

Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Snack Meal Pattern for Adult Day Care Centers

July 1, 2024, through September 30, 2025

Snack meal components ¹ <i>Serve any 2 of the 5 meal components</i>	Minimum quantities
Milk, fluid Low-fat (1%) or fat-free milk, unflavored or flavored ²	8 fluid ounces (1 cup)
Meats/meat alternates (MMA), ounce equivalents (oz eq) ³	1 oz eq =
Lean meat, poultry, or fish; cheese; alternate protein products (APPs) ⁴ ; or tempeh ⁵	1 ounce
Surimi ⁶	3 ounces
Tofu ⁷	2.2 ounces (¼ cup)
Cottage cheese	2 ounces (¼ cup)
Egg, large	½
Beans, peas, and lentils ⁸	¼ cup
Peanut butter, soy nut butter, or other nut/seed butters	2 tablespoons
Peanuts, soy nuts, tree nuts, or seeds ⁹	1 ounce
Yogurt or soy yogurt, plain or flavored, unsweetened or sweetened ¹⁰	4 ounces (½ cup)
Vegetables, cups ^{11, 12}	½ cup
Fruits, cups ^{12, 13}	½ cup
Grains, oz eq ^{14, 15, 16, 17}	1 oz eq =
Whole grain-rich (WGR) or enriched bread or bread product, e.g., biscuit, roll, or muffin	1 oz eq ¹⁷
WGR, enriched, or fortified cooked breakfast cereal ¹⁸ , cereal grain ¹⁹ , rice, or pasta	½ cup
WGR, enriched, or fortified ready-to-eat (RTE) breakfast cereal (dry, cold): Flakes or rounds ¹⁸	1 cup
Puffed ¹⁸	1¼ cups
Granola ¹⁸	¼ cup

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Menu planning notes

- 1 Snack must include the minimum serving of two of the five meal components. Only one of the two meal components may be a creditable beverage, such as milk or juice. The USDA's [CACFP best practices](#) recommend serving a vegetable or fruit for at least one of the two required meal components. Use the USDA's [Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs](#) (FBG) to determine the amount of purchased food that meets the meal pattern requirements. Commercial processed products require a Child Nutrition (CN) label or product formulation statement (PFS) to document crediting information unless they are listed in the FBG. CACFP sponsors must verify PFS forms for accuracy prior to purchasing, serving, and claiming the product in reimbursable meals and snacks. Foods made from scratch must have a recipe that documents the crediting information per serving. Standardized recipes are encouraged to ensure accurate crediting information. For more information, visit the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) [Crediting Documentation for the Child Nutrition Programs](#) webpage and refer to the CSDE's resources, [Using Child Nutrition \(CN\) Labels in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#), [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](#).
- 2 Milk must be low-fat (1%) milk or fat-free milk, either unflavored or flavored. The USDA's [CACFP best practices](#) recommend serving only unflavored milk. For more information, visit the "Milk" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) webpage.
- 3 The serving size of MMA refers to the edible portion of cooked lean meat, poultry, or fish, e.g., cooked lean meat without bone, breading, binders, fillers, or other ingredients. Commercial processed products that contain added ingredients (such as combination entrees, deli meats, hot dogs, and sausages) require a CN label or PFS to document crediting information. The USDA's [CACFP best practices](#) recommend serving only lean meats, nuts, and beans, peas, and lentils; limiting processed meats to one serving per week; and serving only low-fat or reduced-fat natural cheese. For more information, visit the "[Meats and Meat Alternates](#)" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) webpage and refer to the CSDE's resources, [Crediting Commercial Meat/Meat Alternate Products in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#) and [Crediting Deli Meats in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#).
- 4 APPs must meet the requirements in [appendix A of 7 CFR 226](#) (refer to the CSDE's resource, [Requirements for Alternate Protein Products in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#)).
- 5 For a 1-ounce serving of tempeh to credit as 1 oz eq of MMA, the product's ingredients must include only soybeans (or other legumes), water, tempeh culture, and for some varieties, vinegar, seasonings, and herbs. Tempeh products that contain other ingredients require a CN label or PFS to document crediting information.

