

Requirements for the Grains/Bread Component of the Summer Food Service Program Meal Patterns

This document provides guidance on meeting the meal pattern and crediting requirements for the grains/breads component of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) [Summer Food Service Program \(SFSP\) meal patterns](#). For information on the SFSP meal patterns and the grains/breads component, visit the "[SFSP Meal Patterns](#)" and "[Grains/Breads Component for the SFSP](#)" sections of the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) SFSP webpage.

Meal Pattern Requirements

The SFSP meal patterns require one serving of the grains/breads component at breakfast, lunch, and supper. One serving of the grains/breads component may be one of the two required snack components. For guidance on the required amounts for one serving, see "[Serving Size](#)" in this document.

Allowable Foods

The grains/breads component includes a wide variety of foods, such as:

- breads, biscuits, bagels, rolls, tortillas, and muffins;
- snack products, such as crackers (including animal crackers and graham crackers), hard pretzels, hard bread sticks, tortilla chips, and popcorn;
- grain-based desserts, such as cookies, granola bars, cereal bars, cake, and pastries;
- cereal grains, such as buckwheat, brown rice, bulgur, and quinoa;
- ready-to-eat (RTE) breakfast cereals;
- cooked breakfast cereals (instant and regular), such as oatmeal;
- bread products used as an ingredient in another menu item, such as combination foods, e.g., breading on fish or poultry and pizza crust in pizza; and
- pasta products, such as macaroni, spaghetti, noodles, orzo, and couscous.

To credit as the grains/breads component, a grain product or recipe must contain a creditable grain as the primary (greatest) ingredient by weight. Creditable grains include whole grains, enriched grains, bran, and germ.

Grain foods vary in nutrition content. For best nutrition, SFSP menus should offer whole grains most often, and limit grain-based desserts.

Requirements for the Grains/Bread Component of the SFSP Meal Patterns

Required Crediting Documentation

SFSP sponsors must be able to document the meal pattern contribution of all grain products and recipes used for SFSP meals and snacks. Menu planners should use the USDA's *Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs* (FBG) to determine food yields and crediting information for grain menu items.

Commercial products

Acceptable documentation includes the product's Child Nutrition (CN) label (available only for main dish entrees that contribute to the meat/meat alternates component) or a product formulation statement (PFS) from the manufacturer. Crediting documentation is required for commercial products when any of the situations below apply. For additional guidance on determining the amount of creditable grains per serving, see the CSDE's handout, *Calculation Methods for Grains/Breads Servings in the SFSP*.

- **Combination foods:** A commercial combination food contains a grain portion. Examples include pizza crust in pizza, noodles in lasagna, and baked chicken coated with breadcrumbs or crushed cereal flakes. SFAs must obtain a CN label or PFS that documents the amount of creditable grains in the grain portion of commercial combination foods.
- **Multiple creditable grains:** A commercial grain product (such as breads, muffins, crackers, and cookies) does not list a creditable grain as the first ingredient, but the ingredients statement contains more than one creditable grain. The product's PFS must indicate that the combined weight of all creditable grains is the greatest ingredient by weight.
- **Manufacturer's crediting claim:** The manufacturer claims that a commercial grain product can provide the minimum creditable grains using a serving that is less than the minimum weight or volume listed in the USDA's chart, *Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs* (see "Serving Size" in this document). The product's PFS must indicate how the crediting information was determined, based on the USDA's crediting requirements.
- **Product not listed on Exhibit A:** A commercial product is not listed in any of the nine groups of the USDA's Exhibit A chart (see "Serving Size" in this document). The product's PFS must indicate crediting information.

The PFS must indicate the amount of creditable grains per serving, and demonstrate how the product provides that amount according to the USDA's regulations, guidance, or policy. SFSP sponsors must verify the accuracy of the product's PFS prior to including the product in reimbursable meals, and must maintain all crediting documentation on file. The CSDE will review this information during the Administrative Review of the SFSP.

