program Operators</a>  <a href="#">Whole Grain-rich Criteria for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a></p>	<p><b>Crediting:</b> Enriched grain products credit as the grains/breads component.</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">7 CFR 210.10 (o)(2)(iv): Meal requirements for lunches and requirements for afterschool snacks</a>  <a href="#">ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12 (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">Crediting Enriched Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">PFS for Grain Servings (USDA)</a>  <a href="#">PFS for Grain Servings: Completed Sample (USDA)</a></p>	<p><b>Crediting:</b> Enriched grain products credit as the grains component if the SFA offers at least one WGR food per day, between all meals and ASP snacks served to preschoolers.</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">ASP Meal Pattern for Preschoolers (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">Crediting Enriched Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">PFS for Grain Servings (through September 30, 2021) (USDA)</a>  <a href="#">PFS for Grain Servings: Completed Sample (through September 30, 2021) (USDA)</a>  <a href="#">PFS for Grain Ounce Equivalents (effective October 1, 2021) (USDA)</a>  <a href="#">PFS for Grain Ounce Equivalents: Completed Sample (effective October 1, 2021) (USDA)</a>  <a href="#">USDA Memo CACFP 09-2018: Grain Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answers</a>  <a href="#">Whole Grain-rich Criteria for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a></p>

# Comparison of Requirements for the Grains Component in the School Nutrition Programs

## USDA Requirements for the Grains Component in the Meal Patterns for the NSLP, SBP, ASP, and SSO

Requirement	Grades K-12		Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)
	NSLP, SBP, and SSO	ASP	NSLP, SBP, SSO, and ASP
<b>R8: Grain-based Desserts</b>	<p><b>Restrictions at breakfast:</b> None, however, the inclusion of grain-based desserts cannot cause the menu to exceed the weekly dietary specifications (nutrition standards), i.e., limits for calories, saturated fat, and sodium. The CSDE recommends limiting grain-based desserts to no more than twice per week, and serving nutrient-dense whole grains instead. Grain-based desserts often contain more solid fats and added sugars than traditional grains.</p> <p><b>Restrictions at lunch:</b> SFAs may offer up to 2 ounce equivalents of grain-based desserts per week as part of the grains component at lunch. Grain-based desserts served as an <b>extra</b> menu item at lunch must count toward the minimum daily and weekly servings of the grains component, including the weekly limit of no more than 2 ounce equivalents of grain-based desserts, and must fit within the weekly dietary specifications (nutrition standards) for grades K-12.</p> <p><b>Examples of grain-based desserts:</b> Sweet crackers (graham crackers and animal crackers), brownies, cookies, cakes, coffee cakes, cinnamon streusel quick breads, piecrusts in sweet pies (e.g., apple and blueberry), cinnamon rolls, doughnuts, cereal bars, granola bars, breakfast bars, sweet rolls, pastries, toaster pastries, sweet scones (e.g., blueberry and raisin), rice pudding, and sweet bread pudding. The CSDE’s handout, <i>Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP</i>, indicates grain-based desserts with the footnote 1 (allowed for lunch and breakfast) or 2 (allowed only for breakfast).</p>	<p><b>Restrictions at snack:</b> None. The CSDE recommends limiting grain-based desserts to no more than twice per week, and serving nutrient-dense whole grains instead. Grain-based desserts often contain more solid fats and added sugars than traditional grains.</p> <p><b>Examples of grain-based desserts:</b> Sweet crackers (graham crackers and animal crackers), brownies, cookies, cakes, coffee cakes, cinnamon streusel quick breads, piecrusts in sweet pies (e.g., apple and blueberry), cinnamon rolls, doughnuts, cereal bars, granola bars, breakfast bars, sweet rolls, pastries, toaster pastries, sweet scones (e.g., blueberry and raisin), rice pudding, and sweet bread pudding. The CSDE’s handout, <i>Servings for Grains/Breads for Grades K-12 in the ASP</i>, indicates grain-based desserts with the footnote 1.</p> <p>Grain-based desserts do not include muffins, quick breads, e.g., banana bread and zucchini bread (except for cinnamon streusel), cornbread, pancakes, waffles, French toast, savory scones (such as cheese and herb), and piecrusts in entrees such as quiche, meat pies, and chicken potpie.</p>	<p><b>Restrictions at breakfast, lunch, and snack:</b> Grain-based desserts cannot credit in preschool meals and ASP snacks.</p> <p><b>Examples of grain-based desserts:</b> Brownies, cookies, cakes, coffee cakes, cinnamon streusel quick breads, piecrusts in sweet pies (e.g., apple and blueberry), cinnamon rolls, doughnuts, cereal bars, granola bars, breakfast bars, sweet rolls, pastries, toaster pastries, sweet scones (e.g., blueberry and raisin), rice pudding, and sweet bread pudding. The CSDE’s handouts, <i>Grain Servings for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP</i> and <i>Grain Ounce Equivalents for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP</i>, do not include grain-based desserts.</p> <p>Grain-based desserts do not include muffins, quick breads, e.g., banana bread and zucchini bread (except for cinnamon streusel), cornbread, pancakes, waffles, French toast, savory scones (such as cheese and herb), and piecrusts in entrees such as quiche, meat pies, and chicken potpie, and sweet crackers, e.g., graham crackers and animal crackers. The USDA encourages preschool menus to limit sweet crackers because of their higher sugar content. The CSDE recommends not serving sweet crackers more than twice per week, between all meals and ASP snacks served to preschoolers.</p>

