Crediting Beans, Peas, and Lentils in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

This guidance applies to reimbursable meals and snacks served in child care centers, family day care homes, emergency shelters, at-risk afterschool care centers, and adult day care centers that participate in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).

For information on the CACFP meal patterns for children and the CACFP adult meal patterns, visit the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) Meal Patterns for the Child and Adult Care Food Program webpage. For information on the crediting requirements, visit the CSDE's Crediting Foods in the Child and Adult Care Food Program webpage and Crediting Documentation for the Child Nutrition Programs webpage.

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Crediting Beans, Peas, and Lentils in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

Overview of Crediting Requirements

Beans, peas, and lentils are pulses, which are a type of legumes, i.e., plants that include pods. Pulses are the dried edible seeds of legumes. Examples of foods in the beans, peas, and lentils subgroup include black beans, black-eyed peas (mature, dry), edamame (soybeans), garbanzo beans (chickpeas), kidney beans, lentils, navy beans, soybeans, split peas, and white beans.

The following requirements apply to crediting beans, peas, and lentils in the CACFP meal patterns.

- Beans, peas, and lentils may credit as either the meats/meat alternates (MMA) component or the vegetables component, but one serving cannot credit as both meal components in the same meal or snack. A ¼-cup serving credits as 1 ounce equivalent (oz eq) of the MMA component or ¼ cup of the vegetables component.

- Beans, peas, and lentils may credit as the MMA component or the vegetables component in different meals. For example, lentils may credit as the vegetables component at one lunch and as the MMA component at another lunch.

- If the meal includes two servings, the menu planner may choose to credit one serving as the MMA component and one serving as the vegetables component. For example, ¼ cup of garbanzo beans in a salad may credit as ¼ cup of the vegetables component and ½ cup of kidney beans in chili may credit as 2 oz eq of the MMA component.

Menu planners must determine in advance how to credit beans, peas, and lentils in a meal or snack.

Beans, peas, and lentils are one of the five vegetable subgroups recommended by the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans.* The USDA's CACFP best practices recommend that CACFP menus include at least one serving per week of each vegetable subgroup (dark green; red/orange; beans, peas, and lentils; starchy; and other). For information on the vegetable subgroups, refer to the CSDE's resource, *Vegetable Subgroups in the Child and Adult Care Food Program*.

Crediting Beans, Peas, and Lentils in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

Crediting Beans, Peas, and Lentils as Vegetables

Foods in the vegetables component credit based on volume (cups), not weight. For example, ½ cup of beans, peas, or lentils credits as ½ cup of the vegetables component. The minimum creditable amount for the vegetables component is ⅛ cup (2 tablespoons).

The meal pattern serving refers to the cooked amount of beans, peas, or lentils without added ingredients. For example, to credit as ½ cup of the vegetables component, a serving of baked beans must contain ½ cup of beans, excluding added ingredients such as sauce and pork fat.

Menu planners must round down the amount of beans, peas, or lentils to the nearest ⅛ cup (2 tablespoons). For example, a recipe with 2½ tablespoons of kidney beans per serving credits as ⅛ cup of the vegetables component. If the menu item contains less than the full serving of the vegetables component, the meal or snack must include additional vegetables to provide the full serving for each grade group.

Crediting Beans, Peas, and Lentils as MMA

Beans, peas, and lentils credit as the MMA component based on volume. A ¼-cup serving (4 tablespoons) credits as 1 ounce equivalent (oz eq) of MMA. The minimum creditable amount is 1 tablespoon (¼ oz eq). The table below shows the meal pattern contribution for different servings of beans, peas, and lentils.

Table 1. Crediting beans, peas, and lentils as MMA

Serving size (volume)	Meal pattern contribution
8 tablespoons (½ cup)	2 oz eq
7 tablespoons	1¾ oz eq
6 tablespoons (⅜ cup)	1½ oz eq
5 tablespoons	1¼ oz eq
4 tablespoons (¼ cup)	**1 oz eq**
3 tablespoons	¾ oz eq
2 tablespoons (⅛ cup)	½ oz eq
1 tablespoon ($^1/_{16}$ cup)	¼ oz eq (minimum creditable amount)

Crediting Beans, Peas, and Lentils in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

Crediting Hummus and Bean Dips



Hummus and bean dips may credit as either the MMA component or the vegetables component, but one serving cannot credit as both meal components in the same meal or snack. Crediting toward the MMA component is based on the cups of cooked beans, peas, and lentils per serving and the tablespoons of tahini (sesame paste) or other ground nut/seed butters per serving.

