Crediting Juices 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.

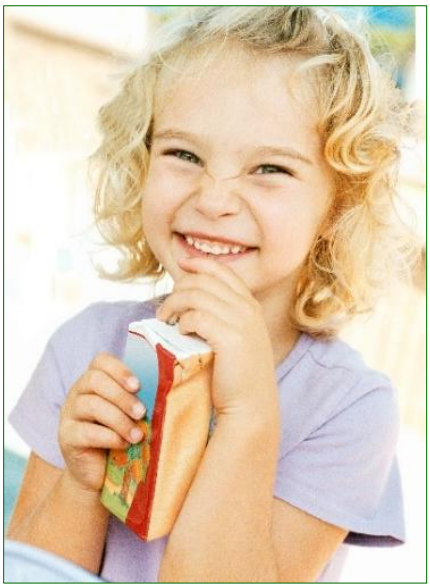
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Crediting Juices in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

Allowable Types of Juices



Juices served in CACFP meals and snacks must be full-strength (100 percent) fruit juices, vegetable juices, or a combination of fruit and vegetable juices. Fruit juices credit toward the fruits component. Vegetable juices credit toward the vegetables component.

Juices may be fresh, frozen, or made from concentrate. The name of the full-strength fruit juice on the label must include one of the terms below. Juice

- Full-strength juice
- 100 percent juice
- Reconstituted juice
- Juice from concentrate

Note: The statements "natural" and "organic" do not indicate that a juice is full strength.

Products that credit as 100 percent juice include:

- 100 percent juices including fresh, frozen, and made from concentrate (refer to "Crediting Juice Concentrates" in this document);
- frozen juice pops made from 100 percent juice (refer to "Crediting Frozen Juice Products" in this document); and
- pureed fruits and vegetables in fruit/vegetable smoothies (refer to "Crediting Pureed Fruits and Vegetables in Smoothies" in this document).

Juice products do not credit if they are less than full strength or contain juice concentrates that are not fully reconstituted. Except for juices in smoothies, juices cannot credit when used as an ingredient in another food or beverage (refer to "Crediting Pureed Fruits and Vegetables in Smoothies" in this document).

> The USDA recommends serving whole fruits (fresh, frozen, canned, and dried) more often than juices. Juices do not provide the same nutritional benefits as fruits and vegetables, which contain fiber, fewer calories, and more nutrients.

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Juice Ingredients

The ingredients in juices can vary among manufacturers and products. The Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) labeling regulations allow 100 percent juices to contain added ingredients and still be labeled "100% juice."

Some 100 percent juices contain added ingredients such as artificial flavors, artificial colors (e.g., red 40, blue 1, yellow 5 and 6, and titanium dioxide), preservatives (e.g., sodium potassium sorbate), flavor enhancers (e.g., ethyl maltol), and emulsifiers or thickeners (e.g., glycerol esters of wood rosin and xanthan gum). The CSDE encourages menu planners to read the product's ingredients statement and choose 100 percent juices without these added ingredients.

Crediting Juice Concentrates

Juice concentrates credit only when reconstituted with water to 100 percent full-strength juice and served in the form of juice. Juice made from concentrate is reconstituted with a volume of water that is several times the amount of juice concentrate. A typical reconstitution ratio might be three parts water to one part concentrate, but this ratio may vary for different juice products.

Commercial juice products made from concentrate will list "water" as the first ingredient followed by the type of juice concentrate, for example, "water, orange juice concentrate" and "filtered water, grape juice concentrate." Juice made from concentrate that is labeled "100 percent juice" credits when CACFP facilities follow the manufacturer's specific instructions for reconstituting.

Crediting Juice Blends

Juice blends must be a combination of 100 percent fruit juices, vegetable juices, or fruit and vegetable juices. Fruit and vegetable juice blends credit based on the first juice ingredient. If the first juice ingredient is fruit juice, the product credits toward the fruits component. If the first juice ingredient is vegetable juice, the product credits toward the vegetables component.

- **Example:** Ingredients: **Reconstituted vegetable juice blend** (water and concentrated juices of sweet potatoes, purple carrots, carrots), reconstituted fruit juices (water and concentrated juices of apples, white grapes, cranberries, blackberries), contains less than 2% of: natural flavoring, citric acid, lemon juice.

This product credits as the vegetables component because the first ingredient is a reconstituted vegetable juice blend.

Crediting Juices in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

Crediting Frozen 100 Percent Juice Products

Frozen 100 percent fruit juice products (such as frozen juice pops) credit toward the fruits component based on the fluid volume prior to freezing. CACFP facilities must request a product formulation statement (PFS) from the manufacturer to document this information. Frozen fruit juices count toward the juice limit (refer to "Juice limit" in this document).

Guidance for crediting documentation

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.

For guidance on the requirements for 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 and PFS forms is available in Bite Size Module 7: Introduction to Crediting Documentation 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.*

Storing crediting documentation

CACFP facilities must maintain all PFS forms 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 Juices in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

Crediting Apple Cider

Apple cider credits toward the fruits component if it is pasteurized 100 percent full-strength juice. Pasteurized juices have been heat-treated to kill harmful bacteria. Menu planners must check labels, as some brands of apple cider are not pasteurized. CACFP facilities cannot serve unpasteurized apple cider or any other type of unpasteurized juices. Apple cider counts toward the juice limit (refer to "Juice limit" in this document).

