Using Production Records in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

This guidance applies to 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).

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The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) CACFP regulations require that CACFP sponsors must maintain records to document the service of reimbursable meals and snacks to participants. Production records are not required except for CACFP child care centers that follow the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) meal pattern. However, using production records is best practice because they:

- verify that the CACFP facility's menu complies with the CACFP meal patterns;
- communicate information to staff regarding what foods and recipes to use, what quantities to prepare, and what amounts to portion for each age group; and
- provide valuable information to assist CACFP facilities with future menu planning.

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) strongly encourages CACFP child care programs and adult day care centers to use production records.

Purpose of Production Records

A production record is a working tool that outlines the type and quantity of foods that need to be purchased and available for the meal service. Production records help verify that the meal service meets the CACFP meal pattern requirements for reimbursable meals. They show how the offered meals contribute to the required meal components and food quantities for each meal and age group every day. Production records are also an important communication tool that tells food service staff what foods and recipes to use, what quantities to prepare, and what amounts to portion.

In addition to documenting reimbursable meals, production records also provide valuable information about the meal service, such as the quantities prepared and total meals served. This historical information helps with future menu planning. CACFP facilities can use previous production records to forecast trends, identify participants' preferences, and plan future menus. Production records also help CACFP facilities with controlling waste, tracking food safety, and conducting a nutrient analysis of menus.

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Required Elements for Production Records

Production records must include certain elements that are recorded at different times. The guidance below indicates what production records must include and when staff should complete the required information.

Complete before meal service

The information below may be completed days or weeks in advance of the meal service. Information that does not change (such as the basic information below) may be pre-filled before printing the production record.

- **Basic information:** Indicate the sponsor name, program/site name, meal date, ages being served, and meal type (breakfast, lunch, supper, or snack).

- **Planned menu items:** List the specific type and amount of all meal choices, milk, leftovers, substitutions, and all noncreditable foods like condiments (refer to the CSDE's resources, *Noncreditable Foods in the Child and Adult Care Food Program*).

- **Recipe name and number or food product name and code:** Indicate the name and number of the standardized recipe for all foods made from scratch. Indicate the product name and code for all commercial products.

- **Planned portion size and number of servings:** Indicate the planned portion size of each menu item, with the specific unit of measure (e.g., scoop number, measuring cup amount, each, and ladle or spoodle size) and the planned number of servings. This is the total number of servings planned for all meals/snacks (reimbursable and if applicable, nonreimbursable). Use standard abbreviations (e.g., lb = pound, oz = ounces, gal = gallon, qt = quart, c = cup, Tbsp = tablespoon, and tsp = teaspoon) and express measurements in fractions, when applicable (e.g., ¼, ½, and ¾). List each menu item's meal component contribution in oz eq for meats/meat alternates (MMA) and grains, and cups for fruits, vegetables, and milk.

  - **MMA (oz eq):** Indicate the correct quantity for each type of MMA. List commercial processed products like pizza and chicken nuggets in oz eq, based on their CN label or PFS. List lean meat, poultry, and fish, natural and processed cheese, and nuts and seeds in ounces (1 ounce = 1 oz eq); eggs by each (½ large egg = 1 oz eq); nut/seed butters in tablespoons (2 tablespoons = 1 oz eq); beans, peas, and lentils, and cottage cheese in cups (¼ cup = 1 oz eq); and yogurt by volume or weight (½ cup or 4 ounces = 1 oz eq). For more information,

refer to the CSDE's *Guide to Meeting the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Meal Patterns for Children* or *Guide to Meeting the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Adult Meal Patterns.*

- **Grains (oz eq):** Indicate the correct quantity for each type of grain. List groups A-E (baked goods like breads, rolls, muffins, crackers, and pancakes) by weight (ounces) and groups H-I (e.g., cooked cereal grains like rice, pasta, and quinoa) by volume (cups), based on the required quantity for 1 oz eq or the minimum creditable grains per serving. If a commercial processed products has insufficient information to determine crediting, the oz eq must be based on the product's PFS. Indicate if grains are whole grain-rich (WGR). For more information, refer to the CSDE's resources and webpages below.

  - [Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/cacfp/crediting/grain_calculation_cacfp_oz_eq.pdf) (CSDE): https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/cacfp/crediting/grain_ calculation_cacfp_oz_eq.pdf

  - [Grain Ounce Equivalents Chart for the Child and Adult Care Food Program](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/cacfp/crediting/grain_oz_eq_cacfp.pdf) (CSDE): https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/cacfp/crediting/grain_ oz_eq_cacfp.pdf

  - [Serving Requirements](https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/crediting-foods-in-the-child-and-adult-care-food-program/grains#ServingRequirements) ("Grains" section of 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/grains#ServingRequirements

  - [When Commercial Grain Products Require a Product Formulation Statement to Credit in the Child and Adult Care Food Programs](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/cacfp/crediting/when_commercial_grain_products_require_pfs_cacfp.pdf) (CSDE): https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/cacfp/crediting/when_ commercial_grain_products_require_pfs_cacfp.pdf

  - [Whole Grain-rich Requirement](https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/crediting-foods-in-the-child-and-adult-care-food-program/grains#WGR) ("Grains" section of 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/grains#WGR

- **Vegetables (cups):** Include the form of the food, e.g., fresh, frozen, canned, or dried. Include all vegetable juices.