- **Beans, peas, and lentils:** A ¼-cup serving of cooked beans, peas, or lentils credits as 1 oz eq of the MMA component. The minimum creditable amount is 1 tablespoon.
- **Tahini or other ground nut/seed butters:** Two tablespoons of tahini or other ground nut/seed butters credit as 1 oz eq of the MMA component. The minimum creditable amount is ½ tablespoon. For more information, refer to the CSDE's resource, *Crediting Nuts and Seeds in the Child and Adult Care Food Program*.

Crediting toward the vegetables component (beans, peas, and lentils subgroup) is based on the cups of cooked beans, peas, and lentils per serving. For example, hummus that contains ¼ cup of chickpeas per serving credits as ¼ cup of the beans, peas, and lentils subgroup. The minimum creditable amount is ⅛ cup.

> Bean dip is a spread made from ground pulses (beans, peas, and/or lentils) with one or more of the following optional ingredients: ground nut/seed butter (such as tahini [ground sesame] or peanut butter; vegetable oil (such as olive oil, canola oil, soybean oil); seasoning (such as salt, citric acid); vegetables and juice for flavor (such as olives, roasted peppers, garlic, lemon juice); and for manufactured bean dip, ingredients necessary as preservatives and/or to maintain freshness.

CACFP facilities must maintain crediting documentation for hummus and bean dips that indicates the amount per serving of cooked beans, peas, and lentils, and tahini or other ground nut/seed butters. Commercial products require a Child Nutrition (CN) label or manufacturer's product formulation statement (PFS) (refer to "Crediting Documentation for Commercial Bean, Pea, and Lentil Products" in this document). Hummus made from scratch requires a recipe (refer to "Crediting Beans, Peas, and Lentils in Recipes" in this document).

Crediting Beans, Peas, and Lentils in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

Crediting Roasted or Dried Beans, Peas, and Lentils

Roasted or dried beans, peas, and lentils, such as roasted garbanzo beans (chickpeas) and roasted soybeans, may credit as either the MMA component or the vegetables component, but one serving cannot credit as both meal components in the same meal or snack.

- **MMA component:** Roasted or dried beans, peas, and lentils credit as the MMA component based on weight (ounces). A 1-ounce serving credits as 1 oz eq of the MMA component.

- **Vegetables component:** Roasted or dried beans, peas, and lentils credit as the beans, peas, and lentils subgroup of the vegetables component based on volume (cups). For example, ¼ cup of roasted chickpeas credits as ¼ cup of the beans, peas, and lentils subgroup.

The USDA recommends using discretion when offering snack-type beans, peas, and lentils (such as individually wrapped soy nuts) as part of reimbursable meals because they may be perceived as snack foods. While these types of products credit in CACFP meals, they may be better suited for meals served off site, such as bagged lunches for field trips. When offering snack-type beans, peas, and lentils as either the MMA component or the vegetables component, make sure that CACFP menus clearly identify how they contribute to the reimbursable meal.

Children younger than 4 are at the highest risk of choking. Consider children's ages and developmental readiness when deciding whether to offer roasted or dried beans, peas, and lentils in CACFP menus. For additional guidance, visit the "Choking Prevention" section of the CSDE's Food Safety for Child Nutrition Programs webpage.



Crediting Beans, Peas, and Lentils in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

Crediting Pasta Products Made of Bean, Pea, and Lentil Flours

Pasta products made of 100 percent bean, pea, or lentil flour (such as chickpea flour or lentil flour) may credit as either the vegetables component or the MMA component, but one serving cannot credit as both meal components in the same meal or snack.

- **MMA component:** Crediting pasta products that contain bean, pea, or lentil flour as the MMA component is the same as crediting beans, peas, and lentils. A ½-cup serving of cooked bean, pea, or lentil flour pasta credits as 2 oz eq of the MMA component. Bean, pea, or lentil flour pasta must be offered with additional MMA, such as tofu, cheese, or meat. The USDA's intent for this requirement is to ensure that MMA are in a form that is recognizable to participants. The nutrition education aspect of the Child Nutrition Programs includes the goal of helping participants recognize the food groups that contribute to healthy meals and snacks.

- **Vegetables component:** Pasta products that contain vegetable flours from one vegetable subgroup credit toward that vegetable subgroup. For example, ½ cup of 100 percent red lentil flour pasta credits as ½ cup of the beans, peas, and lentils subgroup.

