

How to Use the Grain Ounce Equivalents Chart for the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)

This guidance applies to the grains component of the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s CACFP meal patterns for child care centers, family day care homes, emergency shelters, at-risk afterschool care centers, and adult day care centers that participate in the CACFP. For guidance on the CACFP meal patterns for children and crediting requirements for the grains component, visit the Connecticut State Department of Education’s (CSDE) [Meal Patterns for CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage and the “[Grains Component for CACFP Child Care Programs](#)” section of the CSDE’s Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs webpage. For guidance on the CACFP adult meal patterns and crediting requirements for the grains component, visit the CSDE’s [Meal Patterns for CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) webpage and the “[Grains Component for CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#)” section of the CSDE’s Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers webpage.



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Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs

The USDA's chart, [Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs](#), summarizes the required quantities for nine groups (A-I) of grain foods. Groups A-F include baked goods, such as crackers, breads, rolls, taco shells, muffins, waffles, pancakes, and grain-based desserts, e.g., cookies, cake, granola bars, and pastries. Group H includes cereal grains, such as pasta, rice, cooked breakfast cereals, barley, cornmeal, and quinoa. Group I includes ready-to-eat cold breakfast cereals.

The Exhibit A quantities are not the same for all Child Nutrition Programs because the meal patterns are different. The CSDE's ounce equivalents (oz eq) chart, [Grain Ounce Equivalents for the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#), lists the Exhibit A oz eq that are required for the CACFP meal patterns. Groups F and G (grain-based desserts) are not included because grain-based desserts do not credit as the grains component in the CACFP.

The Exhibit A quantities are one of the two methods for determining the oz eq of a grain menu item; the other method is the creditable grains per serving. For guidance on 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](#).

Exhibit A Oz Eq Calculation Method

CACFP facilities must know the applicable weight or volume of the grain menu item to use the Exhibit A oz eq calculation method. The oz eq contribution is calculated by dividing the grain menu item's *serving weight or volume* by the *required weight or volume for 1 oz eq* for the applicable Exhibit A grain group.

Commercial products

For commercial products, the serving weight or volume is determined from the serving information listed on the Nutrition Facts label or product formulation statement (PFS). The oz eq chart cannot be used if the product's ingredients statement and packaging do not provide sufficient information to determine if it meets the meal pattern crediting criteria. These products require a PFS. 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](#).

Foods made from scratch in groups A-G

To use the oz eq chart for foods made from scratch in groups A-G, SFAs must have a standardized recipe on file that indicates the weight of the prepared (cooked) serving. If the standardized recipe does not provide this information, SFAs must either 1) determine the average serving weight by weighing several portions (refer to the CSDE's [Yield Study Data Form for Child Nutrition Programs](#)), then use the oz eq chart; or 2) use the creditable grains method for determining oz eq (refer to the CSDE's

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resource, [Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#). The oz eq chart cannot be used if the grain menu item's serving weight is not known.

Rounding rules

CACFP facilities must follow the rounding rules below when calculating the oz eq of a commercial grain product or recipe.

- **Oz eq contribution:** When determining the oz eq contribution of a grain food, always round down to the nearest $\frac{1}{4}$ oz eq. For example, if the calculation indicates that a bagel contains 1.49 oz eq., round down to 1.25 oz eq.
- **Number of pieces per serving:** When determining the number of pieces needed to credit as 1 oz eq., always round up to the next whole number. For example, if the calculation indicates that 6.7 pretzels credit as 1 oz eq., round up to 7 pretzels.

Make sure to use the appropriate rounding rule to correctly calculate the grain item's oz eq contribution.

Crediting Examples

The examples below show the steps for using the Exhibit A quantities in the CSDE's oz eq chart to determine the oz eq for grain menu items in groups A-G. These steps are used for commercial grain products and may also be used for standardized recipes if the menu planner knows the weight of the prepared (cooked) serving (refer to "[Foods made from scratch in groups A-G](#)" in this document).

The examples include three different categories of commercial products and standardized recipes:

- grain items that contain multiple small pieces per serving, such as crackers, hard pretzels, and animal crackers (example 1);
- grain items that contain multiple large pieces per serving, such as pancakes, slices of bread, and waffles (example 2); and
- grain items that contain one piece per serving, such as muffins, bagels, and rolls (example 3).

