

Requirements for Production Records in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program

The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) regulations for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) (7 CFR 210.10(a)(3)) and School Breakfast Program (SBP) (7 CFR 220.8(a)(3)) require that school food authorities (SFAs) must maintain daily production records for all school meals. A production record is a working tool that outlines the type and quantity of foods that need to be purchased and available for the meal service.

Production records must show how the offered meals contribute to the required food components and food quantities for each meal served to each grade group every day. In addition to documenting reimbursable meals, production records provide valuable information to help with menu planning, forecasting products and amounts, purchasing foods, controlling waste, identifying acceptable menu items, and conducting a nutrient analysis of menus.

Table 1 summarizes what production records should include and when food service staff should complete the information.

Table 1. Required elements for production records	
Complete before meal service	Complete after meal service
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name of site • Meal date • Meal type (breakfast or lunch) • All planned menu items including the specific type and amount of all meal choices, food components, types of milk, leftovers, substitutions, and all other food items such as condiments and other noncreditable foods • Recipe name and number or product name and code • Planned serving size and number of servings for reimbursable meals for each age/grade group, and if applicable, nonreimbursable meals (e.g., second meals and adult meals), and a la carte sales 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temperatures (complete throughout meal service) ¹ • Total amount/quantity of food prepared (based on the USDA’s <i>Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs</i>) for each food item or menu item, e.g., number of servings, pounds, cans, and pieces • Amount of leftover food for each food item or menu item • Total amount of food served • Number of reimbursable meals served to each age/grade group • Number of nonreimbursable meals served, e.g., second meals and adult meals
<p>¹ Food service staff should record temperatures throughout the meal service to ensure that hot foods are held at 135 °F or above and cold foods are held at 41 °F or below. For additional guidance, visit the CSDE’s Food Safety for Child Nutrition Programs webpage.</p>	

Requirements for Production Records in the NSLP and SBP

Sample Production Records

The CSDE's sample production records help SFAs provide the required information based on food items or food components for different grade groups. These forms are available on the CSDE's [Production Records for School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

Guidance for Completing Production Records

Production records must indicate the specific type and amount of each food item and must be completed correctly to provide accurate documentation of reimbursable meals. When using production records, SFAs should ensure that food service personnel follow the guidance below.

- Use a physical written production record for each site, including satellite locations.
- Complete all information. Check that information is not missing or incomplete.
- Record the information legibly, i.e., handwriting can be read.
- Use the proper weight or volume measure for each food item. For example, use cups for fruits and vegetables instead of ounces (refer to “[Volume versus weight](#)” in this document).
- Enter the number of servings, pounds, cans, or pieces (not the number of portions prepared) in the column for the total quantity of food used.
- List the specific type and amount of each food item separately. Do not indicate foods as assorted choices. For example, instead of “assorted juices,” list apple juice, orange juice, and pineapple juice. Instead of “assorted fruits and vegetables,” list “fruit choices,” or “vegetable choices,” list each type of fruit and vegetable.
- List each type of milk served, e.g., low-fat milk, fat-free milk, and fat-free chocolate milk.
- List all condiments, e.g., ketchup, mustard, and salad dressing.
- List portion sizes accurately. Ensure that the listed portion sizes are the same as the amount being served to students.
- List all items prepared for the meal including daily items and alternate meal choices.
- Accurately record the “planned” servings for each age/grade group.
- List nonreimbursable adult meals and second student meals separately from reimbursable student meals.
- Add any extra amounts of food needed during the meal service period.
- Indicate if any substitutions are made to the planned menu items.
- Indicate if leftovers are used.



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

Requirements for Production Records in the NSLP and SBP

Volume versus weight

The amounts listed in production records must reflect the servings required by the NSLP and SBP meal patterns. The meal patterns indicate the servings of the food components by weight (ounces) or volume (fluid ounces). For example, the servings for the vegetables component and fruits component are indicated by volume (cups). The servings of most foods in the meat/meat alternates component are indicated by weight (ounces). However, volume is required for some meat/meat alternates such as peanut butter (tablespoons), cottage cheese (cups), and legumes (cups).

Volume and weight measurements are not the same. Volume is the amount of space an ingredient occupies in a measuring container. Volume measures include teaspoon, tablespoon, fluid ounce, cup, pint, quart, and gallon.

