

Crediting Legumes 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 and crediting foods for children, visit the Connecticut State Department of Education’s (CSDE) [Meal Patterns for CACFP Child Care Programs](#) and [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpages. For information on the CACFP meal patterns and crediting foods for adult participants, visit the CSDE’s [Meal Patterns for CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) and [Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) webpages.



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Crediting Legumes in the CACFP

Overview of Crediting Requirements

Legumes include cooked dry beans and peas, such as black beans, black-eyed peas (mature, dry), edamame (soybeans), garbanzo beans (chickpeas), kidney beans, lentils, navy beans, soybeans, split peas, and white beans. A $\frac{1}{4}$ -cup serving of legumes credits as 1 ounce of the MMA component or $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of the vegetables component.

- Legumes may credit as either meat/meat alternates (MMA) component or the vegetables component, but one serving cannot credit as both components in the same meal or snack.
- Legumes 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 of legumes, one serving may credit as the vegetables component and one serving may credit as the MMA component. For example, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of garbanzo beans in a salad may credit as $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of the vegetables component and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of kidney beans in chili may credit as 2 ounces of the MMA component.

Menu planners must determine in advance how to credit legumes in a meal.

Crediting Legumes as Vegetables

Foods in the vegetables component credit based on volume (cups). For example, a $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup serving of legumes credits as $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the vegetables component. The minimum creditable amount for the vegetables component is $\frac{1}{8}$ cup (2 tablespoons).

The meal pattern serving refers to the amount of legumes without added ingredients. For example, to credit as $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the vegetables component, a serving of baked beans must contain $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of beans, excluding added ingredients such as sauce and pork fat.

Menu planners must round down the amount of legumes to the nearest $\frac{1}{8}$ cup (2 tablespoons). For example, a recipe with $2\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoons of kidney beans per serving credits as $\frac{1}{8}$ cup of the vegetables component. If the menu item contains less than the full serving of the vegetables component, the meal must include additional vegetables to provide the full serving for each age group.



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Crediting Legumes as MMA

Legumes credit as the MMA component based on volume. A $\frac{1}{4}$ -cup serving of legumes credits as 1 ounce of the MMA component. The minimum creditable amount for the MMA component is $\frac{1}{4}$ ounce, which equals 1 tablespoon.

Menu planners must round down the amount of legumes to the nearest $\frac{1}{4}$ ounce. For example, a recipe that contains $2\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoons (0.625 ounce of MMA) of kidney beans per serving rounds down to 0.5 ounce of the MMA component. Table 1 shows the CACFP meal pattern contribution for different serving sizes of legumes.

Table 1. Crediting legumes as MMA component	
Serving size (volume)	Meal pattern contribution
8 tablespoons ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup)	2 ounces
7 tablespoons	$1\frac{3}{4}$ ounces
6 tablespoons ($\frac{3}{8}$ cup)	$1\frac{1}{2}$ ounces
5 tablespoons	$1\frac{1}{4}$ ounces
4 tablespoons ($\frac{1}{4}$ cup)	1 ounce
3 tablespoons	$\frac{3}{4}$ ounce
2 tablespoons ($\frac{1}{8}$ cup)	$\frac{1}{2}$ ounce
1 tablespoon ($\frac{1}{16}$ cup)	$\frac{1}{4}$ ounce (minimum creditable amount)

Crediting Hummus

Hummus may credit as either the MMA component or the vegetables component, but one serving cannot credit as both components in the same meal or snack. To credit as the MMA component, the serving must contain at least $\frac{1}{4}$ ounce of MMA from the chickpeas/garbanzo beans (legumes) and tahini (sesame paste) combined.

- A $\frac{1}{4}$ -cup serving of chickpeas/garbanzo beans credits as 1 ounce of the MMA component. The minimum creditable amount is 1 tablespoon ($\frac{1}{4}$ oz eq).
- Tahini credits the same as nut/seed butters. Two tablespoons of tahini credit as 1 ounce of the MMA component. The minimum creditable amount is $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoon ($\frac{1}{4}$ ounce).

Hummus credits as the vegetables component based on the amount of chickpeas per serving. For example, hummus that contains $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of chickpeas per serving credits as $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of the vegetables component. The minimum creditable amount of legumes is $\frac{1}{8}$ cup.

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CACFP facilities must maintain crediting documentation for hummus that indicates the amount of legumes and tahini per serving. Commercial products require a Child Nutrition (CN) label or manufacturer's product formulation statement (PFS) (refer to "[Crediting Documentation for Commercial Legume Products](#)" in this document). Hummus made from scratch requires a recipe (refer to "[Crediting Legumes in Recipes](#)" in this document).

Roasted or Dried Legumes

Roasted or dried legumes, 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 components in the same meal or snack.