The calculation steps are different for each category.

Before determining the ounce equivalents (oz eq) per serving, make sure the commercial grain product or recipe is creditable, i.e., whole grain-rich (WGR) or enriched. For information on identifying creditable grain foods, refer to the CSDE's [Guide to Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#) and [Crediting Enriched Grains in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#).

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Example 1: Multiple small pieces per serving

For grain items that contain multiple small pieces per serving (such as crackers, hard pretzels, and animal crackers), calculate the number of pieces per oz eq by dividing the *required weight (grams) for 1 oz eq* of the applicable grain group listed in Exhibit A by the *grams per piece*.



Whole grain-rich crackers (group A)

Nutrition Facts	
About 9 Servings per container	
Serving Size	6 crackers (28g)
Amount per serving	
Calories	120

The example below shows this calculation for whole grain-rich crackers in group A. Five crackers credit as 1 oz eq (refer to table 1).

Group A	Oz Eq for Group A
Bread sticks, hard	1 oz eq = 22 grams or 0.8 ounce
Bread-type coating	$\frac{3}{4}$ oz eq = 17 grams or 0.6 ounce
Chow Mein noodles	$\frac{1}{2}$ oz eq = 11 grams or 0.4 ounce
Crackers, savory, e.g., saltines and snack crackers	$\frac{1}{4}$ oz eq = 6 grams or 0.2 ounce
CROUTONS	
Pretzels, hard	
Stuffing, dry Note: weights apply to bread in stuffing	

Table 1. Steps for determining oz eq of grain item with multiple small pieces per serving

1. <i>Required weight for 1 oz eq:</i> List the required weight for 1 oz eq for the product's group (A-G) in Exhibit A.	A 22 grams
2. <i>Grams per serving:</i> List the serving size in grams (g) from the Nutrition Facts label, PFS, or recipe.	B 28 grams
3. <i>Pieces per serving:</i> List the number of pieces per serving from Nutrition Facts label, PFS, or recipe.	C 6 pieces
4. Calculate the grams per piece (divide B by C).	D 4.67 grams per piece
5. Calculate pieces per oz eq (divide A by D)	E 4.7 pieces per oz eq
6. Round up to next whole number.	F 5 pieces per oz eq

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Example 2: Multiple large pieces per serving

For grain items that contain multiple large pieces per serving (such as pancakes, slices of bread, and waffles), calculate the oz eq contribution per piece by dividing the *required weight (grams)* for 1 oz eq of the applicable grain group listed in Exhibit A by the *grams per piece*.



Enriched pancakes (group C)

Nutrition Facts	
4 Servings per container	
Serving Size	3 pancakes (116g)
Amount per serving	
Calories	280

The example below shows this calculation for enriched pancakes in group C. One pancake credits as 1 oz eq (refer to table 2).

Group C	Oz Eq for Group C
Cornbread	1 oz eq = 34 grams or 1.2 ounces
Corn muffins	$\frac{3}{4}$ oz eq = 26 grams or 0.9 ounce
Croissants	$\frac{1}{2}$ oz eq = 17 grams or 0.6 ounce
Pancakes	$\frac{1}{4}$ oz eq = 9 grams or 0.3 ounce
Piecrust (only in meat/meat alternate pies)	
Waffles	

Table 2. Steps for determining oz eq of grain item with multiple large pieces per serving

1. <i>Required weight for 1 oz eq:</i> List the required weight for 1 oz eq for the product's group (A-G) in Exhibit A.	A 34 grams
2. <i>Grams per serving:</i> List the serving size in grams (g) from the Nutrition Facts label, PFS, or recipe.	B 116 grams
3. <i>Pieces per serving:</i> List the number of pieces per serving from Nutrition Facts label, PFS, or CACFP recipe.	C 3 pieces
4. Calculate the grams per piece (divide B by C).	D 38.67 grams per piece
5. Calculate oz eq per piece (divide B by A)	E 1.14 oz eq per piece
6. Round down to the nearest $\frac{1}{4}$ oz eq.	F 1 oz eq per piece

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Example 3: One piece per serving

For grain items that contain one piece per serving (such as muffins, bagels, and rolls), calculate the oz eq contribution per serving by dividing the *grams per serving* by the *required weight (grams) for 1 oz eq* of the applicable grain group listed in Exhibit A.



