

Crediting Summary Charts for the Preschool Meal Patterns of the School Nutrition Programs

School Year 2023-24 (July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024)

School food authorities (SFAs) must be able to document the meal pattern contribution of foods and beverages served in the [National School Lunch Program \(NSLP\)](#), [School Breakfast Program \(SBP\)](#), [Afterschool Snack Program \(ASP\)](#), and [Seamless Summer Option \(SSO\)](#) of the NSLP. This document summarizes the crediting requirements and methods for the five food components of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) NSLP and SBP preschool meal patterns. [Chart 1](#) provides an overview of the crediting requirements for each component. [Charts 2 through 6](#) summarize the specific crediting considerations for each of the five meal pattern components (milk, meat/meat alternates, vegetables, fruits, and grains).

Crediting Documentation

SFAs must use appropriate crediting methods and maintain the applicable documentation for commercial products and foods made from scratch. Menu planners should follow the guidance below to ensure that school menus comply with the crediting requirements of the NSLP and SBP meal patterns.

- **Use the Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs (FBG):** The USDA's [FBG](#) determines food yields and crediting information, and indicates the specific contribution of foods toward the meal pattern requirements. The FBG indicates how many servings a specific quantity of food will provide, what quantity of raw product will provide the amount of ready-to-cook food in a recipe, and how much food to buy to provide a specific meal pattern contribution.
- **Obtain a Child Nutrition (CN) label or product formulation statement (PFS) for all commercial processed products:** SFAs must have a CN label or PFS to document the meal pattern contribution of all commercial processed foods with added ingredients, such as combination foods, deli meats, hot dogs, and breaded vegetables. Commercial processed foods without this documentation do not credit. For more information, 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 National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program](#). For guidance on how to review a PFS, refer to the USDA's [Tips for Evaluating a Manufacturer's Product Formulation Statement](#) and [Reviewer's Checklist for Evaluating Manufacturer Product Formulation Statements for Meat/Meat Alternates](#). Additional resources are available in the "Crediting Commercial Processed Products in Preschool Menus" section of the CSDE's [Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs Programs](#) webpage. Training on the requirements for CN labels and PFS forms 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](#).

- **Maintain standardized recipes for foods made from scratch:** SFAs must have standardized recipes that document the crediting information for all foods made from scratch. Determine the recipe's meal pattern contribution per serving by: 1) using the FBG to determine the weight or volume of each creditable ingredient in the recipe; and 2) dividing the weight or volume of each creditable ingredient by the number of servings. The FBG's [Recipe Analysis Workbook \(RAW\)](#) allows menu planners to search for creditable ingredients and calculate the recipe's meal pattern contribution. For more information, visit the "Crediting Foods Made from Scratch in Preschool Menus" section of the CSDE's [Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs Programs](#) webpage.

Remember to round down all crediting amounts for products and standardized recipes to the nearest minimum creditable amount (refer to [chart 1](#)).

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Chart 1 – Overview of Crediting Requirements for the Meal Pattern Components

Criteria	Milk	Meat/Meat Alternates (MMA)	Vegetables	Fruits	Grains
Meal pattern measure	Volume: cups	Weight (ounces [oz]) for most foods; volume (cups) for some foods (e.g., legumes and peanut butter); and either weight or volume for some foods (e.g., yogurt and tofu)	Volume: cups	Volume: cups	Ounce equivalents (oz eq): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> weight (groups A-E) volume (groups H-I)
Minimum creditable amount	Full serving	¼ ounce	⅛ cup	⅛ cup	¼ oz eq
Crediting methods: Round down all crediting amounts for products and standardized recipes to the nearest minimum creditable amount	Credit based on allowable types of milk for each age group (refer to chart 2).	<p>MMA without added ingredients: Credit based on cooked weight, e.g., 1 ounce of cooked lean meat credits as 1 ounce of MMA. Use the FBG to determine the cooked yields or edible portions.</p> <p>Processed MMA with added ingredients: Credit based on the amount specified in the CN label, PFS, or FBG. Note: The manufacturer’s serving weight is not the same as the MMA contribution because processed foods contain non-MMA ingredients.</p>	<p>Credit based on volume (cups) using the yields in the FBG.</p> <p>Credit raw leafy greens as half the volume served.</p>	<p>Credit based on volume (cups) using the yields in the FBG.</p> <p>Credit dried fruit credits as twice the volume served.</p>	<p>Method 1: Use the weight (groups A-E) or volume (groups H-I) in the USDA’s Exhibit A chart (refer to Grain Ounce Equivalents for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program).</p> <p>Method 2: Determine the weight (grams) of the creditable grains per serving (refer to Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Groups A-F: 1 oz eq = 16 grams of creditable grains Groups H: 1 oz eq = 28 grams of creditable grains
Documentation for unprocessed products	Not applicable	Use the FBG to determine and document food yields and crediting information.			
Documentation for processed products	Not applicable, except for milk in smoothies.	Must have CN label or PFS. CSDE webpage: Crediting Commercial Processed Products in Preschool Menus			
Documentation for foods made from scratch	Not applicable, except for milk in smoothies.	Must have recipe (preferably standardized). CSDE webpage: Crediting Foods Made from Scratch in Preschool Menus			

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How to Credit the Meal Pattern Components

Charts 2 through 6 summarize the specific crediting considerations for each of the five components and include links to resources and websites with additional information.

- [Chart 2](#). Milk Component
- [Chart 3](#). Meat/Meat Alternates Component
- [Chart 4](#). Vegetables Component
- [Chart 5](#). Fruits Component
- [Chart 6](#). Grains Component

For detailed guidance on the meal patterns and crediting requirements, refer to the CSDE's *Menu Planning Guide for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program* and visit the “Crediting Foods in Preschool Menus” section of the CSDE's Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs webpage.

Crediting Resources

Crediting Commercial Processed Products in Preschool Menus (CSDE webpage):
<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Patterns-Preschoolers-in-School-Nutrition-Programs/Related-Resources#CommercialProducts>

Crediting Foods Made from Scratch in Preschool Menus (CSDE webpage):
<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Patterns-Preschoolers-in-School-Nutrition-Programs/Related-Resources#ScratchFoods>

Crediting Guidance for the Meal Pattern Components for Preschoolers (CSDE webpage):
<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Patterns-Preschoolers-in-School-Nutrition-Programs/Related-Resources#MealPatternComponentsPreschoolers>

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

Menu Planning Guide for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (CSDE):
https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Preschool/Menu_Planning_Guide_Preschool.pdf

Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE webpage):
<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Patterns-Preschoolers-in-School-Nutrition-Programs>

Noncreditable Foods for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program (CSDE):
https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/Crediting/Noncreditable_Foods_SNP_preschool.pdf



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Chart 2 – How to Credit the Milk Component

The milk component includes only fluid milk. Milk must be pasteurized, meet all state and local requirements, and contain vitamins A and D at levels specified by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). For information on the meal pattern requirements for the milk component, refer to the CSDE’s chart, *Comparison of Meal Pattern Requirements for the Milk Component in School Nutrition Programs*, and to section 3 of the CSDE’s *Menu Planning Guide for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program*.