Requirements for the Grains/Bread Component of the SFSP Meal Patterns

For more information on crediting documentation for the SFSP meal patterns, see the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) handouts, *Child Nutrition (CN) Labeling Program*, *Product Formulation Statements* and *Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the SFSP*; the USDA's documents, *Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Grains/Breads Servings*, and *Tips for Evaluating a Manufacturer's Product Formulation Statement*; and visit the "Crediting Commercial Processed Products in the SFSP" section of the CSDE's SFSP webpage.

If the manufacturer will not supply a PFS, or the PFS does not provide the appropriate documentation, the product cannot credit as the grains/breads component in SFSP meals and snacks.

Foods made on site

SFSP sponsors must have a standardized recipe that documents the crediting information per serving. For example, to credit macaroni and cheese as one serving of the grains/breads component, the recipe must indicate that each serving contains $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of whole-grain or enriched pasta. For more information, see the CSDE's form, *Standardized Recipe Form for the SFSP*, and visit the "Crediting Foods Prepared on Site in the SFSP" section of the CSDE's SFSP webpage.

Crediting Requirements

Grain products and recipes must meet specific criteria to credit as the grains/breads component in the SFSP meal patterns. The guidance below addresses the crediting requirements for grains/breads.

Creditable grains

Grains and breads must be whole grain, enriched, or contain a blend of whole and enriched grains. Bran and germ credit the same as enriched and whole grains. Products that are 100 percent whole grain, such as whole-wheat bread and brown rice, provide the best nutrition and should be served most often. For more information, see the CSDE's handouts, *Crediting Whole Grains in the SFSP* and *Crediting Enriched Grains in the SFSP*.



Requirements for the Grains/Bread Component of the SFSP Meal Patterns

Crediting breakfast cereals

Cooked and ready-to-eat (RTE) breakfast cereals must be whole grain, enriched, or fortified. The minimum serving for RTE breakfast cereals is $\frac{3}{4}$ cup or 1 ounce, whichever is less. The minimum serving for cooked breakfast cereals is $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooked or 25 grams dry. For best nutrition, choose whole-grain, low-sugar cereals. For more information, see the CSDE's handout, [Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the SFSP](#).

Crediting corn masa, masa harina, corn flour, and cornmeal

Corn ingredients credit as the grains/breads component if they are whole grain, enriched, or 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.

Ingredients labeled as hominy, corn masa, or masa harina are nixtamalized, and therefore credit as whole grains. The ingredients statements below show some examples of nixtamalized products.

- Ingredients: *Corn masa flour*, water, contains 2% or less of: cellulose gum, guar gum, amylase, propionic acid, benzoic acid, and phosphoric acid (to maintain freshness).
- Ingredients: *Whole-white corn*, vegetable oil (contains soybean, corn, cottonseed, and/or sunflower oil), salt, *lime/calcium hydroxide* (processing aid). **Note:** The lime/calcium hydroxide is the processing aid for the nixtamalization of corn.

For more information, see [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](#).

Crediting grain-based desserts

Examples of grain-based desserts include brownies, cookies, cakes, cupcakes, coffee cakes, cinnamon streusel quick breads, piecrusts in sweet pies (e.g., apple, coconut, blueberry, and pecan), cinnamon rolls, doughnuts, cereal bars, granola bars, breakfast bars, sweet rolls, pastries, toaster pastries, sweet scones (e.g., blueberry, raisin, and orange cranberry), rice pudding, and sweet bread pudding. The CSDE's handout, [Serving Sizes for Grains/Breads in the SFSP](#), identifies allowable grain-based desserts with footnote 1 (allowed only at snack) or footnote 2 (allowed only at breakfast and snack).

Most grain-based desserts are high in fat, added sugars, and sodium. The CSDE recommends limiting creditable grain-based desserts to no more than twice per week, between all meals and snacks served in the SFSP. For example, a SFSP menu that offers cookies at snack on Monday and granola bars at lunch on Thursday should not include any other grain-based desserts that week.

Requirements for the Grains/Bread Component of the SFSP Meal Patterns

Crediting hominy

Hominy is made from whole kernels of maize (dried field corn) that have been soaked in an alkaline solution (nixtamalized). Milled hominy credits as the grains/breads component. Hominy offered in a dried, milled form (such as grits) credits as a whole grain. A ½-cup serving of cooked hominy grits or 25 grams of dry hominy grits credits as one serving of the grains/breads component. In its whole form, hominy credits as a starchy vegetable. For information on crediting hominy as the vegetables/fruits component, see the CSDE’s handout, [Requirements for the Vegetables/Fruits Component of the SFSP Meal Patterns](#).