Whole grain-rich blueberry muffin (group D)

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size	1 muffin (57g)
Servings per container 6	
Amount per serving	
Calories	210

The example below shows this calculation for a whole grain-rich blueberry muffin in group D. One muffin credits as 1 oz eq (refer to table 3).

Group D	Oz Eq for Group D
Muffins, all except corn	1 oz eq = 55 grams or 2 ounces $\frac{3}{4}$ oz eq = 42 grams or 1.5 ounces $\frac{1}{2}$ oz eq = 28 grams or 1.0 ounce $\frac{1}{4}$ oz eq = 14 grams or 0.5 ounce

Table 3. Steps for determining oz eq of grain item with one piece per serving		
1. <i>Required weight for 1 oz eq</i> : List the required weight for 1 oz eq for the product's group (A-G) in Exhibit A.	A	55 grams
2. <i>Grams per serving</i> : List the serving size in grams (g) from Nutrition Facts label, PFS, or CACFP recipe.	B	57 grams
3. Calculate oz eq per serving (divide B by A)	C	1.04 oz eq per serving
4. Round down to the nearest $\frac{1}{4}$ oz eq.	D	1 oz eq per serving

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Grain Crediting Tools

The tools below help menu planners determine the meal pattern contribution (including grain oz eq) of creditable products and recipes.

- **CSDE’s CACFP crediting worksheets:** These Excel worksheets determine if grain products and recipes meet the CACFP crediting requirements and WGR criteria, and calculate the ounce equivalents contribution of the serving.
 - Adult Center Worksheet 1: Crediting Commercial Grains in the CACFP
 - Adult Center Worksheet 4: Crediting Family-size Recipes for Grains in the CACFP
 - Adult Center Worksheet 5: Crediting Quantity Recipes for Grains in the CACFP
 - Child Care Worksheet 1: Crediting Commercial Grains in the CACFP
 - Child Care Worksheet 4: Crediting Family-size Recipes for Grains in the CACFP
 - Child Care Worksheet 5: Crediting Quantity Recipes for Grains in the CACFP

The grain crediting worksheets for CACFP adult day care centers are available in the “[Documents/Forms](#)” section of the CSDE’s Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers webpage. The grain crediting worksheets for CACFP child care programs are available in the “[Documents/Forms](#)” section of the CSDE’s Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs webpage.

- **USDA’s Exhibit A Grains Tool for commercial grain products:** This [online tool](#) of the USDA’s *Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs* (FBG) determines the oz eq of commercial grain products. For more information, watch the USDA’s webinars, *Exhibit A Grains Tool to the Rescue* and *How to Maximize the Exhibit A Grains Tool*.
- **USDA’s Recipe Analysis Workbook:** The FBG’s online [Recipe Analysis Workbook](#) allows menu planners to search for ingredients, develop a standardized recipe, and determine the recipe’s meal pattern contribution per serving. To access this tool, users must create a free account on the USDA’s FBG website.

For more information on oz eq, refer to the “Ounce Equivalents” section of the CSDE’s [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) or [Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) webpages.

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Resources

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

Exhibit A Grains Tool (USDA's Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs):

<https://foodbuyingguide.fns.usda.gov/ExhibitATool/Index>

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

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

Grain Ounce Equivalents for the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/Crediting/Grain_Oz_Eq_CACFP.pdf

Grains Component for CACFP Adult Day Care Centers (CSDE webpage):

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

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

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

Guide to Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the CACFP (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/Crediting/WGR_Requirement_CACFP.pdf

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

Standardized Recipes in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers (“Documents/Forms” 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/Documents#StandardizedRecipes>

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Standardized Recipes in CACFP Child Care Programs (“Documents/Forms” 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/Documents#StandardizedRecipes>

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

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource-files/manufacturerePFStipsheet.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

When Commercial Grain Products Require a Product Formulation Statement to Credit in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/Crediting/When_Commercial_Grain_Products_Require_PFS_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/How_to_Use_Ounce_Equivalents_Chart_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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