

Crediting Smoothies in the Summer Food Service Program

This guidance applies to meals and snacks served in the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Summer Food Service Program (SFSP). For information on the SFSP meal patterns and the vegetables/fruits component, visit the “[Meal Patterns](#)” section of the Connecticut State Department of Education’s (CSDE) SFSP webpage and refer to the CSDE’s [Requirements for the Vegetables/Fruits Component of the Summer Food Service Program Meal Patterns](#). For information on the crediting requirements, visit the CSDE’s [Crediting Foods in the Summer Food Service Program](#) webpage and [Crediting Documentation for the Child Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.



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Creditable Ingredients

Smoothie ingredients that credit toward the SFSP meal patterns include full-strength vegetable juice and pureed vegetables (vegetables/fruits component); full-strength fruit juice and pureed fruits (vegetables/fruits component); low-fat or fat-free milk (milk component); and yogurt or soy yogurt (meats/meat alternates (MMA) component).

Creditable ingredients in smoothies must provide at least the minimum creditable amount to credit toward the SFSP meal patterns. The minimum creditable amounts are $\frac{1}{8}$ cup for the vegetables/fruits component, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup for the milk component (applies only to milk in smoothies), and $\frac{1}{8}$ cup ($\frac{1}{4}$ ounce) for yogurt and soy yogurt.

Required Crediting Documentation for Smoothies

SFSP sponsors must maintain appropriate documentation to indicate the crediting information for each meal component in the smoothie. For example, to credit a strawberry-yogurt smoothie as $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the fruits component and 1 ounce of the MMA component, the SFSP sponsor's documentation must indicate that the serving contains $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of pureed strawberries and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of yogurt. Documentation must be based on the food yields and crediting information in the USDA's [Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs](#) (FBG).

Documentation for commercial smoothie products

Commercial smoothies require a Child Nutrition (CN) label or product formulation statement (PFS) that indicates the amount of each meal component per serving. A CN label might be available for some commercial smoothies that contain yogurt. For information on CN labels and PFS forms, refer to the CSDE's resources, [Using Child Nutrition \(CN\) Labels in the Summer Food Service Program](#) and [Using Product Formulation Statements in the Summer Food Service Program](#).

For more information on crediting documentation, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the Summer Food Service Program](#), USDA Memo SP 05-2025, CACFP 04-2025, SFSP 02-2025: *Guidance for Accepting Processed Product Documentation for Meal Pattern Requirements*, and the USDA's resource, [Tips for Evaluating a Manufacturer's Product Formulation Statement](#).

Additional guidance is available on the CSDE's [Crediting Documentation for the Child Nutrition Programs](#) webpage. Training on the requirements for CN labels and PFS forms is available in the CSDE's Summer Meals annual training module, [Crediting Documentation for Summer Meals](#); Module 6: Meal Pattern Documentation, Part B – Crediting Commercial Processed Products of the CSDE's training program, [What's in a Meal: National School Lunch Program](#)

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and School Breakfast Program Meal Patterns for Grades K-12; and the Institute of Child Nutrition's online training, *FBG Module 3: Product Formulation Statements*.

Documentation for smoothies made from scratch

SFSP sponsors must have recipes on file that document the ounces of MMA per serving in all foods prepared from scratch that contain commercial tofu, including foods made on site by the SFSP sponsor and foods prepared by vendors. The USDA encourages SFSP sponsors to use standardized recipes. Standardized recipes ensure accurate meal component contributions and document that menus meet the SFSP meal pattern requirements. For more information, visit the "[Standardized Recipes](#)" section of the CSDE's Crediting Documentation for the Child Nutrition Programs webpage.

The USDA defines a standardized recipe as one that has been tried, adapted, and retried at least three times and has been found to produce the same good results and yield every time when the exact procedures are used with the same

Storing crediting documentation

SFSP sponsors must maintain all crediting documentation on file in accordance with the records retention requirements for the SFSP (refer to the CSDE's [Records Retention Requirements for the Summer Food Service Program](#)). This documentation must be current and will be reviewed by the CSDE during the Administrative Review of the SFSP

Recommended Daily Limit for Smoothies

The USDA recommends limiting smoothies to one meal or snack per day. For example, if a smoothie is served at breakfast, the SFSP menus for lunch, supper, and snack should not include a smoothie.