# Comparison of Requirements for the Grains Component in the School Nutrition Programs

## USDA Requirements for the Grains Component in the Meal Patterns for the NSLP, SBP, ASP, and SSO

Requirement	Grades K-12		Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)
	NSLP, SBP, and SSO	ASP	NSLP, SBP, SSO, and ASP
<b>R8:</b> <b>Grain-based Desserts,</b> <i>continued</i>	<p>Grain-based desserts do not include muffins, quick breads, e.g., banana bread and zucchini bread (except for cinnamon streusel), cornbread, pancakes, waffles, French toast, savory scones (such as cheese and herb), and piecrusts in entrees such as quiche, meat pies, and chicken potpie.</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs</a> (CSDE)  <a href="#">Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs</a> (CSDE webpage)  <a href="#">USDA Memo SP 30-2012: Grain Requirements for the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program</a>  <a href="#">USDA Memo SP 38-2019: Meal Requirements under the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program: Q&amp;As for Program Operators</a></p>	<p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12</a> (CSDE)  <a href="#">Servings for Grains/Breads for Grades K-12 in the ASP</a> (CSDE)</p>	<p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">Grain-based Desserts in the CACFP</a> (USDA)  <a href="#">Grain Ounce Equivalents for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP</a> (effective October 1, 2021)(CSDE)  <a href="#">Grain Servings for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP</a> (through September 30, 2021) (CSDE)  <a href="#">Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs</a> (CSDE webpage)  <a href="#">USDA Memo CACFP 09-2018: Grain Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answers</a>  <a href="#">USDA Memo CACFP 16-2017: Grain-based Desserts in the Child and Adult Care Food Program</a></p>

