

# Servings for Grains/Breads in the Afterschool Snack Program Meal Pattern for Grades K-12

This guidance applies to the meal patterns for grades K-12 in the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Afterschool Snack Program (ASP) of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). For additional guidance on the ASP meal pattern and crediting requirements for the grains/breads component, visit the “[Meal Patterns for the ASP](#)” and “[Grains/Breads Component for Grades K-12 in the ASP](#)” sections of the Connecticut State Department of Education’s (CSDE) Afterschool Snack Program webpage.



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# Servings for Grains/Breads in the Afterschool Snack Program Meal Pattern for Grades K-12

## Overview of Grains/Breads Servings Chart

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) [Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs](#), summarizes the required quantities for nine groups (A-I) of grain foods. These quantities are not the same for all Child Nutrition Programs because the meal patterns are different. The chart on pages 3-5 in this document lists the Exhibit A servings that apply to creditable grain foods in the ASP meal pattern for grades K-12.

The amount of a creditable grain food that provides one serving of the grains/breads component varies because different types of foods contain different amounts of creditable grains. For example, to credit as one serving of the grains/breads component, a roll (group B) must weigh 25 grams or 0.9 ounce and a blueberry muffin (group D) must weigh 50 grams or 1.8 ounces. The minimum amount that credits toward the grains/breads component is  $\frac{1}{4}$  serving.

Effective with school year 2025-26 (beginning July 1, 2025), the USDA final rule, [Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#), changes the grains/breads component to the grains component and the required quantities change from grains/breads servings to grains ounce equivalents (oz eq) (refer to "[Meal Pattern Changes for School Year 2025-26](#)" in this document).



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## Creditable Grain Foods

To credit as the grains/breads component, commercial grain products and foods made from scratch must be made with creditable grains. Creditable grains include whole grains, enriched grains, bran (such as oat bran, wheat bran, corn bran, rice bran, and rye bran), and germ (such as wheat germ). Bran and germ credit the same as enriched grains.

- Creditable foods include commercial grain products and foods made from scratch that are whole grain or enriched, or contain a blend of whole and enriched grains. For guidance on the grain crediting requirements and how to identify whole and enriched grains, refer to the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) resources, [Crediting Whole Grains in the School Nutrition Programs](#) and [Crediting Enriched Grains in the School Nutrition Programs](#),
- Creditable cooked and ready-to-eat (RTE) breakfast cereals include whole grain, enriched, and fortified cereals. For crediting guidance, refer to the CSDE's [Crediting Breakfast Cereals for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs](#).

Additional guidance on the grains/breads component is available in the “Grains/Breads component for Grades K-12” section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

## Whole Grain-rich (WGR) Foods

WGR foods include 100 percent whole grains and foods that contain a blend of whole (at least 50 percent) and enriched grains. The ASP meal pattern for grades K-12 does not have a WGR requirement. The CSDE encourages school food authorities (SFAs) to include WGR foods in ASP menus.

Effective with school year 2025-26 (beginning July 1, 2025), the USDA final rule, [Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#), requires that at least 80 percent of the grains offered weekly in ASP snacks for grades K-12 must be WGR, based on oz eq of offered grains (refer to “[Meal Pattern Changes for School Year 2025-26](#)” in this document).

# Servings for Grains/Breads in the Afterschool Snack Program Meal Pattern for Grades K-12

## Grain-based Desserts

Grain-based desserts are in groups C-G and are indicated in red. Grain-based desserts often contain more fat and added sugars than traditional grains. The CSDE recommends limiting grain-based desserts to no more than twice per week.

Effective with school year 2025-26 (beginning July 1, 2025), the USDA final rule, [Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#), aligns the ASP meal pattern for grades K-12 with the CACFP snack meal pattern for children. Grain-based desserts cannot credit in ASP snacks (refer to "[Meal Pattern Changes for School Year 2025-26](#)" in this document).

## Using the Grains/Breads Servings Chart

The grains/breads servings chart in this document (refer to pages 4-5) indicates each grain group's required weight (groups A-G) or volume (groups H and I) to credit as 1 serving of the grains/breads component in the ASP meal pattern for grades K-12. The chart also indicates the required quantities for  $\frac{3}{4}$  serving,  $\frac{1}{2}$  serving, and  $\frac{1}{4}$  serving (the minimum creditable amount).