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- ⁶ Surimi seafood is a pasteurized, ready-to-eat, restructured seafood product usually made from pollock (fish). A CN label or PFS is required for commercial products that indicate a different crediting amount.
- ⁷ Tofu must contain at least 5 grams of protein in 2.2 ounces (¼ cup) to credit as 1 oz eq of MMA (refer to the CSDE’s resource, [Crediting Tofu and Tofu Products in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#)).
- ⁸ Cooked beans, peas, and lentils credit as either the MMA component or the vegetables component but one serving cannot credit as both meal components in the same snack (refer to the CSDE’s resource, [Crediting Beans, Peas, and Lentils in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#)).
- ⁹ Creditable nuts and seeds include almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, filberts, macadamia nuts, peanuts, pecans, walnuts, pine nuts, pistachios, and soy nuts (refer to the CSDE’s resource, [Crediting Nuts and Seeds in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#)).
- ¹⁰ Yogurt and soy yogurt cannot contain more than 23 grams of total sugars per 6 ounces (no more than 3.83 grams per 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 limit for yogurt to no more than 12 grams of added sugars per 6 ounces (2 grams of added sugars per ounce). For more information, refer to the CSDE’s resource, [Crediting Yogurt in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#).
- ¹¹ The vegetables component includes fresh, frozen, canned, and rehydrated dried vegetables, and pasteurized 100 percent full-strength vegetable juice. Vegetables credit based on volume (cups), except raw leafy greens credit as half the volume served, e.g., 1 cup of lettuce or spinach credits as ½ cup of the vegetables component. A serving of canned vegetables must be drained. Dried vegetables (such as potato flakes and dried soup mix) credit based on their rehydrated volume and require a PFS. The USDA’s [CACFP best practices](#) recommend that CACFP menus include at least one serving per week of each vegetable subgroup (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](#), and visit the “Vegetables” section of the CSDE’s [Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) webpage.
- ¹² Pasteurized full-strength juice credits as either the vegetables component or fruits component at only one meal or snack per day. The juice limit includes fruit and vegetable juice, frozen pops made from 100 percent juice, and pureed fruits and vegetables in smoothies (refer to the CSDE’s resources, [Crediting Juice in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#) and [Crediting Smoothies in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#)). The USDA’s [CACFP best practices](#) recommend serving whole fruits (fresh, frozen, canned, and dried) more often than juice.

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- 13 The fruits component includes fresh, frozen, and dried fruits, canned fruit in juice, water, or light syrup, and pasteurized 100 percent full-strength fruit juice. The creditable serving of canned fruit in 100 percent juice may include the juice but cannot include water or syrup. Fruits credit based on volume (cups), except dried fruits credit as twice the volume served, e.g., $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of raisins credits as $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the fruits component. For more information, visit the “Fruits” section of the CSDE’s [Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) webpage.
- 14 Grain products and recipes must be made with creditable grains (whole grains, enriched grains, bran, and germ) and must be WGR or enriched. For information on identifying creditable grains, refer to the 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](#), and visit the “Grains” section of the CSDE’s [Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) webpage.
- 15 At least one serving of grains per day must be WGR. The USDA’s [CACFP best practices](#) recommend at least two servings of WGR grains per day. To meet the CACFP WGR criteria, foods must contain at least 50 percent whole grains and the remaining grain ingredients must be enriched, bran, or germ. For more information, refer to the CSDE’s [Guide to Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#) and refer to “Whole Grain-rich Requirement” in the “Grains” section of the CSDE’s [Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) webpage.
- 16 Grain-based desserts do not credit as the grains component. Examples include cookies, piecrusts in sweet pies, doughnuts, cereal bars, granola bars, sweet rolls, pastries, toaster pastries, cake, and brownies. Sweet crackers such as graham crackers and animal crackers are not grain-based desserts and may credit as the grains component. However, the CSDE recommends limiting sweet crackers to no more than twice per week between all meals and snacks. For more information, visit the USDA’s [Grain-based Desserts in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#) webpage.
- 17 To credit as the required oz eq, the serving of grain products and recipes must provide either: 1) the required serving weight (groups A-E) or volume (groups H-I) in the USDA’s Exhibit A chart (refer to the CSDE’s resources, [Grain Ounce Equivalents for the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#) and [How to Use the Grain Ounce Equivalents Chart for the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#)); or 2) the minimum creditable grains per serving (refer to the CSDE’s resources, [Calculation Methods for Grains Ounce Equivalents for the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#) and [When Commercial Grain Products Require a Product Formulation Statement to Credit in the Child and Adult Care Food Program](#)). For more information, refer to “Serving Requirements” in the “Grains” section of the CSDE’s [Crediting Foods in CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) webpage.

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- ¹⁸ Breakfast cereals must be WGR, enriched, or fortified and cannot contain more than 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 limit for breakfast cereals to 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*](#).
- ¹⁹ Examples of cereal grains include amaranth, barley, buckwheat, cornmeal, corn grits, kasha, millet, oats, quinoa, wheat berries, and rolled wheat.

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For more information on the CACFP adult meal patterns, refer to the CSDE's [Guide to Meeting the CACFP Adult Meal Patterns and Crediting Requirements](#) and visit the [Meal Patterns for CACFP Adult Day Care Centers](#) 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/mealpattern/cacfp_adult_snack_meal_pattern.pdf.

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