

Crediting Yogurt in the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs

School Year 2024-25 (July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025)

This guidance applies to the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) meal patterns for grades K-12 in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), Seamless Summer Option (SSO) of the NSLP, and Afterschool Snack Program (ASP). The SSO follows the NSLP and SBP meal patterns. For information on the meal patterns and crediting foods, refer to the Connecticut State Department of Education’s (CSDE) [Menu Planning Guide for Grades K-12 in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program](#), and visit the CSDE’s [Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage and [Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.



Contents

- Required Meal Pattern Quantities for Meats/Meat Alternates (MMA) 2
- Overview of Crediting Requirements..... 2
 - Serving size 3
 - Table 1. Meal pattern contribution of yogurt..... 3
 - Nutrition guidance 3
- Fruits in Yogurt 3
- Yogurt in Smoothies 4
- Noncreditable Yogurt 5
- Resources 5



Crediting Yogurt in the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs

Required Meal Pattern Quantities for Meats/Meat Alternates (MMA)

The quantities for the MMA component are indicated as ounce equivalents (oz eq) in the NSLP and SBP meal patterns for grades K-12; and as ounces in the ASP meal pattern for grades K-12. The amount that credits as 1 oz eq or 1 ounce of MMA is the same. This document refers to oz eq for simplicity.

Effective with school year 2025-26 (beginning July 1, 2025), the USDA final rule, [Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#), aligns the ASP meal pattern for grades K-12 with the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) snack meal pattern. The serving size for MMA will change from ounces to oz eq.

For more information, visit the “Meats/Meat Alternates Component” section of the CSDE’s [Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage, [Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage, or [Afterschool Snack Program \(ASP\)](#) webpage.

Overview of Crediting Requirements

Commercial yogurt and soy yogurt credit as meat alternates toward the MMA component of the school meal patterns. Yogurt may be plain or flavored; sweetened or unsweetened; contain any fat content; and contain added fruit, either blended or on the bottom. Yogurt must meet the Food and Drug Administration’s (FDA) standard of identity for yogurt ([21 CFR 131.200](#)).



Effective with school year 2025-26 (beginning July 1, 2025), the USDA final rule, [Child Nutrition Programs: Meal Patterns Consistent with the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#), establishes a sugar limit for yogurt of no more than 12 grams of added sugars per 6 ounces (2 grams of added sugars per ounce).

Crediting Yogurt in the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs

Serving size

The required serving size for yogurt is based on volume (cups) or weight (ounces) and is the same for all types, flavors, and fat contents. A ½-cup serving (volume) or 4 ounces (weight) credits as 1 oz eq of the MMA component in the school meal patterns. Table 1 shows the MMA contribution for different serving sizes of yogurt.

Table 1. Meal pattern contribution of yogurt

Serving size (volume or weight)	MMA contribution
⅛ cup or 1 ounce	¼ oz eq (minimum creditable amount)
¼ cup or 2 ounces	½ oz eq
½ cup or 4 ounces	1 oz eq
¾ cup or 6 ounces	1½ oz eq
1 cup or 8 ounces	2 oz eq

Nutrition guidance

The CSDE encourages SFAs to read labels and consider fat and sugar content when purchasing yogurt for school meals and ASP snacks. The [Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#) recommends serving low-fat and fat-free yogurt for ages 2 and older. These types of yogurts provide the same nutrients as whole milk yogurt but contain less saturated fat and fewer calories.

Many types of yogurts are high in added sugars. For guidance on choosing yogurt with fewer added sugars, visit the USDA's [Choose Yogurts that are Lower in Sugar](#) webpage and watch the USDA's webinar, [Choose Yogurts that are Lower in Added Sugars](#).

The CSDE encourages SFAs to choose yogurts without nonnutritive sweeteners (such as aspartame, acesulfame potassium, sucralose, and stevia) or sugar alcohols. These products are often labeled as “light” or “lite.”

Fruits in Yogurt

Fruits in commercially prepared yogurt (either blended or on the bottom or top) do not credit toward the fruits component. Menu planners may credit fruits offered as a separate component, such as yogurt topped with fresh blueberries or sliced strawberries in a yogurt-fruit parfait.

Crediting Yogurt in the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs

Yogurt in Smoothies

Yogurt and soy yogurt may credit toward the MMA component when used as an ingredient in smoothies. To credit smoothies made from scratch, school food authorities (SFAs) must have a standardized recipe that documents the amount of yogurt per serving. For example, to credit a smoothie as 1 oz eq of the MMA component, the SFA's standardized recipe must indicate that each serving contains $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of yogurt. For information on standardized recipes, visit the "[Crediting Foods Made from Scratch](#)" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.



To credit yogurt in commercial smoothies, SFAs must obtain a Child Nutrition (CN) label or product formulation statement (PFS) stating the total amount of yogurt (cups or weight) contained in one serving of the product. Commercial smoothies cannot credit as the MMA component without a CN label or PFS. For more information on smoothies, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Crediting Smoothies in the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs](#).

For information on CN labels and PFS forms, refer to the CSDE's resources, [Using Child Nutrition \(CN\) Labels in the School Nutrition Programs](#), [Using Product Formulation Statements in the School Nutrition Programs](#), and [Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the School Nutrition Programs](#), and the USDA's [Tips for Evaluating a Manufacturer's Product Formulation Statement](#). For additional guidance on documentation for commercial products, visit the "Crediting Commercial Processed Products" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage or [Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage.

Training on the requirements for CN labels and PFS forms and how to evaluate a PFS is available in Module 6: Meal Pattern Documentation of the CSDE's training program, [What's in a Meal: National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program Meal Patterns for Grades K-12](#).