- **MMA component:** Roasted or dried legumes credit as the MMA component based on weight (ounces). A 1-ounce serving of roasted or dried legumes credits as 1 ounce of the MMA component. At lunch and supper, roasted or dried legumes cannot credit for more than half of the MMA component. They must be combined with another food from the MMA component to meet the full requirement.
- **Vegetables component:** Roasted or dried legumes credit as the legumes subgroup of the vegetables component based on volume (cups). For example, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of roasted or dried legumes credits as $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of the vegetables component (legumes subgroup).

The USDA recommends using discretion when offering snack-type legumes (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 the CACFP, they may be better suited for meals served off site, such as bagged lunches for field trips. When offering snack-type legumes as either the MMA component or vegetables component, make sure that CACFP menus clearly identify how they contribute to the reimbursable meal or snack.

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 legumes in CACFP menus. For additional guidance, visit the "[Choking Prevention](#)" section of the CSDE's [Food Safety for Child Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

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Crediting Documentation for Commercial Legume Products

Commercial processed products that contain legumes (such as black bean burritos and vegetarian chili) require documentation stating the amount of the MMA component per serving. Acceptable documentation includes 1) the original CN label from the product carton, or a photocopy or photograph of the CN label shown attached to the original product carton; or 2) a product PFS signed by an official of the manufacturer stating the amount of the MMA component contained in one serving of the product.

For example, to credit a black bean burrito as 1 ounce of the MMA component, the product's CN label or PFS must state that one serving contains $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of black beans. To credit vegetarian chili as $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of vegetable component, the product's CN label or PFS must state that one serving contains $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of legumes.

Commercial processed legume products without a CN label or PFS cannot credit in the CACFP meal patterns.

CACFP sponsors must obtain a PFS for all commercial processed products that are not CN labeled. Crediting documentation must be maintained on file. The CSDE will review this information during the Administrative Review of the CACFP.

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](#). For guidance on how to review a PFS, refer to the USDA's [Tips for Evaluating a Manufacturer's Product Formulation Statement](#) and [Reviewer's Checklist for Evaluating Manufacturer Product Formulation Statements for Meat/Meat Alternates](#). For additional guidance on documentation for commercial products, visit the "[Crediting Commercial Processed Products in CACFP Child Care Programs](#)" or "[Crediting Commercial Processed Products in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#)" sections of the CSDE's CACFP webpages.

Crediting Legumes in Recipes

Legume-based foods made from scratch (such as lentil soup, bean burritos, hummus, and chili) credit based on volume (cups) of legumes per recipe serving. The crediting information depends on whether the menu planner credits the legumes as the vegetables component or the MMA component. To determine the amount of legumes per serving, the menu planner must determine the total volume (cups) of legumes in the recipe.

- **Vegetables component:** The minimum creditable amount of the vegetable component is $\frac{1}{8}$ cup. To determine the number of $\frac{1}{8}$ -cup servings of legumes in one serving of the

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recipe, divide the cups of legumes in one serving of the recipe by 0.125, then round down to the nearest $\frac{1}{8}$ cup. Table 2 shows an example of how to calculate the vegetables contribution of legumes in a recipe.

- **MMA component:** The minimum creditable amount of the MMA component is $\frac{1}{4}$ ounce (1 tablespoon). A $\frac{1}{4}$ -cup serving of legumes provides 1 ounce of the MMA component. To determine the ounces of the MMA component in one serving of the recipe, divide the cups of legumes in one serving of the recipe by 0.25, then round down to the nearest $\frac{1}{4}$ ounce. Table 3 shows an example of how to calculate the MMA contribution of legumes in a recipe.

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 information on standardized recipes, visit the "[Crediting Foods Made from Scratch in CACFP Child Care Programs](#)" or "[Crediting Foods Made from Scratch in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#)" sections of the CSDE's CACFP webpages.

The CSDE encourages CACFP facilities to use standardized recipes to ensure accurate crediting information. For information on standardized recipes, refer to section 2 of the CSDE's [Guide to Meal Pattern Requirements for CACFP Child Care Programs](#) or [Guide to Meal Pattern Requirements for CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#). Additional guidance is available in the "Standardized Recipes" section of the CSDE's webpages, [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) and [Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#).



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Table 2. Determining the vegetables contribution of legumes in a recipe

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

1. Determine the total cups of legumes 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.

A **20** cups

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

2. Number of servings in the recipe:

B **50** servings

3. Determine the cups of legumes per serving: Divide the total cups of legumes (A) by the number of servings in the recipe (B).

C **0.4** cups per serving *

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

* **Note:** If the decimal amount for the cups of legumes per serving (C) converts to an **even multiple of 1/8 cup**, such as 0.5 (1/2) cup, 0.25 (1/4) cup, or 0.125 (1/8) cup, this is the final meal pattern contribution for the vegetables component. **Do not complete steps 4 and 5.**

4. Determine the number of 1/8-cup servings (minimum creditable amount) of legumes in one serving of the recipe: Divide the cups of legumes per serving (C) by 0.125.

D **3.2** servings of 1/8 cup

0.4 cup of chickpeas per serving divided by 0.125
= 3.2 servings of 1/8 cup.