Noncreditable foods: Examples of foods that do not credit as the milk component include flavored milk; reduced fat (2%) milk and whole milk for ages 2-4; low-fat (1%) milk and fat-free milk for age 1; nondairy milk substitutes that do not meet the USDA’s nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes, such as rice milk, almond milk, and cashew milk; milk that is cooked or baked in prepared foods, such as cereals, puddings, and cream sauces; nutrition supplement beverages, such as Abbott’s Pediasure; powdered milk beverages, such as Nestle’s NIDO; and for public schools only, milk and nondairy milk substitutes that do not meet the state beverage requirements of Connecticut General Statute Section 10-221q. For additional guidance, refer to the CSDE’s *Noncreditable Foods for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program*.

Food item	Crediting requirements	Crediting resources
<p>Fluid milk</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The preschool meal patterns require fluid milk as a beverage. Milk does not credit when cooked or baked in foods, such as cereals, puddings, cream sauces, and other foods. • Milk must be pasteurized, meet all state and local requirements, and contain vitamins A and D at levels specified by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). • Allowable types of milk: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Age 1: Whole milk, unflavored ○ Ages 2-4: Low-fat (1%) or fat-free milk, unflavored • Allowable types of milk include any of the following that meet the fat content and flavor restrictions: lactose-reduced milk, lactose-free milk, acidified milk, cultured milk, cultured buttermilk, and Ultra High Temperature (UHT) milk. • Public schools only: Milk must also meet the state beverage requirements of Section 10-221q of the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S). The state beverage statute requires that milk cannot contain artificial sweeteners and cannot exceed 4 grams of sugars per fluid ounce. • Preschool menus must document the type of milk served to each age group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USDA webpage: Serving Milk in the CACFP • CSDE handout (applies only to public schools): Allowable Beverages for Connecticut Public Schools

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Chart 2 – How to Credit the Milk Component, *continued*

Food item	Crediting requirements	Crediting resources
Iron-fortified infant formula for ages 12-13 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meals and ASP snacks that contain an allowable iron-fortified infant formula are reimbursable for a one-month transition period, when children ages 12 to 13 months are weaning from infant formula to whole cow’s milk. Iron-fortified infant formula does not meet the fluid milk requirement of the preschool meal patterns for any other age group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> USDA guide: <i>Feeding Infants in the Child and Adult Care Food Program</i> USDA Memo 01-2023: Creditability of Infant Formulas Imported Through the Food and Drug Administration’s 2022 Infant Enforcement Discretion Policy in the Child and Adult Care Food Program USDA Memo CACFP 02-2018: Feeding Infants and Meal Pattern Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program: Questions and Answers
Whole milk or reduced-fat for ages 24-25 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meals and ASP snacks that contain unflavored whole milk or unflavored reduced-fat milk may be claimed for reimbursement when served to children ages 24-25 months who are transitioning from whole milk to low-fat or fat-free milk. Whole milk and reduced-fat milk do not meet the fluid milk requirement of the preschool meal patterns for children for any other age. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> USDA guide: <i>Feeding Infants in the Child and Adult Care Food Program</i> USDA Memo CACFP 02-2018: Feeding Infants and Meal Pattern Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program: Questions and Answers
Breastmilk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Breastmilk is allowed as the milk component in the preschool meal patterns for children at any age. Meals and ASP snacks are reimbursable when a parent provides expressed breastmilk, or a mother breastfeeds her child on site. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> USDA guide: <i>Feeding Infants in the Child and Adult Care Food Program</i> USDA Memo CACFP 02-2018: Feeding Infants and Meal Pattern Requirements in the Child and Adult Care Food Program: Questions and Answers
Milk in fruit/vegetable smoothies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The minimum creditable amount of milk in a smoothie is ¼ cup. If a smoothie contains less than the full serving of milk, the meal or ASP snack must include additional milk to provide the full serving for each age group. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CSDE handout: <i>Crediting Smoothies for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program</i>

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Chart 2 – How to Credit the Milk Component, *continued*

Food item	Crediting requirements	Crediting resources
Milk substitutes for children without a disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The USDA allows two types of milk substitutions: 1) nondairy milk substitutes that meet the USDA’s nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes; and 2) lactose-free or lactose-reduced milk that meets the required fat content and flavor restrictions for each age group (refer to “Fluid milk” above). Public schools only: Nondairy milk substitutes must also meet the state beverage requirements of C.G.S. Section 10-221q. The state beverage statute requires that nondairy milk substitutes cannot contain artificial sweeteners and cannot exceed 4 grams of sugars per fluid ounce, 35 percent of calories from fat, and 10 percent of calories from saturated fat. Juice, water, and other beverages can never substitute for milk in meals or ASP snacks for children without a disability. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CSDE handout: Allowable Milk Substitutes for Children with Disabilities in School Nutrition Programs CSDE handout: Determining if Nondairy Beverages Meet the USDA’s Nutrition Standards for Fluid Milk Substitutes in School Nutrition Programs CSDE handout (applies only public schools): Allowable Beverages for Connecticut Public Schools

For more resources, visit the “[Milk Component for Preschoolers](#)” section of the CSDE’s Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs webpage.

Crediting Summary Charts for the Preschool Meal Patterns of the School Nutrition Programs

Chart 3 – How to Credit the Meat/Meat Alternates Component

The MMA component includes fresh and frozen meats (e.g., lean beef, pork, poultry, fish, and shellfish), processed meats (e.g., chicken nuggets, deli meats, and fish sticks), canned meats (e.g., chicken, tuna, and salmon), and meat alternates such as eggs, cheese, yogurt, nuts and seeds and their butters, beans and peas (legumes), tofu, and tempeh. The USDA’s *CACFP Best Practices* recommends limiting processed meats to no more than one serving per week; and serving only lean meats, nuts, and legumes. For information on the meal pattern requirements for the MMA component, refer to section 3 of the CSDE’s *Menu Planning Guide for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program*.

Note: The manufacturer’s serving weight is not the same as the MMA contribution, i.e., 1 ounce does not equal 1 ounce of MMA, because processed foods (such as combination foods, deli meats, hot dogs, and sausages) contain non-MMA ingredients. SFAs must obtain a CN label or PFS for all commercial processed products (refer to “[Crediting Documentation](#)” in this document).

Noncreditable foods: Examples of foods that do not credit as the MMA component include bacon; commercial canned soups (e.g., beef barley, beef noodle, turkey or chicken noodle, and turkey or chicken rice), cream cheese, drinkable yogurt, egg whites, frozen yogurt, imitation cheese, products made with tofu that are not easily recognized as meat substitutes, and sour cream. For additional guidance, refer to the CSDE’s resource, *Noncreditable Foods for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program*.

Food item	1 ounce of MMA =	Additional crediting requirements and resources
Alternate protein products (APPs) , e.g., veggie burgers, meatless chicken nuggets, and soy hotdogs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 ounce of APP: Must have a CN label or PFS from the manufacturer with supporting documentation on company letterhead that the APP ingredient meets the USDA’s requirements (refer to “Crediting Documentation” on page 1 and “Commercial meat, poultry, or fish products with added ingredients” in this section). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CSDE handout: Requirements for Alternate Protein Products in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program USDA handout: Questions and Answers on Alternate Protein Products CSDE training module: What’s in a Meal Module 6: Meal Pattern Documentation
Cheeses , e.g., cheddar, mozzarella, provolone, American, and cottage cheese	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 ounce of natural cheese and pasteurized process cheese, e.g., American. ¼ cup of cottage or ricotta cheese. 2 ounces of cheese substitute, cheese food substitute, and cheese spread substitute, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cream cheese does not credit. Foods that contain cheese (such as pizza and macaroni and cheese) require a CN label or PFS for commercial products and a standardized recipe for foods made from scratch (refer to “Crediting Documentation” on page 1).

