

Crediting Enriched Grains 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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Definition of Enriched Grains

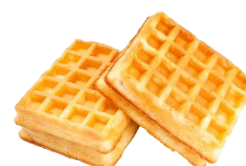
Enriched grains are refined grains (such as wheat, rice, and corn) and grain products (such as cereal, pasta, and bread) that have certain vitamins and minerals added to replace some of the nutrients lost during processing. The five enrichment nutrients are defined by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and include:

- thiamin (vitamin B₁, thiamin mononitrate, or thiamin hydrochloride):
- riboflavin (vitamin B₂):
- niacin (vitamin B₃ or niacinamide):
- folic acid (folate):
- and iron (reduced iron, ferrous sulfate, or ferric orthophosphate).

If a commercial grain product includes enriched ingredients or the product itself is enriched, the ingredients or product must meet the applicable FDA standard of identity for enrichment. Examples of enriched ingredients include enriched flour ([21 CFR 137.165](#)) and enriched cornmeal ([21 CFR 137.260](#)). Examples of enriched products include enriched bread, rolls, and buns ([21 CFR 136.115](#)); enriched macaroni products ([21 CFR 139.115](#)); enriched noodle products ([21 CFR 139.155](#)); enriched rice ([21 CFR 137.350](#)); and enriched farina ([21 CFR 137.305](#)).

[Table 1](#) shows some examples of grain ingredients that are enriched and not enriched. This list is not all-inclusive.

Enriched products are not nutritionally equivalent to whole-grain products because enrichment does not replace all nutrients originally present in the whole grain. CACFP facilities should serve whole grains more often.



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Table 1. Examples of grain ingredients that are enriched or not enriched

Enriched	Not enriched ¹
Bleached enriched flour	Bleached flour
Enriched bromated flour	Bromated flour
Enriched corn flour	Corn flour ²
Enriched corn grits	Corn grits ²
Enriched cornmeal	Cornmeal ²
Enriched degerminated cornmeal	Degerminated cornmeal
Enriched durum flour	Durum flour
Enriched durum wheat flour	Durum wheat flour
Enriched farina	Farina
Enriched flour	Flour
Enriched rice	Rice
Enriched rice flour	Rice flour
Enriched rye flour	Rye flour
Enriched self-rising flour	Self-rising flour
Enriched semolina flour	Semolina flour
Enriched wheat flour	Wheat flour
Enriched white flour	White flour
Enriched white cornmeal	White cornmeal ²
Enriched yellow cornmeal	Yellow cornmeal ²
Milled corn enriched with....(<i>lists the five enrichment nutrients</i>)	Milled corn ²
Puffed wheat enriched with....(<i>lists the five enrichment nutrients</i>)	Puffed wheat
Puffed rice enriched with....(<i>lists the five enrichment nutrients</i>)	Puffed rice
Unbleached enriched wheat flour	Unbleached wheat flour
Unbleached enriched white flour	Unbleached white flour

¹ These ingredients are not enriched unless the label states “enriched,” or the ingredients statement lists the five enrichment nutrients.

² A PFS may be required to determine if some cornmeal products are enriched or nixtamalized (i.e., soaked and cooked in an alkaline solution). Nixtamalized corn credits as a whole grain.

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Overview of Crediting Requirements

Enriched grain products and recipes made with enriched grains credit as the grains component in CACFP meals and snacks. Bran (such as oat bran, wheat bran, corn bran, rice bran, and rye bran) and germ (such as wheat germ) credits the same as enriched grains.

Identifying Enriched Products

To credit as an enriched grain in the school meal patterns, a commercial product must contain an enriched grain as the greatest ingredient by weight. A commercial grain product is enriched if it meets at least one of the criteria below.

1. The food is labeled as “enriched,” e.g., enriched long grain rice.
2. An enriched grain is the first ingredient in the food’s ingredients statement (or water is the first ingredient, and an enriched grain is the next ingredient). The label will usually state “enriched flour” or “enriched wheat flour,” or the grain ingredient includes a sub-listing of the five enrichment nutrients in parenthesis, e.g., “enriched flour (wheat flour, niacin, ferrous sulfate, thiamin mononitrate, riboflavin, folic acid).”

Examples of creditable enriched grain products

The ingredients statements below show some examples of creditable commercial grain products. These products are creditable because they are enriched and do not contain noncredible grains. Enriched grains are in *italics*.