Crediting popcorn

Table 1 summarizes the grains/breads contribution of popped popcorn. A 3-cup (1 ounce) serving of plain popped popcorn credits as one serving of the grains/breads component. The minimum creditable amount is ¾ cup.

Table 1. SFSP meal pattern contribution of popped popcorn		
Cups (popped)	Weight (popped)	Servings of grains/breads
¾ cup	0.25 ounce or 7 grams	¼ serving (minimum creditable amount)
1½ cups	0.5 ounce or 14 grams	½ serving
2¼ cups	0.75 ounce or 21 grams	¾ serving
3 cups	1.0 ounce or 28 grams	1 serving

Menu planners should consider the appropriateness of the serving size. It may be unreasonable to provide the full serving of the grains/breads component from popcorn, due to the large volume required for crediting. The CSDE recommends providing a smaller serving of popcorn and supplementing with another food from the grains component. For example, a snack mix that contains ¾ cup of popcorn (¼ serving of grains/breads) and ½ ounce of pretzels (¾ serving of grains/breads) credits as one serving of the grains/bread component.

SFSP sponsors must maintain crediting documentation for foods that contain popcorn an ingredient, such as a popcorn snack mix (see “[Required Crediting Documentation](#)” in this document). Crediting information for popcorn is summarized in [USDA Memo SP 23-2019, CACFP 10-2019 and SFSP 9-2019: Crediting Popcorn in the Child Nutrition Programs](#).

Requirements for the Grains/Bread Component of the SFSP Meal Patterns

Children younger than 4 are at the highest risk of choking. Consider children's age and developmental readiness when deciding whether to offer popcorn in SFSP 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.



Noncreditable grains/breads

Examples of foods that do not credit include, but are not limited to: bread and grain products and recipes that are not whole grain or enriched; and breakfast cereals (RTE and cooked) that are not whole grain, enriched, or fortified. For more information, see the CSDE's handout, [Noncreditable Foods in the SFSP](#).

Serving Size

Grain foods require different amounts to credit as one serving of the grains/breads component. The required amount for the SFSP grains component is in servings. The USDA allows two methods for determining the servings or ounce equivalents of a creditable grain product or recipe. SFSP sponsors may use either method, but must document how the crediting information was obtained.

- **Method 1 (USDA's Exhibit A Chart)** is used for commercial grain products and may also be used for recipes that indicate the weight of the prepared (cooked) serving. This method uses the USDA's chart, [Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs](#), to determine the required weight (groups A-G) or volume (groups H-I) for the appropriate grain group. The CSDE's handout, [Servings for Grains/Breads in the SFSP](#), lists the Exhibit A grain servings that apply to the SFSP.

SFSP sponsors may use method 1 for foods made on site if the standardized recipe indicates the **weight of the prepared serving** after cooking or baking. If the recipe does not indicate this information, SFSP sponsors must calculate the average weight per serving. For more information, see the CSDE's form, [Yield Study Data Form for Child Nutrition Programs](#).

Requirements for the Grains/Bread Component of the SFSP Meal Patterns

- **Method 2 (creditable grains)** is used for recipes and may also be used for commercial grain products that have a PFS stating the weight of creditable grains per serving. This method determines the grain servings for creditable grain products and recipes by calculating the total weight (grams) of creditable grains per manufacturer's serving (from the PFS) or recipe serving (from the quantities listed in the recipe). For more information, see "[Required Crediting Documentation](#)" in this document.
 - **Groups A-G** must contain 14.75 grams of creditable grains per product or recipe serving to credit as one serving of the grains/breads component.
 - **Group H** must contain 25 grams of creditable grains per product or recipe serving to credit as one serving of the grains/breads component.



For some commercial grain products, SFSP sponsors must use method 2 (instead of the USDA's Exhibit A chart) to determine the grain servings.