Crediting Summary Charts for the Preschool Meal Patterns of the School Nutrition Programs

Chart 3 – How to Credit the Meat/Meat Alternates Component, *continued*

Food item	1 ounce of MMA =	Additional crediting requirements and resources
<p>Commercial combination foods, e.g., pizza and chicken nuggets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varies by product: Must have a CN label or PFS to document the amount of meat or meat alternate per serving (refer to “Crediting Documentation” on page 1 and “Commercial meat, poultry, or fish products with added ingredients” in this section). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSDE handout: Crediting Commercial Meat/Meat Alternate Products in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program • CSDE webpage: Crediting Commercial Processed Products in Preschool Menus
<p>Commercial meat, poultry, or fish products with added ingredients, e.g., hotdogs, deli meats, and sausages</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varies by product: Must have a CN label or PFS to document the amount of meat or meat alternate per serving (refer to “Crediting Documentation” on page 1). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular bacon does not credit. Some brands of turkey bacon might credit with the appropriate documentation from a CN label or PFS. • CSDE handout: Using Child Nutrition (CN) Labels in the School Nutrition Programs • CSDE handout: Using Product Formulation Statements in the School Nutrition Programs • CSDE webpage: Crediting Commercial Processed Products in Preschool Menus • USDA handout: Reviewer’s Checklist for Evaluating Manufacturer Product Formulation Statements for Meat/Meat Alternates • USDA handout: Tips for Evaluating a Manufacturer’s Product Formulation Statement
<p>Cooked lean meat, poultry, or fish, i.e., without bone, skin, or added ingredients</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 ounce: Refer to the FBG for cooked yields of meat, poultry, and fish. 	

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Chart 3 – How to Credit the Meat/Meat Alternates Component, *continued*

Food item	1 ounce of MMA =	Additional crediting requirements and resources
<p>Deli meats, e.g., turkey, ham, roast beef, salami, and bologna</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Varies by product: Must have a CN label or PFS to document the amount of meat per serving (refer to “Crediting Documentation” on page 1 and “Commercial meat, poultry, or fish products with added ingredients” in this section). ● Many deli meats contain added binders, extenders, and liquids, and do not credit based on serving weight. Some deli meats require several ounces to credit as 1 ounce of MMA. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CSDE handout: Crediting Deli Meats in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program ● CSDE training module: What’s in a Meal Module 6: Meal Pattern Documentation
<p>Dried meat, poultry, and seafood products, e.g., jerky and summer sausage</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Varies by product: Must have a CN label or PFS to document the amount of meat per serving (refer to “Crediting Documentation” on page 1 and “Commercial meat, poultry, or fish products with added ingredients” in this section). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Must evaluate the product’s PFS to ensure it meets the following USDA crediting principles: 1) the creditable meat ingredient must match, or have a similar description to, the ingredient listed on the product’s label; 2) the creditable meat ingredient must have a similar description to a food item in the FBG; and 3) the creditable amount cannot exceed the finished weight of the product. For example, a 1-ounce serving of beef jerky cannot credit for more than 1 ounce of the MMA component. ● Ground pork and beef ingredients must include the percent fat because the fat content has a direct correlation to the cooking yield. To credit in Child Nutrition Programs, the fat content of ground beef or ground pork in dried meat products cannot exceed 30 percent. ● USDA Memo SP 21-2019, CACFP 08-2019, and SFSP 07-2019: Crediting Shelf-Stable, Dried and Semi-Dried Meat, Poultry, and Seafood Products in the Child Nutrition Programs ● USDA webinar: Moving Forward: Update on Food Crediting in Child Nutrition Programs with Guidance for Dried Meat Products

Crediting Summary Charts for the Preschool Meal Patterns of the School Nutrition Programs

Chart 3 – How to Credit the Meat/Meat Alternates Component, *continued*

Food item	1 ounce of MMA =	Additional crediting requirements and resources
Eggs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ½ large 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Only whole eggs credit. Liquid egg substitutes are not whole eggs and do not credit. Egg whites served alone do not credit. ● Foods that contain eggs (such as quiche or frittatas) require a CN label or PFS for commercial products and a standardized recipe for foods made from scratch (refer to “Crediting Documentation” on page 1).
Foods made from scratch, e.g., pizza and macaroni and cheese	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Varies by food: Must have a standardized recipe to document the amount of meat or meat alternate per serving (refer to “Crediting Documentation” on page 1). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CSDE webpage: Crediting Foods Made from Scratch in Preschool Menus
Hummus made with chickpeas (or other legumes) and tahini	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Varies by product and standardized recipe. The serving must contain at least ¼ ounce of MMA from the chickpeas/garbanzo beans (legumes) and tahini (sesame paste) combined. ● Commercial products require a CN label or PFS to document the amount of meat alternate per serving (refer to “Crediting Documentation” on page 1 and “Commercial meat, poultry, or fish products with added ingredients” in this section). ● Hummus made from scratch must have a standardized recipe to document the amount of meat alternate per serving (refer to “Crediting Documentation” on page 1). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A ¼-cup serving of legumes credits as 1 ounce of the MMA component. The minimum creditable amount is 1 tablespoon (¼ ounce). ● Tahini credits the same as nut/seed butters. Two tablespoons of tahini credit as 1 ounce of the MMA component. The minimum creditable amount is ½ tablespoon (¼ ounce). ● The legumes in hummus may credit as either MMA or vegetables but one serving cannot credit as both components in the same meal or snack. Refer to chart 4 for information on crediting hummus as the vegetables component. ● CSDE handout: Crediting Legumes in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program

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Chart 3 – How to Credit the Meat/Meat Alternates Component, *continued*

Food item	1 ounce of MMA =	Additional crediting requirements and resources
Legumes (cooked beans and peas) , e.g., kidney beans, black beans, and chickpeas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ¼ cup of cooked legumes ● 1 ounce of roasted legumes, e.g., roasted chickpeas and roasted soybeans (soy nuts) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The liquid served with legumes does not credit, such as the sauce in baked beans. ● Legumes may credit as either MMA or vegetables but one serving cannot credit as both components in the same meal or snack. Refer to chart 4 for information on crediting legumes as vegetables. ● Roasted or dried legumes (such as roasted soybeans or roasted chickpeas) credit as the MMA component the same as nuts and seeds. A 1-ounce serving of roasted or dried legumes credits as 1 ounce of the MMA component. At lunch, roasted or dried legumes cannot credit for more than half of the MMA component; they must be combined with another meat or meat alternate to meet the full serving for each grade group. ● CSDE handout: Crediting Legumes in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program
Pasta products made of 100 percent legume flour , e.g., chickpea flour pasta and lentil flour pasta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ¼ cup of cooked legume flour pasta 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Preschool menus must offer an additional MMA with legume flour pasta, such as tofu, cheese, or meat. ● Pasta products made of 100 percent vegetable flours may credit as either MMA or vegetables but one serving cannot credit as both components in the same meal or snack. Refer to chart 4 for information on crediting 100 percent legume flour pasta products as vegetables.
Nut/seed butters , e.g., peanut butter, almond butter, sunflower seed butter, and soy nut butter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 2 tablespoons ● Note: Use tablespoons, not weight. Measuring 1 ounce by weight does not provide 1 ounce of MMA. The FBG indicates that 1.1 ounces of nut/seed butter credits as 1 ounce of MMA. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consider the appropriateness of the serving size for each age group. It may be unreasonable to provide the full serving of a nut or seed butter in one menu item. For example, a peanut butter sandwich must contain 3 tablespoons of peanut butter to credit as 1½ ounces of MMA. ● CSDE handout: Crediting Nuts and Seeds in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program