The addition of yogurt to a smoothie is not a substitution for fluid milk. SFAs must offer a variety of fluid milk at breakfast and lunch to meet the milk component requirement of the NSLP and SBP meal patterns for grades K-12.

Crediting Yogurt in the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs

Noncreditable Yogurt

Drinkable or squeezable yogurt and frozen yogurt do not credit in the meal patterns for school nutrition programs. The FDA's definition and standard of identity requires that yogurt must be "coagulated," not liquid. The FDA does not have a standard of identity for frozen yogurt.

Due to food safety reasons, homemade yogurt does not credit. Yogurt-flavored products (such as yogurt bars and yogurt-covered fruit or nuts) do not meet the FDA's definition and standard of identity for yogurt, and do not credit in the meal patterns for school nutrition programs.

Resources

Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nslp/crediting/accepting_processed_product_documentation_snp.pdf

Afterschool Snack Program (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/afterschool-snack-program>

Afterschool Snack Program Handbook (CSDE)

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/ASP/ASP_Handbook.pdf

CACFP Halftime Webinar: Choose Yogurts that are Lower in Added Sugars (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/choose-yogurts-are-lower-added-sugars-cacfp-halftime>

Choose Yogurts that are Lower in Added Sugars (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/choose-yogurts-are-lower-sugar>

Crediting Smoothies in the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nslp/crediting/credit_smoothies_snp_grades_k-12.pdf

Crediting Commercial Processed Products (CSDE's Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/crediting-foods-in-school-nutrition-programs#CommercialProducts>

Crediting Commercial Processed Products ("Related Resources" section of the CSDE's Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/meal-patterns-preschoolers-in-school-nutrition-programs/related-resources#CommercialProducts>

Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/food-buying-guide-for-child-nutrition-programs>

Crediting Yogurt in the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs

Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/meal-patterns-school-nutrition-programs>

Meal Patterns for the ASP (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/afterschool-snack-program#MealPatternsASP>

Meats/Meat Alternates Component for Grades K-12 (CSDE's Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/crediting-foods-in-school-nutrition-programs/documents#MMA>

Meats/Meat Alternates Component for Grades K-12 in the ASP ("Documents/Forms" section of the CSDE's Afterschool Snack Program (ASP) webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/afterschool-snack-program/documents#MMAK12>

Meats/Meat Alternates Component for Preschoolers ("Related Resources" section of the CSDE's Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/meal-patterns-preschoolers-in-school-nutrition-programs/related-resources#MMA>

Menu Planning Guide for Grades K-12 in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/menu-planning-guide-for-school-meals>

Product Formulation Statement (Product Analysis) for Meat/Meat Alternate (M/MA) Products in Child Nutrition Programs (USDA):

https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/resource-files/PFS_Meats-Meat_Alternates_Fillable_508.pdf

Resources for the School Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nslp/mealpattern/resources_school_meal_patterns_grades_k-12.pdf

Reviewer's Checklist for Evaluating Manufacturer Product Formulation Statements (Product Analysis) for Meat/Meat Alternate (M/MA) Products

https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/reviewer_checklist.pdf

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

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

Upcoming Meal Pattern Changes (CSDE's Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs webpage):

https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/meal-patterns-school-nutrition-programs#Upcoming_Meal_Pattern_Changes

Crediting Yogurt in the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs

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>

USDA Memo SP 02-2024, CACFP 02-2024, and SFSP 02-2024: Revised: Crediting Tofu and Soy Yogurt Products in the School Meal Programs, CACFP, and SFSP:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/crediting-tofu-and-soy-yogurt-products-school-meal-programs-and-cacfp>

USDA Memo SP 40-2019, CACFP 17-2019, and SFSP 17-2019: Smoothies Offered in Child Nutrition Programs:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cn/smoothies-offered-child-nutrition-programs>

Using Child Nutrition (CN) Labels in the School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nsfp/crediting/cn_labels_snp.pdf

Using Product Formulation Statements in the School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/sde/nutrition/nsfp/crediting/product_formulation_statements.pdf

What's in a Meal Module 6: Meal Pattern Documentation (CSDE's Training Program, What's in a Meal: National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program Meal Patterns for Grades K-12):

<https://portal.ct.gov/sde/nutrition/meal-pattern-training-materials>

Crediting Yogurt in the Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in the School Nutrition Programs

For more information, visit the CSDE's [Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs](#) and [Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpages or contact the [school nutrition programs 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/nslp/crediting/credit_yogurt_snp_grades_k-12.pdf.

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
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

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

The Connecticut State Department of Education is committed to a policy of equal opportunity/affirmative action for all qualified persons. The Connecticut Department of Education does not discriminate in any employment practice, education program, or educational activity on the basis of race; color; religious creed; age; sex; pregnancy; sexual orientation; workplace hazards to reproductive systems, gender identity or expression; marital status; national origin; ancestry; retaliation for previously opposed discrimination or coercion, intellectual disability; genetic information; learning disability; physical disability (including, but not limited to, blindness); mental disability (past/present history thereof); military or veteran status; status as a victim of domestic violence; or criminal record in state employment, unless there is a bona fide occupational qualification excluding persons in any of the aforementioned protected classes. Inquiries regarding the Connecticut State Department of Education's nondiscrimination policies should be directed to: Attorney Louis Todisco, Connecticut State Department of Education, by mail 450 Columbus Boulevard, Hartford, CT 06103-1841; or by telephone 860-713-6594; or by email louis.todisco@ct.gov.