- **Example 1: Saltine crackers (group A)**
Ingredients: *Unbleached enriched flour (wheat flour, niacin, reduced iron, thiamine mononitrate riboflavin folic acid)*, canola oil, palm oil, sea salt, salt, baking soda, yeast.
- **Example 2: Oat bran bread (group B)**
Ingredients: *Unbleached enriched wheat flour [flour, malted barley flour, reduced iron, niacin, thiamin mononitrate (vitamin B1), riboflavin (vitamin B2), folic acid]*, water, *oat bran*, sugar, oats, wheat gluten, soybean oil, salt, yeast, molasses, preservatives (calcium propionate, sorbic acid), monoglycerides, natural flavor, calcium sulfate, grain vinegar, datem, soy lecithin.
- **Example 3: Pancakes (group C)**
Ingredients: Water, *enriched flour (wheat flour, niacin, ferrous sulfate, thiamin mononitrate, riboflavin, folic acid)*, high fructose corn syrup, canola oil. Contains 2% or less of: leavening (baking soda, sodium aluminum phosphate, monocalcium phosphate), eggs, salt, buttermilk, artificial flavor.

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- **Example 3: Spanish rice (group H)**

Ingredients: *Enriched long grain parboiled rice (rice, iron, niacin, thiamine mononitrate, folic acid)*, onion, salt, red & green bell pepper, spices (including red pepper), sugar, yeast extract, tamari soy sauce (soybean, salt) & garlic.

The serving of a creditable enriched grain product must provide the required weight (groups A-G) or volume (groups H and I) for the appropriate Exhibit A grain group or contain the minimum creditable grains (refer to “[Required Servings for Grain Products and Recipes](#)” in this document).

Crediting Criteria for Commercial Combination Foods with Enriched Grains

Combination foods are foods that contain more than one of the five meal components (meats/meat alternates (MMA), grains, vegetables, fruits, and milk). Commercial combination foods that contain an enriched grain portion (such as pizza, breaded fish sticks, and lasagna) credit as grains component if the first grain ingredient is an enriched grain. If the grain portion is listed separately, the first ingredient in the grain portion (excluding water) must be an enriched grain.

Examples of ingredients statements for breaded chicken nuggets

The examples below show how grain ingredients might be listed in a commercial combination food. Enriched grains are in *italics* and noncreditable grain are in **bold**.

- **Example 1: Grain ingredients listed together with other ingredients**

Ingredients: Boneless, skinless chicken breast with rib meat, water, *enriched flour (wheat flour, niacin, reduced iron, thiamine mononitrate, riboflavin, folic acid)*, contains 2% or less of the following: dried garlic, dried onion, salt, sea salt, soybean oil, spice, sugar, torula yeast, turmeric, yeast, yeast extract. Breeding set in vegetable oil.

This product credits as an enriched grain because the first *grain* ingredient is enriched flour.

- **Example 2: Grain ingredients listed as separate grain portion**

Ingredients: Chicken, water, salt, and natural flavor. **Breaded with:** *enriched flour (wheat flour, niacin, reduced iron, thiamine mononitrate, riboflavin, folic acid)*, water, wheat starch, salt, contains 2% or less of the following: **yellow corn flour, corn starch**, dried onion, dried garlic, dried yeast, brown sugar, extractives of paprika, and spices. Breeding set in vegetable oil.

The grain portion of this product credits as an enriched grain because the first ingredient in the breeding is enriched flour.

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If a commercial combination food meets the crediting requirements, the CACFP facility must determine the ounce equivalents (oz eq) contribution of the grain portion (refer to “[Required Servings for Grain Products and Recipes](#)” in this document).

Grain Products that are Not Enriched

Not all refined grains are enriched. For example, when corn is processed into cornmeal, the germ of the grain is removed. The resulting cornmeal is not enriched unless the product states “enriched cornmeal,” or the ingredients statement lists the five enrichment nutrients, e.g., “enriched cornmeal (cornmeal, niacin, iron, thiamine mononitrate, riboflavin, folic acid).” The example below shows a product that is not enriched.

- **Example: Commercial breaded chicken patty**

Ingredients: Boneless chicken breast with rib meat, water. Contains less than 2% of salt, onion powder, garlic powder. Breaded with: wheat flour, water, dextrose, sugar, salt, yeast. Contains less than 2% of spice, extractives of paprika, soybean oil, guar gum, garlic powder, natural flavors.