Alternatively, manufacturers and CACFP facilities may credit bean, pea, or lentil flour pasta using the bean flour yield information in Appendix C of the FBG, or with appropriate documentation on the manufacturer's product formulation PFS. For more information on PFS forms, refer to "Crediting Documentation for Commercial Bean, Pea, and Lentil Products" in this document.

Required Crediting Documentation

CACFP facilities must be able to document that all menu items in reimbursable meals and snacks meet the CACFP meal patterns. The guidance below summarizes the required documentation for commercial processed products and foods made from scratch that contain beans, peas, and lentils. 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 processed products

Commercial processed products that contain beans, peas, and lentils (such as black bean burritos and vegetarian chili) require documentation stating the oz eq of the MMA component or the cups of the vegetables component per serving. For example, to credit a black bean burrito as 1 ounce of the MMA component, the product's crediting documentation must state that one

serving contains ¼ cup of black beans. To credit vegetarian chili as ¼ cup of the vegetables component, the product's CN label or PFS must state that one serving contains ¼ cup of beans, peas, or lentils.

The acceptable types of documentation for commercial products include any of the documents below.

- **Child Nutrition (CN) label:** A CN label is a USDA-approved statement that clearly identifies the contribution of a commercial product toward the meal pattern requirements. CN labels are available only for main dish entrees that contribute at least ½ oz eq of the MMA component. Allowable CN label documentation includes 1) the original CN label from the product carton; 2) a photocopy or photograph of the CN label shown attached to the original product carton; or 3) a CN label copied with a watermark displaying the product name and CN number provided by the vendor, attached to the bill of lading (invoice). For more information on CN labels, refer to the CSDE's resource, *Using Child Nutrition (CN) Labels in the Child and Adult Care Food Program*.

- **Product formulation statement (PFS):** A PFS is a document developed by manufacturers that provides specific information about how a product credits toward the USDA meal patterns for the Child Nutrition Programs. The PFS must be signed by an official of the manufacturer and state the amount of each meal pattern component contained in one serving of the product. For more information on PFS forms, refer to the CSDE's resource, *Using Product Formulation Statements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program*. For guidance on how to review a PFS, visit the USDA's Child Nutrition Programs: Tips for Evaluating a Manufacturer's Product Formulation Statement webpage.

Commercial processed products without a CN label or PFS cannot credit in reimbursable meals and snacks unless they are listed in the FBG.

> A PFS is required for all commercial processed products without a CN label that are not listed in the FBG. The USDA requires that CACFP facilities must obtain and verify the PFS for accuracy prior to purchasing, serving, and claiming the food product in reimbursable meals and snacks.

For more information on crediting documentation, refer to the CSDE's resource, *Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the Child and Adult Care Food Program*, and USDA

Memo SP 05-2025, CACFP 04-2025, SFSP 02-2025: *Guidance for Accepting Processed Product Documentation for Meal Pattern Requirements*. Additional guidance is available on the CSDE's Crediting Documentation for the Child Nutrition Programs webpage.

Training on the documentation requirements, CN labels, and PFS forms is available in Bite Size Module 7: Introduction to Crediting Documentation, Bite Size Module 8: Child Nutrition (CN) Labels, and Bite Size Module 9: Product Formulation Statements of the CSDE's training program, *Bite Size: Meeting the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Meal Patterns.*

Documentation for foods made from scratch

CACFP facilities must have recipes on file that document the meal pattern contribution per serving for all foods prepared from scratch. The USDA recommends using standardized recipes because they ensure accurate meal component contributions and document that menus meet the meal pattern requirements.

> 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 type of equipment and the same quantity and quality of ingredients.

For information on standardized recipes, refer to the CSDE's *Guide to Menu Documentation for the Child and Adult Care Food Program* and the Institute of Child Nutrition's *Recipe Standardization Guide for the Child and Adult Care Food Program* and visit the "Standardized Recipes" section of the CSDE's Crediting Documentation for the Child Nutrition Programs webpage. Training on standardized recipes is available in Bite Size Module 6: Menus, Production Records, and Standardized Recipes of the CSDE's training program, *Bite Size: Meeting the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Meal Patterns.*

Storing crediting documentation

CACFP facilities must maintain all CN labels, PFS forms, recipes, and other crediting documentation on file in accordance with the records retention requirements for the CACFP. This documentation must be current and will be reviewed by the CSDE during the Administrative Review of the CACFP. For more information, refer to the CSDE's resource, *Records Retention Requirements for the Child and Adult Care Food Program*.