5. Round down the number in D to nearest 1/8-cup serving.

E **3** servings of 1/8 cup

3.2 servings round down to 3 servings of 1/8 cup (or 3/8 cup). One serving of the recipe contains 3/8 cup of the vegetables component.

Meal pattern contribution per serving: 3/8 cup of the vegetables component

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Table 3. Determining the MMA contribution of legumes

A recipe provides 50 servings and contains 1 gallon and 1 quart of chickpeas. How many ounces of the MMA component does the recipe provide per serving?

1. Determine the total cups of legumes 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.

A **20** cups

2. Number of servings in the recipe:

B **50** servings

3. Determine the cups of legumes per serving: Divide the total cups of legumes (A) by the number of servings in the recipe (B).

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

C **0.4** cups per serving

4. Determine the ounces of MMA per serving: Divide the cups of legumes per serving (C) by 0.25 (1 ounce = $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (0.25) of legumes).

0.4 cups of chickpeas per serving divided
by 0.25 = 1.6 ounces of MMA.

D **1.6** ounces per serving

5. Round down the number in D to the nearest $\frac{1}{4}$ ounce.

1.6 ounces rounds down to 1.5 ounces of MMA.
One serving of the recipe contains 1.5 ounces of the MMA component.

E **1.5** ounces per serving

Meal pattern contribution per serving: $1\frac{1}{2}$ ounces of the MMA component

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Pasta Products Made of Legume Flours

Pasta products made of 100 percent legume 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 components in the same meal or snack.

- **MMA component:** Crediting pasta products that contain legume flours as the MMA component is the same as crediting legumes. A ¼-cup serving of cooked pasta made of 100 percent legume flours credits as 1 ounce of the MMA component.



Legume 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 children. 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 100 percent vegetable flours may credit as the vegetables component. For example, ½ cup of pasta made of 100 percent red lentil flour credits as ½ cup of the vegetables component (legumes subgroup).

Alternatively, manufacturers and CACFP sponsors may credit legume flour pasta using the bean flour yield information on page C-1 of [Appendix C](#) of the FBG, or with appropriate documentation on the manufacturer's PFS. For more information on PFS forms, refer to "[Crediting Documentation for Commercial Legume Products](#)" in this document.

Identifying vegetable flour pastas on the menu

Nutrition education helps participants understand what foods are in their meals and snacks. As appropriate to participants' ages, CACFP facilities should use signs or other nutrition education to indicate that pasta made of vegetable flour is a "vegetable" and not a grain component of the meal. For example, a 100 percent chickpea flour pasta could be labeled as "chickpea pasta" on the menu with a symbol showing it to be part of the vegetables component of the meal.

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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

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

Bite Size Module 2: Meal Pattern Documentation(CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Patterns-CACFP-Child-Care-Programs/Related-Resources#BiteSize>

Bite Size Module 4: Meat/Meat Alternates Component (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Patterns-CACFP-Child-Care-Programs/Related-Resources#BiteSize>

Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/food-buying-guide-for-child-nutrition-programs>

Guide to Meeting the Meal Pattern Requirements for CACFP Child Care Programs (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/MealPattern/Guide_CACFP_Meal_Patterns.pdf

Guide to Meeting the Meal Pattern Requirements for CACFP Adult Day Care Centers (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/MealPattern/GuideCACFP_Meal_Patterns_Adults.pdf

Meat/Meat Alternates Component for CACFP Adult Day Care Centers (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-CACFP-Adult-Day-Care-Centers/Documents#MMA>

Meat/Meat Alternates Component for CACFP Child Care Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-CACFP-Child-Care-Programs/Documents#MMA>

Product Formulation Statement (Product Analysis) for Meat/Meat Alternate (M/MA) Products in Child Nutrition Programs (USDA):

https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource-files/PFS_Meats-Meat_Alternates_Fillable_508.pdf

Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Vegetables and Fruits in the Child and Adult Care Food Program, Summer Food Service Program, and NSLP Afterschool Snacks (USDA):

https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/resource-files/PFS_Document_Total_Veg_Fruits.pdf

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Resources for the CACFP Meal Patterns (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/MealPattern/Resources_CACFP_Meal_Patterns.pdf

Reviewer's Checklist for Evaluating Manufacturer Product Formulation Statements for Meat/Meat Alternates (USDA):

https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/reviewer_checklist.pdf

Standardized Recipe Form for the CACFP (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/Crediting/Standardized_Recipe_Form_CACFP.docx

Standardized Recipes in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-CACFP-Adult-Day-Care-Centers/Documents#StandardizedRecipes>

Standardized Recipes in CACFP Child Care Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-CACFP-Child-Care-Programs/Documents#StandardizedRecipes>

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

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

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.fns.usda.gov/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):

http://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 for CACFP Adult Day Care Centers (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-CACFP-Adult-Day-Care-Centers/Documents#Vegetables>

Vegetables Component for CACFP Child Care Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-CACFP-Child-Care-Programs/Documents#Vegetables>

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For more information, visit the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) and [Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) webpages 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_Legumes_CACFP.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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