

Grain Ounce Equivalents for the Child and Adult Care Food Program

July 1, 2024, through October 30, 2025

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.

Grain ounce equivalents do not apply to the CACFP infant meal patterns for birth through 11 months.



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Overview of CACFP Ounce Equivalents (Oz Eq) Chart

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) [Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs](#), summarizes the required quantities for nine groups (A-I) of grain foods. These quantities are not the same for all Child Nutrition Programs because the meal patterns are different. The chart on pages 6-7 of this document lists the Exhibit A oz eq that apply to creditable grain foods in the CACFP meal patterns. Groups F and G (grain-based desserts) are not included because grain-based desserts do not credit in CACFP meals and snacks.

- Groups A-E include baked goods, e.g., crackers, breads, rolls, taco shells, muffins, waffles, and pancakes.
- Group H includes cereal grains like pasta, cooked breakfast cereals, and other cereal grains, e.g., amaranth, barley, buckwheat, cornmeal, corn grits, farina, kasha, millet, oats, quinoa, wheat berries, and rolled wheat.
- Group I includes ready-to eat (RTE) cold breakfast cereals.

The amount of a creditable 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, a roll (group B) must weigh 28 grams or 1 ounce and a blueberry muffin (group D) must weigh 55 grams or 2 ounces. The minimum amount that credits toward the grains component is $\frac{1}{4}$ oz eq.



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Creditable Grain Foods

To credit as the grains component, commercial grain products and foods made from scratch must be made with creditable grains. Creditable grains include whole grains, enriched grains, bran (such as oat bran, wheat bran, corn bran, rice bran, and rye bran), and germ (such as wheat germ). Bran and germ credit the same as enriched grains.

- Creditable foods include commercial grain products and foods made from scratch that are whole-grain rich (WGR) or enriched. For guidance on the grain crediting requirements and how to identify WGR and enriched grains, refer to CSDE's resources, [How to Identify Creditable Grains in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#), [Crediting Whole Grains in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#), and [Crediting Enriched Grains in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#).
- Creditable cooked and ready-to-eat (RTE) breakfast cereals include WGR, enriched, and fortified cereals. For additional guidance, refer to the CSDE's [Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#).

Effective October 1, 2025, the USDA final rule, [Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#), changes the product-based limit for breakfast cereals from total sugars to added sugars. Breakfast cereals cannot exceed 6 grams of added sugars per dry ounce. With CSDE approval, CACFP facilities may choose to implement the added sugars limit prior to October 1, 2025.

Additional resources on the grains component of the CACFP meal patterns are available in the "Grains Component" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) and [Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) webpages.

Whole Grain-rich (WGR) Requirement

At least one serving of grains per day must be WGR between all meals and ASP snacks served to participants. The USDA recommends at least two servings of WGR grains per day. WGR foods for the CACFP meal patterns include 100 percent whole grains and foods that contain a blend of whole (at least 50 percent) and enriched grains. For guidance on identifying WGR foods for the CACFP meal patterns, refer to the CSDE's [Guide to Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#).

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Grain-based Desserts

Grain-based desserts do not credit in the CACFP meal patterns. Examples include breakfast bars, brownies, cakes (including cupcakes and coffee cakes), cereal bars, cinnamon rolls, cinnamon streusel quick breads, cookies (all kinds, including vanilla wafers), doughnuts, gingerbread, granola bars, ice cream cones, marshmallow cereal treats, pastries (e.g., cinnamon buns, Danish, eclairs, sweet buns, sweet rolls, and toaster pastries) piecrusts in sweet pies (e.g., apple, coconut, blueberry, and pecan), sweet biscotti (such as those made with fruits, chocolate, or icing) sweet bread pudding, sweet croissants (e.g., chocolate filled), sweet scones (e.g., blueberry, raisin, and orange cranberry), and rice pudding. For more information, visit the USDA's [Grain-based Desserts in the CACFP](#) webpage.