# Comparison of Requirements for the Grains Component in the School Nutrition Programs

## USDA Requirements for the Grains Component in the Meal Patterns for the NSLP, SBP, ASP, and SSO

### BREAKFAST CEREALS (RTE and cooked, including regular and instant, e.g., oatmeal)

Requirement	Grades K-12		Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)
	NSLP, SBP, and SSO	ASP	NSLP, SBP, SSO, and ASP
<p><b>R9:</b> <b>Crediting Criteria for Breakfast Cereals</b></p>	<p><b>Allowable types:</b> Breakfast cereals include ready-to-eat (RTE) cereals (group I) and cooked cereals (group H) such as oatmeal (including regular and instant) and cream of wheat.</p> <p><b>Crediting criteria:</b> All breakfast cereals must be WGR (see “R10: WGR Criteria for Breakfast Cereals”) and provide the required volume or weight (see “R11: Serving Size for Breakfast Cereals”).</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">Crediting Breakfast Cereals for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP and SBP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">Crediting Enriched Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">Crediting Whole Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">USDA Final Rule (83 FR 63775): Child Nutrition Programs: Flexibilities for Milk, Whole Grains, and Sodium Requirements</a>  <a href="#">USDA Memo SP 38-2019: Meal Requirements under the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program: Q&amp;As for Program Operators</a></p>	<p><b>Allowable types:</b> Breakfast cereals include ready-to-eat (RTE) cereals (group I) and cooked cereals (group H) such as oatmeal (including regular and instant) and cream of wheat.</p> <p><b>Crediting criteria:</b> Breakfast cereals must 1) contain a creditable grain (whole or enriched) as the first ingredient or be fortified; and 2) provide the required volume or weight (see “R11: Serving Size for Breakfast Cereals”).</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">Crediting Breakfast Cereals for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP and SBP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">Crediting Enriched Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">Crediting Whole Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a></p>	<p><b>Allowable types:</b> Breakfast cereals include ready-to-eat (RTE) cereals (group I) and cooked cereals (group H) such as oatmeal (including regular and instant) and cream of wheat.</p> <p><b>Crediting criteria:</b> Breakfast cereals must 1) contain a creditable grain (whole or enriched) as the first ingredient or be fortified; 2) meet the sugar limit (see “R12: Sugar Limit for Breakfast Cereals”); and 3) provide the required volume or weight (see “R11: Serving Size for Breakfast Cereals”).</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">Child Care Worksheet 2: Crediting Ready-to-eat (RTE) Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">Child Care Worksheet 3: Crediting Cooked Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">Crediting Breakfast Cereals for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">Crediting Enriched Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">Crediting Whole Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">How to Identify Creditable Grains for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">USDA Memo CACFP 09-2018: Grain Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answers</a></p>

# Comparison of Requirements for the Grains Component in the School Nutrition Programs

## USDA Requirements for the Grains Component in the Meal Patterns for the NSLP, SBP, ASP, and SSO

### BREAKFAST CEREALS (RTE and cooked, including regular and instant, e.g., oatmeal), *continued*

Requirement	Grades K-12		Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)
	NSLP, SBP, and SSO	ASP	NSLP, SBP, SSO, and ASP
<p><b>R10:</b> <b>WGR</b> <b>Criteria for Breakfast Cereals</b></p>	<p><b>RTE breakfast cereals:</b> The first ingredient must be a whole grain and the cereal must be fortified. The limit for noncreditable grains does not apply to fortified RTE breakfast cereals that contain a whole grain as the first ingredient.</p> <p><b>Cooked breakfast cereals:</b> 1) The first ingredient must be a whole grain (or water is the first ingredient and a whole grain is the second ingredient); 2) any other grain ingredients must be enriched; and 3) the combined weight of any noncreditable grains does not exceed 6.99 grams. Breakfast cereals that are not WGR must be enriched or fortified.</p> <p><b>Serving the same WGR cooked breakfast cereals to preschoolers and grades K-12:</b> Cooked breakfast cereals foods that meet the preschool WGR criteria may or may not meet the WGR criteria for grades K-12. If SFAs serve the same grain foods to preschoolers and grades K-12, these foods must <b>meet the WGR criteria for grades K-12</b>; and must also meet the preschool sugar limit (see “Preschoolers and Grades K-5 Eating Together in the NSLP, SBP, and SSO” on page 2).</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">Whole Grain-rich Criteria for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">USDA Memo SP 38-2019: Meal Requirements under the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program: Q&amp;As for Program Operators</a></p>	<p><b>RTE breakfast cereals:</b> None</p> <p><b>Cooked breakfast cereals:</b> None</p>	<p><b>RTE breakfast cereals:</b> The first ingredient must be a whole grain and the cereal must be fortified. The cereal must also meet the sugar limit (see “R12: Sugar Limit for Breakfast Cereals”).</p> <p><b>Cooked breakfast cereals:</b> The first ingredient must be a whole grain (or water is the first ingredient and a whole grain is the second ingredient), and the next two grain ingredients (if any) are whole, enriched, bran, or germ. The cereal must also meet the sugar limit (see “R12: Sugar Limit for Breakfast Cereals”).</p> <p><b>Serving the same WGR cooked breakfast cereals to preschoolers and grades K-12:</b> Cooked breakfast cereals foods that meet the preschool WGR criteria may or may not meet the WGR criteria for grades K-12. If SFAs serve the same grain foods to preschoolers and grades K-12, these foods must <b>meet the WGR criteria for grades K-12</b>; and must also meet the preschool sugar limit (see “Preschoolers and Grades K-5 Eating Together in the NSLP, SBP, and SSO” on page 2).</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">Whole Grain-rich Criteria for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">USDA Memo CACFP 09-2018: Grain Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answers</a></p>