Listing incorrect serving sizes on production records is a common compliance issue. An example is listing the serving for a fruit or vegetable as “4 ounces” instead of “ $\frac{1}{2}$ cup.” This does not document that the fruit or vegetable serving meets the meal pattern requirements because these two measurements are not the same. A serving of 4 ounces by weight may or may not equal $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruits or vegetables.



The weight of a specific volume of food varies depending on the density of the food. For example, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of lettuce weighs less than $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of cooked butternut squash, and 1 cup of whole-grain flaked cereal weighs less than 1 cup of baked beans. For many foods, a specific measure of volume does not equal the same measure of weight. There are some exceptions, such as yogurt ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup equals 4 ounces by weight) and certain types of canned fruits and vegetables. For information on the weight equivalent of servings measured by volume, refer to the USDA’s [Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs](#).

Menu planners should use the USDA’s [Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs](#) to determine the quantity of a food that meets the required meal pattern serving. Production records must reflect this amount. For example, the servings of vegetables, fruits, peanut butter, and legumes must be listed by volume, not weight.

For information on weights and measures, refer to the Institute of Child Nutrition’s (ICN) resource, [Basics at a Glance](#), and the “[Weights and Measures](#)” section of the CSDE’s Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs webpage.

Requirements for Production Records in the NSLP and SBP

Electronic Production Records

SFAs may choose to use electronic production records but must follow specific requirements. A physical written copy of the production record and all applicable standardized recipes must be available at each site to guide the daily menu production. SFAs must regularly review and update their electronic production records to ensure accuracy and compliance with all federal and state regulations. Refer to the “[Resources](#)” section of this document for resources to assist SFAs with meeting these requirements.

Administrative Review of Production Records

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

- include all information necessary to support the claiming of reimbursable meals, i.e., all menu items are listed and all required meal components are offered;
- are used for proper planning, such as determining meal consumption and leftovers;
- document that the prepared foods are creditable for the total number of reimbursable meals offered and served;
- document a la carte sales, adult meals, and other nonreimbursable meals (such as student purchases of second meals), including the number of portions for each of these food items;
- document that menus meet the requirements for fluid milk, the weekly whole grain-rich (WGR) requirement (at least 80 percent of all grains offered at lunch and breakfast are WGR), the weekly vegetable subgroups, the weekly juice limits, and the weekly limit for grain-based deserts at lunch;
- document that menus meet the weekly quantity requirements for fluid milk, vegetables, fruits, grains, and meats/meat alternates; and
- align with standardized recipes, i.e., the ingredients in the SFA’s standardized recipes correspond to the menu items listed on the production records.



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Resources

Basics at a Glance Portion Control Poster (ICN):

<https://theicn.org/icn-resources-a-z/basics-at-a-glance/>

Crediting Foods for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-School-Nutrition-Programs>

Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/food-buying-guide-for-child-nutrition-programs>

Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Patterns-School-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>

Menu Planner for School Meals: Chapter 4 Meal Preparation Documentation (USDA):

https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/tn/USD-114%20-%20MenuPlanner_Ch4.pdf

Menu Planning for Child Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Menu-Planning>

Menu Planning Guide for Preschoolers in the NSLP, SBP, and ASP (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>

Portion Control (CSDE's Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-School-Nutrition-Programs#PortionControl>

Production Records for School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Production-Records-for-School-Nutrition-Programs>

Resource List for Menu Planning and Food Production in Child Nutrition Program (CDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/Resources/Resources_Menu_Planning.pdf

Resources for the School Meal Patterns (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/MealPattern/Resources_School_Meal_Patterns.pdf

Standardized Recipes (CSDE's Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-School-Nutrition-Programs#StandardizedRecipes>

Weights and Measures (CSDE's Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-School-Nutrition-Programs#WeightsMeasures>

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For more information, visit the CSDE's [Production Records for School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage or contact the [school nutrition programs staff](#) at the Connecticut State Department of Education, Bureau of Child Nutrition Programs, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841.

This document is available at https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Forms/ProdRecord/Requirements_Production_Records_NSLP_SBP.pdf.

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Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. fax: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. email: program.intake@usda.gov

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