Using the CACFP Grain Oz Eq Chart

The oz eq chart in this document (refer to pages 5-6) indicates the required weight (groups A-E) or volume (groups H and I) for each group of grain products to credit as 1 oz eq of the grains component in the CACFP meal patterns. This chart indicates the required quantities for $\frac{3}{4}$ oz eq, $\frac{1}{2}$ oz eq, and $\frac{1}{4}$ oz eq (the minimum creditable amount).

CACFP facilities must know the grain item's serving weight (groups A-G) or volume (groups H and I) to use this chart. Oz eq are calculated by dividing the *grain item's serving weight/volume* by the *required weight/volume for 1 oz eq* of the applicable grain group.

- **Commercial products:** The serving weight/volume for commercial products is listed on the Nutrition Facts label or product formulation statement (PFS).
- **Foods made from scratch:** The serving weight/volume for foods made from scratch is determined from the SFA's standardized recipe. If the standardized recipe does not provide this information, SFAs must either determine the average serving weight/volume by weighing or measuring several portions (refer to the CSDE's [Yield Study Data Form for Child Nutrition Programs](#)) or use the creditable grains method for determining oz eq (refer to the CSDE's resource, [Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#)).

The steps for using the oz eq chart are indicated in the CSDE's resource, [How to Use the Grain Ounce Equivalents Chart for the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#). For detailed guidance on both methods for determining the oz eq of commercial grain products and standardized recipes, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#).

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When a Product Formulation Statement (PFS) is Required

The oz eq chart can only be used for creditable grain foods. A manufacturer's PFS is required when a commercial product's ingredients statement and packaging do not provide sufficient information to determine if it meets the crediting criteria. For guidance on when a PFS is required and what it must include, refer to the CSDE's resources, [When Commercial Grain Products Require a Product Formulation Statement to Credit in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#) and [Using Product Formulation Statements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#).

For more information on oz eq, visit to the "Ounce Equivalents" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage or [Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) webpage.

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CACFP Grain Oz Eq Chart

This chart lists the Exhibit A oz eq (groups A-E and H-I) that apply to creditable grain foods in the CACFP meal patterns. Groups F and G (grain-based desserts) are not included because grain-based desserts do not credit in CACFP meals and snacks.

Group A	Group A Servings
Bread-type coating Breadsticks, hard Chow Mein noodles Crackers, savory, e.g., saltines and snack crackers Croutons Pretzels, hard Stuffing, dry (weights apply to bread in stuffing)	1 oz eq = 22 grams or 0.8 ounce $\frac{3}{4}$ oz eq = 17 grams or 0.6 ounce $\frac{1}{2}$ oz eq = 11 grams or 0.4 ounce $\frac{1}{4}$ oz eq = 6 grams or 0.2 ounce
Group B	Group B Servings
Bagels Batter-type coating Biscuits Breads, e.g., white, wheat, whole wheat, French, Italian Buns, hamburger and hot dog Crackers, sweet, e.g., graham crackers and animal crackers, all shapes ¹ Egg roll skins English muffins Pita bread Pizza crust Pretzels, soft Rolls Taco shells Tortilla chips Tortillas	1 oz eq = 28 grams or 1 ounce $\frac{3}{4}$ oz eq = 21 grams or 0.75 ounce $\frac{1}{2}$ oz eq = 14 grams or 0.5 ounce $\frac{1}{4}$ oz eq = 7 grams or 0.25 ounce
Group C	Group C Servings
Cornbread Corn muffins Croissants Pancakes Piecrust (only in meat or meat alternate pies) Waffles	1 oz eq = 34 grams or 1.2 ounces $\frac{3}{4}$ oz eq = 26 grams or 0.9 ounce $\frac{1}{2}$ oz eq = 17 grams or 0.6 ounce $\frac{1}{4}$ oz eq = 9 grams or 0.3 ounce

¹ As a best practice, the USDA encourages CACFP menus to limit sweet crackers (graham crackers and animal crackers) because of their higher sugar content. The CSDE recommends not serving sweet crackers more than twice per week, between all meals and snacks served.