# Comparison of Requirements for the Grains Component in the School Nutrition Programs

## USDA Requirements for the Grains Component in the Meal Patterns for the NSLP, SBP, ASP, and SSO

### BREAKFAST CEREALS (RTE and cooked, including regular and instant, e.g., oatmeal), *continued*

Requirement	Grades K-12		Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)
	NSLP, SBP, and SSO	ASP	NSLP, SBP, SSO, and ASP
<b>R11:</b> <b>Serving Size for Breakfast Cereals</b>	<p><b>Amount for cooked breakfast cereals (group H):</b> 1 ounce equivalent equals ½ cup cooked or 1 ounce (28 grams) dry.</p> <p><b>Amount for RTE breakfast cereals (group I):</b> 1 ounce equivalent equals 1 ounce (28 grams), i.e., 1 cup of flaked or round cereal, 1¼ cup of puffed cereal, and ¼ cup of granola.</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">Meal Patterns for School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage)</a>  <a href="#">PFS for Grain Ounce Equivalents (USDA)</a>  <a href="#">PFS for Grain Ounce Equivalents: Completed Sample (USDA)</a></p>	<p><b>Amount for cooked breakfast cereals (group H):</b> 1 serving equals ½ cup cooked or 25 grams dry.</p> <p><b>Amount for RTE breakfast cereals (group I):</b> 1 serving equals ¾ cup or 1 ounce, whichever or less.</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12 (CSDE)</a>  <a href="#">PFS for Grain Servings (through September 30, 2021) (USDA)</a>  <a href="#">PFS for Grain Servings: Completed Sample (USDA)</a>  <a href="#">Servings for Grains/Breads for Grades K-12 in the ASP (CSDE)</a></p>	<p><b>Amount for cooked breakfast cereals (group H):</b> The required preschool amount is ½ serving through September 30, 2021, and ½ ounce equivalent effective October 1, 2021.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Through September 30, 2021: ¼ cup cooked or 13 grams dry.</li> <li>• Effective October 1, 2021: ¼ cup cooked or 14 grams dry.</li> </ul> <p><b>Amount for RTE breakfast cereals (group I):</b> The required preschool amount is in servings through September 30, 2021, and ounce equivalents effective October 1, 2021.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Through September 30, 2021: ¼ cup or ⅓ ounce for ages 1-2 (whichever is less) and ½ cup or ½ ounce for ages 3-4 (whichever is less).</li> <li>• Effective October 1, 2021: ½ cup of flaked or round cereal, ¾ cup of puffed cereal, and ⅛ cup of granola.</li> </ul> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">PFS for Grain Servings (through September 30, 2021) (USDA)</a>  <a href="#">PFS for Grain Servings: Completed Sample (through September 30, 2021) (USDA)</a>  <a href="#">PFS for Grain Ounce Equivalents (effective October 1, 2021) (USDA)</a>  <a href="#">PFS for Grain Ounce Equivalents: Completed Sample (effective October 1, 2021) (USDA)</a>  <a href="#">USDA Final Rule (84 FR 50287): Delayed Implementation of Grains Ounce Equivalents in the Child and Adult Care Food Program</a></p>