Crediting Beans, Peas, and Lentils in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

Crediting Examples for Beans, Peas, and Lentils in Recipes

The crediting information for recipes depends on whether the menu planner credits the beans, peas, and lentils as the vegetables component or the MMA component. The menu planner must determine the total volume (cups) of beans, peas, and lentils in the recipe.

- **Vegetables component:** The minimum creditable amount is ⅛ cup. To determine the number of ⅛-cup servings of beans, peas, and lentils in one serving of the recipe, divide the cups of beans, peas, and lentils in one serving of the recipe by 0.125, then round down to the nearest ⅛ cup. Refer to "Steps for calculating the vegetables contribution of beans, peas, and lentils" below for a crediting example.

- **MMA component:** The minimum creditable amount is ¼ ounce (1 tablespoon). A ¼-cup serving of beans, peas, and lentils provides 1 oz eq of the MMA component. To determine the oz eq of the MMA component in one serving of the recipe, divide the cups of beans, peas, and lentils in one serving of the recipe by 0.25, then round down to the nearest ¼ oz eq. Refer to "Steps for calculating the MMA contribution of beans, peas, and lentils" below for a crediting example.

For assistance with recipe calculations, use the equivalent volume measures in the ICN's *Basics at a Glance Portion Control Poster* and the decimal fraction equivalents chart (table 6) in the "Introduction" section of the USDA's *Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs* (FBG). For more information, refer to "Documentation for foods made from scratch" in this document.

Steps for calculating the vegetables contribution of beans, peas, and lentils

Example: A recipe provides 50 servings and contains 1 gallon and 1 quart of chickpeas. How many cups of the vegetables component does the recipe provide per serving?

1. Determine the total cups of beans, peas, and lentils in the recipe: Use the ICN's Basics at a Glance Portion Control Poster to convert larger measurements to cups. Use the decimal fraction equivalents chart (table 6) in the FBG's "Introduction" section to convert fractions to decimals.

    - 1 gallon (16 cups) plus 1 quart (4 cups) of chickpeas = 20 cups of chickpeas.

2. List the number of servings in the recipe: 50 servings

3. Determine the cups of beans, peas, and lentils per serving: Divide the total cups of beans, peas, and lentils (step 1) by the number of servings in the recipe (step 2).

    - 20 cups of chickpeas divided by 50 servings = 0.4 cup of chickpeas per serving

    Note: If the decimal amount for the cups of beans, peas, and lentils per serving converts to an even multiple of ⅛ cup, such as 0.5 (½) cup, 0.25 (¼) cup, or 0.125 (⅛) cup, this is the final meal pattern contribution for the vegetables component. Do not complete steps 4 and 5.

4. Determine the number of ⅛-cup servings (minimum creditable amount) of beans, peas, and lentils in one serving of the recipe: Divide the cups of beans, peas, and lentils per serving (step 3) by 0.125.

    - 0.4 cup of chickpeas per serving divided by 0.125 = 3.2 servings of ⅛ cup

5. Round down the number of serving from step 4 to the nearest ⅛-cup serving.

    - 3.2 servings rounds down to 3 servings of ⅛ cup, i.e., ⅜ cup

One serving provides ⅜ cup of the vegetables component (beans, peas, and lentils subgroup).



Crediting Beans, Peas, and Lentils in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

Steps for calculating the MMA contribution of beans, peas, and lentils

Example: A recipe provides 50 servings and contains 1 gallon and 1 quart of kidney beans. How many oz eq of the MMA component does the recipe provide per serving?

1. Determine the total cups of beans, peas, and lentils in the recipe: Use the ICN's Basics at a Glance Portion Control Poster to convert larger measurements to cups. Use the decimal fraction equivalents chart (table 6) in the FBG's "Introduction" section to convert fractions to decimals.
    - 1 gallon (16 cups) plus 1 quart (4 cups) of kidney beans = 20 cups of kidney beans.
2. List the number of servings in the recipe: 50 servings
3. Determine the cups of beans, peas, and lentils per serving: Divide the total cups of beans, peas, and lentils (step 1) by the number of servings in the recipe (step 2).
    - 20 cups of kidney beans divided by 50 servings = 0.4 cup of kidney beans per serving.
4. Determine the oz eq of MMA per serving: Divide the cups of beans, peas, and lentils per serving (step 3) by 0.25 (1 oz eq = ¼ cup (0.25) of beans, peas, and lentils).
    - 0.4 cup of kidney beans per serving divided by 0.25 = 1.6 oz eq of MMA.
5. Round down the oz eq from step 4 to the nearest ¼ oz eq.
    - 1.6 oz eq rounds down to 1.5 oz eq of MMA