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Crediting Fruits and Vegetables in Smoothies

Pureed fruits and vegetables in smoothies credit only as juice toward the vegetables component or fruits component. Crediting is based on the volume (cups) of pureed fruits and vegetables per serving. For example, a smoothie that contains $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of pureed strawberries credits as $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fruit juice. SFSP sponsors must document the amount of juice and pureed fruits and vegetables per serving (refer to “[Required Crediting Documentation](#)” in this document). Menu planners must follow the guidance below when crediting fruits and vegetables in smoothies.

Breakfast

The SFSP breakfast meal pattern requires a serving of vegetables, fruits, or both. Smoothies that contain $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of juice (including pureed fruits and vegetables) may credit as the entire vegetables/fruits component at breakfast. For example, a serving of smoothie that contains $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of pureed mangoes and carrots credits as the full vegetables/fruits component.

Lunch and supper

The SFSP lunch and supper meal pattern requires at least $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (combined total) of two different kinds of vegetables and/or fruits. Juice (including pureed fruits and vegetables in smoothies) cannot credit for more than half of the vegetables/fruits component.

SFSP lunch and supper menus cannot offer a smoothie and juice as the only two servings of fruits and vegetables (because both credit as juice. For more information, refer to CSDE’s resource, [Crediting Juice in the Summer Food Service Program](#).

Snack

The SFSP snack meal pattern requires any two of the four meal components (milk, MMA, vegetables/fruits, and grains/breads). Smoothies that contain $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of juice (including pureed fruits and vegetables) may credit as the entire vegetables/fruits component at snack. Smoothies containing juice and milk may credit as either juice or milk but cannot credit as both components in the same snack. The snack menu cannot include juice (including pureed fruits and vegetables in smoothies) when milk is the only other snack component. Table 1 shows some examples of how these requirements apply.

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Examples of crediting smoothies at snack

The snack meal pattern requires any two of the four meal components: 1 cup of milk, 1 ounce of MMA, $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of vegetables/fruits, and 1 serving of grains/breads.

- **Example 1:** A smoothie recipe's serving contains $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of pureed fruit (credits as fruit juice) and 1 cup of unflavored low-fat milk. The menu planner may choose to credit the smoothie as either the vegetables/fruits component or the milk component but cannot credit the smoothie as both components in the same snack. To be reimbursable, the snack must include the full serving of a second component, i.e., MMA or grains.
- **Example 2:** A smoothie recipe's serving contains $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of pureed fruit (credits as fruit juice) and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of unflavored low-fat milk. The pureed fruit credits as the vegetables/fruits component. However, the milk cannot credit as the full milk component because the serving is less than 1 cup. To be reimbursable, the snack must include the full serving of a second component, i.e., MMA or grains.

Crediting Milk in Smoothies

Milk in smoothies credits as the milk component based on the amount per serving. For example, a smoothie that contains $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of milk credits as $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the milk component. SFSP sponsors must document the amount of milk per serving (refer to "[Required Crediting Documentation](#)" in this document).

Allowable types of milk

The allowable types of milk for the SFSP include unflavored or flavored pasteurized whole milk, reduced-fat milk, low-fat milk, fat-free milk, buttermilk, lactose-reduced milk, and acidophilus milk. For information on the crediting requirements for milk, refer to CSDE's resource, [Requirements for the Milk Component of the Summer Food Service Program Meal Patterns](#). Training on the crediting requirements for the milk component is available in the CSDE's Summer Meals annual training module, [Crediting Foods in the Summer Food Service Program Meal Patterns: Part 2: Milk Component](#).

