

Menu Planning Resources for School Meals

This list includes selected websites and resources to assist school nutrition programs with menu planning for 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. Handouts and guides are in *italics*. Key resources are in **bold**.



General

Afterschool Snack Program (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Afterschool-Snack-Program>

Basics at a Glance Portion Control (ICN):

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

Best Practices Sharing Center (USDA):

<https://healthymeals.fns.usda.gov/best-practices>

Food and Nutrition Information Center (FNIC):

<https://www.nal.usda.gov/fnic>

Forms for School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

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

Healthy School Environment Resource List (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Resources-for-Child-Nutrition-Programs/Documents>

Institute of Child Nutrition (ICN):

<https://theicn.org/>

Legislation and Regulations for School Meals (USDA):

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

National School Lunch Program (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/National-School-Lunch-Program>

Operational Memoranda for School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Lists/Operational-Memoranda-for-School-Nutrition-Programs>

Policy Memos for School Meals (USDA):

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

Production Records for School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

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

Professional Standards for School Nutrition Professionals (USDA):

<http://professionalstandards.nal.usda.gov/>

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Program Guidance for School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Program-Guidance-School-Nutrition-Programs>

Resources for Child Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Resources-for-Child-Nutrition-Programs>

School Breakfast Program (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/School-Breakfast-Program>

School Meals: Tools for Schools (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/tools-schools>

Smarter Lunchrooms (Cornell BEN Center):

<http://smarterlunchrooms.org/>

Smarter Lunchrooms Action Guide (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/SmarterLunch/SLAG.pdf>

Team Nutrition (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/team-nutrition>

USDA Standardized Recipes (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/usda-standardized-recipe>

What's Cooking? USDA Mixing Bowl (USDA):

<https://whatscooking.fns.usda.gov/>

Crediting Foods

Accepting Processed Product Documentation (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/AcceptDoc.pdf>

Allowable Milk Substitutions for Children without Disabilities in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/SpecDiet/Milksub.pdf>

Calculating Weekly Percentage of Whole Grain-rich Menu Items in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/PercentageWGRCalculation.xlsx>

Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/GrainCalc.pdf>

Calculation Methods for Grain Servings for Preschool Meals in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/GrainCalcPreschool.pdf>

Calculation Methods for Grains/Breads Servings for Grades K-12 in the ASP (CSDE):

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

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Child Nutrition (CN) Labeling Food Manufacturers/Industry (USDA webpage):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cnlabeling/food-manufacturersindustry>

Child Nutrition (CN) Labeling Program (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CNlabel.pdf>

Crediting Breakfast Cereals for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CreditCereals.pdf>

Crediting Commercial Meat/Meat Alternate Products in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CreditMMA.pdf>

Crediting Deli Meats in the NSLP and SBP: Crediting Deli Meats in the NSLP and SBP:

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/Creditdeli.pdf>

Crediting Enriched Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CreditEnrichedGrains.pdf>

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

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

Crediting Foods for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Patterns-Preschoolers-in-School-Nutrition-Programs/Documents>

Crediting Juice for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CreditJuice.pdf>

Crediting Juice for Preschool Meals in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CreditJuicePreschool.pdf>

Crediting Legumes in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CreditLegumes.pdf>

Crediting Smoothies for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CreditSmoothie.pdf>

Crediting Smoothies for Preschool Meals in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CreditSmoothiePreschool.pdf>

Crediting Soup in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CreditSoup.pdf>

Crediting Tofu and Tofu Products in the NSLP and SBP:

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CreditTofu.pdf>

Crediting Updates for Child Nutrition Programs: Be in the Know! Webinar Series (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/crediting-updates-child-nutrition-programs-be-know-webinar-series>

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Crediting Whole Grains in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/CreditWholeGrains.pdf>

Crediting Yogurt for Preschool Meals in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/Credityogurtpreschool.pdf>

CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 06-19: *Summary of Federal and State Milk Requirements for the NSLP, SBP, SSO of the NSLP, ASP of the NSLP, and Special Milk Program (SMP):*

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Memos/OM2019/OM07-19.pdf>

CSDE Operational Memorandum No. 07-19: *Compliance Issues with the Vegetables and Fruits Components for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP:*

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Memos/OM2019/OM07-19.pdf>

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>

Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs (USDA):

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

Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/Grainsozeq.pdf>

Grain Serving Sizes for Preschool Meals in the NSLP and SBP (Through September 30, 2019):

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

Grain Serving Sizes for Preschoolers in the NSLP, SBP, and ASP:

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

How to Identify Creditable Grains for Preschoolers in the NSLP, SBP, and ASP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/IdentifyCreditableGrainsPreschool.pdf>

Noncreditable Foods for Grades K-12 in the ASP:

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/ASP/ASPNoncredk12.pdf>

Noncreditable Foods for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/NoncredSNP.pdf>

Noncreditable Foods for Preschoolers in the NSLP, SBP, and ASP:

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/Noncredpreschool.pdf>

Portion Guide for Fresh Fruits (Start with Half a Cup):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SWHAC/PortionGuideFruit85x14.pdf>

Portion Guide for Fresh Vegetables (Start with Half a Cup):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SWHAC/PortionGuideVeg85x14.pdf>

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Product Formulation Statements (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/PFS.pdf>

Serving Sizes for Grains/Breads for Grades K-12 in the ASP:

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/ASP/ASPgrainsbreadsK12.pdf>

Serving Sizes for Vegetables and Fruits for Grades K-12 in the ASP:

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/ASP/aspVFervingk12.pdf>

Serving Sizes for Vegetables and Fruits for Preschoolers in the ASP:

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

Standardized Recipe Form for School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/StdRecipeSchools.doc>