- **Fruits (cups):** Include the form of the food (e.g., fresh, frozen, canned, or dried) and packing medium (e.g., canned in juice or light syrup, or frozen with added sugar). Include all fruit juices.

- **Milk (cups):** List the type of milk for each age group. Meals must include unflavored whole milk for age 1 and unflavored low-fat (1%) or fat-free milk for ages 2 and older. Flavored low-fat (1%) or fat-free milk may be served to ages 6 and older and adult participants, but the USDA's CACFP best practices recommend serving only unflavored milk.

Complete during meal service

- **Temperatures and times:** For time/temperature control for safety food (TCS) – formerly known as potentially hazardous foods – staff should record temperatures throughout the meal service as applicable, to ensure that hot foods are held at 135°F or above and cold foods are held at 41°F or below. Take corrective action if any foods are not at target temperature. For additional guidance, visit the CSDE's Food Safety for Child Nutrition Programs webpage.

Complete after meal service

- **Substitutions:** Indicate any substitutions for the planned menu, such as different entrees or vegetables.

- **Total servings prepared:** Indicate the total number of servings actually prepared for the meal service.

- **Servings left over:** Indicate the total number of servings left over for each menu item.

- **Total servings selected:** Indicate the total number of servings selected during the meal service. Subtract "Servings left over" from "Total servings prepared."

- **Total number of meals and snacks served:** Indicate the number of reimbursable meals and snacks served to each age group. If applicable, indicate the number of nonreimbursable meals and snacks served, e.g., second meals/snacks and meals/snacks for staff members.

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CSDE Production Record Templates

Production record templates for child care program and adult day care centers are available in the "Menu Forms and Production Records" section of the CSDE's Meal Patterns for the Child and Adult Care Food Program webpage. These production records assist CACFP staff with providing the information required to document that menus comply with the CACFP meal patterns. CACFP facilities may use or adapt these sample production records to meet individual program needs.

Guidance for Completing Production Records

Production records must indicate the specific type and amount of each food item and must be completed correctly to provide accurate documentation of reimbursable meals and snacks When using production records, CACFP facilities should follow the guidance below.

- Use a physical written production for each site, including satellite locations.

- Complete all information. Check production records after the meal service to make sure that information is not missing or incomplete.

- Record the information legibly, i.e., make sure that handwriting can be read.

- Use the proper weight or volume measure for each food item (oz eq for MMA and grains, and cups for fruits, vegetables, and milk). For example, fruits and vegetables must be listed in cups, not ounces (refer to "Volume versus Weight" in this section).

- List the specific type and amount of each food item separately. Do not indicate foods as assorted choices. For example, instead of "assorted juices," list apple juice, orange juice, and pineapple juice. Instead of "assorted fruits and vegetables," fruit choices," or "vegetable choices," list each type of fruit and vegetable.

- List the appropriate type of milk for each age group, i.e., unflavored whole milk for age 1, unflavored low-fat or fat-free milk for ages 2-5, and unflavored or flavored low-fat or fat-free milk for ages 6 and older and adult participants.

- List all condiments, e.g., ketchup, mustard, and salad dressing.

- List portion sizes accurately. Make sure that the listed portion sizes are the same as the amount being served to participants.

- List all items prepared for the meal including daily items and alternate meal choices.

- Accurately record the "planned" portions for each age group.

- List the total number of nonreimbursable meals (e.g., second meals for participants and staff meals) separately from reimbursable meals.

- Add any extra servings of food needed during the meal service period.

- Indicate if any substitutions are made to the planned menu items.

- Indicate if leftovers from a previous day are used.

- Indicate how leftovers from that day's meal service will be used, e.g., refrigerated for use in future meals, frozen for future use in the cycle menu, or discarded.

CACFP facilities should maintain production records on file with other required documentation (refer to "Records Retention" in this document). The CSDE will review menu documentation during the Administrative Review of the CACFP.

Volume versus weight

The quantities listed in production records must reflect the servings required by the CACFP meal patterns, which indicate the servings of the meal components by weight (ounces) or volume (fluid ounces).

- The servings for the milk component, vegetables component, and fruits component are indicated by volume (cups).

- The servings for most foods in the MMA component are indicated by weight (ounces). Some MMA are indicated by volume, such as peanut butter (tablespoons), and beans, peas, and lentils (cups). Some MMA are indicated by volume or weight, such as cottage cheese, yogurt, and tofu.

- The servings for foods in the grains component are indicated by weight (ounces or grams) or volume (cups), based on the groups in the USDA's chart, *Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs*. Foods in groups A-E (like crackers, breads,

rolls, taco shells, muffins, waffles, and pancakes) are indicated by weight. Foods in group H (cereal grains like pasta, cooked breakfast cereals, barley, oats, and quinoa) and group I (ready-to-eat breakfast cereals) are indicated by volume or weight.

