

Requirements for the Milk Component of the Summer Food Service Program Meal Patterns

This document provides guidance on meeting the meal pattern and crediting requirements for the milk component of the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) [Summer Food Service Program \(SFSP\) meal patterns](#). For more information on the SFSP meal patterns and the milk component, visit the “[SFSP Meal Patterns](#)” and “[Milk Component for the SFSP](#)” sections of the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) SFSP webpage.



Contents

Overview of Meal Pattern Requirements	2
Crediting Requirements	2
Allowable types of fluid milk	2
Milk substitutes for children without disabilities	2
Milk substitutes for children with disabilities	3
Milk in smoothies	3
Milk in prepared foods	4
Noncreditable milk	4
Keeping Milk Cold.....	4
Resources	5



Requirements for the Milk Component of the SFSP Meal Patterns

Overview of Meal Pattern Requirements

The SFSP meal patterns require 1 cup of milk at breakfast, lunch, and supper. A 1-cup serving of milk may be offered as one of the two required snack components.

- **Breakfast:** Milk may be served as a beverage, on cereal, or a combination of both.
- **Lunch and supper:** Milk must be served as a beverage.
- **Snack:** Milk may be served as a beverage, on cereal, or a combination of both. Milk cannot be served when juice is the only other snack component. To increase nutrient variety, the CSDE recommends not serving milk when yogurt is the only other snack component.

Crediting Requirements

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).

Allowable types of fluid milk

The SFSP milk component allows unflavored or flavored pasteurized whole milk, reduced-fat milk, low-fat milk, fat-free milk, buttermilk, lactose-reduced milk, and acidophilus milk. The recommendations below indicate the appropriate type of milk for each age group.

- **Age 1:** Serve unflavored whole milk.
- **Ages 2-5:** Serve unflavored low-fat or fat-free milk.
- **Ages 6 and older:** Serve unflavored or flavored low-fat or fat-free milk.

For additional guidance, refer to the CSDE's [*Crediting Summary Charts for the Summer Food Service Program Meal Patterns*](#).

Milk substitutes for children without disabilities

SFSP sponsors cannot serve nondairy milk substitutes to children without a disability. Examples of nondairy milk substitutes include soy milk, almond milk, cashew milk, rice milk, and oat milk.

Juice, water, and other beverages cannot substitute for milk in SFSP meals and snacks for children without a disability.

Requirements for the Milk Component of the SFSP Meal Patterns

School food authorities (SFAs) operating the SFSP may serve nondairy milk substitutes that meet the USDA’s nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes and comply with the state beverage requirements for nondairy milk substitutes ([Section 10-221q of the Connecticut General Statutes](#)). Certain brands of soy and oat milk are the only nondairy milk products that currently meet the USDA’s nutrition standards for fluid milk substitutes. For additional guidance, refer to the CSDE resources, *Allowable Milk Substitutes for Children with Disabilities in School Nutrition Programs* and *Determining if Nondairy Beverages Meet the USDA’s Nutrition Standards for Fluid Milk Substitutes in School Nutrition Programs*.

Milk substitutes for children with disabilities

When a child has a medically documented disability that requires a milk substitute, the SFSP sponsor must provide an appropriate substitute based on the child’s medical statement. SFSP sponsors may serve nondairy beverages in place of fluid milk when the substitution is supported by a medical statement signed by a recognized medical authority.

The Connecticut State Department of Public Health (DPH) defines a recognized medical authority as a state-licensed health care professional who is authorized to write medical prescriptions under state law. This includes licensed physicians (doctors of medicine or osteopathy), physician assistants, and advanced practice registered nurses (APRN).

The SFSP meal patterns do not allow nondairy beverages for children without disabilities.

For more information, refer to [USDA Memo CACFP 14-2017 and SFSP 10-2017: Modifications to Accommodate Disabilities in CACFP and SFSP](#) and visit the “[Meal Modifications for Special Diets](#)” section of the CSDE’s SFSP webpage.

Milk in smoothies

Milk served in fruit and vegetable smoothies credits as the milk component. The minimum creditable amount of milk in a smoothie is $\frac{1}{4}$ cup. If a smoothie contains less than 1 cup of milk per serving, the SFSP menu must include the additional amount from another serving of milk.



Crediting milk in amounts less than the full serving applies only to smoothies. SFSP menus must always offer the full 1-cup serving of milk with each meal.

