

Crediting Yogurt for Grades K-12 in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program

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). For information on the meal patterns and crediting foods, refer to the Connecticut State Department of Education’s (CSDE) [Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12](#), and visit the CSDE’s [Meal Patterns for Grades K-12 in School Nutrition Programs](#) and [Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpages.

Quantities for the meat/meat alternates (MMA) component are indicated as ounce equivalents (oz eq) in the NSLP meal pattern 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.



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Overview of Crediting Requirements

Commercial yogurt and soy yogurt credit as meat alternates toward the meat/meat alternates (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).



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.

Serving size (volume or weight)	MMA contribution
1/8 cup or 1 ounce	1/4 oz eq (minimum creditable amount)
1/4 cup or 2 ounces	1/2 oz eq
1/2 cup or 4 ounces	1 oz eq
3/4 cup or 6 ounces	1 1/2 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.”

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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.

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 ½ 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 information on CN labels and PFS forms, refer to the CSDE’s resources, [Using CN Labels in the School Nutrition Programs](#), [Using Product Formulation Statements in the School Nutrition Programs](#), and [Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program](#), 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.

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.

For more information on smoothies, refer to the CSDE’s resource, [Crediting Smoothies for Grades K-12 in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program](#).

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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.

Homemade yogurt does not credit for food safety reasons. 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 National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (CSDE):

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/Accepting_Proccsed_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>

Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs (USDA):

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

Meat/Meat Alternates Component for Grades K-12 (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Crediting-Foods-in-School-Nutrition-Programs/Documents#MMA>

Meat/Meat Alternates Component for Grades K-12 in the ASP (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Afterschool-Snack-Program/Documents#MMAK12>

Menu Planning Guide for School Meals for Grades K-12 (CSDE):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Menu-Planning-Guide-for-School-Meals>

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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 for Meat/Meat Alternates (USDA):

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>

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/NSLP/Crediting/CN_Labels_SNP.pdf

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

https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/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>

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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.

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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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