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Chart 3 – How to Credit the Meat/Meat Alternates Component, *continued*

Food item	1 ounce of MMA =	Additional crediting requirements and resources
Nuts/seeds , e.g., almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, filberts, macadamia nuts, peanuts, pecans, walnuts, pine nuts, pistachios, pumpkin seeds, soy nuts, and sunflower seeds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 1 ounce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Limit for lunch: Nuts and seeds cannot credit for more than half of the MMA requirement at lunch. ● CSDE handout: <i>Crediting Nuts and Seeds in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program</i>
Surimi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 3 ounces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A PFS is required to credit a surimi product differently (refer to “Commercial meat, poultry, or fish products with added ingredients” in this section).
Tempeh	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 1 ounce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A PFS is required if the product’s ingredients contain anything other than soybeans (or other legumes), water, tempeh culture, vinegar, seasonings, and herbs (refer to “Commercial meat, poultry, or fish products with added ingredients” in this section). ● USDA Memo SP 25-2019, CACFP 12-2019, and SFSP 11-2019: <i>Crediting Tempeh in the Child Nutrition Programs</i> ● USDA webinar: <i>Additional Meat/ Meat Alternate Options for CNPs: Crediting Tempeh and Surimi</i>

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Chart 3 – How to Credit the Meat/Meat Alternates Component, *continued*

Food item	1 ounce of MMA =	Additional crediting requirements and resources
Tofu (commercial)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 1 ounce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Three crediting criteria: 1) must be commercially prepared; 2) must be easily recognized as meat substitutes, such as tofu burgers and tofu sausages; and 3) must contain 5 grams of protein in 2.2 ounces. ● CSDE handout: <i>Crediting Tofu and Tofu Products in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program</i> ● 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

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Chart 3 – How to Credit the Meat/Meat Alternates Component, *continued*

Food item	1 ounce of MMA =	Additional crediting requirements and resources
<p>Yogurt and soy yogurt, plain or flavored; sweetened or unsweetened; and with or without added fruit, either blended or on the bottom or top</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ½ cup or 4 ounces weight 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cannot exceed 3.83 grams of sugars per ounce. ● Yogurt mixed in smoothies credits as the MMA component. Crediting requires a standardized recipe for foods made from scratch, and a PFS or CN label for commercial products. Refer to <i>Crediting Smoothies for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program</i>. ● 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 (refer to chart 5). ● Homemade yogurt does not credit. ● Commercial yogurt products do not credit. Examples include drinkable or squeezable yogurt, frozen yogurt, yogurt bars, yogurt-covered fruits and nuts, and yogurt-flavored products. ● CSDE handout: <i>Crediting Yogurt in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program Preschool Meal Patterns</i> ● 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

For more resources, visit the [“Meat/Meat Alternates Component for Preschoolers”](#) section of the CSDE’s Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs webpage.

Crediting Summary Charts for the Preschool Meal Patterns of the School Nutrition Programs

Chart 4 – How to Credit the Vegetables Component

The vegetables component includes fresh, frozen, and canned vegetables; rehydrated dried vegetables; and pasteurized 100 percent full-strength vegetable juices. The USDA’s *CACFP Best Practices* recommends providing at least one serving per week of dark green vegetables, red and orange vegetables, beans and peas (legumes), starchy vegetables, and other vegetables. For more information, refer to the CSDE’s resource, *Vegetable Subgroups in the Child and Adult Care Food Program*. For information on the meal pattern requirements for the vegetables component, refer to section 3 of the CSDE’s *Menu Planning Guide for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program*.

Juice limit: Pasteurized full-strength juice credits as either the vegetables component or fruits component at only one meal or snack per day.

Noncreditable foods: Examples of foods that do not credit as the vegetables include component chili sauce; dehydrated vegetables used for seasoning; cream vegetable soups, e.g., cream of broccoli and cream of mushroom; home-canned products (for food safety reasons); ketchup; pickle relish; and snack-type foods made from vegetables, such as potato chips. For additional guidance, refer to the CSDE’s resource, *Noncreditable Foods for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program*.

Food item	Credit based on	Additional crediting requirements and resources
Canned vegetables , e.g., corn, peas, and kidney beans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Served volume, e.g., ½ cup = ½ cup of the vegetables component 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must be drained. The packing liquid does not credit, such as the water in canned corn or the sauce in baked beans. Refer to the FBG for yields.
Commercial products containing vegetables , e.g., hummus, vegetable pizza, vegetable egg rolls, breaded onion rings, and soups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Varies by product: Must have a CN label or PFS to document the amount of vegetables per serving (refer to “Crediting Documentation” on page 1). Note: CN labels are available only for main dish commercial products that contribute to the MMA component but typically indicate the contribution of other meal components that are part of these products, e.g., vegetables, fruits, and grains. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CSDE handout: <i>Using Child Nutrition (CN) Labels in the School Nutrition Programs</i> CSDE handout: <i>Using Product Formulation Statements in the School Nutrition Programs</i> CSDE webpage: Crediting Commercial Processed Products in Preschool Menus USDA handout: <i>Tips for Evaluating a Manufacturer’s Product Formulation Statement</i>

Crediting Summary Charts for the Preschool Meal Patterns of the School Nutrition Programs

Chart 4 – How to Credit the Vegetables Component, *continued*

Food item	Credit based on	Additional crediting requirements and resources
Commercial vegetable soups , e.g., vegetable soups (such as minestrone and tomato) and legume soups (such as split pea, lentil, and black bean)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Yields in FBG: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Vegetable soup: 1 cup = ¼ cup of the vegetables component ○ Legume soup: 1 cup = ½ cup of the vegetables component 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Only certain types of vegetable soups credit (refer to the FBG). ● Cream vegetable soups (such as cream of broccoli and cream of mushroom) do not credit. ● Must have a PFS to credit a commercial soup differently (refer to “Commercial products containing vegetables” in this section). ● CSDE handout: <i>Crediting Soup in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program</i>
Dried vegetables , e.g., potato flakes and dried soup mix	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Varies by product: Must have a PFS to document the rehydrated volume of vegetables per serving (refer to “Crediting Documentation” on page 1). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Credits based on the rehydrated volume (cups). ● Dehydrated vegetables used for seasoning (such as dried parsley and onion flakes) do not credit.
Fresh vegetables , e.g., broccoli, carrots, and spinach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Served volume (except raw leafy greens such as lettuce, kale, and spinach) and vegetable subgroup. ● Raw leafy greens: Credit as half the volume served, e.g., ½ cup = ¼ cup of the vegetables component (refer to “Leafy greens” in this section). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Refer to the FBG for yields.
Frozen vegetables , e.g., corn, peas, and green beans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Served volume, e.g., ½ cup = ½ cup of the vegetables component 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Refer to the FBG for yields.