Tips for Evaluating a Manufacturer's Product Formulation Statement (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource-files/manufacturerPFStipsheet.pdf>

USDA Product Formulation Statement for Grains:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource-files/PFSgrains13-14.pdf>

USDA Product Formulation Statement for Vegetables and Fruits:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource-files/PFSfv.pdf>

USDA Sample Completed Product Formulation Statement for Fruits:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource-files/PFSsamplefruits.pdf>

USDA Sample Completed Product Formulation Statement for Grains:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource-files/PFSsamplegrains.pdf>

USDA Sample Completed Product Formulation Statement for Vegetables:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource-files/PFSsamplevegetables.pdf>

USDA Sample Product Formulation Statement for Meat/Meat Alternates:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource-files/PFSmma.pdf>

Vegetable Subgroups in the NSLP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/VegSubgroup.pdf>

Whole Grain Resource for the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/whole-grain-resource-national-school-lunch-and-school-breakfast-programs-0>

Whole Grain-rich Criteria for Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/WGRCriteria.pdf>

Whole Grain-rich Criteria for Preschool Meals in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/WGRCriteriaPreschool.pdf>

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Whole Grain-rich Ounce Equivalents for Preschool Meals (Effective October 1, 2019) (CSDE):
<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Preschool/Preschoolozeq.pdf>

Yield Study Data Form (CSDE):
<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/YieldStudy.pdf>

Dietary Specifications for Grades K-12

Get the Facts: Sources of Sodium in Your Diet (CDC):
<https://www.cdc.gov/salt/pdfs/Sources-of-Sodium.pdf>

Implementation Timeline for the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 (CSDE):
<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/MealPattern/ImplementationTimeline.pdf>

Lowering Sodium in School Foods (American Heart Association):
<https://www.heart.org/-/media/files/about-us/policy-research/fact-sheets/infographic-lowering-sodium-in-school-foods.pdf?la=en&hash=3F68156C033DA2741E2EE6807BC4BA85FB8937FF>

Reducing Sodium in Children's Diets infographic (CDC):
<https://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/children-sodium/infographic.html>

Sodium and Children (CDC):
https://www.cdc.gov/salt/sodium_and_children.htm

Reducing Sodium in the Diets of American Children (AHA):
http://www.heart.org/idc/groups/heart-public/@wcm/@adv/documents/downloadable/ucm_433027.pdf

Sodium Reduction Timeline for NSLP and SBP Meal Patterns (CSDE)
<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/MealPattern/SodiumTimeline.pdf>

Tools for Schools: Reducing Sodium (USDA):
<https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/tools-schools-sodium>

USDA Final Rule: Child Nutrition Programs: Flexibilities for Milk, Whole Grains, and Sodium Requirements (83 FR 63775):
<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2018-12-12/pdf/2018-26762.pdf>

What's Shaking: Creative Ways to Boost Flavor with Less Sodium (USDA):
<https://healthymeals.fns.usda.gov/whatsshaking>

Menu Planning Resources for School Meals

Meal Patterns and Menu Planning

ASP Meal Pattern for Grades K-12:

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/ASP/ASPmealpatternK12.pdf>

ASP Meal Pattern for Preschoolers:

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

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschool and Grades K-12 in the ASP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/ASP/ASPComparisonPreschoolK12.pdf>

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschool and Grades K-12 in the NSLP and SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Preschool/ComparisonPreschoolK12.pdf>

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for Preschoolers and Grades K-12 in the Afterschool Snack Program (ASP) of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/ASP/ASPComparisonPreschoolK12.pdf>

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for the Grains Component in the School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/ComparisonGrainCrediting.pdf>

Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for the Milk Component in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/ComparisonMilkRequirements.pdf>

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

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

Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

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

Menu Planning Checklists for Lunch (CSDE):

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

Menu Planning for Child Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

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

Menu Planning for Grades K-12 in the NSLP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/MealPattern/MenuPlanningNSLP.pdf>

Menu Planning for Grades K-12 in the SBP (CSDE):

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

Menu Planning Guidance for Grades K-12 in the ASP:

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/ASP/ASPmenuguidanceK12.pdf>

Menu Planning Resources for School Meals

Menu Planning Guidance for Preschoolers in the ASP:

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

Menu Planning Guide for Preschool Meals in the NSLP and SBP:

<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):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/meals-and-snacks>

Nutrition Standards for School Meals (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/nutrition-standards-school-meals>

Special Diets in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Special-Diets-in-School-Nutrition-Programs>

USDA Memo SP 10-2012 (v.9): Questions & Answers on the Final Rule, "Nutrition Standards in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs"

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/qas-final-rule-nutrition-standards-national-school-lunch-and-school-breakfast-programs>

Offer versus Serve (OVS)

Offer versus Serve for School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Offer-versus-Serve-for-School-Nutrition-Programs>

Offer versus Serve in the NSLP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition//-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/OVS/OVSNSLP.pdf>

Offer versus Serve in the SBP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition//-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/OVS/OVSSBP.pdf>

Offer versus Serve National School Lunch Program Posters (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/offer-versus-serve-national-school-lunch-program-posters>

Offer versus Serve Tip Sheet for School Food Service Managers: National School Lunch Program (USDA):

<http://https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/resource-files/OVS%20Lunch%20tip%20sheet.pdf>

Offer versus Serve Tip Sheet for School Food Service Managers: School Breakfast Program (USDA):

<http://https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/resource-files/OVS%20Breakfast%20tip%20sheet.pdf>

Questions and Answers on the SBP Meal Patterns (USDA):

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

Menu Planning Resources for School Meals



For more information, visit the CSDE's [Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs](#) and [Crediting Foods 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/MealPattern/MenuPlanResourcesSchools.pdf>.

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

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