SFAs must know the grain item's serving weight (groups A-G) or volume (groups H and I) to use this chart. Grains/breads servings are calculated by dividing the grain item's serving weight/volume by the required weight/volume for 1 serving of the applicable grain group.

- The serving weight/volume for commercial products is listed on the Nutrition Facts label or product formulation statement (PFS).
- The serving weight/volume for foods made from scratch is determined from the SFA's standardized recipe. If the standardized recipe does not provide this information, SFAs must either determine the average serving weight/volume by weighing or measuring several portions (refer to the CSDE's [Yield Study Data Form for Child Nutrition Programs](#)) or use the creditable grains method for determining grains/breads servings (refer to the CSDE's resource, [Calculation Methods for Grains/Breads Servings for Grades K-12 in the Afterschool Snack Program](#)).

The steps for using the grains/breads servings chart are indicated in the CSDE's resource, [How to Use the Grains/Breads Servings Chart for Grades K-12 in the Afterschool Snack Program](#). For detailed guidance on both methods for determining the grains/breads servings of commercial grain products and standardized recipes, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Calculation Methods for Grains/Breads Servings for Grades K-12 in the Afterschool Snack Program](#).

## Servings for Grains/Breads in the Afterschool Snack Program Meal Pattern for Grades K-12

### When a Product Formulation Statement (PFS) is Required

The grains/breads servings chart can be used only for creditable grain foods. A manufacturer's PFS is required when a commercial product's ingredients statement and packaging do not provide sufficient information to determine if it meets the crediting criteria. For guidance on when a PFS is required and what it must include, refer to the CSDE's resources, [When Commercial Grain Products Require a Product Formulation Statement to Credit in the School Nutrition Programs and Using Product Formulation Statements in the School Nutrition Programs](#).

### Meal Pattern Changes for School Year 2025-26

Effective July 1, 2025, the USDA final rule, [Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#), aligns the ASP meal pattern for grades K-12 with the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) snack meal pattern for children. The changes below will apply to the grains component.

- The grains/breads component changes to the grains component and the required quantities change from servings to ounce equivalents (oz eq).
- The NSLP and SBP weekly WGR requirement applies, i.e., at least 80 percent of the weekly grains offered at snack must be WGR, based on oz eq of offered grains.
- Breakfast cereals cannot exceed 6 grams of added sugars per dry ounce.
- Grain-based desserts cannot credit in ASP snacks.

For additional guidance on the final rule, visit the “[Upcoming Meal Pattern Changes](#)” section of the CSDE's Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs webpage.

### Grains/Breads Servings Chart

The chart below reflects the required quantities for nine groups (A-I) of grain foods in the USDA's [Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs](#). Grain-based desserts in groups C-G are indicated in red.

Group A	Group A Servings
Bread-type coating	<b>1 serving</b> = 20 grams or 0.7 ounce
Breadsticks, hard	<b>¾ serving</b> = 15 grams or 0.5 ounce
Chow Mein noodles	<b>½ serving</b> = 10 grams or 0.4 ounce
Crackers, savory, e.g., saltines and snack crackers	<b>¼ serving</b> = 5 grams or 0.2 ounce
Croutons	
Pretzels, hard	
Stuffing, dry (weights apply to bread in stuffing)	