This product does not credit as the grains component because the first ingredient in the breading is wheat flour. Wheat flour is a noncreditable grain because it is not enriched or whole grain.

Menu planners must check the ingredients statement to ensure that commercial grain products are enriched. Grain products that are not enriched do not credit in CACFP meals and snacks.



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Required Crediting Documentation

CACFP facilities must be able to document that all grain menu items served in reimbursable meals and snacks meet the crediting requirements for the grains component. The guidance below summarizes the required documentation for commercial grain products and grain foods made from scratch. 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 grain products

A PFS from the manufacturer is required if the product's ingredients statement and packaging do not provide sufficient information to determine if the grain product meets the crediting criteria.

The USDA requires CACFP facilities must verify the PFS for accuracy prior to purchasing, serving, and claiming the grain product in reimbursable meals and snacks. For guidance on when a PFS is required and the information it must include, refer to the CSDE's resource, [When Commercial Grain Products Require a Product Formulation Statement to Credit in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#).

For more information on PFS forms, refer to the CSDE's resources, [Using Product Formulation Statements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#) and [Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#), and the USDA's resources, [USDA Memo SP 05-2025, CACFP 04-2025, SFSP 02-2025: Guidance for Accepting Processed Product Documentation for Meal Pattern Requirements](#) and [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 PFS forms is available in Module 8: Meal Pattern Documentation for Crediting Commercial Processed Products, of the CSDE's training program, [What's in a Meal: Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs](#).

CACFP facilities may also document meal pattern compliance with a Child Nutrition (CN) label if the enriched grain is part of a CN-labeled meat or meat alternate product, such as pizza or breaded chicken nuggets. For more information, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Using Child Nutrition \(CN\) Labels in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#).

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Documentation for grain foods made from scratch

CACFP facilities must have recipes on file that document the crediting information for all grain foods made from scratch, including foods made on site by the CACFP facility and foods prepared by vendors. The CSDE encourages CACFP facilities to use standardized recipes to ensure accurate crediting information. Use the USDA's [Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs](#) (FBG) to determine food yields and crediting information for CACFP recipes.

Recipes for grain foods credit as the grains component based on the grams of creditable grains per serving. If the recipe indicates the weight of the prepared (cooked) serving, menu planners may use the required weight (groups A-G) or volume (groups H-I) for the applicable grain group in the USDA's Exhibit A chart (refer to "[Required Servings for Grain Products and Recipes](#)" in this document). For guidance on determining oz eq, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#).

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.

Storing crediting documentation

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



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Required Servings for Grain Products and Recipes

The required quantities for the grains component are in oz eq. The amount of an enriched grain food that provides 1 oz eq varies because different types of foods contain different amounts of creditable grains. For example, to credit as 1 oz eq of the grains component, an enriched roll (group B) must weigh 28 grams (1 ounce), an enriched corn muffin (group C) must weigh 34 grams (1.2 ounces), and an enriched blueberry muffin (group D) must weigh 55 grams (2 ounces).

The USDA allows two methods for determining the oz eq or servings of creditable grain products and standardized recipes. These methods are summarized below. CACFP facilities may use either method but must document how the crediting information was obtained. For detailed guidance on how to use each method, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Calculation Methods for Grains Ounce Equivalents for the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#).

Method 1: USDA's Exhibit A chart

Method 1 uses the USDA's [Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs](#) chart to determine the required weight (groups A-G) or volume (groups H-I) for the grain group where the food belongs. The CSDE's resource, [Grain Ounce Equivalents Chart for the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#), indicates the applicable Exhibit A quantities and requirements for the CACFP meal patterns. Groups F and G (grain-based desserts) are not included because grain-based desserts do not credit as the grains component in CACFP meals and snacks.

This method is used for commercial grain products and may also be used for standardized recipes if the menu planner knows the weight (grams or ounces) of the prepared (cooked) serving. For more information, refer to the CSDE's resource, [How to Use the Grain Ounce Equivalents Chart for the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#).

Method 2: creditable grains

Method 2 determines the oz eq from the weight (grams) of creditable grains per serving. This method is used for standardized recipes and may also be used for commercial grain products with a PFS stating the weight of creditable grains per serving. The grams of creditable grains are listed in the commercial product's PFS or calculated from the grain quantities in the CACFP facility's standardized recipe.

There are some situations when CACFP facilities must use method 2 and a PFS is required. For more information, refer to the CSDE's resource, [When Commercial Grain Products Require a Product Formulation Statement to Credit in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#).