Crediting Summary Charts for the Preschool Meal Patterns of the School Nutrition Programs

Chart 4 – How to Credit the Vegetables Component, *continued*

Food item	Credit based on	Additional crediting requirements and resources
Hummus made with chickpeas (or other legumes) and tahini	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Varies by product and standardized recipe. The serving must contain at least 1/8 cup of legumes to credit toward the vegetables component. Commercial products require a CN label or PFS to document the amount of legumes per serving (refer to “Crediting Documentation” on page 1). Hummus made from scratch must have a standardized recipe to document the amount of legumes per serving (refer to “Crediting Documentation” on page 1). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hummus credits as the vegetables component (legumes subgroup) based on the amount of legumes per serving. For example, hummus that contains 1/4 cup of chickpeas per serving credits as 1/4 cup of the legumes subgroup. The minimum creditable amount is 1/8 cup. The legumes in hummus may credit as either MMA or vegetables but one serving cannot credit as both components in the same meal or snack. Refer to chart 3 for information on crediting hummus as the MMA component. CSDE handout: Crediting Legumes in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program
Leafy greens , e.g., kale, greens (e.g., beet, collard, mustard, and turnip), spinach, arugula, and lettuce such as iceberg, romaine, Boston, Bibb, red leaf, and spring mix	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raw leafy greens: half the volume served, e.g., 1/2 cup = 1/4 cup of the vegetables component Cooked, roasted, or dried leafy greens (such as cooked spinach and roasted kale): served volume, e.g., 1/2 cup = 1/2 cup of the vegetables component 	
Legumes (cooked beans and peas) , e.g., kidney beans, black beans, and chickpeas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Served volume: Includes cooked legumes, roasted legumes (e.g., roasted chickpeas and soy nuts), and pasta made of 100 percent legume flour pasta (e.g., red lentil flour pasta and chickpea flour pasta). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to the FBG for yields. The liquid served with legumes does not credit, such as the sauce in baked beans. Legumes may credit as either vegetables or MMA but one serving cannot credit as both components in the same meal or snack. Refer to chart 3 for information on crediting legumes as MMA. CSDE handout: Crediting Legumes in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program

Crediting Summary Charts for the Preschool Meal Patterns of the School Nutrition Programs

Chart 4 – How to Credit the Vegetables Component, *continued*

Food item	Credit based on	Additional crediting requirements and resources
Mixed vegetables, e.g., peas and carrots	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Served volume, e.g., ½ cup = ½ cup of the vegetables component 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to the FBG for yields. Credit as one serving of the vegetables component unless 1) the menu planner knows the amount of each type of vegetable in the mixture; and 2) the mixture contains at least ⅛ cup each of two different kinds of vegetables. To credit as more than one serving of the vegetables component, commercial products require a PFS that documents the amount of each type of vegetable in the mixture (refer to “Commercial products containing vegetables” in this section).
Mixtures of vegetables and fruits, e.g., carrot-raisin salad	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May credit toward both the vegetables component and fruits component if the serving contains at least ⅛ cup of recognizable vegetables and at least ⅛ cup of recognizable fruits. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to the FBG for yields. To credit as both the vegetables component and fruits component, commercial products require a PFS to document the amount of each type of vegetable and fruit in the mixture (refer to “Commercial products containing vegetables” in this section).
Pasta products made of 100 percent vegetable flours, e.g., chickpea flour pasta and lentil flour pasta.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Served volume: ½ cup of pasta made of 100 percent vegetable flour credits as ½ cup of the vegetables component. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pasta products made of 100 percent vegetable flours may credit as either vegetables or MMA but one serving cannot credit as both components in the same meal or snack. Refer to chart 3 for information on crediting 100 percent legume flour pasta products as MMA. Pasta products made of vegetable flour with other non-vegetable ingredients require a PFS detailing the volume of vegetable flour per serving (refer to “Commercial products containing vegetables” in this section).

Crediting Summary Charts for the Preschool Meal Patterns of the School Nutrition Programs

Chart 4 – How to Credit the Vegetables Component, *continued*

Food item	Credit based on	Additional crediting requirements and resources
<p>Pureed vegetables, e.g., sweet potatoes, tomato sauce, and butternut squash</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Served volume, e.g., ½ cup = ½ cup of the vegetables component 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Must be recognizable (visible), e.g., tomato sauce, split pea soup, mashed potatoes, mashed sweet potatoes, and pureed butternut squash. Pureed vegetables do not credit as the vegetables component when they are not recognizable unless the food also provides at least ⅛ cup of a visible creditable vegetable. For example, a serving of macaroni and cheese that contains ⅛ cup of diced butternut squash (visible) and ⅛ cup of pureed carrots (not visible) credits as ¼ cup of the red/orange vegetables subgroup. Pureed vegetables in smoothies credit only as juice. CSDE handout: <i>Crediting Smoothies for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program</i>
<p>Vegetable juice, pasteurized full-strength, e.g., tomato juice and mixed vegetable juice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Served volume, e.g., ½ cup = ½ cup of the vegetables component 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Juice limit: Juice credits as either the vegetables component or fruits component at only one meal or snack per day. The juice limit includes all sources of juice, e.g., 100 percent juice, frozen pops made from 100 percent juice, pureed fruits and vegetables in smoothies, and juice from canned fruit in 100 percent juice. CSDE handout: <i>Crediting Juice in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program Preschool Meal Patterns</i>
<p>For more resources, visit the “Vegetables Component for Preschoolers” section of the CSDE’s Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs webpage.</p>		

Crediting Summary Charts for the Preschool Meal Patterns of the School Nutrition Programs

Chart 5 – How to Credit the Fruits Component

The fruits component includes fresh fruit; frozen fruit; dried fruit; canned fruit in juice, water, or light syrup; and pasteurized 100 percent full-strength fruit juice. The USDA’s *CACFP Best Practices* recommends serving whole fruits (fresh, canned, dried, and frozen) more often than juice; and making at least one of the two required snack components a vegetable or fruit. For information on the meal pattern requirements for the fruits component, refer to section 3 of the CSDE’s *Menu Planning Guide for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program*.

Juice limit: Pasteurized full-strength juice credits as either the vegetables component or fruits component at only one meal or snack per day.

Noncreditable foods: Examples of foods that do not credit as the fruits component include banana chips; dried coconut; fruit snacks (e.g., fruit roll-ups, fruit leathers, fruit wrinkles, fruit twists, yogurt-covered fruit snacks); home-canned products (for food safety reasons); jams, jellies, and preserves; and juice drinks that are not 100 percent juice such as grape juice drink, orange juice drink, pineapple-grapefruit drink, cranberry juice cocktail, and lemonade. For additional guidance, refer to the CSDE’s resource, *Noncreditable Foods for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program*.

