

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



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Meal Pattern Contribution of Commercial Soups

Commercial vegetable soups credit based on the yields in the USDA’s *Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs* (FBG). One cup of an allowable commercial vegetable soup credits as ¼ cup of the vegetables component (“additional” vegetables). One cup of a commercial bean, pea, or lentil soup credits as ½ cup of the vegetables component (beans, peas, and lentils subgroup).

Effective July 1, 2024, the USDA final rule, *Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, changes the name of the previous “legumes (beans and peas)” vegetable subgroup to the “beans, peas, and lentils” vegetable subgroup.

Table 1 shows the types of commercial vegetable soups that credit as the vegetables component based on the FBG. The 1-cup serving refers to the amount of the ready-to-eat cooked soup, e.g., heated canned or frozen ready-to-serve soup, reconstituted dried soup, and reconstituted condensed soup.

Table 1. Allowable commercial vegetable soups

Vegetable soups 1 cup = ¼ cup of additional vegetables	Bean, pea, and lentil soups 1 cup = ½ cup of beans, peas, and lentils subgroup
Minestrone soup	Bean soup, e.g., black bean, navy bean, and mixed bean
Tomato soup	Pea soup, e.g., split pea
Tomato soup with other basic components such as rice	Lentil soup
Vegetable soup (contains only vegetables)	
Vegetable soup with other basic components such as meat or poultry	

To credit a commercial soup not listed in table 1, CACFP facilities must obtain a product formulation statement (PFS) from the manufacturer stating the specific contribution of each vegetable subgroup per serving. The PFS must provide the information specified in the USDA’s *Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Vegetables and Fruits in the Child and Adult Care Food Program, Summer Food Service Program, and NSLP Afterschool Snacks*.

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For 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 [Tips for Evaluating a Manufacturer's Product Formulation Statement](#). Additional guidance is available in the "Crediting Commercial Processed Products" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage and [Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) webpage.

Serving size considerations for commercial soups

The served portion of soup must be sufficient to provide the amount of vegetables being credited in CACFP menus. Menu planners should consider the appropriateness of the serving size for different ages and meals, and the size of the container used to serve the soup.

- **Meal pattern contribution:** The large serving required for a commercial soup to provide the full meal pattern serving of vegetables might be unreasonable. For example, the lunch and supper meal pattern for ages 3-5 requires $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the vegetables component. This equals 2 cups of a commercial vegetable soup or 1 cup of a commercial bean, pea, or lentil soup.



When the serving of soup required to provide the full vegetables component is too large, the CSDE recommends offering a smaller serving of soup and supplementing it with another food from the vegetables component. For example, a lunch for ages 3-5 and 6-8 could offer $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of tomato soup (credits as $\frac{1}{8}$ cup of vegetables) and $\frac{3}{8}$ cup of broccoli to meet the required $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup serving of the vegetables component.

- **Container size:** A 1-cup container (8 fluid ounces) does not provide 1 cup of soup unless it is filled to the top, which is impractical. To avoid spilling and ensure that the served portion meets the meal pattern requirements, the container should be larger than the planned serving size of soup. For example, CACFP facilities could use a 10-fluid ounce bowl to hold 8 fluid ounces (1 cup) of soup and a 6-fluid ounce bowl to hold 4 fluid ounces ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup) of soup.

Table 2 indicates the vegetables component contribution of different serving sizes of commercial soups.

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Table 2. Crediting commercial vegetable soups

Vegetable soup serving	Bean/pea/lentil soup serving	Credits as	Meets the meal pattern requirements for
½ cup	¼ cup	⅛ cup of vegetables	Lunch/supper for ages 1-2
1 cup	½ cup	¼ cup of vegetables	Breakfast for ages 1-2 Lunch/supper for ages 3-5
2 cups	1 cup	½ cup of vegetables	Breakfast for ages 3-5 Breakfast for ages 6-12 Breakfast for ages 13-18 ¹ Breakfast for adults Lunch/supper for ages 6-12 Lunch/supper for ages 13-18 ¹ Lunch/supper for adults Snack for ages 1-2 Snack for ages 3-5 Snack for adults
3 cups	1½ cups	¾ cup of vegetables	Snack for ages 6-12 Snack for ages 13-18 ¹

¹ This age group applies only to at-risk afterschool programs and emergency shelters

Crediting commercial soups using manufacturer documentation

To credit an allowable commercial vegetable soup differently from the FBG yields, CACFP facilities must obtain a PFS from the manufacturer stating the specific contribution of each vegetable subgroup in the serving. The PFS must provide the information specified in the USDA's [*Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Vegetables and Fruits in the Child and Adult Care Food Program, Summer Food Service Program, and NSLP Afterschool Snacks*](#).