Minimum creditable amount

The minimum creditable amount of milk in a smoothie is $\frac{1}{4}$ cup. SFSP sponsors must document the type and amount of milk per serving with a recipe for smoothies made from scratch and a CN label or PFS for commercial smoothies (refer to "[Required Crediting Documentation](#)" in this document).

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Crediting Yogurt in Smoothies

Yogurt and soy yogurt used as an ingredient in smoothies credits as the MMA component based on the amount per serving. A ½-cup serving of yogurt credits as 1 ounce of the MMA component. The minimum creditable amount is ⅛ cup.

SFSP sponsors must document the amount of yogurt or soy yogurt per serving with a standardized recipe for smoothies made from scratch and a PFS for commercial products (refer to “[Required Crediting Documentation](#)” in this document). For information on the crediting requirements for yogurt, refer to the CSDE’s resource, [Crediting Yogurt in the Summer Food Service Program](#).

Additional Ingredients

Smoothies may include additional ingredients to improve flavor and consistency, such as oatmeal and peanut butter. However, these ingredients do not credit toward the SFSP meal patterns.

Smoothie Crediting Example

The example below shows how to credit a smoothie made with blueberry puree, low-fat yogurt, fat-free milk, and oatmeal. This smoothie recipe credits toward the vegetables/fruits, MMA, and milk components. The blueberry puree counts toward the juice limit for lunch and supper (refer to CSDE’s resource, [Crediting Juice in the Summer Food Service Program](#)).

Ingredient	Meal pattern contribution
Frozen blueberry puree, ½ cup	½ cup of fruit juice (vegetables/fruits component)
Low-fat blueberry yogurt, ½ cup	1 ounce of MMA
Low-fat milk, 4 fluid ounces	4 fluid ounces of milk
Oatmeal, 2 tablespoons	None (does not credit in smoothies)

Commercial Products

The product formulation and labeling can vary greatly for commercial smoothies because these products do not have a Food and Drug Administration (FDA standard of identity. Commercial smoothies require a PFS (or CN label, if available) stating the amount of all creditable

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ingredients per serving, such as pureed fruits and vegetables, juice, yogurt, and milk (refer to [“Required Crediting Documentation”](#) in this document) and must follow the guidance below.

Crediting pureed vegetables/fruits

Commercial smoothies made with juices or pureed fruits/vegetables credit only as juice. Crediting is based on the volume of fruits/vegetables after pureeing and before freezing.

The product label must include a statement regarding the “percent juice content,” which is required by the FDA for beverages made with fruit/vegetable juice or puree. For example, an 8-fluid ounce smoothie made from fruit puree that is labeled with “contains 50% juice” credits as 4 fluid ounces ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup) of juice. SFSP sponsors may need to obtain a PFS from the manufacturer to document the amount of pureed fruit/vegetable in the product.

Concentrated fruit puree and concentrated juice are added sugars and do not credit in smoothies unless they are reconstituted to full-strength fruit puree or full-strength juice.

Crediting milk

The type of milk used as an ingredient in commercial smoothies must be consistent with the meal pattern requirements (refer to [“Allowable types of milk”](#) in this document). The minimum creditable amount is $\frac{1}{4}$ cup. The manufacturer’s product documentation must attest that commercial mixes with milk are made using ingredients that meet federal, state, and local definitions for fluid milk.

Crediting yogurt

Yogurt and soy yogurt credit as the MMA component when used as an ingredient in commercial smoothies. The minimum creditable amount is amount is $\frac{1}{4}$ ounce, which equals $\frac{1}{8}$ cup of yogurt. The product documentation must attest that commercial mixes with yogurt are made in compliance with the federal definition for yogurt.

Limit for crediting amount

The total creditable amount in a smoothie cannot exceed the volume served. For example, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of a commercial smoothie cannot credit as 1 cup of juice.

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Noncreditable commercial smoothies

Probiotic dairy drinks, drinkable yogurt, and yogurt drinks are not smoothies, and do not credit in the SFSP meal patterns. Commercial smoothies that contain dietary supplements (such as whey protein powder) or herbal supplements (such as ginkgo biloba, ginseng, and echinacea) do not credit in the SFSP meal patterns.