Food item	Credits based on	Additional crediting requirements and resources
Canned fruits in juice, water, or syrup , e.g., canned peaches and pineapple tidbits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Served volume, e.g., ½ cup = ½ cup of the fruits component 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The serving may include the 100 percent juice in which the fruit is packed but cannot include water or syrup. If the menu planner credits the juice from canned fruit toward the fruits component, it also counts toward the juice limit. Refer to the FBG for yields. CSDE handout: <i>Crediting Juice in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program Preschool Meal Patterns</i>
Coconut	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fresh and frozen coconut: Served volume, e.g., ½ cup = ½ cup of the fruits component. Dried coconut: Twice the volume served, e.g., ¼ cup = ½ cup of the fruits component. Coconut water labeled as 100 percent juice (credits as juice): Served volume, e.g., ½ cup = ½ cup of the fruits component. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coconut flour, coconut oil, and coconut milk do not credit. SFAs must count coconut water with all other juices toward the juice limit (refer to “Juice limit” under “Fruit juice, pasteurized full-strength” in this section).

Crediting Summary Charts for the Preschool Meal Patterns of the School Nutrition Programs

Chart 5 – How to Credit the Fruits Component, *continued*

Food item	Credits based on	Additional crediting requirements and resources
Commercial products containing fruits , e.g., trail mix with dried fruit and fruit smoothies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Varies by product: Must have a CN label or PFS to document the amount of vegetables per serving (refer to “Crediting Documentation” on page 1). Note: CN labels are available only for main dish commercial products that contribute to the MMA component. They typically indicate the contribution of other meal components that are part of these products, e.g., vegetables, fruits, and grains. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CSDE handout: Using Child Nutrition (CN) Labels in the School Nutrition Programs CSDE handout: Using Product Formulation Statements in the School Nutrition Programs CSDE webpage: Crediting Commercial Processed Products in Preschool Menus USDA handout: Tips for Evaluating a Manufacturer’s Product Formulation Statement
Dried fruits , e.g., raisins, apricots, and cherries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Twice the volume served, e.g., ¼ cup = ½ cup of the fruits component 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dried banana chips, and fruit snacks (e.g., fruit roll-ups and yogurt-covered fruit snacks) do not credit.
Fresh fruits , e.g., apples, bananas, and pears	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Served volume, e.g., ½ cup = ½ cup of the fruits component 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to the FBG for yields. Depending on the size, one piece of fresh fruit might not provide the full serving of the fruits component. For example, one clementine credits as ¾ cup of the fruits component, which does not provide the required ½-cup serving for ages 3-4 at breakfast or snack. Check the FBG to ensure proper crediting.
Frozen fruits , e.g., frozen berries and melon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Served volume, e.g., ½ cup = ½ cup of the fruits component 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer to the FBG for yields.

Crediting Summary Charts for the Preschool Meal Patterns of the School Nutrition Programs

Chart 5 – How to Credit the Fruits Component, *continued*

Food item	Credits based on	Additional crediting requirements and resources
<p>Fruit juice, pasteurized full-strength, e.g., apple juice, orange juice, and grape juice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Served volume, e.g., ½ cup = ½ cup of the fruits component 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Juice limit: Juice credits as either the fruits component or vegetables component at only one meal or snack per day. The juice limit includes all sources of juice, e.g., 100 percent juice, frozen pops made from 100 percent juice, pureed fruits and vegetables in smoothies, and juice from canned fruit in 100 percent juice. ● Juice blends: Fruit and vegetable juice blends credit based on the first ingredient. If the first ingredient is a fruit juice or fruit puree, it credits as the fruits component. If the first ingredient is a vegetable juice or vegetable puree, it credits as the vegetables component. ● CSDE handout: <i>Crediting Juice in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program Preschool Meal Patterns</i>
<p>Pureed fruits, e.g., applesauce</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Served volume, e.g., ½ cup = ½ cup of the fruits component 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Must be recognizable (visible), e.g., applesauce. ● Pureed fruits do not credit as the fruits component when they are not recognizable, e.g., using applesauce or prune puree to replace the oil in muffins. ● Pureed vegetables and fruits in smoothies credit only as juice (refer to “Smoothies made of fruits/vegetables/juice” in this chart).
<p>Smoothies made of fruits/vegetables/juice</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pureed fruits and vegetables in smoothies credit only as juice and must meet the same requirements as juice (refer to “Fruit juice, pasteurized full-strength” in this chart). ● Crediting is based on the volume (cups) of pureed fruits and vegetables per serving. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Commercial smoothies require a PFS (or CN label, if available) to credit. Commercial smoothies cannot contain dietary or herbal supplements (refer to “Commercial products containing fruits” in this section). ● CSDE handout: <i>Crediting Smoothies for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program</i>

For more resources, visit the “[Fruits Component for Preschoolers](#)” section of the CSDE’s Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs webpage.

Chart 6 – How to Credit the Grains Component

The grains component includes breads and bread products (e.g., biscuits, bagels, rolls, tortillas, and muffins), snack products (e.g., crackers, animal crackers, graham crackers, hard pretzels, tortilla chips, and popcorn); cereal grains (e.g., buckwheat, brown rice, bulgur, and quinoa); ready-to-eat (RTE) breakfast cereals; cooked breakfast cereals (e.g., oatmeal); bread products used as an ingredient in another menu item such as combination foods (e.g., breading on fish or poultry and pizza crust in pizza); and pasta. Grain-based desserts (such as cookies, brownies, cakes, and granola bars) do not credit in the preschool meal patterns. For information on the meal pattern requirements for the grains component, refer to section 3 of the CSDE’s *Menu Planning Guide for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program*.

Commercial grain products and standardized recipes must meet the crediting, whole grain-rich (WGR), and oz eq requirements.

- **Crediting requirements:** Grain products and recipes must be made with creditable grains. Creditable grains include whole grains, enriched grains, bran (such as oat bran, wheat bran, corn bran, rice bran, and rye bran), and germ (such as wheat germ). Bran and germ credit the same as enriched grains. For guidance on creditable grains, refer to the CSDE’s resources, *Crediting Whole Grains in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program*, *Crediting Enriched Grains in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program*, *Crediting Breakfast Cereals for Grades K-12 in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program*, and *How to Identify Creditable Grains for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program*.
- **Daily whole WGR requirement:** At least one serving per day must be WGR. The USDA’s *CACFP best practices* recommend at least two WGR serving per day. Grains that are not WGR must be enriched. For guidance on the preschool WGR criteria and how to identify WGR foods, refer to the CSDE’s *Guide to Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the Child and Adult Care Food Program*. **Note:** Foods that meet the WGR criteria for the NSLP and SBP meal patterns for grades K-12 will also meet the preschool WGR criteria.
- **Oz eq:** The oz eq contribution of creditable commercial grain products and standardized recipes must be determined using one of the two allowable methods: 1) the required weight (groups A-E) or volume (groups H-I) in the USDA’s *Exhibit A: Grain Requirements for Child Nutrition Programs* (refer to the CSDE’s resources, *Grain Ounce Equivalents for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program* and *How to Use the Ounce Equivalents Chart for the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program*); or 2) the creditable grains per serving (refer to the CSDE’s resources, *Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program* and *When Commercial Grain Products Require a Product Formulation Statement to Credit in the School Nutrition Programs*). **Note:** The CSDE’s *Grain Ounce Equivalents for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program* does not include groups F and G (grain-based desserts) of the USDA’s Exhibit A chart because these foods do not credit in the preschool meal patterns.