# Comparison of Requirements for the Grains Component in the School Nutrition Programs

## USDA Requirements for the Grains Component in the Meal Patterns for the NSLP, SBP, ASP, and SSO

### BREAKFAST CEREALS (RTE and cooked, including regular and instant, e.g., oatmeal), *continued*

Requirement	Grades K-12		Preschoolers (Ages 1-4)
	NSLP, SBP, and SSO	ASP	NSLP, SBP, SSO, and ASP
<p><b>R12:</b> <b>Sugar Limit for Breakfast Cereals</b></p>	<p><b>Limit:</b> None</p> <p><b>Serving the same breakfast cereals to preschoolers and grades K-12:</b> If SFAs serve the same breakfast cereals to preschoolers and grades K-12, the breakfast cereals must comply with the preschool limit for sugars. The exception is when SFAs choose to follow the K-5 meal pattern for preschoolers and grades K-5 who eat in the same service area at the same time (see “Preschoolers and Grades K-5 Eating Together in the NSLP, SBP, and SSO” on page 2).</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">Crediting Breakfast Cereals for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a>            USDA Memo SP 38-2019: Meal Requirements under the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program: Q&amp;As for Program Operators</p>	<p><b>Limit:</b> None</p> <p><b>Serving the same breakfast cereals to preschoolers and grades K-12:</b> If SFAs serve the same breakfast cereals to preschoolers and grades K-12 in the ASP, the breakfast cereals must comply with the preschool limit for sugars. The exception is when SFAs choose to follow the K-12 ASP meal pattern for preschoolers and grades K-12 who eat in the same service area at the same time (see “Preschoolers and Grades K-5 Eating Together in the ASP” on page 2).</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">Crediting Breakfast Cereals for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a></p>	<p><b>Limit:</b> Breakfast cereals (RTE and cooked) cannot contain more than 6 grams of sugar per dry ounce (<math>\leq 21.2</math> grams of sucrose and other sugars per 100 grams of dry cereal).</p> <p><b>Resources:</b>  <a href="#">Calculating Sugar Limits for Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP (USDA)</a>  <a href="#">Choose Breakfast Cereals that are Lower in Sugar (USDA)</a>  <a href="#">Crediting Breakfast Cereals for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE)</a>            USDA Memo CACFP 09-2018: Grain Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answers</p>

# Comparison of Requirements for the Grains Component in the School Nutrition Programs

## Regulations and Policy

CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 11-19: Weekly Whole Grain-rich (WGR) Requirement for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) Meal Patterns for Grades K-12:

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Memos/OM2019/OM11-19.pdf>

How Do They Compare? Child Nutrition Programs' Meal Pattern Requirements (USDA):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CNPMealPatternComparison.pdf>

Nutrition Standards in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs (77 FR 4088):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/fr-012612>

School Meals Legislation and Regulations (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/program-legislation-regulations>

USDA Final Rule (81 FR 24347) and Final Rule Corrections (81 FR 75671): CACFP Meal Pattern Revisions Related to the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/fr-042516>

USDA Final Rule (84 FR 50287): Delayed Implementation of Grains Ounce Equivalents in the Child and Adult Care Food Program:

<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2019/09/25/2019-20808/delayed-implementation-of-grains-ounce-equivalents-in-the-child-and-adult-care-food-program>

USDA Memo CACFP 08-2017: Questions and Answers on the Updated Meal Pattern Requirements for the Child and Adult Care Food Program:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/questions-and-answers-updated-meal-pattern-requirements>

USDA Memo CACFP 09-2018: Grain Requirements in the CACFP: Questions and Answers

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/grain-requirements-cacfp-questions-and-answers>

USDA Memo CACFP 09-2018: Grain Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answers:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/grain-requirements-cacfp-questions-and-answers>

USDA Memo CACFP 16-2017: Grain-based Desserts in the Child and Adult Care Food Program:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/grain-based-desserts-child-and-adult-care-food-program>

USDA Memo SP 24-2020, CACFP 13-2020 and SFSP 13-2020: Questions and Answers for the Child Nutrition Programs during School Year 2020-2021:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/disaster/pandemic/covid-19/questions-and-answers-child-nutrition-programs-during-sy-2020-21>

USDA Memo SP 30-2012: Grain Requirements for the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/grain-requirements-national-school-lunch-program-and-school-breakfast-program>