Menu planners should use the USDA's *Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs* to determine the quantity of a food or beverage that meets the required meal pattern serving. The FBG can also be used to determine the weight equivalent of servings measured by volume. Production records must reflect these amounts. For example, the servings of vegetables, fruits, peanut butter, and beans, peas, and lentils must be listed by volume (cups), not weight.

For guidance on weights and measures, refer to the Institute of Child Nutrition's (ICN) Basics at a Glance poster and "Weights and Measures" in the "Portion Control" section of the CSDE's Menu Planning for Child Nutrition Programs webpage.

Using the correct measurement for meal pattern portions

When completing production records, it is important to understand that volume and weight measurements are not the same. Volume refers to the space an ingredient occupies in a measuring container. Common units of volume include teaspoons, tablespoons, fluid ounces, cups, pints, quarts, and gallons.

> In most cases, a specific volume of food does not equal the same weight. However, there are some exceptions, such as yogurt (½ cup equals 4 ounces by weight) and certain canned fruits and vegetables.

A frequent compliance issue with production records and similar menu documentation is listing portion sizes incorrectly. For example, listing fruits and vegetables as "4 ounces" instead of "½ cup" fails to document whether the serving meets the meal pattern requirements, because these measurements are not equivalent. A serving of 4 ounces of fruits or vegetables by weight may or may not equal ½ cup of the fruits component or½ cup of the vegetables component.

The weight of a specific volume of food varies depending on its density. For example, ½ cup of lettuce weighs less than ½ cup of cooked butternut squash, and 1 cup of whole-grain flaked cereal weighs less than 1 cup of baked beans.

Administrative Review of Production Records

During the Administrative Review of the CACFP, the CSDE will evaluate the CACFP sponsor's menu documentation records (including production records, if used) to ensure they.

- include all information necessary to support claims for reimbursable meals and snacks, i.e., all menu items are listed and the minimum servings of all meal components are offered;

- document that the prepared foods are creditable for the total number of reimbursable meals/snacks offered and served;

- document the total number of nonreimbursable meals/snacks separately from reimbursable meals/snacks;

- document that menus meet the requirements for fluid milk, the WGR requirement, and the daily juice limit (refer to the CSDE's *Guide to Meeting the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Meal Patterns for Children* or *Guide to Meeting the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Adult Meal Patterns*); and

- align with the CACFP facility's recipes, i.e., the ingredients in the CACFP facility's recipes correspond to the menu items listed on the production records.

When production records are used, CACFP facilities should ensure that food service staff include all required elements for each daily production record (refer to "Required Elements for Production Records" in this document). Food service staff must be trained in the proper procedures for completing production records.

Records Retention

The CACFP regulations (7 CFR 226.10(d)) require that all records pertaining to the CACFP must be retained for a period of three years after the date of the final claim for reimbursement for the fiscal year to which they pertain. If audit findings have not been resolved, the records must be retained beyond the three-year period, for as long as is required for resolution of the issues raised by the audit. For detailed guidance and resources on the CACFP records retention requirements, refer to the CSDE's resource, *Records Retention Requirements for the Child and Adult Care Food Program*.

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Resources

Basics at a Glance Portion Control Poster (ICN):
https://theicn.org/icn-resources-a-z/basics-at-a-glance/

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

Crediting Summary Charts for the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE):
https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/cacfp/crediting/crediting_summary_charts_cacfp.pdf

Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs (USDA):
https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/food-buying-guide-for-child-nutrition-programs

Foods Made from Scratch (CSDE's Crediting Documentation for the Child Nutrition Program webpage):
https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/crediting-documentation-for-the-child-nutrition-programs#Scratch

Guide to Menu Documentation for the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE):
https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/cacfp/mealpattern/guide_cacfp_menu_documentation.pdf

Instructions for the Production Record Templates for Child and Adult Care Food Program (CSDE):
https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/cacfp/forms/prodrecord/instructions_production_record_cacfp.pdf

Portion Control (CSDE's Menu Planning for Child Nutrition Programs webpage):
https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/menu-planning/portion-control

Production Records ("Menu Forms and Production Records" section of the CSDE's Meal Patterns for the Child and Adult Care Food Program webpage):
https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/meal-patterns-for-the-child-and-adult-care-food-program/menu-forms-and-production-records

Recipe Analysis Workbook (RAW) for Standardized Recipes (USDA):
https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/food-buying-guide-interactive-web-based-tool

[Recipe Standardization Guide for the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#) (Institute of Child Nutrition):
https://theicn.org/icn-resources-a-z/step-by-step-recipe-standardization-guide-for-the-child-and-adult-care-food-program/

[Records Retention Requirements for the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#) (CSDE):
https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/cacfp/forms/records_retention_cacfp.pdf

[Weights and Measures](#) ("Portion Control" section of CSDE's Menu Planning for Child Nutrition Programs webpage):
https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/menu-planning/portion-control#WeightsMeasures

For more information, visit the "[Menu Forms and Production Records](#)" section of the CSDE's Meal Patterns for 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/forms/prodrecord/using_production_records_cacfp.pdf.

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Education

Using Production Records in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

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   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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