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Group D	Group D Servings
Muffins, all except corn	1 oz eq = 55 grams or 2 ounces ¾ oz eq = 42 grams or 1.5 ounces ½ oz eq = 28 grams or 1.0 ounce ¼ oz eq = 14 grams or 0.5 ounce

Group E	Group E Servings
French toast	1 oz eq = 69 grams or 2.4 ounces ¾ oz eq = 52 grams or 1.8 ounces ½ oz eq = 35 grams or 1.2 ounces ¼ oz eq = 18 grams or 0.6 ounce

Group H	Group H Servings
Barley Breakfast cereals, cooked ² Bulgur or cracked wheat Cereal grains, e.g., amaranth, buckwheat, cornmeal, corn grits, farina, kasha, millet, oats, quinoa, wheat berries, and rolled wheat Macaroni, all shapes Noodles, all varieties Pasta, all shapes Ravioli, noodle only Rice, brown or enriched white	1 oz eq = ½ cup cooked or 1 ounce (28 grams) dry ½ oz eq = ¼ cup cooked or ½ ounce (14 grams) dry

Group I	Group I Servings
Ready-to-eat (RTE) breakfast cereals (cold dry) ²	1 oz eq = 1 cup or 1 ounce for flakes and rounds 1¼ cups or 1 ounce for puffed cereal ¼ cup or 1 ounce for granola ½ oz eq = ½ cup or ½ ounce for flakes and rounds ¾ cup or ½ ounce for puffed cereal ⅛ cup or ½ ounce for granola

² RTE and cooked breakfast cereals must be WGR, enriched, or fortified, and cannot exceed 6 grams of sugars per dry ounce. Effective October 1, 2025, the USDA final rule, [Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#), changes the product-based limit for breakfast cereals from total sugars to added sugars (no more than 6 grams of added sugars per dry ounce). For more information, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#), and visit the USDA's webpage, [Choose Breakfast Cereals that are Lower in Sugar](#).

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Resources

CACFP Meal Pattern Updates (CSDE's CACFP webpage):

https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/child-and-adult-care-food-program#CACFP_Meal_Pattern_Updates

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

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

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 to the Rescue (USDA Webinar):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/exhibit-grains-tool-rescue>

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

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

Food Buying Guide Exhibit A Grains Tool (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/food-buying-guide-interactive-web-based-tool>

Food Buying Guide Section 4: Overview of Crediting Requirements for the Grains Component (USDA):

https://foodbuyingguide.fns.usda.gov/Content/TablesFBG/USDA_FBG_Section4_Grains.pdf

Food Buying Guide Section 4: Yield Table for Grains (USDA):

https://foodbuyingguide.fns.usda.gov/files/Reports/USDA_FBG_Section4_GrainsYieldTable.pdf

Grain-based Desserts in the CACFP (USDA handouts and webinars in English and Spanish):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/grain-based-desserts-cacfp>

Grains 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#Grains>

Grains 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#Grains>

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Guide to Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE):

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

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 Maximize the Exhibit A Grains Tool (USDA Webinar):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/how-maximize-exhibit-grains-tool>

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

Ounce Equivalents (“How To” section of the 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#OunceEquivalents>

Ounce Equivalents (“How To” section of the 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#OunceEquivalents>

Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Grains in Child Nutrition Programs (USDA):

https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource-files/PFS_Grains_Oz_Eq_Fillable_508.pdf

Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Grains in Child Nutrition Programs – Completed Sample (USDA):

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

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

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

USDA Final Rule: Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans (89 FR 31962):

<https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/04/25/2024-08098/child-nutrition-programs-meal-patterns-consistent-with-the-2020-2025-dietary-guidelines-for>

Using Ounce Equivalents for Grains in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (USDA handouts in English and Spanish):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/using-ounce-equivalents-grains-cacfp>

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

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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/grain_oz_eq_cacfp.pdf.

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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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