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Grain crediting tools

The tools below help menu planners determine the meal pattern contribution of creditable grain products and recipes.

- **USDA’s Exhibit A Grains Tool for commercial grain products:** This [online tool](#) of the USDA’s [Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs](#) (FBG) determines the oz eq of commercial grain products. For more information, watch the USDA’s webinar, [How to Maximize the Exhibit A Grains Tool](#).
- **USDA’s Recipe Analysis Workbook:** The FBG’s online [Recipe Analysis Workbook](#) allows menu planners to search for ingredients, develop a standardized recipe, and determine the recipe’s meal pattern contribution per serving. To access this tool, users must create a free account on the USDA’s FBG website.
- **CSDE’s How to Use the Grain Ounce Equivalents Chart for the CACFP:** The CSDE’s resource, [How to Use the Grain Ounce Equivalents Chart for the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#), reviews the steps for using the Exhibit A quantities to determine the meal pattern contribution of three types of commercial products and standardized recipes. These include grain menu items in groups A-G that contain multiple small pieces per serving (e.g., crackers, hard pretzels, and animal crackers), multiple large pieces per serving (e.g., pancakes, slices of bread, and waffles), and one piece per serving (e.g., muffins, bagels, and rolls).

For additional guidance, visit the “[Serving Requirements](#)” section of the CSDE’s Crediting Foods in the Child and Adult Care Food Program webpage.

Enrichment Exception for Jewish Institutions

During the religious observance of Passover, the USDA allows Jewish schools, institutions, and sponsors to have a religious exemption for the enrichment requirement of the meal patterns for Child Nutrition Programs. Unenriched matzo may substitute for the grains component during Passover only. Matzo used as the grains component at all other times of the year must be WGR or enriched.

The USDA grants this exemption for entities (schools, institutions, and sponsors) not individuals. SFAs must receive approval from the CSDE before implementing this option. For more information, refer to the USDA’s [FNS instruction 783-13 \(Revision 3\)](#): *Variations in Meal Requirements for Religious Reasons: Jewish Schools, Institutions and Sponsors*.

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Considerations for Reducing Choking Risks for Young Children

Children younger than 4 are at the highest risk of choking. 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.

Consider children's age and developmental readiness when deciding what types of grain foods to offer in CACFP menus and modify foods and menus as appropriate. For additional guidance, visit the "[Choking Prevention](#)" section of the CSDE's [Food Safety for Child Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

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

Bite Size Module 7A: Grains Component Crediting Requirements (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/meal-patterns-cacfp-child-care-programs/related-resources#BiteSize>

Bite Size Module 7C: Grains Component Ounce Equivalents (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/meal-patterns-cacfp-child-care-programs/related-resources#BiteSize>

Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/cacfp/crediting/grain_calculation_cacfp_oz_eq.pdf

Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/cacfp/crediting/credit_cereals_cacfp.pdf

Crediting Documentation for the Child Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):

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

Crediting Whole Grains in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/cacfp/crediting/credit_whole_grains_cacfp.pdf

Exhibit A Grains Tool (USDA's Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs):

<https://foodbuyingguide.fns.usda.gov/ExhibitATool/Index>

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

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

Grain Ounce Equivalents Chart for the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/cacfp/crediting/grain_oz_eq_cacfp.pdf

Grains 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/grains>

How to Identify Creditable Grains for the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/cacfp/crediting/identify_creditable_grains_cacfp.pdf

How to Use the Grain Ounce Equivalents Chart for the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/cacfp/crediting/how_to_use_ounce_equivalents_chart_cacfp.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>

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>

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

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

USDA Memo CACFP 05-2025: Grain Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answers:

<https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/CACFP05-2025-grainrequirements.pdf>

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USDA Memo CACFP 16-2017: Grain-Based Desserts in the Child and Adult Care Food Program:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/grain-based-desserts-child-and-adult-care-food-program>

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>

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):

http://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/cacfp/crediting/using_product_formulation_statements_cacfp.pdf

What's in a Meal Module 8: Meal Pattern Documentation for Crediting Commercial Processed Products (CSDE's Training Program, What's in a Meal: Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs:

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

When Commercial Grain Products Require a Product Formulation Statement to Credit in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/cacfp/crediting/when_commercial_grain_products_require_pfs_cacfp.pdf

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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_enriched_grains_cacfp.pdf.

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To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted 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; or
2. fax: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. email: program.intake@usda.gov

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