USDA Memo SP 34-2019, CACFP 15-2019 and SFSP 15-2019: Crediting Coconut, Hominy, Corn Masa, and Masa Harina in the Child Nutrition Programs: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/crediting-coconut-hominy-corn-masa-and-masa-harina-child-nutrition-programs>

USDA Memo SP 38-2019: Meal Requirements under the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program: Q&As for Program Operators:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/meal-requirements-under-national-school-lunch-program-and-school-breakfast-program>

# Comparison of Requirements for the Grains Component in the School Nutrition Programs

## Websites and Resources

- Afterschool Snack Program (CSDE webpage):  
<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Afterschool-Snack-Program>
- Afterschool Snack Program Handbook (CSDE):  
<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/ASP/ASPHandbook.pdf>
- Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs (USDA):  
<https://foodbuyingguide.fns.usda.gov/Content/TablesFBG/ExhibitA.pdf>
- Food Buying Guide Exhibit A Grains Tool (USDA):  
<https://foodbuyingguide.fns.usda.gov/ExhibitATool/Index>
- Food Buying Guide Section 4: Overview of Crediting Requirements for the Grains Component (USDA):  
[https://foodbuyingguide.fns.usda.gov/Content/TablesFBG/USDA\\_FBG\\_Section4\\_Grains.pdf](https://foodbuyingguide.fns.usda.gov/Content/TablesFBG/USDA_FBG_Section4_Grains.pdf)
- Food Buying Guide Section 4: Yield Table for Grains (USDA):  
[https://foodbuyingguide.fns.usda.gov/files/Reports/USDA\\_FBG\\_Section4\\_GrainsYieldTable.pdf](https://foodbuyingguide.fns.usda.gov/files/Reports/USDA_FBG_Section4_GrainsYieldTable.pdf)
- Grains Component for Grades K-12 (CSDE):  
<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-School-Nutrition-Programs/Documents#Grains>
- Grains/Breads Component for Grades K-12 in the ASP (CSDE webpage):  
<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Afterschool-Snack-Program/Documents#GrainsBreadsK12>
- Grains Component for Preschoolers (CSDE):  
<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Patterns-Preschoolers-in-School-Nutrition-Programs/Related-Resources#Grains>
- Laws and Regulations for Child Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):  
<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Laws-and-Regulations-for-Child-Nutrition-Programs>
- Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):  
<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Patterns-Preschoolers-in-School-Nutrition-Programs>
- Meal Patterns for School Nutrition Programs (Grades K-12) (CSDE webpage):  
<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Pattern-Training-Materials>
- Menu Planning Guide for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):  
<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Preschool/MPGpreschool.pdf>
- Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12 (CSDE):  
<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Menu-Planning-Guide-for-School-Meals>
- Nutrition Standards for CACFP Meals and Snacks (USDA webpage):  
<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/meals-and-snacks>
- Operational Memoranda for School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):  
<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Lists/Operational-Memoranda-for-School-Nutrition-Programs>
- Policy Memos for Child Nutrition Programs (USDA webpage):  
<https://www.fns.usda.gov/resources>
- PFS for Grain Ounce Equivalents (USDA):  
[https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/resource-files/PFS\\_Document\\_Grains\\_oz\\_eq.pdf](https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/resource-files/PFS_Document_Grains_oz_eq.pdf)
- PFS for Grain Servings (USDA):  
[https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/resource-files/PFS\\_Document\\_Grains\\_Breads\\_Servings.pdf](https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/resource-files/PFS_Document_Grains_Breads_Servings.pdf)
- Program Guidance for School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):  
<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Program-Guidance-School-Nutrition-Programs>
- Resources for the Preschool Meal Patterns (CSDE):  
<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Preschool/ResourcesPreschoolMealPattern.pdf>
- Special Diets in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):  
<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Special-Diets-in-School-Nutrition-Programs>

# Comparison of Requirements for the Grains Component in the School Nutrition Programs



For more information, review the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) *Menu Planning Guide for Preschoolers in the NSLP and SBP* and *Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12*, and visit the CSDE's [Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs](#) and [Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpages, or contact the [school nutrition programs staff](#) in the CSDE's Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841.

This document is available at

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Preschool/ComparisonGrainCreditingSNP.pdf>.

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- (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

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