Crediting Coconut Water

Coconut water labeled as 100 percent juice credits toward the fruits component based on the volume served. Coconut water must meet the same requirements as juices and counts toward the juice limit (refer to "Juice limit" in this document).

Crediting Juice in Canned Fruits

Juice in canned fruit may count toward the fruits component and does not count toward the juice limit. For example, ½ cup of canned peaches in juice credits as ½ cup of the fruits component.

Water and syrup in canned fruit do not credit. For example, to credit canned peaches in water as ½ cup of the fruits component, the serving must contain ½ cup of peaches, not including the water.

Crediting Juices in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

Crediting Pureed Fruits and Vegetables in Smoothies

Pureed fruits and vegetables in smoothies credit only as juice. Crediting is based on the volume (cups) of pureed fruits and vegetables per serving. For example, a smoothie that contains ½ cup of pureed strawberries credits as ½ cup of fruit juice. Pureed fruits and vegetables in smoothies count toward the juice limit (refer to "Juice limit" in this document).

> Concentrated fruit purees and concentrated juices are added sugars. They do not credit as juice unless they are reconstituted to full-strength fruit puree or full-strength juice.

CACFP facilities must document the cups of pureed fruits and vegetables in the smoothie serving.

- Commercial products require a CN label (available only for smoothies that contain at least ½ ounce equivalent (oz eq) of the meats/meat alternates (MMA) component from yogurt) or PFS. For more information, visit the CSDE's Crediting Documentation for the Child Nutrition Programs webpage.
- Smoothies made from scratch require a recipe. The USDA recommends using standardized recipes because they ensure accurate meal component contributions and document that menus meet the meal pattern requirements.

The CSDE's resource, *Crediting Smoothies in the Child and Adult Care Food Program*, summarizes the requirements for crediting smoothies in reimbursable meals and snacks.



Crediting Juices in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

Juice Limit

Juices credit as either the vegetables component or the fruits component at only one meal or snack per day. The daily juice limit applies to all sources of 100 percent juices, including fruit and vegetable juices (fresh, frozen, and made from concentrate), frozen juice pops made from 100 percent juice, and pureed fruits and vegetables in fruit/vegetable smoothies.

> If a CACFP meal or snack includes any type of juice as the fruits component or vegetables component, juice cannot credit as the fruits component or vegetables component at any other meal or snack that same day.

The examples below illustrate how the juice limit applies to CACFP menus.

- Lunch cannot contain a smoothie and juice as the only servings of the fruits component and vegetables component. For example, the lunch menu cannot offer a strawberry smoothie as the fruits component and vegetable juice as the vegetables component because both credit as juice.
- If the breakfast menu includes juice as the fruits component, juice cannot credit as the fruits component at lunch or snack.
- If the lunch menu includes a frozen 100 percent fruit juice pop as the fruits component, juice cannot credit as either the fruits or vegetables component at breakfast or snack.
- If the snack menu includes a mango smoothie as the fruits component, juice cannot credit as either the fruits or vegetables component at breakfast or snack.

Juices at snack

The CACFP snack meal pattern requires any two of the five meal components (milk, meats/meat alternates, vegetables, fruits, and grains). A reimbursable snack could include one serving from the vegetables component and one serving from the fruits component. For example, a reimbursable snack could include a serving of vegetable and a serving of fruit, a serving of vegetable and a serving of fruit juice, or a serving of fruit and a serving of vegetable juice.

Reimbursable snacks cannot include a serving of vegetable juice (including pureed vegetables in smoothies) and a serving of fruit juice (including pureed fruits in smoothies and frozen juice pops) as the only two meal components. For example, a snack that contains a vegetable smoothie and apple juice is not reimbursable because both foods credit as juice.

In addition, juice cannot be served when milk is the only other meal component at snack. For example, a snack that contains milk and a mango-peach smoothie is not reimbursable.

Offering juice as an extra menu item

Menu planners may choose to offer juice as an extra menu item that does not credit toward the CACFP meal patterns. However, the USDA encourages CACFP facilities to limit juice in CACFP menus to ensure that meals and snacks meet participants' nutritional needs.

USDA's CACFP Best Practices

Juices do not provide the same nutritional benefits as whole fruits and vegetables. The USDA's CACFP best practices recommend serving a variety of fruits and choosing whole fruits (fresh, canned, dried, or frozen) more often than juices; and serving a fruit or vegetable as at least one of the two required meal components at snack.

For guidance on serving and crediting fruits and vegetables in the CACFP, visit the "Fruits" section and "Vegetables" section of the CSDE's Crediting Foods in the Child and Adult Care Food Program webpage.

Crediting Juices 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

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

Bite Size Module 12: Vegetables Component (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#module12

Bite Size Module 13: Fruits Component (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#module13

CACFP Best Practices (USDA webpage):
https://www.fna.usda.gov/cacfp/optional-best-practices-further-improve-nutrition-cacfp

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

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

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

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

Fruits 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/fruits

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

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

USDA Memo CACFP 09-2017: Vegetable and Fruit Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Questions and Answers:
https://www.fna.usda.gov/cacfp/vegetable-fruit-requirements-qas

USDA Memo SP 40-2019, CACFP 17-2019, and SFSP 17-2019: Smoothies Offered in Child Nutrition Programs:
https://www.fna.usda.gov/cn/smoothies-offered

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

Crediting Juices in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

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

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_ juices_cacfp.pdf.

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Crediting Juices in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

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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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