Review accuracy of PFS

Prior to including commercial smoothies in reimbursable meals and snacks, SFSP sponsors must check the manufacturer's PFS for accuracy (refer to "[Documentation for commercial smoothie products](#)" in this document). Check that the listed volumes of pureed fruits and vegetables are prior to freezing. Check that milk and yogurt (if included) meet the meal pattern requirements. Yogurt must meet the federal definition for yogurt.

Resources

Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the Summer Food Service Program (CSDE):
https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/creditingfspaccepting_processed_product_/documentation_sfsp.pdf

Crediting Documentation for the Child Nutrition Program (CSDE webpage):
<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/crediting-documentation-for-the-child-nutrition-programs>

Crediting Foods in the Summer Food Service Program (CSDE webpage):
<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/crediting-foods-in-the-summer-food-service-program>

Crediting Juice in the Summer Food Service Program (CSDE):
https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/creditingfsp/credit_juice_sfsp.pdf

Crediting Yogurt in the Summer Food Service Program (CSDE):
https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/creditingfsp/credit_yogurt_sfsp.pdf

FBG Module 3: Product Formulation Statements (Institute of Child Nutrition):
<https://theicn.docebosaas.com/learn/courses/139/fbg-module-3-product-formulation-statements-pfs>

Product Formulation Statements (CSDE's Crediting Documentation for the Child Nutrition Programs webpage):
<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/crediting-documentation-for-the-child-nutrition-programs/product-formulation-statements>

Records Retention Requirements for the Summer Food Service Program (CSDE):
https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/records_retention_sfsp.pdf

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Standardized Recipes (CSDE's Crediting Documentation for the Child Nutrition Program webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/crediting-documentation-for-the-child-nutrition-programs/standardized-recipes>

Summer Meals Annual Training Module: Crediting Documentation for Summer Meals ("Annual Training" section of CSDE's SFSP webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/summer-food-service-program/annual-training#CreditingDocumentation>

Summer Meals Annual Training Module: Crediting Foods in the Summer Food Service Program Meal Patterns: Part 5: Vegetables/Fruits Component ("Annual Training" section of CSDE's SFSP webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/summer-food-service-program/annual-training#CreditingFoods>

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

<https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/manufacturerPFStipsheet.pdf>

USDA Memo SP 02-2024, CACFP 02-2024, and SFSP 02-2024: Crediting Tofu and Soy Yogurt Products in the School Meals Programs, Child and Adult Care Food Program, and Summer Food Service Program:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/crediting-tofu-and-soy-yogurt-products-school-meal-programs-and-cacfp>

USDA Memo SP 05-2025, CACFP 04-2025, and SFSP 02-2025: Guidance for Accepting Processed Product Documentation for Meal Pattern Requirements:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/labeling/guidance-accepting-processed-product-documentation>

USDA Memo SP 40-2019, CACFP 17-2019, and SFSP 17-2019: Smoothies Offered in the Child Nutrition Programs:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/smoothies-offered>

Using Child Nutrition (CN) Labels in the Summer Food Service Program (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/creditingfsfp/cn_labels_sfsp.pdf

Using Product Formulation Statements in the Summer Food Service Program (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/sfsp/creditingfsfp/product_formulation_statements_sfsp.pdf

What's in a Meal Module 6: Meal Pattern Documentation Part B – Crediting Commercial Processed Products (CSDE's Training Program, What's in a Meal: National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program Meal Patterns for Grades K-12):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/meal-pattern-training-materials>

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For more information, visit the “[Meal Patterns](#)” section of the CSDE’s SFSP webpage and the CSDE’s [Crediting Foods in the Summer Food Service Program](#) webpage or contact the [Summer Meals 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/sfsp/creditingfsp/credit_smoothies_sfsp.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; or
2. fax: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. email: program.intake@usda.gov

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