## Servings for Grains/Breads in the Afterschool Snack Program Meal Pattern for Grades K-12

Group B	Group B Servings
Bagels Batter-type coating Biscuits Breads, e.g., white, wheat, whole wheat, French, Italian Buns, hamburger and hot dog Crackers, sweet, e.g., graham crackers and animal crackers, all shapes <sup>1</sup> Egg roll skins English muffins Pita bread Pizza crust Pretzels, soft Rolls Taco shells Tortilla chips Tortillas	<b>1 serving</b> = 25 grams or 0.9 ounce $\frac{3}{4}$ <b>serving</b> = 19 grams or 0.7 ounce $\frac{1}{2}$ <b>serving</b> = 13 grams or 0.5 ounce $\frac{1}{4}$ <b>serving</b> = 6 grams or 0.2 ounce
Group C	Group C Servings
Cookies, plain, including vanilla wafers <sup>1</sup> Cornbread Corn muffins Croissants Pancakes Piecrust (dessert pies <sup>1</sup> , cobblers <sup>1</sup> , fruit turnovers <sup>1</sup> and meat or meat alternate pies) Waffles	<b>1 serving</b> = 31 grams or 1.1 ounces $\frac{3}{4}$ <b>serving</b> = 23 grams or 0.8 ounce $\frac{1}{2}$ <b>serving</b> = 16 grams or 0.6 ounce $\frac{1}{4}$ <b>serving</b> = 8 grams or 0.3 ounce
Group D	Group D Servings
Cereal bars, breakfast bars, granola bars, plain <sup>1</sup> Doughnuts, cake and yeast raised, unfrosted <sup>1</sup> Muffins, all except corn Sweet rolls, unfrosted <sup>1</sup> Toaster pastries, unfrosted <sup>1</sup>	<b>1 serving</b> = 50 grams or 1.8 ounces $\frac{3}{4}$ <b>serving</b> = 38 grams or 1.3 ounces $\frac{1}{2}$ <b>serving</b> = 25 grams or 0.9 ounce $\frac{1}{4}$ <b>serving</b> = 13 grams or 0.5 ounce
Group E	Group E Servings
Cereal bars, breakfast bars, granola bars, with nuts, dried fruit, and/or chocolate pieces <sup>1</sup> Cookies, with fillings or coverings, nuts, raisins, chocolate pieces, and/or fruit purees <sup>1</sup> Doughnuts, cake and yeast raised, frosted or glazed <sup>1</sup> French toast Sweet rolls, frosted <sup>1</sup> Toaster pastries, frosted <sup>1</sup>	<b>1 serving</b> = 63 grams or 2.2 ounces $\frac{3}{4}$ <b>serving</b> = 47 grams or 1.7 ounces $\frac{1}{2}$ <b>serving</b> = 31 grams or 1.1 ounces $\frac{1}{4}$ <b>serving</b> = 16 grams or 0.6 ounce

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Group F	Group F Servings
Cake, plain, unfrosted <sup>1</sup> Coffee cake <sup>1</sup>	<b>1 serving</b> = 75 grams or 2.7 ounces $\frac{3}{4}$ <b>serving</b> = 56 grams or 3.0 ounces $\frac{1}{2}$ <b>serving</b> = 38 grams or 1.3 ounces $\frac{1}{4}$ <b>serving</b> = 19 grams or 0.7 ounce
Group G	Group G Servings
Brownies, plain <sup>1</sup> Cake, all varieties, frosted <sup>1</sup>	<b>1 serving</b> = 115 grams or 4 ounces $\frac{3}{4}$ <b>serving</b> = 86 grams or 3 ounces $\frac{1}{2}$ <b>serving</b> = 58 grams or 2 ounces $\frac{1}{4}$ <b>serving</b> = 29 grams or 1 ounce
Group H	Group H Servings
Barley Breakfast cereals, cooked <sup>2</sup> Bulgur or cracked wheat Cereal grains, e.g., amaranth, buckwheat, cornmeal, corn grits, farina, kasha, millet, oats, quinoa, wheat berries, and rolled wheat Macaroni, all shapes Noodles, all varieties Pasta, all shapes Ravioli, noodle only Rice, brown or enriched white	<b>1 serving</b> = $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooked (or 25 grams dry) $\frac{1}{2}$ <b>serving</b> = $\frac{1}{4}$ cup cooked (or 13 grams dry)
Group I	Group I Servings
Ready-to-eat (RTE) breakfast cereals (cold dry) <sup>2</sup>	<b>1 serving</b> = $\frac{3}{4}$ cup or 1 ounce* $\frac{1}{2}$ <b>serving</b> = $\frac{1}{3}$ cup or $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce* $\frac{1}{3}$ <b>serving</b> = $\frac{1}{4}$ cup or $\frac{1}{3}$ ounce * * whichever is less

<sup>1</sup> Grain-based desserts are often high in fat, added sugars, and sodium. The CSDE recommends limiting grain-based desserts to no more than twice per week.

<sup>2</sup> RTE breakfast cereals must be whole, enriched, or fortified. Effective July 1, 2025, breakfast cereals cannot exceed 6 grams of added sugars per dry ounce. For more information, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs](#).