Requirements for the Milk Component of the SFSP Meal Patterns

To credit milk in smoothies made from scratch, SFSP sponsors must have a standardized recipe that documents the amount of milk per serving. To credit milk in commercial smoothies, SFSP sponsors must obtain a product formulation statement (PFS) that states the amount of milk per serving. The PFS must also attest that commercial mixes with milk are made using ingredients that meet federal, state, and local definitions for fluid milk. For more information, refer to the CSDE's resources, [Crediting Smoothies in the Summer Food Service Program](#) and [Using Product Formulation Statements in the Summer Food Service Program](#).

Milk in prepared foods

The SFSP meal patterns require fluid milk as a beverage. Milk does not credit when cooked in cereals, puddings, cream sauces, or other foods. For example, milk does not credit when used to make quiche or macaroni and cheese. Foods made from milk (such as cheese, yogurt, and ice cream) do not credit as the milk component. For information on crediting cheese and yogurt as the meat/meat alternates component, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Requirements for the Meat/Meat Alternates Component of the Summer Food Service Program Meal Patterns](#).

Noncreditable milk

Some examples of foods that do not credit as the milk component include nondairy milk substitutes (e.g., soy milk, rice milk, almond milk, and cashew milk), milk that is cooked or baked in foods (e.g., cereals, puddings, and cream sauces) nutrition supplement beverages (e.g., Abbott's Pediasure), powdered milk beverages (e.g., Nestle's NIDO), and *only for SFSP sponsors operating on the premises of public schools*, milk and nondairy milk substitutes that do not meet the state beverage requirements of Connecticut General Statute Section 10-221q. For more information, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Noncreditable Foods in the Summer Food Service Program](#).

Keeping Milk Cold

Implementing procedures to keep milk cold is important for food safety and helps make milk more appealing to children. Milk must be kept at 40°F or below but tastes best at 35°F. SFSP sponsors should develop procedures to maintain milk at 35°F during all points of the meal service including receiving, storing, and serving.

New England Dairy's [Chill Out with Cold Milk](#) webpage contains resources to help staff serve cold milk. The U.S. Dairy has a [Milk Quality Checklist](#) that helps programs evaluate their current practices and implement procedures for keeping milk cold.

Requirements for the Milk Component of the SFSP Meal Patterns

Resources

Allowable Milk Substitutes for Children with Disabilities in School Nutrition Programs (CSDE):
https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/NSLP/SpecDiet/Milk_Substitutes_SNP.pdf

Crediting Foods in the SFSP (“Documents/Forms” section of CSDE’s SFSP webpage):
<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Summer-Food-Service-Program/Documents>

Crediting Smoothies in the Summer Food Service Program (CSDE):
https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SFSP/CreditingSFSP/Credit_Smoothies_SFSP.pdf

Crediting Summary Charts for the Summer Food Service Program Meal Patterns (CSDE):
https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SFSP/CreditingSFSP/Crediting_Summary_Charts_SFSP.pdf

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

Chill Out with Cold Milk (New England Dairy webpage):
<https://www.newenglanddairy.com/school-meals/keep-milk-cold/>

Meal Modifications for Special Diets (“How To” Section of CSDE’s SFSP webpage):
<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Summer-Food-Service-Program/How-To#MealModificationsSFSP>

Meal Patterns for the SFSP (“How To” Section of CSDE’s SFSP webpage):
<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Summer-Food-Service-Program/How-To#MealPatterns>

Milk Component for the SFSP (“Documents/Forms” section of CSDE’s SFSP webpage):
<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Summer-Food-Service-Program/Documents#Milk>

Milk Quality Checklist (U.S. Dairy):
<https://www.usdairy.com/news-articles/milk-quality-check-list>

Noncreditable Foods in the Summer Food Service Program (CSDE):
https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SFSP/CreditingSFSP/Noncreditable_Foods_SFSP.pdf

USDA Memo CACFP 14-2017 and SFSP 10-2017: Modifications to Accommodate Disabilities in CACFP and SFSP:
<https://www.fns.usda.gov/modifications-accommodate-disabilities-cacfp-and-sfsp>

Using Product Formulation Statements in the Summer Food Service Program (CSDE):
https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/SFSP/CreditingSFSP/Product_Formulation_Statements_SFSP.pdf

Requirements for the Milk Component of the SFSP Meal Patterns



For more information, visit the [Meal Patterns for the SFSP](#) and [Crediting Foods in the SFSP](#) sections of the CSDE's SFSP webpage, or contact the [Summer Meals 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/SFSP/CreditingSFSP/Component_Milk_SFSP.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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