Noncreditable foods: Examples of foods that do not credit as the grains component include commercial products that do not contain a creditable grain as the first ingredient (excluding water); standardized recipes that are not made with creditable grains; breakfast cereals that contain more than 6 grams of sugars per ounce; and grain-based desserts. For additional guidance, refer to the CSDE’s resource, *Noncreditable Foods for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program*.

Crediting Summary Charts for the Preschool Meal Patterns of the School Nutrition Programs

Chart 6 – How to Credit the Grains Component, *continued*

Food item	Crediting requirements	WGR requirements	1 oz eq of grains =
Breakfast cereals: cold RTE in group I , e.g., flaked cereals, round cereals, puffed cereals, and granola	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Crediting criteria: 1) The first ingredient must be a creditable grain or the cereal must be fortified; and 2) the cereal cannot exceed 6 grams of sugars per dry ounce. ● CSDE handout: <i>Crediting Breakfast Cereals for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program</i> ● CSDE handout: <i>When Commercial Grain Products Require a Product Formulation Statement to Credit in the School Nutrition Programs</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● WGR criteria: 1) The first ingredient must be a whole grain and the cereal must be fortified, or the cereal must be 100 percent whole grain; and 2) the cereal cannot exceed 6 grams of sugars per dry ounce. ● CSDE handout: <i>Crediting Breakfast Cereals for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program</i> ● CSDE handout: <i>When Commercial Grain Products Require a Product Formulation Statement to Credit in the School Nutrition Programs</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 1 cup of flaked or round cereal ● 1¼ cups of puffed cereal ● ¼ cup of granola ● CSDE handout: <i>Grain Ounce Equivalents for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program</i> ● CSDE handout: <i>When Commercial Grain Products Require a Product Formulation Statement to Credit in the School Nutrition Programs</i>
Breakfast cereals: cooked hot in group H , e.g., oatmeal, cream of wheat, and farina	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Crediting criteria: 1) The first ingredient must be a creditable grain or the cereal must be fortified; and 2) the cereal cannot exceed 6 grams of sugars per dry ounce. ● CSDE handout: <i>Crediting Breakfast Cereals for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program</i> ● CSDE handout: <i>When Commercial Grain Products Require a Product Formulation Statement to Credit in the School Nutrition Programs</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● WGR criteria: 1) The first ingredient must be a whole grain; 2) the next two grain ingredients (if any) must be creditable grains; and 3) the cereal cannot exceed 6 grams of sugars per dry ounce. ● CSDE handout: <i>Crediting Breakfast Cereals for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program</i> ● CSDE handout: <i>When Commercial Grain Products Require a Product Formulation Statement to Credit in the School Nutrition Programs</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ½ cup cooked or 1 ounce (28 grams) dry ● CSDE handout: <i>Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program</i> ● CSDE handout: <i>Grain Ounce Equivalents for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program</i> ● CSDE handout: <i>When Commercial Grain Products Require a Product Formulation Statement to Credit in the School Nutrition Programs</i>

Crediting Summary Charts for the Preschool Meal Patterns of the School Nutrition Programs

Chart 6 – How to Credit the Grains Component, *continued*

Food item	Crediting requirements	WGR requirements	1 oz eq of grains =
<p>Cereal grains in group H, e.g., pasta, cooked breakfast cereals, and other cereal grains, e.g., amaranth, barley, buckwheat, cornmeal, corn grits, farina, kasha, millet, oats, quinoa, wheat berries, and rolled wheat</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Crediting criteria: 1) The first ingredient must be a creditable grain. ● CSDE handout: <i>Crediting Enriched Grains in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program</i> ● CSDE handout: <i>Crediting Whole Grains in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program</i> ● CSDE handout: <i>When Commercial Grain Products Require a Product Formulation Statement to Credit in the School Nutrition Programs</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● WGR criteria: 1) The first ingredient must be a whole grain; and 2) the next two grain ingredients (if any) must be creditable grains. ● CSDE guide: <i>Guide to Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the Child and Adult Care Food Program</i> ● CSDE handout: <i>When Commercial Grain Products Require a Product Formulation Statement to Credit in the School Nutrition Programs</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ½ cup cooked or 1 ounce (28 grams) dry ● CSDE handout: <i>Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program</i> ● CSDE handout: <i>Grain Ounce Equivalents for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program</i> ● CSDE handout: <i>When Commercial Grain Products Require a Product Formulation Statement to Credit in the School Nutrition Programs</i>

Crediting Summary Charts for the Preschool Meal Patterns of the School Nutrition Programs

Chart 6 – How to Credit the Grains Component, *continued*

Food item	Crediting requirements	WGR requirements	1 oz eq of grains =
<p>Commercial products: grain foods in groups A-E, e.g., crackers, breads, rolls, taco shells, muffins, waffles, pancakes, and sweet crackers like animal crackers and graham crackers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The first ingredient (excluding water) must be a creditable grain. ● CSDE resource: <i>How to Identify Creditable Grains for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● WGR criteria: 1) At least half of the grains in the product must be whole grains; and 2) any other grain ingredients must be enriched, bran, or germ. ● Six methods to identify WGR products: 1) Rule of Three; 2) WIC whole-grain foods list; 3) Documentation; 4) National School Lunch Program (NSLP) WGR criteria; 5) Food and Drug Administration (FDA) whole grain health claim; and 6) FDA Standard of Identity (only for certain types of whole-grain products). ● CSDE guide: <i>Guide to Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the Child and Adult Care Food Program.</i> ● CSDE handout: <i>When Commercial Grain Products Require a Product Formulation Statement to Credit in the School Nutrition Programs</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Varies by product: Use method 1 (USDA’s Exhibit A chart, <i>Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program</i>), following the instructions in the CSDE’s resource, <i>How to Use the Grain Ounce Equivalents Chart for the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program.</i> ● Use method 2 (creditable grains per serving) and obtain a PFS if any of the following apply: 1) the first ingredient is not a creditable grain, but the product contains more than one creditable grain; 2) <i>for WGR foods only</i>, the first ingredient is not a whole grain, but the product contains more than one whole grain; 3) <i>for WGR foods only</i>, the first ingredient is a whole grain, and the product contains two or more enriched grains; 4) <i>for WGR foods only</i>, the first ingredient is a flour blend of whole and enriched flour; 5) a combination food that contains a grain portion is not CN labeled; 6) the manufacturer claims that a commercial grain product can provide the required creditable grains using a serving that is less than the amount in the USDA’s Exhibit A chart; and 7) the product is not listed the USDA’s Exhibit A chart. Refer to the CSDE’s resource, <i>When Commercial Grain Products Require a Product Formulation Statement to Credit in the School Nutrition Programs and Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program.</i>

Crediting Summary Charts for the Preschool Meal Patterns of the School Nutrition Programs