One serving provides 1.5 oz eq of the MMA component



Crediting Beans, Peas, and Lentils in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

Resources

Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE):
https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/cacfp/crediting/accepting_processed_product_documentation_cacfp.pdf

Accepting Product Documentation (CSDE's Crediting Documentation for the Child Nutrition Program webpage):
https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/crediting-documentation-for-the-child-nutrition-programs/accepting-product-documentation

Appendix C: Food Items for Further Processing, Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs (USDA):
https://foodbuyingguide.fns.usda.gov/files/Reports/USDA_FBG_FoodItemsForFurtherProcessing_YieldTable.pdf

Basics at a Glance Portion Control Poster (Institute of Child Nutrition):
https://theicn.org/icn-resources-a-z/basics-at-a-glance/

Bite Size Module 7: Introduction to Crediting Documentation (CSDE's Training Program, Meeting the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Meal Patterns):
https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/meal-patterns-for-the-child-and-adult-care-food-program/bite-size-meal-pattern-training#module7

Bite Size Module 8: Child Nutrition (CN) Labels (CSDE's Training Program, Meeting the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Meal Patterns):
https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/meal-patterns-for-the-child-and-adult-care-food-program/bite-size-meal-pattern-training#module8

Bite Size Module 9: Product Formulation Statements (CSDE's Training Program, Meeting the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Meal Patterns):
https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/meal-patterns-for-the-child-and-adult-care-food-program/bite-size-meal-pattern-training#module9

CACFP Best Practices (USDA webpage):
https://www.fna.usda.gov/cacfp/program-operator/best-practices

Crediting Beans, Peas, and Lentils in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

Child Nutrition Programs: Tips for Evaluating a Manufacturer's Product Formulation Statement (USDA webpage):
https://www.fna.usda.gov/cn/labeling/tips-evaluating-pfs

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

Crediting Soups in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE):
https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/cacfp/crediting/credit_soups_cacfp.pdf

Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs (USDA):
https://www.fna.usda.gov/tn/fbg

Meats and Meat Alternates Component (CSDE's Crediting Foods in the Child and Adult Care Food Program webpage):
https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/crediting-foods-in-the-child-and-adult-care-food-program/meats-and-meat-alternates

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

Recipe Standardization Guide for the Child and Adult Care Food Program (Institute of Child Nutrition):
https://theicn.org/icn-resources-a-z/step-by-step-recipe-standardization-guide-for-the-child-and-adult-care-food-program/

Records Retention Requirements for the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE):
https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/cacfp/forms/records_retention_cacfp.pdf

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

USDA Memo SP 05-2025, CACFP 04-2025, and SFSP 02-2025: Guidance for Accepting Processed Product Documentation for Meal Pattern Requirements:
https://www.fna.usda.gov/cn/labeling/guidance-accepting-processed-product-documentation

Crediting Beans, Peas, and Lentils in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

USDA Memo SP 26-2019, CACFP 13-2019, and SFSP 12-2019: Crediting Pasta Products Made of Vegetable Flour in the Child Nutrition Programs: https://www.fna.usda.gov/cn/crediting-pasta-products-made-vegetable-flour-child-nutrition-programs

Using Child Nutrition (CN) Labels in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE): https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/cacfp/crediting/using_cn_labels_cacfp.pdf

Using Product Formulation Statements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE): https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/cacfp/crediting/using_product_formulation_statements_cacfp.pdf

Vegetable Subgroups in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE): https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/cacfp/crediting/vegetable_subgroups_cacfp.pdf

Vegetables Component (CSDE's Crediting Foods in the Child and Adult Care Food Program webpage): https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/crediting-foods-in-the-child-and-adult-care-food-program/vegetables

Crediting Beans, Peas, and Lentils in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

For more information, visit the CSDE's Crediting Foods in the Child and Adult Care Food Program webpage or contact the CACFP 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/cacfp/crediting/credit_beans_peas_lentils_cacfp.pdf.

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Crediting Beans, Peas, and Lentils in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

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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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