## Servings for Grains/Breads in the Afterschool Snack Program Meal Pattern for Grades K-12

### 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/asp\\_handbook.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/asp/asp_handbook.pdf)

Afterschool Snack Program Meal Pattern for Grades K-12 (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/asp/meal\\_pattern\\_asp\\_grades\\_k-12.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/asp/meal_pattern_asp_grades_k-12.pdf)

Calculation Methods for Grains/Breads Servings for the Afterschool Snack Program Meal Pattern for Grades K-12(CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/asp/grains\\_breads\\_calculation\\_asp\\_grades\\_k-12.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/asp/grains_breads_calculation_asp_grades_k-12.pdf)

Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nslp/crediting/credit\\_cereals\\_snp\\_preschool.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nslp/crediting/credit_cereals_snp_preschool.pdf)

Crediting Enriched Grains in the School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nslp/crediting/credit\\_enriched\\_grains\\_snp.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nslp/crediting/credit_enriched_grains_snp.pdf)

Crediting Grain-based Desserts in the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nslp/crediting/credit\\_grain\\_based\\_desserts\\_grades\\_k-12\\_snp.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nslp/crediting/credit_grain_based_desserts_grades_k-12_snp.pdf)

Crediting Whole Grains in the School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nslp/crediting/credit\\_whole\\_grains\\_snp.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nslp/crediting/credit_whole_grains_snp.pdf)

Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs (USDA):

<https://foodbuyingguide.fns.usda.gov/Content/TablesFBG/ExhibitA.pdf>

Exhibit A Grains Tool to the Rescue (USDA Webinar):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/exhibit-grains-tool-rescue>

Food Buying Guide Exhibit A Grains Tool (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/food-buying-guide-interactive-web-based-tool>

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)



## Servings for Grains/Breads in the Afterschool Snack Program Meal Pattern for Grades K-12

Grains/Breads Component (“Documents/Forms” section of the CSDE’s Afterschool Snack Program (ASP) webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/afterschool-snack-program/documents#GrainsBreadsK12>

How to Maximize the Exhibit A Grains Tool (USDA Webinar):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/how-maximize-exhibit-grains-tool>

How to Use the Grains/Breads Servings Chart for Grades K-12 in the Afterschool Snack Program (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nslp/crediting/how\\_to\\_use\\_grains\\_breads\\_servings\\_chart\\_asp\\_k-12.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nslp/crediting/how_to_use_grains_breads_servings_chart_asp_k-12.pdf)

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

[https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/PFS\\_Grains-Breads\\_Servings\\_Fillable\\_508.pdf](https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/PFS_Grains-Breads_Servings_Fillable_508.pdf)

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://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource-files/PFS\\_Example\\_Grains-Breads\\_Servings.pdf](https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource-files/PFS_Example_Grains-Breads_Servings.pdf)

Recipe Analysis Workbook (USDA’s Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/food-buying-guide-interactive-web-based-tool>

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

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

Upcoming Meal Pattern Changes (CSDE’s Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs webpage):

[https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/meal-patterns-school-nutrition-programs#Upcoming\\_Meal\\_Pattern\\_Changes](https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/meal-patterns-school-nutrition-programs#Upcoming_Meal_Pattern_Changes)

USDA Final Rule: Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans (89 FR 31962):

<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/04/25/2024-08098/child-nutrition-programs-meal-patterns-consistent-with-the-2020-2025-dietary-guidelines-for>

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://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nslp/memos/om2019/sp34\\_cacfp15\\_sfsp15-2019s.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nslp/memos/om2019/sp34_cacfp15_sfsp15-2019s.pdf)

## Servings for Grains/Breads in the Afterschool Snack Program Meal Pattern for Grades K-12

Using Product Formulation Statements in the School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nslp/crediting/product\\_formulation\\_statements.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nslp/crediting/product_formulation_statements.pdf)

When Commercial Grain Products Require a Product Formulation Statement to Credit in the School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nslp/crediting/when\\_commercial\\_grain\\_products\\_require\\_pfs\\_snp.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nslp/crediting/when_commercial_grain_products_require_pfs_snp.pdf)

## Crediting Breakfast Cereals for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs

For more information, visit the “[Grains/Breads Component for Grades K-12 in the ASP](#)” section of the CSDE’s [ASP](#) 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/asp/grains\\_breads\\_servings\\_asp\\_grades\\_k-12.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/asp/grains_breads_servings_asp_grades_k-12.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](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

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