Chart 6 – How to Credit the Grains Component, *continued*

Food item	Crediting requirements	WGR requirements	1 oz eq of grains =
<p>Commercial products: combination foods that contain a grain portion from groups A-E or H-I, e.g., pizza, breaded chicken nuggets, and macaroni and cheese</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ingredients listed together: The first <i>grain</i> ingredient must be a creditable grain. ● Grain portion listed separately: The <i>first ingredient</i> in the grain portion must be a creditable grain. ● CSDE handout: <i>Crediting Enriched Grains in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program</i> ● CSDE handout: <i>Crediting Whole Grains in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program</i> ● CSDE resource: <i>How to Identify Creditable Grains for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program</i> ● CSDE handout: <i>When Commercial Grain Products Require a Product Formulation Statement to Credit in the School Nutrition Programs</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● WGR criteria: 1) At least half of the grains in the <i>grain portion</i> of the product must be whole grains; and 2) any other grain ingredients in the <i>grain portion</i> must be enriched, bran, or germ. ● Six methods to identify if grain portion is WGR: 1) Rule of Three; 2) WIC whole-grain foods list; 3) Documentation; 4) National School Lunch Program (NSLP) WGR criteria; 5) Food and Drug Administration (FDA) whole grain health claim; and 6) FDA Standard of Identity (only for certain types of whole-grain products). ● CSDE guide: <i>Guide to Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the Child and Adult Care Food Program.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Varies by product: Must have a CN label or PFS to document the creditable grains per serving (refer to “Crediting Documentation” on page 1). Note: CN labels are available only for main dish commercial products that contribute to the MMA component but typically indicate the contribution of other meal components that are part of these products, e.g., vegetables, fruits, and grains. ● CSDE handout: <i>Using Child Nutrition (CN) Labels in the School Nutrition Programs</i> ● CSDE handout: <i>Using Product Formulation Statements in the School Nutrition Programs</i> ● CSDE handout: <i>When Commercial Grain Products Require a Product Formulation Statement to Credit in the School Nutrition Programs</i> ● CSDE webpage: Crediting Commercial Processed Products in Preschool Menus ● USDA handout: <i>Tips for Evaluating a Manufacturer’s Product Formulation Statement</i> ● CSDE training module: What’s in a Meal Module 6: Meal Pattern Documentation

Crediting Summary Charts for the Preschool Meal Patterns of the School Nutrition Programs

Chart 6 – How to Credit the Grains Component, *continued*

Food item	Crediting requirements	WGR requirements	1 oz eq of grains =
Foods made from scratch: grain foods in groups A-E , e.g., crackers, breads, rolls, muffins, waffles, and pancakes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The <i>grain portion</i> of the recipe must be made with creditable grains. ● CSDE handout: <i>Crediting Enriched Grains in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program</i> ● CSDE handout: <i>Crediting Whole Grains in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program</i> ● CSDE resource: <i>How to Identify Creditable Grains for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program</i> ● CSDE handout: <i>When Commercial Grain Products Require a Product Formulation Statement to Credit in the School Nutrition Programs</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● WGR criterion: The amount of whole grains in the <i>grain portion</i> is equal to or more than the total amount of enriched grains, bran, and germ. ● Method to identify WGR recipes: Compare the amount of the whole grain ingredients to the total amount of enriched grains, bran, and germ. ● CSDE guide: <i>Guide to Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the Child and Adult Care Food Program</i> ● USDA handout: <i>Is My Recipe Whole Grain-Rich in the CACFP?</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Varies by standardized recipe. ● If serving weight (groups A-E) or volume (group H-I) of the grain portion is known: Use method 1 (USDA’s Exhibit A chart, <i>Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program</i>), following the instructions in the CSDE’s <i>How to Use the Grain Ounce Equivalents Chart for the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program</i>. ● If serving weight (groups A-E) or volume (group H-I) of the grain portion is not known: Use method 2 (creditable grains per serving). Refer to the CSDE’s <i>Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program</i>. ● CSDE webpage: “Standardized Recipes” section of CSDE’s Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs webpage

Crediting Summary Charts for the Preschool Meal Patterns of the School Nutrition Programs

Chart 6 – How to Credit the Grains Component, *continued*

Food item	Crediting requirements	WGR requirements	1 oz eq of grains =
<p>Foods made from scratch: combination foods that contain a grain portion from groups A-E or H-I, e.g., pizza, breaded chicken nuggets, and macaroni and cheese</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Standardized recipes must be made with creditable grains. ● CSDE handout: <i>Crediting Enriched Grains in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program</i> ● CSDE handout: <i>Crediting Whole Grains in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program</i> ● CSDE resource: <i>How to Identify Creditable Grains for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program</i> ● CSDE handout: <i>When Commercial Grain Products Require a Product Formulation Statement to Credit in the School Nutrition Programs</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● WGR criterion: The amount of whole grains is equal to or more than the total amount of enriched grains, bran, and germ. ● Method to identify WGR recipes: Compare the amount of the whole grain ingredients to the total amount of enriched grains, bran, and germ. ● CSDE guide: <i>Guide to Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the Child and Adult Care Food Program</i> ● CSDE handout: <i>Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program</i> ● USDA handout: <i>Is My Recipe Whole Grain-Rich in the CACFP?</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Varies by standardized recipe. ● If serving weight is known: Use method 1 (USDA’s Exhibit A chart, <i>Grain Ounce Equivalents for Grades K-12 in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program</i>), following the instructions in the CSDE’s <i>How to Use the Grain Ounce Equivalents Chart for the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program</i>. Note: To use the oz eq chart for foods made from scratch, SFAs must know the serving weight. If the standardized recipe does not provide this information, SFAs must either determine the average serving weight by weighing several portions (refer to the CSDE’s <i>Yield Study Data Form for Child Nutrition Programs</i>) or use method 2 (creditable grains) below. ● If serving weight is not known: Use method 2 (creditable grains per serving). Refer to the CSDE’s <i>Calculation Methods for Grain Ounce Equivalents for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program</i>. ● CSDE webpage: “Standardized Recipes” section of CSDE’s Crediting Foods in School Nutrition Programs webpage

Crediting Summary Charts for the Preschool Meal Patterns of the School Nutrition Programs

Chart 6 – How to Credit the Grains Component, *continued*

Food item	Crediting requirements	WGR requirements	1 oz eq of grains =
<p>Grain-based desserts in groups C-G, e.g., plain brownies, cookies, sweet crackers (such as animal crackers, and graham crackers), cakes, cinnamon rolls, doughnuts, cereal bars, granola bars, breakfast bars, sweet rolls, pastries, and toaster pastries</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Not applicable: Grain-based desserts do not credit in the preschool meal patterns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Not applicable: Grain-based desserts do not credit in the preschool meal patterns. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Not applicable: Grain-based desserts do not credit in the preschool meal patterns.

For more resources, visit the [“Grains Component for Preschoolers”](#) section of the CSDE’s Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs webpage.

Crediting Summary Charts for the Preschool Meal Patterns of the School Nutrition Programs



For more information, refer to the CSDE's *Menu Planning Guide for Preschoolers in the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program* and visit the CSDE's [Meal Patterns for Preschoolers in School Nutrition Programs](#) webpage 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/CACFP/Crediting/Crediting_Summary_Charts_SNP_Preschool.pdf.

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