Noncreditable Commercial Soups

Commercial beef barley soup, chicken or turkey noodle soup, chicken or turkey rice soup, and cream vegetable soups (such as cream of broccoli and cream of mushroom) do not credit in the CACFP meal patterns.

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Crediting Soups Made from Scratch

Soups made from scratch credit based on the amount of each meal component in one serving of the recipe. Examples of meal components in soups include vegetables, grains, and meats/meat alternates (MMA). CACFP facilities must determine crediting information based on the FBG yields for each soup ingredient.

To credit toward the CACFP meal patterns, one serving of the recipe must contain at least the minimum creditable amount of a meal component. The minimum creditable amounts are $\frac{1}{8}$ cup of vegetables, $\frac{1}{8}$ cup of fruits, $\frac{1}{4}$ ounce equivalent (oz eq) of grains, and $\frac{1}{4}$ oz eq of MMA. If the meal component in the serving of soup is less than the full serving, the menu must include additional foods from that meal component to meet the full serving for each age group.

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 [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage and [Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) webpage.

Crediting Vegetable Soups in CACFP Meals and Snacks

Soups that meet the requirements for the vegetables component may be served at any CACFP meal or snack. The CACFP meal pattern requirements for the vegetables component are summarized below.

- **Lunch and supper:** The CACFP lunch and supper meal pattern requires a serving of the vegetables component. The USDA's [CACFP best practices](#) recommend that CACFP meals contain at least one weekly serving of each of the five vegetable subgroups (refer to the CSDE's resource, [Vegetable Subgroups in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#)).
- **Breakfast:** The CACFP breakfast meal patterns require a serving of vegetables, fruits, or both. Vegetables may be served at any breakfast.
- **Snack:** The vegetables component may be served as one of the two required components in the CACFP snack meal pattern. The [CACFP best practices](#) recommend serving a vegetable or fruit for at least one of the two required snack components.



Crediting Soups 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 2: Meal Pattern Documentation (CSDE):

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

Crediting Commercial Processed Products in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/crediting-foods-in-cacfp-adult-day-care-centers/documents#CommercialProducts>

Crediting Commercial Processed Products in CACFP Child Care Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/crediting-foods-in-cacfp-child-care-programs/documents#CommercialProducts>

Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers (CSDE webpage):

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

Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/crediting-foods-in-cacfp-child-care-programs>

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

Meats/Meat Alternates Component (“How To” section of CSDE’s Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/crediting-foods-in-cacfp-adult-day-care-centers/how-to#MMA>

Meats/Meat Alternates Component (“How To” section of CSDE’s Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/crediting-foods-in-cacfp-child-care-programs/how-to#MMA>

Resources for the CACFP Meal Patterns (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/cacfp/mealpattern/resources_cacfp_meal_patterns.pdf

Crediting Soups in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

Standardized Recipe Form for the CACFP (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/cacfp/crediting/standardized_recipe_form_cacfp.docx

Standardized Recipes (“Documents/Forms” section of CSDE’s Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/crediting-foods-in-cacfp-adult-day-care-centers/documents/#StandardizedRecipes>

Standardized Recipes (“Documents/Forms” section of CSDE’s Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs 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/manufacturerPFStipsheet.pdf>

USDA’s Production Formulation Statements (USDA’s Food Manufacturers/Industry webpage):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cnlabeling/food-manufacturersindustry>

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 (“How To” section of CSDE’s Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/crediting-foods-in-cacfp-adult-day-care-centers/how-to#Vegetables>

Vegetables Component (“How To” section of CSDE’s Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/crediting-foods-in-cacfp-child-care-programs/how-to#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_soups_cacfp.pdf.

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Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
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3. email: program.intake@usda.gov

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