Crediting Soups 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 Soups in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

Crediting Commercial Soups

Commercial vegetable soups credit based on the yields in the USDA's *Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs* (FBG). The FBG indicates that 1 cup of an allowable commercial vegetable soup credits as ¼ cup of the vegetables component ("additional" vegetables) and 1 cup of a commercial bean, pea, or lentil soup credits as ½ cup of the vegetables component (beans, peas, and lentils subgroup). 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.

To credit an allowable commercial vegetable soup differently from the FBG yields, CACFP facilities must obtain a product formulation statement (PFS) from the manufacturer that states the specific contribution of each vegetable subgroup in the serving. For more information, refer to "Crediting commercial soups not listed in FBG" in this document)

Allowable commercial vegetable soups

1 cup = ¼ cup of vegetables

- Minestrone soup
- Tomato soup
- Tomato soup with other basic components such as rice
- Vegetable soup (contains only vegetables)
- Vegetable soup with other basic components such as meat or poultry

Allowable commercial bean, pea, and lentil soups

1 cup = ½ cup of vegetables

- Bean soup, e.g., black bean, navy bean, and mixed bean
- Pea soup, e.g., split pea
- Lentil soup



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Serving Size Considerations for Commercial Vegetable Soups

The served portion of a commercial vegetable soup must be sufficient to provide the vegetable subgroups being credited. Menu planners should consider the appropriateness of the serving size for different grade groups, and the size of the container used to serve the soup.

Meal pattern contribution

The large serving needed for a commercial vegetable soup to provide the full serving of vegetables might be unreasonable, especially for younger children. The examples below show the meal pattern contribution of different serving sizes of commercial soups.

- The lunch and supper meal patterns for ages 6-12 and adults and the snack meal pattern for ages 3-5 require ½ 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.

- The snack meal pattern for ages 6-12 and ages 13-18 in at-risk afterschool programs and emergency shelters requires ¾ cup of the vegetables component. This equals 3 cups of a commercial vegetable soup or 1½ cups of a commercial bean, pea, or lentil soup.

When the serving of commercial soup needed 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 could offer ½ cup of tomato soup (credits as ⅛ cup of vegetables) and ⅜ cup of broccoli to meet the required ½-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 prevent spills and ensure the served portion meets the meal pattern requirements, the container should be larger than the planned serving 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 (½ cup) of soup.

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Crediting Soups Made from Scratch

Soups made from scratch credit based on the quantity of each meal component in one serving of the standardized recipe. CACFP facilities must determine the crediting information for each creditable soup ingredient based on the yields listed in the FBG (refer to "Documentation for soups made from scratch" in this document).

To credit toward the meal patterns, one serving of the standardized recipe must contain at least the minimum creditable amount of a meal component (⅛ cup for vegetables and fruits and ¼ oz eq for grains and MMA). If the meal component in the soup is less than the full meal pattern serving, the menu must include additional foods from that meal component to provide the full serving for each grade group.

Required Crediting Documentation for Soups

CACFP facilities must maintain appropriate documentation that states the specific contribution of each meal component in the serving, such as vegetables, grains, and meats/meat alternates (MMA). For example, to credit minestrone soup as ½ cup of the vegetables component, the SFA's documentation must indicate that the serving contains ½ cup of vegetables. Documentation must be based on the food yields and crediting information in the FBG.

Documentation for commercial soups not in the FBG

Commercial soups not listed in the FBG require a Child Nutrition (CN) label or product formulation statement (PFS) that indicates the amount of each meal component per serving. For information on CN labels and PFS forms, refer to the CSDE's resources, *Using Child Nutrition (CN) Labels in the Child and Adult Care Food Program* and *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.

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

Crediting Soups in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

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 soups made from scratch

Soups made from scratch require a recipe that indicates the contribution of each meal component in the serving. 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 Vegetable Soups in CACFP Meals and Snacks

Soups that meet the requirements for the vegetables component may be served at any 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 (dark green, red/orange, beans, peas, and lentils, starchy, and other). For more information, refer to the CSDE's resource, *Vegetable Subgroups in the Child and Adult Care Food Program*.

Breakfast

The breakfast meal patterns require a serving of vegetables, fruits, or both. Vegetables may be served at any breakfast.

Snack

The snack meal patterns require any two of the five meal components (MMA, grains, vegetables, fruits, fruits, and milk). Vegetables (including vegetable soups) may be served as one of the two required meal components at any snack. 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

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

Bite Size Module 6: Menus, Production Records, and Standardized Recipes (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#module6

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/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

Crediting Soups in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

Crediting Beans, Peas, and Lentils in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE):
https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/cacfp/crediting/credit_beans_peas_lentils_cacfp.pdf

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

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

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

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

Crediting Soups 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

What's in a Meal: Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs (CSDE Training Program):
https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/meal-pattern-training-materials

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_soups_cacfp.pdf.

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Crediting Soups in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

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