For detailed guidance on both methods, see the CSDE's handout, [Calculation Methods for Grains/Breads Servings in the SFSP](#).

Minimum creditable amount

The minimum creditable amount of the grains/breads component is $\frac{1}{4}$ ounce. If a menu item provides less than the full-required serving, the SFSP menu must include the additional amount from other grains/breads.

Considerations for Reducing Choking Risks for Young Children

Children younger than 4 are at the highest risk of choking. Consider children's age and developmental readiness when deciding what types of grain foods to offer in SFSP menus. This consideration is also important for children with a disability that requires dietary restrictions. 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. For additional guidance, visit the "[Choking Prevention](#)" section of the CSDE's [Food Safety for Child Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

Requirements for the Grains/Bread Component of the SFSP Meal Patterns

Resources

Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the SFSP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SFSP/CreditingSFSP/AcceptDocumentationSFSP.pdf>

Calculation Methods for Grains/Breads Servings in the SFSP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SFSP/CreditingSFSP/GrainCalculationSFSP.pdf>

Choking Prevention (CSDE's Food Safety for Child Nutrition Programs webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Food-Safety-for-Child-Nutrition-Programs/Documents#ChokingPrevention>

Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the SFSP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SFSP/CreditingSFSP/CreditCerealsSFSP.pdf>

Crediting Enriched Grains in the SFSP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SFSP/CreditingSFSP/CreditEnrichedGrainsSFSP.pdf>

Crediting Foods in the SFSP (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Summer-Food-Service-Program/Documents>

Crediting Whole Grains in the SFSP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SFSP/CreditingSFSP/CreditWholeGrainsSFSP.pdf>

Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs (USDA):

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

Grains/Breads Component for the SFSP (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Summer-Food-Service-Program/Documents#GrainsBreads>

Meal Patterns for the SFSP (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Summer-Food-Service-Program#MealPatterns>

Noncreditable Foods in the SFSP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SFSP/MealPattern/NoncreditableFoodsSFSP.pdf>

Nutrition Guide: Summer Food Service Program (USDA):

https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/resource-files/USDA_SFSP_NutritionGuide.pdf

Requirements for the Grains/Bread Component of the SFSP Meal Patterns

Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Grains/Breads Servings in the Child and Adult Care Food Program, Summer Food Service Program, and NSLP Afterschool Snacks: Completed Sample (USDA):

https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/resource-files/PFS_Samples_Grains_Breads_Servings.pdf

Product Formulation Statements (CSDE):

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

Servings for Grains/Breads in the SFSP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SFSP/MealPattern/ServingsGrainsBreadsSFSP.pdf>

Standardized Recipe Form for the SFSP (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SFSP/CreditingSFSP/StandardizedRecipeSFSP.pdf>

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>

Requirements for the Grains/Bread Component of the SFSP Meal Patterns



For more information, visit the [SFSP Meal Patterns](#) and [Crediting Foods in the SFSP](#) sections of the CSDE's SFSP webpage, or contact the [Summer Meals 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/SFSP/CreditingSFSP/ComponentGrainsBreadsSFSP.pdf>.

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at: [How to File a Complaint](#), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (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.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

The Connecticut State Department of Education is committed to a policy of equal opportunity/affirmative action for all qualified persons. The Connecticut Department of Education does not discriminate in any employment practice, education program, or educational activity on the basis of age, ancestry, color, criminal record (in state employment and licensing), gender identity or expression, genetic information, intellectual disability, learning disability, marital status, mental disability (past or present), national origin, physical disability (including blindness), race, religious creed, retaliation for previously opposed discrimination or coercion, sex (pregnancy or sexual harassment), sexual orientation, veteran status or workplace hazards to reproductive systems, unless there is a bona fide occupational qualification excluding persons in any of the aforementioned protected classes.

Inquiries regarding the Connecticut State Department of Education's nondiscrimination policies should be directed to: Levy Gillespie, Equal Employment Opportunity Director/Americans with Disabilities Coordinator (ADA), Connecticut State Department of Education, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 505, Hartford, CT 06103, 860-807-2071, levy.gillespie@ct.gov.